



Cornerstones

A Newsletter From Oak Grove Cemetery

Summer ♦ 2002 ♦ Vol I ♦ No. 2



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The importance of planning ahead Consider these two scenarios:

Situation 1:

John dies unexpectedly. He has made no plans for his funeral or burial. His wife Mary, in addition to being in shock, now has to make hundreds of decisions without his guidance. He actually wanted to be cremated, but since they never discussed this, Mary decides on a traditional in-ground burial. She selects a middle-to-higher end casket, and buys a family plot in the cemetery that her parents buried in, in North Dakota. She easily spends more than \$15,000 at a time when future income is uncertain. In addition, Mary and John's children try to plan the funeral service, and get into heated arguments over what Dad would have wanted for music, scripture, pallbearers, etc. The family had not been affiliated with any church, so determining where to have the funeral service is challenging.

Summary: Besides their enormous grief, John's family burdened – emotionally and financially – by John's lack of planning.

Situation 2:

John dies unexpectedly. But ten years ago, he made his final plans. He and Mary discussed the issue, and decided they would both be cremated and have their remains in a mausoleum at Oak Grove Cemetery so their children could visit. John worked directly with Oak Grove Cemetery, and paid for the cremation and space in the mausoleum. The cost was less than \$1,000 per person, and had

been paid in full in 1991, at 1991's prices. John also made plans for his funeral. Because he was working with Oak Grove Cemetery, the family was able to have the funeral in Oak Grove's chapel at no charge.

Summary: John's family is still grieving, but without the added pressure of last-minute decision-making. John has also saved them a significant amount of money by pre-paying when he made his final plans.

In the midst of daily living, it is often difficult to discuss the practical realities of death. However, experience has shown that advance planning avoids most of the unnecessary emotional and financial problems that many people face. Knowing that your family will not be burdened by making hasty decisions, and that your plans have been made according to your wishes is one of the most thoughtful expressions of love and concern that you can show your family.

The cost of cemetery and funeral arrangements continues to rise. By planning ahead, you can do your research and compare prices. Another advantage is that you pay for everything at today's prices and avoid the effects of inflation.

At Oak Grove Cemetery, we help people make these kinds of decisions every day. Call us to set up an appointment with our pre-arrangement counselor. If you won't do it for yourself, do it for your family.

in this issue:

- ♦ **Famous sites**
- ♦ **Tour Historic Oak Grove Cemetery**
- ♦ **Losey Arch Rededication**

Planning for a Funeral

The Federal Trade Commission offers these tips for planning for a funeral:

- ♦ Shop around in advance. Compare prices from at least two funeral homes. Remember that you can supply your own casket or urn.
- ♦ Ask for a price list. The law requires funeral homes to give you written price lists for products and services.
- ♦ Resist pressure to buy goods and services you don't really want or need.
- ♦ Avoid emotional overspending. It's not necessary to have the fanciest casket or the most elaborate funeral to properly honor a loved one.

- ♦ Recognize your rights. Laws regarding funerals and burials vary from state to state. It's a smart move to know which goods or services the law requires you to purchase and which are optional.
- ♦ Apply the same smart shopping techniques you use for other major purchases. You can cut costs by limiting the viewing to one day or one hour before the funeral, and by dressing your loved one in a favorite outfit instead of costly burial clothing.
- ♦ Plan ahead. It allows you to comparison shop without time constraints, creates an opportunity for family discussion, and lifts some of the burden from your family.

Interesting Information on the Web

The web is an extremely valuable resource for finding information about obituaries and funeral planning. Check out these sites:

www.oakgrovecemetery.com

The Oak Grove Cemetery Association website keeps you informed on upcoming events and services.

www.lacrosselibrary.org/genealogy

The La Crosse Public Library's helpful obituary index.

www.lacrossetribune.com

The La Crosse Tribune's web site has searchable database of obituary information for 2001 and 2002.



www.rootsweb.com/~wilacgs.com

A helpful site from the La Crosse Area Genealogical Society.

www.schumacherkish.com

The web site for the local funeral homes of Schumacher Kish.

www.funeralplan.com

This page bills itself as "everything you need to know about funerals and grief support."

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Of The Issue:

Columbarium

A columbarium is a freestanding structure that houses cremated remains. There are two columbaria at Oak Grove Cemetery.

Famous sites:

In The Cemetery: Mark Kellogg Historic Plaque

Next to the grave of Martha Robinson Kellogg (1838-1867) is perhaps the most fascinating historic marker in the Oak Grove Cemetery. The plaque is a tribute to La Crosse newspaperman Mark Kellogg, who was killed with Gen. George Armstrong Custer and the entire 7th US Cavalry at the Battle of the Little Big Horn on June 26, 1876.

Mark Kellogg (1833-1876) was born in Canada and came to La Crosse with his family in 1851. His father was postmaster in La Crosse and built the Kellogg House hotel in 1853. Mark worked as a reporter for the La Crosse Democrat and operated a flour and feed store for a while.

His wife died in 1867, and within the year he left La Crosse and spent the next nine years traveling in the American West as a correspondent for several newspapers. He was a pioneer in the use of telegraph communications and may be the first American wire service reporter killed in battle.

