

Friends of Oakdale Cemetery, Inc.

520 North 15th Street
Wilmington, NC 28401

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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 & up
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Membership is for one year ❖ Many volunteer opportunities!

Please contact me about volunteering! ☐

A REMINDER

To all the Friends of Oakdale, when receiving this periodic publication, this is not a reminder of your membership status. The Membership Committee sends out a specific letter. These letters are mailed to you annually when the time arrives according to the month you had renewed last or joined.

Inscriptions

VOLUME 19, NO. 1

SPRING 2023



FRIENDS
of
OAKDALE
CEMETERY

Hans Anderson Kure Sr.

Written by Hunter Ingram

A man from Denmark finds himself shipwrecked off the Carolina coast. It sounds like the start of a classic novel or a great movie. But in the case of the Cape Fear, it is actually the origin story for one of the region's most beloved beach towns.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Kure Beach Pier, a 711-foot fishing pier that has stood outstretched off the coast of Kure Beach since 1923. The town claims, without much protest from any competitors, the pier is the oldest on the East Coast. It's a rather impressive feat considering the century of hurricanes it has endured, including 1954's Hazel, which ravaged the town around it.

On any given summer day, you can venture out onto the pier's still-sturdy planks before dawn and cross paths with a handful of people who have already been there for a few hours. Around the clock, people from near and far sit with their gaze and their lines cast out into the ocean, waiting for a bite from below. It is one of the Cape Fear's defining past times and the centerpiece of Kure Beach. But do you know where the pier — and by nature, the town itself — gets its name?

Well, that story lies with the Kure family, and it begins with Hans Anderson Kure Sr., who is buried in Section K and a few yards from the Confederate Memorial in Oakdale Cemetery. He was born on June 15, 1851 in Barnholm, Denmark, a far piece from the Carolina coast he would eventually call his home. He took to sailing as a young boy and began a career on the water as a cabin boy before ascending to the coveted spot behind the wheel of his own vessel.

Continued on page 2.



Calendar of Events



Friends of Oakdale Cemetery Board Meetings

Board meetings will be held virtually. Time and date TBD.



Deadline for ordering Easter Lillies

Saturday, April 1, 2023

Easter is April 9, 2023. The Friends of Oakdale Cemetery are offering for sale a limited number of full, fresh Easter lillies for the graves of loved ones. See details on insert sheet of this newsletter.

Summer Walking Tour Series

Saturday, May 20, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

Historical walking tours of North Carolina's oldest rural cemetery will be given by local historian Hunter Ingram who created Burgwin-Wright Presents and Cape Fear Unearthed Podcasts Mr. Ingram will lead you on a journey through Oakdale and will delight you with many tales of those who are interred in the cemetery. Tour is from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. Cost of the tour is \$10.00 per person.

Summer Walking Tour Series

Saturday, June 17 2023, 10:00 a.m.

Historical walking tours of North Carolina's oldest rural cemetery will be given by local historian, Robin Triplett. Ms. Triplett will lead you on a journey through Oakdale and will delight you with many tales of those interred in the cemetery. Learn some local history from a long time Wilmingtonian. Tour is from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm. Cost of the tour is \$10.00 per person.

Flashlight Tour

Saturday, September 16, 2023, 6:30 p.m.

Historical walking tours of North Carolina's oldest rural cemetery will be given by local historians, Dr. Chris Fonvielle, Robin Triplett and Hunter Ingram. Each of these historians will lead you through the cemetery and speak about the history of Oakdale, Civil War veterans, Funerary Art as well as a taste of Oakdale's prominent citizens. Tour is from 6:30 pm till 8:30 pm. Cost is \$20.00 per person and you must supply your own flashlight.

ALL TOURS ARE CANCELED IN THE EVENT OF INCLEMENT WEATHER.

A Letter from the President of Friends of Oakdale Cemetery

First, let me thank you for your support of Oakdale Cemetery. Your kind gifts allow Eric Kozen and his crew to help maintain and beautify our historic spot and the Friends board and I appreciate your generosity. This has been an unusual February. As I write this, the sun is shining, and the temperature is a balmy 75 degrees. It is the perfect time to visit the cemetery for a leisurely walk down its paths. Many thanks to the Tidewater Camellia Club for taking care of the plants in the cemetery. They have spent hours pruning and air layering the hundreds of camellia bushes in our historic cemetery. The Loblolly Garden Club have given much time and manpower to improving the 15th Street corridor leading to the main gate, for which we are grateful. There is a full schedule of tours planned in this post-covid year, so be sure to sign up for one or two and come enjoy learning about the famous and not so famous people buried on our grounds. I hope to see you soon, either walking along the paths or enjoying a flashlight tour one evening.

