



Remembrance Day,

A California Memorial Project Event

September 15, 2008

PRESS RELEASE

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September 15 – a day to honor people who died in California’s state institutions and were buried anonymously

At 10 sites across the state, family, friends, advocates, community members and state institution survivors will gather September 15, 2008 at cemeteries to honor those who died while in State Institutions for the 6th Annual Remembrance Day. Many of the more than 45,000 individuals who died in these same institutions were buried in unmarked graves. In some instances, they were interred in mass graves.

California Memorial Project

The California Memorial Project (CMP) is a collaboration of The California Network of Mental Health Clients, the Peer Self-Advocacy Units’ of Protection & Advocacy, Inc. and People First of California. The mission of our project is to honor and restore dignity to individuals that lived and died in state hospitals and developmental centers.

The project has three main goals:

- 1) Restore all cemeteries or graves where individuals from state institutions are buried
- 2) Document the history of the client and consumer movement in California
- 3) Preserve the history of individuals that lived in state institutions through collections of oral histories which tell the stories about living in an institution from a client’s perspective

Since the first California state institution opened in 1852, individuals including people with mental and developmental disabilities were taken out of the community and committed to these institutions for a variety of reasons, some of which would be considered unacceptable today.

September 15 Events

The Napa State Hospital and Stockton events will take place at 10:30 a.m., and the following sites will hold events between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.:

Agnews Cemetery
Porterville Developmental Center
Sonoma Developmental Center
East Lawn Andrews & Greilich Mortuary, Sacramento
Patton State Hospital
Ukiah Valley Cemetery

The programs include short remembrances of friends or relatives, poems, songs and news about other CMP events.

Remembrance Day Ceremonies are held annually throughout California on the third Monday of September, with the objective of "...reclaiming and healing our past by honoring our own..." Earlier this year, the CMP dedicated its first monument at Stockton.

Additional ceremonies, September 22, 2008

Scheduled Participating Sites Include:

Parkview Cemetery, Manteca Metropolitan State Hospital

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