

## From the President's Desk



Robert A. Gordon Jr.

### Why don't we begin with Gratitude...?

As I begin to pen this letter as my inaugural contribution to the Cypress Heritage Foundation, I am once again touched by the sacred trust that has been placed with me as the President and Chief Executive Officer of Cypress Lawn Cemetery Association and The Heritage Foundation. I am humbled by the opportunity before me and committed to continue the mission set forth by so many forward thinking and thoughtful leaders that have served before.

*Continued on page 7*

## CYPRESS LAWN: A NOBLE ACHIEVEMENT

In the Fall issue of the Heritage Foundation Newsletter, we reviewed the dedication of Pioneer Mound at Cypress Lawn in 1954, a place where some 35,000 remains from San Francisco's Laurel Cemetery were officially reinterred on our West Campus. I remarked that the transition from Laurel Cemetery to Cypress Lawn was logical. Both were designed to be classic "rural" or garden cemeteries, part of a nineteenth-century movement to transform urban burial places from bleak and rundown enterprises to beautiful park-like settings that would be a place for the living as well as the dead.

Established in 1854, originally called Lone Mountain Cemetery, Laurel Hill was designed to be a grand garden cemetery. It was populated by the leading citizens of the day and enjoyed by the urban public as a welcoming and elegant destination in a somewhat dismal-looking city at the time that boasted few trees or inviting open spaces. Golden Gate Park was not seriously developed until the 1880s. Less than forty years after the establishment of Laurel Hill, wealthy financier and industrialist Hamden Holmes Noble took a carriage ride through the cemetery and lamented its deterioration. He was inspired to invest in a cemetery in Colma, outside cemetery-hostile San Francisco, where the Catholic Church and Jewish congregations had already bought property for that purpose.



Hamden Holmes Noble

*Continued on page 6*

## CALENDAR

November 2017 – February 2018

### HERITAGE SUNDAY LECTURE

November 5, 2pm

WORLD WAR ZERO — *Prelude to Armageddon*  
Crosby-N. Gray, 2 Park Blvd., Burlingame  
Professor Michael Svanevik



### CYPRESS LAWN BOOK CLUB

November 16, 11:00am

*Cool Grey City Of Love*  
Reception Room, Cypress Lawn  
Author: Gary Kamiya



### HERITAGE SUNDAY LECTURE

December 3, 2pm

GEORGIE'S PETS  
*The Children of Britain's King George V*  
Crosby-N. Gray, 2 Park Blvd., Burlingame  
Professor Michael Svanevik



### 11<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL

### HOLIDAY REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

December 6, 2:00 pm

Tiffany Memorial Chapel at Cypress Lawn Cemetery, 1370 El Camino Real, Colma

*Continued on page 2*

*All Events Are Free  
Light Refreshments Served*



View of East Campus from Sun Terrace

CALENDAR *Continued from page 1*

HERITAGE SUNDAY LECTURE

January 7, 2 pm

DOUGLAS MacARTHUR—*The Last Centurion*  
Crosby N Gray, 2 Park Blvd., Burlingame  
Professor Michael Svanevik-



CYPRESS LAWN BOOK CLUB

January 18, 11:00 am\*\*



SUNDAY AFTERNOON LECTURE

January 21, 2pm\*

EVEN THE TOAST MATTERED —  
*A Perfectionist Who Built Germany's  
Luxurious Passenger Fleet*  
Professor Michael Svanevik



HERITAGE SUNDAY LECTURE

February 4, 2pm

BONANZA INN —  
*San Francisco's Grandest Caravansary*  
Crosby-N. Gray, 2 Park Blvd., Burlingame  
Professor Michael Svanevik-



CYPRESS LAWN BOOK CLUB

February 15, 11:00\*\*



SATURDAY WALKING TOUR

February 17, 1:30\*

AIN'T WE GOT ELEGANCE —  
*Democratic Nobility Resting at Cypress Lawn:  
A Walking Lecture*  
Professor Michael Svanevik



SUNDAY AFTERNOON LECTURE

February 18, 2pm\*\*

LEVI STRAUSS:  
*The Man Who Gave Blue Jeans to the World*  
Author Lynn Downey/Book signing

EVENT LOCATIONS:

\*Meet at green tent, East Side,  
near granite Entry Arch

\*\*Reception Room, Cypress Lawn

All Events Are Free • Light Refreshments

## Cypress Lawn Endowment Care At Work: Restoration of Lakeside Columbarium



### Cypress Lawn Cemetery Association

Cypress Lawn is a 501 (c)(13) not for profit corporation established in 1892 by a group of prominent and responsible citizens, headed by Hamden Noble, determined to provide a decent cemetery for all creeds and races as well as "an attractive and pleasing place for meditation of the living." Today, over a hundred years later, Cypress Lawn stands as a testament to the vision of these men when they proclaimed, "... in the fullness of time, the cemetery... will form an extensive park, rich in foliage, flowers, mausoleums, statuary and other works of art ... a handsome gift to posterity."



SUPPORT CYPRESS LAWN  
& BECOME A MEMBER

Cypress Lawn Cemetery Association  
cordially invites you and your family for a special evening at our

11th Annual  
*Holiday Remembrance Service*  
Wednesday, December 6, 2017  
2 pm at the Tiffany Chapel

1370 El Camino Real, Colma, California 94014

If you would like to have a picture of a loved one placed in a specialized Christmas ornament, please email your loved one's name with a photograph that will fit into a standard-sized ornament to [photo@cypresslawn.com](mailto:photo@cypresslawn.com) or drop off the photograph to be scanned no later than November 30, 2017.

R.S.V.P no later than November 30, 2017 by calling the  
Cemetery Events line at (650) 550-8884  
with the total number of people  
who will be attending.







## 2017 Annual Appeal



**T**his is the time of year when we ask those who have enjoyed our educational and cultural programs, Heritage Foundation members, the many who have loved ones resting at Cypress Lawn, and all who cherish and wish to sustain this unique historical landmark for the next generation to give what you can to promote a legacy that belongs to you and the entire Bay Area community.

Your gifts go to preserve the architectural and horticultural beauty of Cypress Lawn as well as underwriting our free community outreach programs, which have significantly expanded recently.

Last year's response was generous and heartwarming, and we thank you. Many will receive our annual appeal in the mail that allows you give by post or online.

You may view the enhanced rewards for this year's donations and contribute now by going to the Cypress Lawn Heritage Foundation Website ([cypresslawnheritagefoundation.com](http://cypresslawnheritagefoundation.com)) and clicking on the SUPPORT CYPRESS LAWN & BECOME A MEMBER icon in the upper left hand corner.



There you will see the "Thank you" rewards for giving at all levels, and you have the convenience of online donation or traditional mail. ❖

*Do your giving while you're living. Then you'll be knowing where it's going.*

*-Ann Landers*

# Past Events

## Twilight Photo Seminar by Doug Keister

Author of 44 books, called the “finest photographer of cemetery art in America.” / September 17



## Second Annual Night Tour of Cypress Lawn

Docent: Terry Hamburg / September 23



## Annual Antiques Roadshow Appraisal Event

On October 15th sixty-eight items were evaluated in front of an enthusiastic group of collectors.

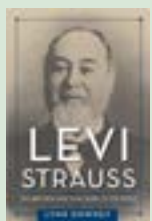
The next Appraisal Event is October 21, 2018.



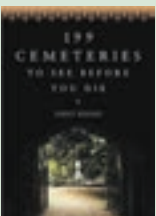
# Upcoming Events

## An Exciting Cypress Lawn Tour & Lecture Schedule

### *Some Highlights in 2018*



**FEBRUARY 18**  
Lecture & Signing



**SEPTEMBER 16**  
Lecture & Signing

- JAN 28** *A Century of Looking Back: San Francisco Through Magic Lantern Slides*  
Ron Ross, President of the San Francisco History Association
- APRIL 15** *Bay Area Japanese Americans in the 1940s: The Internment Experience & After* / Steve Okamoto
- JUNE 17** *San Francisco Golden Gate International Exposition: 1939-1940*  
Anne Schnobelen, Vice President of the Treasure Island Museum Association
- JULY 21** *Splendor in the Glass Walking Tour: Stained Glass in the Mausoleum* / Terry Hamburg
- AUG 19** *Book signing: The True Story of the Titanic & its Bay Area Connection* / Sheryl Rincol
- OCT 21** *Annual Antiques Appraisal Event* / Terry Hamburg
- OCT 27** *Annual Cypress Lawn Nighttime Walking Tour* / Terry Hamburg

**Michael Svanevik will give 4 “SUNDAY AT CYPRESS LAWN” LECTURES and 4 WALKING TOURS**

Go the Cypress Lawn Heritage Foundation website [cypresslawnheritagefoundation.org](http://cypresslawnheritagefoundation.org) for a downloadable 2018 walking tour and lecture schedule



## Cypress Lawn Denizen Packed A Powerful Punch Beware of this Holiday Cheer!

Widely served during the Gold Rush years and long thereafter, Pisco Punch was so potent that one writer of the day remarked that "it tastes like lemonade but comes back with the kick of a roped steer." Another said "it makes a gnat fight an elephant."

Pisco is a late 16th century brandy made from Peruvian grapes and was available in the sleepy village of Yerba Buena — later renamed San Francisco— since the 1830s when the drink arrived via ship along with rawhide and tallow traders. Pisco was the first distilled spirit made in the new world. As there were no glass bottles in the 16th century, the brandy was shipped in ceramic (clay) containers sealed with beeswax.

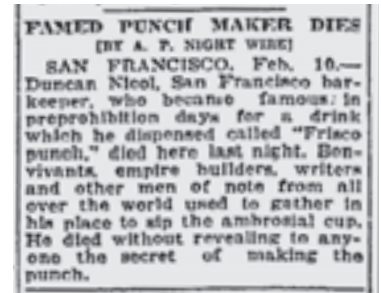
When the Bank Exchange & Billiard Saloon opened its San Francisco doors in 1853 it served Pisco among several other liquors. Various punches were made using Pisco at the Bank Exchange over a long succession of proprietors. The last owner, Duncan Nicol, took over in 1893 and stayed on until the establishment closed its doors permanently in 1919 because of Prohibition. The mixologist is at rest at Cypress Lawn.

Nicol invented a Pisco Punch that was the most popular and infamous re-invention of the drink. He took the recipe to the crypt. His was so potent that a patron was required to walk around the block and enter as a new customer before being served a third one. Assuming, of course, he could negotiate the walk and return.

Pisco Punch gained fame worldwide thanks to pieces written by travelers, including Mark Twain and Harold Ross (founder of New Yorker Magazine). In Rudyard Kipling's 1889 epic *From Sea to Sea*, he immortalized Pisco Punch as being "compounded of the shavings of cherub's wings, the glory of a tropical dawn, the red clouds of sunset and the fragments of lost epics by dead masters."

The drink has undergone resurgence in recent years. Read more about it.

[www.zagat.com/b/san-francisco/8-pisco-punches-to-drink-in-the-sf-bay-area](http://www.zagat.com/b/san-francisco/8-pisco-punches-to-drink-in-the-sf-bay-area)



### The Bank Exchange



(far left)  
The interior of the Bank of Exchange Saloon, where Pisco Punch was standard drink until Prohibition. The proprietor, Duncan Nicol, is third from the left.

Photo Courtesy of the Transamerica Corporation

(left)  
Duncan Nicol, Proprietor of the Bank Exchange



### CYPRESS LAWN TRIVIA QUESTION: Who Am I?

Like many legendary Americans, I was raised in a log cabin. I grew up before public education was widely accessible in Missouri, so my education was less than formal. My net worth at the time of my death in 1891 was \$19 million, which is the equivalent of at least a half a billion dollars today. Some regarded me as semi-literate. No one regarded me as semi-rich.

I traveled to California by wagon train in 1850 as a member of a party of 16. After I arrived, it took a while but I made a small fortune in the mining business.

I returned to Missouri in 1860 in order to care for my ailing mother. During this time, I became reacquainted with a younger neighbor, a girl of 18, 22 years my junior, which did not stop us from marriage. We trekked back to California.

Soon, I was making more money in the mining business than I could count. Although I became a U.S. Senator from California, my wife and only child are more famous than me.



Answer on page 7



## CYPRESS LAWN: A NOBLE ACHIEVEMENT

*Continued from page 1*

In a sense, the establishment of Cypress Lawn was the re-invention and upgrading of the original Laurel Hill, but with one critical difference: Noble insisted on establishing a permanent endowment fund for his new project. Endowing a cemetery is a relatively modern idea. It typically involves charging a nominal one-time fee to all clients at the point of land or space purchases. These monies go into a special trust fund governed by state law which mandates that the principal cannot be spent, and the interest earned must go into maintenance and restoration. Cypress Lawn has the largest endowment fund in Northern California. Such a fund insures that Cypress Lawn remains in pristine condition “in perpetuity.” Today there are 41 full time maintenance people who help keep the grounds looking beautiful. We have restoration experts on call.

Laurel Hill did not have an endowment. After all, it was the home of mayors, governors, senators, and wealthy businessmen who would presumably set up their own family endowments. Some did, but there were about 37,000 in that cemetery when San Francisco ordered all burials to stop in 1901, and many could not afford the cost, especially over the long run. In the nineteenth century, the private San Francisco cemeteries showed varying and sometimes serious signs of deterioration, a fact which helped to fuel the movement to restrict and eventually evict the dead from San Francisco. Endowments might have saved the situation. That is, ultimately, what an endowment is all about. Even if all the available land for ground burials, columbariums and mausoleums is used, a solid endowment can insure the upkeep of a cemetery. In the case of Cypress Lawn, it is unlikely that all of the currently existing or procurable space will be



*Noble chapel, built in 1893, was carefully restored to its original condition in 2015.*

exhausted for the foreseeable future, but if that day should ever arrive, our endowment guarantees that our children and grandchildren and their grandchildren will visit a place that looks like it did as its founding, and today.

Hamden Noble engaged in a crash course in cemetery building by traveling back to the East coast to visit the established garden cemeteries for inspiration and advice. “I knew nothing about the business,” he noted years later, “and therefore had no false ideas to overcome.”

The East Campus was opened first. Hundreds of hand-picked trees were planted on the grounds. Today, each tree at Cypress Lawn is tagged and extensively catalogued, and many of these date back to the founding. Noble designed a broad main avenue that could accommodate large carriages going in both directions that was graded to wind gracefully up to a peak. The grounds were planted in lush green lawn accented with pockets of shrubbery and ornamental trees. In the

1920s, he excavated five lakes that today consist of two large lakes. The famous birds of Cypress Lawn go back to its founding. Noble was so enamored of the brown-winged turbit pigeon he found back East that he imported a flock from Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Massachusetts. That flock soon numbered around 1500, which he fed daily. Today, Cypress Lawn is host to a menagerie of feathered friends, including mud hens, ducks, seagulls, geese, and ravens. In 1941, the state Fish and Game Department authorized stocking the lakes with 500 rainbow trout and German carp. Many adults fondly recall visiting this bird sanctuary and beautiful park as children.

Our commitment is to preserve these grounds and the incomparable art and architecture that grace it. We know that we can keep our promise that Cypress Lawn will remain as it is “in perpetuity.”

