

HEBREW MARKER TRANSCRIBING BEGINS

A reddish-golden glow of an early fall sunset illuminates the crowded rows of markers in Oakland's Jewish section, adding to the mystique of a section shrouded in a maze of Hebrew letters and words, undecipherable to the average Oakland visitor. The mystery of what is contained within the Hebrew inscriptions will soon be unraveled as area Hebrew high school students embark on the transcription and translation of some 400 gravemarkers at Oakland. Midrasha: The Atlanta Jewish Community High School is directing this effort as a major component of the school's history, genealogy, community service and Hebrew language curriculum for the next two years.

The project, an off-shoot of Oakland's Original Six Acres Survey, began this summer when HOCI sought community involvement in the transcription of Hebrew inscriptions in the section known as "the Old Jewish Grounds."

This section, which is separate from the later and much larger Jewish sec-

tion, was purchased in 1860 by the Hebrew Benevolent Society, now known as the Temple, and contains the graves of some of Atlanta's earliest Jewish settlers. It also contains the graves of Jewish families from neighboring towns and states, because in the mid-19th century Oakland was one of only a few Jewish burial grounds in the Southeast.

Midrasha will transcribe not only the Old Jewish Grounds, but will also survey and photograph all of the Jewish sections, including both Hebrew and English gravemarkers. As a result of their interest in this project, Midrasha faculty developed a comprehensive Cemetery Heritage Education program. Forty-seven 8th- through 12th-graders at the school are studying the following:

- Oakland history and layout
- the importance of cemetery survey and preservation
- Jewish customs in death, burial and mourning
- how to identify marker types, materials, carving styles, lettering styles, gravestone art and symbolism

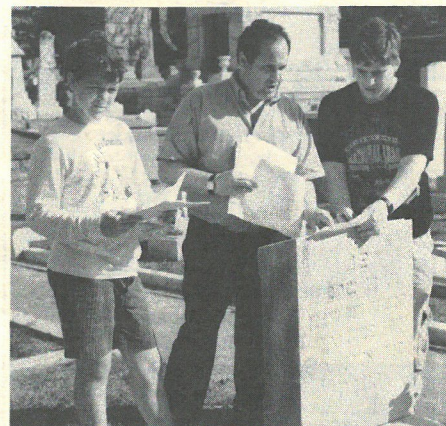


Photo: Max Movsovit

- cemetery etiquette
- the effects of vandalism, acid rain and other elements.

The transcribed and translated tombstone inscriptions will be made available to families, researchers and genealogists at the libraries of the Atlanta History Center and the Atlanta Bureau of Jewish Education, as well as at the archives of the Atlanta Jewish Federation.

The project is directed by Max Movsovit, HOCI Director of Historic Resources, and Midrasha Principal Richard Becker and Instructor Glenn Hallerman. Consultants to the project include area Rabbis as well as the Hebrew language department of Emory University. Interested volunteers should contact Principal Richard Becker at 873-1248. ♦

U.D.C. DEDICATES STEPHENS HISTORICAL PLAQUE

On September 15, the Alfred Holt Colquitt Chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) unveiled a new historical marker at Oakland recognizing Alexander Hamilton Stephens. Stephens, who served as Vice President of the Confederacy, U.S. Congressman and Governor of Georgia, died while in the office of Governor in 1883. He was interred temporarily in the Cotting-Burke Mausoleum, which stands in the shadow of the Tower Building, before being re-interred at his home, "Liberty Hall" in Crawfordville, Ga. ♦



Photo: Max Movsovit

Mrs. John Dunaway (far right) presided over the plaque dedication ceremony, at which the UDC also presented a new brochure on Stephens and five Confederate generals buried at Oakland, to be distributed at the cemetery Visitors Center.

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COMMENTARY

"DOWN THE ROAD"

There is a lot of attention these days being paid to Scarlett O'Hara and Rhett Butler. A flurry of activity centered at bookstores as people waited in long lines for Ms. Alexandra Ripley to autograph her book, *Scarlett*. There was a fund-raiser to save "The Dump."

