

# Inscriptions

VOLUME 2, NO. 3

FALL 2006



## Thanks to:

**Clint North** for organizing the horse-drawn wagon rides; **Annie Gray Johnson, Sylvia Stoudenmier** and **Elizabeth King** for the refreshments; and **Ed Lewis** owner of Currie Work and Driving Horse Farm and his trusty steeds, **Nip and Tuck**, for supplying the transportation; and our guides, **Bill Wilcox, Lou Hargett, Jack Fetner** and **Janet Seapker**.

**Sylvia Stoudenmier** for organizing this year's *Gossip, Graves and Grapes* and to the interpreters: **Ed Turberg, Bob Cooke, Chuck Truby, Eric Kozen, Lori Dupstadt**; and to the guides **Deese Thompson, Bill Wilcox, Ham Hicks, Chris Fonvielle, Gretchen Kozen**; and **Janet Seapker; Hester North** and **Catherine Solomon** for staffing the ticket table.

## Board Change

We welcome Betsy Leonard to the friends' board. She replaces Ellen Wells whom we will miss greatly.

## Oakdale and the National Cemetery

by *Eric Kozen*

Recently, I was in Washington D.C., having attended a workshop about conservation and preservation of cemeteries. I went to the National Archives to see what I could find on Oakdale Cemetery, particularly information about burials that took place between the years 1863-1867. The cemetery does not have accurate records of who was interred during those years. The superintendent had died of yellow fever in 1862 and the administration of the cemetery became lax. Because of a list made by a later Superintendent, Timothy Donlan, and placed in the cornerstone of the 1896 lodge, we

know numbers of burials for each of the years, but there were no names.

In the archives I located information about how the federal government created a final resting place for the bodies of Union soldiers—letters and reports written during 1866 and 1867 that contained information about the creation of a National Cemetery. Captain H. B. Blackman, Chief Quartermaster of the District of Wilmington, on January 1, 1866, reported that there were approximately 2,500 Union soldiers buried in cemeteries in Wilmington and surrounding areas. Surgeon Norman Barnes, the medical director for the District of Wilmington, had been in charge of recording burials, but following his muster out of service, the detailed information (names, units, place and cause of death) been lost.

Blackman recommended that the U. S. government purchase and enclose a two-acre site within Oakdale Cemetery into which the soldiers would be removed from the other cemeteries. The Oakdale Board of Directors set a rather steep price—\$1,000 per acre—perhaps trying to discourage the federal government from purchasing part of Oakdale. Letters were written in July and September of 1866 to Major General Meigs stated that the conditions of the graves were in shocking condition and that the soldiers must be arranged properly in one site.

Oakdale's superintendent Timothy Donlan noted that 1,037 Union soldiers were removed in 1866 from Oakdale to the new National Cemetery. Donlan's assertion was confirmed in a letter dated October 30, 1867 to General Ulysses S. Grant which stated, that by April, the removal of bodies from all burying places was almost complete. The sad part of this saga is that the federal records contain no data about those soldier's identities and to this day, they remain unidentified in their final resting place.

## FALL CALENDAR

HOLIDAY WREATHS AND  
POINSETTIAS AVAILABLE:

ORDERS MUST BE PLACED BY  
NOVEMBER 20TH, 2006



THE FRIENDS OF OAKDALE CEMETERY OFFER CHRISTMAS WREATHS AND POINSETTIAS. THIS YEAR THE WREATHS WILL BE LARGER—26" INCHES WITH A WATERPROOF RED BOW AND FROSTED PINE CONES—AND BEAUTIFUL LIVE POINSETTIAS\* IN 7" POTS. THE WREATHS AND POINSETTIAS WILL BE PLACED ON THE GRAVESITE OF YOUR LOVED ONES BEGINNING THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 18TH. (\* MAY BE SUBJECT TO FREEZE OR FROST.)

A NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF OAKDALE CEMETERY, INC.

520 NORTH 15TH STREET, WILMINGTON, NC 28401 + 910.762-5682

EMAIL: FRIENDS@OAKDALECEMETERY.ORG + WWW.OAKDALECEMETERY.ORG

## Friends' Board Biographies:

### *Sylvia Orrell Stoudenmier*

Sylvia was born and raised in Wilmington. She was educated in Wilmington and married her high school sweetheart, Dallas. They have four children and eight grandchildren.

