

SPIRIT OF THE PIONEER

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

SPRING 2012

HAROLD J. SLAVIK, Jr.

A Fiercely Independent Individual!

by *Quentin A. Holmes*
President

Eugene Pioneer Cemetery Association

Harold Slavik leaves a legacy that bridges both sides of the Civil War. His passion for finding, and recording, the graves of soldiers who fought in the Civil War – both Confederate and Union – is without equal. A very brilliant man, Harold has been of immeasurable help to Eugene Pioneer Cemetery and many other old cemeteries.

Born in Minneapolis to Harold and Josephine Tersko Slavik, Harold held a BS degree in Recreation and Park Management from the U. of Minnesota, and a BS degree and Master's degree in Geology from the U. of Idaho. He served in the Air National Guard in Minnesota for six years. For most of his life, Harold was self-employed as a geological consultant for construction site assessment – that paid for the essentials of life.

Early on, Harold believed that he was descended from a Confederate soldier. So, he became a member of Sons of Confederate Veterans and even helped found a company of Sons of Confederate Veterans. Later, when he discovered that his ancestors had actually fought on the Union side, Harold also became a life member of Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War. He helped found the Edward D. Baker Camp of the SUVCW, and served as its first camp commander.

Harold Slavik was at his best when wandering about in an old Cemetery looking for graves of Civil War veterans. A number of these veterans lived on and were got buried in family plots with civilian markers. Harold spent years using USGS Quadrangle Maps to locate all the old Cemeteries in each County. Harold then carefully walked each old Cemetery to find individuals at rest there who had



Harold Joseph Slavik, Jr. (Sep. 9, 1946 – Dec. 11, 2011)

fought in the Civil War. He would see that information about them was placed into the appropriate records, such as Find-A-Grave. In many cases Harold also helped request an appropriate military marker from the VA. Beginning in 2003, Harold was Graves Registration Officer for the Louis Renniger Camp # 1. During his lifetime, Harold found, and registered, the graves of more than 5,000 veterans of the Civil War. Whether Union or Confederate, Harold strongly believed each deserved to be recognized and honored.

Harold also considered himself a teacher. He loved to be in a classroom teaching children about his beloved Confederate flags and the soldiers who carried them.

Life was not kind to Harold in his last couple of years. Illness, economic hardship, and then a debilitating stroke. A memorial service for Harold was held at Eugene Masonic Lodge last January.

Harold's SUVCW comrades plan to place his cremains in a grave plot owned by the GAR in our Cemetery. Fittingly, this plot is not far from that of Louis Renninger.

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Upcoming Events:

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Any Comments or
Questions?

Please write or
phone us!

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[Editor's Note: Daniel R. Christian III was one of the early settlers in Eugene, and his home is the oldest in Eugene and now a historical landmark.]

The known history of the Christian family goes back to Daniel R. Christian I who was born in Schleswig-Holstein, Denmark in 1762. He immigrated to North America with his parents and, at age 14, served on the American side during the War for Independence in 1776. Daniel Christian II was born in Boonsboro, Maryland in 1787. He married in 1810, and fought in the Maryland Militia during the War of 1812. Daniel R. Christian III - the third person to bear this same name – was born in Maryland in 1818 and moved to “Locust Hill”, Illinois Territory (near modern day Mt. Carroll) along with his parents in 1848. There, he married Catherine Etnyre on August 8, 1839. In 1852, the couple left Illinois and migrated West and initially lived in the area now called Hillsboro, Oregon. Daniel and Catherine were the only members of the Christian family to come out West. In 1853 they moved down the Willamette Valley to Eugene, and settled a 160 acre homestead located immediately South of what became 12th Avenue & Pearl Street. “For years after the incorporation of Eugene as a town, the Christian’s great farm lay on the immediate outskirts and the hum of the thresher was within hearing distance of the County Court House.”^[1] The following fond recollection of them was written around 1910 by a beloved granddaughter.]

Daniel R. Christian III and Catherine Etnyre Christian
(1818 – 1891) (1819 – 1889)

by Irena Dunn Williams, a granddaughter

When we children were young we loved to run through the orchard to Grandma’s house; we like to see her deftly pat the fresh butter into shape, work the soft rubbery mass of dough into loaves and cuddle them into the pan to rise but best of all we like to eat a slice of fresh warm bread as it came from the oven smelling so delicious and spread with sweet, fresh butter. Grandma never denied us this pleasure, she was always so gentle and kind and we ungrateful youngsters could have helped her so much more than we did. We did help stir the apple butter in season, sitting on a high stool and pulling backward and forward a long handle to which was attached a duck-billed paddle with holes pierced in the bottom edge, which passed to and fro through the mushy mass to keep it from sticking to the bottom of the huge brass kettle. I would like to tell of many things but cannot make my story too long. Grandma was small and graceful with shapely head, brown hair neatly coiled at back, small hands and feet. I never saw her with soiled apron or frock. She was always neatly though simply dressed. She could not boast of expensive clothes but always looked nice.

