

resulted in numerous gravesites marked only by the bases which once held the stones. Some graves are marked only by brick enclosures and the occasional iron fence. Many are not marked at all.

Rose Hill Cemetery is being preserved by the East Bay Regional Park District. Staff have rebuilt brick and wrought iron enclosures, as well as repaired broken gravestones. Burials have been documented by recording all known information for each site and research has been conducted on the individuals interred.



Karen Terhune

Park Rangers installing the repaired gravestone of Sarah Norton.

### Exotic Plantings

Like the abandoned mining townsites, Rose Hill Cemetery contains several plant species which had been imported from foreign lands. Some plants may have been introduced for practical uses such as shade, while others may have been planted in the cemetery for their symbolic value.

Although many of the trees in the cemetery grew old and died, a few of the original plantings have survived.

### Help Preserve History

Please help us preserve Rose Hill Cemetery and respect those buried here by not walking, standing, or sitting on the gravestones. Most of the stones are over 100 years old. They are precious artifacts that should be protected for future generations. For the protection of gravestones, no rubbings are permitted.

If you or anyone you know ever visited Rose Hill Cemetery prior to 1973, before it became part of Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, and have photographs, written material or information to share regarding individuals buried there, please contact the staff at Black Diamond Mines. The return of gravestones and iron fences is gladly appreciated, no questions asked.



Nancy McKay

For more information on Rose Hill Cemetery, please contact a Black Diamond Mines Naturalist.

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Zelma Myrick

Rose Hill Cemetery, circa 1939. Courtesy of Tony Dunleavy

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This brochure is provided as a public service of the Interpretive and Recreation Services Department of the East Bay Regional Park District.



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# Rose Hill Cemetery

Black Diamond Mines  
Regional Preserve

East Bay Regional Park District



Over the years, vandalism almost destroyed Rose Hill Cemetery. Prior to the area becoming a Regional Preserve, the road to the cemetery remained open, allowing unrestricted access to the site. It was during this time that much of the vandalism occurred. Some visitors broke or stole gravestones and iron fencing. Wooden fences and markers were raved by both vandals and fires that swept through the area.

By 1973, when the East Bay Regional Park District acquired Rose Hill, concerned individuals had already begun securing broken gravestones to the ground in an effort to keep them in the cemetery. Many years of vandalism have

### Vandalism and Current Preservation

A variety of motifs appear on the gravestones. The images may symbolize many things. Willows express sorrow. Grapes and vines represent Christ. Scalloped shells depict one's journey through life. Young children are symbolized with lambs, or rose buds that were "nipped in the bud" just as life was beginning. Other motifs represent membership in fraternal organizations such as the Masons or Odd Fellows.

Over the years, burials have been documented by the presence of a gravestone, photographs showing missing gravestones, articles, and by comparing previous incomplete cemetery lists compiled between 1922 and 1954.

The majority of gravestones in the cemetery are marble. In the late 1890s, the invention of the pneumatic drill made carving granite easier and it became the material of choice. As with many cemeteries of the

Of the nearly 250 burials in the cemetery, only about 80 gravestones remain today. Gravestones were expensive and many people shared them between family and friends. Some individuals' gravesites were marked with wood or were not marked at all.

### Gravesites and Gravestones

- Earliest known burial with a gravestone was Elizabeth Richmond; died February 1865 (Plot 81).
- Youngest known person was the one day old unnamed daughter of Thomas H. and Elizabeth Jenkins who was interred with her father; April 15, 1880 (Plot 9).
- Oldest known person, at 81 years old, was Ruth French who died on September 11, 1874 (Plot 116).
- Most recent known burial was William T. Davis who died in 1954 and was buried in the Davis family plot (Plot 104).

### Notable Burials in Rose Hill Cemetery

Andrew Rose (hence the name Rose Hill). In the 1940s, Emma decided the cemetery to Contra Costa County. The East Bay Regional Park District acquired Rose Hill Cemetery and much of the surrounding land in 1973.

