

Some History of the Rosa Bonheur Memorial Park
By David Zinner – 1/23/2024

For years Friends of Rosa Bonheur have been trying, without success, to work with the developer, Mark Levy, to get an agreement to protect the cemetery. He denies knowing who caused the damage to the cemetery.

In 1979 humans began to be buried at the cemetery. Burials of humans and pets continued until 2004 when the cemetery was closed to new burials although there was room left for thousands of additional burials. There are at least 24 humans buried and 4,000 confirmed animal burials at the cemetery. Many markers for both the human and pet burials had been decorated for Christmas.

On December 20 & 21, 2023, two Rosa Bonheur Society volunteers, and a society member whose family has plots dating back to 1946, observed the cemetery status. They reported desecration of burials, memorials, and the grounds. They provided photos of the damage they witnessed. All three reported deep holes, markers strewn about, damage to the graves surrounding the holes, human remains missing from graves, and the exposure of other remains.

Robert Mosko, of Mosko Cemetery Monument Services, spent an hour assessing the damage. He confirmed that the soil indicated that the vandalism has occurred in the last two days, because the dirt is still fresh, that the area was heavily dug up probably using a backhoe. He noted tractor tracks. At least 3 sites were exhumed with evidence of probing. Graves were blindly destroyed, and human and animal markers strewn around and in piles. He said it was very easy to tell what the desecrators did.

No notice of disinterment was given to the families whose loved ones are buried at Rosa Bonheur. These disrespectful actions, the damage done, and lack of any attempt to repair that damage, make it appear that no professional funeral director and/or staff was present.

Memorial LLC had contacted the State's Attorney for Howard County, Rich Gibson, almost three years ago for permission to disinter human remains. Gibson approved the request, without consulting the impacted families. Families with both human and pet burials strongly objected to any disinterment. Two funeral homes contacted to conduct the disinterment refused to proceed without the family's permission.

Neither the families nor Rosa Bonheur Society has been contacted by any other funeral services companies regarding disinterment.