

Historic Lawson Stonework Gets Much-Needed Attention

Beautiful stone walls and bridges were built by Victor and Jessie Lawson all over the grounds of Green Lake Conference Center in the 1800s. The testament to their meticulous work is that over 100 years later, the stonework is still here, influencing the feel and charm of the property. However, many stones are loose and some have pulled away from their structures. They don't look as nice as they could, and some areas are unsafe due to deterioration.

In fall of 2021 local resident Jim Weigert worked with our Maintenance Director Dan Kunde to reset and mortar many stones that were in disrepair. The wall that lines the entrance to the tennis courts had developed a crevice caused by years of snow and salt. Jim filled the crevice with hundreds of pounds of concrete mix (pictures below).



They also repaired a large hole in a wall that spilled rocks into the Greenhouse parking lot. The picture at right shows the midpoint in the repair. The hole had been pushed by many seasons of freeze and thaw cycles and exposed the ground beneath the road surface. Holding back the road surface is an important job as it keeps the road from collapsing and provides a suitable place for staff to park their cars. A greater cave-in of the wall could be catastrophic to the greenhouse parking lot, Spurgeon Chapel, and the Avenue of Flags.



Repairs were made to the walls on the east side of Lawson Drive by the Combination Barn as you enter the front gates (left); at the base of the brick pillars at the front gates; and at the retaining wall by the steps to Bruce Kinney.

Jim's work was thorough and careful. He tried different mixtures of aggregate and color additives, looking for just the right combination.

Stones in many other areas need attention. Jim's has a gift for teaching that will hopefully facilitate the teaching of this important skill to others – staff and volunteer groups alike -- so that our miles of stone structures can be enjoyed for another 100 years! Cost to repair varies from \$1,000-\$100,000 depending on how much work is being done and what the paid to volunteer ratio is.