Many of those buried in Rose Hill Cemetery were children, a large number of whom died from diseases such as scarlet fever, smallpox, diphtheria, and typhoid. Adults were also prone to deadly illnesses and accidents. A number of men died in mining accidents, while some women died during childbirth.

Although no original records have been located for the cemetery, it is believed that nearly 250 individuals are at Rose Hill. The cemetery was primarily used between the 1860s and 1900, with most burials occurring in the 1870s when the towns' populations were at their peak and disease outbreaks were common.

### People Interred

to his only child Emma and her husband Andrew Rose (hence the name Rose Hill). In the 1940s, Emma decided the cemetery to Contra Costa County. The East Bay Regional Park District acquired Rose Hill Cemetery and much of the surrounding land in 1973.



Bob Kanagaki

From the early 1860s to the turn of the twentieth century, the Mount Diablo Coal Field was the largest coal mining area in California. Rose Hill Cemetery was established as a Protestant cemetery serving the five towns in the coal field: Nortonville, Somersville, Stewartville, West Hartley, and Judsonville. Many residents were buried in neighboring community cemeteries.

When the coal mines closed in the early 20th century, many of the buildings were dismantled and moved to nearby communities. Others were eventually destroyed by fire or vandals. Among the remnants of that bygone era are the mines, piles of waste rock, exotic plants, and Rose Hill Cemetery.

### A Brief History — Rose Hill Cemetery



Photographer unknown

# Rose Hill Cemetery

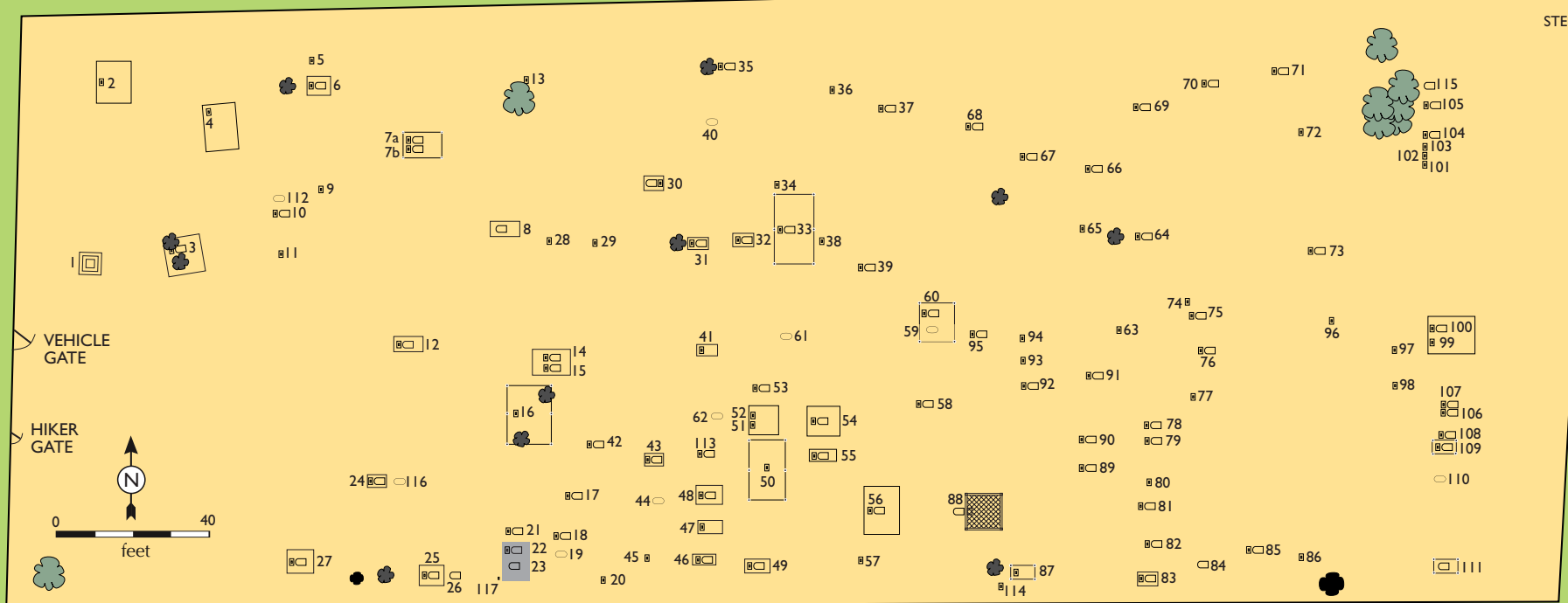
Mount Diablo Coal Field  
Contra Costa County, California

