

The Restoration and Preservation of “Old St. Joe’s” Cemetery

- A Little About old St. Joseph’s Cemetery
- What prompted the Restoration and Preservation Project?
- A Little About “Adopt-a-Plot”
- What’s Next?
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A Little About old St. Joseph’s Cemetery

- Burial ground was consecrated May 26, 1881 by Bishop Patrick Monogue of Grass Valley.
- The land was apparently donated by R.G. Dunn and Bernard Conroy.
- Location: Lincoln and Waldon Streets, next to the UPRR tracks, one block west of California Street.
- The cemetery was located near St. Joseph’s Church (corner of Court & Sacramento Streets) and just down from the rail station. After fire destroyed it in 1964, St. Joseph’s church moved next to St. Joseph’s School adjacent to Benton Airport.

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A Little About old St. Joseph’s Cemetery

- July, 1942 Bishop Armstrong of Sacramento dedicated the new St. Joseph’s mausoleum “near Redding” (on Hwy 299, just west of Buenaventura Blvd).
- Interments at old St. Joseph’s tapered off with the opening of this new burial ground.
- Over 500 persons have been buried in old St. Joseph’s.

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What prompted the Recent Restorations and Preservation Project at Old St. Joe’s?

- 1986-1987: Vandalism and Desecration of gravesites prompted raising of funds and construction of a chain-link fence around the perimeter. Louis Franchetti also fashioned a welded steel gate at the entrance.
- 2008-2009: Vandalism and Desecration of gravesites again prompted **Knights of Columbus** to take responsibility for restoring the gravesites and initiating ongoing stewardship for the grave plots – establishing “Adopt-a-Plot.” **Bishop Jaime Soto** of the Sacramento Diocese also took a personal interest and directed funds for graves restoration. UPRR also took interest and initiated erosion control measures along the west boundary of the cemetery abutting the UPRR tracks.

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- Gravestones Shattered



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- Monuments Toppled by Vandals



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- Erosion & Grave Vandalism along UPRR Tracks



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- Volunteers Clean up / Restore Plots



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- Union Pacific RR Installs Retaining Wall



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- Attention & Resources from Sacramento Diocese – Bishop Soto personally inspects



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A Little About “Adopt-a-Plot”

- Currently 44 plots have been defined in Sections “A” thru “N” encompassing 500+ graves. All but 4 plots have been adopted by St. Joseph’s parishioners, local citizens, a Boy Scout troop, and others.
- 35 individuals, families or organizations have adopted plots.
- Bi-Annual Adopt-a-Plot events (possibly Memorial Day and Veterans Day clean-up parties) are envisioned, as well as interim access for adoptors who wish to visit ad hoc.

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A Little About “Adopt-a-Plot”

- Application Forms have been prepared and distributed at Cemetery open houses and Sunday services.
- A “Work Group” organization has been established to sustain the effort.
- Policies, Procedures, and helpful Cleaning Guidelines have been established.

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What’s Next? What Can You Do?

- Sign up for Remaining, Un-adopted Plots. Existing sections can be further “sub-plotted.”
- Contribute Resources (e.g. Boy Scouts spread 144 tons of gravel donated by Crystal Creek Aggregate for walkways; Dan Palmer Trucking hauled it to the site; new entrance sign was designed & installed)
- Attend scheduled clean-up events
- Start Adopt-a-Plot program at other cemeteries and gravesites in the County.