

SWEET AUBURN

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MOUNT AUBURN AS A MUSE

180TH ANNIVERSARY

SWEET AUBURN

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Cover Photo: View of Forest Pond, Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, MA, attributed to Thomas Chambers c. 1840s. Inspired after an engraving by R. Brandard of a painting by William Henry Bartlett. Oil on canvas, 14-1/4 x 18-1/4 inches.

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The Friends of Mount Auburn Cemetery was established in 1986 to assist in the conservation of the Cemetery's natural beauty and to promote the appreciation of its cultural, historic, and natural resources. Organized in 1990 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit charitable trust, the Friends seeks financial support from its members, other individuals, foundations, corporations, and public agencies. It receives gifts for educational and interpretive programs and materials for the public, specific cultural projects, and operating support for horticultural rejuvenation and the preservation of the historic monuments, structures, and archival artifacts and records. The Friends has over 1,300 active members.

President's Corner

September of 2011 was a very special month for me. September 1st marked the 18th anniversary of the day I joined the staff of the Cemetery as Director of Horticulture. On the 10th, I completed my third year as President and CEO. Then on the 24th I had the privilege, as Mount Auburn's 12th president, of hosting a celebration of the 180th anniversary of Mount Auburn's founding (see article on page 8). On each of these dates many fond memories crossed my mind, and I thought a great deal about how fortunate I am to be part of such a significant institution and wonderful organization.

But the day that was by far the most special and meaningful to me was Saturday, September 3rd. On that day my brother Larry got married to my brand new sister-in-law, Kim Smith. A wedding is always a special occasion, but this one occurred right here at Mount Auburn. While it was the 12th wedding we have hosted here in the past two years, it was the first in which I was personally involved. It gets even better. Kim and Larry asked me to officiate the wedding for them, and they obtained a one-day permit for me to act as justice of the peace. Our task then became to determine the perfect outdoor location for the ceremony. Kim's family had never been to Mount Auburn, and she wanted them to fully experience the beauty and inspirational qualities of the place. Her favorite spot was Consecration Dell, but Larry liked the view from the wildflower meadow at Washington Tower, so we came up with a plan.



David Barnett (center) with his brother, Larry, and new sister-in-law, Kim, at the base of Washington Tower.

On the wedding day, our two immediate families gathered at Bigelow Chapel and walked to Consecration Dell, where I read a few excerpts from Joseph Story's 1831 Consecration Address. His visionary words about Mount Auburn becoming a place to honor and remember the dead while it would also serve to inspire the living could not have been more fitting, as I then remembered the names of the family members we have lost. We raised our glasses to toast our loved ones, and though a few tears could be seen, we all knew they were there with us in spirit to witness Kim and Larry's special day.

From there our own spirits were quickly raised as we walked up the path through the woods to the base of the Tower on the top of Mount Auburn. Standing in the wildflower meadow, with the spectacular Boston skyline in the background, Larry and Kim said their vows and I happily pronounced them husband and wife. The merriment was extended as we climbed to the top of the Tower and then took the scenic route walking back to Bigelow Chapel via Auburn Lake, taking photos along the way. It was a wonderful day!

When it came time to celebrate Mount Auburn's 180th anniversary just three weeks later, it was so easy for me to say that we are, indeed, still carrying out the vision of our founders. I hope you enjoy reading in this issue how others have been inspired by Mount Auburn, and I encourage you to come by for a visit. The Cemetery is beautiful during every season, and there is nothing quite like the stirring simplicity of winter under a blanket of freshly fallen snow.

David P. Barnett, President



Photo by Richard Cheek

A Treasured Source of Inspiration... & a Modern Day Muse

BY BREE D. HARVEY, *Vice President of External Affairs*
EDITED BY LAUREN MARSH, *Communications, Grants & Events Coordinator*

When the members of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society consecrated Mount Auburn in 1831, they did so with a vision for a place that would commemorate the dead, console the bereaved, and inspire the living. And though it was their intention to attract the living and inspire these visitors with the landscape's natural beauties and its many features—the works of art, the horticultural specimens, and the stories of those buried at the Cemetery—the founders could never have envisioned the extent to which this sacred ground would, indeed, come to serve as a creative muse.

Throughout the eighteen decades that have since passed, Mount Auburn has inspired generations of creative individuals. In the nineteenth century,

writers like Caroline Frances Orne (*see inset on page 4*) celebrated their experiences at the Cemetery in prose and verse. Daguerreotypists Southworth and Hawes, some of the earliest practitioners of the new art form, chose Mount Auburn's dramatic landscape as the subject for some of their early experiments with photography (*see inset on page 6*).

Today, designers, writers, painters, and photographers continue to find inspiration within our 175 acres. Julie Moir Messervy, Amy Clarkson, Jessie Brown, and Richard Cheek are among those for whom Mount Auburn now serves as muse. Like the generations of those who have done so before, they have drawn upon personal experience to celebrate the Cemetery's many virtues, each telling a unique story of Mount Auburn in their chosen medium.



Julie Messervy's completed design of Spruce Knoll

Creating the Contemplative Garden

Julie Moir Messervy, Landscape Designer

Julie Messervy's relationship with Mount Auburn began more than a quarter of a century ago when she first discovered the Cemetery as a wonderful place to walk. Messervy, a landscape designer and principal of the award-winning firm Julie Moir Messervy Design Studio (JMMDS), located in Saxtons River, Vermont, received her Master of Architecture and Master in City Planning degrees from MIT. She also studied landscape design under Japanese garden master Kinsaku Nakane, first as a Henry Luce Scholar, and later as a Japan Foundation Fellow. After she returned to Boston, she searched for gardens that had a similar feel to the many gardens she studied throughout Kyoto. "I sought out places in Boston that had a similar contemplative quality to the Japanese gardens I loved," says Messervy. "My favorites were the courtyard at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, which offered its visitors a contemplative viewing experience, and Mount Auburn Cemetery, which, with its winding roads and paths, felt like a large stroll garden. I was entranced..."

In 1994, Mount Auburn commissioned Messervy to design an area specifically for the burial of cremated remains. For Spruce Knoll, the resulting woodland garden, Messervy didn't have to look too far for inspiration, as much of her design took its cues from the surrounding landscape. "...it's all here at Mount Auburn. The huge tulip tree right next to Spruce Knoll, together with the views out to the older

part of the Cemetery, and the beautiful memorials there, all offered inspiration. And then the spruce trees, with their tall trunks and needle canopy above created a quiet space within. The barren knoll needed definition and enclosure, so I brought in stones and plants and went about making a natural burial space where ashes could be poured directly into the earth."

Unlike a landscape design project for a residential or commercial client, a commission from Mount Auburn comes with many unique design parameters, including the need to accommodate memorials and future burials. "I was quite intrigued by how best to memorialize loved ones while not jeopardizing the contemplative experience of those left behind. We decided to ring the knoll with tablets, rather than scattering too many plaques throughout the small space. The result is that visitors feel like they are walking through a little piece of nature, an experience that is quite different from anywhere else in the Cemetery."

"When you think about it, designing a space in a cemetery is built on creating a sacred trust between the designer and the person mourning a loved one. A designer has to be able to understand what the mourner is going through and make a place that can 'hold' and honor those feelings. And it's not just people in mourning who experience Mount Auburn; it's also those who come to choose their final resting place.

It's a heavy responsibility and Mount Auburn has lived up to it by creating a host of different kinds of contemplative experiences that draw different people to them. Creating a place in Mount Auburn that would stand up to all that and yet be something new and something natural—it was a really interesting problem."

It has been sixteen years since the completion of Spruce Knoll. Since that time, Messervy has worked with Mount Auburn on the designs for other interment spaces within the Cemetery, including Willow Pond Knoll and several family plots. She continues to find inspiration in many aspects of Mount Auburn, from its history to its natural features. "There's something about knowing that so many important thinkers, writers, and artists are buried there, and that they've chosen Mount Auburn because of its

beauty and meaning... Then the trees, then the topography, the Tower... I love the meandering trails and roads, I love their evocative names. And the ponds and the waterways, of course. And I've pinched myself every time I've ever worked at Mount Auburn. It's an honor to add my own vision to the bigger vision that so many have brought to these venerable grounds. The Cemetery staff has done a wonderful job of honoring its history, while enabling subtle but important changes to occur within its walls, keeping current, while remaining historic. I feel so lucky—and



Julie Messervy

honored—to have played a part in making it the beautiful, contemplative place that it is for so many people, both here and around the world.”

