



Hopland Cemetery Newsletter

WELCOME



We hope you are enjoying our Hopland Cemetery Newsletter! We have created this project to keep our community updated on work and improvements at our beloved historical cemetery, thank those that help, and keep you informed.



GET INVOLVED

Next cleanup date: May 16-17, 2026

Join us and help keep our cemetery beautiful.
Contact us at HoplandCemetery@gmail.com
for more information.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Meet the volunteers who oversee Hopland Cemetery and ensure it carries on to support our local community.

Chair - Joan Norry

Joan Norry moved from the bay area to Hopland in 2012 and began as a Trustee in 2020. She has been dedicated to preserving the beauty and history of the cemetery and visiting friends that are resting there.



Secretary - Bob Gaston

Bob has been a Hopland resident since 1989 when he married his wife Priscilla Hawksworth raising 3 children in the township. He has a great appreciation for the local history and community members especially the "old-timers" and became a Trustee in 2024.



Treasurer - Nina Kaiser

Nina has been a Trustee since 2020, and resident of Hopland full time since 2012. Living on Full moon cattle ranch with best friend and family. Dedicated to preserving the area and history of Hopland.



Trustee - Bill Janusz

Hopland is his hometown. His family from grandparents, parents, aunt and nephew are buried in this cemetery along with many friends and acquaintances. He became a Trustee in 2022.



GET INVOLVED!

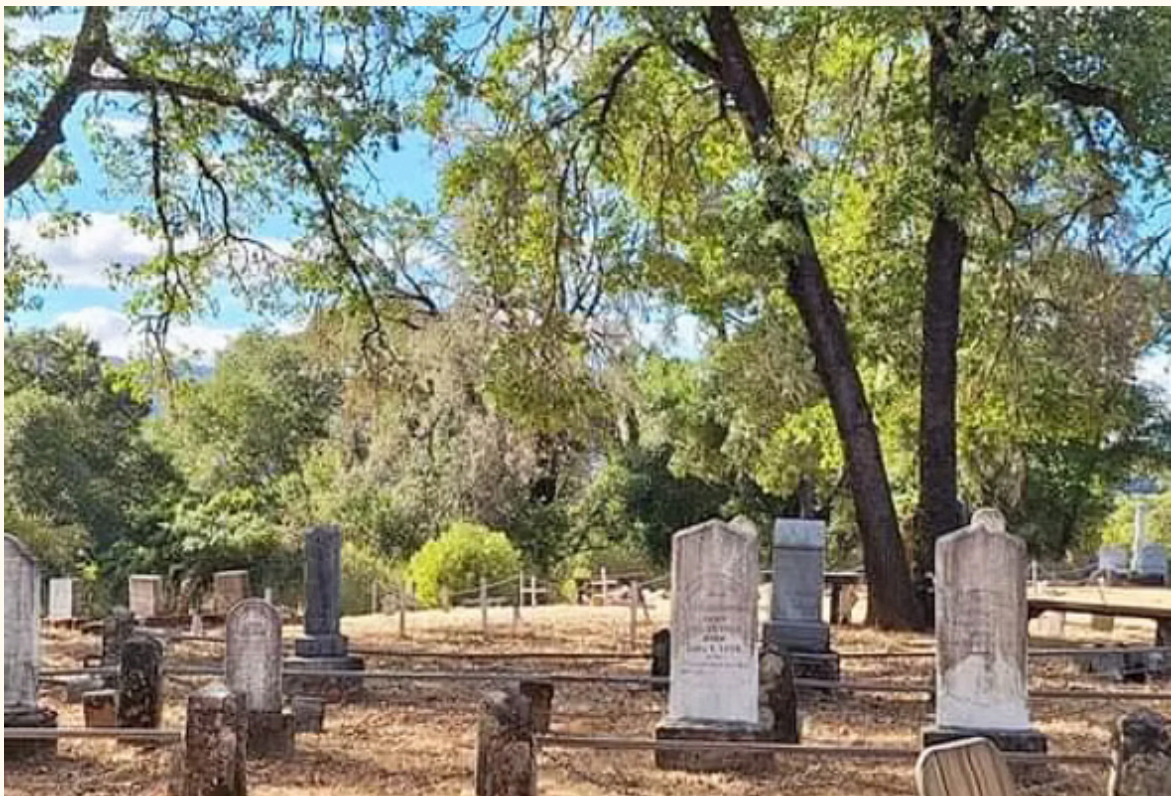
The Hopland Cemetery currently has one open position on the Board of Trustees. To apply, you must be a resident of Hopland. Would you like to join our board?

Email us at HoplandCemetery@gmail.com.

CEMETERY HISTORY

Originally the Feliz Family burial ground, the Hopland Cemetery was founded in the early 1780's by Spanish land grant. By 1840, it became the cemetery for the settlers from the nearby town of Sanel. The railroad arrived in 1888 bringing pioneers from across the globe seeking a new life in the healthy climes of the West. The town of Sanel was renamed "Hopland" in the early 20th Century in an effort to attract visitors to the then location of the largest hop farm in the country. The surviving monuments represent only half of the residents buried here and many of the original families continue to reside in the surrounding area.

Our newsletter will feature the history of people interred at Hopland Cemetery. If you would like us to feature the story of your beloved, email us at HoplandCemetery@gmail.com.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Who can buy a plot in the cemetery if space is available?