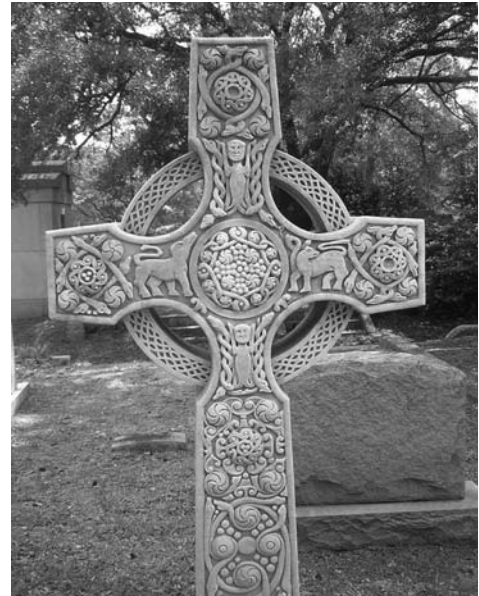
Sylvia was a very active mom. She has been a substitute teacher, volunteer P.E. teacher, little league coach, cheerleader and biggest sports fan for her three sons. Sylvia is a member of Winter Park Baptist Church where she is a member of the choir, outreach leader and the bereavement chairman. Sylvia volunteered at Cape Fear Hospital for many years and now volunteers for her granddaughters' school and her grandsons pre-school. Sylvia joined the board for Friends of Oakdale because of her love for the history and beauty of the cemetery. Currently Sylvia is chairman for volunteers at Oakdale. Want to volunteer? Just give her a call.

### *D. C. "Deese" Thompson*

Deese started life in Brooklyn, NY, was raised in Erie, PA and lived in twenty-one different places before deciding Wilmington would be his final anchorage in 1988. With a BS in Marine Engineering from the U.S. Coast Guard Academy and an MS from Purdue University, Deese spent most of his 36 years in the USCG as a Coast Guard aviator, retiring as Vice Admiral. His subsequent careers included corporate pilot, airport manager, V.P. of a systems integrator, and an aviation & maritime consultant. Deese and his wife Jeanne are blessed with six children, 16 grandchildren and three great grandkids, but none live locally. Oakdale Cemetery became a favorite place to take their visiting family and other houseguests, to show the history of the Cape Fear area, as well as to enjoy the beauty of the seasons expressed there.

### *Eric Kozen, Cemetery Superintendent*

I was born in Riverside, California in 1968. My family and I moved around the country from California to Florida and on to Virginia. I attended College at Virginia Wesleyan in Virginia Beach studying marketing and management. I grew up loving the great outdoors, golfing, fishing, surfing, sailing, and hiking the Appalachian Trail. While in Virginia, my love for the outdoors influenced my work. Starting in high school I earned money mowing neighbor's lawns, raking leaves, and, in the winter, shoveling snow. Those experiences paved the road to my career. After years of hard work and aspirations, I was graced with the honor of becoming the site manager for Arlington National Cemetery outside of Washington DC. In 1996, I moved to Wilmington with the expectation that my parents would retire here soon. Since being in Wilmington, I have continued my work and studies within the horticulture industry, most recently as superintendent of Oakdale Cemetery.



## Funerary Art Symbolism, Herbert G. Latimer's Celtic Cross

by Janet K. Seapker

Oakdale contains a wealth of symbolic funerary art, most of which are pretty obvious—lamb for the innocence of a baby, for instance. But every once in a while, you see a marker that is beyond the bounds of the ordinary—like Herbert G. Latimer's Celtic Cross. The Celtic Cross is not unusual, but the carvings on it are. I asked members of the Association for Gravestone Studies who offered these interpretations.

Heather Beattie who wrote her master's thesis on sourcebooks for Celtic Revival funerary monuments, offered these observations: "It is a Celtic Revival monument based on the west face of the Kildalton Cross on Islay, a Western isle of Scotland. The Kildalton Cross was carved circa 800 AD and is the only High Cross to survive fully intact in Scotland. The decoration is the snake and boss pattern which appears on other West Highland and Pictish (Northern and Eastern Scotland) medieval sculpture. The animals are lions.

