

# CONCERNED CITIZENS FOR WASHINGTON CEMETERY CARE, INC. and WASHINGTON CEMETERY HISTORIC TRUST

Vol. 21, No. 1

"Heirs Who Care"

February 1997

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## Cameron Foundation Contributes to Monument Restoration Project

Good news! Just after Christmas, we received \$4,000 from the **Harry S. and Isabel C. Cameron Foundation**, which will cover restoration of a dozen more monuments in Phase 3B. **THANK YOU!** We have also just learned that **Randalls Food Markets** will contribute to this project through their *Good Neighbor Program*. The Washington Cemetery Historic Trust number is **2810**. See page 4 for details.

However, we will need help from a lot more individuals and foundations to finish the job. If you can help in any way, including assisting in fund-raising efforts, such as telephoning or writing letters, please contact **Lloyd Shenberger**.

The progress is easy to see -- every time you visit the cemetery, more monuments have been straightened and cleaned. **The Monument Company** has just restored and secured 18 more headstones, including new foundations, repair, and cleaning, for \$5,450 or an average of \$303 each.

Newly restored headstones in Section A are: Nancy J. **Underwood** (1873-1901), Charles **Herrmann** (1849-1899), Mina **Herrmann** (1860-1914), Edgar **Williams** (1891-1894), Mary C. **Heath** (1842-1906), Clarence E. **Heath** (1872-1919), Rose **Heath** (1884-1916), Arthur William **Heath** (1906-1906), Edward C. **Blind** (1869-1915), Minna L. **Blind** (1882-1902), Donnie Fenwick **Floyd** (1901-1902), Frances **Schrane** (1847-1901) & son August (d.1951) & daughter Lena **Hill** (d.1954).

Section B: **Order of Railway Conductors** central monument, J. S. **Hansard** (1865-1903). Section C: Johanna **Osterman** (1861-1925), Friderike (*sic*) **Heinze** (1819-1899). Section F: Myrtle **Taylor Turner** (1881-1935), Sophie **Finn** (1828-1901).

## Strangers' Rest Marking Project

We set 56 markers in concrete in November, which brings us to about 215 headstones and 550 markers now located in Strangers' Rest (Section H only). We applied high-tech to this process on December 7, 1996, when Joe Austin of **Earth Measurement Corp.** volunteered his equipment and his crew (normally \$1800/day), using ground penetrating radar and conductivity meters to identify gravesites on the southern and eastern edges of Strangers' Rest.

Now we need for you to come out on the work days and probe the areas he found to locate the numbered markers; then do the necessary research to order the metal nameplates. If this process is successful and if we can raise the money, we may consider hiring Earth Measurement Corp. to survey and map all gravesites in the one-acre Strangers' Rest area in Section H at a cost of about \$7,000. Please contact **Bernice Mistrot** if you can help, either in the field, in the library, or at the bank.

## Maintenance Report

Glenwood has been doing a great job for us and the cemetery looks better than ever! Even the unused area at the back is nicely mowed. Now turning our attention to security: Connecting the two cemeteries with a road at the south end of Section D would give Glenwood's security service easy access to Washington also. Regular patrols might be possible for a nominal charge. However, such a road could cost as much as \$50,000. That's a lot of money, but if it helps to significantly reduce vandalism damage like we had in 1994 (which we're still paying for), then it may be worth it. The CCWCC Board, WCHT Trustees, and Glenwood's Board are all exploring this idea. Stay tuned for further details.

## Clements' Corner

**Strangers' Rest, Lot F-84 (SR-X166): Catherine Leal (full name: Calletana Torres De Leal)**

**Strangers' Rest, Section H (SR-X402): José Leal**

**Strangers' Rest, Section H (SR-X404): José V. Ortíz**

*Prepared with assistance from Guadalupe and Frances Leal Muñoz, son-in-law and daughter of Calletana Torres De Leal.*

Calletana **Torres** was born 6 August 1892 in the village of Matehuala in the state of San Luis Potosi, Mexico, the daughter of Jesus Torres and his wife Martina **Ramírez** de Torres. The information on her early life is very sketchy, but that is not unusual, considering the times and circumstances.

She was reared in the same town, and as a young woman, married José **Leal**, shortly before the 1910 Mexican Revolution broke out. As violence and terror spread throughout the nation, many Mexican citizens sought safety cross the border. José and Calletana joined the flood of refugees who fled to the U.S.A., arriving in this country in 1922.

José was a carpenter and house builder. He readily found work, so they settled down here in Houston in 1930, becoming faithful parishioners of St. Stephen's Catholic Church on Center Street. They were the parents of seven children: Josephine, Leonard, Inez, Frank, Jesse, Frances, and Catherine, of whom only the two youngest are now living. Calletana was a good mother to her children. She loved flowers and decorated their home inside and out with a variety of flowers and plants.

