

Media Contact:
Gus Nodal
Landis Communications Inc.
415-359-2320
gus@landispr.com
www.landispr.com



THE HISTORIC CHAPEL OF THE CHIMES OAKLAND: AN ARCHITECTURAL LANDMARK AND CULTURAL DESTINATION

From its Moorish Gothic-inspired interior designed by architect Julia Morgan to its annual Garden of Memory summer solstice concert, Chapel of the Chimes Oakland is a beacon of reflection and inspiration to locals and visitors alike

OAKLAND, Calif. (August 1, 2017) – Did you know that Julia Morgan, best known as the chief architect of the famous Hearst Castle, also played a key role in the design of several San Francisco Bay Area landmarks? [Chapel of the Chimes Oakland](#) (CCO), founded in 1909 as a crematory and columbarium, provides funeral, cemetery and cremation services for families in Oakland, Calif. and around the Bay Area. The main building reflects a 1928 redevelopment designed by Morgan, the first woman architect licensed in California.

Chapel of the Chimes Oakland:
By the Numbers

- Property acreage: 2 city blocks
- First burial on record or oldest headstone date: 1909

The location's Moorish Gothic-inspired interior consists of a maze of charming interconnected rooms and enclaves that feature ornate stonework, statues, gardens, fountains and mosaics. Although families turn to Chapel of the Chimes Oakland for a multitude of end-of-life services, the location remains one of the region's most desired cremation venue. Designated a City of Oakland Landmark in 1999, CCO is home to approximately 300,000 urns, including those of many area pioneers and celebrities.

History

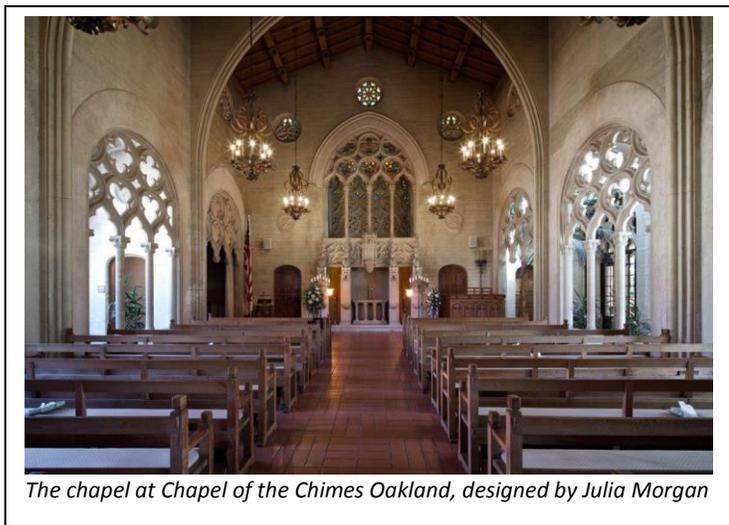


*Chapel of the Chimes Oakland
4499 Piedmont Ave. in Oakland, Calif.*

The land where CCO now stands was originally the site of a trolley car station that delivered people to the gates of Mountain View Cemetery next door and to St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery. Using the talents of architects Cunningham and Politeo, the Association built the first crematory in 1909 and then added a columbarium later that year.

The original chapel of the columbarium still features train schedules on the wall. The first niches are sealed by metal plaques that convey little information – often only a last name. The second section of the columbarium began incorporating the use of glass, which was shipped cross-country on trains, to protect the urns inside the niches. By the time the third section opened, the niches were left open to display the urns inside.

In the 1920s, CCO hired prominent Bay Area architect, Julia Morgan, to design the Moorish Gothic addition, which includes gardens, alcoves, cloisters, fountains, and chapels. Morgan, the first woman to graduate from the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, included stained glass, mosaics, European statuary, tile floors and California faience to decorate the walls. One of her additions is a balustrade now in the cloister. Though she had intended the piece for Hearst Castle, William Randolph Hearst rejected it, so it ended up at Chapel of the Chimes.



In the 1920s and 1930s, organ music was broadcast live from the Chapel over radio station KRE, which had a lease agreement with the Chapel. In December 1936, KRE was sold to Central California Broadcasters, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Chapel of the Chimes because the Federal Communications Commission ruled the lease agreement was illegal.

In 1959, Aaron Green (one of Frank Lloyd Wright's architecture students) added the mausoleum behind the columbarium, allowing for full body interment. Chapel of the Chimes was the first space in the world to be both columbarium and mausoleum.

Garden of Memory Concert

Chapel of the Chimes Oakland, in partnership with New Music Bay Area, celebrates summer solstice (this year on June 21, 2017) with its annual Garden of Memory concert. The program features simultaneous performances in different parts of the columbarium and mausoleum by dozens of Bay Area composers and musicians. Artists put their talents on display, presenting a variety of acoustic and electronic music, installations and interactive performances.



Getting lost in part of the architectural beauty is part of the experience when visiting Chapel of the Chimes Oakland. More than 3,000 guests climb up and down CCO's three floors through a maze of gardens, cloisters, alcoves, stairwells, fountains and other architectural elements that rise into vaulted ceilings. All performance areas have excellent acoustics and are illuminated by gentle natural light, making this a one-of-a-kind sensory experience for all ages.

Ching Ming

One of CCO's many free, annual events is the Ching Ming celebration, which takes place early each spring. Activities include a performance by Chinese lion dancers to ward off bad spirits, a traditional blessing from Buddhist and Taoist monks and the [Wall of Honor](#), upon which guests place the names of the departed. The observance of Ching Ming, which dates back more than 2,500 years, is linked to the Chinese tradition of ancestor worship. Each year, celebrants visit ancestral graves where they conduct ceremonial rites and make offerings. Ching Ming traditions remain a significant part of cultural life in modern Chinese communities.



Notable Burials

From sports professionals to performers to politicians, CCO is home to many famous figures. Among them:

- **Harriet Chalmers Adams** (1875–1937), explorer
- **Dick Bartell** (1907–1995), baseball player
- **Russ Christopher** (1917–1954), baseball player
- **Frederick George Coppins** (1889–1963), Canadian recipient of the Victoria Cross in WWI
- **Al Davis** (1929–2011), Natl. Football League executive, Oakland Raiders owner
- **John A. Elston** (1874–1921), U.S. Congressman
- **William Frederick "Bones" Ely** (1863–1952), baseball player
- **John Lee Hooker** (1917–2001), musician
- **Friend Richardson** (1865–1943), California governor
- **Henry Vollmer** (1867–1930), mayor of Davenport, Iowa; U.S. Congressman



Getting There

Located at 4499 Piedmont Ave, in Oakland, Calif., Chapel of the Chimes Oakland is free and open to the public between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m., seven days a week. Staff-guided and self-guided tours are available.

For more information regarding Chapel of the Chimes Oakland, please visit:

www.oakland.chapelofthechimes.com or call (510) 654-0123.

MEDIA, PLEASE NOTE: Reporters/editors interested in touring the property, receiving high-res images or interviewing CCO's General Manager, Marcie Russell, please contact Gus Nodal at (415) 359-2320 or northstar@landispr.com.

ABOUT CHAPEL OF THE CHIMES OAKLAND

Chapel of the Chimes Oakland provides end-of-life services to families from diverse religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Established in 1909 as a crematory and columbarium, Chapel of the Chimes Oakland is a leading cremation service provider in Northern California. Chapel of the Chimes is part of a family of cemeteries, funeral homes and crematories with locations throughout Northern California. For more information, visit www.oakland.chapelofthechimes.com.

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