




At Mountain View Cemetery, we welcome thousands of visitors each year. Some come to remember loved ones; some come to appreciate a Bay Area landmark designed by renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted; some come to enjoy the peace, tranquility, inspiring landscaping, and sweeping views of the Bay Area; and some come to visit the graves of community and industry leaders and learn more about the wealth of history that lies among our beautiful hills.

Whatever connects you to this remarkable place, we invite you to learn more.

Our goals for this newsletter are to help you discover the cemetery's natural beauty and historical significance, invite you to attend our special events throughout the year, give you behind-the-scenes details about current and future projects, and create a way for you to become involved in our ongoing preservation and restoration efforts. 

*The Friends of Mountain View Cemetery is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization. Your donation is tax-deductible.*

*Friends of*



**MOUNTAIN VIEW  
CEMETERY**

**What's Inside**

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**MOUNTAIN VIEW  
CEMETERY**

5000 Piedmont Avenue, Oakland, CA 94611  
founded 1863 • a not-for-profit association  
[www.mountainviewcemetery.org](http://www.mountainviewcemetery.org)

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| Friday, 3/30–<br>Sunday, 4/1<br>10 a.m. to 4 p.m. | <b>Tower Chapel Tulip Exhibition</b> Walk amidst spectacular floral arrangements created by Bay Area florists, garden clubs, and local college floral design classes. See “What’s in Bloom” section for details.  |
| Saturday, 3/31 and<br>Sunday, 4/1                 | <b>Ching Ming Festival</b> Visit the cemetery in observance of Ching Ming this weekend and enjoy complimentary refreshments and flowers. For details, visit <a href="http://www.mountainviewcemetery.org">www.mountainviewcemetery.org</a> or call 510.658.2588 prior to the event.   |
| April   | <b>Tulip Extravaganza</b> Visit the cemetery for a spectacular showing of thousands of tulips in bloom!   |
| Thursday, 4/5                                     | <b>Ching Ming/Remembrance of Ancestors Day</b>  |
| Sunday, 4/8                                       | <b>Easter</b>   |
| Saturday, 4/14<br>10 a.m.                         | <b>Free docent tour led by Linda Castellani</b> Linda shares intriguing “rags to riches” stories of self-made Californians dating back to the Gold Rush.  |
| Saturday, 5/12<br>10 a.m.                         | <b>Free docent tour led by Silvia Lange</b> Silvia highlights the stories of fascinating women who played a part in California’s rich history.  |
| Sunday, 5/13                                      | <b>Mother’s Day</b>   |
| Monday, 5/28<br>10 a.m.                           | <b>86th Annual Memorial Day commemoration program</b> Presentation of colors, salute to the fallen, and guest speakers.   |
| Monday, 5/28<br>11:30 a.m.                        | <b>Memorial Day Civil War plot tour led by Dennis Evanosky</b> Dennis, who has also led tours at the Pardee Home and Oakland’s Preservation Park, gives a general tour with special emphasis on the Civil War and the role California and Californians played in the conflict.  |
| Saturday, 6/9<br>10 a.m.                          | <b>Free docent tour led by Sandy Rauch and Stafford Buckley</b> Sandy, who also developed a school tour for fourth-grade students studying California history, emphasizes notable Gold Rush figures buried at Mountain View. Stafford, a third generation Oaklander, enjoys sharing information about the natural history of Mountain View.   |
| Sunday, 6/17                                      | <b>Father’s Day</b>   |
| Sunday, 7/8<br>10 a.m.                            | <b>Oakland Heritage Alliance’s (OHA) annual walking tour led by Barbara Smith and Michael Crowe</b> (\$5 for OHA members, \$10 for nonmembers) Barbara, a former Oakland Museum history docent, developed Mountain View’s tour program in the early 1970s. Her tour offers insights into historical figures—some heroic, some humorous, some tragic. Michael is an architectural historian who comments on the monuments. |
| Saturday, 7/14<br>10 a.m.                         | <b>Free docent tour led by Gaye Lenahan</b> Gaye will discuss the history of Mountain View Cemetery, including details about the Stranger’s Plot, the ethnic roots of decedents, and customs of Victorian funerals and burials.   |
| Saturday, 8/11<br>10 a.m.                         | <b>Free docent tour led by Linda Castellani</b> Linda shares intriguing “rags to riches” stories of self-made Californians dating back to the Gold Rush.  |
| Saturday, 9/8<br>10 a.m.                          | <b>Free docent tour led by Chris Patillo</b> Chris, an Oakland landscape architect who has been a fan of Mountain View since 1955 when her grandfather was buried here, focuses on people whose contributions were important to the history of Oakland.   |
| Saturday, 10/13<br>10 a.m.                        | <b>Free docent tour led by Elwood Gerrits</b> Elwood, a history major, speaks about the main mausoleum, part of Millionaires’ Row, and much more. He also takes “special requests” for specific tour destinations whenever time permits.  |
| Saturday, 10/27<br>Noon to 3 p.m.                 | <b>Pumpkin Festival</b> After enjoying the annual Piedmont Avenue Merchants Association Halloween parade, stop by Mountain View Cemetery with your family and continue your Halloween celebration! We’ll be hosting a free pumpkin patch meadow with free pumpkins for kids, a hay bale maze, jumper activities, and a balloon artist. There will even be complimentary hot dogs, cold drinks, cookies, and candies!      |

