

SINCE 1841

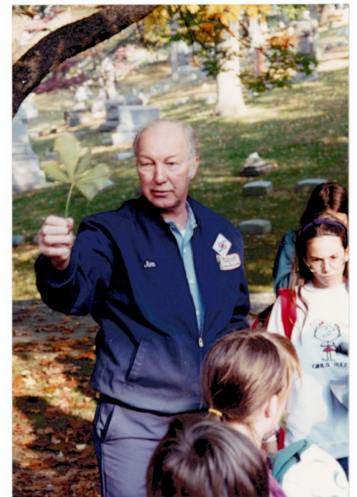
WOODLAND

HISTORIC CEMETERY & ARBORETUM

Richard Blandy

World Champion Pole Sitter

A few weeks ago we gave you the story of "Buckeye Dixie" Blandy, the World Champion Pole Sitter. We were contacted by several people who loved the story of this larger-than-life character with a big personality and smile to match. Jim Sandegren (pictured right), former Director of Horticulture at Woodland from 1988 until 2003, sent an email to Angie Hoschouer, Manager of Development and Marketing, and shared an interesting story of how Mr. Blandy received his uniquely engraved headstone.



"Dale Huffman and I got together," said Jim, "and arranged for the headstone that marks the grave now. His family had refused to provide a marker so Dale and I prevailed upon the cemetery management and the engraver to provide the modest marker that adorns Mr. Blandy's grave."

In an email to Mr. Huffman, Jim wrote, "The Dixie Blandy's of the world will probably always have to die to receive any recognition for their remarkable stunts."

Jim also loves poetry and would often write poems about Woodland - its beauty, and residents. He wrote a poem for Richard Blandy and we hope you enjoy it as much as we do. Thank you Jim!

Dixie Blandy **By Jim Sandegren**

Beneath the grass his soul shall lie and none shall know him there.
His earthly grave betrays no mark or stone to bear his name.
The distant drums to which he marched are silent everywhere
And only ghosts can greet him now acknowledging his fame.

The lofty view that crowned each day appeared for no one new.
The cold and rain he came to know could leave a numbing feel.
While scorn would judge and doubt the drive that came for very few.
And all the while he'd sit and smile with visions that were real.

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Though men may point and gestures give expressing as they may
Their narrow worlds of toil and sweat competing one and all.
But from his perch above the fray he heeded night and day
With no concern or feeble smile that he might fade or fall.

Throughout this land from far and wide they came with spirits high
To see his place of majesty found high above the realm
And whisper words of mock surprise at pigeons as they fly
Above his place and past his eyes so high above the elm.

The Dixie Blandys of this world will find no fame or gold
And none will speak their credit as our simple world goes round.
But fame's unspoken countenance will quietly unfold
The simple truth, their great escape so high above the ground.

Richard Blandy was born in 1902 and raised in Vieux Carre, Louisiana. He was a Creole, five feet, four inches tall, and generally maintained a weight of 150 pounds. Various accounts recall his experience as a circus worker, boxer, house painter, Merchant Marine, riveter, steeplejack, flagpole painter and salesman.

Richard's first flagpole sitting experience was in 1929 when he answered a classified ad by Goodrich Rubber Company and Texaco, earning \$600 for climbing a spire atop a new service station in Tampa, Florida.

By 1933, he claimed title as champion flagpole sitter during 77 days and nights at the Chicago World's Fair.

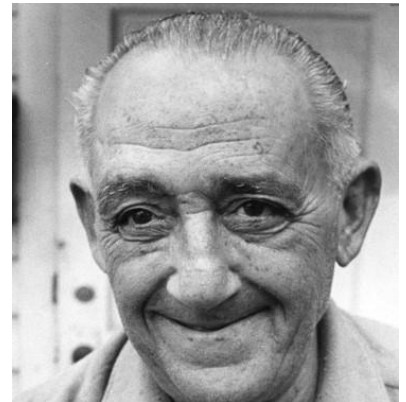
In 1954, he set a flagpole standing record after 10 days at the Michigan State Fair.

In 1960, he established a bicycle record for 13 days and nights atop a 50-foot pole in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

In 1964, Richard broke his own 1933 sitting record on the Steel Pier in Atlantic City, New Jersey after 78 days.

And in 1965, he had proclaimed the world title at Grona Lund Amusement Park in Stockholm, Sweden after sitting 125 days in a chair 200 feet above the ground. During his stay he drank 92 bottles of whiskey and smoked 3 packs of cigarettes a day.

On May 6, 1974, Richard Blandy died at 72 years of age when a flagpole collapsed in Harvey, Illinois at the Dixie Square Mall. He is located in Section 201 Lot 271 at Woodland.



Blandy had six wives, having been divorced three times and widowed three times. He was known to meet his younger wives through telephone conversations with fans on the ground during his many flagpole sitting exhibitions.

Johnny Carson interviewed him while he was sitting on a 155 foot pole for the Tonight Show in the mid-1960s.

As others broke his records, he dismissed their attempts since they had built elaborate sitting platforms, while he continued to use a small seat as his primary mode of sitting.

Blandy made his winter home in Dayton, Ohio, for over 60 years, bartending to make ends meet. Known as "Dixie-on-the-Ball" and "Buckeye Dixie", he wanted his epitaph, to read: "The World Super Champion Flagpole Sitter and a good American."



125 days straight at Grona Lund Amusement Park in Stockholm, Sweden



A young lady talks to Dixie on the telephone in 1955



Buckeye Dixie pole sits on a bicycle



Richard (Buckeye Dixie) Blandy
1903 - 1974
Here Lies Buckeye Dixie Blandy
World Champion Pole Sitter

Around the Cemetery in 80 Tours

Yes, we have over 80 tours on the calendar so far and many more are coming!



7th at 10:00 a.m.
Historic Tour

7th at 6:30 p.m.
Sports Legends Tour

11th at 11:00 a.m.
Outdoor Mausoleums Tour

14th at 12:00 p.m.
Military Tour

15th at 10:00 a.m.
Arboretum Tree Tour

15th at 6:30 p.m.
Cemetery Symbols Tour

16th at 10:00 a.m.
Luminaries of Dayton Tour

18th at 10:00 a.m.
Street Names of Dayton
Tour

23rd at 6:30 p.m.
Luminaries of Dayton Tour

2nd at 2:00 p.m.
History, Mystery, Mayhem,
and Murder Tour

4th at 10:00 a.m.
Military Tour

7th at 6:30 p.m.
Dayton's Walk of Fame Tour

9th at 10:00 a.m.
Women of Woodland Tour

13th at 10:00 a.m.
Arboretum Tree Tour

16th at 10:00 a.m.
Historic Tour

20th at 6:30 p.m.
Cemetery Symbols Tour

23rd at 6:30 p.m.
Luminaries of Dayton Tour

27th at 10:00 a.m.
Street Names of Dayton
Tour

8th at 6:30 p.m.
History, Mystery, Mayhem,
and Murder Tour

11th at 6:30 p.m.
Luminaries of Dayton Tour

13th at 10:00 a.m.
Women of Woodland Tour

17th at 10:00 a.m.
Arboretum Tree Tour

23rd at 6:30 p.m.
History, Mystery, Mayhem,
and Murder Tour

24th at 6:30 p.m.
Dayton's Walk of Fame Tour

This is just a sampling of
tours scheduled from now
through November. Click on
the link
below to find all of the
available tours and to
register yourself
and your friends.

Click here: [Guided walking tours are now available and registration is open for all tours and events.](#)

THANK YOU for supporting us through our 180th Anniversary!



We hope you will continue to support the Woodland Arboretum Foundation as we move through 2022. Support of the Chapel restoration and preservation project is our most critical need as you will soon see the outside of the Chapel and Administration Building receiving new sandstone pieces and eroding and disintegrating elements replaced. Once the stonework is complete, the beloved Tiffany windows will return and be put back in place. The Tiffany mosaic floor will be restored and the beautiful interior woodwork will also receive a facelift. We are hopeful to open the doors to the public once again in late 2022.

Please consider making a first time donation or an annual donation to the Chapel Fund. Donate on our secure website by clicking below or click on the check to receive a donation form to mail in.

**Click Here
Donate Now**



[Click here](#) to link your Kroger PlusCard to Woodland Cemetery and Arboretum's charitable account. It's an easy way to support us!

Our NPO Number is: JJ851

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