

CHARLES BABER CEMETERY PRESERVATION TRUST OF POTTSVILLE, PA



**Site: 1400 W. Market St., Pottsville, PA
(Between 12th St. and 16th St.)**

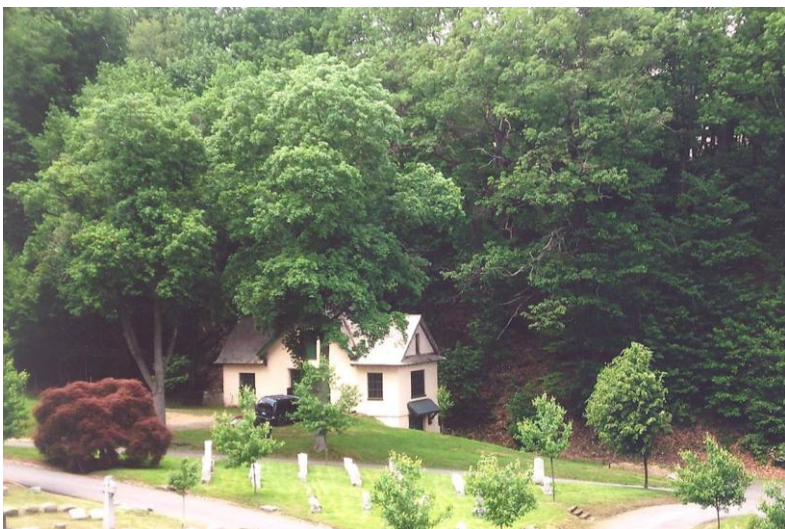
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By: Carol S. Field

THE HISTORY OF CHARLES BABER AND MOUNT LAUREL CEMETERY

When the Rev. William Cooley was hired as rector of Trinity Protestant Episcopal Church in May 1846, he was assigned two major responsibilities: (1) to help obtain financing to construct the new church edifice, and (2) to find a burial ground for the church. Because the Trinity Church Vestry met infrequently, it was not until the May 1, 1848 meeting that it was noted the Vestry had the responsibility of taking charge and laying out the plans of the cemetery and collecting the payments. Although never directly mentioned by name in the 1847 and 1848 minutes, it was the **Mount Laurel Cemetery** to which the church was referring.



Joseph H. Zerbey, in his 1936 History of Pottsville and Schuylkill County, describes Mount Laurel Cemetery as “the cemetery was on the knoll at the head of Market Street at the intersection of Minersville Road and was secured as a cemetery in connection with the Episcopal Church as early as July 21, 1847.” In the same



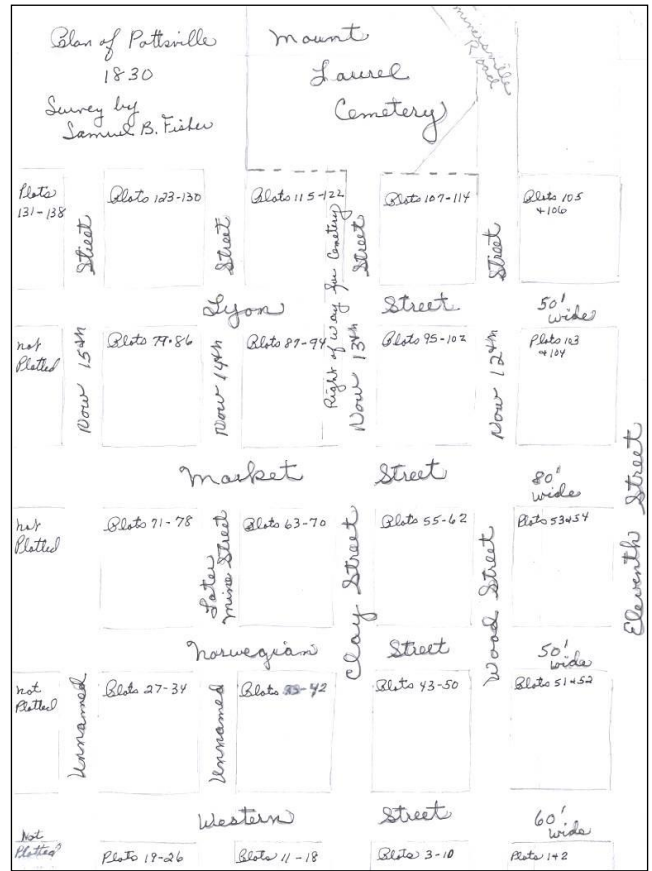
article, Zerbey also noted that “the first burials were made there Oct. 25, 1848”. In an 1875, article for the Herald written by Sarah McCool entitled *Schuylkill County Historic Gleanings*, Mount Laurel Cemetery is described as “being purchased in the fall of 1848, it is a cemetery of limited proportion, but set in the midst of a dense and beautiful forest upon undulating land.”

allocated in the years 1851, 1852, and 1853 was pledged for the payment of the new Trinity Episcopal Church building debt.

The money from the sale of the burial lots of Mount Laurel Cemetery specified as being

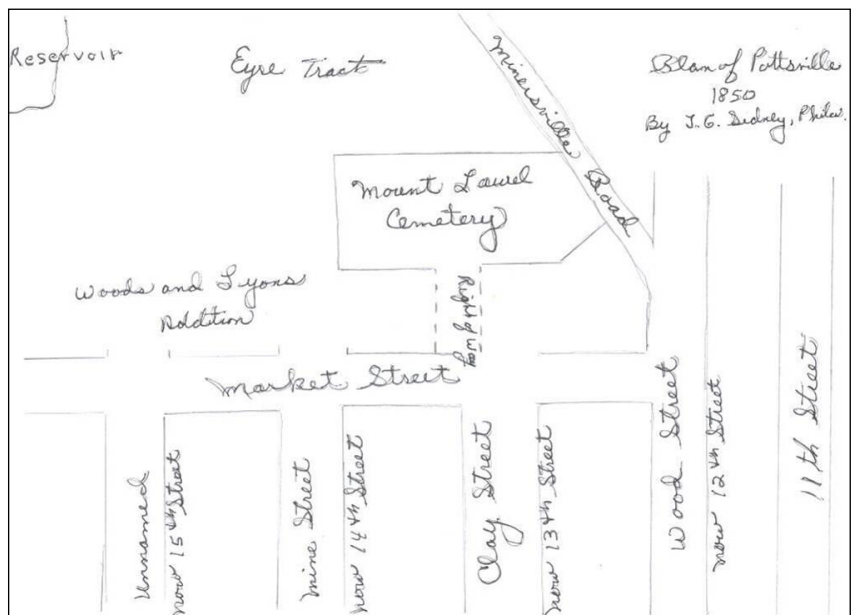


An 1830 plan of Pottsville surveyed by Samuel B. Fisher shows a fifty foot wide street called Lyon Street laid out north of Market Street and running parallel to it. The land on the north side of Market Street from Wood (Twelfth) to a then unnamed street (Fifteenth) was known as the Woods and Lyon Addition. The land was plotted beginning in the south east side of Eleventh Street and Western Street (now called Mahantongo Street). Market was plotted as the larger street with a width of 80 feet. Both Norwegian and Lyon Streets were 50 feet wide. And Western Street (now Mahantongo) was 60 feet wide. Fourteenth and Fifteenth Street were unnamed and the mapping ended there. The developed part of the village of Pottsville seemed to end at Eleventh Street with unplotted vacant ground comprising three quarters of the block to Wood (Twelfth) Street. The remaining one-fourth block closest to Wood Street held only 2 plots while the blocks west of Wood held seven plots. It almost seemed as if the land west of Eleventh Street was intended to be its own tract, section, or borough similar to what became of Yorkville.



