

**MEETING MINUTES**  
**OCHC**  
**Museum of the Oregon Territory, Oregon City**  
**July 20, 2007**

Robert Keeler called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm. All the Commissioners and staff introduced themselves.

**Present:** Stanley Clarke, Nick Eddy, Judy Juntunen, Robert Keeler, Diana LaSarge, Dirk Siedlecki, Kuri Gill, Kyle Jansson, Kimarie Lamb

**Guests:** Lynne Pagan -Treasurer of OHCA, Lee-Ann Lane, Carol Surrency – OHCA, Judy Goldman – Harrison Cemetery, Linda Van Orden – Junction City Historical Society, Bev Power, Judy Boyd, Cynthia, Bob Leitner – Etna Cemetery, Stanley Clark, Elizabeth Banducci – Myrtle Creek Pioneer Cemetery, Beverlee Koutny – Jory Pioneer Cemetery, Richard Morris, Curtis & Cynthia Duane – Deer Creek Cemetery,

**Approval of Minutes:**

Chairman Keeler mentioned that the date of the meeting needed to be on the agenda. There were no other additions or corrects. Nick Eddy moved to approve the minutes with mentioned corrections and changes and Dirk Siedlecki second the motion. All were in favor. Kuri mentioned that the final minutes will be available online.

**Additions to the Agenda:**

There were no additions to the agenda..

**Commission Update:**

New Appointments: Two new members have joined the Commission: Dale Ivan and Col-lea Lane. This gives some good geographic distribution throughout the various areas of Oregon. A friendly welcome was given to our two new Commissioners.

Sub-Committees:

Education Committee: The bibliography is complete and is still working on the symbols and plan on having that done by the November planning meeting in draft. The Commission will start doing bulletins and making them available on the website. The first one is about State Laws, Cemeteries and the Cleaning of Markers. The template created will be used for all of Heritage Programs, the Heritage Commission, the Archaeology program – Section 106, all of SHPO and Cemeteries.

Legislative Committee: discussed possible recommendations to change the designation date of a historic cemetery as there are cemeteries that don't meet the current criteria who are seeking guidance and wanting to apply for grants. Considered two levels: Pioneer and Historical, but in the end the consensus was to suggest a 75 year rule and by doing that take into consideration the 20th century and recognizing the cemeteries that don't make the rule. Further review and discussion of this will take place with the Oregon Cemetery and Mortuary Board. Also discussed was shooting in, into and /or through a cemetery.

**OPRD Update:**

Historic Cemeteries to partner with other heritage Programs: In a fall workshop, several folks within heritage programs will host a fall research workshop.

**Workshops:**

May Workshop: Cemetery Care and Preservation - There was a good turn out and the class was very successful. Presentation of the class was done by Sally Donovan and Bruce Howard.

July Workshop: Cemetery Records: To be held tomorrow, Saturday July 21<sup>st</sup> following this meeting discussing cemetery records – kinds of records to keep, how to store and archive them, creating partnerships for storage locations and database exploration.

October Workshop: getting the youth involved in cemeteries. Becky Soules will be presenting, a representative from Oregon SOLV will talk on Service Learning and how to get that started up in the schools, and several other presenters will be present on Saturday, October 6th following the Friday meeting in Coos Bay.

November Workshop: OPRD and Ross Curtis, Cultural Resources Coordinator, will do a training on researching local people and places. This will most likely be in Eugene - dates to be announced.

January Workshop: OMA will be in Salem to present and discuss the fee structure that changed with the Legislative session this year & the kinds of records they require - dates are to be announced.

Oregon Heritage Conference: February 2008 in Eugene - dates to be announced.

**Website Content:**

Kuri is putting things on the website. The grants page was just updated and as of Monday the grants application will be downloadable. The highlighted grant project section will change monthly so when you obtain a grant it's helpful to take pictures so those can be put up on the website to show other people what can be done.

The How-to-do press release reminds web viewers and other people of all the great things being done. There was an article placed in the Weekly Ad of the Oregonian for this workshop.

