

Rockville Cemetery Association

DECEMBER 2019



President's Message

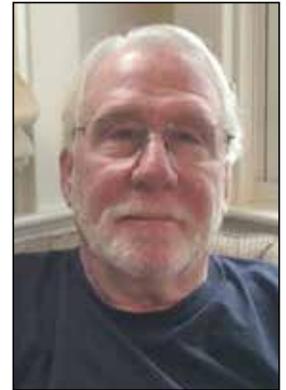
On behalf of the Rockville Cemetery Association Board of Directors I am pleased to report that 2019 has been a successful year. The Cemetery is in good condition overall. Grave sales continue at strong levels, in both the upper and lower sections, and we are blessed with excellent tenants in the Caretaker's House.

The 30 trees planted last year are thriving, despite the summer drought, thanks to our watering contract, on which more than \$8,000 was spent between June and October. The tree program was recently honored with a Peerless Rockville Award. Kudos and thanks to board member and professional arborist Elise Polydoroff who led this effort. Rockville Cemetery also thanks the Rockville Rotary Club Foundation for a \$2,500 grant that was used to support the tree watering contract.

Our most valuable assets continue to be the dedicated volunteers who comprise the Cemetery Board. Rockville Cemetery operates with no paid staff, as it has throughout its 289-year history. It is truly a community-run cemetery focused on serving the needs of area residents. There are currently two open board positions. We are actively recruiting new members to fill these vital seats on the board. If you are interested please contact RCA via the website www.rockvillecemeterymd.org, or call.

In addition to the new trees, a visit to the cemetery will reveal much gravestone conservation work completed and ongoing. Two contractors are in the midst of repairing approximately 50 monuments that are either leaning, broken, or require other specialized work. Your financial contributions to support this necessary and expensive work are greatly needed and appreciated.

Two volunteers, including director Anne Allnutt and super-volunteer Linda Lawton have repaired, straightened, re-set or restored more than 180 "volunteer grade" upper cemetery markers during this past year! Anne and Linda also keep the 135 boxwoods trimmed and, along with director Mike Grant, have cleared a virtual mountain of brush from overgrown areas throughout both the upper and lower cemetery sections.



In October, our event committee led by Hannelore Quigley and Eileen McGuckian staged a Ghost Tour, which was well attended and received rave reviews. This event is a key part of RCA's community outreach, which offers cemetery tours for school and community groups, as well as many other focused volunteer opportunities.

Special recognition and thanks to RCA Treasurer Steve Edwards for his capable and dedicated work managing our finances, investments, and paying the bills. Steve plays a key role in grave sales and burials support as well. Our digital records and maps team led by Mike Grant, Hannelore Quigley, and Anne Allnutt also deserve special acknowledgment.

I also want to specially recognize our contractor partners who play such important roles, including Grave Digger Scotty Combs, our Landscape Contractor Solar Gardens, and Tree Contractor Pogo Tree Services. In addition to opening and closing graves, Scotty Combs performs other vital work keeping the grounds and new graves in good condition, and special projects such as the recent demolition of the garage which was falling apart and had been designated an unsafe building.

Please consider a contribution to Rockville Cemetery, in the form of a financial donation or by stepping up to volunteer in one of many ways available. Donations will be used to support ongoing gravestone conservation projects.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Rockville Cemetery Association, either through the website, www.rockvillecemeterymd.org or by calling us at 301-309-0191.

Sincerely,

Burt Hall, President,
Rockville Cemetery Association, Inc.

2020 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

RCA Board of Directors Meetings Second Tuesday of Rockville City Hall (*not August*) every month, 7 pm

Conservation work in Upper and Lower Cemetery Sections Spring 2020

Annual Meeting and Elections April 14, 2020

Flags Posted on Veteran Graves May 22-30, 2020

A NEWSLETTER OF ROCKVILLE CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 4318, ROCKVILLE, MD 20849 • WWW.ROCKVILLECEMETERYMD.ORG • RCA@ROCKVILLECEMETERYMD.GMAIL.COM • 301-309-0191

2019 Rockville Cemetery Ghost Tour

In October, Rockville Cemetery volunteers presented a special afternoon of tours for dozens of visitors. “History Comes Alive!” featured distinguished persons who described personal and professional experiences from their respective time periods. In addition to enjoying the day, guests left with a better understanding of some individuals who now rest in this historic burial ground.



