

PCA Historian's Report 2023

Pioneer Cemetery Association activity levels increased in 2023 continuing the trend of returning to pre-covid levels. The Memorial Day ceremony was larger than it has been in several years and an ambitious schedule of fundraising events were held. Work on the Jacob Waltz Monument progressed steadily while the Grave Marker Preservation Project concluded its 9th year and has reached the point where maintenance of conserved monuments is now a primary task. Volunteers donated a total of 5,734 hours during the year. Sadly, the year saw the passing of PCA lifetime member Frank Barrios, a good guy and friend to all, whose many contributions to the cemetery and Phoenix history will not be forgotten.

Cemetery Projects

- Scanning of mortuary records in binders to e-files continues, several entered into Backblaze and available to members
- After discussion on obtaining Thomas Hayden records from AZ State Library and Archive, records were transferred to AHS Tempe by State Library in March, they will need volunteers to help scan (April)
- Board consented to allow Smurthwaite interior and front porch areas to be used in Grand Canyon U. film project (Feb)
- Board agreed to share Go Fund Me on Facebook page for victims of Feb 25 bicycle accident, husband of volunteer Judy Smith involved in accident
- Board agreed to give Jarrod Riddle of Spirit of AZ access to cemeteries to conduct tours, will need cemetery to be opened and closed, letter of agreement to be prepared and make available to other tour groups, (Oct)
- Margaret Hangan, Tonto Forest archaeologist and member of Black Family Genealogy and History Society asked PCA to join AZ Historical Society to help with requests for research on African American burials. (May)
- Frank Barrios voted lifetime PCA member, city declares May 30 Frank Barrios Day, Frank Barrios passed September 11, 2023
- Recreated map of north Rosedale cemetery completed, will need to schedule moving rock borders in field to correspond.
- Ed Dobbins writing history of old cemetery in the original Phoenix townsite and the cemeteries at PMMP (April)

PCA Community Outreach

- Patty Gault and Val Wilson presented to Anasazi Chapter DAR on Women in History in March
- Jenn Merry presented at Phoenix Public Library, Burton Barr in April
- Memorial Day Event, speaker Steve Schumacher, Mayor's Office Official Historian, Masons performed flag ceremony, bugler James Weatherspoon, videographer Tim Totter, 76-100 in attendance
- Jenn Merry and Cindy Lee presented on Cemetery Symbolism at the Apache Junction Library in November

Fundraising events for Grave Marker Preservation

A total of \$4,359.99 was raised in 2023 at the following events

- Cars and Art January 21, 37 attendees, total receipts \$153 including \$53 in donations
- Open House January 28, Make a Valentine
- Hats and High Tea Feb 25, huge success 58 tickets sold, total collected \$3,630 before expenses to benefit GMP
- Open House March 25
- Brooch Making event, May 6, 15 guests, raised \$400 to benefit GMP
- Decorate a Victorian Fan, July 15, raised \$326 to benefit GMP
- Open House Sept 23, Ice cream social Sept 23
- Dia De Los Muertos Fundraiser Sept 30, raised \$755 to benefit GMP
- Murder Mystery held with good reviews October 21
- Open House Oct 28
- T-shirt sales went well at 40th anniversary event in December
- Total volunteer hours 1,789

PCA Committees

Grave Marker Preservation

- Joseph Ferrannini, Conservator, preservation work and educating volunteers on preserving historic grave markers Feb. 4-8, 11, 12, 18, 19. Twenty-eight markers repaired, one new military marker placed.