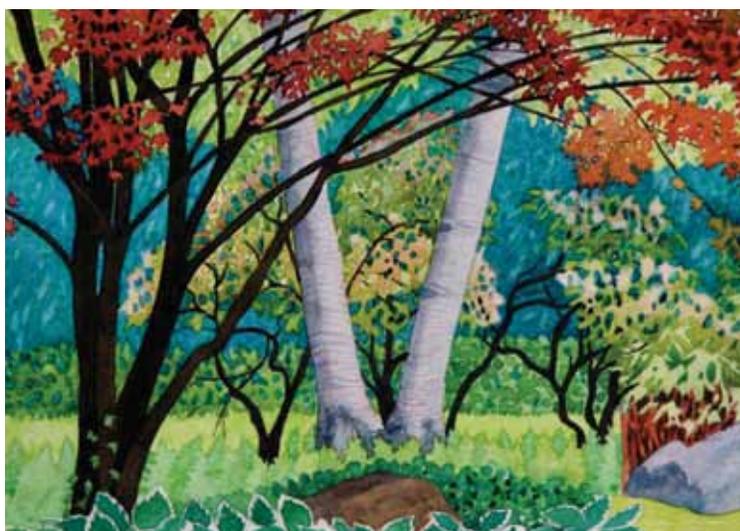
Discovering Intimate Spaces and Little Rooms

Amy Clarkson, *Painter*

Amy Clarkson has been interpreting Mount Auburn’s landscape for several years, her observations and artistic eye manifesting in vibrant watercolor, oil, and sepia paintings. “I feel a great sense of peace in being here and of being embraced,” says the Cambridge-based artist. “You get into almost a Zen frame of mind. There’s a comfort level that, in part, comes from the landscape, but I also think it comes from the monuments and the history, and the fact that there are all these loved people surrounding you.”

Clarkson, who studied fine art at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts/Tufts and Massachusetts College of Art, began her career as a still-life artist. When she first considered using Mount Auburn as a subject for her works, she felt overwhelmed by the Cemetery’s vast landscape and lush plantings. “But then as I started walking around the Cemetery more, I would find these little rooms and spaces that gave me inspiration for making paintings. I would do a sepia painting first to capture the composition and the values, and to make sure that it was going in the direction I wanted. Then I would continue if I liked that... There’s something again very peaceful and Zen-like about the sepias, and I think they represent Mount Auburn so well. But the color ones are special, too.”

Her paintings of Mount Auburn reflect Clarkson’s own interest in Asian woodblock prints, her love of gardening, and her appreciation for the Cemetery. Alice Fountain, the small pond at the intersection of Spruce and Mound Avenues, has been particularly inspirational for Clarkson, who has created 15 to 20 paintings of that one area. “It was never my intention, it just really grabbed me and held on for a long time.” Consecration Dell is another area Clarkson has revisited to capture from different views and in both color and sepia.



Top: Amy Clarkson, painting in the area called “Alice Fountain.” This photo was taken by her daughter, Elena Laird, during a photo class at Noble & Greenough school circa 2007.

Above: A finished painting of the same area by Amy Clarkson

Perhaps one reason Clarkson feels such a special bond with Mount Auburn is that the Cemetery reminds her of her childhood on Long Island. “I’m not very much interested in the vast landscape, but in the intimate spaces this place creates. I grew up on Long Island next to a golf course, and there were all these rhododendrons that separated our property from the course. I used to spend hours playing in there, and I had little rooms because they were really old, big-stemmed rhododendrons. So there were these areas that were my hideouts... There is a distinct relationship to why I feel this comfort level here and love to create spaces with boundaries.”

While she appreciates the carefully maintained landscape and its impressive trees, Clarkson’s connection to this place goes much deeper. “I have been here for funerals and one in particular was my friend who had to bury her 17-year-old daughter, and that was just excruciatingly sad. And I thought that would impact my feeling of working here, but it only made it more special for me. Because I felt like it’s so nice to have a place to come where it isn’t just about the Cemetery, though that aspect is always present.”

“And you can’t believe you’re in the city when you’re here. All the cares and the frenetic energy of urban life disappear. It just melts away... There’s so many vistas, so many special sweet spots in here. You’re just walking along and all of a sudden you see it and the light is coming in a certain way, and a shadow is doing its thing, and it reels you in.”

Walking Where Others Have Found Inspiration

Jessie Brown, *Writer*

“I don’t remember a time when I didn’t know about Mount Auburn,” says Jessie Brown, a writer who lives in Arlington, Massachusetts. “For my first five years I lived within walking distance of the Cemetery. As far as I was concerned it was just the most beautiful park, far more beautiful than any of the ones with playground equipment on them. So I was used to playing here. It’s always been part of my experience; there’s never been a time when I didn’t come here. Even when we moved to Belmont, and it was a little more of a hike, I would bicycle here. I brought my friends from school, as a kid. I never understood why they thought it was a little strange to play in a cemetery. They hadn’t grown up with it like I had.”

Brown has written in every place she’s lived, including Oberlin, Ohio, where she received her Bachelor’s degree; the University of Córdoba, Spain; and Palo Alto, California, where she received her Master’s degree from Stanford University. She studied poetry there with Denise Levertov, and received an American Academy of Poets prize. Her poems have appeared in various journals, and her prize-winning chapbook, *Lucky*, is forthcoming this spring from Anabiosis Press. Currently she works as a poet-in-residence in schools and libraries in the Boston area, both on her own and with Troubadour, an arts education collaborative. Fifteen years ago she helped found the Alewife Poets, a group of women writers who give frequent readings in the Boston area. But it’s safe to say that she got her start at Mount Auburn.

“Well, I have always found that it’s easier to write outdoors. I don’t want to sound too mystical, but I think it makes a difference to write in a place that’s not only full of beauty, but full of history. It makes a difference to walk where others have found inspiration. It makes a difference to walk between other people’s griefs and loves. And the monuments are reminding us of that all the time.”

“The landscape also plays a part. There’s the inspiration of its natural resources. It’s hard not to come to Mount Auburn and see amazing things growing, or animal life that anyone would want to write about. It’s in front of you all the time. You don’t have to look for it at Mount Auburn; it comes to you.”

Brown has several favorite spots within the Cemetery that she likes to visit, often sitting and writing for hours. When she was still in school she frequented the Dell. “I would sit down opposite one of the monuments and



*Above: Jessie Brown
Right: Her son Ben, now a college freshman, on one of his childhood visits to Mount Auburn.*

Forest Pond: A Lost Landscape Remembered Through the Art it Inspired

Mount Auburn’s rolling landscape of hills, dells, ponds, and meadows has always inspired its visitors, especially those artists who come to capture a vibrant glimpse of a season, preserving a living moment forever. Today there are a few areas that seem particularly popular among those seeking inspiration: lily-clad Auburn Lake, the untamed wildflower meadow at Washington Tower, and the earthen core of the Cemetery, the Dell.

In the earliest decades of Mount Auburn, however, no spot in the Cemetery rivaled Forest Pond in the affections of the public. The small figure-eight shaped pond, quietly nestled in the valley between Beech and Willow avenues, was celebrated for its picturesque qualities in paintings, daguerreotypes, romantic engravings, chalk illustrations, and poems alike. Though the Cemetery filled in Forest

Pond in 1919, we know much about this lost landscape due to the numerous accounts, both written and visual, of this beloved spot.

One depiction of Forest Pond, painted by Thomas Chambers in the 1840s, graces the cover of this magazine. Among their many photographs of the Cemetery, daguerreotypists Southworth and Hawes captured the Winchester Tomb proudly overlooking the pond (see page 6). In her poem “Mount Auburn,” Caroline Frances Orne describes the scene,

*“...When all the tree-tops bathed in splendor glow,
And a deep shadow rests on all below;
Or as, like golden bars, the struggling rays
Pierce through the fretted leaves’ entwining maze,
As Forest Pond, that, sleeping tranquilly,
From its clear depths gives back each leaf and tree,
Each tomb, each monument that’s mirrored there...”*

make up complete stories and life histories for the people whose names I saw there. Even if there were only initials, I would make up first names and middle names and relations for them, and use them as characters in my stories.” She adds, “I think I probably learned to read off of the stones. Because the letters are so big, they’re wonderful for kids. They’re just at child height. The inscriptions are brief and fascinating, unpredictable. So I don’t remember learning to read per se, but I do remember being fascinated by the inscriptions on the stones since I was tiny. I loved the ones with poems on them.”

