



A Place of Remembrance

Clostered among the trees of the Redwood Grove next to the McCaffrey Center Apartments is an unusual sculpture, its significance a mystery to many of the Pacific community.

The idea to commission a sculpture was first conceived by members of the Interfaith Council after several unexpected deaths in the Pacific community over a period of a couple of years. The Interfaith Council recognized a need for a memorial on campus to honor these individuals.

“We needed a place on campus that had no religious connection,” says Charlene Wilson ’01, ’07 of Pacific’s Interfaith Council. They sought to establish a sacred space that would be accessible to all members of the Pacific community, regardless of their faith tradition.

The Möbius strip, discovered independently in 1858 by German mathematicians August Ferdinand Möbius and Johann Benedict Listing, is a surface that folds onto itself to create a never-ending, three-dimensional surface.

The idea for the sculpture was the brainchild of artist Dennis Patton, who was commissioned by the Interfaith Council with

funding from Morris Chapel. Patton, who has created other works throughout the region, such as “Sir Francis Drake” in Marin County and “Tamalpais” in Larkspur, used a corrosion-resistant steel for the 16-foot structure. It was constructed off-site using a technique called the roller-coaster method.

In choosing the location in the Redwood Grove, Wilson and the Interfaith Council cited its centrality on campus, the connection of redwoods with the state of California and the symbolic nature of trees in various sacred traditions.

In September 2002, Joy Preisser, then Pacific’s interfaith chaplain, along with leaders of the Interfaith Council, held a dedication of the Möbius strip. Members and leaders of student faith groups on campus attended, each contributing from their unique faith traditions. The ceremony ended with a procession through the center of the piece.

The Möbius strip, an unending loop with a shape evoking a candle’s flame, stands as a fitting memorial — an eternal flame — to honor the memory of Pacific community members who have passed away.