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Woodland Cemetery Stewardship Committee 2003 Annual Report

The calendar year of 2003 was one of steady progress and continued focus for the Woodland Cemetery Stewardship Committee. The issues of primary importance to the group have remained constant over the past 12 months – the enhancement of the cemetery grounds through a comprehensive developmental plan, the on-going analysis of current policies to assess their relevance to our efforts, and the need to create a heightened awareness of the importance of this sacred ground throughout the Clemson community. The attention given to these issues relates directly to the mission of the committee, which is to protect, preserve, and promote the integrity and character of the cemetery.

Through a schedule of regular committee meetings and close coordination with the Office of Campus Planning, the Stewardship Committee established in late 2003 a general plan for capital improvements within the bounds of the cemetery. Although this plan is currently an initial roadmap in need of greater detail, it still serves as an important starting point for what the committee believes is a much needed and perhaps long overdue initiative for Woodland Cemetery. It is the hallmark of this year's work, and will continue to be a focal point of the committee for years to come.

During the past year, the Stewardship Committee deliberated various topics related to the cemetery, including the coping policy, parking space allocation, future plot assignments, and routine upkeep and maintenance of the grounds. As a result of these discussions, the Administrative Council approved one policy change and the committee produced its official recommendations on several other issues.

Additionally, the activities of the Stewardship Committee were promoted to the public on a number of occasions in recent months. From a tour conducted during Alumni Reunion weekend to a presentation to the Board of Trustees in October, the storied history of the Woodland Cemetery and the committee's current game plan is being told to all who will listen. In return, new friends and supporters of the Woodland Cemetery are being identified on an almost daily basis. It is this type of "grassroots" effort that will ultimately ensure the importance of the cemetery is not lost on the generations to come.

This annual report is intended to provide a detailed synopsis of the work and accomplishments of the Woodland Cemetery Stewardship Committee during 2003. In addition to reports from each sub-committee within the overall group, this document contains updates from on-going endeavors, minutes of committee meetings (Appendix A), the most recent version of the Woodland Cemetery developmental plan (Appendix B), and an analysis of the current parking policy on the cemetery grounds (Appendix C).

Committee Proceedings

The Woodland Cemetery Stewardship Committee met on February 28, April 3, July 10, August 29, October 3, and November 7, 2003. After nearly two years of leadership and service as the Chairman of the committee, Bobby McCormick resigned from his post in July. Wil Brasington was nominated and elected by the committee to serve as its new Chair, and Gerald VanderMey continued in his service as Recording Secretary.

Through the appointment of President Barker, Patti McAbee joined the Stewardship Committee in March as an ex-officio representative of the Board of Trustees. Her addition brings the committee's head count to nine total, with Sonya Goodman being the only other ex-officio member.

The Committee carries out a large portion of its business through the efforts of three standing sub-committees: Fundraising, Public Relations, and Grounds.

The Fundraising subcommittee is led by Jim Hendrix, and has assumed a highly important role in the overall scheme of the Committee's work due to the dependency of privately raised funds for the success of the proposed capital improvements to the cemetery.

Matt Dunbar, who has single-handedly orchestrated the Cemetery Chronicles series in the alumni publication Clemson World, heads the Public Relations arm. The PR subcommittee has also taken on the responsibility of establishing and organizing tours to promote a greater awareness of the cemetery.

The third subcommittee, Grounds, is under the guidance of Dr. Tom Wooten, who lends his expertise in the area of forestry to ensure that the cemetery grounds are properly maintained and that future needs are planned for.

Capital Improvement and Developmental Plan

The committee adopted a developmental plan in late 2003 that would greatly enhance the aesthetics of the cemetery, while providing perimeter definition and addressing certain environmental concerns at the same time. This plan calls for the creation of entry gates on Williamson Road, a forecourt leading to the traditional cemetery burial area, and a stone and wrought iron garden wall that would control erosion and replace the existing chain-link fence. All of these improvements are scheduled for completion by 2009 at an approximate total cost of \$585K, and would be carried out through a series of phases as shown below:

Phase One (\$125K) – Removal of chain-link fence, installation of hedgerow to replace fence, Williamson Road gates construction, landscaping

Phase Two (\$245K) – Forecourt and Garden Wall construction

Phase Three (\$215K) – Landscaping to define perimeter of Williamson Road, corner markers

An informational meeting took place in October 2003 between President Barker, Wil Brasington, Thornton, Kirby, Gerald VanderMey, and Barry Anderson of Campus Planning. The purpose of this meeting was to share preliminary ideas and solicit feedback from President Barker on the direction of the developmental project. The critical component of funding was discussed, and it was agreed that the majority of this effort would be driven through privately generated funds. However, President Barker generously offered the committee financial support from the university with matching funds at a 1:2 ratio (\$1 in university funding for every \$2 raised privately). The committee would like to express its gratitude to President Barker for his commitment to the success of this project and his continued support in general.

