

THEN & NOW

From the Nashville Room photo archives at the Nashville Public Library, a glimpse of the City Cemetery from the past and how it appears today.



A Nashville Banner newspaper photo shows the Duncan Robertson marker as it stood in 1955. (Photo courtesy of the Nashville Public Library, The Nashville Room.)

As one of the monuments currently under restoration, plans include replication of the three missing urns. (Photo by Jeff Thorneycroft)

Replacement Tombstones Restore Our History

One of the major concerns of any cemetery is dealing with the destructive effects of time and vandalism. Last year, when Nashvillian **Joe Price** became concerned that the graves of two of his ancestors lacked

appropriate headstones, he spoke to preservation maven **Fletch Coke** about replacing the stones. One of the graves had no marker; the other stone was broken in half. Price and Coke put their heads together with **Fred Zahn**, historic preservation supervisor for the Metro Historical Commission, and developed a plan that would apply to anyone wishing to provide replacement stones for their ancestors in the Nashville City Cemetery. In a remarkably short time, the work was done – by February of this year, the graves of Joe Price's great-great-grandfather

Levi Price (1815-1896) and his eldest son, Joe's great-grandfather **Joseph Walker Price** (1844-1867), were marked by elegantly simple white stones. Price has been delighted with the results, not only personally, but because he believes that preserving the City Cemetery "is important to the whole city — there's a lot of our history there."



Joe Price stands proudly next to his great-great grandfather Levi's newly replaced headstone. (Photo by Fred Zahn)

Master Plan (from page 1)

Finally, we are concentrating on reclaiming land on the west side of the cemetery where a neighboring business had encroached on cemetery property. The offending loading dock and blacktop paving have both been removed; the misplaced (although historic in its own right) chain-link fence has been removed; and our new pressed-face/poured concrete retaining



(Photo by Fred Zahn)

wall is going in truckload by truckload. When the wall is finished and back-filled, a new steel security fence, similar to the one along the railroad but somewhat shorter, will be installed along the newly redefined property line.

In summary, although some major items remain to be completed (e.g., paving, lighting, reworking of the two buildings, and the interpretive signage program), we have nevertheless accomplished a great deal in the space of a year. Not only has the work produced many much-needed improvements in the City Cemetery, but it has also involved craftsmanship of the highest quality. It is an achievement for which the city and the workers involved can take enormous pride.