Nancy Jean Fox portrayed nurse Vashti Rebecca Bartlett, whose Johns Hopkins Hospital School of Nursing education led to global missions and served as an example of skill and enthusiasm for her profession.



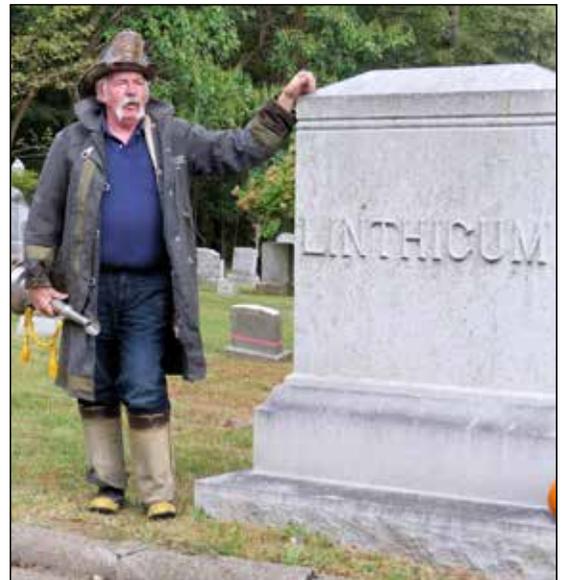
The full cast of ghost characters posed at the front porch of the Caretaker's Cottage at Rockville Cemetery after conclusion of the program.



David Hill recalled the distinguished life of Judge Richard Johns Bowie, whose leadership in the 19th century left a legacy of education, agricultural innovations, and civic causes in Montgomery County.



Bruce Adams, as Hall of Fame baseball pitcher Walter Johnson, described his career as the revered Washington Senator as well as what “Big Train” might think of baseball today.



Timothy Jones depicted Rockville physician Otis Linthicum, whose civic hats during his lifetime included Mayor, Councilman, and founding member of the Rockville Volunteer Fire Department.

(Continues on page 5)

Robert J. Stevens

1907-2005 • Lower Cemetery, Section 2, Lot 138, Site 1

Born on April 17, 1907, Robert "Bobby" Stevens was the youngest child of Eugene E. and Gertrude M. Stevens. Eugene, a trial attorney, passed away young. Gertrude was a schoolteacher, suffragette, and first president of the League of Women Voters of Montgomery County. The family lived in three different homes in Chevy Chase, MD.

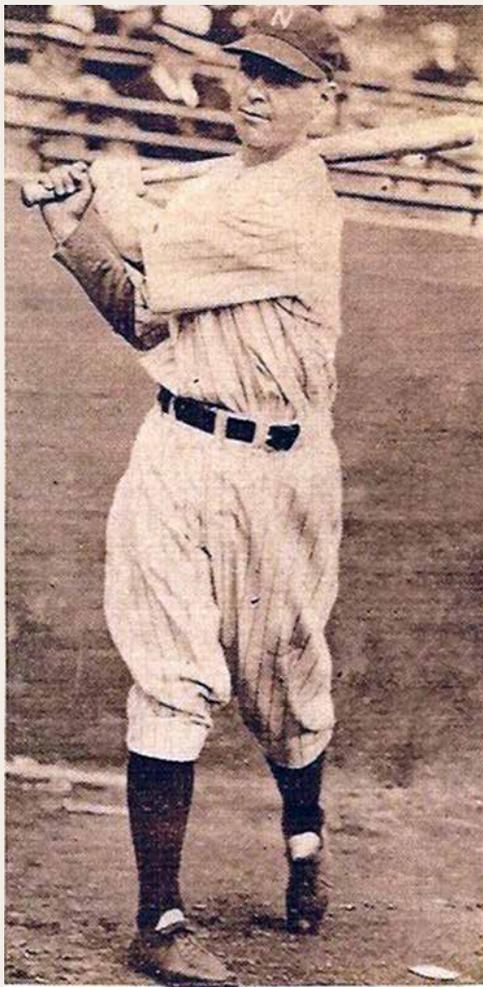
The four Stevens brothers always played baseball. As kids, they watched the Senators at Griffith Stadium and cheered for Walter Johnson (a neighbor), Babe Ruth, Ty Cobb, and other big name pros. Bobby Stevens attended Western High School in Washington, D.C., playing shortstop on the team.