The plots began with no. 1 in the southeastern corner of Eleventh and Western Street and continued through no. 138 which was at the corner of Fifteenth (then unnamed) and Lyon Street. The land was not plotted beyond Fifteenth Street, except plots 131-138 were shown on the north side of Lyon. Because the 1830 plan showed plotted land on both the north and south side of Lyon Street, Trinity Protestant Episcopal Church purchased the undeveloped and unplotted grassy multi-tiered hill behind or north of the Lyon Street plots. A right of way access road led from Market Street and Clay (now Thirteenth) Street and crossed over the plots fronting Lyon Street.

Mount Laurel Cemetery could be entered into from either the northeastern side off of the Old Minersville Road (now East Arch Street) or from the south by an egress entrance from Market Street through the plotted Lyon Street. In length, it ran from Wood Street (now Twelfth Street) to Mine Street (now Fourteenth Street). The plots and streets ended at Sixteenth Street (which didn't exist on the 1830 map and was unnamed on the 1850 map). State Street (now Sixteenth Street), when it was finally named sometime after 1850, became the boundary between the Borough of Pottsville and the Borough of Yorkville.



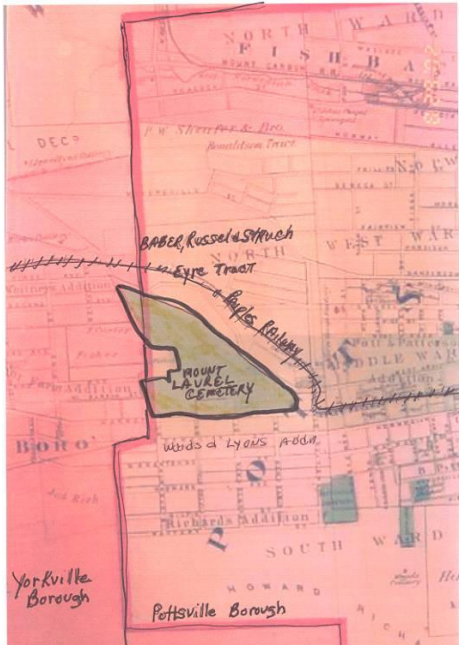
Mount Laurel Cemetery lay adjacent and east of a large plot of ground called the “Eyer Tract” which was owned by Baber, Russel, and Strauch that ran from East Arch Street to Fishbach. Running along Market Street was land called the Woods and Lyons Addition, and to the west of Mount Laurel, mostly in the Borough of Yorkville, was the Woods Estate.

In the 1860s, an industrialist named **Charles Baber** began buying parcels of land near the Mount Laurel Cemetery including the Eyer tract and the Woods and Lyons Addition. At the time of the land purchases, Charles Baber owned a planning mill that made window sashes, blinds, and doors, a lumber company, and he held various interests in coal mining lands and operations. After purchasing the Eyer Tract and part of the Woods and Lyons Addition, Baber held a land mass of 40 acres. Some historic records call the purchased tract of land “the Farm Tract” and state that it encompassed 40 acres. Part of the tract of land between Fourteenth and Sixteenth Streets formed the boundary between the Borough of Pottsville and the Borough of Yorkville. This tract of land, just like the Mount Laurel Cemetery was undeveloped woodland and forest with a natural spring fed reservoir. Baber continued buying plots and tracts of land until he owned over 100 acres of land reaching to Fishbach and Jaloppa.



At the May 3, 1867 Vestry meeting, the minutes reflect that Charles Baber, then a vestryman of Trinity Episcopal Church, was authorized to fence in the grave yard and to repair the stone wall. At this same meeting Charles Baber submitted plans of the grounds that he purchased from the Woods Estate. It is difficult to interpret the minutes, but it appears that Charles Baber also owned land in the Mount Laurel Cemetery that was by the Woods Estate. He wanted the Vestry to approve his development plan because it embraced sections A, B, C, and D of Mount Laurel, and he could then sell his lots for burial purposes. From this time forward through 1879, it appears that Trinity Church, as owner of Mount Laurel Cemetery, and Charles Baber, as owner of the adjoining cemetery now called the **Charles Baber Cemetery**, were exchanging land and lots back and forth.

Charles Baber was a Trinity Episcopal Church Vestryman for 21 years, a businessman, and the President of the Pottsville Water Co. which was chartered in 1834 and was built on Centre St. at the other end of the same city block that the Trinity Episcopal Church sat upon. Charles Baber served as President of the Water Company from 1868 to the day of his death in 1885. He was succeeded as president of the Water Co. by his son and later by his grandson. He helped establish the Safe Deposit Bank and the People’s Railway. The People’s Railway was a trolley line which ran along Market Street and linked Pottsville with Yorkville and Minersville.



According to one map, the trolley line ran behind

the cemetery on what was called the old Minersville Road across Baber's land on the Eyre Tract and to Market Street and Twelfth Street.

In the November 27, 1872 Vestry minutes, the Church, in consideration for improvements made by Charles Baber, deeded Mount Laurel land to Charles Baber beginning at the road north and west of J. E. Graeff's lot to the fence in the Minersville Road and to the centre of the avenue (centre is spelled this way in all the minutes), formerly Lyons Street. The Vestry surrendered the old entrance to him which was across from Thirteenth Street and gave him the right of way to the new entrance. It was also at this meeting that Charles Baber submitted a bill for sodding and graveling the cemetery. On May 28, 1874, it was again mentioned of an exchange of ground for burial purposes north of the new road and west of the grant made to him in April 1873 and would convey to Charles Baber ground north of the Market Street fence and west of the gateway extending east from the stone wall. It was also mentioned in the May 1874 minutes that the nine bell chimes he was gifting to the Church were expected to arrive any day.

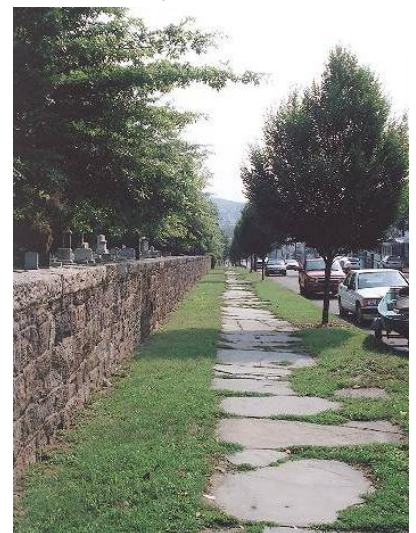


Sometime after the frequent swapping of lots with the Church and the surrendering of the old entrance to Baber in 1872 and allowing Baber the right of way of the new entrance, Charles Baber built a stone wall and a gateway entrance along the front of the cemetery that faced Market Street. The stone entrance way bears the date of 1867, which may have been about the time Charles Baber bought the land. He may have begun building the long stone wall and gateway entrance after that, but the Vestry minutes don't reflect the permitted use of the entrance until 1872.