The Stewardship Committee also had the opportunity to present its initial work on this plan to the Budget and Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees in October. This meeting was also informational in nature, and appeared to be well received in theory by the Board.

The committee hopes to present this plan in its entirety to the Administrative Council for their review and approval. It is hoped that Phase One could begin in the spring of 2004 with the removal of the chain-link fence surrounding the cemetery, and that this initial phase would conclude with the Williamson Road gates construction and landscaping in late summer 2005.

Sub-Committee Reports

Fundraising Update:

The Stewardship Committee made significant progress towards its financial goals in 2003. The cash on hand in the Foundation account is \$44,068 (almost 250 gifts), compared to \$11,563 one year ago. More importantly, donors have pledged an additional \$127,000 over the next 5 years, bringing our total of gifts and pledges to more than \$171,000 (compared to just over \$80,000 one year ago). A snapshot of the largest pledges to date reveals:

1 pledge of \$50,000

1 pledge of \$25,000

1 pledge of \$15,000

5 pledges of \$5,000

3 pledges of \$2,500

Perhaps the most significant fundraising accomplishment in 2003 was the actual organization and establishment of the Woodland Cemetery Fundraising Subcommittee itself. This subcommittee is made up of the four life members of the Woodland Cemetery Stewardship Committee plus Terry Long, Brian O'Rourke, Brandt Gilbert, and Mendal Bouknight. The eight-person team will advise on a variety of issues including the recognition of donors and the appropriate message to use in marketing materials. Further, each member of this subcommittee will be expected to identify donors and assist in that effort.

The Fundraising Subcommittee is encouraged by the fact that its success to date has been through a combination of donors large and small, old and young. The earliest graduating donor is a member of the class of 1933, while the youngest benefactor will graduate in 2004. It makes the membership proud that this project appeals to a broad spectrum of the Clemson family, and builds confidence that enough donors can be found to successfully complete this project. It has been especially rewarding to see so many recent graduates dig deep to make this project a reality. Additionally, for the third year in a row, Tiger Brotherhood donated the proceeds from the RC & Moonpie Downhill Run, which were in excess of \$1,500.

The Fundraising Subcommittee has already identified several potential donors and is working on a brochure that will be sent to all members of Tiger Brotherhood, to the families of those who reside in Woodland Cemetery, and to those who have been assigned plots but fortunately are not yet residents. The expectation of the Subcommittee is that the upcoming year will be an even more fruitful year than 2003.

Public Relations Update:

Cemetery Chronicles

The *Cemetery Chronicles* series in the *Clemson World* alumni magazine continues to be a popular and important piece of the Stewardship Committee's work. In 2003, the *Chronicles* series profiled Dr. Rupert H. "Rube" Fike, Professor D. W. Daniel, Professor Elwyn Lorenzo Clarke, and Professor Gilbeart "Lord" Collings. These articles were written by three current students (including two National Scholars) and the daughter of one of the featured individuals.

Readers of the *Clemson World* have offered the Committee regular positive feedback regarding the *Cemetery Chronicles*, including compliments, questions, offers to write future articles, and unsolicited donations to the Cemetery Hill Preservation Fund. Given the popularity of the series, the Committee will use the *Chronicles* forum in 2004 to launch its public fundraising campaign for the Cemetery improvement project.

At year-end 2003, a total of ten *Cemetery Chronicles* had been published, with plans to continue the series indefinitely. The Committee wishes to recognize and thank Liz Newall, Editor of the *Clemson World*, for her continued support of the *Cemetery Chronicles*.

Cemetery Tours

It has long been a goal of the Committee to provide periodic tours of the Cemetery in order to increase the awareness and historical appreciation of the Cemetery and its inhabitants. The first tour was given during “Bring your Daughter to Clemson Weekend” in May, 2001, and a second tour was conducted during Reunion weekend in June, 2003. Feedback from both tours was overwhelmingly positive, and efforts have since been underway to formalize the Tour program with a regular schedule and designated tour guides.

Currently, the Committee is working to institute standing tours for events that might include Founders Day, Reunion Weekend, Kickoff Clemson, and Homecoming. A dialogue has been initiated with the University Tour Guide Association to explore the possibility of training a subset within that group to conduct those regularly scheduled tours as well as special event tours that might be arranged for particular occasions, guests or fundraising activities. The Committee has called upon Dr. Jerry Reel, Dean of Undergraduate Studies and University Historian, to help in establishing the tour content and training the tour guides. The Committee also plans to develop a self-guided tour for guests and alumni who visit campus throughout the year.