His gravesite and marker remain on the Custer Battlefield National Historic Site in Montana. The memorial plaque was erected at his wife's gravesite in his honor by several local newspaper, radio and television organizations. It was dedicated on June 26, 1976, the centennial of the Little Bighorn Battle.



Mark Kellogg

Photo courtesy of Murphy Library-University of Wisconsin-La Crosse

Self-Guided Walking Tour

Brochures Now Available

You can easily visit Mark Kellogg's memorial plaque, along with several other historic sites in Oak Grove Cemetery, thanks to a new self-guided walking tour brochure. This guide leads you to gravesites of famous people, as well as interesting structures and works of art. You'll also learn about the lives of the people buried in the cemetery, including G. Heileman, the Hixon Family and the Tranes.

The guide is free of charge and is a great way to learn more about area history- and get a little exercise at the same time. To order your copy, mail back the coupon on page 3.

A Grand Entrance Losey Arch Rededicated

The Losey Arch, the grand entrance to Oak Grove Cemetery, was rededicated on Memorial Day, 2002, exactly 100 years after its original dedication. More than 100 people turned out to hear presentations from Historian Barbara Kooiman and Mayor John Medinger. In addition to the arch dedication, the La Crosse County Historical Society provided actors portraying soldiers in various wars to commemorate Memorial Day.

One popular item was the arch rededication t-shirt. We still have a few left – they are very nice quality cotton shirts and cost \$5 each. Call us or stop in to pick one up today! Or - you can order one by using the coupon below.



Oak Grove Cemetery Executive Director, Val Reinke, enjoys the beautiful day in her commemorative t-shirt.



Mayor John Medinger delivers the rededication speech.



Descendants of Joseph Losey pose with event coordinator, George Italiano. L-R Susan Schaller, Jean Norby, George Italiano and Geri Updahl.



Troy Buddenhagen portrays a soldier from World War I.



Want To Know More? Please Send Me This Information

- General information on Oak Grove Cemetery
- General information on cremation
- A price list for Oak Grove Cemetery
- Oak Grove Cemetery's Self-guided Walking Tour brochure
- A Losey Arch rededication t-shirt *(Please enclose \$10, \$5 for t-shirt and \$5 for shipping & handling)*

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City/State/Zip: _____
 E-mail: _____

Please have someone call me about pre-arrangement Phone number: _____

Send to: Oak Grove Cemetery, 1407 La Crosse Street, La Crosse, Wisconsin 54601



Trust ♦ Compassion ♦ Respect

Oak Grove Cemetery Association Meet The Staff

Valerie Reinke *Executive Director*

Val celebrates her one-year anniversary at Oak Grove on September 1. She is responsible for the overall management of the cemetery and its personnel. Val lives in Iowa on a farm with her husband and son.

Adam Casper *Acting Superintendent*

Adam has been with the cemetery for 11 years and has recently taken on the role of acting superintendent. He is responsible for keeping our grounds and facility beautiful. Adam lives in La Crosse and is an avid outdoorsman.

Debra Seitz *Sales Counselor*

Although Deb has been with Oak Grove for eight years, she has recently taken on a new role – sales counselor. In this capacity she helps individuals and families with pre-arrangement planning and at-need decisions. Deb has two daughters and lives in La Crosse.

Shirley Fancher *Receptionist*

Shirley has been with Oak Grove for two years. She returns to work after retiring from many years at Gundersen Clinic. Shirley and her husband live on Irish Hill in La Crosse.

Myrna Townsend *Business Administrator*

Myrna joined the cemetery this spring. She brings several years' experience in bookkeeping and administrative affairs. Myrna, her husband, and three children live in Holmen.

Our Mission:

Oak Grove Cemetery exists to provide a beautiful and serene final resting place. We will provide comprehensive services for clients in an environment of trust, compassion and respect. The cemetery recognizes its importance as a historical resource, and is committed to enhancing public knowledge of that history.

Oak Grove Cemetery News Briefs

■ **Oak Grove launches web site**

We're on the web! Check out Oak Grove's new web site at www.oakgrovecemetery.com to learn more about our history, services and upcoming events.

■ **Silent City Tour Dates Announced**

Mark your calendars – the La Crosse County Historical Society will host their annual Silent City Tour at Oak Grove Cemetery on Sunday, September 22. This is a fun event where actors portray famous people buried in the cemetery. It's your chance to learn more about La Crosse history. This year's tour will feature familiar names such as John Medary and Joseph Losey.

■ **Need a Speaker?**

Does your organization need a speaker? Let Oak Grove help! We can give talks on the history of the cemetery, pre-arrangement issues/estate planning, and cremation. Give us a call at (608) 782-6956.



■ **Holiday Wreath Update**

Oak Grove has some exciting news to share with you regarding our holiday wreath program. We have selected a new wreath vendor, which will allow significant cost savings that can pass on to you! Expect a mailing from us in the near future outlining all of the details, including the pricing information. If you haven't received a mailing by October 1, please contact our office!

