“IN THE ARMS OF ANGELS”
A NEW CEMETERY BOOK COMES TO LIFE!

By Patrick Harwood
Charleston CNPA
March 20, 2014
Topics and dimensions to explore - no shortage!
Magnolia Cemetery - Victorian Elegance

Today’s modern “memorial” cemetery - what’s memorable about this design?

Magnolia Cemetery shines - even in the rain
The Goal:
A comprehensive examination and documentation of one of America’s most beautiful and historic cemeteries

Superintendent Beverly Donald holds an original 1850 Magnolia Cemetery planning map

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In the summer of 2012, once the book’s basic outline was set, I began researching, writing, photographing, and laying out the pages (in Adobe InDesign).
Writing Key (for me): A quiet, comfortable, two big screened computer set up, with quick Internet access for research, fact checks, spelling, definitions and InDesign technical help. Another key...
...a furry friend, my “co-author” GiGi, who helped keep me calm and focused
Who are the people behind (and beneath) these amazing masterpieces of monument design?
RESEARCH RESOURCES

- **Internet** - Google and other searches related to the names of the buried, stonecutters/artisans, cemetery symbolism, Victorian Era influences, newspaper, magazine, book, blog references pertaining directly/indirectly to Magnolia Cemetery

- **Ancestry.com** - death notices, family members/trees, newspaper obits, places of birth, U.S. Census data, etc.

- **Cemetery records** - burial dates, causes of death, family plots, cemetery’s founding/developments

- **Books** - bought or checked out from CofC’s library on Charleston history/people, cemeteries/cemetery iconography

- **Charleston County Public Library** - South Carolina Room, newspaper morgue (obits), cemetery news

- **Gravesites themselves** - many cases very informative and revealing
CONFEDERATE AND CHILDREN’S CHAPTERS

CHAPTER 3
MAGNOLIA’S CONFEDERACY LEGACY
CIVIL WAR VICTIMS AND VETERANS ABOUND

It’s ironic to suggest that a cemetery can represent a “living” history, but there’s something powerfully moving, even chilling, about standing at the gravestones of Confederate soldiers and reading headstone inscriptions that say, “Fell at Gettysburg July 3rd, 1863”, or “Fell in the battle of Marye’s Hill, Marylan.”

On many occasions, stumbling across such markers at Magnolia Cemetery has been as much a history lesson as have the many books and articles I have read about the Civil War, and as psychologically meaningful as my visits over the years to a number of the battlefields and museums from that epic 1861-65 conflict.

For me, it’s always caused me to pause and ponder, to stand there and think that the man buried here was in that battle, he saw and was part of what today we can only read about or watch representations of in theaters and on television. And he paid the ultimate price for his life in that great war that all these years later is still so passionately remembered and debated, especially in the South.

Magnolia Cemetery does not necessarily promote its significant connection to the Civil War. As a “working” cemetery it remains, for the most part, off limits to Charleston’s many tourist enterprises. It’s a policy the cemetery has long had. A visitor map marks several key Confederate spots and there are signs to the Confederate submarine H.L. Hunley site where those separate coves are interred.

There is something pure and innocent, respectful even, in this low key, non-advertised, non-marketed sanctuary of Confederacy legacy. The pages ahead delve into this deep Civil War treasure trove, or as called on one veteran’s headstone, “The War Between the Sections” (see that story on page 16).
The Children of Magnolia Cemetery
A MODERN STONEMAKER’S PERSPECTIVE ON HISTORIC MAGNOLIA CEMETERY

Victorian cemeteries like Magnolia, others around the U.S., and in Europe, ushered in a greater exhibition of spirituality and romanticism concerning death. There were lots of softening, euphemistic words and symbols conveying that the departed were merely “asleep” or “at rest.” This may have helped many grieving families deal with the finality of death.

Crites agrees that there was something people back then were trying to say and do with these monuments and memorials. “I think what they tried to say was more about the person,” he said, “about what kind of style they may have liked. Certainly a lot of emblems were on the stone. You definitely notice they were more religious back then. There were a lot of biblical verses on the stones. So I think they put a lot of thought into that particular stone for that particular individual.

“I think there was more pride of the people that wanted something nice out there for their relatives. And that’s what I think is lacking today. As I said, the families would go out and clean up the lots. Now, they don’t ever go back to the cemetery so why would they put a lot of money into it. I think that’s what has really changed about the whole thing, unfortunately.”

The size and/or artistry of the creations that fill Magnolia Cemetery certainly stand out. So does the abundance of symbolism, whether through plants, flowers, animals or objects such as crosses, angels, crowns and torches. Crites says the monument makers had (as they still do today) catalogs and examples to show customers of ways to decorate markers and memorials lost relatives.