One of her own poems that she wrote specifically about Mount Auburn centers on her first visit back to the Cemetery after her son, Ben, was born. “Of course many stones memorialize children, but suddenly I had that parental grief that I hadn’t had before when I was reading the inscriptions on the monuments. Before they’d just been beautiful; this time they hit home.”



*Now That Benjamin is Three Months Old
How could I have missed them?*

*The headstones on this walk I’ve passed
and re-passed twenty summers now, or more.*

*“Our Angel Boy,” under a reclining cherub
whose face and limbs have worn to blurring. Then*

“My Wife and Child.”

The mother lifts the baby overhead in laughter.

Sun streams down on broken rows of stones.

For the first time, I leave the cemetery in tears.

—Jessie Brown

Immortalizing Mount Auburn...

Richard Cheek, Photographer

“There are many aspects of the Cemetery that I dearly love, but my affection for them may have nothing to do with my ability to capture them effectively. That’s up to the viewer to judge when looking at my photographs,” says photographer Richard Cheek. “I’m particularly fond of the way time has been allowed to gently take its toll at Mount Auburn: the great oak tree trunk that appears to have swallowed the balusters of an iron fence, the fading marble faces that have been worn away by tears of rain, and the faint inscriptions that now speak only to God because human eyes can no longer read them. I also appreciate the myriad of natural or man-made patterns that beg for your attention as you pass

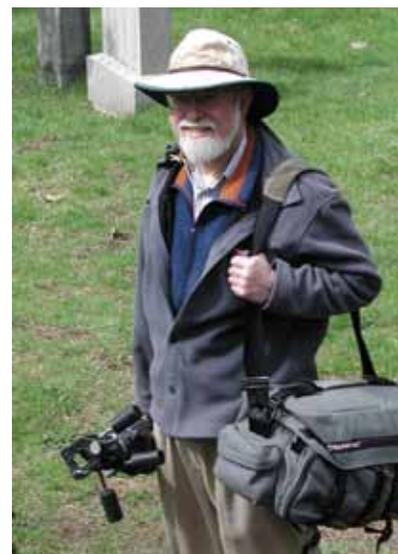
by, especially the seasonal carpets made by leaves, acorns, or flower petals that briefly overlie carved stone surfaces. But some of these aspects, such as indecipherable epitaphs, can be difficult to convey in a visually arresting manner.”

Richard Cheek, a Belmont-based freelance photographer, made his first professional visit to Mount Auburn nearly four decades ago when working with the Cambridge Historical Commission on the *Survey of Architectural History in Cambridge* series. He returned to the Cemetery in the early 1980s to record the historic iron fence along Mount Auburn Street,



before it disappeared, for the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (now Historic New England), and again in the early 1990s to photograph the Cemetery for his book for The Trustees of Reservations *Land of the Commonwealth*. It was following that last assignment in 1993 that the Cemetery commissioned Cheek to capture the beauties and mysteries of Mount Auburn for its own publications.

Now, close to twenty years later, Cheek has a collection of several thousand photographs of the Cemetery. He has returned year after year to capture Mount Auburn’s unique qualities and, in the process, has created an important photographic document of this ever-evolving landscape. His images, all shot on film, highlight Mount Auburn’s most iconic and celebrated views as well as its more secretive and intimate corners and details. “I’ve experienced so many extraordinary moments in so many locations all over the Cemetery that I have no single favorite place. I’ve probably spent more time in Consecration Dell than anywhere else; first, because my son, Benjamin, is buried there; and second, because I took the photographs for *A Guide To*



Above: Richard Cheek

Above, left: Bigelow Chapel, photo by Richard Cheek

Realism and Illusion in a Sacred Landscape *Southworth & Hawes, Daguerreotypists*

By Melissa Banta,

Program Officer for Photographs at Harvard University Library,
Weissman Preservation Center;
Historical Collections Consultant at Mount Auburn

Mount Auburn Cemetery's beloved landscape has inspired photographers since the introduction of the medium in the mid-19th century. In 1853, two pioneering practitioners of the art, Josiah Johnson Hawes (1808-1901) and Albert Sands Southworth (1811-1894), known for their magnificent portraits of Boston's illustrious citizens, ventured outside their studio to create a series of daguerreotypes of Mount Auburn.

The first publicly announced photographic technique, the daguerreotype realized a centuries-old dream of fixing the reflection of a natural scene onto a surface. The wondrous process involved treating a silver-coated copper plate with light-sensitive chemicals, exposing it in a camera, and developing the plate with mercury vapor. The resulting picture—a single, unique plate—was sometimes referred to as a “mirror image” for its smooth reflective appearance, exquisite tonal range, and faithful rendering of the most minute detail.

The daguerreotypes taken by the Southworth and Hawes studio document the Cemetery as it looked 20 years after its founding in 1831 and include a number of scenes of favorite vistas and noted monuments.¹ (These scenes were often represented as engravings in contemporary guidebooks of the day, such as *Dearborn's Guide Through Mount Auburn*.) The studio's images reveal how Southworth and Hawes experimented with elements of radiance and darkness. Their daguerreotype of the Winchester family lot, for example, captures the sunlight streaming through the trees and the dappled light and shadow on the lovely hillside tomb. “As far as possible we imitate nature in her most beautiful forms, by a mellow blending of lights and shades,” Southworth explained.² In their daguerreotype of the Lawrence family lot, the photographers bathe the scene in a subdued glow that evokes the otherworldly nature of the landscape.

Southworth and Hawes produced a number of daguerreotypes of the Cemetery as stereo views, a new development that allowed the photographers to push the boundaries of the medium to a seemingly miraculous form of realism.³ The studio designed an apparatus called the “Grand Parlor and Gallery Stereoscope,” which housed a series of daguerreotype stereo pairs that when seen together, created a three-dimensional view. Southworth noted that the daguerreotype had surpassed engraving and painting in “faithful and life-like delineation,” and now along with the stereoscope, would “invade the precinct of sculpture.”⁴ The richly intricate and multi-layered landscape of Mount Auburn presented the ideal setting for their stereo images.

Southworth and Hawes issued tickets to their Gallery Stereoscope (25 cents for a single view and 50 cents for the season) to individuals working at various cultural institutions, including Mount Auburn Cemetery. Photograph historian Grant Romer explains that the studio's foray into stereography also presented an opportunity to generate business from the city's elite—many of whom, such as the eminent doctor Oliver Wendell Holmes, had family lots in the Cemetery.⁵ Holmes,



whom Southworth and Hawes photographed many times, described stereo views as providing “the same sense of infinite complexity which Nature gives us.”⁶ (The doctor himself would eventually invent an improved stereo viewer.) One can imagine that the studio's magnificent cemetery scenes would have intrigued Holmes as well as another photograph and technology enthusiast, Jacob Bigelow. A physician as well as a founder and designer of Mount Auburn, Bigelow mused about the “beautiful perfection” of the daguerreotype “by which the external picture is depicted in miniature, light for light, and shade for shade, to the minutest gradation of each.”⁷

While the studio valued the fidelity of the medium, Southworth also contended that the, “artist, even in photography, must go beyond discovery and the knowledge of facts.... Nature is not at all to be represented as it is, but as it ought to be, and might have possibly been.”⁸ Having earned a reputation as among the most celebrated artistic photographic innovators of their day, Southworth and Hawes created a magical blend of realism and illusion as they set about capturing the sacred landscape of the young Cemetery.

¹ Daguerreotypes of Mount Auburn by Southworth and Hawes currently reside at the George Eastman House, the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, the University of New Mexico, and in private collections. The studio's daguerreotypes of the Cemetery include views of the Binney monument, Central Avenue, Cushing tomb, Davenport lot, Forest Pond, Gentian Path, Lawrence lot, Magoun monument, Mead and Read tombs, Shaw monument, Story monument, Tisdale-Hewins lots, Torrey monument, Walcott-Frothingham lots, and Winchester tomb.

² “Artists' Daguerreotype Rooms,” *Massachusetts Register for the Year 1853 Containing a Business Directory of the State, with a Variety of Useful Information* (Boston: George Adams, 1853), 326.

