



Story by Emma Williams

Nestled in Southeast Portland, Lone Fir Cemetery is more than just a cemetery. It's one of Oregon's most treasured historic places, a living story book of the region's history and Portland's second-largest arboretum.

In 1854, J.B. Stephens sold his farm to Colburn Barrell. Stephens' father, Emmor, had died in 1846 and was the first person buried on the property. Barrell was a partner in a passenger steamship line between Portland and Oregon City. The steamship *Gazelle* exploded in April 1854, killing several people, including Barrell's business partner, Crawford Dobbins. Barrell set aside 10 acres of his property as a cemetery and buried the victims near Emmor Stephens. He named the cemetery Mount Crawford in honor of his friend.

By 1866, 20 more acres were added. Burial plots sold for \$10. Because of marshy ground, the city closed graveyards in what is now downtown. Many bodies were then re-interred at Mount Crawford. Barrell's wife, Aurelia, changed the name to Lone Fir Cemetery for the solitary tree standing on the site. The cemetery was eventually sold to Portland investors in 1866.

Today, Lone Fir is a wooded, landscaped arboretum in the heart of Portland with more than 700 trees representing 67 species. Most of the trees were planted as memorials to loved ones as long as 150 years ago. It boasts the last pioneer rose garden in Portland.

More than 30,000 people are buried at Lone Fir. Wander around and look for the graves of the founders with street names – Hoyt, Hawthorne, Lovejoy, Davis, Couch, as well as six Portland mayors and four governors. The lovely grounds, filled with trees that belie the cemetery's name, sustains the memory of military veterans, firefighters and mental hospital patients. It is the final resting place for people of diverse ethnicities and nationalities.

Chestnut Grove Memorial Garden opened within Lone Fir in 2013 to provide an option for the increasing number of people who choose to be cremated.

At Lone Fir, a transformation is taking shape in the block at the intersection of Southeast 20th Avenue and Southeast Morrison Street: burial grounds for patients at a nearby asylum and for Chinese immigrants. There are plans for a heritage garden and memorial on the site.

Be on the lookout!



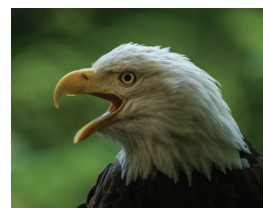
Cooper's hawk



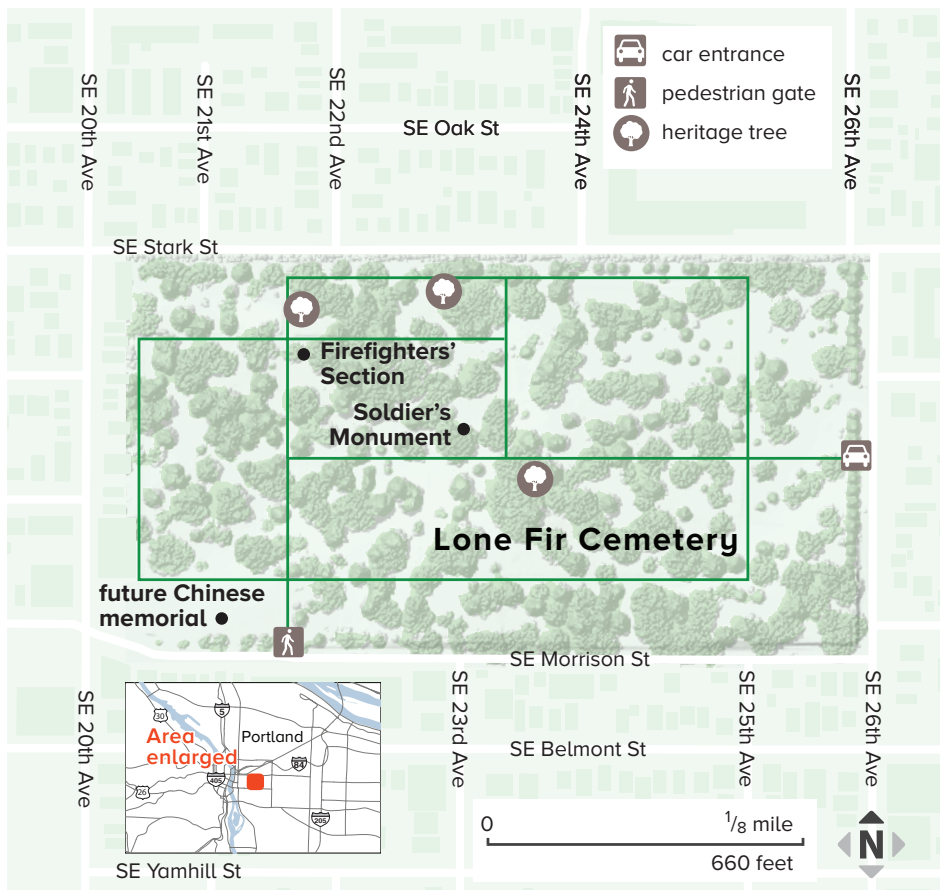
Douglas squirrel



great horned owl



bald eagle



Southeast 26th Avenue and Southeast Washington Street, Portland

Season-by-season highlights

Fall: Some may say the most beautiful time of year at Lone Fir is when the leaves have changed and a chill is in the air. Look for the three heritage trees: the bigleaf maple, incense cedar and Douglas fir, the cemetery's namesake. Every October Lone Fir hosts the Tour of Untimely Departures, an historic tour on the Saturday before Halloween highlighting some of the more unusual and interesting stories about people buried in the cemetery.

Winter: There is something striking about a walking through an historic cemetery on a clear, cold, winter day. The cemetery is open year round, so be sure to stop in and enjoy the serene surroundings. And if we are lucky enough to have snow, you might find someone cross country skiing.

Spring: It's the busiest time of year.

Not only are the flowers blooming and the birds singing, but Portlanders are also coming out to walk the grounds after a long winter. With Mother's Day and Memorial Day in the spring, the cemetery is full of fresh-cut flowers and lots of visitors. Each Memorial Day, the cemetery hosts an event with the local fire department to honor those who gave their lives in service to the country.

Summer: Longer days allow for evening events in the cemetery. Every other year you can find Shakespeare in the Park performing at the Soldier's Monument.

Year Round: The Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery nonprofit group offers Art and Epitaph tours on the first Saturday of each month and historical tours on the second Saturday.

friendsoflonefircemetery.org

Getting there

Lone Fir is located between Southeast Stark and Morrison streets and Southeast 20th and 26th avenues. Free parking along cemetery roads. TriMet bus 15 bus goes down Southeast Belmont and Morrison streets.

Know when you go

Open daily 7 a.m. to sunset. No pets. Please respect any services that might be taking place at the cemetery and families visiting graves of loved ones.

Cemetery details

Benches; free flower vases provided at Soldier's Monument, with five water spigots along the main roadway. Lone Fir is open to new sales. If you are interested in purchasing a burial or cremation space: 503-797-1709 or oregonmetro.gov/cemeteries

In the neighborhood

Lone Fir occupies six blocks in the Buckman neighborhood. The cemetery is within easy walking distance of many shops, restaurants, and bars along Southeast Stark, Morrison and Belmont streets, East Burnside Street and Southeast 28th Avenue.

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