**Grants Update:**

The grants final reporting came and completed applications came in. There were six who didn't complete out of the thirty-nine. Many of those grantees have been visited by Kuri and there is excitement for the next round. The program was on hold for about 5 months with money from the last biennium budget not spent and Kuri is working on a way to apply that to grants in this biennium.

Dale Ivan commented that the City of Klamath Falls was a recipient of a grant and it was turned into a training seminar/workshop with Sally Donovan and Bruce Howard. He felt that the Commission should act as mentors to help small cemeteries by training and working with them. The demand and need is very great out in every community for grant monies.

Upcoming Grants: the deadline for this next round of grants is September 15<sup>th</sup>. The goal is to get the Commission those grants as quickly as possible for approval at the October 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, then funds would be available by November. Project completion deadlines would be November 2008. The six incomplete grants were cancelled but they can be allowed to re-apply.

**Comments from Judy – Gravestone Studies Conference:** Judy attended the A.G.S. conference where she attended cemetery tours of both Colonial and Victorian cemeteries, workshops, scholarly lectures and late night get-togethers of sharing power point presentations. Conservation and public programming seemed to be the highlights of the conference. Interesting workshops: “Developing Cemetery Truths: What if no body famous is buried in your cemetery”, “Using digital photography to promote cemetery walking tours” and “Foil Rubbing”. It was fascinating to hear about Louisiana’s above ground burial vault.

### **Current Projects and Legislation:**

SB 746 was an amendment to ORS 692.10 and up which addressed the fees for the certificate of authority for operating cemeteries. The end results, after many changes, is that an exempt operating cemetery is now a cemetery that holds 10 or fewer burials a year, which is up from 10 per biennium. Those cemeteries can now receive a certificate of authority with payment of a one-time fee that can be up to \$100.00. As long as a cemetery renews their certificate every two years, they won’t have to pay that fee again. The original bill was that cemeteries paid a fee for all of the principals of the cemetery and now it’s \$50.00 no matter how many principals a cemetery has, beginning January 2008.

### **Cemetery List and Burial Index**

#### Cemetery list

The database of historic cemeteries that the Commission maintains has been going through an overhaul this summer. Contacts have been updated with owner information, accessibility, whether private or not. Once done, that information will be added to the Heritage Programs/Historic Sites database and the entire database will be put online and made searchable. There are some cemeteries that have requested their address not be made known but still want to be listed and that’s been able to happen. And as time goes on the hope is to add more photos and details.

#### Burial Index

Most genealogical groups that Kuri has spoken with are on board with having a state-wide burial index but not all are on board to have SHPO be the body that maintains it. There are meetings scheduled to discuss this with other groups. The idea is to help use funding for this program to gather information, put into the database and made searchable online. Some objections to this happening is not knowing the sources and genealogical societies selling information so it’s important not to trample on any groups. It’s also important to make it clear that there’s no biographical information being displayed online. Right now there about 550 cemeteries ready to go online for the cemetery listing.

### **ODOT Project Updates:**

Portland ODOT Project: ODOT is providing fencing for the Columbian Cemetery during the I-5 project. They will let the cemetery deal with what’s appropriate and ODOT will fund it. They will provide lighting and the cemetery folks get to select what it is. During construction ODOT will survey a certain number of feet into the cemetery and make sure no burials or monuments are disturbed with vibrations. They will replant the slope outside the cemetery as the work finishes. Ground penetrating radar was done outside the fence line to determine that there were no burials where they were fencing. If the cemetery informs ODOT when there is a burial about to happen, ODOT will work with the contractor to stop the work to avoid noise and disruption.

Metro Cemetery/Powell Grove Cemetery: Spoke with Suzie Bousha with Metro and the work shouldn’t disturb the cemetery but since the construction is bringing the road even closer to the cemetery than it is

now, Metro is talking with ODOT to buy a good, strong fence for car action. She hasn't heard how negotiations were going but felt it would be a pretty plausible thing. The parking aspect of it was not asked about.

Project/construction off Hwy 213: road widening was done. This area was avoided to start with but then it caused more traffic issues including several accidents so they are setting up ground penetrating radar surveys in the work area, just to be sure there are no burials. That report will be given to the OCHC when it's complete. The communication with ODOT is going well and the fact that they are willing to address questions and concerns before they become a problem is a very positive thing.