³ The British scientist Charles Wheatstone introduced the idea of binocular vision in the 1830s, and the technique was later applied to photography.

⁴ Albert Sands Southworth, “Daguerreotype Likeness No. IV,” *Boston Daily Evening Transcript*, 7 May 1852, 1 in Grant Romer, “A High Reputation with All True Artists and Connoisseurs: The Daguerreian Careers of A. S. Southworth and J. J. Hawes,” in *Young America: The Daguerreotypes of Southworth and Hawes*, eds. Grant Romer and Brian Wallis (Rochester and New York: George Eastman House and International Center of Photography, 2005), 37.



Left:
Lawrence Lot
Whole-plate daguerreotype, c. 1853
Southworth and Hawes,

Below:
Winchester Family Tomb
Whole-plate daguerreotype, c. 1853
Southworth and Hawes

Images Courtesy of the Eastman House



⁵ Grant Romer, "A High Reputation with All True Artists and Connoisseurs": The Daguerreian Careers of A. S. Southworth and J. J. Hawes," in *Young America: The Daguerreotypes of Southworth and Hawes*, eds. Grant Romer and Brian Wallis (Rochester and New York: George Eastman House and International Center of Photography, 2005), 38-39.

⁶ Oliver Wendell Holmes, "The Stereoscope and the Stereograph," *Soundings from the Atlantic* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1864), 148.

⁷ Jacob Bigelow, *The Useful Arts: Considered in Connexion with the Applications of Science*, Volume 1 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1853), 182. The author of *Elements of Technology*, Bigelow defined technology as "the principle, processes, and nomenclatures of the more conspicuous arts, particularly those which involve application of science."

⁸ Albert S. Southworth, "An Address to the National Photographic Association," 1870, vol. VIII, no. 94 (October 1871).

Consecration Dell At Mount Auburn Cemetery (2006), covering all four seasons and shooting the flora and amphibia.”

During his impressive career, Cheek has photographed many of the iconic buildings and landscapes throughout New England and the country. When not behind the lens, he spends his time collecting historic books and ephemera and serving as editor of *Historic New England's* visual history series. His current project, a photographic portrait of Mount Auburn Cemetery, will be Cheek's fifteenth publication. The book, due to be published in 2012, will present an idealized all-color vision of Mount Auburn, conveying the moods and spirits of the place and celebrating the glories and subtleties of its artistic and horticultural heritage. "Rather than impose images on the visitor that they could never see for themselves, it has been my intent to capture climatic or seasonal moments in time that people can experience on their own, if they can slow down and open their eyes to the colors, textures, and forms that surround them on every side, lie beneath their feet, or rise above their heads. Sounds and smells are there, too, deepening their sensory experience, but my photographs can only help them sharpen their visual focus. The influence these physical perceptions may then have upon thought and emotion is part of the wonder and mystery of walking slowly through Mount Auburn."

Though publishing a book of his photographs might seem to be the final chapter on Cheek's relationship with Mount Auburn, it's clear that he will always be drawn back to the Cemetery by the moments and monuments he has yet to encounter. "I've always wanted to create an image that can stand for everything Mount Auburn represents, which can capture the essence of the place in a single view. It may not be possible."

CONCLUSION

There is much at Mount Auburn to awaken the creative impulse: an inscription on a weathered marble monument, a sweeping vista bathed in the perfect light, the sight of a bird taking off in flight. From the kindergartener who draws a simple sketch of Auburn Lake in his or her nature journal to the prize-winning poet who writes a poem after a walk, few people are unaffected by what they discover while exploring the grounds. Come and get lost in the landscape, and see for yourself. Try your own hand at a poem, a sketch, or a photograph and join the long list of others who have done the same.

Visit www.jmmds.com to learn about Julie Messervy's firm and view the iPhone app she created called Home Outside Design. View Amy Clarkson's portfolio, including several beautiful paintings of Mount Auburn at www.amyschuylerclarkson.com. Join us next spring for poetry workshops led by Jessie Brown, and stay tuned for details about the publication of Richard Cheek's photographic essay of Mount Auburn.



Mount Auburn Cemetery: 180 Years Old and Going Strong

BY DAVID P. BARNETT, *President & CEO*

ON SEPTEMBER 24, 2011, WE CELEBRATED THE 180TH anniversary of the founding of Mount Auburn. It was on this exact date in 1831 that Associate Supreme Court Justice Joseph Story delivered the consecration address that established Mount Auburn as the first “rural cemetery” in the nation.

Joseph Story, along with Jacob Bigelow and the rest of our founders, had the foresight and vision in 1831 to pursue the bold and innovative concept that a cemetery could serve as a place for families to bury and commemorate their loved ones, while at the same time it could be designed as a place of great natural beauty and inspiration for the public to enjoy.

The concept proved to be a huge success, as Mount Auburn very quickly became both a popular tourist destination and cemetery. Mount Auburn thus started what became known as the rural cemetery movement, as the concept was duplicated in major cities throughout North America. The popularity of rural cemeteries, in turn, led to the public parks movement, starting with New York’s Central Park in 1857 and later the Emerald Necklace here in Boston, and all the parks around the country that are so important to our society today. Mount Auburn is now recognized as a National Historic Landmark because of its major influence on our nation.

And today we are still very much an active cemetery, providing a high level of service to families at their time

of need, while we also work to preserve and enhance the character of this historically significant landscape. We often summarize our mission as one of “preservation and service with excellence and innovation.”

This brings me back to our 180th Anniversary Celebration on September 24th. We hosted about 75 friends and supporters for a reception at Bigelow Chapel followed by a walk to Consecration Dell, the site of Joseph Story’s address. Rob Vellella, a literary historian and playwright specializing in American literature of the 19th century, joined me in leading the walk, and his role was to read excerpts from Mr. Story’s 1831 Consecration Address. Story was the first president of Mount Auburn Cemetery, and I had the distinct privilege (as the 12th president of Mount Auburn) to respond to Joseph Story’s words and describe how we are indeed still carrying out the vision of our founders. To say that it was a “privilege” does not adequately describe how inspired I felt to be standing in the very spot that Justice Story stood 180 years ago to deliver an impassioned speech in front of the 2,000 people who came to witness the consecration of this exciting new place called Mount Auburn.

For this 180th Anniversary event we walked around Consecration Dell, stopping in three places to hear Rob Vellella deliver the words of Joseph Story, followed by my own remarks in response. On the next three pages, excerpts from Joseph Story’s Consecration Address are on the left and my own words are on the right.

Joseph Story:

“My Friends,—

The occasion which brings us together, has much in it calculated to awaken our sensibilities, and cast a solemnity over our thoughts. We are met to consecrate these grounds exclusively to the service and repose of the dead. The duty is not new; for it has been performed for countless millions. The scenery is not new; for the hill and the valley, the still, silent dell, and the deep forest, have often been devoted to the same pious purpose. But we address feelings intelligible to all nations, and common to all hearts.

...It is to the living mourner—to the parent, weeping over his dear dead child—to the husband, dwelling in his own solitary desolation—to the widow, whose heart is broken by untimely sorrow—to the friend, who misses at every turn the presence of some kindred spirit. Thus, these repositories of the dead caution us, by their very silence, of our own frail and transitory being. They instruct us in the true value of life, and in its noble purposes, its duties, and its destination. They spread around us, in the reminiscences of the past, sources of pleasing, though melancholy reflection.

We dwell with pious fondness on the characters and virtues of the departed; and, as time interposes its growing distances between us and them, we gather up, with more solicitude, the broken fragments of memory, and weave into our very hearts, the threads of their history. As we sit down by their graves, we seem to hear the tones of their affection, whispering in our ears. We listen to the voice of their wisdom, speaking in the depths of our souls. We shed our tears; but they are no longer the burning tears of agony. They relieve our drooping spirits. We return to the world, and we feel ourselves purer, and better, and wiser, from this communion with the dead.”