The Committee believes that regular Cemetery Tours will not only increase the appreciation of Clemson’s history among its supporters and help raise funds for the Cemetery’s preservation, but also serve to further Clemson’s 2010 Goals to “strengthen our sense of community” and “recognize and appreciate Clemson’s distinctiveness.”

Grounds Update:

Chain-Link Fence Removal

As preparation for Phase One of the adopted developmental plan, the committee has begun planning for the removal of the chain-link fence that surrounds the previously defined perimeter of the cemetery. A span of hedgerow would be installed in its place. The committee feels that the chain-link fence is not aesthetically appropriate in a “natural” surrounding such as the cemetery. Further, its only purpose is that of a safety barrier at the top of the two-foot high crosstie wall. The proposed hedgerow is suitable replacement for the fence, since it addresses both of the afore-mentioned issues of visual appeal and safety. It would serve as a barrier until the Garden Wall is constructed, and will remain as a compliment to the wall afterwards.

Cemetery Burial Plot Expansion

An effort is underway to expand the available burial area of the cemetery to the northwest corner of the grounds (closest to Jervy Gym). A tree survey must be completed prior to the formal plotting process of the future burial area. The challenge that faces the committee with this project is to find a balance between the protection of trees and the need for additional, assignable burial space. This initiative is slated for completion in the summer of 2004.

Policy Recommendations and Changes

Coping Policy

The Stewardship Committee discussed the status of the coping policy pertaining to burial plots in the cemetery. In the Woodland Cemetery Policies and Procedures, as adopted by the Board of Trustees in July 1991, the coping policy reads, "Coping, if desired by the assignee, is allowed provided the entire plot is outlined." A recent burial and subsequent, unsightly coping installation served as the catalyst for the committee to reconsider this policy.

The recommended change from the committee reads "Coping of plots in Woodland Cemetery is prohibited. Corner markers, that do not exceed a height of 4 inches above grade, are allowed." The Administrative Council approved this change in policy, and the Policies and Procedures Manual has been updated accordingly.

Analysis of Parking on Cemetery Grounds

Since the Board of Trustees approved the new boundaries of the cemetery in October 2002, questions have arisen as to whether or not parking and tailgating (during football season) should be allowed on cemetery grounds. Such is currently the case with the football game parking assignments in Lot 7. Bobby McCormick and Matt Dunbar evaluated this issue on behalf of the committee in the fall of 2003. After numerous discussions with both the Athletic Department and the Ticket Office, they presented their recommendation how to proceed with this issue to the full committee, who in turn unanimously endorsed the proposal.

Our finding states, "The current parking/tailgating situation and structure need not be changed unless and until burial grounds are expanded outside the chain-link fence boundary." The committee decided that the current proximity of tailgating parking assignments to gravesites is an appropriate distance. As the actual burial area is expanded beyond its current bounds at some future time, this will need to be re-evaluated, as the two components (parking assignments and plots) will begin to infringe upon one another. Further, it was determined that the ultimate goal of this committee's effort is to identify ways to bring people onto the cemetery grounds. The displacement of parking

spaces, until absolutely necessary, would run contrary to this objective. Additional comments and information pertaining to this issue are provided in Appendix C.

Conclusion

The Stewardship Committee is proud of the accomplishments it has witnessed over the past twelve months. Through considerable discussion, careful planning, and coordinated efforts with various parties across the University, the committee feels it is providing the type of vigilance over the cemetery that it was established to provide. The upcoming year will undoubtedly offer both opportunities and challenges to the overall effort, and each will be confronted with great energy and enthusiasm from the group.

The expectations for 2004 are lofty. The committee will remain heavily involved in fundraising activities, with a goal of at least \$75,000 cash on hand by year's end. Work will continue on the cemetery developmental plan to ensure that our project cost projections are achievable and that the end result is worthy of the ground that it will be built upon. A standing Woodland Cemetery tour calendar will be established. These tours will be carried out by a dedicated group of guides, who will offer an intimate glimpse into the lives of those interred within the grounds and of the cemetery itself. Finally, the committee intends to conduct a thorough analysis of the Woodland Cemetery Policies and Procedures to determine which, if any, guidelines are in need of modification due to the ever-changing needs of the cemetery.

At the end of the day, the Stewardship Committee remains as committed as ever to its most important responsibility. It is with deep appreciation for this unique opportunity to serve Clemson that this annual report is issued.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Committee,

Wil Brasington
Chairman