I personally decided not to read Ms. Ripley's book. I take it back. I read the first few pages and discovered that Melanie was buried at Oakland. Then I read the last few pages to discover...better not tell. Some of you may be reading it. Instead, what I did was re-read *Gone With the Wind*.

How did Margaret Mitchell know these things about the South? I decided to find out more about her. Having daughters of my own, I was drawn to the words of wisdom from her mother in Mitchell's biography by Finis Farr. Today's parents would refer to these times as teaching opportunities.

One story goes that Margaret's mother "would take her for rides in the countryside and stop on a back road when a ruined chimney could be seen above the scrubby second-growth timber. Pointing to the column of blackened brick, Mrs. Mitchell would say, 'That is one of Sherman's sentinels.' Then she would give Margaret the familiar speech about the difference between the people who had been, so to speak, defeated by defeat and those who

refused to 'go down in the world and disappear.' One's obligation to life was to turn in a good performance; that was the hard path, by which one attained validity and self-respect." What a great lesson.

Another passage from her bio that hits home was Mitchell's returning home from first-grade one September and announcing that "she saw no reason to learn arithmetic. Mrs. Mitchell took her daughter for a ride on the remote and quiet Jonesboro Road. There had once been people hereabouts, and Margaret's mother 'talked about the world those people had lived in, such a secure world, and how it had exploded beneath them. She told her daughter that her own world was going to explode under her, some day, and God help her if she didn't have some weapon to meet the new world. She was talking about the necessity of having an education, both classical and practical. For all that would be left after a world ended would be what you could do with your hands and what you had in your head.' The strength of women's hands isn't worth anything but what they've got in their heads will carry them as far as they need to go."

My daughters will never be able to take the ride down Jonesboro Road with Margaret's mother, but hopefully her wisdom can be shared for lifetimes to come. ♦

Lillian Gantsoudes

Former HOCI Board member May B. Hollis poses with a favorite marker at Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Mass. As a side trip on a recent visit to the Boston area, she went to Mount Auburn "on assignment" for Oakland, photographing mausolea and monuments for comparative study with Oakland monuments of the same period.



THE RESULTS ARE IN!

On September 8, Historic Oakland held Run for Restoration '91, its first-ever 5K road race and one-mile fun run and walk to benefit the effort to restore 29 retaining walls identified by a recent survey as being in critical need of repair. Some of these walls are more than 100 years old.

Over 300 runners showed up on a cool, late summer morning to run through the streets of Downtown and through Oakland's historic gates.

For "before and after" pictures of two of the eight walls repaired with Run for Restoration '91 proceeds, please see page 6.

HOCI would like to extend a most grateful thank-you to all of those who made Run for Restoration '91 possible:

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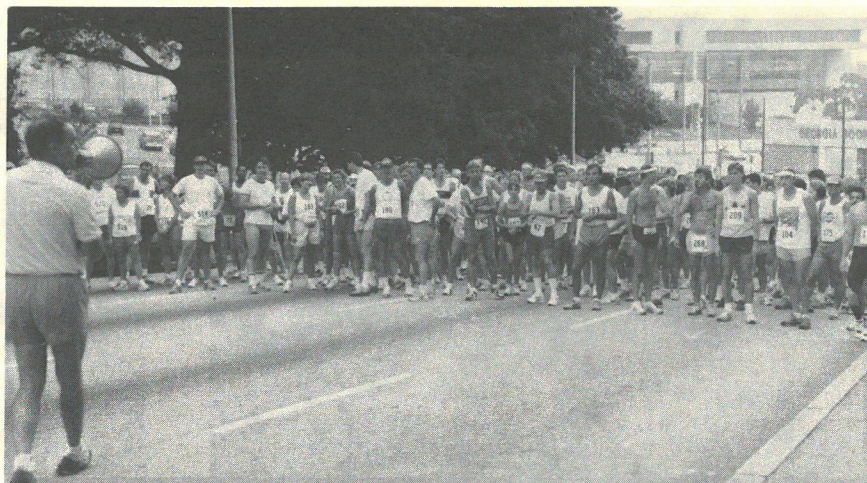
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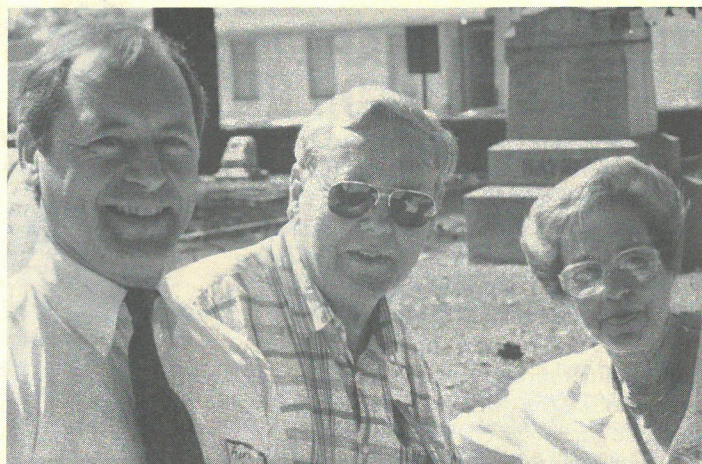
Margaret Sewell • Mrs. Edward D. Smith

