



## Luper Marker

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### Memorial Day and Veterans Day Events Planned

As in recent years, Luper Cemetery main motor vehicle gate on West Beacon Drive will be open 9 am to 4 pm during the three-day Memorial Day weekend (May 24-26, 2014). Visitors are welcome to tour the cemetery and volunteers will be available most hours to answer questions.

Luper Cemetery will also be open Veterans Day, November 11, 2014, 9 am to 4 pm. The cemetery is open to walkers and bicyclists, dawn to dusk, every day.



#### Markers Found!

Three original Luper Cemetery headstones were recently discovered with the help of Karen Olson, one of the volunteer caretakers in the 1990s. These headstones are for Anna Bell

Wadsworth, Harriet Wadsworth and Lavina Moore. They were located at a local monument company where they had been delivered over 20 years ago for repairs. The plan is to place these markers back in their bases, or new bases, as needed. Unfortunately, many other headstones have disappeared over the years due to vandalism or theft.

#### Empty Headstone Bases

Visitors might wonder about some of the empty or damaged bases for headstones that are in the cemetery. Over the years, mainly due to vandalism, headstones were broken out of their bases. These headstones were stolen or moved in the cemetery. That left the bases. Some were damaged beyond repair, others sunk below ground level because of neglect. When possible, current and past restoration projects at Luper Cemetery have restored headstones to their original bases. Other headstones received new cement bases if the original base was damaged or could not be found. Some of the empty bases you see in the cemetery are original bases that are damaged too much to be used, some we know who they belong to but their headstone is missing, other bases were only found after the headstone had been repaired to a new base. For historical reasons we usually place damaged bases near their original grave. With further searching we hope to be able to fill some of the remaining bases with their

headstones. Donations are welcome to help make further restoration and preservation work possible. You can donate by check mailed to Luper Cemetery, Inc., P.O. Box 955, Marcola, OR 97454; or at [www.LuperCemetery.com](http://www.LuperCemetery.com) using PayPal. You can also contact one of the Board Members or volunteers on the Contacts page at [www.LuperCemetery.com](http://www.LuperCemetery.com) for more information about how you can help.

#### Five Years of Restoration

2014 is the fifth year Luper Cemetery, Inc. has been overseeing the restoration of Luper Pioneer Cemetery. It is an annual struggle to keep the weeds, vines, and invasive plants at bay. With the assistance of Wells McCool (a local landscaper) the core area of the cemetery was leveled and grass planted to help with caretaking. Mark Brown, a Luper board member, volunteers regularly to mow the grass, and others lend a hand to keep the cemetery core area mowed. Russ Carey keeps the paths clear and whacks the plants around the perimeter. Russ has made discoveries of a marker, footstones, bases, and other artifacts by probing the probable locations of graves.

Many other “Luperites” continue contributing to the restoration of this historic site by historical research, site maintenance, grant writing, site protection, restoration, site survey, and public information and other activities. They include:

Merilee and Steve Boulton, Sharon Jones, Ben Stinnett, Ted Baker, Linda VanOrden, John Moore, Richard Collett, Zane Medlen, Daniel Owen, Meredith Prochot, Peter Thurston, Bruce Howard and Sally Donovan.

### **Grant funding Received**

In 2013 Luper Cemetery, Inc. received a grant from the Oregon Commission on Historic Cemeteries to list all other people known to be interred at Luper and whose graves are not shown on the cemetery map. This monument will be placed at the entrance to the cemetery across from the information kiosk.

### **Luper Maple Tree Damaged**

The single largest and longest living feature at Luper Pioneer Cemetery took a hit from the ice storm that struck our area in February. The Luper Maple is estimated to pre-date the founding of the cemetery in 1850s. Aerial photos from the 1930s show the Luper Maple on the north boundary with a large canopy. About one-third of the canopy was brought down by the weight of the ice. Luper volunteers are working to make slabs of the maple, and clear the wood from the cemetery.

**Wagon train history** - Luper Cemetery is one of the oldest pioneer cemeteries in the southern Willamette Valley, dating back to the first burial in 1857, and recording of the original deed in 1865. There are 163 burials noted in historic records, 17 of which were pioneers on the 1853 wagon train that came by way of the Oregon Trail and Free Emigrant Road across central Oregon. Bylaws of the McClure wagon train described the destination of this company as "the fertile valley of the Willamette, located between the Cascade Mountains on the east and the Coast

range on the west". That is exactly where Luper Cemetery is located.

### **Luper Cemetery, Inc. Goals**

After five years of work to prepare and implement the Luper Maintenance Plan, we can see the possibility of having everyone interred at Luper recognized with a marker.

The mission of Luper Cemetery, Inc., described in Luper Pioneer Cemetery Management Plan is: to historically preserve and maintain the pioneer Luper Cemetery, honor those buried here, and engage the community in local history. Luper's overall goals are to: 1) restore the tombstones and markers, 2) remove invasive plants and replace them with native plants, 3) level the site so it can be maintained, 4) raise funds to maintain the site, 5) establish ownership for the cemetery, and 6) provide information to inform and engage the public.

2014 activities to accomplish these goals include: Complete the shared marker and close out the grant. Complete two benches and information areas, Do more probing to recover historical artifacts, Improve safety by placing a sign – "Open Dawn to Dusk", Create a long-term legacy maintenance fund, Raise \$3,000 for restoration and maintenance, and enhance native vegetation at entrance.

### **Lupercemetery.com website grows**

The primary means of providing information to the public and encouraging involvement in cemetery restoration is the web site. The web site provides access to historical information diaries, and other sources. Detailed information and pictures have been collected and displayed. More web site

development needs to be done that may require professional services.

After restoration of the cemetery is complete, our goal is to restore native vegetation around the perimeter of the cemetery – like that which pioneers saw when living here in the mid-1800s. This will preserve a bit of the Willamette Valley oak prairie that drew early pioneers to this region.

### **Comments from visitors**

The clipboard on the entrance kiosk receives comments from visitors throughout the year. These notes often recognize the beauty and serenity of Luper Cemetery. We would like to keep it this way. You may mark your contribution as "Legacy Fund" to insure there will be funds to back up the volunteers who work to maintain this historic site accessible to the public in perpetuity.

**Luper Cemetery, Inc.** is organized to look out for and take care of Luper Pioneer Cemetery. Luper is not an active cemetery. It was started in the mid-1800s and was formally deeded by Thomas and Elizabeth Baker in 1865 to the heirs and descendants of the people buried there. The cemetery is accessible from West Beacon Drive on the northern edge of the Santa Clara neighborhood of Eugene. From River Road, go west half a mile. The gate is well marked, on the north side of the Beacon.

### **Thank you to Supporters**

Luper Cemetery grounds are substantially maintained and improved through the efforts of dedicated volunteers and supporters who give of their time and make tax deductible contributions to Luper Cemetery, Inc. Thank you.

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