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525 Alpine Street  
Suite 103  
Los Angeles,  
California 90012

213 - 229 - 8890

www.socialstudio.org

## Westwood Village Memorial Park

Time: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Date: Saturday, June 9, 2007

Meeting Place: 1218 Glendon Ave, Los Angeles CA 90024 (Entrance)

Cost: Free.



Led by Resident Storytellers Steve Goldstein and Joe Walker, this 90 minute Walking Tour explores Westwood Village Memorial Park. This cemetery is over 100 years old, but until 1962, no "famous" burials had taken place yet. The very small cemetery is just off Wilshire Blvd and Glendon Ave, behind high-rise office buildings and a movie theatre.

Wear a hat, walking shoes & sunscreen. Shutterbugs should bring a camera.

Many famous and infamous Los Angelenos are at Westwood Village Memorial Park including Susan Dorsey, pioneer L.A. educator and the first female Superintendent of L.A. schools. Famed historians Will & Ariel Durant are there, side by side. They died within a few weeks of each other never knowing the other had died. Ray Bradbury's widow, Maggie Bradbury, is there. She worked so her husband could write, thus making an invaluable contribution to modern American literature. Danny Sugerman was a rock fan who as a teenager got to meet and become a roadie for his favorite band, the Doors, going on to become their manager and eventual biographer.

Ernest Shoedsack and his wife, Ruth Rose, were adventurers and writers who helped create the screen legend King Kong. Two of the main characters are based on themselves. Ronald Hughes was an attorney who had the misfortune to defend one of the Manson girls, Leslie Van Houten. He was found dead in the desert many months after the trial, becoming the first of the Family's "Retaliation Murders." Audrey Neva Wilson was the mother of Beach Boys Brian, Carl and Dennis Wilson. Her memorial bench refers to her as the original Surfer Girl. Jennifer Syme was the ex-girlfriend of Keanu Reeves, and gave birth to his daughter. The baby was stillborn, and a year later Jennifer was killed in a drug related car crash near the Hollywood Bowl, coming home from a party at Marilyn Manson's house. She and her baby are buried here.

In 1962, Marilyn Monroe became the first celebrity burial here, due to the fact that two of the women who raised her, Ana Lower and Grace Goddard, are buried there. One young actress (never famous or ever in film) was murdered by her stepfather and is entombed near Marilyn Monroe, her idol. Since then, Marilyn has been joined by many other so-called "Tragic females" such as Natalie Wood, Dorothy Stratten, Minnie Riperton, Dominique Dunne, Jennifer Syme, Darbi Winters, Heather O'Roarke and Carrie Hamilton, as well as non-tragic celebrities like Donna Reed, Jim Backus and his wife, Hennie, Fanny Brice (moved here after 50 years at Home of Peace by her son-in-law, producer Ray Stark), Jack Lemmon, Walter Matthau, Billy Wilder, Carroll O'Connor, Don Knotts, Armand Hammer, Burt Lancaster, Dean Martin, Carl Wilson of the Beach Boys, Peggy Lee, James Coburn, Sammy Cahn, Buddy Rich, Nora Kaye Ross, and many others. The unmarked graves of Roy Orbison and Frank Zappa will be featured as well.

**Steve Goldstein** was born in Boston, Massachusetts, where he developed his love of cemeteries at a very early age. Moving to Southern California at the age of 18, he continued studying and began his vast collection of photographs of the graves of what he calls "The Famous, the Infamous, and the Just Plain Dead" that make up his as-yet unpublished book, "Beneath Los Angeles." The collection has become a favorite website for many over the past eight years at [www.BeneathLosAngeles.com](http://www.BeneathLosAngeles.com) and has led to Mr. Goldstein being frequently interviewed, including the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Orange County Register*, KABC AM Radio, NPR and many other media venues.

**Joe Walker** is a Crime Analyst with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and has been with the department since 1986. In that capacity, he has worked numerous patrol stations and special unit assignments. In the 1990's, he assisted best selling author James Ellroy, (L.A. Confidential, Black Dahlia) in researching Ellroy's mother's unsolved 1958 murder. His most recent work was as a contributing writer to the five volume series, "Famous American Crimes and Trials" in which he wrote about the 1942 "Sleepy Lagoon" murders in Los Angeles and the subsequent "Zoot Suit Riots" and their long lasting effect on race and police relations in Los Angeles. In 2005, he was recognized by the L.A. Firefighters Museum for his research leading to the discovery that the first fireman killed in the line of duty was also the first African-American fireman in the department's history. The tragic victim lay an unmarked grave at Evergreen Cemetery for over 100 years until a ceremony in which the Stentorians, the Black firefighters fraternal organization, put a new marker on his final resting place.