

HOURS OF OPERATION

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YESTERDAY'S NEWS

Yesterday's News will be an occasional feature where we share, word for word, historic newspaper articles pertaining to The Homewood Cemetery or the people therein.

From The Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph, November 12, 1936

PHYSICIAN, HALE AT 74, ARRANGES FOR OWN BURIAL

Tomb of Arab Type Built, Epitaph Written

A 74-year-old Pittsburgh physician, happy, healthy and still practicing his profession, has made virtually all arrangements for his own burial, though he expects to live for a number of years.

Dr. Robert Andrew Woods...who has not been sick for 30 years and is the picture of health, long since has written his own epitaph, chosen his casket and engaged an undertaker, who has been given instructions for his burial.

...Dr. Woods' epitaph, along with that of his wife, is inscribed on a granite monument which weighs over 17 tons and has been on the family lot in the cemetery more than a year. Bronze medallions of the two are inserted in the side of the monument. The epitaphs contain 1,005 letters, probably the longest of any in the cemetery.

Dr. Woods' epitaph is a brief biography of his life...It reads in part: **"He leaves no posterity, he was the last of his family. He was a member of no learned societies, was identified with no political party, no church, a director of no corporation, a trustee of no institution, a member of no hospital staff or organized charity...He aspired to**

no office or political position. He gave all his time to his profession and the sick. Died..."

Carved underneath is Mrs. Woods' epitaph.

...He conceived the idea of his own tomb during a visit to Memphis, Egypt, where he saw one in ancient ruins. Later he made wooden models of the cemetery lot, monument and tomb.

One of the reasons he wrote the epitaph and personally took charge of the other unusual arrangements

is because he has no relatives left, he explains.

He visits the cemetery almost daily in pleasant weather. Smiling, he said:

"Why that's where most of my friends are."

[Dr. Robert Woods died in 1953 at age 91. He is at rest with his wife in lot 46, Section 14, under the monument he designed.]

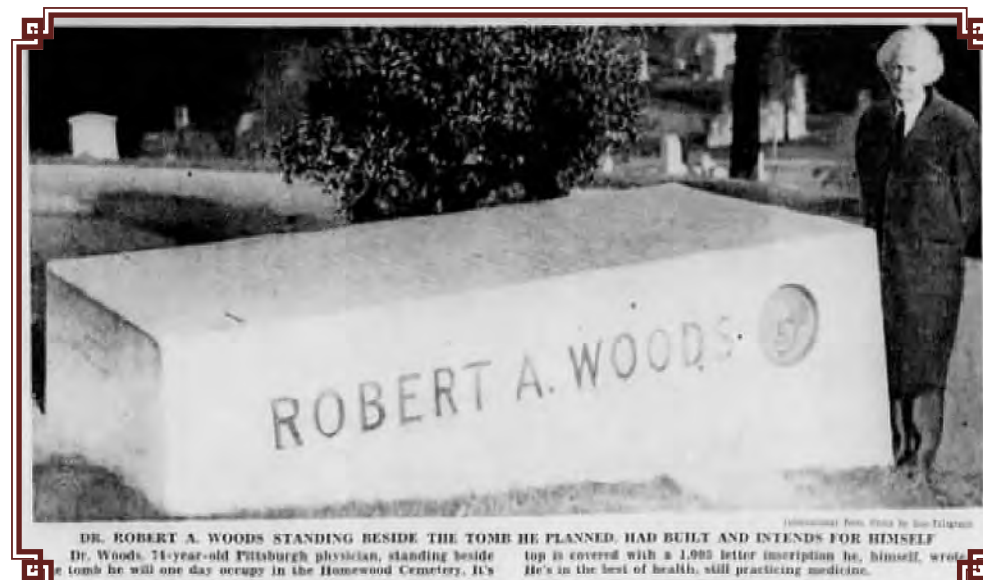
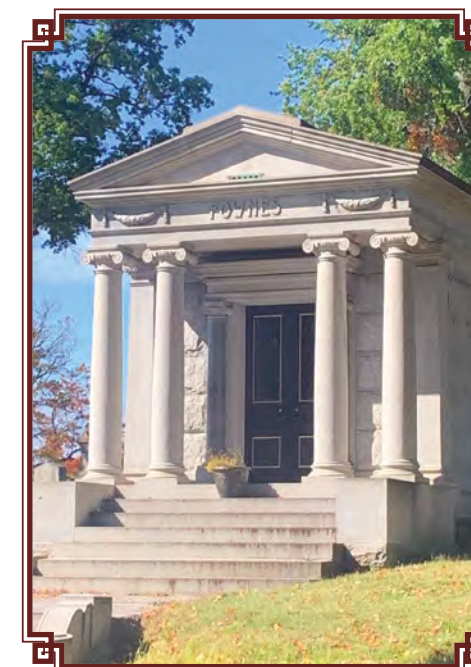