David Barnett:

I first came to Mount Auburn in 1993 as Director of Horticulture, having come from a career in arboretum and public garden management. At first I only noticed the spectacular collection of trees and the natural landscape, and I didn't really focus on all the monuments and the “cemetery” aspects of Mount Auburn. About two years after I came here, one day I was giving a tour of Mount Auburn to my major professor from graduate school, who had authored a textbook on Arboriculture. We happened to be right here in the Dell looking at this spectacular Japanese Stewartia tree planted in 1939. I was explaining to Dr. Harris that we had initiated a project to restore this area back to the woodland habitat it would have been in 1831 by removing exotic plants and replacing them with native New England species. I noted that we would not remove this beautiful tree just because it wasn't native. When it eventually dies, we will replace it with a native species. I also noted that the Stewartia had a memorial plaque on it with the name and birth and death dates of a woman who had recently passed away. As I was explaining this to Dr. Harris, a woman who had been walking nearby came up to introduce herself to me as the daughter of the woman memorialized on the tree plaque. She enthusiastically told me that Consecration Dell was one of her mother's favorite spots, and thus she and her siblings had chosen to purchase this tree plaque to remember her in this location. The woman said she came here frequently to think about her mother and it was always an uplifting experience. She thanked me for making it such a beautiful and inspirational place to visit. I have never forgotten that moment, and from that day forward I have understood the importance of the “cemetery services” that we provide to families as much as I have realized the significance of our horticulture and preservation activities. One thing is certain – the vision of our founders that Mount Auburn would be a place of comfort and inspiration for families to remember their loved ones is still very much being realized.





Joseph Story:

“A rural Cemetery seems to gratify human feelings, or tranquilize human fears; to secure the best religious influences, and to cherish all those associations which cast a cheerful light over the darkness of the grave. And what spot can be more appropriate than this, for such a purpose? Nature seems to point it out with significant energy, as the favorite retirement for the dead. There are around us all the varied features of her beauty and grandeur—the forest-crowned height; the abrupt acclivity; the sheltered valley; the deep glen; the grassy glade; and the silent grove. Here are the lofty oak, the beech, the rustling pine, and the drooping willow;—the tree, that sheds its pale leaves every autumn, a fit emblem of our own transitory bloom; and the evergreen, with its perennial shoots. Here is the thick shrubbery to protect and conceal the new-made grave; and there is the wild-flower creeping along the narrow path, and planting its seeds in the upturned earth. All around us there breathes a solemn calm, as if we were in the bosom of a wilderness, broken only by the breeze as it murmurs through the tops of the forest, or by the notes of the warbler pouring forth his evening song.

...And we are met here to consecrate this spot, by these solemn ceremonies, to such a purpose: as a Rural Cemetery or Burying-Ground, and to plant and embellish it with shrubbery, and flowers, and trees, and walks, and other rural ornaments.

And I stand here by the order and in behalf of this Society, to declare that, by these services, it is to be deemed henceforth and forever so dedicated. Mount Auburn, in the noblest sense, belongs no longer to the living, but to the dead. It is a sacred, it is an eternal trust. It is consecrated ground.

May it remain forever inviolate!”

David Barnett:

As I hear Joseph Story’s words from 180 years ago describing this very spot in which we stand, I am struck by how similar it appears today. So much of what he mentions—from the forest-crowned height and the sheltered valley to the oak and the rustling pine to the thick shrubbery and the wildflower creeping along the narrow path—are still very much here today. And although we haven’t heard “the warbler pouring forth his evening song” today, it sure has been fun to see and hear the two young Great Horned Owls that were born here in the Dell this spring.

It is gratifying to observe the success of the work we have done over the last several years to restore this area to the natural woodland setting that was here in 1831. We have dramatically improved the habitat value for migrating warblers and other birds each spring and fall, as well as for

many nesting species such as the Great Horned Owls whose babies you’ve just been observing. The new plantings and other work around the vernal pool have also improved the habitat for an ecologically significant population of Yellow-spotted Salamander, only just recently removed from the “Special Concern” species list in Massachusetts. We have been fortunate to receive significant funding from the Ruggiero Memorial Trust, along with a number of other donors, to assist us in these efforts to restore the

PHOTO BY JOHN HARRISON



PHOTO BY JOSEPH MARTINEZ



woodland habitat. As part of this multi-year phased project, we have removed the exotic invasive species such as Norway Maple and Japanese Barberry, along with other non-native species such as Japanese Yew, and replaced them with several thousand plants representing over 100 species of trees, shrubs, groundcovers, and wildflowers that are native to New England.

And while the Dell has been restored as closely as possible to its natural state, throughout the rest of the grounds we continue to “plant and embellish with shrubbery, and flowers, and trees, and walks, and other rural ornaments” in the words of Joseph Story. Several areas, including the garden in front of Bigelow Chapel, have recently been planted in the Victorian-inspired, highly ornate garden style. Other areas have been planted to enhance various historic landscape character zones representing different periods of Mount Auburn’s 180-year evolution. In all our planning, horticultural diversity and overall landscape beauty are paramount, just as our founders envisioned.

Joseph Story:

“Let us banish the thought that this is to be a place of gloom. Let us cultivate feelings and sentiments more worthy of ourselves. Here let us erect the memorials of our love, and our gratitude, and our glory. Here let the brave repose, who have died in the cause of their country. Here let the statesman rest, who has achieved the victories of peace, not less renowned than war. Here let genius find a home, whether he has sung immortal strains, or has instructed with still diviner eloquence. Here let learning and science, and the teacher of the philosophy of nature come. Above all, here let the benefactors of mankind, the good, the merciful, the meek, the pure in heart, be congregated; for to them belongs an undying praise.

And let us take comfort, nay, let us rejoice, that in future ages, long after we are gathered to the generations of other days, thousands of kindling hearts will here repeat the sublime declaration, “Blessed are the dead, that die in the Lord, for they rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.”



David Barnett:

As we stand here looking toward the monument erected in memory of Joseph Story, who died

in 1845, I think it is fair to say that his wish on this very day 180 years ago that Mount Auburn should not be a “place of gloom” has been realized. Look around us! Almost every day I hear from someone telling me how much they love coming to Mount Auburn because it is so beautiful and uplifting. Story’s vision that “learning and science” should come here has also been realized. The staff continues to use the most sustainable maintenance practices possible, utilizing current research information, and we continue to expand our public educational programming on topics ranging from horticulture to history to preservation.

Our founders envisioned a place both stirring and extraordinary, and I am confident that in another 180 years Mount Auburn will still be a cemetery and a place of comfort, beauty, and inspiration. I am proud to be part of such an innovative and unique institution that continues to carry out the vision of our founders and the stewardship of this evolving landscape. Thank you so much for coming this evening to help us celebrate this occasion!



STORIES BEHIND THE STONES: *The Stone Family*

BY BREE D. HARVEY

A SIMPLE MARBLE MONUMENT PERCHES ON MOUNTAIN Avenue in the shadows of Washington Tower. The monument, ornamented with the image of a butterfly emerging from its chrysalis and a wreath of laurel, bears the following inscription:

CORNELIUS STONE.

Died Dec. 23, 1823.

Aged 41 years.

MELINDA STONE.

Died July 26, 1865.

Aged 77 years,

5 months.

Those familiar with the history of Mount Auburn may recognize the name “Stone.” The majority of the Cemetery’s land was once known as “Stone’s Woods” in honor of the family that settled the land in the early 17th century. And, it is nearly four centuries ago that the fascinating story of Melinda and Cornelius Stone begins.

In 1635, Simon Stone arrived in Massachusetts, having made the long journey from London with his wife and young children aboard the ship *Increase*. Stone settled in Watertown, where he was granted eight lots along the banks of the Charles River and later became one of the town’s largest land owners. Stone’s property, which included farmland and orchards, remained in the family long enough for six generations of his descendants to live on and work the land that he settled.

By the early 19th century, Simon Stone’s land had been divided into smaller parcels, each owned by a different branch of the family. One of the larger tracts of land had been inherited by Cornelius Stone, who in 1810 married Melinda Stone, a distant cousin who also descended from Simon. The couple had seven children in their thirteen years of marriage, though only three of these children would live to see adulthood. Following the death of Cornelius in 1823, the children inherited the family’s estate, and with it, a sizeable debt. To settle accounts, the family was forced to sell the majority of their land. Newspaper accounts announcing the auction of the land described the 50 acres as “a valuable forest of wood of almost all kinds, including the hill called ‘Sweet Auburn,’ commanding a delightful view of Boston and the vicinity.” George Watson Brimmer purchased the Stone’s land to create his own country estate, but instead



Above: The Stone family monument (foreground) looks out over the land once owned by Cornelius Stone and generations of his ancestors.