Richard Waterhouse: "The animals in the middle are dogs; in the Celtic tradition dogs symbolize loyalty and protective vigilance. The circle (nimbus) is a symbol of Irish Christianity, and the sun and eternity. On the three arms are Celtic knots, symbols of unity; they have open circles, symbols of eternity. The knots ward off evil spirits. The three knots and the three rocks or stones represent the Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Ghost). The two figures are symbols of mother earth recognizing that the Celtic tradition started as pagan. The serpents with erect heads are symbols of human wisdom. Both earth goddesses have two snakes on each side of each figure, symbols of death."

Jim Parris offered web resources: <http://irelandsown.net/serpent.html>; and <http://www.fantasy-ireland.com/Celtic-animal-symbols.html>.

# Holiday Wreaths and Poinsettias Available: Orders must be placed by November 20th, 2006

The Friends of Oakdale Cemetery offer Christmas wreaths and poinsettias. This year the wreaths will be larger—26" inches with a waterproof red bow and frosted pine cones—and will be placed on stands. Additionally, we are offering beautiful live poinsettias\* in 7" pots.

The wreaths and poinsettias will be placed on the gravesite of your loved ones beginning the week of December 18th.

(\* May be subject to freeze or frost.)

Please mark the item or items your wish to order.



\_\_\_\_\_ Wreath, 26 inches \$ 35.00 each. (\$2.00 OFF EACH FOR MEMBERS)

\_\_\_\_\_ Poinsettias, 7" pot \$ 15.00 each. (\$1.00 OFF EACH FOR MEMBERS)



Provide the name of the person BURIED on the lot and check the appropriate selections.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Wreath \_\_\_\_\_ Poinsettia \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Wreath \_\_\_\_\_ Poinsettia \_\_\_\_\_

Record YOUR contact information should we need clarification on your order.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

**Orders must be placed by November 20th, 2006.**

Make checks payable to: Friends of Oakdale Cemetery

520 N 15th Street

Wilmington, NC 28401

*If you need assistance with your order, please call the cemetery office at 910-762-5682.*

## New & Renewing Members

(recorded between August 1 and Mid-October, 2006)

If you joined and we failed to list your name, please phone the office and we will correct it in the next issue of *Inscriptions*.

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Mr. Bruce Cameron  
Mr. Thomas S. Kenan, III  
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Mrs. Mary Koonce  
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Mr. Chad Farriss  
Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Hodder  
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Ms. Wanda Gregory

### Corrections:

*Renewals between January 1 and July 31, 2006*

**Founder:** Mrs. Sylvia Stoudenmier/Cape Fear Towing

**Benefactor:** Mr. and Mrs. William Morrison

**Sponsor:** Mrs. Carl B. Brown

**Patron:** Thomas Ashe Lockhart ; The Hon. and Mrs. L. Bradford Tillery

**Donor:** Mr. and Mrs. Charles Truby; Mrs. Christian H. Swiers

**Individual:** Helen Chiverton

**Contribution:** Mrs. Wanda Moore

# Friends of Oakdale Cemetery

520 North 15th Street  
Wilmington, NC 28401

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Sylvia Stoudenmier  
John T. "Jay" Talbert III  
D. C. (Deese) Thompson  
Catherine Solomon, *Ex. Officio*  
Eric Kozen, *Ex. Officio*

*Inscriptions* is published periodically.  
Janet K. Seapker, editor

A wag, hearing about the formation of the Friends of Oakdale Cemetery asked, "Do you have to be dead to join . . . ?" Of course not; you just need an active bank account!



## BE a Friend of Oakdale Cemetery!

Please mail your tax-deductible contribution to:

**Friends of Oakdale Cemetery, Inc.**  
520 North Fifteenth Street • Wilmington, NC 28401

*Questions? Call us at 910-762-5682*

*Please check one:*

- Founder**    \_\_\_ \$2,500
- Benefactor**    \_\_\_ \$1,000
- Sponsor**    \_\_\_ \$500
- Patron**    \_\_\_ \$250
- Donor**    \_\_\_ \$100
- Family**    \_\_\_ \$40
- Individual**    \_\_\_ \$30
- Student**    \_\_\_ \$15

*Membership is for one year*

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Title                      First Name(s)                      Last Name

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Street Address                      City                      State                      Zip

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone                      Email

\_\_\_\_ *Please contact me about volunteering*