

Unearth Oregon's Past

I4 The Block 14 Initiative
at Lone Fir

Westward expansion is a well-known part of American history. The land claims that occurred in the Oregon Territory opened limitless opportunities for settlers wanting to start new lives. Portland became home to many who traveled in covered wagons and had dreams of building a place of possibilities nestled against forested hills and a winding river.

What is not as well known is the story of thousands of people traveling *east* to Oregon by ship, with the intention of finding jobs, not homes. Upon completion of their projects, they returned to their provinces in China where many generations of their families had lived and died.

Oregon's early Chinese workers accepted the challenge of undertaking the most arduous tasks – laying down rail tracks and building up seawalls, and digging ancient tree stumps to create our infrastructure. As they worked hard to make Oregon a more civilized place to live, they faced significant hardship and discrimination. Many of those who lost their lives doing this work were buried in Block 14 at Lone Fir Cemetery – a section of land purchased by Suburban Railroad and managed by the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association.

Not even death was going to keep these workers from returning home. Many of them had made arrangements for their remains to be sent back to China should they face untimely deaths in Oregon. After a specified amount of time, their bones were to be sent back to their home provinces in small metal boxes.

Discrimination continued after death. At the request of Multnomah County, the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association sent the remaining bones from Block 14 back to

China so the County could construct a maintenance building on the site. Once it was discovered in 2005 that remains still existed in Block 14, the community was motivated to tell the story of early Chinese workers and honor their contributions. Thus, *The Block 14 Initiative at Lone Fir* was established.

Honoring THE past 朗花

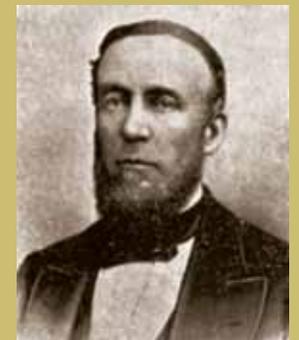


There was a time when, rather than helping or rehabilitating loved ones, the solution was to send them away. The word *asylum* used to refer to a place for people who couldn't take care of themselves or who did not have families with the means to support them. These people may have been afflicted with mental health conditions, or were physically incapacitated, impoverished or non-English speaking. One Oregon man not only looked after these people, but also treated them with great respect and dignity.

Dr. James Hawthorne was known for his benevolence and humanity toward his patients. He established the Oregon Hospital for the Insane in East Portland where he cared for more than 500 people. Some of his practices were unprecedented at the time. By giving his patients a sense of purpose, through making a living and tending to gardens, he fostered their confidence and independence in a safe environment. Due to Dr. Hawthorne's progressive and innovative work, his statewide hospital received national recognition as being one of the best institutions in the United States.

One of Dr. Hawthorne's greatest examples of kindness was arranging to bury his patients when family members were absent. It is believed that more than 200 of his patients were laid to rest in various areas of Lone Fir Cemetery – including the east side of Block 14.

Like many of the Chinese workers, their grave markers are long gone, but *The Block 14 Initiative* aims to honor these patients and the doctor who cared for them until his own death, when he too was buried at Lone Fir Cemetery.



THE Heritage Garden AND Memorial AT Lone Fir



The Chinese worker and asylum patient memorials are linked by a shared pergola with seating, providing a place for contemplative views out to the gardens.



The oval green is flanked by ribbons of wildflowers and a curved path leading to the pergola, which frames a funerary burner and memorial pine tree. Authentic Chinese headstone artifacts are located in the green.



An informational kiosk and sign are located at a new pedestrian entry at the memorial garden. A seeping stone wall is a focal point in the entry plaza.

A Place to Gather, Reflect and Learn

Although the stories of Oregon’s early pioneer days are abundant, the historically significant places to visit in Portland are sparse. Listed on the U.S. Department of Interior’s National Register of Historic Places, Lone Fir is a beloved destination for history lovers, neighbors, students from nearby schools, and tourists alike.

Among the stunning array of headstones, hundreds of trees have been planted for loved ones, providing an urban ecosystem for a variety of habitats. As seen in many cultures around the world, cemeteries are a place for gathering, celebrating, grieving, growing and learning. More people are visiting Lone Fir than ever before – through cultural events, historic tours and cleaning and repair workshops.

