Franklin Sears 1817- 1904 from Missouri, family was in livestock farming on the plains to Oregon, 1845 to CA, served under Fremont, then became a successful gold miner, finally settled in Sonoma 1851. He owned both a 740 acre farm in Sonoma Valley and a 3,000 acre ranch in the San Francisco Mountains. 30 Point. County Recorders office records show Mr. Sears involved in many real estate transactions.

Ercolo Chioldi 1867-1932, bookkeeper 15 years for Samuelle Sebastiani, died and buried in 1932, he was survived by his wife in Italy, he probably would not have built such a nice crypt planned to be buried alone. Payment for the crypt by a friend and any debts thereby brings an association with Grateful Dead folktales, where debts are paid so the corpse can be buried, and later a stranger who turns out to be the grateful dead man, offers help to the friend.

John Joseph Steiner 1883-1927, from Switzerland, hotel keeper, namesake of Steiner Street in San Francisco.

Indian child, buried in the early days of Sonoma. 900 known violas are buried near the Mission.

Luis Vallejo Emparan 1886-1948, oldest surviving child of M.G. Vallejo, bequeathed Vallejo’s 10-acre oak-studded parcel to the State. sold land to William Montini Sr., land that became the Montini Ranch and now the site of the Tuftel trail. the site of a new hiking trail on the hill behind the Vallejo Home.

Billy Ray King 1939-1955, died at age 16, his picture is on a photographic plaque on his headstone; this style of photo plaque precedes the newer types that are etched directly into the stone itself, the older photo plaques are not seen in the older portion of the Mountain Cemetery.

Jeanette Yvonne Grooms 1942-1964, next to Tony trailhead, buried alone without family at age one, what could be her story? Many headstones give pause for consideration.

Paride “Pete” Basaglia, 1888-1951, native of Italy. Expert blacksmith in the quarry above the cemetery. He built the Castello Bldg Annex in 1911, also his own house 369 Napa St. West. Successful stone and cement contractor, bridges, culverts, dairy barn, farm buildings. “The most beautiful vaults in Mountain Cemetery were built by him.” Look for his stamp in various cemetery work.

Frank Atsuo Matsuyama 1886-1957, the only Japanese in old Town, grew up with M.G. Vallejo’s children, naturalist, horseback rider, friends with Charmian and Jack London. Sierra Club member, mountain color, photographer, watercolor painter, pioneer automobile traveler/car camper, vernacular architect.

Leonido Quartaroli 1865-1933, from Tuscany, Italy, rented Toscano street paving and building. Much of the stone in the cemetery, some buildings on the Plaza, in local homes, bridges and walls, and barn foundations come from these quarries.

The Mountain Cemetery is situated directly adjacent to the Sonoma Overlook Trail and to Schoken Hill, location of former basalt quarries important to Sonoma’s economic and immigrant history. It seemed like a natural to connect these dots for a brochure. Basalt deposits run along the mountains from Sonoma to Santa Rosa. The quarry industry and demand for stone paved parts brought railroad lines to service the transport of this stone, as well as for agricultural produce: fruit, nuts, dairy, eggs, turkeys etc.

The quarries produced millions and millions of blocks for regional street paving and building. Much of the stone in the cemeteries and some buildings on the Plaza, in local homes, bridges and walls, and barn foundations come from these quarries.

You will find interesting crossovers with this brochure and the Sonoma Walking Tour brochure centered around the Plaza. From the historical sign on the upper loop of the Overlook Trail you can look out over the valley to Schollen, Wegis and Sean point and see where the old rail, and ship steamship took quarry block and agricultural produce down to San Pablo Bay and then to the urban core. The people participating in this life and work are buried in the cemetery.

In this self-guided tour you will meet cowboys, Indians, ranchers, agriculturalists, martial arts instructors, murderers, builders, bankers, real estate tycoons, quacks, map-makers, American Indians, leaders, pipettiets, blacksmiths, bootleggers, bankers, grocers, hoteliers, stone makers, fraternal order members, speculators, young, old, among others. Enjoy!

This brochure is available for free at the Visitor’s Center and the Overlook Trail kiosk.

Visit: www.sonomacemeteryrcenter.org/overlooktrail to download a PDF of this brochure and link to online cemetery photo gallery.

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Mountain Cemetery walking tour

This brochure spans a time period from 1807 to 1994. The primary purpose of the brochure is to highlight the many historical interests associated with the Mountain Cemetery. The Mountain Cemetery was established in 1841 and is one of the oldest operating cemeteries in the western US.

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