**Key** □ gravestone & base    ■ base only    □ iron fence    ☁ pepper tree  
○ gravestone only    ○ no marker    □ brick or stone enclosure    🌲 cypress tree



William L. Williams, plot 52

Courtesy of Madison Devlin



Thomas H. Jenkins and infant daughter, plot 9

Courtesy of Madison Devlin

Abraham, Rebecca	55	Davis, (child)	103	Green, Martha J.	107	Jenkins, Thomas H.	9	Leam, May	91	Pohl, Dora	110	Vaughn family	33
Aitken, Katie	17	Davis, Ellen	101	Griffith, David E.	7b	Jewett, Milton	105	Love, John	30	Pohl, Millie	110	Waters, Edna Bella	116
Anderson, Robert	24	Davis, Peter	111	Griffiths, David W.	49	Jewett, Walter S.	105	Markley, A. J.	67	Powell, Mary	42	Waters, John R.	116
Banks, Joseph	3	Davis, Thomas J.	59	Habenicht, Wilhelm C.	4	Jones, Austin	23	Markley, David	67	Prosser, Mary	78	Waters, William	116
Bowman, Charles H.	75	Davis, William T.	104	Havard, Elias	39	Jones, Catherine	82	Markley, Eliza Jane	67	Rees, Elizabeth Ann	19	Watts, David	50
Bowman, David G.	75	Dawson, Mary A.	106	Heycock, Richard	35	Jones, David R.	83	Mills, Charles W.	11	Richards, Daniel	15	Watts, Theophilus	50
Bowman, Violette I.	75	Dumas, Theophile	47	Holt, Walter L.	10	Jones, Elizabeth	83	Minett, William C.	66	Richards, John	64	Williams, Annie	55
Bradshaw, John	16	Edwards, Catherine	31	Hook, Alice J.	108	Jones, Ellen	89	Morgan, David	92	Richards, William Timothy	64	Williams, David R.	58
Bryant, Elizabeth Ann	57	Edwards, Joseph M.	7a	Hook, George B.	109	Jones, Hugh R.	89	Morris, Alexander	38	Richmond, Anne	80	Williams, Edward F.	74
Buxton, Alfred W.	60	Eno, Susan J.	71	Howell, Sarah	8	Jones, Isabella	84	Mortimore, Alvin	21	Richmond, Elizabeth	81	Williams, Watkin	51
Buxton, Lulu	60	Evans, John	94	Howell, Thomas M.	8	Jones, Jennie	117	Mortimore, Harriet	21	Richmond, Thomas	80	Williams, William L.	52
Buxton, Maggie	25	Evans, John R.	94	Howells, Isaac	73	Jones, John B.	59	Mortimore, Richard	21	Ritchards (Richards), Mary	14	Wingate, Robert	37
Cain, Elizabeth O.	2	Evans, Rebecca	27	Hughes, David M.	12	Jones, Lewis James	117	Native Sons & Native Daughters of the Golden West monument	1	Smith, Evan	48	Witherow, Barbara L.	32
Clare, Walter E.	112	Evans, William	94	Hughes, Margaret	54	Jones, Martha	22	Thomas, Elvira	56	Spowart, Annie	68	Unknown (adult)	99
Clement, Ann	100	Evans, William Rodrick	93	Humphreys, Gwelym	43	Jones, Mary E.	79	Thomas, Frederick Elias	5	Thomas, John	5	Unknown "Infant Babe"	79
Clement, William H.	100	French, Ruth	115	James, Mary Ann	28	Jones, Thomas	113	Thomas, John	5	Thomas, Rees G.	56	Unknown infants (2)	69
Cooper, George	25	Gething, William	46	James, Thomas	50	Jones, Thomas M.	70	Tully, Mary	18	Thomas, Sarah	6	Other Unknown Gravesites	
Davies, Evan	53	Goulding, Joseph	72	Jenkins family	88	Jones, Thomas S.	69	Oliver, Jane	95	Oliver, Jane	95	13, 20, 29, 34, 36, 40, 41, 44,	
Davis, Anna	90	Goulding, Thomas	72	Jenkins, (infant daughter)	9	Leam, Margaret	91	Ott, Georg Adam	76	Piercy, Julia Etta	85	45, 61, 62, 63, 65, 77, 86, 87,	
Davis, (child)	102											96, 97, 98, 114	