Grandpa was a kindly gentleman. He, as well as Grandma, never gave us children a harsh

word. Grandfather was a carpenter as well as a farmer. I loved to watch him in his shop as he planed a board and the shavings curled out of the top of his plane; with a sweep of his hand brushed the sweet, piney smelling heap to a pile at his feet. But I shuddered as he passed his fingers over the razor blade of his drawknife to test its sharpness.

Threshing time was a grand time for us but I have written of all of this in my memoirs. Of times, in winter, we ran over and sat before the roaring fire as Grandpa popped corn and turned out the snowy mass into the big dish-pan all salted and buttered for use. No apples were so good as Grandpa’s stored in the root house safe from frost and cold. I could write reams of these beloved people but must cut it short. They were devout Methodists. Grandpa was one of the first Deacons of the Church, and Grandma had the care of the Communion Service for many years, the snowy cloth, the “wine” and the tender, snowy bread. They were very hospitable. It was not unusual in the early days for three or four persons to come in from the country over the weekend and stay over night to attend church. It must have been quite a strain on Grandma with all of her house work to do, but I never remember of seeing her perturbed. She always managed!

(see **D. R. Christian III ...** on pg. 3)

^[1] *Brief History of the Christians and Etnyres* by Irena D. Williams



The Christian Family Lot (*Block No. 184*)



Daniel and Catherine's Memorial

Grandmother lived until June 24, 1889, aged 69 years. She died very suddenly of a ruptured heart after a severe spasm of vomiting after her doctor had given her some medicine that always nauseated her excessively. She was aware of the nature of the medicine but the doctor knew of her sensitiveness to it. It was terrible shocking to us all, more especially to her dear crippled daughter, Etha, who depended on her mother's loving care so wholly. Dear Grandfather was so bereft, he was like a helpless child, but mourned silently. He lived a little less than two years after her death. We cherished their memories tenderly. Grandfather died March 17, 1891, age 73 years and 7 months.

EUGENE PIONEER CEMETERY ENDOWMENT FUND

by Quentin A. Holmes

The Eugene Pioneer Cemetery was founded in an era before perpetual care cemeteries. We rely on donations to the Association and income from the Endowment Fund to pay for upkeep as well as improvements. The following are the names of folks who contributed to the Eugene Pioneer Cemetery Endowment Fund and/or the Eugene Pioneer Cemetery Association between January 31, 2011 and January 31, 2012:

\$250 or more:

Central Lutheran Foundation
Margaret Tobey Hewitt
Ruth M. Holmes

\$100-\$249:

Bob Carmichael
Patricia Baker D'Anna
Carol Holman
Quentin Holmes
Sara Leiman

\$50-\$99:

Milton Bilderback
Charles Harshberger
Tony James
Clayton Jones
Geraldine Leiman
Mary Jane Pagter
Helen Reed
Everett Smith
James Whithall

Up to \$49:

Nancy Danielson
Sandra Farber
M. Irene Haskins
Virginia Hendrickson
Holmes Archie Holeman
Margaret Hunsaker
Phillip Krohn
Bob Potter*
Cori V. C. Taggart
Bonnie Todis
Mrs. Jeffrey Vogel

Contributions to the Eugene Pioneer Cemetery Endowment Fund are preserved permanently to generate income to help with expenses. Please consider a donation now or in your estate plans. Donations are tax deductible.

* *Deceased*

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Will be held Saturday, May 12th, 2011 from 10:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

LOCATION: The First Congregational Church
1050 E. 23rd Street
Eugene, Oregon.

Memorial Day Services at The Eugene Pioneer Cemetery

A Memorial Day Service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, May 28th, 2012 at the Civil War Veteran's Plot. This formal service will feature members of the Sons of Union Veterans dressed in full Civil War military uniforms, and a musket salute in honor of the heroes who are at rest in the G.A.R. Plot. The inspiring Shasta Middle School Band and Choir will perform music from the Civil War era. Please Come!

Eugene Pioneer Cemetery Association

c/o Ruth Lake Holmes

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED