



## “Grave Matters”

Historic Oakwood Cemetery Preservation Association  
Fall, 2014 Volume 22, Number 2

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### President’s Message...

Your generous donations have funded various projects which have been completed this past summer. Several dying trees were removed and replaced by similar species. This tradition assures that the integrity of Oakwood’s original landscape design will remain intact.

All our copies of Oakwood: A Special Place have been sold and a second printing of 400 volumes with accompanying maps is available for sale at \$20 per copy. This charming book by well-known local author and historian, Barbara Rivette, contains a history not only of Oakwood and background on several of Syracuse’s founding families, but also many colorful photographs. Don’t forget to include copies on your holiday gift list.



HOCPA has begun phase one of the repairs on the *porte-cochere* of Silsbee Chapel. As many of you know, the structure needs serious work if it is to survive. Our fundraising efforts for the necessary repairs continue.

HOCPA’s own living historian, Sue Greenhagen, inspired her loyal troops of touring enthusiasts with the final journey for the season through history on Sunday, September 21<sup>st</sup>. Her well-researched and always entertaining talk included wonderful descriptions of local legal eagles, and was entitled, “Here Come Da Judge: Judges Lawyers and Other Legal Reprobates.” For the first time in HOCPA history, however, her stories were cut short by driving rain and claps of thunder. By popular demand, we’ll repeat this tour next summer.

*Connie Palumb*

### Editor’s Notes...

It’s really important that HOCPA stay in touch with our members and friends. We need to let you know what we are doing, what we are planning, and what we’ve managed to accomplish. Our summer tours are as popular as ever. We always try to make these tours interesting, educational but at the same time entertaining. We often have to battle the elements of heat or rain, but we carry on. As we look to next year, we’d like your input as to what tours you would like to have us do. We do try to make our tours not terribly arduous, and we seem to concentrate on the western section, the oldest part of the cemetery. For the past three years we’ve explored one particular section in depth. We’ll find a section to do next year as well. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please let us know. We listen.



Silsbee Chapel is 185 years-old, and is beginning to look it. HOCPA is raising funds to make repairs on that grand building. There are serious cracks and leaks in the *porte-cochere* that must be addressed. It definitely won’t be cheap, so we need the help of all of you who care about Oakwood Cemetery and its future.

Our “Tours by Appointment” program is going well. Students from Melissa Cheshire’s classes at the Newhouse School did the “Live Oaks & Dead Folks” tour. A class from West Genesee High School also made the tour. This spring, we had a group of docents from the Everson Museum take the tour. Oakwood tours are not just five Sundays a year anymore.

For being a “city of the dead,” Oakwood is certainly a lively place. But isn’t that how it should be...

*Sue Greenhagen*

## “Live Oaks & Dead Folk: A Virtual Tour of Oakwood Cemetery”

Sue Greenhagen’s PowerPoint presentation of “Live Oaks...” has been a huge success. It’s been in such demand that she’s developed the sequel – “Live Oaks & *More* Dead Folks.” If you have a club, organization or any group that would like to see Oakwood but doesn’t want to face the walking involved, give Sue a call at (315) 684-3418, or contact her by email at [greenhsh@morrisville.edu](mailto:greenhsh@morrisville.edu)

## Memorial Gift

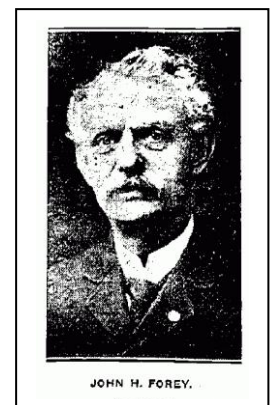
HOCPA recently received a \$100 gift in memory of long-time Oakwood Cemetery Board member Jean J. Greene. This generous donation from the Syracuse Contract Bridge Board of Directors is to be used specifically for the maintenance of the Silsbee Chapel garden. Jean had a life-long passion for flowers and gardening. We shall miss her.

## Book Orders

Anyone wishing to order copies of Oakwood: A Special Place, contact Connie Palumb at (315) 446-3570 or mail a check for \$20 made out to HOCPA to Connie at 102 Bradford Lane, Syracuse, NY 13224.

## The Civil War Soldiers’ Inventory Project

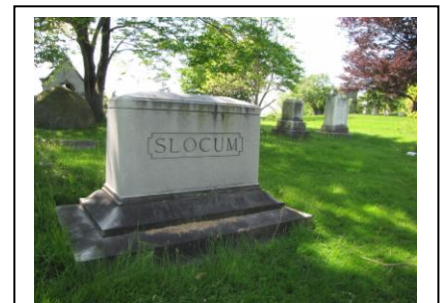
HOCPA is pleased to be working with the Onondaga County Civil War Round Table in a project to inventory all the Civil War veterans buried in Oakwood Cemetery. So far the volunteers have verified over 680 soldiers and two nurses. The verification process involves checking newspaper obituaries, reading soldier lists that were published in the early 1900s, reading Town Clerks’ Records and pension indexes, and just walking around the cemetery looking for non-military headstones that bear a birthdate that ranges from 1815 to 1849. This process is extremely time consuming, but some interesting stories have emerged. For example, John Forey, when he was with the 10<sup>th</sup> NY Cavalry in Maryland, met a young fellow who invited him back to his house to have lunch with him and his mother. The young man’s name was John Surratt and his mother was none other than Mary Surratt, later hanged as one of the Lincoln assassination conspirators. We’ve identified two members of the famous 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Infantry, a unit immortalized in the movie *Glory*. They are Charles L. Creamer and James Jameson. Jameson was for sixty-one years a barber in the city of Syracuse. In 1863, he traveled all the way to Readville, MA, where he enlisted. He mustered out in August of 1865 and returned to Syracuse where he again took up barbering at his shop on East Washington Street.