The Stevens and McAuliffe families organized the Chevy Chase Bearcats Baseball team in 1919. Bobby, Ray, and Mike Stevens were shortstop and batting practice pitcher, second, and first base respectively. They played in local fields, including Chevy Chase Circle, where conductors and passengers watched as their trolleys rounded the 200' diameter circle. The Bearcats competed against teams in the Montgomery County League from Bethesda, Rockville, Gaithersburg, Boyds, Dickerson, Glen Echo, and Takoma Park. The family recalls the crowd cheering double plays from Stevens to Stevens to Stevens, and the Bearcats almost never lost.

Even before his high school graduation, Bobby was drafted by Norfolk, a Yankees farm team. He was called up by Philadelphia in 1931 and remained on the Phillies roster until 1933. He played in 12 Major League games. After his first game on July 3, 1931, he built an average of .343 with 35 at-bats. His last game was in Canada on August 5, 1931, where he was hit in the head with a fastball and knocked unconscious. After recovering, Stevens never got his starting line-up job back, nor was a baseball card ever issued for him.

However, Stevens transitioned quickly to a great, paid career in the Carolina and International minor Leagues. He earned a lifetime average of .313 and about \$12,000-\$15,000 a year. He continued playing semi-pro ball while studying accounting and law. His last game, played for an Annapolis team, was in 1941.

In World War II, Stevens served in the Army Air Corps at Mitchell Field in Long Island, NY. He later regaled his family with tales of waging a two-year life-and-death battle with an



Shortstop Bob Stevens hit a Grand Slam for the Newark Bears on April 17, 1932. Star Ledger photo, courtesy Dolly Stevens

adding machine. He then worked in accounting for the Veterans Administration in Washington. There he met Lucy Elizabeth Shull, born and raised in Texarkana, Texas, who worked in New Orleans and Fort Wayne before moving to Washington; they married in January 1942. Bob was an MLB professional umpire from 1949 to 1955, sometimes officiating games in Griffith Stadium.

Lucy and Bobby Stevens raised four children -- William, David, Rusty, and Dolly -- living first in Chevy Chase and then moving to South Stonestreet Avenue in Rockville in 1955. Thirty-four years later, WMATA took the property to construct the Metro parking lot, so the family moved to Roxboro Road, in the west end of town.

Bob Stevens coached a Rockville Little League baseball team from 1960 to 1967, capping with a championship that final year. Frank Williams, owner of team sponsor Rockmont Chevrolet, said he was the best pure coach he had ever seen and should have coached in the majors. Stevens taught the kids, including son David, to hit the ball because none of them were very good fielders.

Stevens retired from the VA in 1966, then drove a County bookmobile for a decade. He always read avidly and was

particularly interested in the Civil War; ancestors on two sides of his family had fought each other in Fredericksburg. He always remained an athlete, never gaining weight, and was known as a funny story-teller who could spell-bind a room.

After Lucy passed away in 1992, Bob Stevens maintained his life-long connection with baseball. He encouraged Rockville to name a field at Dogwood Park for Walter Johnson. In 2000, the Association of Professional Ball Players of America invited Stevens to Veterans Stadium to unveil a plaque for the Phillies' original field, Baker Bowl Park. A few years later, at a Frederick Keys game, he threw a perfect first pitch from the mound to home plate.

Stevens moved to Frederick during the final year of his life. Before passing away on December 30, 2005, at 98 he was the oldest living former member of the Philadelphia Phillies. He was buried in Rockville Cemetery next to Lucy and Rusty. He was survived by three children, four grandchildren, and numerous fans.

Appreciation to Bill Stevens, Dolly Stevens, and Chevy Chase Historical Society for information and assistance.



Please include Rockville Cemetery Association when making your end-of-year gifts.

I'm interested in serving on the Board of Directors. Please call me. Thanks!

