

## Spotlight on Headstones:

### Andrew J. Monroe and William Staiger: Pioneer Monument Makers of Salem



*The polished grey granite stacked monument in raised plot 618 commemorates Andrew J. Monroe (1832-1876) and his wife, Sophia Staiger Monroe (1842-1917). Monroe was a pioneer stonecutter in the Valley.*

Salem Pioneer Cemetery contains an untold number of headstones produced by a Salem marble works founded by one of the pioneer dealers in monuments in the mid-Willamette Valley. Moreover, the cemetery contains the graves of the early monument-maker A. J. Monroe, his wife, Sophia Staiger Monroe, and Sophia's brother, William Staiger, who continued the business after Monroe's death.

Andrew J. Monroe's first appearance in the ads of newspapers and business directories was as Monroe & Jeffries, Salem proprietors of the Pacific Marble Company, in 1864. The partners were dealers in "California, Vermont, and Italian marbles, monuments, obelisks, and tomb-, head-, and foot-stones," and also marble furniture such as mantelpieces. The next year, Monroe was advertising solely under his own name. In July of 1866, he was reported to have left the capital city, bound for his former home in Iowa, but by August he had returned. The "Tomb Stone Man," reported the *Weekly Oregon Statesman*, had acquired a fine lot of Italian marble at a bargain price during the layover in San Francisco and was resuming his business in Salem.



*The grey granite primary monument in plot 483 marks the burial lots of William H. Staiger (1844-1924) and his family. Staiger was successor to the Salem enterprise founded by A. J. Monroe in the 1860s.*

It was at about this time that members of the Staiger family who were associated with the Christian communal colony of German-speakers at Aurora, Oregon, moved to Salem. Brothers William and Jonathan were shoe-makers and stone cutters and William joined Monroe's business. Monroe married William's sister, Sophia, in 1867. In 1873, Monroe served a term as Salem mayor. By 1874, the marble works "near Reed's Opera House" at the corner of Court and Liberty Streets was advertised as Monroe & Staiger. When, in 1876, Andrew Monroe died at the age of forty-four, William Staiger continued the business, carrying on under his own name until selling out about 1909. To that time, no other marble works in the city had been as enduring as the one begun by Monroe and sustained as Staiger Marble & Granite Works. See [salempioneercemetery.org](http://salempioneercemetery.org) for biographical information on those interred in the Monroe and Staiger family plots, 618 and 483.

### Endowment Fund Update

Salem Pioneer Cemetery's Endowed Fund was established within The Salem Foundation Charitable Trust in 1999 for long term care and protection of the cemetery. In 2008, the fund's earning power was boosted by \$24,905 from seventy individual contributors. The year's total donations included a generous \$20,000 bequest from the estate of Luella M. Charlton.

To help the City toward an enhanced level of maintenance and to accomplish betterment work that could not be undertaken otherwise, the ongoing goal is to build the endowment to \$500,000. In the current market, the value of the fund stands at \$442,043. Proceeds from the endowment provided the City with supplemental funds in the amount of \$13,391 in 2008. Endowment funds typically are used for special cemetery-wide projects and major monument repairs and stabilization.



*Ken Beerbower of the Salem Parks Operations Division staff keeps the cemetery mutt mitt dispenser filled as part of his regular debris collection routine.*

### City Parks Operations Personnel are the Key to Coordinated Upkeep

In the years following World War II, Chemeketa Lodge No. 1, Independent Order of Odd Fellows sought help from Salem and Marion County in maintaining its historic 16-acre burial ground now known as Salem Pioneer Cemetery. In time, the City assumed full responsibility. When, on Feb. 3, 1986, the cemetery was formally deeded to the City, the transfer of stewardship was complete. The City coordinates work crews, contractors, and volunteers.

## American Legion Post 136 Upholds Tradition of Remembrance



The cemetery benefits from the regular participation of volunteer groups such as the Boy Scouts. Last March, Matthew Kleinman, Isaac Grigg, and Everett Davis of Troop 77 collected prunings for the debris pile.



Mark Fields applied adhesive compound to rejoin a stacked monument in the Kurtz family plot in May while Fred Klatz observed the approved technique.

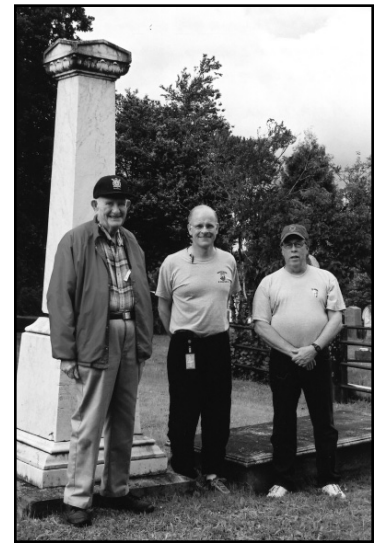


Last August, Jeff Hilts, proprietor of a Salem-based marker setting service, helped the Friends raise and reset the sinking headstone of Harvey Gordon. Hilts drilled and cleared the base keyway for added depth.