Hopland residents for 5 years or family members of already purchased plots with proof of purchase and rights of ownership may purchase a plot in the cemetery if one is available.

2. If I have a family member buried in the cemetery, can I be buried with them?

You can be buried with your family member:

If there is proof of purchase for more than one plot (and receipt) or if there is proof of ownership, family succession with family lineage, evidence of inheritance or burial rights affidavit.

3. What paperwork is required besides the documents mentioned in question 2?

The internment order is required in addition to prior notice to the cemetery trustees one to two weeks in advance of requested burial date by contacting the cemetery at HoplandCemetery@gmail.com.

4. Who is in charge of the cemetery?

Hopland Cemetery District is voluntarily run and does not employ a caretaker or gravedigger. It is a special district under Mendocino County, California. The cemetery is administered by a volunteer Board of Trustees.

5. Are there rules and laws that govern the cemetery?

Yes. The cemetery is governed by the following law: California law, government code title 3, health and safety codes, the Brown Act and Senate Bill 827.

Vassar Connection to the Hopland Cemetery

How did the Vassars become buried in the Hopland Cemetery. Let me begin at the beginning. Benjamin Dunnaway Vassar crossed the country by covered wagon in the 1860's. His wife Rachel McCracken and 10 children. He is buried in Hall Cemetery north of Healdsburg. Benjamin's son William J (Jesse) Vassar settled near Hopland having large land holdings. Jesse is reported to have 14 children. A lot of Vassars for sure. Most of them were in the sheep, cattle and butchering business. Moving on to Eugene Vassar Sr. who is buried in the Hopland Cemetery. Gene was born July 31, 1878. He married Cornelia Helena Thompson. (also of MacDowell Valley) Dec 1907. Five children were born of this union. Margaret Vassar Staples Cole is buried there in Hopland. Also her daughter Sherl Kinney. Another child of Eugene and Helena, Alma, died in infancy. Helena Thompson Vassar lies beside her husband at the cemetery. James Bernard Vassar, a merchant seaman, was the third son of Gene and Helena and was interred in 1982. Gene's brothers John Edward and Erven Edward are also found in the cemetery. John's wife, Mary lies beside her husband.



Helena, Eugene Vassar Sr and my Dad Eugene Vassar Jr

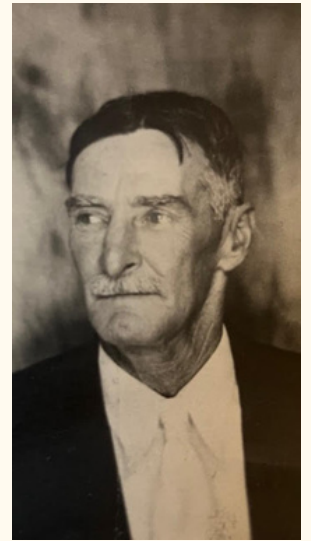


Eugene Sr

Vassar Connection to the Hopland Cemetery (continued)



The family resided in McDowell Valley. Their property is located where the McDowell Winery. All of the buildings are gone now and there are acres of grapes. When Gene passed Helena tried for several years to keep the farm up but eventually had to sell. She spent her last days living with family.



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The Thompsons that are buried are related to Oliver Samuel Thompson and Almery Phillips Thompson (Helena's parents) have some family also buried at Hopland. Oliver and Almery lived also in McDowell Valley next to Eugene and Helena. The family was very close to the Buckman family . I believe that they lived next to the Vassar and Thompson's ranch. Submitted by :Helen Vassar

Oliver Thompson
Family in McDowell
ranch. My dad is the
boy on the left



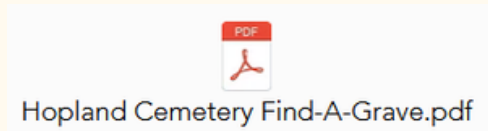
Hopland Cemetery Cleanup Day - April 11, 2026

Thank you Nyna, Kellen and Joan for tree cutting the limb off the road on a rainy afternoon. Thank you also to Priscilla Gaston for painting Hopland Cemetery sign and Bob for reinstalling sign.



FIND-A-GRAVE FEATURE

We are excited to announce that the **The Find-a-Grave** lookup on the Hopland Cemetery website at HoplandCemetery.org has been upgraded and now live. There is a link at the top of every page to a PDF file containing current records and location of graves.



As always if you need assistance, please email the Board of Trustees at HoplandCemetery@gmail.com.

DONATIONS

If you would like to support the ongoing care and community work at our beloved Hopland Cemetery, we warmly welcome donations of items, labor, or financial contributions. Please reach out to the Board of Trustees at HoplandCemetery@gmail.com.



FUN-RAISER

GIDDY UP TO HOPLAND LINE DANCE LESSONS



CAMPOVIDA COUNTRY NIGHTS

SATURDAY, MAY 23RD @ 7PM

**TO BENEFIT:
HOPLAND HISTORIC CEMETERY**

\$10.00 AT THE DOOR - 21+ PLEASE NO OUTSIDE BEVERAGES

PLEASE RSVP WWW.CAMPOVIDA.COM

LINE DANCING 
WITH RISE AND THRIVE