In Europe and in the colonial states of America, the urban cemetery is common. On the west coast of America, Mountain View Cemetery is rare, if not unique, in its urban location. The cemetery provides a connection among generations of Bay Area families. To sustain the cemetery and care for our community, we are developing for the future. This year we intend to break ground on several development projects.

## Three New Plots Opening This Year

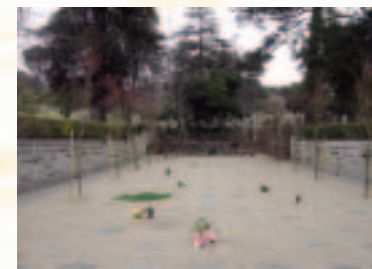
We look forward to opening three new plots (Plots 78, 80, and 81) this year. Located at mid-elevation in the cemetery, these plots will enjoy views that extend from the Golden Gate Bridge to the peninsula. Since many Bay Area families are versed in and embrace the design concepts of feng shui, we have carefully considered feng shui in the design of these new plots—which will also allow a return to the tradition of upright monuments.

Years ago in older sections of the cemetery, many families chose to establish heritage in family estates. The cemetery, however, has not offered such family estates for many years. Because some of our families have asked for family estates, we are especially pleased to announce that our new Plot 80 will include ten premium family estates. Each estate, surrounded by handset stone, will be a semiprivate garden and feature wonderful views of the San Francisco Bay.

For personal philosophies ranging from religious preference to the desire to save land, an increasing number of families choose cremation. To improve choices for niche placement, we are developing several new indoor and outdoor columbaria (a community of niches). Plot 81 will feature an outdoor columbaria wall facing the southwest sunlight and the Bay. We intend to enhance the columbaria with flowering pear trees, noted for beautiful spring blooms and warm fall color.

Next, we located three alcoves in our indoor mausoleum that, although they appear set aside for columbaria or sarcophagi, were never finished. We have many families who have asked for middle-tier-height niche locations, and we are pleased to say that we have a plan and are nearing completion of a design-build order with Matthews Bronze. If you have visited the indoor columbaria, you have observed the uniquely beautiful quality of the cast bronze niche frames that grace its halls. Matthews Bronze has agreed to build new niches for these three alcoves that are in keeping with the artistry and quality of the existing columbaria. Using cast bronze frames and air spaces between each niche is an almost forgotten technique for columbaria design. The cast bronze frame and glass fronts, which enable unique expression through the selection of an artistic urn, convey the individuality and importance of each family, and we are pleased to offer it for those in our community who favor this option. 🏡