Below, center: The 1830 Hale Map of Watertown designates the highest hill within present-day Mount Auburn as “Stone’s Hill.” (Map courtesy Watertown Free Public Library)

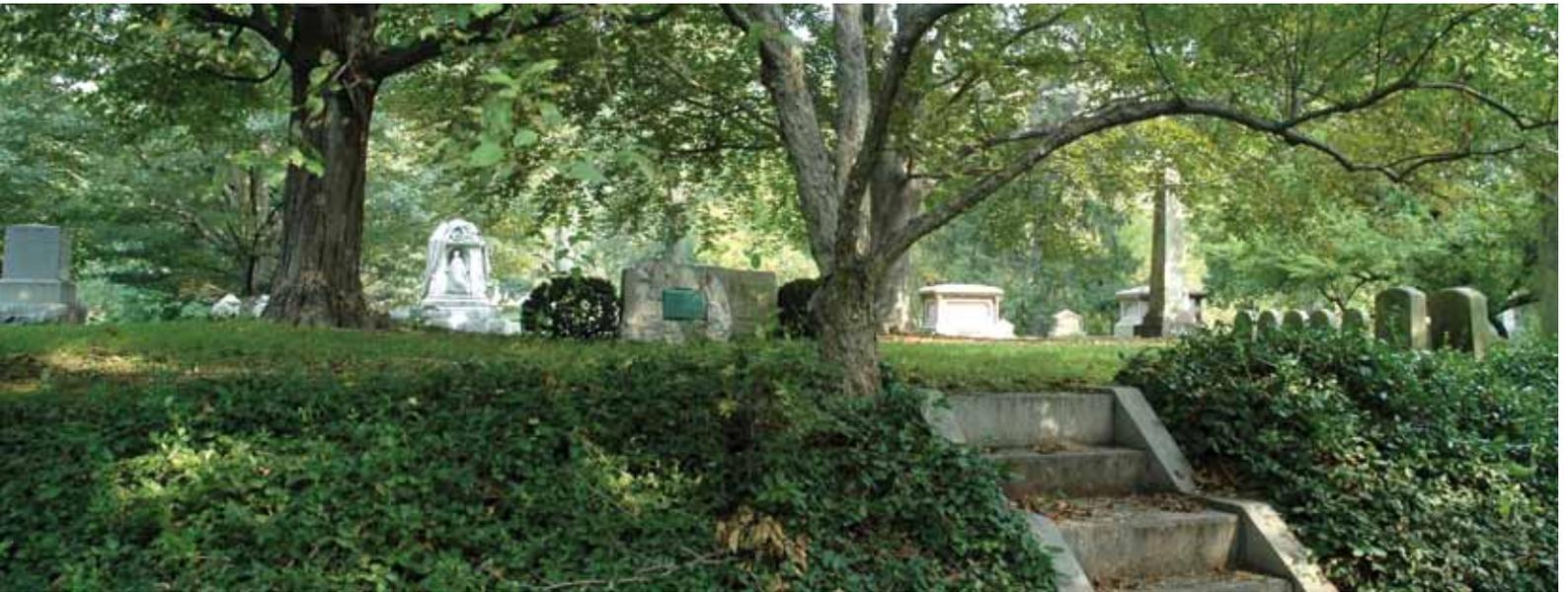
sold the land to the Massachusetts Horticultural Society for the creation of Mount Auburn Cemetery six years later.

In 1838, Melinda purchased a family lot at the new Cemetery. The place she selected was situated on the summit renamed by the Cemetery’s founders as “Mount Auburn,” the same hill known previously as “Sweet Auburn,”

and even earlier in time known as “Stone’s Hill” (see map). Melinda had her husband reburied in this lot and erected a monument to commemorate their family. It must have been bittersweet for Melinda to purchase burial space on the very land once owned by her husband and several generations of his ancestors. Situated on the southern slope of the hill, the Stone lot also looked out over the small piece of land Melinda and her children continued to own for a few remaining years. It is not impossible that from her house,

Melinda could even see the spot where she would one day lie next to her husband. Melinda was buried in the lot following her death in 1865. Several of the Stone children also join their parents in the family lot, helping to ensure that the family’s link to their ancestral land lasts in perpetuity.

We must give credit to Dee Morris, social historian, and David Russo from the Watertown Historical Commission for helping us to understand the story of Cornelius and Melinda Stone. As part of the program series “Watertown & Mount Auburn” presented this past spring and summer, Dee and David contributed fascinating new details about the many families important in the history of Watertown who now call Mount Auburn their eternal home.



MOUNT AUBURN FOUNDED ON NATURAL BURIALS

BY CANDACE CURRIE, *Director of Planning & Sustainability*

TODAY'S "NATURAL" OR "GREEN" BURIAL MOVEMENT harkens back to Dr. Jacob Bigelow's 1831 address entitled "A Discourse on Burial of the Dead." There are three basic tenets of today's natural burials: conservation of resources, reduction of carbon emissions, and restoration or preservation of habitat.

Conservation of Resources

In 1831, Mr. George Brimmer was the rightful landowner of what was to become Mount Auburn Cemetery. According to Bigelow, "[Brimmer's] just appreciation of the beautiful in nature had prompted him to preserve from destruction the trees and other natural features of that attractive spot." Like Brimmer, today's green burial movement is propelled by individuals who want to protect beautiful land from development, and by creating a cemetery, land will be protected forever.

Reduction of Carbon Emissions

While it takes less physical space to bury cremated remains than a casket, cremation does burn natural gas, a fossil fuel, which does release carbon into the air. There's also another item with a carbon footprint that is typically used in cemeteries including Mount Auburn: concrete grave or liner boxes. These boxes are used to prevent the earth from collapsing after burial. They are not required by law; but do assure some safety and reduce landscape maintenance after a burial occurs. It takes energy to manufacture and ship these boxes, and those processes have an associated carbon footprint. Natural burials do not allow concrete boxes. There are available spaces at Mount Auburn where concrete boxes are not required.

Restoration or Preservation of Habitat

Bigelow noted [burial] "should take place peacefully, silently, separately, in the retired valley, or the sequestered wood, where the soil continues its primitive exuberance." Primitive exuberance! Greenhouse Technician Paul Kwiatkowski describes "primitive exuberance" this way: "the soil foodweb is a vast community of organisms that exchange energy and nutrients through relationships which are beneficial to every organism's prosperity in the formation of healthy soil." Bigelow would be overjoyed to know the steep banks around Consecration Dell have been shored up with nutrient-rich, compost-filled burlap tubes that were planted with native plants all in the name of restoration. Mount Auburn is recognized as an Important Bird Area (IBA) by the Massachusetts Audubon Society for its bountiful, diverse, and expanding bird habitat. Those are just two of the many acts of ongoing restoration and preservation of these 175 acres.

Furthermore, Mount Auburn allows the burial of embalmed bodies, which is not perceived as a "natural burial," but the choice is up to you. Embalming is not required by law. Formaldehyde, a known human carcinogen, is used in embalming fluid and the funeral industry is seeking alternatives to better protect worker health. Today, if a wake is desired with the body present, one alternative includes putting a body on dry ice. Contact your funeral director or the Funeral Consumers Alliance if you'd like further details. Bigelow was not in favor of delaying the decomposition of a body. He asks, "What possible use is a resistance to the laws of nature?"

Bigelow closes, "if some memorial is necessary to soothe the unsatisfied want, which we feel when bereaved of their presence, it must be found in contemplating the place in which we know that their dust is hidden." How beautiful to know that place is Mount Auburn.

PRESERVATION: *Two Treasures Restored*

AMONG MOUNT AUBURN'S COLLECTION OF APPROXIMATELY 44,000 memorials, there are a number of highly significant monuments that contribute to the Cemetery's national importance. These monuments are deemed significant for a variety of reasons. They are either rare or unique works of art, represent the work of a renowned artist, are associated with one of our notable residents, or are reflective of an important period in our country's history. They are only a small part of the Cemetery's cultural landscape yet they are essential in telling Mount Auburn's story. Many of these significant monuments need preservation work. The Robert Gould Shaw Monument and the Nathaniel Bowditch Statue are two examples of such treasures that have recently been conserved.

monument and work on the underground tomb. The lot fence is currently being restored and will be back in place in the spring.

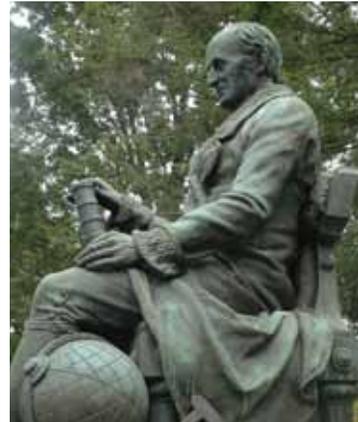
"We are grateful for the generous gift to restore the Shaw Monument and fervently hope that other families will follow suit to help the Cemetery care for their significant works of art and horticulture at Mount Auburn," says Curator of Historical Collections Meg L. Winslow.

The Bowditch Statue, created by the notable sculptor R. Ball Hughes, commemorates self-taught mathematician and astronomer, Nathaniel Bowditch

(1773-1838). Originally created in 1847, it was the first life-size bronze statue cast in the United States. The statue was later re-cast at the Gruet Jeune Fondateur in Paris in 1886, and this second casting stands in the Cemetery today overlooking Central Avenue from a prominent rise. Over time, the surface of the statue had become streaked with corrosion. A build-up of oils, once used to treat the bronze, began to obscure the details of the sculpture. Conservation treatment this past summer included filling in cracks and pits, removing old coatings and corrosion, and repatination to restore the statue's original bronze finish. "He's smiling once again" a recent visitor remarked.

On your next visit to Mount Auburn, make sure to stop by the Bowditch Statue and Shaw Monument to see firsthand the remarkable difference that these conservation efforts can make. Less visible, but equally important is the critical effect preservation has in extending the longevity of these treasures for all to appreciate. These two monuments are tangible examples of the work that can be accomplished with your support, and there are many other cultural artifacts in our collection that are being lost to the elements.

If you can help fund another of our priority preservation projects, please contact Vice President of Development Jane M. Carroll at 617-607-1919.



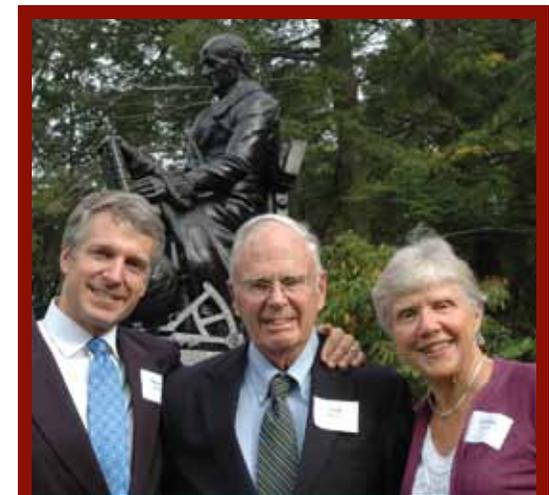
Above, left: Conservation work being done to the Shaw Monument
Above: Progression of restoration to the Bowditch Statue



The Shaw Monument was erected in 1848 by Robert Gould Shaw (1776-1853). Designed by noted architect Hammatt Billings, and executed by distinguished artisan Alpheus Cary, the monument holds great artistic significance. The later addition of a panel to com-

memorate Shaw's grandson, Colonel Robert Gould Shaw (1837-1863), Civil War commander of the 54th Massachusetts Regiment, brought the historic monument national significance as well. In 2011, a family member, Mr. S. Parkman Shaw,

made a generous donation to the Cemetery for the much-needed restoration of the large family monument, the surrounding cast-iron lot fence, and the grounds of his family lot. Throughout the summer, work on this exciting landmark project included washing and conservation of the central



Bowditch descendants Brooks Preston (left) and his parents, Frederic and Granthia Preston, visited Mount Auburn during our 180th celebration to see the completed conservation of the Bowditch Statue.

TRUSTEE ANNOUNCEMENT

The Friends is pleased to announce that **James F. Hunnewell, Jr.**, of Chestnut Hill, Mass., was elected to the Friends of Mount Auburn Board of Trustees this past March.



Jim Hunnewell

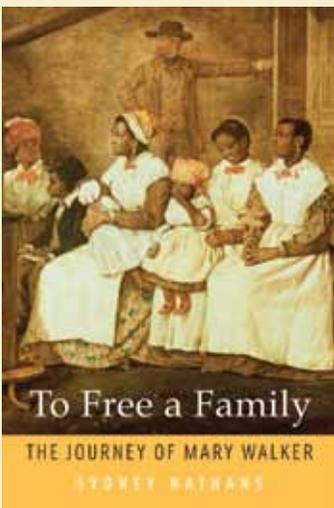
As a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) accredited registered architect with 36 years of experience in the Boston area, Jim’s professional background and interests are congruent with Mount Auburn’s mission to carry out preservation initiatives. He is currently a principal at Briar Properties, LLC, and has previously worked for many years at Shepley Bulfinch Richardson & Abbott.

His projects often feature significant elements of historic preservation or adaptive re-use and renovation, and have included 14 library projects.

Jim has had a long-term interest in Mount Auburn and its mission, which led to his involvement in the Cemetery’s Meadow Extension Architect Selection and Planning Committees. In addition to his activities at Mount Auburn, he also maintains affiliations with The Boston Athenaeum, Peabody Essex Museum, Gore Place Society, the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, and The Bostonian Society. Regarding his new appointment with the Friends, Jim commented, “Mount Auburn’s status as a National Historic Landmark and an iconic cultural landscape makes it well-suited to play an active role in a wide variety of important civic arenas involving the environment, art and architecture, horticulture, and preservation. As an architect with a preservation background, I look forward to working with the Friends to help shape and strengthen that role.”

Forthcoming Publication of Interest

Sydney Nathans’ *To Free a Family* (Harvard University Press, 2012) tells the remarkable story of one of Mount Auburn’s notable residents, freedom-seeker Mary Walker, who in



August 1848, fled her owner for refuge in the North and spent the next seventeen years trying to recover her family. Her freedom, like that of thousands who escaped from bondage, came at a great price—remorse at parting without a word, fear for her family’s fate. This story is anchored in two extraordinary collections of letters and diaries, that of her former North Carolina slaveholders and that of the northern family—Susan and Peter Lesley—who protected and employed her.



The Horticultural Club of Boston, which was founded in 1911 and is the oldest “club” of horticultural professionals in the country, chose to celebrate its 100th Anniversary here at Mount Auburn in Bigelow Chapel on October 1st.

GRANTS

We are pleased to announce that in May we surpassed the match for the original grant of \$132,000 from the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund (MCFF) towards the construction of a new entryway into our Visitors Center in Story Chapel. This entrance will be more welcoming, accessible, and energy efficient in addition to reflecting the historic integrity of the original porte-cochere. Without the generous support of Cambridge Savings Bank (\$30,000), The Lynch Foundation (\$30,000), Harold Whitworth Pierce Charitable Trust (\$30,000), Richard Saltonstall Charitable Foundation (\$5,000), and individual contributions (\$64,288, including a lead gift of \$40,000), we could not have reached this goal. We aim to secure the remaining funds of \$68,712 within the year and begin work on this project in 2012.

The Friends also received \$25,000 in May from the Cabot Family Charitable Trust towards the construction of the new greenhouse facility, for which we continue to raise funds.

In August, the 1772 Foundation awarded the Friends \$17,500 for a joint conservation and interpretive project, which will preserve a selection of monuments commemorating notable African Americans buried at the Cemetery and interpret their lives through an interactive Heritage Trail. Mary Walker (*see left*) is one of the individuals whose monument and story will be addressed through this exciting project.

The Anthony J. and Mildred D. Ruggiero Memorial Trust awarded the Friends \$78,155 in September towards a multi-year effort to restore the Narcissus Path and Beech Avenue area, making major improvements in the quality of Mount Auburn’s wildlife habitat.



Photo by Carol Harper



Photo by
Ginny Brady-Mann



Photo by Helen Abrams

VOLUNTEER PROFILE: PHOTO CLUB *“A Thousand Words”*

The old adage that “a picture is worth a thousand words” holds true for Mount Auburn’s Photo Club. Every month, a rotating group of Mount Auburn volunteers and staff gather together for an afternoon stroll through the Cemetery with their point and shoot cameras, SLRs, DSLRs, and camera-equipped cell phones – sharing tips and inspiration as they experiment with different camera angles and subject matter. Members of the Photo Club are volunteers Helen Abrams, Hilary Hopkins, Carol Harper, Irene Dygas, Bill Mann, Ginny Brady-Mann, Meredith Miller, Rosemarie Smurzynski, and Sara Goldberg. The amazing images they’ve captured speak for themselves.



