

The Big Turnaround

When we first started with Union Cemetery, it was truly in a "Before" situation. They were a small and nearly forgotten old cemetery located in one of the most depressed areas in Bakersfield, CA. New property sales were continually declining as families stayed away from the area, preferring the newer cemeteries.

One of the best moves we made was bringing in LA ads. It's hard to imagine the contrast between what we had before compared to what our brand is today thanks to them. Without reservation, I recommend LA ads because of their energy, creativity and strategic thinking.

— Dave Hepburn, General Manager

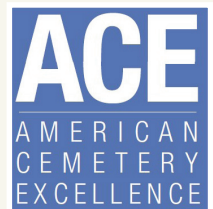
But we saw a diamond in the rough: a historic treasure dating back to California's earliest days. More than that, we discovered that the founder of the town had selected this place for a cemetery, and for his own grave. That gave us the clues we needed to turn a liability into a wonderful asset: rebrand the cemetery as a destination! We renamed the property "Historic Union Cemetery," and built an entirely new marketing program based on its colorful history. We created a new logo, new website, new office graphics, a Facebook program, and a campaign of long-copy ads telling the stories of the fascinating people who are buried there. We orchestrated a series of historic tours that drew crowds never before experienced, and a hugely successful photo contest that promoted the park's uniqueness. Plus, we managed an ongoing PR program that repeatedly attracted all the local media and, with our help, earned ACE Award recognition by American Cemetery and Cremation magazine. *[See results top right]*

OVER THREE YEARS:

Average YOY Sales % Increase - 12%

Average YOY Case % Increase - 21%

Achieved ACE Finalist recognition
(American Cemetery Excellence)



Bakersfield's Past Meets the Future

AFTER TRAVELING THROUGHOUT THE WEST, COL. BAKER FINALLY SELECTED THE PERFECT SPOT TO SETTLE DOWN. BOTH IN THIS WORLD AND THE NEXT.



He was the grandson of another Thomas Baker who fought for independence during the Revolution. War left him with few things left to my bones. A desire for a better life led him to the town of Bakersfield, California. He was a distinguished political figure in the 1850s, seeking new opportunities in the young state of California. He moved across the plains to the Bay Area, then to Stockton, then to Vallejo. There, he purchased swampland and along the way, he met the man who would become his partner in the gold and silver mining business. Their partnership was a success, and Baker became known as "Baker's Field" and was widely regarded as a pioneer in the gold and silver mining industry. A true visionary, Col. Baker.

Historic UNION CEMETERY EST. 1872

Bakersfield's Past Meets the Future

IN 1903 BAKERSFIELD, THE WILD WEST WAS STILL ALIVE AND WELL. ALL EXCEPT FOR ITS PARTICIPANTS.



Blam blam blam! For several months, Jim McKinley and his posse were hunting for the elusive gold mine. McKinley was one of the men who helped build Bakersfield. He was a pioneer in the gold and silver mining industry. McKinley was one of the men who helped build Bakersfield. He was a pioneer in the gold and silver mining industry.

Historic UNION CEMETERY EST. 1872

Eye Street



The combined JROTC programs from Bakersfield, South and West High schools attend a Pearl Harbor Day Remembrance Ceremony in 2012 at Union Cemetery.

A tomb with a view: Cemetery contest on

Photographers invited to enter pictures taken on Union grounds

It may be a stretch to describe a cemetery as "living history." But a stroll along the grounds of the Historic Union Cemetery in east Bakersfield seems to bring to life the city's past. Pioneer names only found on street signs and in history books are engraved on marble tombstones; the remains of Bakersfield's heroes and hoodlums stretch out beneath visitors' feet.


contest is free; however, photographers will be limited to three entries. Only photographs taken on the cemetery's grounds can be entered. Entries will be judged by two methods — first by face-book likes, with photographs receiving the most number of "likes" advancing to a panel of judges. Winners will be announced in mid-June.

Four cash awards — \$250 first prize, \$150 second prize and two \$50 merit prizes — will be given in three categories: Historic Graves, featuring graves prior to 1930; Memorial Beauty, expressing the cemetery's scenic beauty; and Creative Eye, featuring artistic expression inscribed by the

Bakersfield's Past Meets the Future
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The history of Bakersfield begins right here



On these sacred grounds lie early pioneers, city founders, soldiers of the Civil War on both sides, and the man for whom our city is named.

Historic Union Cemetery is more than a memorial park. It is the storybook of the American West.

It is the chronicle of Bakersfield's emergence into a significant urban, agricultural and oil center, and of countless families who, since 1872, have forever merged their own histories with the heritage of this remarkable place.

We invite you now to tour our website. And to come and tour our unique memorial park as it continues to serve the families of Bakersfield now and well into the future.

Park Gates open Daily, 6 AM to 6 PM Office open Daily Office open Sunday 10-3, Monday-Friday 8-5, Saturdays 8-4
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