*Terry Hamburg, Cypress Lawn Heritage Foundation*



*First Crematory in Northern California*



*First Columbarium at Cypress Lawn was built in 1893 and is still standing*



*El Descanso – Southern Pacific's funeral car in front of the Cypress Lawn granite entry gate, circa 1900*



*Old Cypress Lawn Lake with footbridge*



*Noble feeding his loyal flocks*

## Follow Us!

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## From the President's Desk *continued from page 1*

I would be remiss if I didn't extend my respect and gratitude to the Board of Directors, who's wisdom, support and leadership guide the Organizations forward. My gratitude and appreciation also extends to Kenneth E. Varner, our past President and CEO for selecting me to carry the torch forward. Kenneth is a very good man, and for Cypress Lawn, through leadership, creativity and tenacity, has been a great steward of our Association and Foundation. His vision and ability to execute on that vision is apparent in every area of our beautiful historic treasure we call Cypress Lawn Cemetery. Ken, I will always be in your debt for this opportunity and will do all in my power to ensure the vision continues.

To the Employees of Cypress Lawn and Its Affiliated Organizations, the choice to move to the Bay Area did not come without many sleepless nights. We left our home, my position with the largest funeral company in North America, and our family members, neighbors and friends. The position to serve as your President was just such a good fit for us. The role is so unique, and challenging. In the first few months, you the Cypress team has welcomed us and been overwhelmingly supportive. I am grateful for all of you and the opportunity to join the Cypress Family.

Now to the future. The greatest gift in life is the opportunity to give back. The Cypress Lawn Heritage Foundation is dedicated to that end via education and preservation for the benefit of the community. As we enter the next fiscal year, I want to thank the volunteers, foundation members, and team members for their continued tireless efforts to move forward the agenda of this worthwhile cause. Our progress is due to the vision, execution of a plan and generosity of our donors. There are many ways to give back and I encourage you to reach out to Terry Hamburg, our Director and Champion of the Cypress Lawn Heritage Foundation, to see where you can play a part. Giving back has long lasting effects on us, and the future.

In closing, this vision that was ignited back in 1892 by Hamden Noble, still burns in the hearts and minds of our more than 250 associates, our vendor and supplier partners, and the members of our Foundation. I am proud to be a part of this meaningful endeavor and as a group with a common vision we will accomplish much to be proud of in our time together.

Ensuring Others Succeed.



Robert A. Gordon, Jr.

ANSWER  
TO PG 5  
TRIVIA  
QUIZ



**George Hearst (1820-1891)** was the husband of Phoebe Apperson Hearst and father of William Randolph Hearst, his only child. The larger Hearst family is buried in the family mausoleum.



**CYPRESS LAWN  
HERITAGE FOUNDATION**

A non-profit 501 (c)(3) corporation  
promoting Cypress Lawn Cemetery  
as a historical and educational  
resource for the Bay Area community

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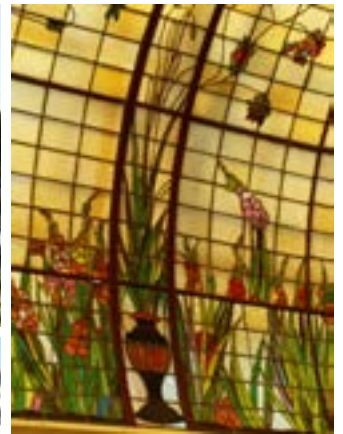
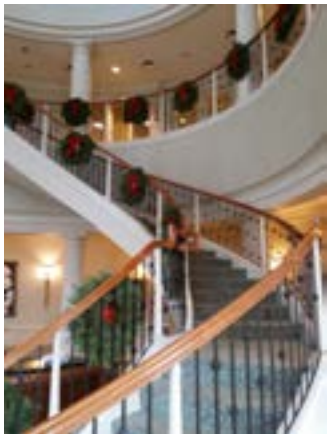


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**Scenes of Cypress Lawn**