- To be used for:
- Tree Work (planting new, pruning old)
 - Road Repair
 - Gravestone Conservation
 - However funds are needed
- \$25
 - \$50
 - \$100
 - \$500
 - Other \$_____

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution:

Please make checks payable to **RCA** or donate online **using PayPal!** Go to www.rockvillecemeterymd.org At the bottom right of any page hit the **DONATE** button. **Quick & Easy!**

IN MEMORY OF: _____

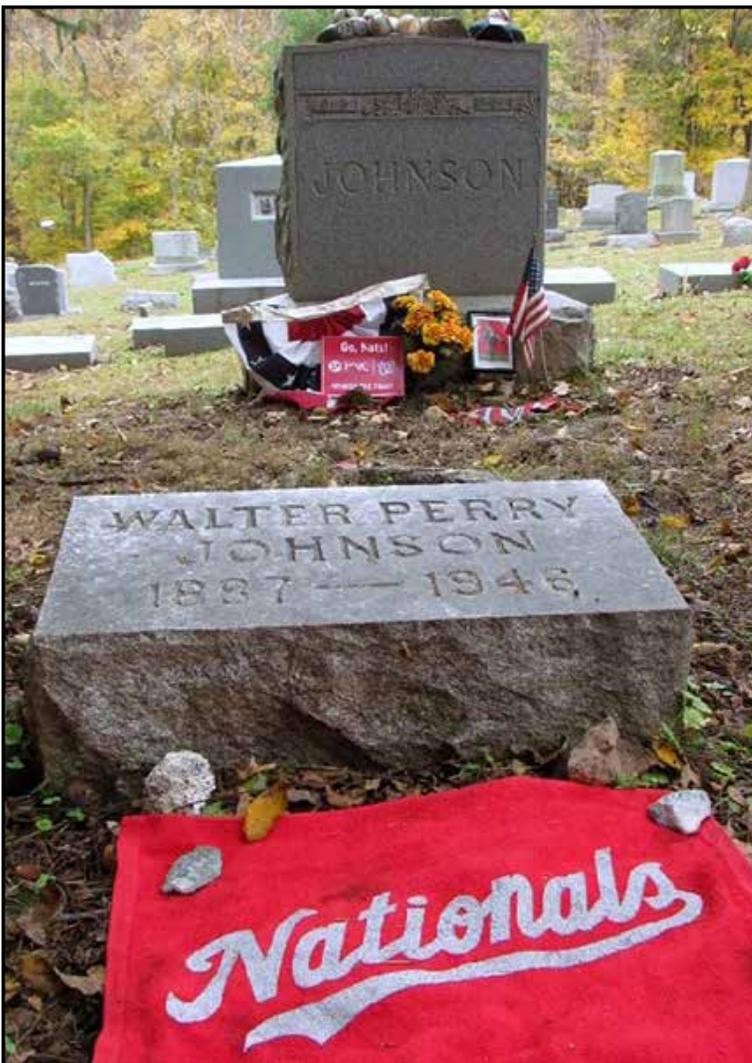
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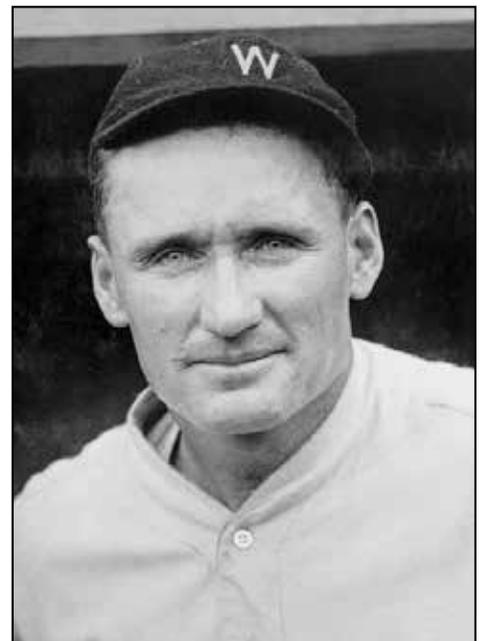
City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____



Walter Johnson was the star pitcher for the Washington Senators from 1907-1927, compiling statistics that still produce awe. Known as "Big Train" for his fastball, he helped to win Washington's first World



Series in 1924. In 1936 he was one of the first five players voted into the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Johnson was managing the Senators in 1930 when his wife Hazel died suddenly. He went on to raise their children, purchase a 552-acre farm in Germantown, and serve two terms as a Montgomery County Commissioner. He died of a brain tumor on December 10, 1946, and was buried next to Hazel in Section M of the Upper Cemetery. This year, Nats fans made their way to Rockville Cemetery to celebrate the 2019 World Series with Walter Johnson.

