

SPIRIT OF THE PIONEER

A newsletter for the families and friends of
the Eugene Pioneer Cemetery
(Across from McArthur Court)

SPRING 2018

HERITAGE ROSE PRUNING WORKSHOP

by Karen Bender, EPCA Board Member

I drove from Salem to the cemetery today to take in a workshop on trimming roses. This was the fifth year that this spring workshop has been offered. EPCA President, Quentin Holmes had asked if I would write an article about the event and I said, "yes."

The weather forecast called for rain and cold with new snow on the Coburg hills, I dressed in tights and many layers along with gloves and a warm hat.

A number of our board members were in attendance. I met Elaine Sedlock who was new to me and has moved to Eugene from the bay area of California. Enjoyed visiting with her prior to the beginning of the workshop. Elaine belongs to a rose club which sounds fun and intriguing. Their club is planning a trip to Salem to see the roses in Bush Park.



ELAINE SEDLOCK, MASTER GARDINER,
LEADING ROSE PRUNING WORKSHOP

At 10 AM there were some introductions by Cindy Wise and Helen Liu, who continue to make cuttings from the roses in the cemetery and sell a few Heritage Rose Starts at the cemetery's yearly Memorial Day event.

Some of the twenty people present came with buckets holding a hand pruner, long-handled loppers, a special knife and maybe a few other special tools for trimming like a hand saw. There were many pages given to each attendee naming the different rose categories and the pruning philosophy: A properly pruned bush looks as natural as possible and reflects its fundamental form and character.

Master Gardiner Elaine Sedlock was our educator for the day. There was a list of a number of different heritage roses that she wanted to trim or discuss their condition. We walked all over the cemetery visiting many plots that had a special heirloom rose. *(Continues on Page 2.)*

What's in this issue?

Page – 1

HERITAGE ROSE
PRUNING
WORKSHOP

Page – 2

HERITAGE ROSE
PRUNING
WORKSHOP (Cont.)

LOUIS RENNINGER
(1841-1908)

Page – 3

LOUIS RENNINGER
(Cont.)

Page – 4

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Left Blank)*

Page – 5

2018 Work Parties
Scheduled
Seen Recently in the
Cemetery
Eugene Pioneer
Cemetery's
Gracious Donors

Page – 6

UPCOMING EVENTS

Annual Meetings of
EPCA & E.P.C.E.F.

2018 Memorial Day
Ceremony

Heritage Rose Tour
& Rose Sale

Any Comments or
Questions?
Please write or
phone us!

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HERITAGE ROSE PRUNING WORKSHOP (Continued from pg. 1)

Wow! I came to the workshop thinking I knew how to trim my roses. Because I have already pruned my roses this year, I will begin lightly pruning next year to see how they grow. “Pruning a rose bush is not unlike giving a home haircut to a small child: you do the best you can, secure in the knowledge that if it turns out odd looking, new growth will quickly hide your mistakes. Old garden roses do not need or like the kind of heavy pruning that is beneficial to modern Tea roses. The primary goal is to remove dead, weak or sickly plant material without ruining the shape. Thinning superfluous growth increases sunlight and air circulation to the center of the plant preventing fungal infections and stimulates new growth.”

Two of the rose bushes we visited were fenced by wire with a sign “Rose Recovery in progress please do not take cuttings, rooting or disturb this rose.” The group caring for the roses in the cemetery will be carefully watching them.

I noticed that some of the roses had a special tag telling the viewer what the name is and a picture of the rose along with a number. The special tag describes the Heritage rose by color, size of flower and the height. i.e., Baby Warnock – *Heritage Rose, shell pink bloom with deeper touches of rose on medium size cupped flowers fading to cream. Vigorous shrub to 6'. Beautiful rounded buds of soft pink open to fragrant, abundant blooms with floribunda habit. Spring bloom with little disease.*

By 12:30 we were quite ready to finish; each of us had a feeling we wanted to return and help preserve the cemetery’s heritage roses.

Louis Renninger (1841-1908) — Won Congressional Medal of Honor at the Battle of Vicksburg

by Jane Lake/ New York, NY

[NOTE: In all of history, there are only 11 Congressional Medal of Honor Winners in Oregon. Louis Renninger, is one of them. Eugene Pioneer Cemetery is still here today because of Renninger’s selfless bravery.]

Buried in Block 370 next to his wife Elizabeth Mann rests Louis Renninger, a Civil War corporal who notably fought under legendary Union generals Grant and Sherman.

