



Maple Ridge Cemetery – Maple Ridge, BC

A debate which exists in the paranormal world is whether cemeteries can be or are haunted. After all, no one dies in a cemetery. The deceased are simply buried there. While this is true, cemeteries are places of great emotion, concentrated energy and the physical resting place of many souls over the decades. There are many cemeteries, graveyards and churchyards all over the world which report apparitions and enough paranormal activity to inspire those who feel they want to brave reportedly haunted locations to see if they find any solid evidence of ghosts.

For us the more likely question is do the dead in the cemeteries speak? In our opinion, not all cemeteries are haunted but the dead always speak. The speaking comes from reading their names, discovering their stories and sometimes reaching living people who are touched by what we find and share.

This was the case with the Maple Ridge Cemetery. Though we visit this cemetery often simply due to the proximity of where we live it seems we constantly discover new sections, subtle details, new vegetation and new features. This is

the beauty of repeat visits. Each trip reveals hidden gems and details which renew our curiosity.

We have been to the Maple Ridge Cemetery numerous times; the main reason being is that it literally is in our back yard. We've also partaken, as volunteers, in the headstone preservation projects. Delicately we've brushed overgrown markers, washed dirt from the well-worn stones, and unceremoniously scraped weeds out of the dry, dusty earth. We help preserve history and bring the memories of those who have passed back to life.



As we frequent more cemeteries in our adventures we've found that they are great alternatives when one is in need of a meditational walk. Local trails and city parks are great but on a sunny day you find them packed with people: weaving and dodging living bodies, each scrambling to soak up either the first long-awaited warmth or to grasp the last fleeting, golden rays as they fade into the often damp Pacific Northwest.

Many pioneering families are buried here and the cemetery has served the community for over 140 years. The land was donated by William Nelson and

George Howison. The oldest headstone is dated 1883 and not many records of burials were kept until about 1897. Notable families buried here are the Haney's, Hammonds, Ruskins, McIvers, Pitts, and Charltons, just to name a few. There is also a Japanese section as a significant number of Japanese families settled in Maple Ridge in the early years.

One particular visit to the Maple Ridge Cemetery was mesmerizing, even ethereal in quality. We wandered around the cemetery but ventured further down a path which leads to a more modern section that backs onto an area with homes and apartments. It was a sunny day in May and not quite dusk. No one else was around. We found ourselves in a section where, magically, the sounds of wind chimes began to ring out as a warm but forceful breeze joined the early evening assembly.

There is a large tree in this particular section where many family members of the deceased chose to hang a wind chime in commemoration of their loved ones. As we stood quietly, the chimes glistened, sparkled and spun, wafting in the wind. We were gradually enveloped by the concert of sounds orbiting around us.

We stood under the tree, chimes glinting as we paused to look at the flower-adorned graves from a distance. The stones were now shaded by the taller trees behind the fence where the cemetery ends. The sun shifted, the light pierced and sparked through the tree leaves as the chimes hauntingly continued to stir. We made a short video of the captivating moment.

After sharing the video on our social media, a woman reached out to us to express her gratitude and she shared:



This video is the most special ever to me. Near the end you will see a chime in the tree with three eagles, one in a circle. This is the chime me and my sisters hung in the tree near my Mom's grave. To see a video and listen to the beautiful, tranquil chimes is a true gift. Thank you Haunted History BC. This is a gift I will always keep close to my heart. —RM (May 2, 2021)

So do the dead speak? Always. And we find ourselves right there with them, often stumbling around in a darkened wood, our purpose always clear as we bring to light the stories that might otherwise remain hidden.