“Cemeteries have so much to offer communities. We honor our ancestors by caring for their final resting place – but we must also not forget their stories. They are a mirror reflection of our past and a window to our future.”

METRO COUNCILOR AND
FORMER OREGON GOVERNOR
BARBARA ROBERTS

Unearth Oregon’s Past: The Block 14 Initiative at Lone Fir

This effort will continue to provide the momentum to bring more people to this treasured cemetery and preserve it for future generations. Metro Regional Government, which manages 14 pioneer cemeteries, retained Lango Hansen Landscape Architects and partnered with Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery, the Oregon Consolidated Chinese Benevolent Association and prominent mental health advocates to seek input on the aesthetics, cultural appropriateness and potential uses for Block 14. Metro and Lango

Hansen produced the Lone Fir Block 14 Memorial Park Master Plan in 2008, with guidance from the State of Oregon Historic Preservation Office as required by the National Register. Situated in the southwest corner of Lone Fir’s 30 acres, Block 14 feels removed from the cemetery. Unlike the rest of Lone Fir, there are no trees, plant life or headstones. Instead, visitors find a gravel lot where a maintenance building and a parking lot once existed. *The Block 14 Initiative at Lone Fir* will aesthetically reunite the area with the rest of the cemetery and serve as a beautiful entrance, rich with storytelling, honor and gratitude.

A view of Block 14 from southeast Morrison Street.





THE Transformation OF Block I4

Honoring Chinese Workers

- ◆ New pedestrian entrance to Lone Fir Cemetery that includes welcoming signs with information about the Heritage Garden, Memorial and history of the cemetery
- ◆ Seeping stone fountain flanked by curved paths that surround the area
- ◆ An oval green composed of low-growing, drought-tolerant grasses and ground cover interspersed with flowering trees
- ◆ Interpretive stone panels designed to convey the journey of early Chinese workers, and mark locations where remains were found in 2005
- ◆ Chinese funerary burner and trellis similar to the original structures that were demolished

Paying Respect to Asylum Patients

- ◆ Small building displaying artifacts from the Chinese workers and Dr. Hawthorne's asylum
- ◆ Shallow contemplative pool and stonework with the names of Dr. Hawthorne's patients listed
- ◆ A bell tower to the north of the garden, reminiscent of the bell Dr. Hawthorne rang daily at the asylum
- ◆ Series of interpretive art pieces telling stories of the asylum patients' experiences
- ◆ An intimate garden inspired by Victorian-era planting design that was popular during Dr. Hawthorne's time

Sustainable Landscaping

- ◆ Native Oregon plants as well as groupings of plant species brought to the state by early pioneers
- ◆ Landscape design supporting sustainable practices, energy efficiency and cost containment



Lone Fir Cemetery

Lone Fir Pioneer Cemetery is a civic landmark and a treasured historic resource with an extraordinary, multicultural past. The cemetery sustains the memory of military veterans, firefighters and mental hospital patients, and is a final resting place for people of diverse ethnicities and nationalities, including Chinese, Japanese, Russians, Ukrainians, Vietnamese and African-Americans.

Despite its central location and wealth of treasures, Lone Fir has greater potential to serve additional city residents and visitors who are unaware of the variety of resources inside. Many neighborhood residents currently walk, bike or drive by without noticing Lone Fir. *The Block 14 Initiative at Lone Fir* will create a new, inviting public entrance, and the cemetery and the community will benefit from an increased profile that will help overcome challenges, such as vandalism and neglect.

A Welcoming Entrance

Your support of *The Block 14 Initiative at Lone Fir* will help establish the garden and memorial, honoring those who lie in unmarked graves, and providing a place where Oregon's history can be told.

Like many other world-class cities that treasure their earliest cemeteries, The Heritage Garden and Memorial at Lone Fir will be a place to learn, explore, reflect and enjoy. It will enhance the experience of visiting Lone Fir, welcoming those who seek stories about our past among the trees, gardens and monuments in the cemetery.