Photo by Rosemarie Smurzynski

Photo by Bill Mann





Photo by Meredith Miller



*“Everything—
from an intimate macro picture
of a tiny gnat on a flower
to the marble pathos
of a childbed death
attended by angels
to the elegant, majestic forms
of winter oaks—
all these images are
arresting and beautiful.
All you have to do
is capture them
and people will
SEE and FEEL.
And that is the
point of photography.”*



Photo by Meredith Miller

— HILARY HOPKINS



Photo by Helen Abrams



Photo by Hilary Hopkins



Friends of MOUNT AUBURN

Celebrating 25 Years

IN 1986, MOUNT AUBURN'S PRESIDENT ALAN CHESNEY announced the formation of the Friends of Mount Auburn, an organization established "to reach out to the surrounding community and the world at large to explain the true value of Mount Auburn, to share the botanical beauty and tranquility of this sanctuary, to make known its history and its lessons to generations now living and generations to come." This year the Friends celebrates its 25th anniversary and reflects on its achievements through the last quarter of a century.

The Friends established preservation as one of its primary interests with one of its earliest projects, the conservation of the monument for one of America's first professional architects, Charles Bulfinch. In August of 1990, the Cemetery removed the large limestone urn from the top of Bulfinch's badly deteriorated monument because of safety concerns. Funds raised through the Friends allowed this historically and artistically significant urn to return to its perch in 1993, following its cleaning, conservation, and stabilization. This early and successful fundraising campaign made it clear that the public was interested in supporting Mount Auburn's preservation efforts. Since then, the Friends has raised the funds for several other preservation projects, including the restoration of Bigelow Chapel's historic stained glass chancel

window in 2006, and most recently, the preservation of the Robert Gould Shaw Monument on Pine Ave (*see page 14*).

Protecting Mount Auburn's world-renowned horticultural landscape has also been a top priority for the Friends since its founding. With support solicited through the Friends, the Cemetery has been able to replant the shores of Auburn Lake and Willow Pond, and to create a meadow of wildflowers on the hillside surrounding Washington Tower. While these three projects have drastically improved the Cemetery's overall wildlife habitat and aesthetic qualities, no Friends-sponsored project has been as significant as the project to restore Consecration Dell. For more than a decade, the Friends has raised funds to allow the continued removal of invasive plant species and the planting of appropriate native New England woodland species. This ongoing project now allows the Cemetery to better celebrate the historic significance of the place where Mount Auburn was consecrated 180 years ago, while also providing a healthier habitat for the Great Horned Owls, Yellow-spotted Salamanders, and other wildlife that make the Dell their year-round home. It is now almost impossible to remember what the Dell looked like before the Friends took on this important project.



*“...by reaching out, by sharing,
and by teaching what values
generations before us stood for,
[we] are carrying out the thoughts
and aspirations of the founders.”*

—ALAN CHESNEY,
1986 Mount Auburn Cemetery Annual Report

The outreach efforts described by Alan Chesney when announcing this new organization remain a significant aspect of the Friends’ activities. With a 1995 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Friends began a multi-year and multi-pronged plan to improve the Cemetery’s educational outreach. Funding from the NEH and other sources has enabled the Friends to create a rich and dynamic array of interpretive resources including printed maps and guides, three audio tours, and, most significantly, a Visitors Center located in Story Chapel. Countless visitors have left the Cemetery with a much greater appreciation for this special place since the creation of these many amenities. See the “Did You Know?” section on the following page for some other interesting facts about the growth of the Friends’ educational outreach during the past 25 years.

The Friends would like to thank everyone who has contributed to our success over these many years. We will continue to faithfully carry out our mission in order to sustain and enhance this inspirational place for future generations.



Did **you** know...?

Did you know...?

...In the past 25 years

- The Friends has offered more than 1,400 walking tours, lectures, and special events to share the stories of Mount Auburn's history, horticulture, art and architecture, wildlife, and to celebrate the lives of the many remarkable people buried and commemorated at the Cemetery;
- Current Mount Auburn President, Dave Barnett, has led 65 talks and walks for the Friends since he came to the Cemetery as Director of Horticulture in 1993. His first program, entitled "Arboreta, Botanical Gardens, and Mount Auburn Cemetery," was held on January 29, 1994;
- The Friends has received numerous awards and accolades for its educational outreach. In 1996, the American Association of State and Local History bestowed the Friends with a Certificate of Commendation for Innovative Interpretive Programming for the audio tour "Reflections;" and
- The Friends has published 43 issues of its newsletter/magazine, *Sweet Auburn*. This issue makes 44!



...In the past 5 years, the Friends has

- Offered 495 public programs; and
- Hosted 1,046 private groups.

...In the past 3 years, there have been

- 6,874 people in attendance at Friends programs;
- 181 free public programs;
- 63 horticulture programs;
- 49 preservation programs;
- 47 wildlife programs;
- 36 meetings of the Mount Auburn Book Club; and
- 7 concerts!



...In the past year

- Our Visitors Center has been open to the public 7 days a week year-round, thanks in large part to our active group of volunteer docents; and
- Our interactive kiosk, completed with funds raised through the Friends, was installed in our Egyptian Revival Gatehouse and is now making more information about the Cemetery accessible to a wider audience.

...and there is

- **still space available** for purchase at Mount Auburn. For more information call 617-547-7105 or email sales@mountauburn.org





Our new website is coming soon!

Redesigned with funding from the Anthony J. and Mildred D. Ruggiero Memorial Trust

Upcoming Events

Join us for an upcoming program to celebrate the history, horticulture, art and architecture, and notable figures that make Mount Auburn so unique. Visit us at www.mountauburn.org to view the entire schedule of events taking place at the Cemetery throughout the spring and summer.

* Candle Lighting Service Tuesday, December 20, 4 PM

Our annual Candle Lighting Service, held each December, provides the opportunity to remember all of the loved ones no longer with us. Please join us in Story Chapel for year's service. Free.

* Cherubs & Angels of Mount Auburn Sunday, January 8, 1 PM

Images of celestial beings are found throughout the Cemetery, proudly posing on pedestals or tucked into the decorations of many monuments. Can you find them? Join **Rosemarie Smurzynski** for an exploration of the grounds, seeking examples of these winged beings in marble and granite. \$5 members; \$10 non-members.

* Eyes on Owls Saturday, February 18, 1:00 PM & 3:30 PM

Join us in *Story Chapel* for a special presentation by teacher naturalist **Marcia Wilson** and wildlife photographer **Mark Wilson**. Marcia and Mark will introduce visitors to the owls of New England and beyond. Learn the field marks, signs, and naturalist's skills that you can use to find owls without disturbing them, then meet some live owls up close! Two sessions will be offered. Seating is limited. Preregistration is required.

Adult: \$8 members; \$12 non-members.
Child: \$2 members; \$3 non-members.
Children under three: Free.

Photo by Graeme McLellan



* Tree & Shrub Pruning Workshop Tuesday, March 13, 10 AM

Join **Darryl Sullivan** and **Jonathan Webb** for this walk and hands-on demonstration to learn about pruning ornamental trees and shrubs. We will discuss pruning methods and tools, and look at examples. Bring your questions and hand pruners. Space is limited; preregistration is required. \$10 members; \$15 non-members.

* Good Bugs for Bad Bugs Saturday, March 24, 1 PM

Interested in keeping your annuals, perennials, and house plants healthy organically? Join us at our *Greenhouse* for this workshop led by **Kelley Sullivan** to explore the hidden world of bugs that inhabit many of our plants. We will uncover foraging pests, detect their damage, and discover the beneficial insects that keep them at bay. Learn where to look for insects and the symptoms plants may display. Come away with tips for keeping both you and your plants healthy using organic methods. \$5 members; \$10 non-members.

* Volunteer Docent Training Tuesday, March 27–Thursday, March 29, 5:30–8:00 PM

Would you like to be an ambassador of Mount Auburn Cemetery? Consider becoming a Mount Auburn Docent! Following this three-part training class, you will be ready to staff our visitor center and assist with our many public events. The Docent Training is free, but membership in the Friends is required.