



Luper Marker

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Inc.

Luper Memorial Day
Newsletter 2013

Luper celebrates Memorial Day on the weekend of May 25 and 26, and on Memorial Day, Monday, May 27, 2013.

Luper Cemetery, Inc. is organized to look out for and take care of Luper Pioneer Cemetery. Luper Cemetery was started in the mid-1800s and was formally deeded to the heirs and descendants of the people buried there. The cemetery is accessed from West Beacon Drive on the northern edge of the Santa Clara neighborhood of Eugene. To get to Luper, go west from River Road about half a mile. The gate is well marked, on the north side of the Beacon Drive. During the three-day Memorial Day celebration, the gate will be open at 9 am and close at 4 pm. There will be cemetery tours each day at 1 pm, and other historic education events on all three days. Come join the celebration of the early pioneers, and others, who are interred at Luper.

Events on Memorial Day weekend will include: Telling the pioneers'

stories - We are always looking for more information and stories about the people who are buried at Luper. Please share contacts or information. The history of Luper Cemetery is contained in the many stories of the people buried here. There will be several diaries on display and interesting anecdotes about the pioneer life of the mid- to late-1800s.

Luper's unique location - Luper Pioneer Cemetery is tucked back on a small piece of the Willamette Valley oak savanna, on an elevated piece of ground that is the resting place for dozens of pioneers who settled here in the 1800s. Until the 1980s access to the cemetery was on a meandering carriage road from Prairie Road to the west. Now, access to Luper is made easy for bikes and pedestrians on a solid gravel road through a locked gate on West Beacon Drive.

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 Train 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 is located.

Riding into History – One way to reach Luper Cemetery anytime during daylight hours is by riding a bicycle. River Road from Eugene to Beacon Drive has dedicated bike paths and sidewalks. The shoulder of West Beacon is paved. Access to the gravel road to the cemetery is through the pedestrian entrance next to the main gate. At the end of the gravel road is a parking area with a gate and kiosk at the entrance to the cemetery. Take a ride into the past and enjoy a bit of nature and history. For more information about Luper Pioneer Cemetery visit the website at: www.lupercemetery.com.

Recent Accomplishments - Luper Cemetery, Inc. has been working for almost four years to restore the cemetery after decades of neglect and abuse. This dedicated work has mostly involved people recovering the overgrown one-and-a-half acre site from blackberries, trees, weeds, and other vegetation. The second major effort involves restoration of grave markers, many of which are missing. Vandals broke and removed dozens of

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historic grave markers in 2009. Recently two markers were tipped over. So the repair, restoration and removal of vegetation goes on. All hands are welcome, particularly during spring and summer months – when the vegetation is growing prolifically. During these months Luper regularly holds a restoration event on the third Saturday, from 9 am to Noon. Please check the web site to confirm specific dates.

2013 Fund raising objectives

-Now that we have pieced together the stones that remain, and located many unmarked graves, we want to recognize those buried at Luper who do not have a marker. There are about two dozen. The plan is to secure funding for one marker that recognizes all people with unmarked graves at Luper. You can help by contributing, as described at the bottom of this newsletter and on the Luper website. The plan also includes replacing markers that are badly broken and worn with age. If the 2013-14 fund raising goal of \$2,000 can be achieved, it is possible to secure other historical funding to match, and complete the cemetery.

Luper Cemetery Inc. GOALS-

The Luper website is the primary means of providing information to the public and encouraging involvement in restoration of the

historic site. Our goal is to improve access to Luper historical information. Detailed information and pictures have been collected. Professional services may be needed to complete this website project. 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.

Get involved at Luper - If you live in the local area you can help by participating in Luper restoration activities. Check the Luper website, below, for details about restoration events, board meetings, and other improvement news. The website provides the beginning of cemetery documentation, which points to another goal for coming years. You can be directly involved in restoration and development of the Luper Cemetery story by attending restoration and maintenance parties, typically held on the third Saturday of the month, from 9 am to noon.

Another way to assist in restoration and maintenance of Luper is to make a tax deductible donation to Luper Cemetery, Inc. in the following ways: 1) a check

made out to Luper Cemetery, Inc. may be mailed to PO Box 955, Marcola, OR 97454, or 2) on the Luper website there is a PayPal process for contributing with a credit card.



The above Edwards marker was vandalized in May – tipped off onto the ground. Minor damage resulted. The repair work involved lifting it back onto its base with a tripod and affixing it with epoxy. This vandalizing was most likely a late night event. The Luper board asks that everyone in the Luper network spread the word about the importance of protecting the cemetery.

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