Claire Efird, President, Friends of Oakdale Cemetery

Hans Anderson Kure Sr. *Continued from front page*



According to an account of Kure's story in "Land of the Golden River, Vol. 1" by Lewis Philip Hall, now Capt. Kure found himself shipwrecked off the North Carolina coast in the 1870s. Ferried to Beaufort to be treated for injuries, he was heartened by the generosity of the coastal region. Whether the shipwreck is true or not is up for debate. The nautical narrative isn't included in his 1914 obituary, but it could have been an oversight of time. Regardless of his first encounter, he will end up back in Denmark within a few months of the wreck. But he never shakes the experience of the Crystal Coast and winds up back in its clutches with his wife, Ellen, by 1879. To pay the bills in his new surroundings, he opened his own stevedore business, loading and unloading cargo on the Wilmington waterfront. It was back-breaking work but it put him in the heart of the region.

Retiring from the stevedore business around the turn of the century, he took a liking to the burgeoning Carolina Beach area — particularly the undeveloped sandy portions just south near Fort Fisher. At the time, there wasn't much more than a hotel and a few cottages that dotted the coast. In Kure's eye, a canvas of possibility. In May 1891, he opened a bowling alley in the town, which Hall notes had an attached saloon for billiards and pool. It was all a notable turn from his days breaking a sweat in Wilmington's port or captaining a ship, but his involvement in the area was just beginning to bear fruit. In time, he would go on to organize and serve as the president for the "Kure Land and Development Company," which owned, as his obituary states, "the Fort Fisher Sea Beach and the Fort Fisher railroad."



A world away from where he grew up, Kure was building out a new community that could serve as a resort in the summer and an escape in the winter for fellow admirers of the area. That company, however, was founded in 1914, the same year that Han Anderson Kure Sr. died on Dec. 23 at the age of 63. He spent his final weeks at Harper's Sanitarium, a former hospital at the corner of Front and Castle streets, the name for which draws a far more ominous image than it deserves. According to local historian Beverley Tetterton, privately owned hospitals were all the rage in the early 20th century, and Harper's was one of them. Kure was treated in the hospital for several weeks following an illness before he fell into a coma and never regained consciousness.

He left behind a legacy and appreciation for the Cape Fear coast that eventually led to his dream — a community south of Carolina Beach. In 1923 Hans' son Lawrence C. Kure built Kure Pier and what is known to be the very first fishing pier on the Atlantic Coast. Story has it that he had the trees cut from the Cape Fear River to be used as the pilings and by Fall of that year numerous fish were being caught by anglers and the fee was .35 cents per day. Lawrence Kure is also buried in Oakdale and is at rest in Section T. Today, Kure Beach is a residential community of hundreds that swells to thousands in the warmer months, as he had envisioned. What he probably didn't expect is that his name, which he shared with his son Hans Kure Jr., would greet every person who passes over its threshold and walks to the end of its century-old pier. ❖

www.oakdalecemetery.org

For those interested in Oakdale Cemetery, the website provides spectacular photography by Kenneth Newland. Featuring a fresh updated look and offers a more user friendly experience, improved navigation, and more interactive resources including maps, burial database, the ability to purchase items online, history, news, calendar of events, comprehensive cemetery information, newsletter archive and much more.



PLEASE FOLLOW US

Sketchout in Oakdale

The Urban Sketchers of Wilmington come to Oakdale periodically to capture the beauty of Oakdale. This group of artists always express that Oakdale is one of their favorite places to come draw, color and paint. Urban Sketchers is a global community now started almost 20 yrs ago to encourage artists who love to draw their cities where they live as well as where they may travel to. It's a snapshot of time and place drawing on location telling the stories of the surroundings as they witness it for a few hours. ❖



Funerary Art - The Lamb

Throughout the grounds of Oakdale you will see many graves marked with a lamb at rest including the first burial of Oakdale being little Annie DeRosset from February of 1855. The lamb has been used as a Christian symbol for centuries and especially in cemeteries to adorn the grave of children. The lamb symbolizes innocence and purity and sometimes you will find them resting upon a stack of rocks which symbolizes that these children are also the foundations of our families. ❖



Birdwatching in Oakdale



A longtime resident of Oakdale is a red shouldered hawk we have conveniently named "Dale." The bird has lived in the historic section of the cemetery annually raising its young. There is also another pairing of red shouldered hawks that have taken up residence across the bridge in the Annex and Memorial Park sections. We think this is Dale Jr who lives next door to Ma and Pa. You will also find numerous other birds who reside or benefit from the grounds of Oakdale including large populations of bluebirds, cardinals, robins, sparrows, warblers, and many more. You will also be greeted occasionally by flocks of white ibis feeding in the Memorial Park or the graceful Mississippi Kites that fly high above the treetops when they arrive in the summer. Even sightings of barred owls are possible along the Burnt Mill creek sections. Oakdale Cemetery is proud to be recognized and part

of the North Carolina Birding Trail which helps conserve and enhance North Carolinas bird habitats. ❖



VOLUNTEERS WELCOMED!



If you would like to become more involved with the Friends of Oakdale Cemetery, Inc., we have lots of opportunities for you.

910-762-5682