Photo of Dr. Woods and his monument (Sec. 14, lot 46) from original article.

WHO'S CARRIE? THE NAME BEHIND THE CARRIE BLAST FURNACES

IT DIDN'T MATTER if they were there for a guided tour, a class in aluminum casting, a blacksmithing festival, or a graffiti workshop. The top question from visitors at the Carrie Blast Furnaces National Historic Landmark had always been, "Who's Carrie?" That mystery has been solved, and The Homewood Cemetery factors into the answer.

In 1884 when the Carrie Furnaces roared to life, it was tradition to name these huge machines after a woman, usually a member of the business owner's family. Brothers William C. and Henry Clay Fownes were in their 20's when they founded the Carrie Furnace Company, one of several successful businesses owned by their family. When the brothers sold the Carrie Furnace Company to Andrew Carnegie in 1898, Henry retired from industry to focus on golf, which was a relatively new sport in America. In 1904, Henry Fownes opened the Oakmont Country Club, featuring the now-legendary 18-hole golf course of his own design. In the early 1880s, the



The Fownes family mausoleum, Section 7.

Fownes family purchased four adjacent lots in Section 7 of The Homewood Cemetery and erected one of the first, private family mausoleums in the Cemetery. The prominence of the family, as well as records maintained by The Homewood Cemetery in connection with their mausoleum, has ensured the Fownes family tree has been well documented. At the time

the Carrie Furnace Company was named, no Carrie or Caroline Fownes appeared on their family tree.

Earlier this year, Ron Baraff, director of historic resources and facilities at Rivers of Steel, was compiling information on the first years of the furnaces when he came across an article in the *Pittsburgh Daily Post* entitled, "The New Rankin Station Furnace." The article was an account of public ceremonies surrounding the opening of the new furnaces, which included the lighting of the furnaces' fires by, "Miss Carrie Clark." Carrie was, indeed, part of the Fownes family; her father was William Clark, president and manager of The Carrie Furnace Co., and uncle of W.C. and H.C. Fownes.

Caroline Clark was born in 1863. She studied at both Vassar Preparatory School and later at Vassar College. Within two years of lighting the furnaces that bear her name, she married Bartlett Arkell of New York. She was twenty-five years old at the time of her death in 1888 and was survived by her husband and their 26-month-old son.

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One of the two enormous furnaces at the Carrie Blast Furnaces
(Wikimedia Commons courtesy of Adam Jones, PhD., Kelowna, BC, Canada).

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The Homewood Cemetery Historical Fund is a Section 501(c)(3) charitable organization established July 11, 1989 promoting the appreciation and preservation of the cultural, historical and natural resources of The Homewood Cemetery. Contributions made by individuals, corporations, or foundations to the Fund are tax deductible according to law.

The Homewood Cemetery Historical Fund
Phone: 412-421-1822 • Fax: 412-421-1112
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A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Dear Friends,

As we come to the close of another year, we take this moment to express our deepest gratitude to you for your essential and continual support of The Homewood Cemetery Historical Fund. Although the past few years have presented a multitude of challenges for all, we have been fortunate to flourish through the generosity of our friends, neighbors, and the dedicated efforts of several local organization.

It is with this generous support that we are able to accomplish the critical repairs and improvements throughout the last year, including the repair of our administration office roof. Our vast grounds require a dedicated preservation effort to maintain the historic buildings, infrastructure, tree canopy and roadways for generations to enjoy.