- Totals for 2023: Funds raised \$4,350.56, volunteer hours 1,789, value of volunteer time \$54,504.65

Jacob Waltz Committee

- Presentation on current ideas and significance of adding to the burial site. Timeline includes concrete bench near the site, a few large boulders, mortuary markers to be replaced by brick markers, composite granite around site to be added by city. A monument to Waltz postponed until later due to cost, would be same size as Chinese Circle monument. A motion to approve this first part of the plan was passed.
- Text on the Jacob Waltz plaque was reviewed and suggestions made, plaque accepted as edited (April), final size and wording accepted, will take 6 weeks to fabricate (Oct)
- Photos shown of progress of the project, plaque has been ordered and waiting on granite (May)
- Boulders placed, plaque ordered (June)
- Fundraising for monument, final design to be presented in October, memorial coins used as fundraiser, close to \$7000 donated in cash and goods to project so far (Sept)
- Board approved \$1000 towards Jacob Waltz monument, Mark stated whole \$7,300 cost of monument has been funded but not all yet received, will continue to fundraise, any extra to go to cemetery maintenance (Dec)

Memorial Marker Committee

- New order of markers for PMMP and Cementerio Lindo discussed, accounts for markers to be combined
- Five markers ordered, eighteen already received have been placed. Additional orders currently on hold until most recent placed
- Metal mortuary markers will be preserved by placing new markers at their locations, will meet with city archaeologist for advice
- Patty and Ed met with city archaeologist and checked KJ Schroeders field records for metal markers, they are based on GPR results indicating anomalies that might be burials

- Design of memorial markers changed to make them look more significant (April)
- Suggest recommending future donations be made to other funds unless for family as program is currently well-funded (May)
- Markers to be placed at Cementario Lindo, waiting for assistance from Polo (March), postponed, Polo unavailable for now (June)

Sotelo Heard Committee

- Mark reported meeting with Collective that wants to preserve cemetery, delay now due to terms of three-way land trade between city, Trellis and Collective (Feb)
- Mark reported progress slow (April)
- Property transfer from Trellis to Collective should be about two months away (May)
- Maria Cano and Enjolie LaFaurie of Collective presented updated plans to board
- Parks Dept. may not be involved in future maintenance (Dec)

Treasurer and Membership Reports

- January beginning balance \$29,957.69, some of the funds are in allocated accounts and need to be used
- December 31, 2023 balance \$29, 128.13
- 26 new members reported by end of December

Donations

- DAR scheduled for volunteer day March 11
- Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) donated \$1000 to begin process of obtaining memory bench in honor of John W. Owen, G.A.R.
- Hallie Orme Thomas Children of the American Revolution group to visit and replace sign in Loosley Cemetery
- SRP to donate \$500 as result of Ilene Snoddy's volunteering efforts
- Anasazi and Cactus Wren DAR house cleaning October 7
- \$1000 donation received from Jim Tang (Nov), (earmarked Jacob Waltz)

City of Phoenix crew projects and other City action items

- Wooldridge Vault assessment reported to members and city. Will need repairs and termite treatment.
- Flooding started Dec 7, 2022 from a storm drain backup has created many sinkholes in south cemeteries and a second flood at Christmas created more, 50 holes were filled in south cemeteries by a city crew of 15 with 7 trucks in February
- New fire alarm is in and final inspection completed in January
- New signage for front and side fencing for house has been placed (Feb)
- City considering planting trees along Madison, board disagrees and sent letter, before letter sent, city postponed project (March)
- City concerned about money for repairing sprinkler system and need for archaeologist, repairs to sprinklers may not need archaeologist and we have some money for maintenance to add to city (Nov)
- City announced no budget for repairs at Smurthwaite, Patty wrote strongly worded letter (Nov), released draft for review, plan to send to Joe Diaz and others, maybe place on social media, encourage calls to city council from PCA members, among suggestions for distribution (Dec)
- City continuing to clear homeless from “Zone” (Sept), city to carry NARCAN
- Use Homeless CARES city website when have issues with homeless (Nov)
- Patty met with Rachel Milne about new homeless camp at southwest corner 15th Ave. and Jackson, will be there about 3 yrs, contact Milne if any problems (Dec)

PCA Board Meetings: First Thursday of the month. Meetings generally include: President’s Report, Treasurer’s Report, Old Business, New Business, Schedules, Call to Public, and AZ Trivia.

PCA / City of Phoenix Parks and Rec. South Division Maint. Meetings: Monthly meetings on the second Thursday of the month. Jacob Waltz improvement Committee occasionally follows the facilities meeting.

Respectfully submitted, Ed Dobbins, January 4, 2024