“It’s all back to religion, it was certainly very important in their lives, and you just don’t see it anymore,” Crites said. “Every thing had meaning back then, everything they did was for a reason. Nowadays, it’s not really for a reason, it’s just that somebody likes the way it looks, but it doesn’t really mean anything to them. I think that’s what’s changed about it too. It’s just more about the design, then the name and date.”

“It was important to the people, important to the family to do something special. It was something that would be seen for years to come, about that particular person. I think it was just high on their list. I actually try to encourage people to put more down there. We used to charge for extra lettering but we stopped doing that. We say, look, ‘Whatever you want to put on the stone, we’ll put on the stone.’ So I try to encourage them to put a little thought into it and come up with something. Certainly it’s a special person to you so surely you can come up with a few things that are good about them and put them down.”

The mid-to-late 1800s were a “Golden Age” for stonemcutters and monument makers. Charleston had the White brothers, Emilie Wett, John and William Fremishman and many others in the field. Some had prominent locations on Meeting, King and East Bay streets, which reflect their prominence and productivity as business enterprises. They specialized in cemetery monuments but also were in demand for building, home and park construction and detail work.

The artistry those craftsmen created with hammer and chisel receives high praise from Crites. “Some of the sculptures you see out there to me, rank high with anything I’ve seen around the country,” he said. “I’m just amazed at some of the work that’s out there.”

Crites says large-scale cemetery monuments could take eight months to a year to complete. “Companies today don’t have someone they could dedicate that way,” Crites said. “His wage would be pretty high to dedicate him to produce just one monument.”

The reason most monuments, even the grandest ones, were not signed by the artisans was the feeling that doing so was “intrusive,” Crites said. “Signage cemetery creations is something he doesn’t do either. ‘I don’t like doing that,’” Crites said.

Crites’ extensive work at Magnolia Cemetery includes (left) the impressive Cato family memorial and lovely landscaped lot in Greenhill. It is modeled after the 19th century Courtenay monument in an older part of the cemetery. The Courtenay and Cato monuments are each featured in other parts of this book.

One of the memorials for the H.L. Hunley submarine was also produced by Crites’ company. E.J. McCarthy & Sons is located at a Cummington Ave. in Charleston. The phone number is (843) 723-8381 and website is at www.ejmcCarthyandsons.com.

The company has been at its location for nearly 150 years.
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The Publication Process

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Page numbers are important too!
Printed Photo Education!

My Canon SX40 Preset Resolution is 180 ppi/dpi. Photos may look great on the computer screen but printed or published they look like the example above (low resolution, blurry, especially the larger photos).

After receiving by first book proof, I was horrified to see many photos like the one on the left. But after seeking some advice, including from a certain professional photographer (thanks Kate!), I learned how to boost the resolution in PhotoShop (Image—Image Size—Resolution). The 500 dpi photo above is much sharper. My 2nd proof set looked great. What a relief!
Slide rule anyone?
Adobe inDesign - Setting the Cover, Spine and Back
MAGNOLIA CEMETERY
DISCOVER CHARLESTON’S HIDDEN TREASURE OF HISTORY, MYSTERY AND ARTISTRY

IN THE ARMS OF ANGELS
CHARLESTON’S TREASURE OF HISTORY, MYSTERY AND ARTISTRY

"In The Arms of Angels" has filled a gap in Charleston's history. It is a well-balanced work combining history and beautiful photography of one of the South's most historic cities of the dead." - Richard W. Hatcher III, Historian, Fort Sumter National Monument

"From the past to the present, the true beauty, history, and uniqueness of Magnolia Cemetery fully unfold page by page as one reads this landmark book on one of Charleston’s landmarks. It makes a visit to Magnolia a greater experience." - Glenn McConnell, long-time South Carolina political leader and Civil War expert

"Patrick Harwood's book on Magnolia Cemetery covers a myriad of topics. It is a complex work, just as Magnolia Cemetery is a complex place. Most importantly, from the standpoint of the architectural historian, it is the first work to deal with the art, architecture and landscape design of Magnolia Cemetery in a comprehensive manner. The book is well-researched and well-written, as it should be. The author is a professional journalist and journalism professor. It is also beautifully illustrated, mostly with the author's own photographs." - Robert P. Stockton, College of Charleston history professor and author (expert in Charleston architecture and Victorian Charleston)

3 proof readers; 3 historian “blurb” writers; I read and reread at least 6 times looking for tipos, I mean typos
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—Robert P. Stockton, College of Charleston history professor and author (expert in Charleston architecture and Victorian Charleston)
First Book Signing:
Saturday, April 12
10 a.m.-1 p.m.
Magnolia Cemetery
70 Cunnington Ave.
Charleston
(please pick up a flyer)

Interested in doing a book yourself? Maybe I can help!