Our mission at The Homewood Cemetery is to provide a beautiful, respectful resting place for those who

have gone before us, while serving as a living tribute to generations past. The Homewood Cemetery Historical Fund is a 501 (c)(3) certified organization, specifically developed for the preservation, conservation and restoration of our historical buildings, grounds and monuments. We graciously thank you for your enduring commitment and generosity which enables us to continue these vital preservation efforts.

Sincerely,

Mary M. Unkovic

Mary M. Unkovic

November 2023



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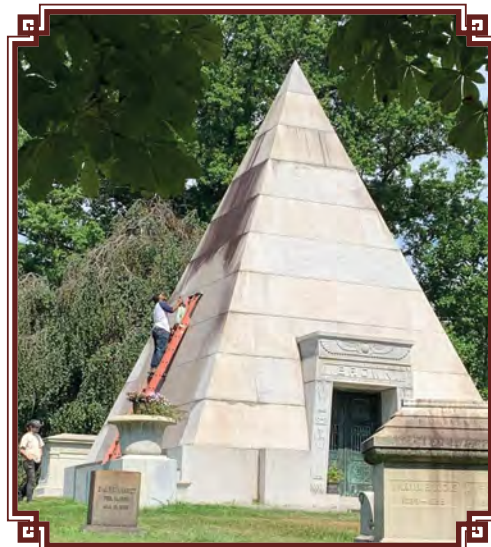
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IN MEMORY OF...

Gail
by Asia Carpet & Decorating Co.
Hermann Frederick & Anna Katherina Bier
by Patrick J. Bier
Henry Brown
by Sang Hui Brown
Joseph & Ida Corriols
by Maria & Larry Cain
The John & James Reed Families
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by William & Deborah Getkin
The Huber & Stadtlander Families
by Rev. Wm. Huber & Barbara Stadtlander Huber
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by Mr. & Mrs. Charles C. Kenney
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Charles F. Arrott
by David G. McCreery
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by William Mitchell, Jr.
Doug Chambers & Herb Eyman
by Walter F. Rutkowski
Doolittle & McGinnis Families
by Patricia D. Staley
Dr. Cheng Dong Young
by Susan Young

JUST LIKE NEW: POWERWASHING "THE PYRAMID"



Workers clean the Brown family
pyramid, Section 14.

THE BROWN family mausoleum in Section 14 has been the unofficial landmark of The Homewood Cemetery since its construction in the first years of the 20th century. "The Pyramid" dominates the landscape, rising 35 feet into unencumbered sky.

Over 100 years after its construction, it remains the largest private mausoleum within The Homewood Cemetery.

This summer, the grounds crew of The Homewood Cemetery cleaned The Pyramid which, in recent years, had accumulated a dark coating of dirt and moss. A rotation of four to five crew members using a powerwasher was required to clean the historic structure. Most of the work was done from the ground or using a ladder. To safely reach the top, the Cemetery rented a 35-foot boom lift.

Cemetery Operations Manager Tamara Feigelstein noted that, after being cleaned, "the brightness of [The Pyramid] is striking!" Feigelstein credited The Homewood Cemetery Historical Fund for its part in funding the project and a similar effort: the cleaning of the Dr. Robert Woods

monument, another Cemetery landmark also in Section 14 [See "Yesterday's News," page 8, of this publication].



Coal magnate W. Harry Brown and family visiting
Egypt. Archives of the Homewood Cemetery.

INDIVIDUAL GIFTS

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Piano Day...continued from page 3



Pianist Max Leake playing adjacent to the grave of Erroll Garner in Section 12-2.

Section 12-2, where Garner and his family are at rest, is a Who's Who of mid to late 20th-century Black Pittsburgh. Purchases of multiple lots by Robert and Jessie Vann, the married couple who served as editors for *The Pittsburgh Courier*, resulted in a large grouping of influential *Pittsburgh Courier* staff members, including Percival Prattis, Daisy Lampkin, Bill Nunn, Sr., Bill Nunn, Jr., and photographer Teenie Harris, most of

whom are at rest directly across from the Vann's private mausoleum in Section 21. Fellow jazz pianist Walt Harper is also a permanent resident of Section 12-2, while Charlotte Enty Catlin, teacher of pianist/composer Billy Strayhorn and pianist in her own right, is at rest nearby in Section 27.

