



MOUNT AUBURN CEMETERY

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NEWS:

For Immediate Release

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STATE HOUSE CEREMONY LAUNCHES YEAR-LONG CELEBRATION OF MOUNT AUBURN CEMETERY'S 175th ANNIVERSARY

*Free Lectures, Art and Music Programs,
and Special "Legacy Projects"
will Highlight Commemoration of National Historic Landmark
that was Nation's First Garden Cemetery*

Cambridge, MA – June 22, 2006 – A year-long celebration of the 175th Anniversary of Mount Auburn Cemetery will kick off on the Grand Staircase at the State House in Boston at 11:00 AM on Thursday, June 22, when resolution from both houses will be read honoring the 1831 passage of the legislation that authorized the creation of Mount Auburn as the nation's first garden cemetery. Participating in the ceremony will be Senator Steve A. Tolman and Representative Rachel Kaprielian.

"The passing of the legislation that enabled the plan for Mount Auburn Cemetery to go forward was the first step in establishing an incredible landscape legacy for future generations, not only here in Boston but across the country when other cities quickly followed the example of Mount Auburn," said Mount Auburn Cemetery President William C. Clendaniel. "Now, 175 years later, two hundred thousand visitors a year still enjoy the natural beauty and tranquility of Mount Auburn Cemetery thanks to the foresightedness of the people who came together in 1831 to start this new kind of cemetery. We look forward to commemorating this important event at the State House."

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Bostonians founded Mount Auburn Cemetery in 1831 for both practical and aesthetic reasons: to solve an urban land use problem created by an increasing number of burials in the city and to create a tranquil and beautiful space where families could commemorate their loved ones with tasteful works of art in an inviting natural setting. The public flocked to the new cemetery and Mount Auburn quickly became the model for the “rural” cemetery movement that later inspired public parks and open space planning across the country. Today, the Cemetery, which has been designated a National Historic Landmark has 175 landscaped acres featuring 5,000 trees representing 630 species as well as an historic collection of 19th, 20th and 21st Century architecture and memorials. Burials and cremations continue to take place at the Cemetery and new interment space is still being designed for sale.

The Boston Athenaeum, the Boston Public Library, Historic New England, the Massachusetts Historical Society, the National Park Service, Harvard University’s Museum of Natural History, the New England Conservatory and the New England Wildflower Society are among the Boston-area organizations partnering with Mount Auburn in celebrating this 175th Anniversary. The many events will include:

- A commemoration ceremony and reception at the Cemetery on September 24 to mark the 175th Anniversary of Mount Auburn’s consecration;
- Seven free public lectures by renowned speakers touching on themes related to Mount Auburn (such as the Asian influence on American Horticulture, 19th Century Art and Architecture, and African-American history and roots) at the Boston Public Library, beginning in October, 2006 and extending through next May, 2007;
- Several art exhibitions and music programs featuring the works of artists and composers buried at Mount Auburn and/or featuring Mount Auburn settings;
- Publication of a revised and redesigned edition of *Silent City on a Hill: Landscapes of Memory and Boston’s Mount Auburn Cemetery* by Blanche Linden;
- A number of “legacy programs” at the Cemetery, including the installation of a Visitors Center; the renovation and conservation of Bigelow Chapel and its original and rare mid-19th century stained glass windows; the groundbreaking for Birch Gardens, a new interment space landscape; and the digitization of the Cemetery’s burial records;
- A celebration-concluding “Tribute to a Treasure” Gala Dinner on June 14, 2007, under a tent at Mount Auburn.

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About Mount Auburn Cemetery

Founded in 1831 as America's first landscaped cemetery, it is a place of exquisite horticultural beauty and cultural importance. A National Historic Landmark, Mount Auburn Cemetery is a treasure house of American history, horticulture and art. Its renowned landscape inspired the creation of the nation's public parks. Still an active burial place, Mount Auburn Cemetery also provides comfort and solace to countless thousands.

Over 94,000 people are buried at Mount Auburn Cemetery, many significant to our nation's history. This culturally diverse group includes African American writer Harriet Jacobs, women activists Dorothea Dix and Julia Ward Howe, Christian Science founder Mary Baker Eddy, art collector Isabella Stewart Gardner, poets Oliver Wendell Holmes and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, artist Winslow Homer and more contemporary notables such as Buckminster Fuller, B. F. Skinner, Edwin Land, and Curt Gowdy.

Mount Auburn Cemetery is located on the Watertown-Cambridge border at 580 Mt. Auburn Street, about six miles from downtown Boston and one mile west of Harvard Square. The grounds are open every day of the year from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., with extended hours during the spring, summer and fall. Maps, audio tours and other publications are available at the main entrance Gatehouse or in the Office. The Office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday; and 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Saturdays. Mount Auburn Cemetery remains an active cemetery with hundreds of burials and cremations taking place annually. A wide variety of public tours and lectures take place throughout the year. More information is available by visiting www.mountauburn.org or calling 617-547-7105.

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