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

By Patrick Harwood
Charleston CNPA
March 20, 2014
IN THE ARMS OF ANGELS

MAGNOLIA CEMETERY
CHARLESTON’S TREASURE OF HISTORY, MYSTERY AND ARTISTRY

BY PATRICK HARWOOD

AUTHOR OF "THE BIRDS OF MAGNOLIA CEMETERY: CHARLESTON’S SECRET BIRD SANCTUARY"

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
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 rare to suggest that a cemetery can represent a “living” history, but there’s something powerfully moving, even chilling, about standing at the gravesites of Confederate soldiers and reading headstone inscriptions that say, “Fell at Gettysburg July 2nd & 3rd,” or “Fell in the battle of Marye’s Heights.”

On many occasions, strolling 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, titanic conflict.

For me, it’s always cause 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 televisions. 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 tourism 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 there separate coves are interred.

There is something pure and innocent, respectful even, in this low key, non-advertised, non-marketed sanctuary of Confederate 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 106).

CHAPTER 4
THE CHILDREN OF MAGNOLIA CEMETERY
TOUCHING TRIBUTES TO YOUNG LIVES LOST

A startling, very noticeable number of children’s graves line the elegant bodespace of Magnolia Cemetery. In the 19th century and first part of the 20th, death was a part of life on a scale many Americans today would find shocking. Wealth, prominence and power were not shields against the high level of infant and childhood deaths during those times. By one estimate, 40 percent of all 19th century U.S. deaths were children under age 5.

The numbers are staggering. Research by Magnolia Cemetery Superintendent Brenna Osburn concludes that of the 6,000 people buried here from 1830-1870, 25% were children, ages 0 to younger. Most were babies.

The most common 19th-century childhood disease were chicken and small pox (both viruses), diphtheria (formation of a thick gray membrane in the throat), polio (a disease that attacks the spinal cord and leads to paralysis), consumption (or tuberculosis). Most of these and many other diseases were highly contagious causing various levels of epidemics.

Families were large, medicine was crude, disease ran rampant, and it seems no family was untouched by the tragedy of a child’s death,” writes historian, author and journalist Douglas Stewart.

President U.S. President Abraham Lincoln and his wife Mary had their 3-year-old son Edie in tuberculosis in 1864. Two of future Confederate President Jefferson Davis’s six children died of disease; one in 1850, 1851, the other in 1879, at age 6. Richard Garnet, son of pierced, killed in a yellow fever epidemic in the Mississippi River Valley in 1846.

Before vaccines and treatments could be found, Magnolia Cemetery would be populated with scores of hundreds (if not more than a thousand) children’s graves. Some of the most touching and poignant ones are shown and described in the following pages.

By one estimate, 40 percent of all 19th century U.S. deaths were children under age 5

Soldiers Ground—6 CSA Generals—Killed in Action—Disease Deaths—Unit Memorials

138
The Children of Magnolia Cemetery
CEMETERY SYMBOLISM AND ICONOGRAPHY MEANINGS
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 they wanted something nice out there for their relatives. And that’s what I think is lacking today. Like 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 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 for 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. “Everything 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 families 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 stonemasons and monument makers. Charleston had the White brothers, Emil Witt, John and William Breaman 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 hammers and chisels 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.

Signing 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 on Magnolia Avenue. 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) 727-8381 and website is at www.ejmcCarthyandsons.com.

The company has been at its location for nearly 150 years.
MORE BIRDS OF MAGNOLIA CEMETERY!
The Publication Process

Printing Industry Exchange
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Fill out this two page spec sheet and your project will be shared with dozens of printers around the U.S. and beyond.
360 DIGITAL BOOKS is a division of 360 Services International.

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Adobe inDesign- pretty user friendly!

But make sure your page margins are correct BEFORE you get too far into the work… Page numbers are important too!
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
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DISCOVER CHARLESTON'S HIDDEN TREASURE
OF HISTORY, MYSTERY AND ARTISTRY

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- 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 ream 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. Stockson, College of Charleston history professor and author (expert in Charleston architecture and Victorian Charleston)
Proofreading and Proofs- The Devil is in the Details!

3 proof readers; 3 historian “blurb” writers; I read and reread at least 6 times looking for tipos, I mean typos.
Back Cover Blurbs—For Marketing and “Street Cred”

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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!