## Urn Garden Improvements



If you walk the main avenue in the cemetery from time to time, you may have noticed the poor condition of the cherry trees in the urn garden. We are pleased to announce that we have replaced the aging cherries with 18 36-inch box Japanese maple trees, which will burst with stunning fall color. We also replaced the aging turf with golden pebbles, and we are adding a few white birch trees for contrast. Come by and visit our new Zen-like garden. 🏡

## Tower Chapel Tulip Exhibition Friday, March 30, through Sunday, April 1

We’re delighted to invite you to our second annual Tulip Exhibition in the Tower Chapel, which will showcase spectacular floral arrangements that feature tulips and are created by Bay Area florists, garden clubs, and college floral design classes.

Visit anytime between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. during the three-day event and learn where the tulip originated (not Holland!). Admission to the cemetery and the exhibition is free; no reservations or tickets are required. Simply stop by and appreciate the beautiful artistry created by local enthusiasts and professionals. There will be a daily floral arrangement demonstration. 🏡



## Mountain View’s Tulip Extravaganza

Every year, Mountain View celebrates spring with thousands of tulips in bloom. This year our plantings include Red Impression tulips, Golden Parade tulips, and several other varieties. At the trellis, we added daffodils. Imported directly from Holland, our tulips are delivered in December and planted around New Year’s Day—later than many gardeners because our goal is to mature them closer to Easter.

Near our entrance, our tulip beds are flanked by a Japanese Boxwood (*Buxus microphylla japonica*, “Green Beauty”) hedge and lawn and can easily be enjoyed via the pedestrian walk that circles the fountain. Framing the walk are blossoming Carolina cherry trees (*Prunus caroliniana*). 🏡

*Enjoy magnificent floral arrangements that feature various varieties of tulips during our second annual Tower Chapel Tulip Exhibition. Then, take some time to stroll among the thousands of tulips in bloom outside.*

## Free Docent Tours Every Second Saturday

Want to learn more about the legendary leaders of industry, government, education, and art at Mountain View Cemetery? Join one of our free docent tours, which begin at 10 a.m. the second Saturday of every month (except December). No RSVP is necessary; simply meet in front of the administrative office and wear comfortable walking shoes. Each tour lasts approximately two hours. For more information or to arrange a special group tour (including wheelchair-accessible tours), contact the cemetery office at 510.658.2588. 🏡

## Domingo Ghirardelli (1817–1894)

Founder of Ghirardelli Chocolate Company

By Barbara Smith, Mountain View Cemetery Docent

Domingo Ghirardelli was born Domenico Ghirardelli in Rapallo, Italy, and as a young man was a follower of Garibaldi in his struggle for the unification of Italy. When Garibaldi was exiled in 1836, he fled to South America; the next year Domenico followed, first to Montevideo, Uruguay, where Garibaldi made his headquarters, and later to Lima, Peru. It was there that Ghirardelli's first wife, Bettina, died and he married his second wife, Carmen, who became the mother of a large brood of Ghirardelli children. He was learning Spanish at the time and thought it appropriate to take a Spanish name, so Domenico became Domingo. It was in Lima that Domingo met James



*Domingo Ghirardelli had dreams of striking it rich in the California Gold Rush, but didn't succeed at mining. Domingo instead headed his highly successful company until 1892, at which time he turned the management over to his three sons.*

**Lick wrote Ghirardelli an enthusiastic letter suggesting he follow him north to San Francisco and bring more of his chocolates, as Lick had promptly sold all 600 pounds!**

the discovery of gold, he planned carefully what he should take with him. Lick arrived in San Francisco January 11, 1848, bringing with him his workbench, his tools, nearly \$30,000 in gold coins, and 600 pounds of Ghirardelli's chocolate. Lick wrote Ghirardelli an enthusiastic letter suggesting he follow him north to San Francisco and bring more of his chocolates, as Lick had promptly sold all 600 pounds!