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Photos: Catherine Cates and Stan Campbell



Photos this page (left to right, top to bottom): Tour Guide Joanne Fox and friends enjoy a picnic lunch; HOCl Board members Alfred Kennedy, Reid Benson and Betty Jacobson; HOCl member Hal Raper and daughter Pepper; Board President Dameron Black and Trustee Bonnie MacNaughton staff the HOCl souvenir table; Victorian Hat Contest judges; children watch the festivities.

Sunday In The Park

Sunday In The Park, held October 13, was a roaring success. Over 2,300 people visited Oakland to celebrate our 141st anniversary. A beautiful fall afternoon enhanced festivities enjoyed by all, including the now-famous "Turn of the Century" picnic lunches; the Victorian Gift Boutique; A Path of Stories with Annette Chamberlin, Franklin Garrett, Eric Goldstein, Pat Washington Clement, the Alfred Holt Colquitt Chapter of the UDC, Deborah James and Col. James Bogle; a Victorian Hat Contest; Irish Bagpipes and Dance with the Hibernian Society; the South Metro Concert Band; a Teddy Bear Tea and Contest; and Stories for Children with Akbar Imhotep, Dr. Gil Watson, Betty Ann Wylie and B.J. Abraham.





Many, many thanks to the following
for their contributions and support for Sun-
day In The Park '91:

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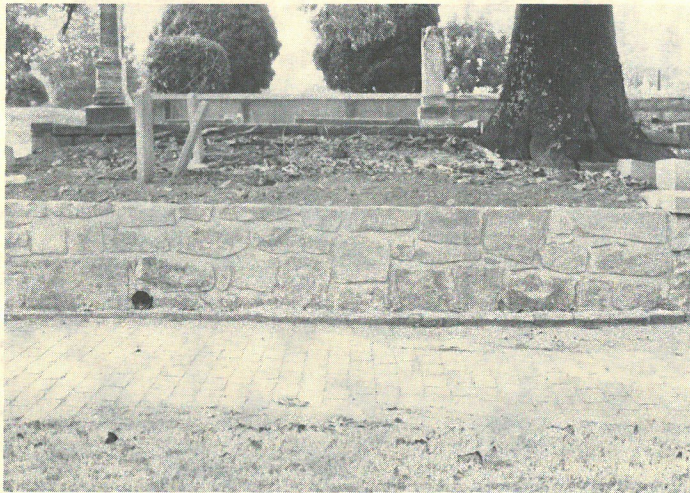
*Photos this page (left to right, top to bottom): Children
await the Teddy Bear Tea and Contest; HOCI staff mem-
ber Max Movsovitz guides visitors; Sharon Cooper and
Teddy Bear contestant; a smiling HOCI Member; visitors
from Gainesville, Ga. enjoying the picnic lunch; guests in
Victorian costume.*



*Photos by: Catherine Cates, R.B. Coulter, Linda Finsth-
wait and Mike Huston*



R.I.P.: RESTORATION IN PROGRESS



Photos: Max Moscovitz

Proceeds from Run for Restoration '91 funded the restoration of eight badly deteriorated, unstable walls. Six of the walls were along the cemetery tour route just south of Potter's Field near the Boulevard wall. The walls were restored in late September and early October, bringing the total number of 1991 R.I.P. restoration projects to nine.

