

JANUARY

“Sparkling”

It is hard to find an adjective that appropriately describes the Charles Baber Cemetery in the month of January. Words like dazzling or enchanting come to mind when thinking of the chapel, the roads, the trees and the memorial markers all dressed in winter white. When the snow is falling, it spreads a quietness, a pristine, fresh, untouched soft, gentle blanket over the property. As one walks softly on any of the roads, a hushed reverence soothes the soul, and dissuades one from talking, or from wanting to put footprints upon the unsoiled, white ground. It is almost too perfect for intrusions of any kind. On sunny days, the clean, white snow appears to twinkle and sparkle as the sun's rays reflect off of it. If it is windy, the snow spiraling and dancing up over and around any object in its path can be dazzling.



The nice thing about January, is that while it is cold, and the daylight hours are short, the snowfall accumulation is small, especially if December was a mild month. In fact, many people, especially school children, are eagerly awaiting the snow falls of January. Often the school children crossing the property are throwing snow balls at each other; and laughter is in the air. If there is enough snow, parents may be found pushing or pulling a small child on a sled. The faithful dog walkers are still walking their dogs on a daily basis. If there is snow, their dogs may be jumping at the snowflakes or pushing their noses in a pile of snow. If there is a lot of snow that doesn't readily melt, then the cemetery employees, who are usually laid off over the winter months, have to be called back to shovel or snow blow the long Market Street walkway. The plowing of the roads are subcontracted out.



Most of the trees are now dormant. Some of the trees, like the baby pin oaks dotting the property and along the east Market St. wall, and the swamp white oaks by the pond, are still desperately clinging to their dry brown leaves. The barrenness of the leaf bearing trees, make the bright greens of the eastern white pine, the cryptomeria, the Norway spruce, and the arborvitae more prominent on the landscape.



January is a sparkling month for the cemetery, not only because of the quiet serene beauty of the newly fallen snow, but also because of the fun and delight from the children and from the dog walkers. No matter what the weather is, no matter how cold the temperature is, no matter how much snow there is, nature provides a comforting assurance and a relaxing distraction to anyone walking the property.