In February 1849, Ghirardelli arrived in San Francisco, then headed for the Gold Country where, for a time, he sold supplies to the miners—then opened a tent-store in Stockton as a distribution center for the goods he had shipped from San Francisco. He soon acquired several businesses in Stockton and San Francisco, and in 1852 established his chocolate company on Jackson Street. Ghirardelli promptly became involved in the community, served on the Vigilance Committee of 1856, and was one of the founders of the Italian Benevolent Association.

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*Continued on the next panel*



Visitors may leave gravesite decorations seven days before and after New Year's Day, Ching Ming, Easter, Mother's Day, and Father's Day—and from seven days before Christmas through January 10. Flags may be placed seven days before and after Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Veterans' Day.

By 1869 the Ghirardellis had moved to Oakland, where Domingo took pride in his garden filled with flowers, fruit trees, and vegetables.

Dating back to the days when Garibaldi and the Pope were on opposing sides on the question of the unification of Italy, Domingo's Catholicism had been a little shaky. In 1879, an event occurred that destroyed any attachment he might still have had to his church. His teenage granddaughter, Aurelia, who had lived



*The Ghirardelli Chocolate Company, incorporated in 1852, is a manufacturer of premium chocolate products. Ghirardelli Square in San Francisco is an official city landmark and has National Historic Register status.*

with her grandparents since the death of her mother Virginia, became gravely ill and the priest was called to administer the last rites. There are two stories in the family as to why the priest refused to come. One says that it was raining; the other says that the priest felt Domingo had not given the church enough financial support. Whatever the reason, the girl died without receiving the last rites. Her deeply religious grandmother, Carmen, was devastated, and Domingo was furious. He forbade the members of his family to ever enter a Catholic church again, or to be ministered to by a priest. Aurelia was buried in the Ghirardelli family vault in St. Mary's, adjacent to Mountain View, as was Carmen when she died in 1887.

Domingo had a plan, however, to right the wrong he felt had been done to his family. First, he had a handsome white marble mausoleum built at Mountain View with the Masonic emblem over the door—not considered appropriate for a Catholic. Around 1890 when all was completed, Domingo and his sons took a wagon to St. Mary's in the dark of night, removed the four Ghirardelli bodies from the family vault, transported them to Mountain View, and reinterred them in the new mausoleum. Thus, Domingo had the last word.

Domingo Ghirardelli died in his birthplace, Rapallo, Italy, during an 1894 visit there. His body was returned for interment in his white marble mausoleum in Plot 27, Lot 40, at Mountain View. 🙏



*You can visit Ghirardelli's white marble mausoleum in Plot 27, Lot 40.*



A free map showing plots, listing points of interest, and identifying graves of notable persons is available at the cemetery office or online at [www.mountainviewcemetery.org](http://www.mountainviewcemetery.org).

## Colonel John Coffee "Jack" Hays (1817–1883)

*One of the greatest of all of the Texas Rangers*

By Barbara Smith, Mountain View Cemetery Docent

Tennessee native Jack Hays was orphaned at 15 and struck out on his own in 1832. Around 1837, after working for a time as a surveyor in Mississippi, he headed for Texas at the age of 20 and volunteered as a Texas Ranger to fight for independence from Mexico.

Hays proved to be an able leader of men, rising to the rank of colonel serving under Zachary Taylor and Winfield Scott and celebrated in legend and history as one of the greatest of all of the Texas Rangers. Hays County in Texas bears his name.

In June 1849, he left Texas to lead an expedition along the Gila River in an attempt to find a practical southern route to California. He arrived in San Francisco in 1850 at the age of 33 with the intention of heading for the gold fields. However, when San Franciscans learned they had a Texas Ranger in their midst, they quickly persuaded Hays to become their first sheriff. All this was during the vigilante period of 1850–1851, a chaotic time for a lawman.