Despite what Stumpf felt was a lack of notice, an impressive crowd showed up for a free concert in this most unusual setting. Pianists Joe DeFazio and Max Leake played a well-received set of pieces by or associated with both Garner and Walt Harper. The final piece, Leake's take on "Misty," has received hundreds of views on Facebook. From The Homewood Cemetery, the PianoDay team transported the piano back uphill and over to Schenley Plaza in Oakland, where it was set up under

the Plaza's massive tent for three hours of performances.

Stumpf describes Pittsburgh as a city with a "strong musical heritage especially as it applies to the piano," citing other influential pianists, such as Johnny Costa, Mary Lou Williams, Earl Wild, Eunice Norton, Dodo Marmarosa, Earl "Fatha" Hines, and Ahmad Jamal. "I have been wanting to do something for Erroll Garner for years, but this is the first time we've been able to make it so intimate."

"The people in attendance loved it," Stumpf said, with well-earned satisfaction. "It was a reverent, thoughtful, musical moment. There is nothing pretentious about our efforts. We simply want to lift up the piano and let its beauty steal the show."



Erroll Garner's grave, Section 12-2, Lot 19E.

Carrie...continued from page 1

Carrie is at rest with her family in a small, tasteful mausoleum in Section 14 of The Homewood Cemetery despite the fact her death occurred 2 years before lots in Section 14 were available for purchase. Cemetery records show both she and her father, who had died shortly after the Carrie Furnaces opened in 1884, were temporarily placed in the Fownes family mausoleum, to be relocated upon completion of the Clark family mausoleum in 1892.

Little beyond these basic facts is known about Carrie and, to date, no photograph or any other image of her has been found.

Rivers of Steel has produced several insightful blog posts focused on her times and what her life might have been like. These are available on their website, <http://riversofsteel.com>.

The Homewood Cemetery looks forward to learning more about this young woman whose identity has finally caught up with her name.



The Clark family mausoleum, Section 14.

PIANODAY PITTSBURGH AT THE HOMEWOOD CEMETERY



Portrait of Erroll Garner, New York, N.Y., c1947, photographer William P. Gottlieb, Library of Congress via Wikimedia Commons.

SECTION 12-2 of The Homewood Cemetery was the first stop on the itinerary of PianoDay Pittsburgh, 2023. In honor of one of the piano greats of jazz, Erroll Garner (Lot 19E, Section 12-2) a Shigeru Kawai grand piano was set up in the road, adjacent to the Garner family lot. The incongruous sight of a concert grand piano being played outdoors in a cemetery drew a large crowd who, if they came for the novelty, stayed for a program of songs by both Garner and another Pittsburgh jazz legend, Walt Harper (Lot 161 W 1/2, Section 12-2).

PianoDay Pittsburgh is the brainchild of local piano technician Peter Stumpf. Stumpf, who is a pianist himself as well as composer, came up with the idea for PianoDay in 2015. "Between 2015 and 2018 I had two Steinway-owned concert grand pianos at my facility. They were reserved for artists who would come to town so that a fine instrument would be available for them, but I was

free to use the pianos for other events as well. I liked the idea of putting them in the hands of the public and the finest musicians of Pittsburgh." In the past eight years, PianoDay has partnered with such local celebrities as Franco Harris, Roger Humphries, Ricky Manning, as well as many other local artists.

"We have put pianos inside the garden in Heinz Hall, in Market

Square and Grandview Park," Stumpf explained, but "Homewood was the first cemetery we ever visited." Stumpf had previously paid his respects at Garner's grave but, upon deciding to make the Cemetery a PianoDay venue, he returned to figure out the logistics. While Garner's resting place is close to a road in the cemetery, the road itself is on a slight hill. Having trusted the day's piano transport to professional movers, however, putting the approximately 900-pound instrument into place went smoothly.