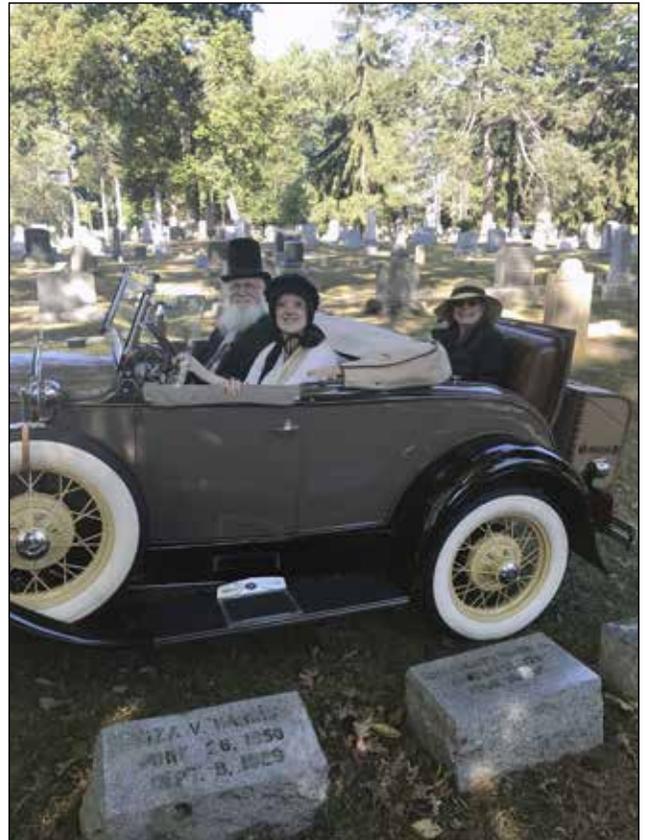


Dr. Stonestreet (left, played by Clarence Hickey) is surprised how the cemetery has changed. "Where did all these gravestones come from? Oh, what year is it? 2019!! My goodness gracious!"



"Where did my car go? Did those kids leave me high and dry? These kids these days... I just don't know!"

Ghost Tour participant and board member, Mike Grant, playing his ancestor Thomas McGaha, former Caretaker at Rockville Cemetery, made several appearances during the tour. Here is rests on his shovel on the stoop of the Caretakers Cottage, which is now used as a private rental property.



Off on a jaunty tour in the 1931 Ford Model A Roadster, 'driven' by Ghost Tour organizer and RCA board member, Hannelore Quigley along with Doug Hill (as Nicholas Offutt) in front passenger seat, Patrice Lucid in the rumble or "mother-in-law seat." Join us in 2021 to view 'living history' at Rockville Cemetery for the Ghost Tour. The 1931 Ford Model A Roadster was graciously donated for the day's enjoyment by car enthusiast and Ford restorer, Charles McDonald.



VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

Good men and women to support historic



Rockville Cemetery Association is seeking individuals to
serve on its Board of Directors:

- ★ Attend monthly Board Meetings
- ★ Provide input regarding cemetery operation
- ★ Help preserve and protect local history

For More Information & Nomination Form Contact Us at:
WWW.ROCKVILLECEMETERYM.D.ORG



IN MEMORIAM

Rockville Cemetery Association wishes to extend our deepest condolences to the families of those interred during the past year. The diverse lives they leave behind will forever serve to further enrich the cultural landscape of Rockville's most historic cemetery.

James Leon Albin
Mary Georgiana CONNICK Bentley
Rick C. Brownlee, Jr.
Runbo Cao
Hong Cong
Alfred Sylvan DeAgro III
Janet Ruth SWEARINGTON Dennis
Terrell Senator Ellis
Edward Sydney Gault, Jr.
George Daniel Hickman
Shuiqin Huang
Shi Poy Lew
Jack Anthony Martinelli
Jonathan Mason
Nina Halissa Ouedraogo
Marjorie Pauline HEFFNER Mead
Theodore Stephen Michaels
Rahim Mokhtari
Ellen Camm SUTTON Scala
Chaojun Shen
Steven Dawson Shoemaker
Dan Junior Stanback
William Lee Stephens, Jr.
Alfredo Tirado
Clarice Amanda Wilson
Mark Edward White