

History tour in Lakewood seen through a cemetery

Historical tours Sept. 26-27 will highlight iconic people

By Andrew Fickes
September 24, 2015

Mountain View Memorial Park in Lakewood, known for its picturesque grounds and superior customer service to families grieving the loss of a loved one, is celebrating its 100th year in operation with a weekend of events Sept. 26 and 27. General Manager Clarke Thomson and his staff expect to entertain upwards of 600 people. Included in the weekend celebration will be historical tours of the grounds, which will be offered nearly every hour between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday and between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Sunday.

"The intent of the historical tours is to celebrate the beginnings of Mountain View from 1915 when the first burial took place and walk people through the different sections and highlight the evolution of Mountain View," Thomson said. "We have a number of gardens that represent the veterans' community. We will discuss those. We will take people by the first burials section. We have our garden chapel that is a highlight. We also have the First Responders Memorial."

Services were held at Mountain View for the four Lakewood police officers who were shot and killed in 2009. Two are buried at Mountain View.

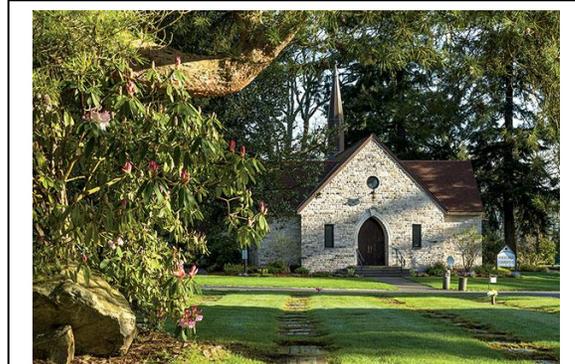
Some of the other notable people buried at Mountain View who will be highlighted during the tours are Edgar N. Eisenhower, the older brother of President Dwight D. Eisenhower; business icon Marcus Nalley, founder of Nalley Fine Foods; Cheney Lumber Company founder Ben Cheney; and U.S. Air Force Capt. Douglas Ferguson, whose remains were finally recovered and returned to the U.S. on May 1, 2014 - 40 years following his death in the Vietnam War. "We have had really good interest thus far in the (tours)," Thomson said. "Spaces are limited. They are filling up rather quickly. We're hoping for no more than ten people per tour."

Following the tours, guests will be able to view a photographic exhibit entitled "Tacoma: 100 Years of Progress," displayed in Mountain View's Celebration of Life Center. The exhibit will feature historic images on canvas of Tacoma history from the 1900s-1950s. Guests who like what they see can bid on items during a silent auction. Thomson said 100 percent of the proceeds from the auction will benefit the Lakewood Historical Society.

Some of the historical images will be on display at Mountain View's new mausoleum, which opened last April. Connected to the mausoleum is the new cremation garden, completed in August. There are nearly 2,000 spaces in the mausoleum and about 650 spaces in the cremation garden.

"People have the opportunity to see the garden and the mausoleum," Thomson said. "It's one-of-a-kind, very unique to Mountain View. The construction of the mausoleum has a Northwest feel with exposed timbers and river rock. "The garden is designed to celebrate the individual lives and personalization through the markers," he added. "It's all in a peaceful setting with a fireplace in the middle and two water fountains on either side of the fireplace. It has a lodge feel to it."

For more information, visit www.100yearsofcaring.com.



The Garden Chapel on the grounds was burned in a 1993 fire set by an arsonist and recently restored. The chapel will be highlighted during historical tours Sept. 26 and 27. Photo credit: Mark Johnson