

THE HISTORIC *Union Cemetery* REDWOOD CITY, CA

❁ Winter 2025 ❁



HUCA Board members Jean and Don Tomatis, Bridget Cottrell, Kathy Klebe
Maggie Coleman, Barry Kuhl and Don Bach and (center) George Smith (American Legion Post 105)

Thank you American Legion!

Recently, the Historic Union Cemetery received a donation of \$500 from American Legion Post 105 to support our school field trip program. We are very grateful for their generous support. Field trips are scheduled in 2026 that include the bus transportation thanks to donations like this and the cooperation of the Redwood City School District transportation department. Thanks to all!



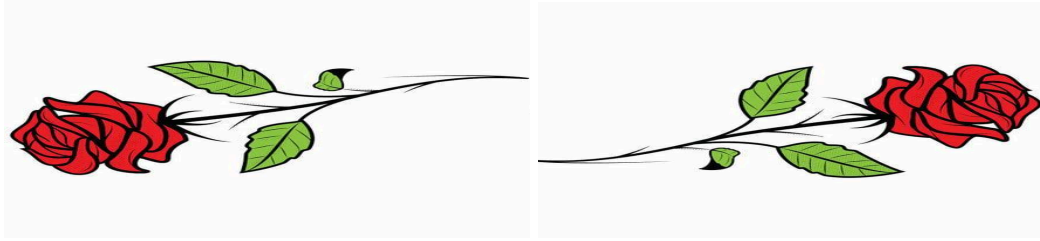
It's Wreaths Across America time again!



For the last 5 years we have participated in the [Wreaths Across America](#) program in cooperation with Daughters of the American Revolution. This year, we will be placing the wreaths on soldiers' graves on December 13 where they will remain until January 10. Please come and take a stroll to enjoy these beautiful and fragrant wreaths.



I recently met a man who has a mid 1800's headstone in his backyard that was there when he bought the property. Although it doesn't seem to be from our cemetery, it reminded me to ask once again if you might have an unidentified piece of marble or granite in your garage or patio. We have about 2500 people buried at Union Cemetery, but we have less than 1000 markers and headstones. Many of these original markers were taken or vandalized in the late 1970's and 80's. You also might have a piece of decorative concrete or stone trim. Or even the little girl's head from the Beeger plot. Maybe it is from Union Cemetery and we would LOVE to have it back. Contact me [here](#) if so and we'll check it out.



It's almost ROSE PRUNING TIME!!

Starting on Saturday morning, January 10th, we will begin the annual pruning of the 305 rose bushes at Union Cemetery. It is a daunting task, but we have many volunteers, both from organizations and individuals, so it goes pretty quickly. If you don't know how to prune, we will teach you; just bring clippers and gloves.

It is also the day we will be removing the wreaths from the Veterans' graves. Parking along Woodside Rd. is OK for events like this.



It's time to renew your membership and support the efforts of the Historic Union Cemetery Association!

It is \$25 for an individual membership, \$50 for an organization/family and you can sign up/renew at: www.historicunioncemetery.org > contribute > membership

Or mail a check to:

Historic Union Cemetery Association

PO Box 610033, Redwood City, CA 94063

Please be sure to include your Name, address, email

Thank YOU!



Here is an interesting biography written by Board member Barry Kuhl.



Charles E. Benjamin

Born in New York in 1842, Charles Benjamin came to Redwood City with his family as a child prior to the Civil War. Charles' father David found work as a master carpenter, a much sought profession in the early pioneering days when the harvesting of redwood lumber created the vast majority of jobs in the southern San Mateo County area.

Charles was 19 when the Civil War began in 1861. The United States Department of War assigned a quota to the Eastern states to provide a certain number of troops to the war effort. Being geographically distant from the battlefield, California was not given a quota. However in Massachusetts, a state having difficulty fulfilling their quota, the Governor asked the Department of War to help them recruit men from California.

So in Oct 1862, the Secretary of War issued a wanted notice in California to raise a cavalry company of 100 men to go to Massachusetts to assist in the War. They were to become the "2nd Mass Cavalry", company A.

The notice was posted for volunteers interested in fighting for the Union cause to report to the hall at the corner of Post & Kearny Streets in San Francisco. What do we call that location today?.... UNION Square!! So at age 20, Charles enlisted on

November 16 and was shipped out a month later as a member of the original "California 100".

Charles fought valiantly until July 1864 when he was wounded in the leg and taken prisoner. He managed to escape and returned to his regiment after wandering in the swamps for two to three days while wounded. He was transferred to a position of commissary officer, and mustered out July 20, 1865 as the war ended.

Post war, we know little about where Charles went and what profession he took up, but at some point in time he returned to Redwood City where he died in August of 1909, survived by his two sons Frank and Charles. He is buried in the Union Cemetery along with his parents David and Hettie and brother Edward. The family is buried in Plot 88 along Central Ave.

There are nearly 50 Civil War veterans buried in the Union Cemetery but only 3 lived in California when the war began and Charles was one of them. So while there were no Civil War battles fought in California, there was no lack of commitment by Californians to the Union cause.



Thank you for all your support. It truly is the impetus to keep us doing our best for Union Cemetery.

Be sure to check our website: <https://historicunioncemetery.org/>

You will soon be able to access the schedule for future tour dates and other events on the home page.

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