

Sagamore Hill

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Sagamore Hill
National Historic Site

YOUNGS MEMORIAL CEMETERY AND THE ROOSEVELT FAMILY



Theodore & Edith Kermit Roosevelt's Grave at Youngs Memorial Cemetery

“Death had to take him sleeping, for if Roosevelt had been awake there would have been a fight!” was the observation of Vice-President Thomas Marshall upon TR’s death in 1919.

By the time of his death, Theodore Roosevelt had been suffering from several illnesses such as recurring infection in various parts of his body and chronic arthritis. Although Theodore Roosevelt’s death at the age of sixty surprised the public and many of his political allies, his family was not unprepared. In 1911, Edith Roosevelt had been thrown from a horse and knocked unconscious; and it had taken several days for her to fully recover. The incident had frightened the couple and prompted a discussion about where their final resting place should be. Many Roosevelts, including Theodore’s parents and his first wife, Alice Lee Roosevelt, were buried in Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn. Edith’s family, the Carows, was buried in Connecticut and New York City. All of these places were far from Oyster Bay and the home they had made for themselves at Sagamore Hill. Youngs Memorial Cemetery, just a mile from that home, and located on a hill overlooking the bay where they had gone rowing and swimming and where their children had fished and sailed, must have seemed an obvious choice.

Youngs Family and TR’s Funeral

The Youngs family, whose homestead is across the road from the cemetery, were early settlers of the area. The family owned most of Cove Neck in the 18th and 19th centuries and had established their family burial ground as early as the 1660s. Attorney Thomas Youngs was a neighbor and private secretary to Governor Theodore Roosevelt in 1899. In 1901, Youngs chartered his family graveyard as a not-for-profit corporation to provide for its perpetual care and opened it for use by his neighbors. When Theodore Roosevelt died on January 6, 1919, his body rested in the North Room at Sagamore Hill where his family and close friends paid their respects. The casket was taken to Christ Church for a funeral service attended by political

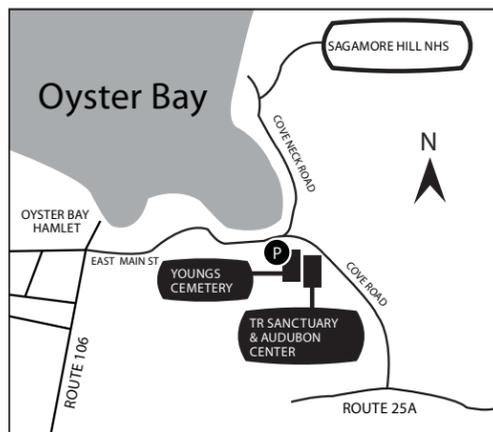
leaders and other dignitaries before the burial. An honor guard of New York City policemen stood beside local residents and lined the route to the cemetery. At the funeral, a teary-eyed friend and former political adversary, ex-president William Howard Taft was one of the last to leave the grave side. In later years, dignitaries, like Chief Scoutmaster Dan Beard, the King of Belgium and the Duke of Windsor visited the grave to pay their respects. On his visit, the Duke recalled TR’s 1910 visit to Buckingham Palace when he, as a young boy, listened to Roosevelt’s stories about hunting lions in Africa. When Edith Roosevelt died in 1948, she was buried alongside her husband in a private ceremony.

A Roosevelt Cousin’s Gift

In 1923, Emlen Roosevelt, a close cousin who lived next door to Sagamore Hill, purchased 12 acres of land to shield to the cemetery from development. Part of that tract was added to the back of the cemetery and used as a burial place for members of the Roosevelt family. Emlen presented the remainder of the property to the National Audubon

Society as a songbird sanctuary. It was a fitting and appropriate tribute since Theodore had told his cousin that this deep, forested cove had the greatest variety of birds around Oyster Bay. It was the first Audubon Songbird Sanctuary established in the United States.