Born in Germany, Louis Renninger was 21 year old private when he survived the perilous Battle of Vicksburg on the banks of the Mississippi in May 1863. This battle, for control of the Mississippi River, is considered one of the most deadly “brown-water” naval assaults to ever occur on American soil.

The river attack involved 150 advance volunteers who were to advance under cover of darkness in the early morning and build a bridge across a dry moat and place ladders against the Confederate



DEMONSTRATING HOW TO PRUNE THE HEIRLOOM ROSE ON THE SNELLSTROM LOT



LOUIS RENNINGER’S MARKER

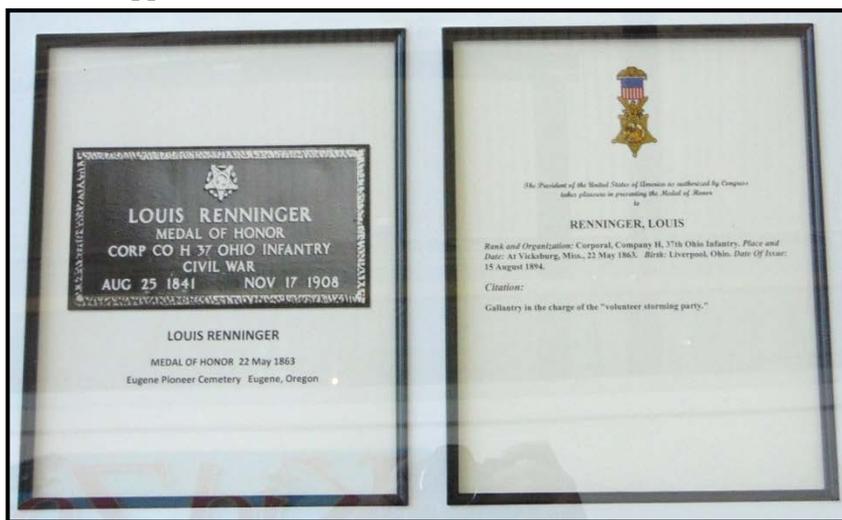
(Continues on Page 3.)

LOUIS RENNINGER (Continued from pg. 2)

Embankment – so perilous was this volunteer mission that only single men were allowed to volunteer. Union General Ulysses S. Grant chose General William Tecumseh Sherman to lead the main body of federal troops in a massive frontal assault on the Confederate fortress which would be preceded by a bombardment from Union gunboats on the Mississippi River.

From the start, the Battle of Vicksburg was destined to be one of the most tragic charges in the Civil War. It was deemed a “forlorn hope” – or in modern day terms a “suicide mission.” On May 22, 1863 Grant lost 3,200 soldiers that day. Seventy-two men in Renninger’s party were killed that day. The rest were wounded, including Corporal Renninger who suffered a shoulder and eye injury.

In August 1894, years after his service, Corporal Renninger of the all-German Company H, 37th Regiment Ohio Volunteer Infantry, was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. The citation is for,



DISPLAY COMMEMORATING CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR WINNER LOUIS RENNINGER

(at Evergreen Aviation and Space Museum in McMinnville, OR)

Gallantry in the charge of the “volunteer storming party.”

After the war, Renninger returned to his farm in Ohio and married Elizabeth Mann. They had four sons and five daughters. In 1870 the Renningers left Ohio to farm in Leavitt, Michigan for the next 20 years. In 1898 the Renninger’s traded the harsh winters and cold winds off Lake Michigan to establish a farm in Marcola, Oregon.

A simple farmer for most of his life, in 1908 Renninger died of a heart-attack at the age of 67 while feeding chickens and mules on his son’s property nearby.

Eugene Pioneer Cemetery is still here today thanks to Louis Renninger and his military record. In the 1960’s, the University of Oregon’s Pioneer Memorial Park Association(PMPA) obtained legal title to the cemetery. Committees were deep in the process of planning to relocate the cemetery so classrooms could be built above its 16 acres.

Then EPCA Secretary Ruth “Lake” Holmes, however was committed to preserving the cemetery. Generations of her family were at rest therein.

In 1987, Ruth “Lake” Holmes successfully applied to get the cemetery on the National Registry of Historic Cemeteries. The centerpiece of the paperwork was that Renninger had been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his bravery in the Civil War during the Battle of Vicksburg. Not accidentally, Congress has a law that the final resting spot of a Congressional Medal of Honor winner is “sacred and can not be disturbed.”

