



America's Newspapers

Paper: THE SEATTLE TIMES

**Title: RESIDENT SORRY FOR MARRING CEMETERY
HEADSTONES DAMAGED IN BID TO REMOVE WEEDS**

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A man who had an overgrown **cemetary** on Beacon Hill bulldozed in an effort to spruce it up has apologized for his actions, saying it's time to stop bickering and move forward with plans to restore the property

"I am sorry," Don Kipper said in a formal apology for the 1987 bulldozing of the Elysian Fields **Cemetery**. "I apologize for, maybe, some improper actions I took."

The two-acre pioneer **cemetary** overlooking the Duwamish River Valley had gone largely untended for more than 40 years until Kipper, a neighbor, became interested in removing weeds and vegetation. But when he used a bulldozer to do that, he chipped and moved the **cemetary's** headstones, sparking cries of outrage.

"I have never seen anything like it. It was devastation," said the executive director of the state **Cemetery** Board, Paul Elvig, who toured the **cemetary** after the bulldozing. Kipper said later he didn't mean to disturb any headstones but there was no other way to get at the underbrush.

Some 200 early settlers are believed to be buried at the **cemetary**, which was dedicated in 1895 at 23rd Avenue South and South Graham Street and formerly was known as the **Comet Lodge Cemetery**. The most recent burial took place in the 1930s.

Kipper apologized at a meeting last week of the Elysian Fields **Cemetery** Board, a group of people including Kipper, other neighbors and descendants of people buried at the **cemetary** who intend to raise money and develop restoration plans. But their aim has been slowed to some extent by infighting and differences of opinion. Kipper acknowledged that at this point, the board has no money.

The board is planning a community meeting March 9 at a still undecided location to solicit support for the restoration. On April 15, in honor of Arbor Day, festivities, including a tree-planting ceremony and speeches, are planned to boost the effort.

The Rev. Dr. William Cate, executive director of the Church Council of Greater Seattle and a **cemetary** board member, said he'd known Kipper and became involved in the effort to restore the property partly because of an interest in history. Kipper's apology came after Cate said it is time to put animosities aside and move forward.

Caption:

DON KIPPER: APOLOGY FOR 'IMPROPER ACTIONS'

Caption:

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