Contemporary Monuments

A Self-Guided Tour of Portland's Historic Lone Fir Cemetery

Attitudes about death change over time, and burial markers reflect that. The early skull and hourglass motifs common prior to the 19th century marked a society with perhaps too much contact with the Grim Reaper. The passage of time gave way to the expression of more positive feelings about the afterlife and headstone symbolism moved to various religious and other themes reflective of the deceased's beliefs or station in life. Shaking hands, fraternal images, and heavenly references indicate lives with less time spent struggling for survival and more to r eflect on spirit.

Most modern cemeteries, called memorial gardens, are fields of flat markers laid out for ease of maintenance. Metro's Pioneer Cemeteries are different, as all 14 of them still allow burials with upright headstones. People choose specific cemeteries for many different reasons, but many of the burials at Lone Fir seem to have something to communicate which couldn't be carved on a plaque. This results in some which are poignant, evocative, sentimental, humorous, or in some way seek to convey information about the one buried there.

Today's Americans are known for individuality and freedom of expression. This is reflected in contemporary headstone art. An earlier movement toward low-maintenance cemeteries with flat plaques has returned to a preference for personal expression in monument design. Some of Lone Fir's contemporary monuments have been featured in books and vother publications.

Visit the gravesites pictured and discover others indicated by cemetery block and lot number.

Leonid ZAPOLSKIY
5.30.1966 - 5.17.2006

"THIS WASN'T IN MY SCHEDULE BOOK"

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Map of Lone Fir Cemetery

SE SE Stark St.

| | A | B | 5M | 6M | 11M | C | D | E |

Willows Block 3

Leonid Zapolskiy   Block 7

Bench   Block 7M

Iron Cross   Block 8M

Dragonball   Block 26

Scrabble Board   Block 34