Visiting Youngs Memorial Cemetery



Directions to Youngs Memorial Cemetery :

The cemetery is located 1.5 miles east of the Hamlet of Oyster Bay and 1 mile from Sagamore Hill. Visitors traveling to Sagamore Hill on Cove Road will pass Youngs Cemetery as they turn onto Cove Neck Road. Parking for the cemetery and the sanctuary is available in the lot adjacent to the entrance gate of the cemetery, marked "P" on the map.

Youngs Memorial Cemetery is operated by a not-for-profit corporation and is maintained in cooperation with the adjacent **Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary & Audubon Center**. The Audubon Sanctuary has a nature center, trails, and aviaries featuring a variety of native birds of prey and offers frequent special nature programs for all ages. **Visit http://ny.audubon.org/centersedu_troosevelt.html or call 516-922-3200 for more information.**

Roosevelt Children



1 Alice 2 Theodore Jr. 3 Kermit 4 Ethel 5 Archibald 6 Quentin

In birth order, Left to Right: (1) Alice Roosevelt Longworth (1884-1980) in the late 1930's; (2) Theodore "Ted" Roosevelt Jr. (1887-1944) in 1942; (3) Kermit Roosevelt (1889-1943) as an officer in the British Army in 1941; (4) Ethel Roosevelt Derby (1891-1977) as a Red Cross volunteer during World War II; (5) Archibald "Archie" Roosevelt (1893-1979) in 1945; (6) Quentin Roosevelt (1897-1918) in 1918.

Roosevelt Family Graves At Youngs Memorial Cemetery

In time, other members of the Roosevelt family were buried at Youngs Cemetery. Ethel Roosevelt Derby rests next to her husband, Dr. Richard Derby. Archie Roosevelt, the only son to live into his senior years, lies next to his wife Grace Lockwood Roosevelt. While Ted and Kermit are buried elsewhere, they are memorialized on the stones that mark the graves

of their wives, Eleanor Butler Roosevelt and Belle Willard Roosevelt. Several grand-children and great grand-children are also buried in the family plot.

While visiting the cemetery, please respect the area and walk carefully around the gravestones.



Above, Left to Right: grave markers of Ethel and her husband, Dr. Richard Derby; Archie and his wife, Grace Lockwood Roosevelt; Theodore, Jr. and his wife Eleanor Butler Alexander Roosevelt; and Kermit and his wife Belle Willard Roosevelt

Roosevelt Family Graves In Other Locations

Four of Theodore and Edith's children are buried far from Oyster Bay. Lt. Quentin Roosevelt served as an Army Air Corp pilot and was killed when his plane was shot down over France in 1918. He was buried with full honors by German troops near the spot of the crash. General Theodore Roosevelt Jr. led the landings at Utah Beach on D-Day, June 4, 1944 and was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions; he died of a heart attack five weeks later. In 1955, Ted and Quentin were re-interred side-by-side in the

American Cemetery at Normandy. Kermit Roosevelt died in 1943 while stationed with the Army at Fort Richardson, Alaska; and is buried in the national cemetery there. Alice Roosevelt Longworth lived all of her adult life in Washington D.C.; and was buried next to her daughter Paulina in Rock Creek Cemetery when she died in 1980. She was 96 years old and had outlived her sister and all of her younger brothers.



Above, Left to Right: grave markers of Quentin and Theodore, Jr. side-by-side at the American Cemetery in Normandy, France; Kermit at Fort Richardson National Cemetery in Fort Richardson, Alaska; and Alice at Rock Creek Cemetery in Washington, DC

About Sagamore Hill

Sagamore Hill National Historic Site is a unit of the National Park Service. The site was established by Congress in 1962 to preserve and interpret the structures, landscape, collections and other cultural resources associated with Theodore Roosevelt's home in Oyster Bay, New York, to ensure that future

generations understand and appreciate the life and legacy of Theodore Roosevelt, his family and the significant events associated with him. The 83 acre site also protects significant natural areas including woodlands, pastures, marshlands and a beach.

For more information:
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