### **Upcoming Projects – proposed seminar:**

Contribution to Oregon Sesquicentennial - going from practical to academic, Kuri suggested:

- One big evening speaker at the seminar symposium that would draw a greater audience
- A day-time cemetery visit with a one-day event of paper presentations
- "Stories in Stone" book by Douglas Kyser from Chico, CA - one-day travel fee: \$1500.00
- Traveling exhibit connected with "Stories in Stone" book - one month fee: \$2000.00
- Host of exhibit: University of Oregon at the Museum of Cultural and Natural History – Allied Arts Dept with their preservation program
- Idea for call of day-time presenters: Willamette University, Salem Pioneer Cemetery Assoc., Marion County Historical Society, The Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde, Eugene Masonic Cemetery, Western Oregon University and other potential partners
- Other things to consider: facility rental, marketing, registration
- Funding sources: Council for the Humanities, Cultural Trust and Local County sources
- Possible timeline: October 2009 which is Oregon's Cemeteries' month

At some point a decision will need to be made on choosing what area and which partners to go with to start working on this.

Leisurely Lunches: would like to have the Commissioners gather with cemetery supporters in their community for a host or no host lunch at your favorite eatery or do a brown-bag lunch. This can be done after the October meeting in support of cemetery education month. More information will follow.

### **Partnership Updates:**

Kuri met with Rogue Valley Genealogical Society and they were interested in outreach and being regional. Also met with grant recipients and got to see cemetery projects. The Coquille Tribe will host the October meeting and grant workshop in Coos Bay. Other partners that will attend are: City of Butte Falls, SOLV, OHCA (who will help present tomorrow), and the Cemetery District. People are helping people and their support is appreciated.

OPRD has a Veterans Memorial Grant Program and Stan suggested finding when those dates of those happened in historic cemeteries and there was one grant given to the GAR Cemetery in Portland to replace an actual Civil War statue that was stolen. It was similar to the one in Lone Fir and was stolen about 25-30 years ago.

### **Public Comment (3-minute limit per person):**

Linda Van Orden reported on the Cemetery in Junction City that suggestions made at the last meeting were followed through on: maps from the forest service & a written to the Lane County Historical Society who's President of the board is an Attorney and he's agreed to offer his assistance. Regarding

the burial index she is satisfied with the name, birth date, death date, cemetery and contact online. The sale of publications to support Genealogical Societies is getting smaller which affects business there.

Judy Goldman commented on the non-profit corporate fees charged to small cemeteries, how it affects her cemetery and that this should go before the next legislative session.

Carol Surrency is impressed with the goals that are being set and the with the direction things are going in since the reorganization of the Commission and with Staff so thanks for working so hard to get some of these things accomplished.

Lynne Pagan had questions about the 75 year definition on historic cemeteries and what it meant. Commissioners explained that it would be 75 years from the present.

Bev Power talked about the City of Medford and hopes that Kuri will help break down barriers. They don't get any unique funding. Regarding contact information on the database, there's a fear of reporting vandalism but the more you advertise, the more people become legitimate. If there is going to be a database that's created by tax monies then it needs to be treated as a public access and for the public information that it is. Private cemeteries shouldn't remain private if you want to be listed. The more people are aware of its presence, the more legitimate genealogy research takes place there and it keeps vandals and thieves out.

Judy responded to the location issue and that it really depends on where the cemetery is located. Many rural cemeteries in Benton County don't put up signs because they become a Mecca and then vandalism occurs. There have been concerns about smaller cemeteries completing the report and they don't want to be identified. Something to think about is trying to get neighbors of cemeteries to understand the value.

Kuri stated that what is on the database is not what's online. They can call her to get the contact and accessibility and it would say that in the online information. It will also state whether it is a public and/or private cemetery.

**2007/2008 Public Meeting Schedule:**

Friday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2007 – Clackamas County

Friday, October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2007 – Coos Bay

Friday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2007 Planning retreat, at a State Park.

Friday, March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2008 Salem

**Chairman Keeler adjourned the meeting at 5:00 p.m.**