The Block 14 Initiative at Lone Fir aims to raise funds to build one of the first memorials to early Chinese workers and to Dr. Hawthorne and his patients. It will serve as a welcoming entrance to Lone Fir Cemetery, honoring those whose headstones disappeared long ago. The garden will also serve as an expression of gratitude to the early settlers who built our city, as well as to those who cared for people in need.

With Gratitude to the Community

Through the efforts of Metro Regional Government, City of Portland and Multnomah County, *The Block 14 Initiative at Lone Fir* has engaged many community organizations and interested parties, such as the Oregon Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery, Southeast Uplift, Buckman Neighborhood Association and Portland Fire and Rescue.

Through two artistic projects released in 2008, the *(D)early Departed* music CD and the documentary, *Come Together Home*, public awareness of the project has increased and proceeds from their sales continue to be donated to *The Block 14 Initiative at Lone Fir*. The project has also received support through public funds, grants, corporate support and individuals.

“The wave of Chinese immigrant workers to Portland at the turn of the 20th century created the nation’s second largest Chinese community. Despite the discrimination and hardships they faced, their contribution to the foundation and growth of Oregon is immeasurable. It’s time their stories were told, and what more fitting tribute than this beautiful, sacred memorial garden where we can pay them the public respect and honor so long overdue.”

REBECCA LIU
Oregon Chinese Consolidated
Benevolent Association

DID YOU Know?

- ◆ Families with strong connections to Oregon's history are buried throughout Lone Fir. Familiar names include Lovejoy, Cardwell, Macleay, Bybee, Cullen, Dekum, Banfield, Holman, Lane, Caruthers, Thurman, Tryon and Lownsdale.
- ◆ It is believed that there are more than 10,000 unmarked graves at Lone Fir. Dr. Hawthorne's asylum patients comprise more than 200 of them. When families were absent, Dr. Hawthorne made arrangements for his patients to be buried at Lone Fir. It is believed that their wooden markers deteriorated over time.
- ◆ Some of Dr. Hawthorne's accomplishments include being elected to the California Senate; establishing a state hospital that was considered one of the best institutions in the country; being honored as the leading authority of "diseases of the mind"; and achieving the highest order of the Masons.
- ◆ Since the 1850s, Chinese immigrants have been in Oregon. By the 1890s, 11 percent of Portland's residents were from China, and the city was the second largest Chinese community on the West Coast until 1900.
- ◆ The Burlingame Treaty of 1858 allowed Chinese citizens to enter the United States freely, with many of them working for Oregon's mines, railroads, canneries and construction. Others worked as servants, gardeners, cooks and launderers. Threatened by the prevalence of Chinese workers and their success in establishing businesses, their civil rights were restricted and they were banned from owning land. In 1882, the Chinese Exclusion Act prohibited any future arrival of Chinese into the U.S.
- ◆ More than 150 years ago, there was one tree at Lone Fir Cemetery. Today, there are over 600 trees within 30 acres – each planted on a grave after the death of a loved one. The mature trees create an extensive canopy that supports an urban habitat for over 65 bird species.

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at Lone Fir

The Block 14 Initiative at Lone Fir
c/o Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery
PO Box 14214, Portland, Oregon 97293
503.902.4778 ◆ lonefirblock14.org

The Heritage Garden and Memorial at Lone Fir will be located at the southwest corner of Lone Fir Cemetery at southeast 20th and Morrison.

Donations can be made payable to "Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery." Indicate your intention by adding "Block 14" on the memo line.

In 2008, Buddhist Master Yundan Trinley Dorje Rinpoche was invited to visit Block 14 and review the plans. He interpreted the arched path in the design as representing a boat carrying spirits back to the West and felt the memorial will improve the Feng Shui of the area.



James Beck, Hawthorne descendant, and Stanley Clarke, local historian, visited Dr. Hawthorne's grave at Lone Fir Cemetery in 2011.

Collaborators

Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery
friendsoflonefircemetery.org

Metro Regional Government Cemeteries Program
oregonmetro.gov/cemeteries

Oregon Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association
ccbaportland.org

Oregon Historic Cemeteries Commission
oregon.gov/OPRD/HCD/OCHC/