Born in Pittsburgh's Hill District in 1921, Erroll Garner was a musical prodigy. He started playing piano when he was three years old and was a regular performer on both KDKA radio and Allegheny riverboats, by age 11. Garner was also a prolific composer, writing hundreds of songs despite never having learned to read music. His best-known composition, the jazz standard, "Misty," consistently tops lists of jazz's most recorded, most influential, and best-selling works. A live recording of a 1955 performance of Garner's trio, released as *Concert by the Sea*, is considered a masterpiece and was recently remastered and rereleased. Garner died of lung cancer, arguably at the height of his career, in 1977.

continued on page 6

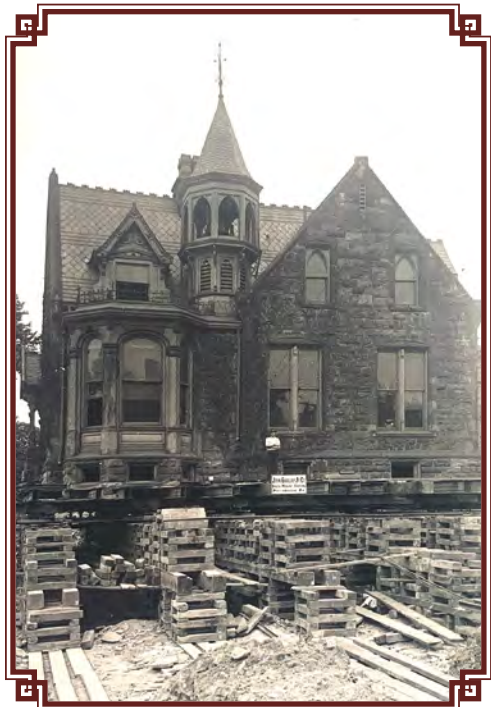


Joe DeFazio at the piano and Roger Dannenberg on the trumpet playing "Here's That Rainy Day" Section 12-2, The Homewood Cemetery.

100 YEARS OF THE HOMEWOOD CEMETERY OFFICE, CHAPEL, AND GATEHOUSE COMPLEX

In 1922, The Homewood Cemetery announced its intention to “build a chapel office building and receiving vault facing Dallas Avenue and near the entrance to the cemetery... at a cost exceeding \$200,000 [over \$3.5 million in 2023]” (*Pittsburgh Post*, April 7, 1922). Pittsburgh architect Albert H. Spahr would design this building, as well as a matching gate and gatehouse. The buildings opened with a dedicatory service in the Chapel on October 9, 1923.

The Cemetery’s first office had been a repurposed 18th century log cabin, a structure included in the purchase of 175 acres of land by the as-yet unnamed Cemetery Corporation from the estate of Judge William Wilkins in 1878. The humble cabin was razed in 1886 and replaced by a gabled and turreted stone building, designed by architect J.T. Steen. That house served as both Cemetery office and residence of the Superintendent.



1886 Office building being moved to its present location, c1922.
Archives of The Homewood Cemetery.

By 1900, Steen’s Victorian design was terribly out of date. 20th century tastes were different, as was the sort of work a modern office needed to accommodate.



Albert H. Spahr, architect, 1915.
Wikimedia Commons.

In 1922 the Cemetery engaged the John Eichleay Jr. Company to relocate the old office to make way for the new, updated complex. Specialists in, as stated in their letterhead, “house raising and moving,” Eichleay moved the old office building to the corner of Dallas and Aylesboro Avenues, directly across the street from its original location. It remains today as a private residence.

Albert H. Spahr, who would gain fame as a favorite architect of Detroit’s Grosse Pointe