## Selected Biographies

### Sarah Norton (plot 6)

Died October 5, 1879. Age 68 years. Sarah was a midwife who reportedly delivered over 600 babies successfully. Widowed in an earlier marriage, she married Noah Norton, for whom the town of Nortonville is named. Sarah was answering a call for her services in Clayton, a town just south of Nortonville, when she was thrown from a buggy, and was killed instantly.



Courtesy of Contra Costa County Historical Society

### Annie Spowart (plot 68)

Died June 7, 1872. Age 11 years, 6 months. Annie died of smallpox in Somersville. Her parents may have come to Somersville during the Civil War. Her father is believed to have operated a saloon in Somersville. Descendants presume her sister, Eliza, may also be buried in the cemetery.

### Martha Jones (plot 22)

Died October 27, 1886. Age 18 years, 7 months, 13 days. Martha's parents, Austin and Celia (Spill) Jones, moved to California from Maryland in the 1860s. Martha was one of nine children in the Jones family. According to coal field descendants, Martha did millinery and dressmaking work, and died of diphtheria—a common disease in the coalfield. She is buried next to her father, two siblings, her brother-in-law, Richard Mortimore, and Richard's two children. Martha's gravestone was broken by vandals prior to the area becoming an East Bay Regional Park. Black Diamond Rangers repaired Martha's stone and returned it to the cemetery in October 2004.



Courtesy of Alice Whites

### Rees G. Thomas, Sr. (plot 56)

Died December 6, 1875. Age 48 years, 3 months, 6 days. According to descendants, Rees was a native of Wales who moved to the coal fields of Pennsylvania in the early 1850s, where he met his wife Margaret. Together they moved to California in search of gold. In 1867, the Thomas' moved to Nortonville, where they homesteaded 160 acres and Rees worked as a miner until his death. Rees's daughter, Elvira, is also buried at this site.

### Margaret Leam (plot 91)

Died October 3, 1884. Age 47 years, 9 months, 8 days.

### Robert Leam (unknown)

Died February 27, 1900. Age 64 years. Robert Leam was a coal miner and mine superintendent in the Somersville and Stewartville coal mines. The Leams had eight children, including May who is buried with her mother (plot 91) in Rose Hill Cemetery. After the death of his first wife Margret, Robert remarried and worked at the Tesla Coal Mines near Livermore, Alameda County, CA. Upon his death, a newspaper reported that he was interred in Rose Hill Cemetery.



