

## New basalt columns grace Lone Fir Cemetery entrance



Two basalt columns now flank the east entrance of Lone Fir Cemetery on Southeast 26th Avenue, matching columns on the west entrance.

By Rebecca Koffman

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At one time, [Lone Fir Cemetery's](#) two entrances were each flanked with hand-carved stone columns. The original columns on the cemetery's west side are still standing. The east side columns were removed, leaving only the bases.

"We don't know when the original columns were placed or when they were removed," Janice Reid, former chair of [Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery](#), told a small crowd gathered along Southeast 26th Avenue on July 16.

The occasion: the dedication ceremony for two new columns that now grace the east entrance to the cemetery. About 20 people came to show their support for this latest effort to restore and beautify the cemetery.

Friends of Lone Fir came up with the idea and raised \$35,000 for the project. The group's volunteers partnered with Metro staff to commission the columns and to work through the permitting and land-use review process. Stone mason Matt Goddard of [Poetry In Stone](#) carved the new columns to look like the originals on the west side.

"Lone Fir is not just a cemetery," [Metro Councilor Shirley Craddick](#) said in her remarks, "It's valued by the community as a park."

Watching the speeches was former Gov. and Metro Councilor Barbara Roberts, who said she never misses anything to do with this beautiful cemetery. U.S. senators, leaders of the suffrage movement, Chinese workers, and Dr. James Hawthorne, who co-founded the nearby Oregon Hospital for the Insane in 1861, are all buried at Lone Fir, she said.

People cheered as Wendy Palmer, vice-chair of Friends of Lone Fir, and Monty Woods, parks operations supervisor at Metro, cut the red ribbon strung between the two stone pillars.

"My great-great-great-grandparents are buried here," Palmer said after the ceremony with tears in her eyes. Palmer came here as a child to decorate their graves. Buried nearby are their infant twins, Mamie and James. "But they have no headstone," said Palmer, explaining that she took to calling the new columns after the twins.

"Mamie is the one with the plaque, dedicated to those who rest here," she said with a smile.

"I'm also proud of our partnership with Metro," she said. "Monty and I work well together, we respect each other."

Woods said he jumped at the chance to work with Friends of Lone Fir on a project like this. "It's a great day for a place where the community comes to reflect," he said.

The new columns are made from blue-gray basalt that comes from a quarry in Corbett.

Goddard, the stone mason, said the basalt in the original columns likely came from the Rocky Butte Quarry that closed when Interstate 84 was built. "The Corbett basalt is so similar," he said.

He wanted to honor the work of prior masons who carved the headstones in the cemetery.

"There's a lot of high-level stonework," he said. "This was a powerful place to work. There are 25,000 souls here watching over me."



Monty Woods, parks operations supervisor at Metro, Wendy Palmer of Friends of Lone Fir Cemetery and Matt Goddard, of Poetry in Stone, celebrate the dedication of the columns.



Matt Goddard of Poetry In Stone used blue-gray basalt from a quarry in Corbett for the new columns. Photo courtesy of Matt Goddard