In an undated Republican article by Walter S. Farquhar entitled "*Musings*", the thought was that the stone wall, called Pottsville conglomerate stone, was built from stone taken from one of the twenty-two old canals. This may be possible, because a drought in 1869 and later, a disastrous flood dumped coal



dirt into the canals, forcing the closing of some of the canals. Port Carbon's canal for instance, was flooded and abandoned in 1853. However, Charles Baber could also have purchased the same Pottsville conglomerate stone



used by the Schuylkill Navigation Company who built the canals.

The entrance into the cemetery is a beautiful granite gateway with two gatehouses situated on both sides of the entrance. While the chapel structure would be built in a Gothic design, the gateway is Egyptian

Revival. The Egyptian design was making its comeback at this time period and this gateway is thought to have been patterned after Boston's Mount Auburn Cemetery. Mount Auburn was created in 1831 by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and contained a Gothic Chapel, the Egyptian Revival gateway and a Norman Tower. When commenting on the cemetery and its gates, Charles Baber is to have referred lovingly to his cemetery as "the beautiful City of the Dead", perhaps thinking of Egypt's massive burial mausoleums called "the City of the Dead".

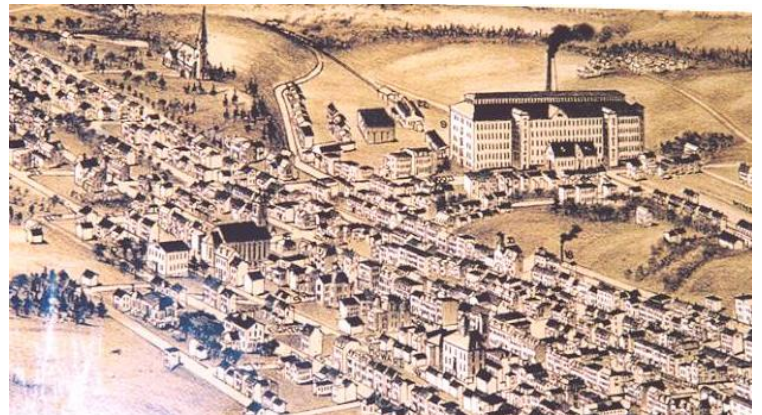
In June 27, 1874, the nine bell chime for Trinity Church's bell tower that Charles Baber purchased had arrived. The original bell, which was the first church bell to ever ring in Pottsville, was removed and placed in the Chapel of the Resurrection at the Charles Baber Cemetery.



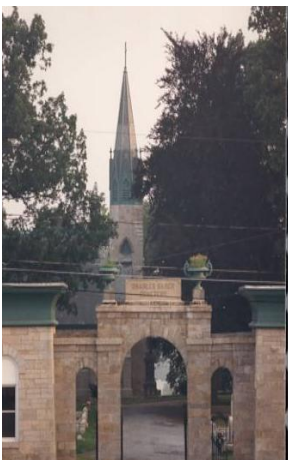
Between 1876 and 1880, Charles Baber built a beautiful Gothic chapel within his cemetery which was opened to the general public for burial services. The chapel was built at a cost of \$25,000. The slate on its roof was imported from out of state (possibly Vermont). The chapel was built at street level to Market Street, but the land behind and northwest of the chapel slopped off down a hill. The chapel overlooked a reservoir. The reservoir, from the 1800s until the 1940s, was used for swimming, fishing, and picnicking during the summer months and

for ice skating during the winter months. The reservoir was fed from a natural spring that ran underground. Since most of the cemetery was undeveloped it was used as a park by the people of Pottsville.

This sketch of Pottsville showing Market Street from Tenth Street to Fifteenth Street was to have been done in 1889. It accurately depicts the chapel, the reservoir behind the chapel, the Minersville Road down the hill and to the right of the chapel, and even the People's Railway to the right of the Minersville Road. What also is accurate, is the development of Pottsville along Market, Norwegian, and Mahantongo Streets, and the sparse development to the north of



Market Street leading to Fishbach and Jalappa. That area, for the most part, had not been developed yet passed the Tilt Silk Mill built in 1888 on Twelfth Street. The Minersville Road was the main road from this part of town to Fishbach, Jalappa, and Minersville. However, what is not accurate and should be in this 1889 picture, are the grave stones of Mount Laurel (developed in 1848), and the Charles Baber Cemetery grave stones, stone wall and Egyptian entranceway along Market Street (developed in 1867-1878).

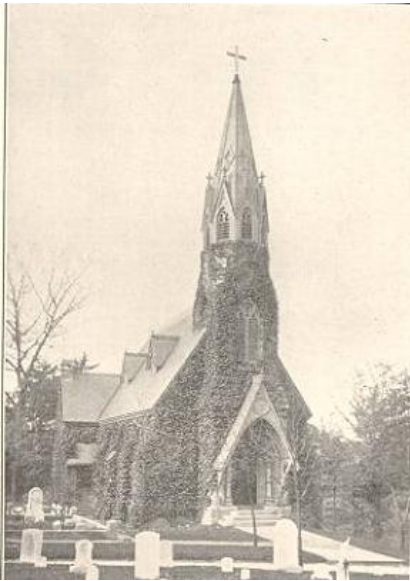


On Easter morning, April 4, 1885, Trinity Episcopal Church suffered a severe loss when Charles Baber, 73 years old and a faithful parishioner of 21



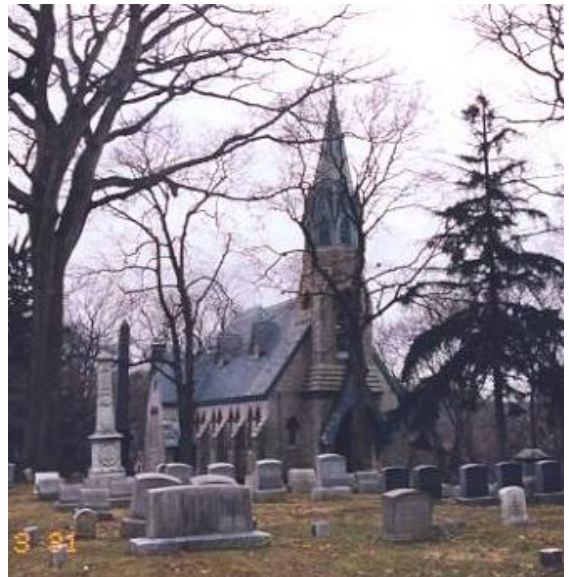
years, died. Mr. Baber had served as vestryman since 1864 and as church warden since 1875. He was said to be an earnest worker and a generous giver to the Church. He also gave of his time and money to the Charles Baber Cemetery, which consisted of 40 acres and included within its limits the old cemetery belonging to the church and known as Mount Laurel Cemetery.

One month before his death, Charles Baber willed the cemetery in trust to the people of Pottsville. He appointed the Vestry of Trinity Church as Trustees to administer the trust. Because the will was written only one month before Charles Baber's death, the cemetery passed to his wife, Mrs. Louise Baber, who knowing her husband's wishes, executed the deed of trust for Trinity Church on January 27, 1887. Charles Baber Cemetery was given as a gift to the people of Pottsville. It was not a church investment, but was to be administered by the Church for anyone desiring to use it as a final resting place for their dead. The beautiful chapel was consecrated by the Rt. Rev. Nelson S. Somerville Rulison, Assistant Bishop of the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania, on October 6, 1891 as "The Chapel of the Resurrection". Dr. Nelson, then rector of the Nativity of South Bethlehem, and to



become in 1927 the Bishop of Georgia, preached the sermon.

Afternoon Sunday school classes and services were held at the Chapel of the Resurrection beginning in 1885. At that time, the Women's Guild of the Resurrection was formed to prepare the chapel for services. By 1888, a vested men and boys choir was occasionally performing at the Sunday afternoon services. The Chapel of the Resurrection Sunday school grew to the point that a full board was formed with a superintendent, a secretary, treasurer, organist, and librarian. As with all churches and chapels at that time, the board was run by a male superintendent and secretary. The chapel services and Sunday school continued well into the early 1920s.



In 1898, Royal Horitcultural Society Silver Metal recipient botanist, nurseryman, landscape engineer, Thomas Meehan, Thomas Meehan & Sons, Germantown, PA, was employed to design a botanical garden layout of the 40 acres in the Charles Baber Cemetery. The acreage layout encompassed the reservoir (then referenced as a lake) beginning at Twelfth Street running to State Street (Sixteenth), fronting Market Street and backing to West Arch Street. In 1898, the 40 acre cemetery park consisted of

22 numbered sections and over 50 small alphabetized sections beginning with “A” and ending with “ZZ”. There were many looping roads and paths. Many of the roads which touched W. Arch Street bore flower names of Tulip, Azalea, and White Rose Avenues. Other roads bore name of Hillside, BridgeView, and Wildwood. The path running along side the reservoir was called “Lake Path”.

The eight division August 1898 plan laid out by Thomas Meehan reflected the coniferous, deciduous



evergreens, and mass plantings in each section. Meehan had a nursery in Germantown that supplied plants to gardens, parks, and estates from California to Europe. The Meehan drawings were also signed by Harold Van Duzer, construction engineer.

In 1911-1914 some of the shapes and sizes of the lots were changed in sections 3 and 5 (west of the gate on the Market Street level) with the work done by A .B. Cochran Engineering & Sons. In 1918-

1921, Sections 2 and 14 (located on the north and south side of Valley Road touching State or Sixteenth Street) were reconfigured by John L. Strauch, Engineer. And in 1939 sections 15 through 20 (lower level and east of the reservoir) were reshaped by Peter J. Pugh, Engineer.

Records from the Charles Baber Cemetery indicate that sometime in the 1940s, the beautiful reservoir behind the Chapel of the Resurrection had to be filled in. The water run off from the reservoir was more than the sewers of Pottsville could handle and in the late 1930s the city requested the reservoir be drained.



This request was easier said than done. Over several years, the reservoir was filled in with rocks, bricks, dirt, and grass and tree clippings. While most of the water was replaced with land fill, the remaining tiny pond could not be filled in completely because it was still fed

by a two to three natural underground springs.



At a special meeting held on October 21, 1964, Trinity Church, as the trustee of the Charles Baber Cemetery, approved the sale of cemetery lots and a parcel of land to the Pottsville Area School Board. The parcel of land ran from West Arch Street to the back of the barn and abutted part of Sixteenth Street. It included some of the street sections 20-22 and included the Meehan plan road names of Tulip, White Rose, Maplewood, Bridge View, etc. The land was sold for \$11,767.36. The sale of this land and

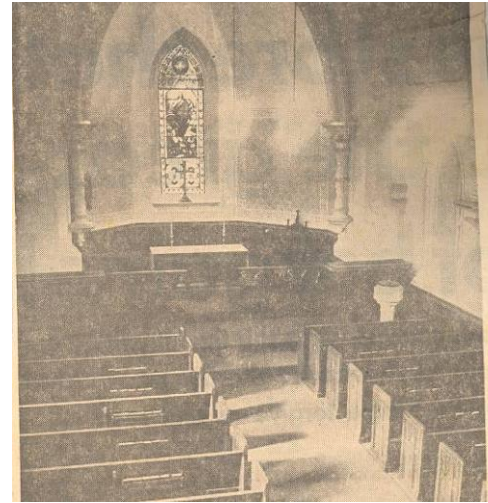
the land that had been used by the People's Railway reduced the total cemetery acreage from 40 acres to about 25 acres. The proceeds were used to buy 100 shares of Philadelphia National Bank stock and 100 shares of Phillips Petroleum stock which was placed in an endowment account. This land is where Martz Hall and the D.H.H. Lengle Middle School now sit.

In 1969, the Chapel of the Resurrection was restored through the efforts of a group of enthusiastic Church women at a cost of \$13,357. The altar triptych, which was placed there by Trinity Church when

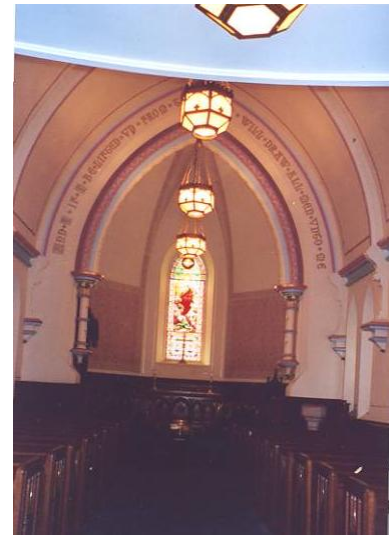


Trinity's new stone chancel was built in 1922, blocked the memorial window. The altar was restored, the sanctuary paneled for a communion table, and the retable in the

window was refinished for the cross and vases. The work was done by Richard Morgan who donated his time and only charged for the materials.



The nave and the trim were painted and decorated including stenciling of the ceiling and walls by duplicating the original style. The cream walls were outlined with bands of gold. The pillars to the chancel, the wings of the rounded sanctuary, and the graceful arches spanning the cathedral-type ceiling were stenciled with gold fleur de leis and outlined with dusty rose and French blue motifs. The work was done by Nicholas Bervinchak, a well know artist living in Minersville. The cost of the work by Nicholas Bervinchak was \$8,797. The bishop's chair and the chancel chairs were reupholstered in deep blue velvet; and the kneeling cushions, chancel carpeting and steps to the sanctuary were done in matching blue.



In 1970, Marion Price gifted in memory of her husband, Frank Price and at a cost of \$1,223., the six Gothic designed hammered bronze lights with amber opal glass. Also gifted at that time by Marion Price and her sister, Nita Hadesty, was the rails on the stone steps of the Chapel.



In 1978 the cemetery house and lot at 1228 W. Market Street, Pottsville was sold for \$7,500. to William and Elizabeth Kline. The proceeds paid off a cemetery bank loan, other cemetery bills, with the balance placed in the cemetery trust fund. This house was built by Charles Baber and is made of the same stone as the walls of the cemetery on Market Street.

In April and August 1979, the glass was broken in several of the chapel windows. The sections broken were replaced

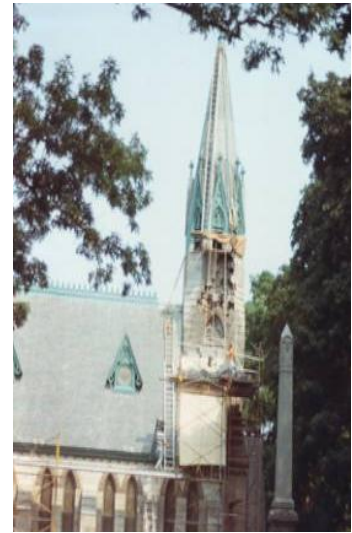
by Empire Glass. Again in January 1980, 18 window sections were broken. They were replaced and lexon was placed over the windows at a cost of \$3,250. This cost was paid through the insurance company. Later in January 1980, more window sections were broken and replaced at a cost of \$1,500. with \$200. from insurance and the balance a gift from Betty Atkins.

In 1988, extensive work was undertaken to repair, restore, and



waterproof the stone work of the Chapel and the gatehouses. The cost was \$74,188. which was paid for from the estate of Helen W. Lewis. Once this was done, the next endeavor was to repair the water damage to the interior of the Chapel.

The costs to do this was \$15,000. And in 1989 a new cast iron steam boiler was installed in the Chapel at a cost of \$5,895.



In August 1990, the roads in the cemetery were paved by Carbon Equipment Company at a cost of \$23,687. with \$3,687. of the cost gifted to the cemetery by George R. Lynn who owned Carbon Equipment. In late May 1999, a 1,500 gallon Wesco underground waste holding tank was installed for use when the basement of the Chapel could be renovated to include an indoor bathroom. At this time when the chapel is used during the summer months, a job Johnny is placed in the back of the chapel. The holding tank was grandfathered by the City of Pottsville. It was grandfathered for three reasons: the chapel is used infrequently, it currently doesn't have indoor plumbing, and the cost of running a sewer line across the cemetery to tap into the Market Street sewer would have been prohibitive.

Beginning in the late 1980s and continuing today, a more horticulturist approach was used to preserve the cemetery and the chapel as "the garden cemetery" it was meant to be. And yet while preserving its natural beauty, life styles were changing and more people were considering the alternative to the vault burial by being cremated. To allow the cemetery to also change with the times, in May 1998, a bronze columbarium by Matthews Bronze, Pittsburgh was built on both sides of the front entrance to the Chapel. Each columbarium consists of a 5'x

5' vault with 16 niches centered in each vault. This allows the placement of 2 more 16 niche sections to be added on both sides of each vault for a total niche inclusion of 48 niches per side. An engraved name plate is then placed over the niche with hidden screws to prevent any tampering. The cost of \$4,756.43 in materials for the columbarium vault was paid by the cemetery with the labor and equipment donated by Norm Kauffman, Junior Warden. The cost of the two bronze vaults from Matthews Bronze was \$9,603.60. This money was taken from the investment account. Each spring, colorful perennials are planted around the columbarium.



Much public attention was directed to the Cemetery in August and September 1999, over rotted and diseased trees that had to be cut down on the Market Street sidewalk. In actuality, 38 of the 49 rotted trees had to be taken down. The trees were a mixture of leafy American sycamores, Norway maples, European elms and various other trees. Responding to public concern over the removal of the trees, State Forester Frank P. Snyder, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Bureau and Joseph T. Orlowsky, Pottsville Shade Tree Commission asked Thomas P. Mishler, Executive Director of the Awbury Arboretum, Philadelphia to visit Pottsville and review the problem. Based upon Thomas Mishler's suggestions, Frank Snyder devised an eight phase plan to remove and replace the diseased trees beginning in 2000 and continuing into 2006.



The trees on the outside of the cemetery wall and on the immediate inside of the wall would be cut and replaced in four phases beginning in the spring of 2000. Phase one would be the immediate removal of eight trees on Market Street. The trees would be replaced with European hornbeam trees. Phase two covered the trees from the gatehouse to the west on the outside wall. Phase three was from the gatehouse east on the inside wall. And phase four was from the gatehouse west on the inside wall. There

was a possibility of combining phase three and four. In May 2000, nine trees were removed by Womer Landscaping at a total cost of \$3,541. One thousand six hundred and forty six dollars was funded by a generous contributor and \$500. was received from the Tree Commission.

To keep the momentum going with the public interest in the shade trees and the cemetery, the first Charles Baber Cemetery Appreciation Day was held on Oct. 3, 1999. This tradition has continued each year with the date being moved up from October to September. It is a festive occasion with walking nature tours by Frank Snyder and Joseph Orlowski, a Third Brigade band concert, a picnic of hot dogs and hamburgers, gatehouse prizes, and a walking and historical civil war enactment by Stuart Richards.

Continuing with the momentum of public awareness, a quarterly newsletter entitled Gatehouse Views is published by the Baber committee and sent to the supporters of Baber Day, church members, and families with relatives buried in the cemetery.



In May 2001, the east gatehouse was renovated. The floors had to be jacked up, the wood replaced, and new tile laid. The walls were sheet rocked, primed, and painted, and new wiring and receptacles installed. The total cost of \$1,250. was paid by the Comoloquoy Trust.

In September 2002, the slate barn roof was repaired by Leland Corp., Emmaus at a cost of \$16,664. which was funded partially by contributors (mostly parishioners) and matched by \$7,000. from a church vestryman.

In the winter of 2004, the west gatehouse was gutted by the two CBC employees. The second floor was completely rotted and had to be ripped out. Much of the old plaster had fallen off the walls. The rotted wood floor was removed and dug up in preparations for a new floor. At this writing in 2006, because of lack of funds, no further work has been done on the west gatehouse. One



gatehouse now contains a tree plaque on the wall listing the memorial trees given.



Over the years, the organ in the Chapel has fallen into disrepair because of the dampness and the coldness over the winter months and the heat over the summer months. In Aug. 1990, the assemblies and silver contact wire had to be replaced at cost of \$3,936. And in July 2004, the organ reservoir had to be repaired at a cost of \$2,900. The \$2,900 was funded through a gift from David Giammattei in 2001 and a memorial to Russel Muench by Celia Muench in 2000.

After cutting and replacing the trees on Market St. and along the interior wall, Frank Snyder designed a four phase interior tree replacement plan beginning in 2004 and ending in 2007. The diseased trees in this plan would be replaced by red maple trees. The plan covering Woodland Ave. and Mt. Laurel Ave, proposed the cutting and replacing of ten trees per year. In March of 2005, eight trees were taken down, a pile of tree branches was removed, and a huge stump left from a fallen tree in a storm in 2004 were all cut and removed at a cost of \$2,400. The diseased

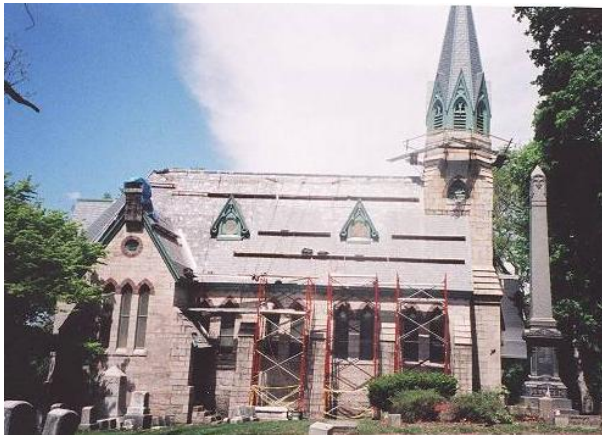
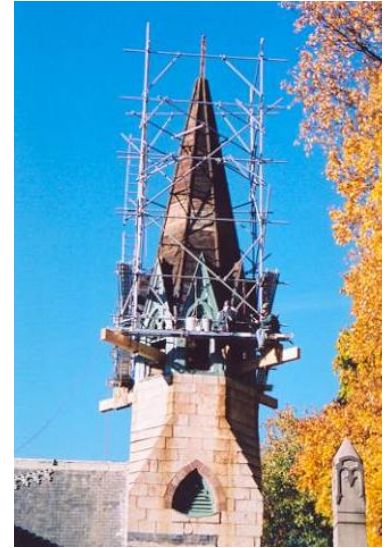


and rotted trees are removed and replaced with memorial or thanksgiving trees planted at a cost of \$400. each. The memorial trees are planted around Arbor Day of each year. Arbor Day usually is the last Friday of April. Each memorial tree or tree of thanksgiving planted is blessed at a special service by the rector of Trinity Episcopal Church. Anyone can sponsor a memorial or thanksgiving tree.

While attending church services in the summer of 2005 at the Chapel of the Resurrection, evidence could be seen in the nave of water seeping into the plaster. The chapel would not survive another winter without having the roof replaced. Months were spent debating over whether to try to keep the original slate roof and to have the repairs done at a cost in excess of \$136,000 or to have the roof completely replaced with a PVC imitation slate roof or a shingle roof. A parish survey was sent out, but few responded and those that did were split between keeping the original slate or replacing it with a PVC imitation slate. Bids had to be obtained on replacing the roof and on painting the wood trim. A decision was not made until mid October to hire Highclimbers to replace the slate roof with a PVC imitation slate

roof at a cost of \$50,000. Highclimbers would also scrape, sand, and paint all the wood trim including the steeple at a cost of \$21,850. The total estimate was \$71,850.

This was considered as Phase I of the chapel renovations. Unfortunately, the delay in making a decision was costly and the contractor did not begin work until the third week of October in the middle of the hurricanes and the rains. This delayed the paint work until November and by the first week of December the temperatures had dropped to 30 degrees, far below the possibility of installing the PVC roof. The steeple louvers were rotted, the window ledges below the louvers were completely rotted, the flashing was cracked and was leaking water between the walls, and the floor surface in the bell tower was cracked and leaking water as well. The copper cross atop the steeple was cracked and had to be removed, repaired, and painted. And a new copper lighting rod and wiring had to be attached to the cross and grounded. The mahogany replacement louvers cost \$1,683; the cross repairs cost \$1,000; and the replacement of the rotted window sills, sides, flashing, and bell tower roof cost \$5,000.



By the time the work was resumed in March and completed in May 2006, the total cost of Phase I was \$93,292. The roof was \$50,000; the painting - \$21,850; rotted wood replacement and repaired cross - \$12,850; louvers-\$1,683; and lexan window covering - \$7,259. It was funded as follows: \$77,369 from the investment account; \$10,000 from Kathryn Speacht's bequest; \$3,123 from general donations; and \$2,800 from Baber Day fund raisers.

Phase II of the chapel renovations was to change the heating pipes (\$22,000); put flooring, a ceiling, and walls in (\$6,000); insulation and wiring (\$5,000); new metal door (\$1,000); install in-door plumbing and a bathroom (\$3,000); replace lower level windows (\$3,200); new Plexiglas over the windows (\$11,200); for a total cost of \$51,400. This could only be accomplished through donations or if more money were pulled from the investment account which would sorely begin to drain the investment account. When or if Phase II can be accomplished remains to be seen. Only through the good will of the community and from grants from different park and recreation commissions could this be accomplished.



The Charles Baber committee is very grateful to contributors like **Kathryn Speacht**, who passing away on Aug. 21, 2005, left a gift of \$10,000 towards the chapel repairs, and through her will in 2006, she gifted a \$168,022 endowment managed by the Schuylkill Area Community Foundation. The interest income is distributed each year for



the general operations and ground maintenance of Charles Baber Garden Cemetery. It is the committee's hope that planned giving bequests like Kathryn's will build the endowment to perpetually sustain the maintenance of this luscious garden cemetery.

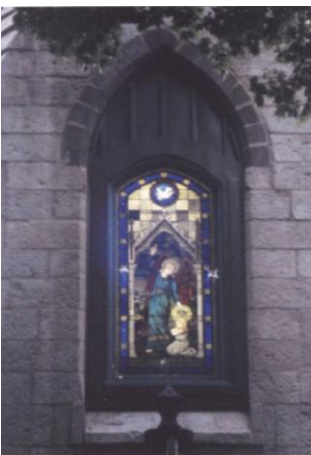
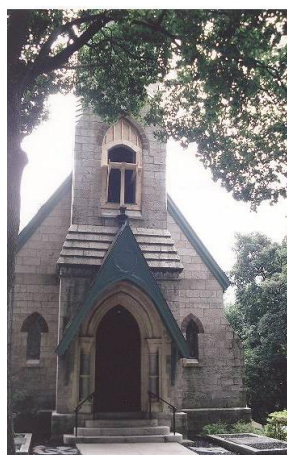
In the summer of 2006, several feet of mud washed into the lower level of the barn. The mud came



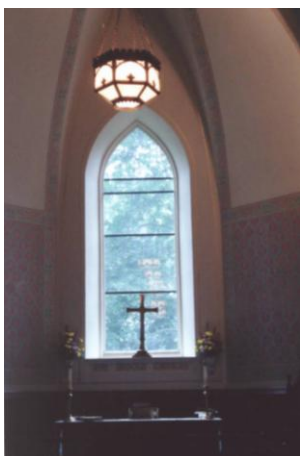
from water runoff and underground springs being feed from the 16th Street hill. We had to "bite the bullet" so to speak and incur \$23,000 in expenses to dig a French drain and trench behind the barn, dig some of the hillside

out, slope the ground toward the hillside and into the pond and lay new crushed stone to level the road which was deeply rutted from all the runoff by the pond. Seventeen thousand dollars of the expense was funded by two friends of cemetery and two church parishioners. The balance of \$6,000 was taken from the capital campaign account funds raised for the roof replacement.

In 2007, a broken stained glass window was found in the barn. An appeal was made to restore the window and place it in the chapel's bell tower. The window was restored by Leon Disarro, Minersville at a cost of \$3,500 plus \$500 for removing the rotted wood from the existing window opening and retrofitting the opening for the new window. The window restoration was gifted by Mrs. Theodore (Carol) Johnson and her family as a memorial to The Rev. Theodore Titus Johnson who had served as Trinity Church's rector from 1952 to 1979. The window was blessed and dedicated at the Baber Day picnic on Sept. 2007. Carol's son, the Rev. Theodore Johnson participated in the blessing and Even Song service.



The Chapel of the Resurrection was equally blessed in 2008 when the Yuengling family gifted the

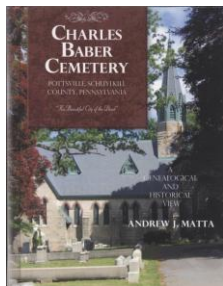


restoration of the stained glass window behind the altar as a memorial gift to their mother, Edith Yuengling, an active member and former Senior Warden of Trinity Church and an avid supporter of the Baber Garden Cemetery. This window restoration was also done by Leon Disarro at a cost of \$4500 plus framing costs around the window. The window was blessed and dedicated at the Baber Day Even Song service on August 31, 2008.

In the summer of 2008, Michael Ferguson, a young man working on his Eagle Scout project, initiated and proposed a plan to build a small meditation area adjacent to the pond. He had to design the meditation area, get approval from the Vestry and the cemetery committee, raise the money for the project, and then build the meditation area. This he

accomplished over the summer months and the meditation area was blessed and dedicated at the Baber Day celebration in August.

Also at the Baber Day picnic in Aug. 2008, Andrew Matta presented his four year long project of mapping, and compiling a genealogy of the cemetery.



His book entitled *Charles Baber Cemetery Book of Remembrance*



contains a complete genealogy of the cemetery, the history of the cemetery compiled by Carol Field, stories and writings from friends of the cemetery, and poems and short passages about grief and bereavement. The first publication was sold out, generating over \$5,000 in revenue which was placed in the endowment account at the Schuylkill Area Community Foundation.



In the fall of 2009, Carol Field with the assistance of a Penn State Schuylkill campus student, Vladimere Pierre began building the cemetery's website. By February 2010 it was officially built and on line. It contains the home page, the cemetery history, the 2 most current newsletters, a photo gallery, a contributions link for ground care and improvement projects and for the endowment account through the Schuylkill Area Community Foundation, an event link listing Arbor Day, Memorial Day, and the Baber Day picnic, an order page for Andrew Matta's *Book of Remembrance*, an aerial view, Google access and a map, information on the types and styles of memorial markers, locations of available plot and columbarium niches, how to contact the office, and a link to Trinity Episcopal Church. It is a beautifully designed website which holds much promise for future additions.

Beginning in early 2010, Attorney Jay Zane with the help of a Trinity Church parishioner, Attorney John Giansello, filed for incorporation of the cemetery as a preservation trust. The purpose of the incorporation and filing as a non-profit was three-fold: (1) for insurance liability purposes, (2) to separate the church from the cemetery and enhance the public's awareness that the cemetery is non-denominational, and (3) to insure that as a non-profit preservation trust, all donations are considered charitable donations. By September the incorporation into the **Charles Baber Cemetery Preservation Trust of Pottsville, Pennsylvania** was received and the cemetery held its first official meeting on October 5, 2010 as a new board. Trinity Episcopal Church still remains the trustee; however, it now has its own board. The board consists of a seven member board with 4 members from the Trinity parish and 3 members from the community. The rector serves as the chairperson. Three committees were formed: a master planning committee, an activity and function committee, and a budget committee. Any number of members, both within the parish and from the community can sit on the committees.

In August 2010, the Trinity Church sexton and the cemetery workers painted the gatehouses at a cost of \$350 which was taken from the general operating account. And in July and August 2011, Trinity's sexton and the Baber Cemetery workers covered and capped the basement windows of the Chapel of the Resurrection. The costs of \$250 was paid from the general operating account.

The Penn State Schuylkill campus student, Vladimier Pierre who was instrumental in setting up the website, graduated in the spring of 2011. He was replaced by Tyler Roberts beginning with the fall semester of 2011. Tyler expanded the web site to include videos from the Baber Day celebrations and one from the Memorial Day flag replacement ceremony by the 4th grade Clark Elementary school students. The web site continued to grow with new links of tree descriptions done by Frank Snyder, DCNR and Carol Field, and with descriptions of the cemetery in the various seasons. The website

program was becoming burdened with rewriting programming to add new links, so Tyler revised the website using Joomla. By using Joomla, we can now have more of a formatted program which will be easier to use when the website is no longer supported by Penn State students.

Arbor Day, celebrated each year on the last Friday of April, is the cemetery's opportunity to raise funds by selling \$400 sponsorships for the planting of ten new trees which covers the expense of cutting and removing dead trees and pruning trees with large dead limbs. Some years all ten trees are sponsored, and other years only 60-70% are sold. Sadly, in the summer of 2012, two prominent trees to either side of the gateway entrance closer to the chapel had to be cut down. A large dead white oak standing vigil over the John Pott plot framed the left side of the Chapel of the Resurrection. Directly across from the white oak and framing the right side of the chapel



was a dying European Copper Beech. The cost to remove each tree was in excess of \$3,000 per tree. The cemetery was able to raise some funds from donations for the John Pott white oak; but the majority of the expense had to come from the investment account. The removal of both trees significantly changed the visual appearance of the chapel, perhaps for the better because the structure of the Gothic chapel is more visible, and the dead white oak tree wasn't a pretty sight; however the reddish color of the copper beech will be missed. And it was under this beech tree that the Veterans stood on Memorial Day when playing taps and performing the 21 gun salute after the school children replaced the American flags on graves.



At the April 2012 board meeting, it was unanimously approved to create an Executive Committee to expedite decision making and for check signing. The executive committee consists of three members including the rector. While the cemetery was officially incorporated as the preservation trust, it was not until June 2012 that IRS approval was received for the cemetery to operate as a non-profit organization.

In October 2012, the Charles Baber Cemetery was blessed with an anonymous endowment account donation of \$100,000 deposited with the Schuylkill Area Community Foundation. The funds were kept separate from the first endowment account set up in 2005 from the bequest of Kathryn Speacht. The first endowment account continues to grow annually from donations, from the proceeds of Andrew Matta's *Book of Remembrance*, and from basket and gift card raffles. The first endowment account currently has \$203,000; and the two endowments combined should generate annual interest income of \$9,500 for the cemetery. It is the hope and the directive of the board to continue raising funds through memorials, donations, and bequests to the endowment accounts to provide a continual and increasing source of income to maintain the grounds, equipment, and buildings in the excellent condition that they are being currently kept in for the community's use and enjoyment now and for future generations.

In 2013, a sub-committee was formed to review the possibility of restoring the pond, creating a retention pond or a perforated piping system to divert the water runoff from behind the pond that erodes the road, and subsequently asphaltting the road to prevent further rutting and washout. Because of the recent legislative changes in the separation of storm water from sewer water, a proposed catch basis for the water runoff has to be reworked and an alternate solution has to be found. An engineering study may have to be done. Then the three phase project with all proposed changes will have to be rebid. Community support will be sought at the appropriate time on all three phases.

This beautiful garden cemetery is often referred to as Pottsville’s “hidden jewel” and “best kept secret”. However, the garden cemetery is not meant to be kept as a secret; we want to share it with the public as both a place of burials and as a garden park. It is a nature trail; an exercise tract to walk, jog, push a baby carriage, or stroll with a child; a place for entertainment with a picnic or to enjoy the Third Brigade Concert Band; a chance to sit and watch the many squirrels, ground hogs, and chipmunks at play; an opportunity to bird watch or just sit and listen to their songs; an artistic classroom of numerous forms, shapes, designs, engravings, and decorations on the headstones; an oasis for reflection, thought, and solitude; a snapshot history of days and people from long ago; a chapel for church and funeral services; a horticultural delight with many varieties of trees and shrubs; and a beautiful well groomed cemetery with a columbarium. We invite you to come and walk, drive, jog, stroll, or sit in this serene, tranquil garden cemetery. Come to the picnics or the Third Brigade Band Concerts, or Charles Baber Appreciation Day in September with nature and historic walking tours, or attend one of the church services held during the summer months at 8:00 AM and 9:15 AM at the Chapel of the Resurrection.

To preserve and maintain this beautiful public gift, it takes money to cut and replace the trees; to maintain the grounds which includes two full time workers and one part time who cut grass, prune trees, clean up litter, rake lots and lots of leaves, and shovel and plow the roads, the walkways, and the sidewalks; service and maintain the equipment; and for the maintenance, restoration and repair of the Chapel of the Resurrection, the carriage house, and the gatehouses. If you have family, friends, or relatives buried at the cemetery, if you use the garden cemetery for jogging or walking, if you care and enjoy one of the few remaining large “green” spaces in the city of Pottsville, if you want to have future generations enjoy the natural environment, then join us in continuing the perpetual care of this beautiful garden cemetery. Please help preserve and polish Pottsville’s jewel. There are two ways to make contribution to the Charles Baber Cemetery Preservation Trust: (1) for the daily care and maintenance of the grounds, a check can be made payable directly to Charles Baber Cemetery Preservation Trust, 200 S. Second St., Pottsville, PA 17901, and (2) for the perpetual care of the grounds and cemetery garden for future generations to enjoy, a contribution can be made to the endowment account with the Schuylkill Area Community Foundation, 216 S. Centre St., Pottsville, PA 17901 marking the memo line for the Charles Baber Cemetery Preservation Trust. Forms have been provided below for your convenience.

Charitable contributions for daily care and maintenance can be sent to the Charles Baber Cemetery Preservation Trust, 200 S. Second Street, Pottsville, PA, 17901. Your name, address, phone no. and contributions are confidential and will not be given or shared with anyone or any other organization.

Charles Baber Cemetery Preservation Trust, 200 S. Second St., Pottsville, PA 17901	
Name _____	Phone: _____
Address _____	
Amount of contribution enclosed: _____	
Do you wish to be put on the mailing list for the <i>Gatehouse Views</i> ? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Do you visit, use, or attend events at the Baber Cemetery? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
Comments:	

Charitable contributions can also be made to the endowment account which provides for the perpetual care and maintenance of the garden cemetery through the Schuylkill Area Community Foundation, 216 S. Centre St., Pottsville, PA 17901, marking your check for the Charles Baber Cemetery. You will receive an acknowledgement directly from the Community Foundation with a copy of your contribution sent to the Charles Baber Cemetery office.

Schuylkill Area Community Foundation for the Charles Baber Cemetery Preservation Trust
216 S. Centre St., Pottsville, PA 17901

Name _____ Phone: _____

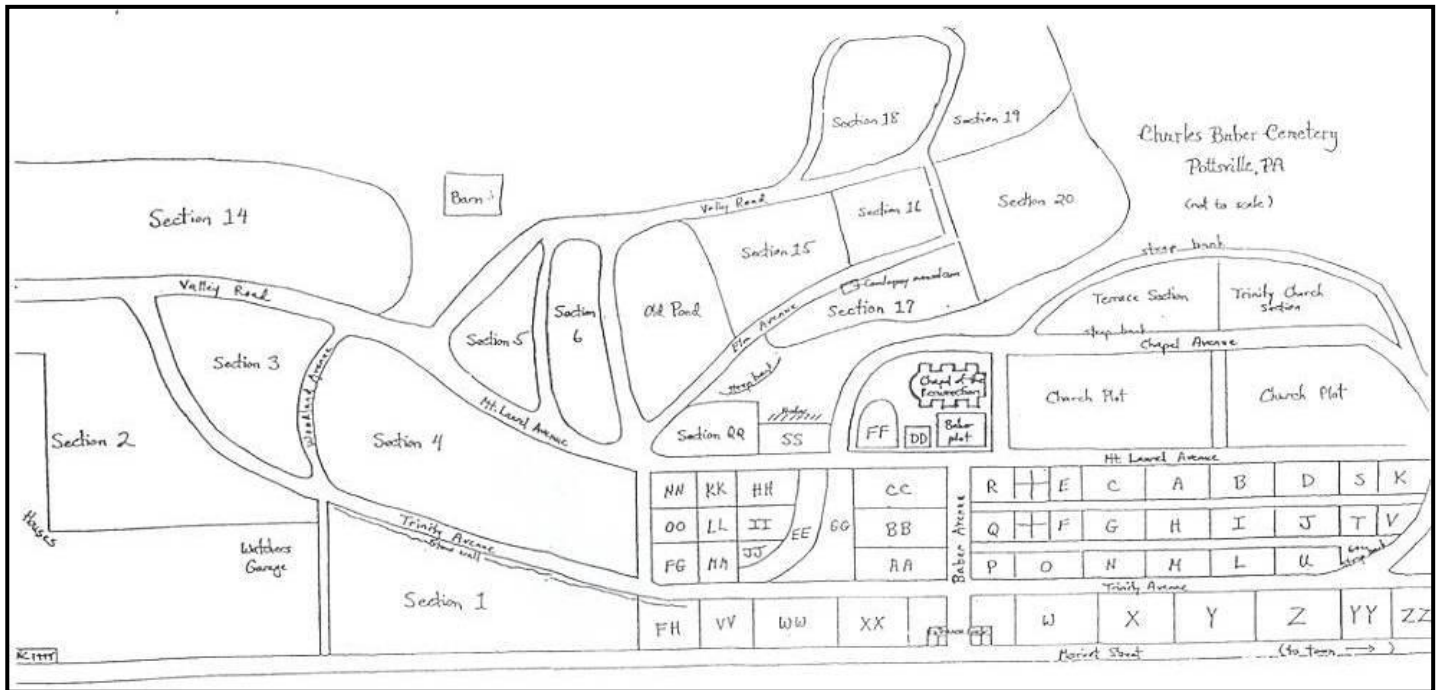
Address _____

Amount of contribution enclosed: _____

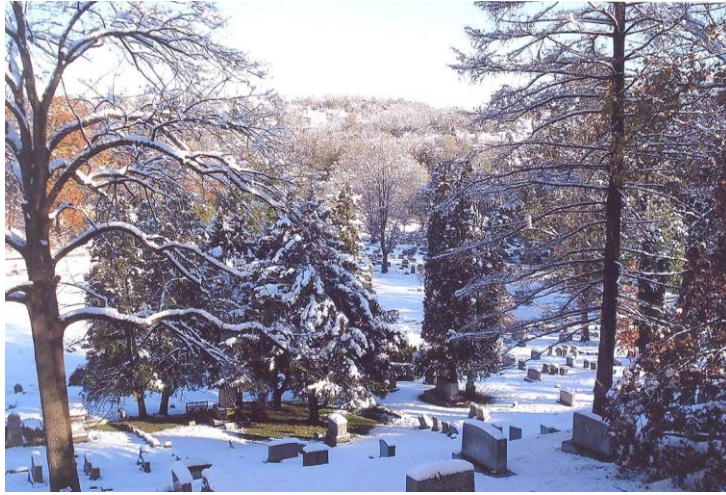
Do you wish to be put on the mailing list for the *Gatehouse Views*? ___ Yes ___ No

Do you visit, use, or attend events at the Baber Cemetery? ___ Yes ___ No

Comments: _____



Charles Baber Cemetery Preservation Trust of Pottsville, PA



Trinity Episcopal Church, Trustee

200 S. Second St. Pottsville, PA 17901