Dale Palmquist gave the Harvey Gordon headstone base a final check before mortaring its keyway newly cleared to a depth of four inches. The extra depth was appropriate for the height and weight of the stone.

Memorial Day observances honoring the nation's military veterans in the former Odd Fellows Rural Cemetery (Salem Pioneer) and neighboring City View Cemetery continue a long tradition, one that was established soon after a national day of remembrance was declared after the Civil War. By the 1880s, carriages and marching bands accompanied the Independent Order of Odd Fellows and other fraternal orders from formation places downtown to the adjoining cemeteries. The parades passed through a gate on Commercial Street and proceeded up the central drive to the Circle of the Grand Army of the Republic in City View Cemetery, where ceremonies and speeches were held.



Members of American Legion Post 136 gathered at the cemetery on Memorial Day in May to supervise flag ceremonies honoring U. S. service veterans. Left to right, Richard Arenz, Dwight Morse, and Art Cummins paused at the grave monument of Governor John Pollard Gaines, a veteran of the War of 1812.

Today, visitors are heartened to see U. S. flags lining Salem Pioneer Cemetery's central drive during the Memorial Day weekend. The flags are displayed by custom of American Legion Post 136.

To gain greater permanence, last October, Post 136 improved the sub-surface receptacles which hold the flag staffs in place. Legion members also sponsor placement of memorial flags at the graves of servicemen and women throughout the cemetery.



Junior R.O.T.C. cadets from North Salem High School placed flags at the graves of American military veterans throughout the cemetery on Memorial Day. L. to R, front: Candice Botkin, Haim Estrada, Cody Harper. Back row: Travis Madrigal, Kyle Murphy, and Dustin Muravez with director Col. Dwight Morse.



Friends of Pioneer Cemetery  
 The Salem Foundation, Pioneer Trust Bank, N A  
 PO Box 2305  
 Salem OR 97308

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## About this Mailing

Friends of Pioneer Cemetery provides this Annual Report for your information in association with the Salem Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Services. If you wish to contribute to the Salem Pioneer Cemetery Fund, make additions or corrections to the mailing list, or have your name removed from the mailing list, a return envelope is provided within.

## Volunteers Make Headway in Stone Repairs, Grooming Projects

Once monthly, from March through October, Friends of Pioneer Cemetery field volunteers gather for Saturday morning sessions aimed at improving the cemetery one work area at a time. Volunteers from throughout the community help reset fallen markers, prune heritage roses and ornamental plants, remove moss and vines, collect debris, and carry out other improvements. Those participating in the work parties enjoy spending productive hours in an outdoor setting where they can apply their skills, learn conservation techniques, and encounter the stories of Salem area pioneers.

Leaders of the field volunteers, Dale Palmquist and Mark Fields, were grateful for the valuable help of twenty-nine workers. The following were members of the 2008 volunteer field crew.

Suzanne Apodaca and daughters Erin and Amie  
 Debbie and Steve Bartol  
 Jason Caldwell  
 Gwen Carr  
 Susan Dancer  
 Art Fogarty  
 Arel Grimshaw and son Andrew  
 Marjorie Jordan  
 Fred Klatz  
 Moya McKeehan  
 Kathy Moreland  
 Jan Norlund and children Alec and Emma  
 Harold Otto  
 Elisabeth Potter  
 Willie Richardson  
 Penny and Jose Ruiz  
 Grant Rutherford  
 April Schmidt and daughter Zoe  
 Karen Sewell  
 Claudine Shaw  
 John Turner  
 Bill and Linda Warren  
 Benny Williams and grandson Kylan Carter

Field volunteer crews were supported in their work by five university student and local youth groups offering community service, as follows:

**Boy Scouts of America, Troop 77**, Second Ward, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, nine Scouts  
**Alpha Chi Omega Sorority**, Willamette University, thirty-eight women  
**Pey-Ko-Nay Club of Camp Fire U.S.A.**, six members  
**Brownie Troop 231**, four Brownies  
**Morningside United Methodist Church Youth Group**, ten members



*Brownie Troop 231, working for a unit badge on the theme "Listening to the Past," gathered in September with their leaders at the gravesite of Tabitha Brown, beloved educator and Oregon pioneer mother symbol.*

Volunteers are always needed and welcome. For schedule information, contact Tibby Larson, Volunteer Coordinator, Salem Parks Operations Division, [tal arson@cityofsalem.net](mailto:tal arson@cityofsalem.net) 503-589-2197.