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BIRD BOOK SIGNING SATURDAY, DEC. 3 AT MAGNOLIA CEMETERY

A cemetery may seem like an odd place to sign books but it makes sense given the new pictorial publication by Patrick Harwood, "The Birds of Magnolia Cemetery: Charleston's Secret Bird Sanctuary."

On Saturday, Dec. 3 from noon to 3 p.m. Harwood will sign copies of his newly released book. Published by BirdsEyeViews and printed locally by Knight Printing and Graphics, the 130-page coffee table style book sells for \$29.95 (two for \$55). Only checks and cash will be accepted.

Magnolia Cemetery is located at 70 Cunnington Ave., which is off Meeting Street just down from Morrison Drive and Santi's Mexican restaurant.

The surprisingly abundant and diverse bird population at Charleston's historic Magnolia Cemetery has been captured in this new book by Harwood, an adjunct communication professor at the College of Charleston and former WCSC-TV news reporter.

"The Birds of Magnolia Cemetery: Charleston's Secret Bird Sanctuary" is filled with 400 photographs of 46 different bird species, all taken in the intimate setting of one of America's most historic and beautiful cemeteries.

The book is endorsed by longtime cemetery superintendent Beverly Donald. "I will enjoy for years to come some of my most cherished memories made at Magnolia through the efforts of this project," she wrote for the book's back cover. "I applaud him and feel this book would be a wonderful addition to everyone's collection."

"Patrick Harwood has accomplished the impossible: He has brought a graveyard to life, and he has done so beautifully by honoring those who lie there through the beauty and grace of birds," writes former College of Charleston president Alex Sanders, a noted environmentalist.

Harwood, who took the photographs during the past three years, says what started as a diversion turned into a passion that has culminated in his first book endeavor. "Who would think that a place of death could contain so much life," he says. He says his first visit to the cemetery in March 2008 when he encountered a pair of wood storks got him interested in birding.

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“Birds of Magnolia Cemetery” Book Signing (p. 2)

Dating to 1850, Magnolia Cemetery, located on Charleston’s outskirts near the Cooper River, is known as the final resting place for many of Charleston’s movers and shakers. Strong War Between the States connections are evident in the large statue of Gen. Wade Hampton, Confederate flags that fly daily, the graves of 1,700 Civil War casualties and veterans, including the men who died aboard the historic submarine Hunley.

But what many people don’t know is how Magnolia Cemetery is also a birders’ paradise, Harwood says. The remote location, two lagoons, adjacent salt marshes and lack of (living) human presence have created an ecosystem that attracts a wide array of birds from large herons, egrets, wood storks and osprey to smaller birds and ducks such as belted kingfishers, yellow-rumped warblers, mallards and hooded mergansers.

“Even though I have quietly meandered through Magnolia Cemetery on many occasions, I never realized the plethora of birds that visit and make their homes among the ponds, statues and tombstones,” writes Greg Schmitt, a College of Charleston communication professor and professional photographer. “Clearly this book is a labor of love for Patrick, and I am certain you- as am I- will be ever-enriched with these beautiful images he has given us.”

“Patrick’s photography, identifications, passionate observations, and field notes open our eyes to the beauty and diversity of birds found at this Lowcountry destination, all the while encouraging us to see the cemetery from an entirely different perspective,” writes Beaufort-based Marvin Bouknight, author of “South Carolina’s Lowcountry...Naturally.”

Harwood has worked at the College of Charleston since 1991, in public relations then as a professor in the communication department. A former broadcast journalist, Harwood holds degrees from Virginia Commonwealth University and Northwestern University.

For more information about this event or to purchase the book, please contact Patrick Harwood at 843.224.3112, magnoliacemeterybirds@hotmail.com or through his photography website at <http://www.mybirdseyeviews.blogspot.com/>

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