In 2004, Pioneer Memorial Park Association voluntarily dissolved. Its assets were given to Eugene Pioneer Cemetery Association in return for having one member of the EPCA Board appointed by the President of the University of Oregon. As then EPCA President Ev Smith put it, “With the dissolution of PMPA, the ‘words’ and the ‘music’ will combine in one harmonious composition in the best interests of both organizations.” And, this has truly happened! The U. of O. and EPCA now work closely together.

Today, young and old alike enjoy the park-like setting Eugene Pioneer Cemetery offers thanks to Renninger’s selfless bravery in battle, as well as Ruth “Lake” Holmes’ commitment and persistence decades later.

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2018 WORK PARTIES SCHEDULED

by *George C. Beebe, EPCA Director*

We have two major work parties each year. These have to be set up months in advance. We get crews of 10-12 people - men and women - from the Lane County Sheriff's Dept. These folks do an excellent job for us. One week before each work party, several of us "walk-thru" and agree upon what areas need to get addressed.

Spring work party will be just prior to Memorial Day:

Walk-Thru: Thursday, May 17, 2018 at 11:30am

Work Party: Friday, May 25, from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Fall work party will be just prior to Labor Day.

Walk-Thru: Thursday, August 23, at 11:30 a.m.

Work Party: Friday, Aug.31, from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Come join us if you can, we can always use your help!

SEEN RECENTLY IN THE CEMETERY



INFORMATION KIOSK IN MEMORIAL SQUARE

The lovely kiosk has made a huge difference – it welcomes visitors and provides helpful information about Eugene Pioneer Cemetery.

EUGENE PIONEER CEMETERY'S GRACIOUS DONORS

Quentin A. Holmes, EPCA President

Eugene-Springfield, Lane County, Oregon and our Country are what they are today because of the vision, dedication, hard work, and sacrifice of many of the men and women who are now at rest in Eugene Pioneer Cemetery. It is to honor them, and to remember them, that your Cemetery Board Members do what they do. Our goals include: preserving the historic nature of this sacred space, maintaining it as a beautiful and inviting green space amidst a busy urban surround, and sharing our community's pioneer history with upcoming generations. Our efforts are made possible by your donations. The following gave donations to Eugene Pioneer Cemetery Association and/or the Eugene Pioneer Cemetery Endowment Fund during 2017:

Up to \$49:

Karen Bender
Howard T. Bonnett
Robert Bounds
Helen Cook
Clayton R. Jones
Helen Liu
Sherman L. Newman
Laurist M. Olson
Elizabeth Walton Potter
Roger S. Smith
Sally Smith
Lawrence A Svarverud
Malcolm Trupp
Cornelia V.C. Taggart
Rosalie Callef Willett

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Jerry D. Christian
Sandra Farber
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Marna Broekhoff
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Gary W. Hayes
Tim King

\$500 or more:

Margaret J. Hewitt
Ruth "Lake" Holmes Trust
Deahn C. Kincaid
Estate of D. Crystal Mitchell

UPCOMING EVENTS

Combined Annual Meetings of Eugene Pioneer Cemetery Association and Eugene Pioneer Cemetery Endowment Fund, Inc.

Will be held Saturday, May 12th, 2018 from 10:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

LOCATION: Daneland Mobile Home Park - at the Recreation Hall

99 N. Terry Street

Eugene, Oregon 97402

Memorial Day Service at Eugene Pioneer Cemetery

A Memorial Day Service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, May 28th, 2018 at the Civil War Veteran's Plot. Organized by Eugene American Legion Post #3, the formal ceremony will include members of the Sons of Union Veterans dressed in Civil War military uniforms, and a Three-Volley "Black Powder Salute" in honor of all veterans who are at rest in our cemetery. The inspiring Shasta Middle School Band and Choir will perform patriotic songs. Come, pay your respects, and enjoy the celebration!

Heritage Rose Tour & Rose Sale at Eugene Pioneer Cemetery

Master Gardeners will hold a Heritage Rose Tour on Saturday, June 2nd, 2018 from 10 a.m. – Noon.

Back in the 1800's and early 1900's when a loved one passed away tradition was to plant a rose from the family home on their grave. Individual roses in our Cemetery date back 60, 80, or over 100 years. Come, learn about them, behold their beauty, and experience their exquisite fragrance! A number of Heritage Roses (in 1 gallon containers) will be available for purchase.

Eugene Pioneer Cemetery Association

c/o Quentin A. Holmes

40338 Mohawk River Rd.

Marcola, Oregon 97454 - 9741

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED