

Paul Haubrich
Narrator

Cody J. Kern
University Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Interviewer

Paul Haubrich: PH

Cody Kern: CK

Abstract: An interview with Paul Haubrich, former chairman of the Forest Home Cemetery Committee and docent for the last fifteen years. Paul is a tour guide for tours that the cemetery provides to the public of prominent historical figures associated with Milwaukee. Also, he has given tours of the Forest Home Chapel and old crematory. Paul Haubrich has been associated with Forest Home for over twenty years and much of what is discussed is the vast knowledge he has been able to gather about the cemetery and chapel. From this knowledge and experience Paul tells an interesting history of the cemetery and chapel as a gathering place. Beginning with the cemetery's early history to the development of the chapel and crematory in the 1890's. The interview continues with the cemetery and chapel ability to adjust to changing funeral practices throughout the 20th century until the present day. There are two separate recordings for the interview. The first recording took place at the Forest Home Chapel in Milwaukee, WI. on April 13th, 2022, and experienced technical difficulties causing it to cut off at 24 minutes. The second recording took place at the Golda Mier Library on the University-Wisconsin Milwaukee campus May 3rd, 2022 and continued discussing the same topic where the first recording was cut off. The total time for the interview is 53 minutes. For more information and to hear the full interview, visit: <https://liblamp.uwm.edu/omeka/gatheringplaces/>

First Recording: April 13th, 2022:

Cody Kern: Hello. My name is Cody Kern. I'm conducting an interview today on the history of the Forest Home Chapel as a gathering place today. With me, I have Paul. Paul, if you would like to introduce yourself and your connection with the chapel and the cemetery.

Paul Haubrich: My name is Paul Haulbrich and I'm formerly chairman of the Cemetery Committee here at Forest Home Cemetery. And I've been a tour guide and docent here for the last 15 years.

CK: Great. So, Paul, we have met already before. A couple of weeks ago and walking away from our meetup, I was extremely impressed with your knowledge and the history of the chapel and the cemetery. So, I just want to start off with asking you a question about sort of the history of the decision as to why Forest Home Cemetery was established here in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

PH: Okay. This cemetery was founded by St Paul's Episcopal Church. Church records indicate that by 1847, they were discussing the idea of a cemetery, primarily because the existing

cemeteries in the city of Milwaukee were not well maintained or lacked dignity. And they were interested in developing a cemetery for the city, not for the church, but for the city that would provide dignified and a peaceful rest.

CK: Now. Now, this idea of having a cemetery just for this city. So when they decided to have the cemetery, they decided to locate the cemetery a few miles outside of the current city center at the time. Can you kind of explain the reasoning why they wanted more of a rural setting than urban setting?

PH: Well, the whole goal, I think, at the time, or the logic they employed, was to find a place for a peaceful rest. That meant you had to go somewhere out in the countryside. You couldn't remain in the bustling city, so to speak. And so a piece of land was chosen about two miles from downtown Milwaukee. As the crow flies and the purchase was made in the early spring of 1850. At that time, they contracted with Increase Lapham to design the cemetery. Lapham was familiar with the cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts, called Mount Auburn. And that is considered to be the first great garden or rural cemetery in the US. And so Lapham designed the cemetery, and the basic idea was to respect the existing landscape so we don't have any straight roads or a lot of flat land here. What he did was took the existing topography, so to speak, and then put in roads around it. So it's a very untypical arrangement because there were so many curved roads. Literally, people can get lost in the middle of the cemetery. And it's just an interesting place to learn how to get around in.

CK: Yes. Um, so you mentioned the idea of having a garden cemetery. So one thing that really strikes me about the idea of a garden cemetery is like the connection to sort of the leisure at the time. So could you possibly go into how they kind of wanted.. they wanted a garden cemetery as also during this time period, as you mentioned, that started in the 1850s. How many people really visited the cemetery as as a place of leisure, as a place to spend their time on the weekends. Could you go in a little more detail about that?

PH: Right by the time of the Civil War, it became apparent that Forest Home was going to be a park like setting for many people. There were no parks in the city of Milwaukee at that time, and by 1870, people were coming here on Sundays to have a leisurely green space. Back in those days, most people worked six days a week, so Sunday was their only off day, and if they wanted to spend it in a leisurely way, they had to find open space, green space that allowed them to do that. The Milwaukee Park system doesn't come alive until the late 1890s. So therefore, Forest Home was considered to be Milwaukee's first park. It got so popular that they had to start issuing tickets for people who could get in on a Sunday afternoon because the crowds were upwards of 6 to 8000 people, which was basically overwhelming the property and they had to begin to manage it. So they actually installed a gatekeeper, a person dressed in kind of a policeman style uniform to manage the entrance into the cemetery.

CK: Wow. That that's very interesting, especially the idea of considering the cemetery as Milwaukee's first park that really, uh, encapsulates as a gathering place. So in your previous answer, you mentioned how the cemetery was going to be used for everybody and all people of Milwaukee. So could you kind of just give more detail about the decision making behind that and how the cemetery is really supposed to provide that service for the public?

PH: Well, historically, when churches developed cemeteries, most of their cemeteries were for the members of the congregation. However, in the discussions, at least, if you read the minutes of the vestry of an Episcopal church, you would find that they were more interested in a broader idea of what a cemetery should be, and the phrasing that they used was for all faiths and non profit. That was the basic motto that they went with for many years and they recognized that there were a number of people who did not participate in a religious community and therefore needed someplace to be buried. What happened over time was, is that the small city cemeteries that existed, the city closed them down because Forest Home was available for all faiths, so to speak, all people to be buried here. As time went on, it also became the only cemetery where someone of an African American descent could be buried. Other cemeteries had a religious focus, and often they would not allow people of African-American backgrounds to be buried at those locations. And so. The decision making really was designed to have something for the city and not necessarily just for the church. And that was the focus in terms of how they develop the cemetery over time.

CK: Just one question to go a little further. Do you possibly know, like the reasoning why the St Paul's Episcopal Church specifically decided to allow African Americans to be buried at the cemetery?

PH: Well, I don't know that it was a decision making to do that. It was just well, we're for all members of the Milwaukee community, so they would be allowed to be buried here. I'm sure there were some people who said, well, maybe we shouldn't do that. But the ultimate or the final decision was, is that they would allow people of an African American descent to be buried here. Now should understand that a lot of the early African-American community here, when they passed away, many of them wanted to go back to their home communities where they came from originally to be buried. It was not unusual for anybody to do that and want to go back home and be with your family, so to speak.

CK: That's great. I actually have a question. I'll probably ask it a little later on about really all types of denominations that have used the chapel and the cemetery. But before that, I just want to, um, so we've mentioned really just, we've only just been talking about really the first, the beginning of the cemetery, the 1850s, 1860s. So, by the 1890s, the cemetery board started to consider having the chapel on the cemetery grounds. Could you possibly going into detail about the decision making as to why certain people wanted to have a chapel?

PH: Well, this can be a long answer [chuckles] because it's changing funeral practices that play into this decision to build a chapel at this location. Originally, when the property was purchased, it was purchased from a woman by the name of Polly Hall and her two adult children who owned 100 acres in this particular location. The original purchase was for 72 acres. As part of that, you have to understand that Mrs. Hull's husband had been the rector head priest at St Paul's Church. He died unexpectedly in 1843 and she remained in Milwaukee and active in the church. When she sold the property, she indicated she thought there should be land set aside for the building of an Episcopal church on the property. However, as time played out from 1850 to almost 1890, there was no desire or movement to build an Episcopal church on the property. So they began to

explore the idea of developing a chapel on the grounds. The chapel would allow families to have a funeral service on the property in a chapel, as opposed to a graveside service. And in back in those days, if you were having a funeral and you were coming out to the cemetery, it was a day long event because you were coming up by horse and buggy. The casket had to be brought out generally from the funeral director. One of the things in early funeral practices, basically civil war on until late 1800s was if the family was middle class. The body would be displayed in a casket in the living room or the parlor of your house. And then people would come and pay their respects. And then after a three day period of time, the body would be moved to the cemetery. And it just allowed families the option of having a funeral at the cemetery and then walking to the grave rather than going to their church, having a service there, than getting in your horse and buggy and coming all the way out to the cemetery to have a graveside service again. So it just facilitated that. The other thing that was an impetus for developing the chapel is, is that back in the early 1880s, late 1870s, Forrest Home bought 50 acres of land on the other side of what was then Kilbourne Avenue. Now we know it as 27th Street, which be the west side of 27th. But as time went on and development took place, they began to realize that moving equipment across 27th Street or Kilbourne Avenue back in those days would be just too difficult. So, they sold that property and they used that money to build this chapel. That's how they were able to get it done.

CK: Excellent. Could you possibly go into detail about the architecture and the interior of the chapel?

PH: Well, the architects chosen were from the firm of Ferry and Clas, and they had become, by the early 1890s, one of Milwaukee's more premiere architectural firms. And they designed it as to be a chapel as opposed to a church. So they didn't put in all the other things that you might have with within a church. So there's no naves and so forth like that for statuary or stuff like that. It was meant to serve primarily for a funeral purpose. The stone that they used was the same stone that they used for St Paul's Episcopal Church. It's technically known as Potsdam Sandstone, and it comes from quarries in the Bayfield, Wisconsin area. And so they used that particular stone for it they decided to put in. Uh. Stop it for a second. I'm blanking.

Paul Haubrich continues: They decided to install conservatories on each side of the chapel area, which allowed for plenty of light to come inside the building as electricity was still new and illumination was limited. And the other thing that it did is it allowed for displays of large funeral flowers that were used back in those days. Today, while you have floral arrangements back in those days, they were huge. It was a big deal and those would be brought out to the cemetery and displayed in the conservatories on each side. Some of the pictures that we have of that, they're just quite spectacular. The amount of flowers that are there.

CK: Yes, I. I've seen those pictures, too, and it is, uh, quite marvelous. One thing that struck me when kind of researching about the conservatories is now is this kind of true? The first, like, not the first, but the plants that they really want in the conservatory is they wanted it to be more exotic, as you could say. They weren't like they weren't really trying to use like domestic plants. They really wanted to...

PH: They they did, in fact, use a lot of tropical type of plants. And that was just to give it a unique quality because of the consistent light and warm environment, they could raise certain kinds of tropical plants, which gave it kind of an exotic feel, which made it unique and different. And when people would come, they would be able to see those kind of plants.

CK: Yeah, I really like learning about that. I think I think it was very interesting. It made the place more unique. So as the chapel gained more popularity, basically a couple of years later, people started pushing for a crematory in the basement of the chapel. Could you go into detail about the reasons why certain people wanted the crematory?

PH: Well, there was a local group of Germans in Milwaukee that was trying to have a crematory developed. Other cemeteries were not interested in it. And after a period of time, that group raised enough money to help underwrite the cost of developing the crematory. The crematory is located in the basement. It's done in a very what I would call fashionable style. It has two chambers. And because it was 1895, they were able to have an oil fired facility. Prior to that, crematories just didn't have that capacity. And so cremation just didn't occur very often in American society. But with the availability of oil and being able to fire a chamber, they were able to develop that a lot of the initial. Cremations at Forest Home, where people from other states who literally transferred the body here by rail had it brought to the cemetery, had the cremation. And they would take the cremains back home with them, which meant they were spending a lot more for the cremation than they were for a traditional burial. However, for a lot of people, they considered it to be an environmental thing. Rather than putting the body in the ground that it was, it would save the land, so to speak. And the cremation took place. Cremation did not gain popularity until the modern era. And the modern era, I would argue, begins sometime around 1990 and continues to grow dramatically, far more popular in the western United States than the eastern United States for a period of time. However, at the time of this recording, based on information provided by Milwaukee County, almost 70% of all people in Milwaukee County are being cremated. That is a huge shift in what has taken place in 1950. Our data suggested that they were doing about 200 cremations a year. By 2000, we were doing almost 1200 cremations a year. So it's a huge shift over a period of 50 years. And the reasons for it is it's actually cheaper than a traditional in-ground burial.

CK: Yeah, I think I think it's very true that cremation has become way more popular over the years. I mean, my dad personally says that he wants to get cremated. And I mean, it's kind of a little too early for me to be thinking that way, but I kind of feel like I want to be cremated, too. So to continue on with the crematory. One thing that really strikes me when you go down there is they build a sort of a prayer room right next to the crematory. So could you go into the reasoning why they decided to have that?

PH: Well, it was meant to be a waiting room where the family could sit and wait. And then they provided a small altar and where people could pray during that period of time for the departed. It was just the practice back in those days and those days, the family accompanied the staff to the crematory in the basement. They participated in pushing the casket into the chamber and then close the doors on it and waited until it was finished. And today that never happens. The funeral director drops off the body. The cremains go back to the family. There is no family participation in the cremation anymore back in the year 2002. We converted from an oil fired to a gas fired

approach to it. What was interesting is since the oil tank that we have still could hold 1000 gallons, we were really worried about it being a problem in removing it because there's considerable cost. However, it turned out that for some reason that tank is inside a concrete chamber. In other words, they built a concrete chamber around the tank. So the Department of Natural Resources indicated that we wouldn't have to remove it. We just had to fill it with sand, and that would be the end of it, which saved us a considerable amount of money.

CK: Yeah. Um, so you kind of already previously mentioned this, but how the crematory really served a lot of people out of state and not even from the Milwaukee area. So could you go into detail as to why the cemetery, the chapel and the crematory kind of became an attractive place for people to have their funerals and the cremations for the family?

PH: Well, again, it's just changing practices for funerals over time. And what it became, it became an opportunity to, so to speak, have a full service cemetery in terms of what was available to the community. And I think that was the goal is to be able to provide those particular services. I don't think there was an attempt to limit or but just be able to do that. Literally speaking, as things evolved over time, holding a service in the chapel was kind of competition to the funeral home because the funeral home, as it developed, also developed the capacity to have a service at that location. And so you had these kind of competing elements in terms of who is going to provide those kind of services to the families that were out there. It's interesting if you take a look at the funeral practices changing over time, it's changed quite a bit. Even the funeral directors will tell you that cremation has crept up on them in terms of so many people being cremated. Therefore, you're not selling caskets. You're not selling all the services that they used to provide in a traditional funeral.

CK: Yes. That's very interesting that you just mentioned that, because it kind of goes back to this idea about how the chapel that the cemetery was supposed to be.

[During first recording of interview at Forest Home Chapel SD card had a problem with device and cut off mid interview. Second recording continued a few weeks later at the UWM Golda Meir Library. Interviewer tried their best to continue where first recording of oral history was cut off]

Second Recording, May 3rd, 2022:

Paul Haubrich: Have a place that devoted all the revenues to the operation of the cemetery and not to pay anybody else. Part of the motivation to build the chapel derived itself from the changing burial practices in the late 1800s. For many years, the idea of a funeral home was really that of an undertaker, where the body was embalmed, and then the body may be taken to the home for display or to the church. Well, many people did not have a church to go for burial purposes, so the cemetery developed the chapel to fulfill the need of that particular population. The other factor involved with that is, is that to come out to services at the cemetery frequently, they were back in those days, they were called graveside services. And if the weather was bad, it really didn't work well to have a graveside service. So, the chapel fulfilled that purpose by providing a shelter location and where a service could be conducted, and then the body would be

interred at a later date when the weather had improved. This was particularly true during heavy rains, very cold weather, snow, etc.. So, the chapel served that purpose as time went on and technology improved those particular needs for the Chapel changed, and it became a place to hold a service which was very popular until the First World War. And then after that period of time, things began to change. But that was the whole practice of the cemetery in those days. Our approach to it was quite different. However, the chapel continued to serve the purpose of providing the opportunity for someone to have a service. And if you did not have a church where you could do that, over the years, funeral homes expanded their size and or their capacity so that they could have a gathering area within them where they could hold the service at the funeral home. And so, they, in essence, became in competition with each other for providing those kind of services for those who at the time of need at the end of life.

Cody Kern: Yeah. And you make the point about how the cemetery was even supposed to serve all denominations and really someone that really didn't even have a denomination. And I think, like, that's kind of like what funeral homes kind of do. Funeral homes are not really denomination affiliated, at least to my knowledge, but so building off that. So, I just want to discuss a little bit about all denominations. Oh, I said that kind of loud. All the denominations that are buried at the cemetery. Now, I do know you mentioned before that it's predominantly Protestant, but when you say predominantly Protestant, still it's not like a specifically a Baptist or specifically a Methodist, it's all sorts of Protestants and Christians. So could you just maybe discuss really just like the history of just all the type of denominations that have been buried and use the chapel as a service.

PH: Forest Home, it reflected again the practices of the late 1800s, early 1900s and the largest cemeteries in Milwaukee, and probably true through much of the nation, were Catholic cemeteries. And then the next large group of people who had cemeteries were Lutherans. Many of them were associated with the location of their church, particularly in more rural areas when you came to an urban location. The cemetery served a very diverse population. And at a place like Forest Home, for want of a better term, anybody could be buried there as long as you could purchase the property that was necessary. My experience over the years is that we have people who were born of the Jewish faith but buried at Forest Home rather than a Jewish cemetery, because they married a gentile. And so, the Jewish cemeteries wouldn't let so to speak, a mixed marriage to be buried at that location. So, there at Forest Home other groups that have been buried at the cemetery are Muslim populations, which were looking for grave locations that would face the east. That was a particular requirement. That they needed at that time. So, Chapel serves just about everybody and providing a space for it. So, we call it a nondenominational chapel. We do have the Christian cross available. But if it's not a Christian ceremony, the cross is just removed from that location. And it's the physical space. It's not consecrated space. So therefore, it doesn't have that religious connotation to it. It is literally a gathering place. It's called a chapel, but it is a gathering place and serves that purpose.

CK: Now, you previously mentioned the changing practices that was going on in the cemeteries, especially after the First World War. And in my research, I came across like in 1929 it wasn't

added to the chapel, but there was a flower shop added to the south side of the main office building. And then 20 about 20 or so years later, they also have the Chapel Gardens right across the chapel with the crypts and everything. So, do you possibly know any background that went into those decisions to have those two add ons to the chapel and the cemetery?

PH: Yeah. The flower shop, as it was referred to, is an outgrowth of the greenhouses that the cemetery had to grow, the flowers that they needed for cemetery purposes. The larger issue with growing flowers was to sell them to people who came particularly on Memorial Day and would plant geraniums, etc. on the grounds. Plus, the cemetery had large floral displays of their own in terms of plantings throughout the cemetery. So the floral shop was developed. It served the general public in addition to customers coming to the cemetery. Interestingly enough, the flower shop was closed in 1982 because it was considered to be in competition with local florists. And since it had the not for profit designation, it had, quote, an advantage and the ERs ruled that they could not sell flowers of that type anymore. What has changed over the years is the use of flowers in funeral memorialization has declined dramatically, where at one time cemeteries would be floral abounding. Today they are minimized and lots of the flowers you find in cemeteries are plastic or silk, as opposed to fresh or planted flowers. The chapel gardens, which were referred to, are really an aboveground mausoleum and that became popular in the 1950s as part of the changing cemetery practices. And so, the Chapel Gardens were named because they were right next door to the chapel. It was just a kind of a marketing approach to it, but that section of the cemetery has been full now for a good ten years. Originally it could accommodate 6000 interns. And the Chapel Gardens, but there's no additional space there anymore.

CK: Yeah, that's really, uh, interesting that you mention how the flower shop was kind of for all. It really continues the function of the cemetery as providing the service to everyone so kind of continuing talking about cemetery practices. So as the, as, as history continues, you, you, um, you don't like, I feel like there was a lot, like, there was a lot more service, like funeral services, like in the very early age, like you mentioned, funerals used to have an abundance of flowers and used to be this whole ordeal. And I feel like it's not really like a thing anymore. But the chapel, like, had to still go on. The cemetery still had to survive. So, one thing that I came across in my research was like the chapel now hosts weddings. Do you possibly know any like background or information about when the first wedding happened and why the chapel decided to take on that practice and offer that service to people?

PH: I'm not completely sure when the first wedding took place, however, for staff that had been there for 30, 40 years, they reported the first one took place in 1992 and it was a couple that on their first date came to Forest Home and walked the grounds and once they became engaged they asked if they could be married in the chapel and they said, sure, they had never thought about it. It never crossed their mind that anybody would want to use it for a wedding. They're probably holding only about one or two weddings a year. It just depends on the people and what their interests. A wedding invitation to a cemetery location might be considered to be unusual, but it's used in that fashion. Occasionally there are lectures that are held there which is sponsored by the cemetery themselves. But so many things have changed over the years in terms of the use of a cemetery, the purpose of a cemetery. Many cemeteries now are trying to portray themselves as community gathering places and where people can come and participate in various kinds of

activities, they actually develop kind of public facilities that people can use. And in many respects, that's what the chapel is becoming today, as opposed to a place for lots of funerals. They're now trying to make it available for community groups to hold an event, a participation of some kind.

CK: Yeah, it's actually, if you think about it, it actually is kind of kind of full circle. How like in the beginning of the cemetery's history, it was kind of as a place to leisure, and it seems like it's kind of going back to that. So could you possibly speak a little bit about kind of the time period when it kind of fell off as like a place that like people would go to as like a place of leisure on those Sundays, we'll just take a stroll into the garden and then also kind of the revitalization to try to bring it bring that back.

PH: In terms of Forest Home cemetery, the leisure aspect of it of people coming to it on Sundays starts right after the Civil War. By that time, Forest Home has begun to develop its character and the number of burials have increased. And there were roads that you could either take your buggy on or walk on and on a Sunday afternoon that was pleasurable. That practice continued on for another 25 or 30 years until Milwaukee County began to develop parks. The other real competition you might have had for leisure space, where the beer gardens that were found in Milwaukee, all the major breweries had a beer garden, but those were primarily for men. Women could attend, but there were limitations in terms of what they could do. And so the need for a public space was filled by forest home for a long time. As the park system grew, there was less and less need of doing that, but people continued to visit their family. It was part of many rituals that families had to go and pay respect to your elders. And so, days like Memorial Day and so forth were very important. And the cemetery was actually very crowded with people who came. To pay their respects, plant their flowers, whatever they were going to do accordingly. By the First World War. The size of funerals was beginning to decline. They weren't as big as they had been moved away from what was known as the family lots to mom and pop. Lots just for mother and father as opposed to entire families being buried at a specific location. And that trend continued. And I think, as I indicated earlier, the biggest change for most cemeteries has been the shift from in-ground burial to cremation. And that's really a nationwide phenomenon. And of course, cremation offers different kinds of final dispositions. A lot of people are cremated. Do not end up at a cemetery.

CK: Yes. Um. So. So we're kind of talking about how the cemetery kind of evolves as a gathering place. And to my knowledge, you kind of started these tours that are given at the cemetery and the chapel. Could you possibly go into the decision behind that and why the cemetery and chapel decided to offer these tours to the public?

PH: The tour concept evolved out of two things. There always people who are interested in family history, ancestry, so to speak. The other aspect of the tour was to try to get people to come to the cemetery. Kind of a soft pedal marketing approach to getting people there for some real advantage is that it has many historical figures associated with Milwaukee, particularly from people from the 1850s through basically Second World War. You have 27 of Milwaukee's 44 mayors buried there. You have many of the beer barons that are located there. And it also has a large collection of monuments that are, quote, disproportionate and compared to what today's burials would be. And a lot of in the 1800s, in that Victorian era, demonstrating your social

standing and your wealth was carried on in the afterlife by having a large memorial as part of your family location. And so that makes the cemetery kind of unique. It's rare to have anybody have a large memorial in the modern era. It's just not considered to be, for want of a better term, good expenditure of your money. So the whole memorialization practices have changed over time.

CK: So can you, uh, could you possibly just go in a little more about, like, the tours, the functions of the tour? Um, like how it kind of encapsulates the continuing of the cemetery as a gathering place. And then also if there are just like any interesting stories that you have of from any tours that you've given.

PH: Well, the first tour that we developed is we call it the Milwaukee History Tour. It's a good sampling of Milwaukee history, basically 1850 to 1900 and focuses in on that period of time. It includes political figures. It includes tragic events that took place in Milwaukee. It includes a lot of industrialists and people whose names were familiar with because the streets of Milwaukee are named after them. So that was the first tour. The second tour, and probably our most popular is the Beer Barons tour. We have the majority of all the major beer barons of Milwaukee, both large and small breweries buried at Forest Home. The next tour that was developed was a Civil War tour. We have over 100 Civil War veterans, a number of generals and significant Civil War individuals. And then the fourth tour that was developed was the women of Milwaukee. It's an unusual topic because most history in that period of time is associated with men. But we had an individual that was willing to research women who made contributions to Milwaukee history, and that became a fairly popular tour, particularly with women, because these were people that most people never heard of. And then we developed a tour called Cemetery Art and Symbolism. There's a lot of symbolism, particularly in the Victorian era, on grave markers. And to explain that and understand why people did what they did, for example, the peaceful dove or the palms associated with Palm Sunday and Christianity and a lot of different flower symbols that are there, the lily being purity, so forth like that. And the more recent tours that have been developed is one on the streets of Milwaukee. And what you do is you use the name of the street, one that people will know very well. And then at the graveside you tell them about the history of the person. And so that works well. And then another one is industrial. In Milwaukee, a lot of Milwaukee's early industrialists, everybody from Harnish Fager to Ellis EPP, Alice Ellis, Chalmers Corporation, Nordberg Manufacturing Rexnord they're all buried at Forest Home. So the tour itself for the industrialist would be at the graveside. You would explain what they did, not who they were, but what their industry did, and how it played a role in developing Milwaukee's industrial base in the 1800s. So, the tours have proven to be popular for a number of years. They were free. So, in Milwaukee it was a good deal to go to a free tour. Today the charge is \$5 for a tour, and it continues to draw people. There's almost a tour every Sunday, not every Sunday, but particularly three Sundays a month. There will be a tour, each of them, some of them are repeated, but the attendance is good. The biggest turnout for a tour and the only one that's still free is Memorial Day. And that's Milwaukee History Day. Because so many people come, it's a little hard to get into charging them because they come to the cemetery for one thing and find out there's a tour, and so that one's free.

CK: Yeah, that's really interesting that, um, you guys have that memorial tour because as you previously mentioned, Memorial Day kind of seems like a significant day for the cemetery and

the chapel's history seems like they always have some type of service, uh, related to Memorial Day. Which brings me to mention so we've mentioned funerals, cremations, weddings, tours, Memorial Day events. Um, could you as well mention like any other type of services that we haven't mentioned that the chapel or the cemetery, um, provides?

PH: Well, they are currently developing a larger open air public space for use of small concerts string group, not a rock group, [chuckles] but events like that. And the interesting thing that they're going to try this coming year is to clean old headstones. They're actually people who will volunteer to come in and do that. One of the things I've learned by being at the cemetery, there are different grades of stone and some stones are very soft and they absorb the acids in the air. The dirt that's in the air. And then it gets to look really shabby or old, but there is a way of cleaning them. And my understanding is, is that sometimes in June, the first team, a team of six people, will start cleaning the older headstones. It's just another way of getting people involved in the cemetery. They also have a 5k run. It's done in association with St Luke's Hospital in the summer, and it's an unusual run. Runners like it because it's different. Yeah. And there's also now a bike ride throughout the cemetery. If you follow all the curved roads and go to the section that's on the other side of Cleveland Avenue, you have about 11 miles of road so you can get a nice bike ride. And the person who does it then has stops along the line and talks about certain things, about the cemetery, not necessarily the people or the monuments, but they like that. And the new one this year is a tree tour. There's a wide variety of trees. The cemetery has approximately 2300 trees on the property, and a number of them are what they call specimen trees. And so, they are going to have the tree tour starting this year.

CK: That's really interesting. Especially I'm assuming those trees have always been there because one thing in my research when I came across the garden cemetery, one of the goals of a garden cemetery was to preserve as much as the national landscape. So, to your knowledge, have any of the trees been planted there or have they kind of just always been there?

PH: Well, originally the property had a lot of trees on it, and some trees had to be removed to create burial space. However, if you drive around Forest Home, you'll see there's a lot of old oaks that are well over 100 years old. So, they are big, they're old. But the cemetery has to take down trees every year because they age out and they plant trees every year. The biggest challenge is where you're going to plant a tree because there's gravestones everywhere. So you have limited options of what you can do. And they do in this day and age, plant only native species to Wisconsin. Those are most hardy and survive better. Years ago, some people wanted to do more unique trees, but they don't do well in the environment that we have in Wisconsin. That Cold Wisconsin weather is the phrase. And so that tree tour will be interesting. To see how that plays out is drawing people.

CK: Yeah. Um, I, um, I plan on attending one of the tours after I came across them in my research and I saw that you guys offer them, I'm like, I have to go to one of these. So, we, we are coming up on time. So, I want to just appreciate you for your time. And with the final question, I just want to ask, is there anything that I didn't ask that you would want to mention?

PH: One of the things that allows cemeteries to survive over time is an idea that goes back to probably just before the Civil War, the cemeteries began to talk about something called perpetual

care. And the idea of perpetual care was, is that when, as you as an individual bought property at the cemetery, a certain portion of that would be set aside into an endowment would be the proper term for it. But they used the term perpetual care back then and it has survived to this day as a cemetery term, saying we have invested our money accordingly. When you encounter a cemetery that is so to speak, failed and being overgrown or whatever, it's an indication that their perpetual care money did not last the way they should. And in some cases, people mismanage the money or whatever and what not. They didn't set enough aside to go the long distance. So, it's something that frequently we don't talk about, but like Forest Home, if you've been there 173 years, you had to do something to survive that long.

CK: Yes. Um. Yeah. Um. Thank you for your time, and I really appreciate everything that you've done.

PH: Thankfully, we're done. [chuckles]