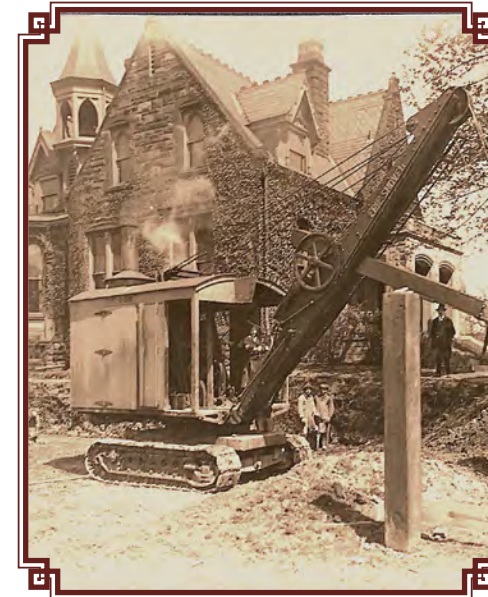
millionaires, created an assembly of buildings for the Cemetery that were large enough to impress but inviting enough to charm. The 1920s Tudor Gothic style he chose, built here with sunny, bright sandstone, has a fairytale feel that was a fitting entrance to the Cemetery’s green, manicured grounds. The wrought iron gate at the Cemetery’s entrance was created by legendary iron craftsman Samuel Yellin, who also fabricated the interior and exterior ironwork throughout all three of Spahr’s buildings.

With these buildings, The Homewood Cemetery not only updated their office but expanded their services. The addition of a chapel offered an elegant indoor space for funerals. Below the Chapel a crematory, placed within a well-appointed waiting room, provided a modern alternative to traditional burial. The lower level of the Chapel also offered a columbarium room for placement of ashes, and a mausoleum wing.

A full-page love-letter of sorts in the October 1925 issue of *Charette; Journal of the Pittsburgh Architectural Club* spoke to the success of the Cemetery’s plan. Titled, “An



Office building today



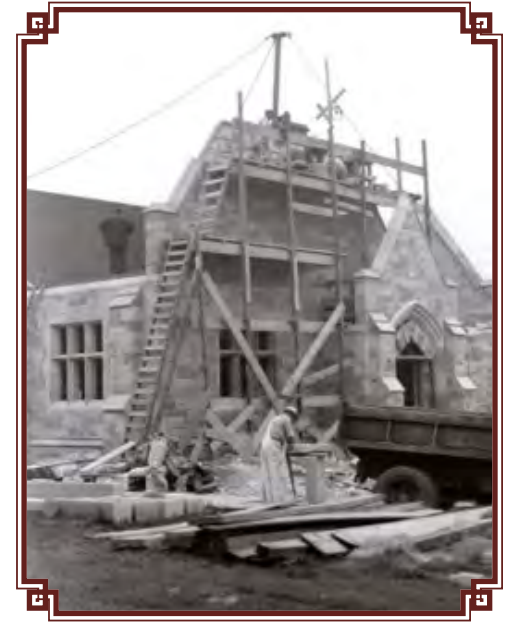
Steam shovel used to relocate the 1886 office building, c1922.
Archives of The Homewood Cemetery.

Appreciation,” an anonymous letter writer waxed poetic about the new Office, Chapel, Gate, and Gate House complex: “One cannot help being deeply, yea, reverently, impressed with the ensemble as he approaches it from Aylesboro Avenue and sees the chapel with its square tower sitting snugly on top of the hill, the Administration Building cuddling up to its side and the trees and shrubs adding their touch to implant them in the earth, and the whole set back in its proper perspective by the boundary walls and railings and the Entrance Gates and Gate Lodge.”

The *Pittsburgh Post* described the complex as “one of the finest and most complete administration, chapel and crematory buildings in the country,” [*Pittsburgh Post*, October 7, 1923].

As early as 1943, the Cemetery wished to update and enlarge their crematory facilities but wartime restrictions on construction materials pushed those plans into 1950. Architect Charles McGill designed a long, one-story wing off the north side of the Chapel, that accommodated a state-of-the-art cremation facility as well as a lovely, light-filled family room for those attending cremation services. McGill’s design is a seamless match to the existing buildings, both inside and out.

Currently, restoration work on the roof and ceilings of the Administration building is underway, funded by generous grants from local foundations. These buildings, now landmarks, will enter their second century continuing to welcome and ready to serve.



Construction of the 1950 addition to the 1923 Chapel.
Archives of The Homewood Cemetery.



Scaffolding erected during this year’s restoration work.



The chapel tower today with 1950 addition on its right.



Chapel doors, featuring ironwork by Samuel Yellin.