These photographs illustrate two of the Run '91 wall projects shortly after restoration work was begun (top row) and after restoration was completed (bottom row).

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Kathryn Ballou for assisting the HOCL office with data entry; Dr. & Mrs. J.T. Cooper for their generous donation of computer software; Scott Grow/CompuCepts for computer software installation and instruction; Home Depot for donation of grass seed to help beautify the cemetery.

Annual membership dues are the lifeblood of Historic Oakland and are gratefully acknowledged at all levels. We would like to express special appreciation to those members who so generously support Historic Oakland through annual memberships of \$100 and above by listing them in four consecutive newsletters.

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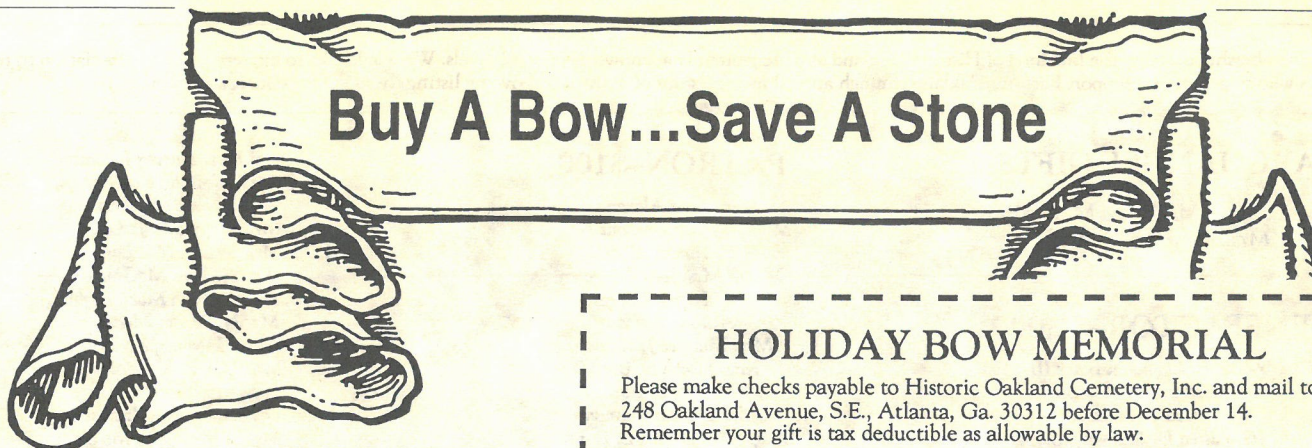
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HOCl is again offering elegant red velvet bows to beautify Historic Oakland during the Holiday Season. This opportunity allows you to place a memorial bow on your family lot or a location of your choice. **Proceeds from this project directly benefit the restoration fund.**

Renewal letters for last year's orders are being sent. If you do not receive the letter or if you are interested in purchasing a bow(s) for the first time, please contact the HOCl office at 688-2107 or send in the form at right before December 14. Also, if you are interested in helping HOCl place the bows on Saturday, December 14, please call Betty Mitchell or Linda Finsthwait, Bow Memorials Co-Chairmen. (Betty - 351-4323; Linda - 355-4225)

Make decorating Oakland a part of your holiday tradition this and every year!

HOLIDAY BOW MEMORIAL

Please make checks payable to Historic Oakland Cemetery, Inc. and mail to 248 Oakland Avenue, S.E., Atlanta, Ga. 30312 before December 14. Remember your gift is tax deductible as allowable by law.

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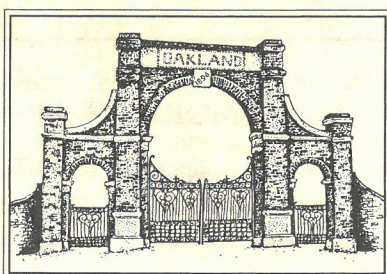
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