Courtesy of Margaret Santana



Courtesy of Margaret Santana

### William Gething (plot 4)

Died July 24, 1876. Age 36 years. On July 24, 1876, William and nine other men were killed during a mine explosion in the Black Diamond Mine at Nortonville. Buried near William are other men that were killed in the explosion: William Williams, David W. Griffiths, Theophilus Watts, David Watts, Thomas James, Evan Smith, and Theophile Dumas.

### John Bradshaw (plot 16)

Died October 25, 1881. Age 55 years, 4 months, 20 days. John was born in Monmouthshire, Wales. John and his wife, Mary, had at least 15 children. He was a member of the Odd Fellows Lodge and died in Nortonville. His marble gravestone was taken by vandals before the area became a Regional Preserve. The top section of the stone, containing the motif, was returned to the park in 2009. The brick enclosure and iron fence have been repaired by Park staff.



Courtesy of Tony Dunlavy

### A. J. Markley (plot 67)

Died May 2, 1870. Age 40 years. Andrew Jackson Markley served as Clerk for Contra Costa County from 1869 to 1870. Markley Creek in Somersville was named for him. He died of heart disease in Martinez, Contra Costa County, California. He shares a gravesite with his two children, Eliza Jane and David, who died in Somersville.

### Individuals Buried In Rose Hill Cemetery With Burial Location Unknown

Banks, Albert	Cooper, John L.
Banks, Ann C.	Crowhurst, Elizabeth
Bassett, (child)	Daley, James
Blackburn, Charles W.	Davis, David B.
Bryant, Eva Sitera	Davis, David B.
Bryant, Ida Mary	Davis, Margaret
Bryant, Margaret	Dennis, John
Bussey, Joseph	Dodsworth, George W.
Buxton, Thomas	Doulton, George
Conner, John T.	Dunton, Clyde C.
Easton, Mary	
Edwards, Clara	
Edwards, Emma	
Edwards, John	
Engler, Annie H.	
Engler, Charles	
Engler, John	
Evans, Elizabeth	
Goulding, Fanny S.	
Goulding, Thomas P.	
Griffith, (infant)	
Griffith, Emma	
Griffith, Jack	
Hay, John	
James, Morgan E.	
Jewett, Emeline F.	
Jones, Benjamin A.	
Jones, David T.	
Jones, Elizabeth	
Jones, George T.	
Jones, Henry	
Jones, John	
Leam, Robert	
Lewis, David John	
Lewis, Meredith	
Lewis, Seth John	
MacLeod, John	
Maddin, Ella	
Malpass, Percival S.	
Morgan, Ann	
Muir, Jane Russel	
Oliver, Thomas J.	
Parsons, Jeannette	
Price, Hazel	
Pritchard, Lupyester	
Ramsay, (child)	
Rees, Margaret	
Reynolds, George M.	
Riddock, Mary Jane	
Riddock, Rob. (d 1865)	
Riddock, Rob. (d 1867)	
Riddock, William	
Rogers, Elizabeth	
Saddler, (male child)	
Saddler, Harriet A.	
Schwartz, (infant #1)	
Schwartz, (infant #2)	
Shaw, Hazel Beatrice	
Spowart, Eliza	
Spratt, Wm. Gladstone	
Stine, Catherine	
Thomas, Charles M.	
Thomas, Elizabeth Ann	
Thomas, Handel	
Thomas, Howell	
Thomas, John D.	
Thomas, John H.	
Thomas, Jos. (d 1870)	
Thomas, Jos. (d 1871)	
Thomas, Peter B.	
Tierney, John	
Tolan, (child #1)	
Tolan, (child #2)	
Tonkins, John	
Tregellas, Annie	
Tregellas, James	
Tregellas, Joseph	
Van Amringe, Ellen	
Vestnys, Lorenda A.	
Williams, Howell M.	
Williams, Mary M.	
Williams, Sara Elizabeth	
Willis, Mary Blanche	
Wright, Bertie	
Wright (child)	
Wright, John Edmund	
Wright, Mary Elizabeth	
Wright, Minnie	