In his role as an officer of the court, Hays met Vicente Peralta, with whom he and four associates negotiated the acquisition of considerable property in the Oakland portion of the Rancho San Antonio.

Although Hays was elected to a second term as sheriff of San Francisco, he left the job in 1853 to fill the federal post of Surveyor General for California during the presidency of Franklin Pierce. During his trip to Washington for Pierce's inauguration, Hays, the war hero, was treated as a major national celebrity.

His estate in lower Montclair was called "Fernwood" and was described as "one of the most beautiful of the State." Hays arranged for the grading and construction of a road from Oakland to his property, known at the time as Hays Canyon Road—and now as Moraga Avenue.

He devoted much of the rest of his life to acquiring and developing property in Berkeley, Oakland, Alameda, and what was to become Piedmont. When Jack Hays died at his home on April 21, 1883, newspapers were filled with accounts of his passing. The funeral procession wound its way out Broadway as crowds lined the streets all the way to Mountain View Cemetery. Fernwood was destroyed by fire in 1899, but a stone foundation along Thornhill Drive and Mountain Boulevard remains today as a reminder of the once-great estate. 🙏



*Hays was a Texas Ranger captain and army military officer who served in several conflicts, including the Mexican War. (Photograph by Matthew Brady.)*



*This plaque is displayed where Hays is interred in Plot 2, Lot 15, at Mountain View Cemetery.*

## The Ryer Monument

By Gaye Lenaban, Mountain View Cemetery Docent

The tallest and most impressive monument on the south side of Mountain View Cemetery is that of Dr. Washington M. Ryer (located in Plot 9, Lots 33–40). Massive chunks of granite bearing a bronze portrait of Ryer are topped with a larger-than-life statue of a woman gazing south over the city of Oakland. She is wrapped in draperies and is carrying a book in her right hand; a closed book generally represents a life ended. No details about the creation or placement of the monument are known, but it must have taken many horses and men to place it over Ryer’s grave.



The Ryer monument is the tallest and most impressive monument on the south side of the cemetery.

Born in New York in 1821, Ryer studied medicine and joined General Winfield Scott’s Mexican campaign as an assistant surgeon. Impressed with the opportunities to be found in California, he returned there after his army service and opened a medical practice in Stockton. This lucrative practice allowed him to invest in real estate and retire in 1861 at the age of 40. In 1860, Dr. Ryer married Mary Fletcher of Boston, and they had one child—Fletcher F. Ryer.

In 1856 the California Assembly commissioned the respected Dr. Ryer to investigate the operations of the Stockton State Hospital for the Insane. Ryer later testified that the hospital administration, headed by a Dr. Langdon, was incompetent. Dr. Langdon was heard to say, “He [Ryer] is going to stick his nose into other people’s business once too often.” One dark evening shortly thereafter, Ryer was accosted on the street and beaten with fists and pistol butts by Drs. Langdon and Hunter. Ryer warned the two that he was going to arm himself and hunt down Langdon. The news that one doctor was hunting for the other raced through the pioneer town. One of Ryer’s friends, versed in the Deep South dueling culture, suggested they duel to settle the matter—even though the “bloody code” of dueling had been outlawed in California.

Ryer dutifully followed the required steps of written challenge, choice of seconds, and weapons (Langdon provided “hair trigger” dueling pistols), and the date for the duel was set. On a foggy morning, the two met by the San Joaquin River bank. Before the duel could commence, the sheriff appeared and put a stop to the proceedings. A few days later, two skiffs filled with “duck hunters” slipped over to the beach of Rough and Ready Island on a clear afternoon. At the first signal, Ryer’s hair trigger fired into the ground. Then Langdon’s gun cracked and the bullet whistled past Ryer’s ear. A second set of bullets did the same. “Once more,” said Ryer. “Three shots for a blow—that’s the code, isn’t it?” Ryer’s third bullet struck Langdon in the leg, shattering his knee before Langdon could squeeze off his own shot. Dr. Langdon died a cripple in 1880.