All the information gathered on each veteran will be available to genealogists and Civil War researchers via the Internet. As we approach the final year of the Civil War Sesquicentennial, this inventory seems the right thing to do for those veterans who left hearth and home to fight to save the Union during those dark days of 1861 to 1865. We need to make sure that they no longer lie forgotten.

## History’s Mysteries

Apparently the Slocum family stone that we see in the picture at the far right is not the original stone in that lot. Margaret Olivia Slocum Sage (wife of the Wall Street tycoon, Russell Sage) is interred along with her mother and father. Mrs. Sage had a brother, Jermain, and no children. Who would have provided for the second monument? When was it replaced? Why was it replaced? Inquiring minds want to know...



**WANTED:** Do you have or know of any pictures of the interior of Silsbee Chapel taken when it was still being used for services and funerals? If you can help, please call Connie Palumb at (315) 446-3570.

## Among the Original Rules of Oakwood Cemetery, circa 1860

### Oakwood Cemetery - Rules and Regulations

- Each proprietor of a lot will be entitled to a ticket of admission into the Cemetery with a vehicle...
- No vehicle will be admitted unless accompanied by a proprietor, or member of his household...
- On Sundays and holydays the gates will be closed. Proprietors will be admitted on foot...
- Fast driving will be especially prohibited...[not] exceeding three miles per hour.
- No persons...having refreshments to sell will be permitted to come within the grounds, nor will any smoking be allowed.
- No horse may be left by the driver unfastened. Hitching posts are provided for that purpose.
- All persons are prohibited from writing upon, defacing, or otherwise injuring any monument, fence or structure...or from picking any flowers...,or injuring any tree, shrub or plant.
- Any person disturbing the quiet and good order of the place, by noise or other improper conduct, will be compelled instantly to leave the grounds.

## HOCPA Donors as of October, 2014

*We are most grateful to all our donors for their continued interest and support.*

John & Katherine Auwaeter, Dwight & Augusta Baum, David Beebe, Carolyn Bernstein, Carol Biedinger, Peter & Lida Black, Robert & Susan Boland, Richard Bowman, Lawrie Chase, Sharon Coulter, Linda DeStefano, Eloise Diamond, Harold Edwards, Rebecca Eiholzer, Kathryn Gemmill, Margaretrose Gioia, Elizabeth Glass, Andrea Graves, Stewart Hancock, Jr., Anne Kemper, Anne King, Gelene Lewis, Zalie & Bob Linn, Thomas Mafri, Gerald Mager, John & Candace Marsellus, Diane Medvitz, John & Penny Mercer, Eileen Miller, Thayer Miller, John & Shirley Mills, Francis & Alice Morigi, Jon Nelson, Timothy & JoDean Orcutt, Frederick & Virginia Parker, Haden Patten, Christopher & Ileana Payne, William & Carol Porter, P.B. Price Gardner, Lisle Rath, Barbara Rivette, William & Elizabeth Schaefer, Herbert & Hillery Schneiderman, Helen Seymour, William & Lillian Smyser, James & Barbara Snell, James Stathes, Janice Stearns, Lawrence & Marilyn Steen, Paul & Olga Suholet, Syracuse Home Foundation, Peter & Martha Thompson, Maritia Walper, James & Marsha Wooster.

## HOCPA MEMBERSHIP FORM

\_\_\_\_\_ New Member      \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal

\_\_\_\_\_ Senior/Student \$5    \_\_\_\_\_ Individual \$15    \_\_\_\_\_ Family \$25    \_\_\_\_\_ Patron \$100    \_\_\_\_\_ Corporate \$200

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Address \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

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Historic Oakwood Cemetery Preservation Association is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization.

Donations are deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Please make checks payable to **HOCPA**, and mail to:      **HOCPA, PO BOX 15065, Syracuse NY 13215**

## Oakwood All-Star – Julie R. Jenney

Our All-Star is a very special lady in the annals of the central New York legal community. Miss Jenney has quite a story to tell.

She was born in Syracuse on April 11, 1866, the daughter of Edwin S. and Marie Jenney. Her father was a lawyer and a veteran of the Civil War. After completing her high school education locally she applied for admission to the Cornell law school but was turned down. Julie was accepted, however, at the University of Michigan Law School, graduating in 1892, the only woman in her class. She returned to Syracuse with her law degree in hand and began working in her father's law office. She had been admitted to the bar in 1894, becoming the first female member of the organization. When her father died in 1900, the law office was reorganized and Julie became an equal partner with her two cousins, William S. and Alexander D. Jenney.

Julie Jenney was fast becoming an advocate of social justice. At the National American Convention of 1896, she expressed her opinion that women's legal rights were at that time seen as a "license," and they could be revoked at any time at the whim of the bodies granting them. Thus, until women were allowed to elect lawmakers, women could not be guaranteed any rights at all.

Recognizing the lack of legal representation for poor women, she organized the Legal Relief Society of Syracuse. Her office door was always open to women in need of legal advice. She also organized the Syracuse Federation of Women's Clubs and the Professional Women's League. In 1919 she was appointed the first woman District Supervisor for the Federal Census to be taken in 1920. Also in 1920, she became the first woman Deputy Attorney General of New York State. In 1922 she stated that women should be able to serve on juries, and two years later she advocated jail time for what we call today "dead-beat dads." She was opinionated, outspoken, and a tireless worker for equal rights for all. When Julie R. Jenney passed away on December 21, 1947, Syracuse lost an icon, a heroine, a pioneer, a truly great lady.



*address correction requested*

**H.O.C.P.A.  
PO Box 15065  
Syracuse, NY 13215**