

Integrating GIS Mapping at Your Cemetery

We are pleased to welcome LEES+Associates to the fold of WCCFA supplier members. Please note that we published an incorrect e-mail for LEES+Associates in our 2011 membership directory. Direct e-mail to elees@elac.bc.ca.

Article by Damian Bradley, GIS Mapping Coordinator for LEES+Associates, Cemetery Planners and Landscape Architects

WHAT IS A GIS?

A Geographic Information System (GIS) is a tool that relates tangible elements in the real world (such as roads, trees, memorials and buildings) to information such as records, documents, photographs, stories and statistics.

Where a traditional map may show a line to represent a street, a GIS map displays the same line, linked to a database. This linked database may contain any information, such as the street name, surface type, condition, number of lanes, photo, and so on. GIS is the driving force behind products such as Google Maps, Earth and Street View, portable GPS units and cellular navigation technology. Each of these systems

literally puts the power of GIS at our fingertips. Although there is a lot of data and complexity working in the background, the end user interacts only with simple yet powerful maps.

The work that goes into creating a GIS infrastructure is significant: a good example is the Google fleet which mapped and photographed roads worldwide for the Street View project. In collecting this data and making it accessible and easy to use, Google changed the way the public interacts with street maps and uncovered new ways of capitalizing on mapping technology. The cemetery industry is in a position to do what Google did with roads: to fundamentally change the way we interact with cemetery information.



GIS professionals can use your existing maps, CAD drawings, and aerial imagery or go on-site with a high-resolution GPS data logger to locate your plots, roads, buildings, iconography, signage, gardens, trails, trees, niches, crypts and memorials. (LEES+Associates)

HOW CAN MY CEMETERY USE A GIS?

Combining GIS data with a cemetery records management software provides cemeteries with a simple user-friendly interface to access information through a database or a map. Building a GIS system can greatly enhance aspects of your organization's management, administration, operations, marketing and visitor satisfaction. A GIS can:

Management

- ◆ Provide cemetery planners with spatial and economic data to inform decision making.
- ◆ Help determine short and long term budgeting and planning.
- ◆ Show a full plotting plan of your cemetery.
- ◆ Determine who is buried at a given location, and link back to their records.

Operations

- ◆ Show the location of trees which pose safety concerns and require regular monitoring.
- ◆ Locate infrastructure situated on the property, including associated data and condition.

Marketing

- ◆ Publish public, online or Google-based cemetery maps and tours.
- ◆ Create online searchable databases to assist in the location of memorials.

(Continued on page 28)

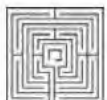


LEES + Associates

Cemetery Planners and Landscape Architects

Over 70 years combined experience in:

- Cemetery Master Planning
- Cemetery Business Planning
- Plot and Infrastructure Layout
 - Cremation Garden Design
- Cemetery Land Needs Assessment
 - Feasibility Studies
- Cremation and Interment Research
 - Regulatory Approvals
 - Cemetery GIS Mapping

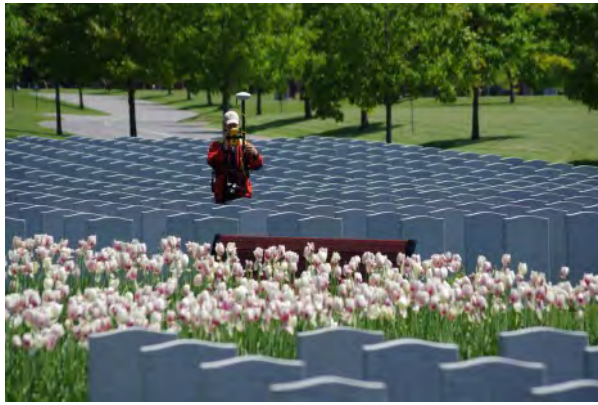


Vancouver Office: 604 899 3806 Toronto Office: 905 895 3826
Web: www.elac.bc.ca E-mail: elees@elac.bc.ca

(Continued from page 19)

Visitor Satisfaction

- ◆ Facilitate publishing of printed cemetery maps.
- ◆ Produce signage within the cemetery.
- ◆ Provide an interface for kiosk-based maps.
- ◆ Mark historically significant memorials.
- ◆ Link to photos of memorial or interment sites.
- ◆ Generate online or self-guided tours.



Collecting an inventory, understanding your site and building a solid data infrastructure will help you to make informed decisions in the short term, and create a robust sustainable information system in the long term. GIS data acts as a foundation upon which more intelligent and sophisticated systems can be built as your cemetery grows.

BUILDING A GIS SYSTEM AT YOUR CEMETERY

The key to realizing the benefits of building a GIS is to start with the basics.

(Continued from page 27)

clients. You can start arriving at their door anytime after 8:00 a.m. weekdays and 9:00 a.m. weekends. Get out and do these before the heat of the day sets in. early morning visitors are always welcome by 65+ adults.

Summertime is good and your pre-need living can be easy and worry-free if you follow these suggestions. Remember to keep calling,

keep mailing, keep sending emails, keep sending letters, keep reaching out to people in every and any way you can to spread the good news about funeral preplanning., Article by Christopher Kuhnen for the July 2011 YB News, reprinted in its entirety with permission. Christopher Kuhnen is Vice President of Marketing and Corporate Communications for The Outlook Group, Inc., Franklin, Ohio. He was 25 years' experience in the field of funeral directing, prearrangement planning and training. He also has considerable experience in public relations, market-

ing, consumer and business to business sales and is a trusted adviser to those in the death care industry. As an insider into excellence Chris provides comprehensive consultation, education and positive support to funeral directors nationwide to help them coordinate and develop their business strategies. He is a licensed funeral director, life insurance agent, certified preplanning consultant, In-sight Institute certified celebrant and certified marketing specialist. Reach him at ckuhnen@theoutlookgroup.com.

Recent LWTC Grad Seeking Funeral Director/Embalmer Internship

I am a member of Washington state's very first graduating class in Funeral Services! While at Lake Washington Technical College I was able to complete a three-month academic internship at Marlatt Funeral Home in Kent. Since finishing the program at the end of March I now have passed both the Art and Science sections of the NBE. I own a mobile home so I can easily relocate for a funeral director/embalmer internship.

My hobbies are needlework, singing in the church choir, training my Dalmatian and traveling (my most recent trip was to attend the 2010 NFDA Convention and Expo in New Orleans). With a BS in Biology with minors in Fine Arts (Sculpture) and Disability Studies (proficient in American Sign Language) from WSU, I am looking forward to putting all my skills to use in this caring, challenging and most respected professions.

Please contact me, Robin Grant, by email to rgrant2010@live.com, or by phone to 253-939-9206.

Robin's resume is available from her, or from the WCCFA, upon request.



DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION

Meeting your needs of today ♦ Planning for the future of tomorrow

- ◆ Private Mausoleums
- ◆ Chapel Mausoleums
- ◆ Garden Mausoleums
- ◆ Niche Columbaria
- ◆ Estate Development
- ◆ Master Planning

For more information contact:

Dan Terhaar
1-800-888-4573
terhaar@wilbertprecast.com

2215 E BROOKLYN AVE
SPOKANE, WA 99217
WWW.WILBERTPRECAST.COM