Washington Ryer lived until 1892, a noted physician and pillar of the community. Ryer Island in the Sacramento River delta is named in his honor. 📖

References:

Sketches of Leading Representative Men of San Francisco, 1875.  
Oakland Post-Enquirer, January 1926.

## New Entryway Gates Planned

If you’ve visited the cemetery during the past two years, it’s been difficult not to notice the temporary construction gates at the cemetery entrance. We are pleased to announce that new gates are on the way!



Our new entryway gates will feature a soft floral pattern.

The bronze, picket-style gates that graced the cemetery entrance for the past several decades are being retired. These gates were a gift from the Craig family to visitors of the cemetery, and we are grateful for the many years of good service they provided. Unfortunately, metal fatigue coupled with their bifold design presented a safety hazard. Design Site in Berkeley in tandem with Kurt Smith, proprietor of HandCrafted Metals Inc., have teamed up to design and build new gates. The design will feature a soft, floral pattern that expresses the harmonious crossroads of landscape and heritage that are Mountain View Cemetery. We expect to complete this project by the end of this year. 📖

## New Walkway Design

Managing change at Mountain View Cemetery is a process. In our Fall 2006 newsletter, we expressed hope that a new style of path construction, using a grid of plastic rings to minimize erosion, would be a useful, long-term walkway improvement strategy for the cemetery. We were wrong. After field testing the product, we discovered that the rings could not withstand the operation of our maintenance equipment. But, we liked the color and feel of the pebbles much more than the old concrete, and they have much better potential for drainage. So, we are testing an alternate method of installation. You can see these new walks in three older sections of the cemetery, and we imagine you will enjoy the color, feel, and sound created when strolling across these new walks. We will continue to gauge the success of this new walkway design during the coming months. 📖



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Your donations are vital to maintaining and improving the Mountain View Cemetery grounds. To make your tax-deductible contribution, please complete and return the donation form printed at the end of this newsletter. If you have a favorite project, you can earmark your donation to be used for it. All of us at Mountain View, including our families and visitors, thank you for your support. 📖

**YES**, I’d like to make a tax-deductible donation to the Friends of Mountain View Cemetery to help restore, preserve, and enhance the beauty of the Mountain View Cemetery grounds.

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Please accept my donation in the amount of:

\$10  \$50  \$100  \$250  \$500  \$\_\_\_\_\_

Please use my donation for (check one):

- Main Mausoleum Stained Glass Restoration Fund
- Italian Cypress Tree Fund  Civil War Plot Restoration Fund
- Preservation and Restoration Fund  Wherever my donation is needed most

Form of payment (check one):

Check enclosed (please make your check payable to Friends of Mountain View Cemetery)

Credit card:  Visa®  MasterCard®

Card no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. date: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Tax-deductible donations may be mailed to:



5000 Piedmont Avenue • Oakland, CA 94611

Thanks to Our Contributors

Our special thanks to those who have recently contributed \$50 or more to support our ongoing preservation and restoration efforts: P. J. Connolly • William W. Foskett • Harold Gow • John Holland • Paul D. Lane • Dr. Susan L. Lindsay • Tim Meese • O. Ying Wong

The Mountain View Cemetery Association, established in 1863 by citizens of the East Bay, is a non-sectarian, community nonprofit corporation dedicated to providing comfort to families in a setting of great beauty. We are a private organization and receive no public funding. While most areas of the cemetery grounds are maintained through an endowment fund, there remain a number of significant projects that are important to the preservation and restoration of this extraordinary cemetery. It is through your generous, tax-deductible support that we can continue completing this historically critical work.

Phone: 510.658.2588 • Fax: 510.652.2726 • www.mountainviewcemetery.org

Grounds open: 7 a.m.–sunset daily (entrance gates close a half hour before sunset)

Office hours: Weekdays 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m., weekends and holidays 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Mausoleum hours: Weekdays 8 a.m.–4 p.m., weekends and holidays 9 a.m.–4 p.m.

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