

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**DEDICATION OF NEW CHINESE ALTAR AND BURNER,  
MT. MORIAH CEMETERY**

**DEADWOOD, SD** - On Tuesday July 23, 2013, the Deadwood Historic Preservation Commission is dedicating the reconstructed Chinese burner and altar once located at Mt. Moriah Cemetery. The dedication will begin with a press conference at 9:00 a.m. at Deadwood City Hall, 102-108 Sherman Street. Immediately following the press conference, Christopher Leatherman, the principal investigator of the 2003 Chinese burner excavation will present a talk on the archaeology surrounding the burner and altar. The dedication will then move to Mt. Moriah Cemetery, located at 1 Mt. Moriah Drive. A shuttle located at Mt. Moriah Cemetery will be available to transport passengers from the cemetery gateway to the altar and burner site.

At 10:30 am, the dedication will reconvene in front of the burner. Deadwood Mayor Chuck Turbiville and Deadwood Historic Preservation Officer Kevin Kuchenbecker will officiate the dedication. Members of the Wong Family will officially dedicate the burner and altar.

## **BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE ALTAR AND BURNER PROJECT**

In 1908, representatives from Deadwood's Chinese community constructed a ceremonial burner and altar in Section Six of Mt. Moriah Cemetery. These unique cemetery features were incorporated in Chinese mortuary rituals and ancestor worship ceremonies for over twenty years. By the 1930s, the ceremonial burner and altar fell into disrepair and was eventually destroyed with the exception of the concrete pad.

Archaeologists hired by the Deadwood Historic Preservation Commission in 2003 excavated and mapped the concrete pad associated with the burner and altar. Using the archaeological data coupled with historic photographs, design professionals in 2012 developed plans for the reconstruction of the burner and altar using the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Reconstruction. The exact size and height of the burner and altar were determined based on the archaeological record, the excavated brick dimensions, and number of courses of brick in the photographs. Bricks salvaged from the demolition of the Chinese Wing Tsue building once located in Deadwood's Chinatown District were used in the construction of the new burner and altar.

If you have any further questions in regard to the Chinese altar and burner dedication, please contact the Deadwood Historic Preservation Office at (605) 578-2082 or e-mail [kevin@cityofdeadwood.com](mailto:kevin@cityofdeadwood.com).

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PDFs attached to document