On 22 November 1939, she succumbed to the cumulative effects of kidney and lung disease (including an old tubercular infection), leaving a grieving husband and children. She was only 47. The widower, a very religious man, decided to build a unique monument to his dear departed at her gravesite under a tree near the western fence of the cemetery.

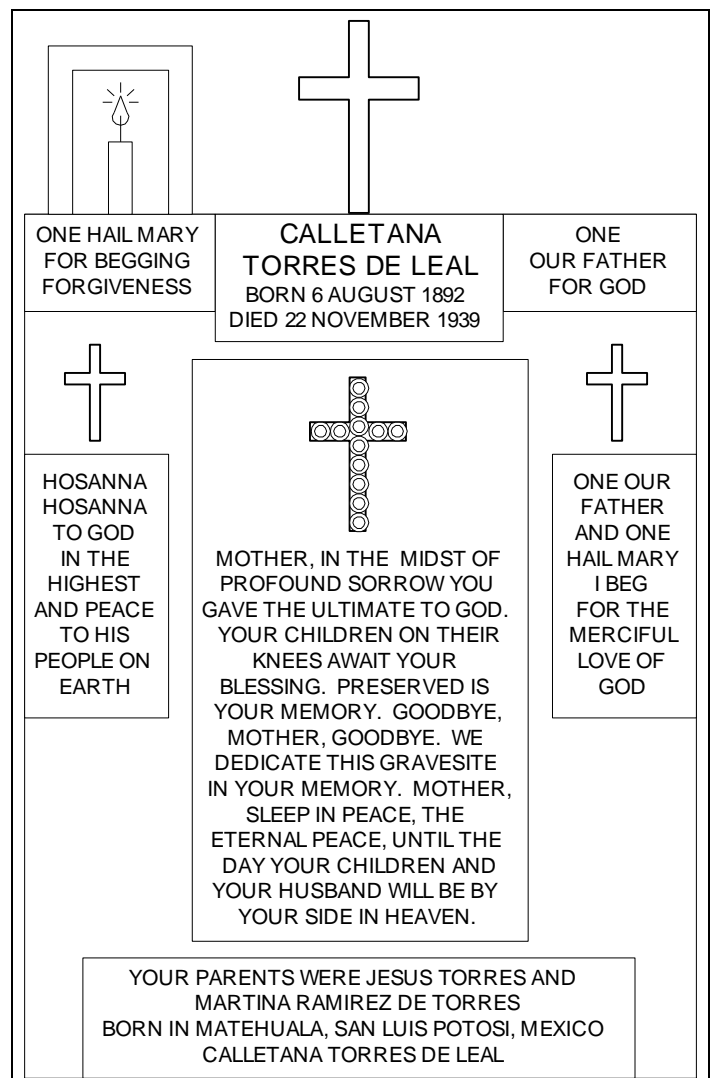
The grave is covered, head to foot, with polished colored tiles. In the center is a cross of sea shells; and at the head is a larger stone cross. Down the center and along the edges are a variety of prayers and heavenly petitions, lovingly hand-inscribed in Spanish, together with her dates of birth and death, place of birth, and names of her parents. And next to the large cross is a small stone box in which a candle burns continuously, protected from the wind by a small pane of glass.

Daughter Frances Leal and her husband Guadalupe **Muñoz** now live in Woodland Heights, not far from

the cemetery. When "Lupe" retired from the Merchant Marine seven years ago, he decided to make every day a "*Dia de los Muertos*" (Day of the Dead) for his mother-in-law whom, incidentally, he had never met. He and Frances go to Washington Cemetery almost every day to make sure the candle is burning and replace it if necessary. He said, "The candle flame is a prayer to God for my mother-in-law and for all the dead ones there; a memorial that they are not forgotten."

As Arlington National Cemetery has the eternal flame at the grave of President Kennedy, so Washington Cemetery has its own "eternal flame". Ours is not as expensive, not as well known, but just as impressive, for it marks the love, religious fervor, and dedication of a family for their mother.

José Leal died 25 Feb. 1954, and is buried in Strangers' Rest X402, on the eastern edge of Sec. H, with a headstone reading "1886-1954 *Recuerdos de sus hijos*" (Remembered by your children). Next to him in SR-X404 is his son-in-law, José V. **Ortíz** (15 Aug. 1908 - 3 Aug. 1954), husband of Inez Leal.



## Deutsche Gesellschaft Historical Notes

From the minutes of the Trustees Meeting, 18 June 1903 and 21 June 1903, transcribed by Bill Waters.

Mr. **Yeagerman** was given a contract to build a "Summer House" at the intersection of Sections B, C, and G for \$90.00 total. It was "to be executed in first class manner, the building to be 14 x 14, eight corners, with two openings and 12 feet high, latticed all around, except the openings, ... (with) benches necessary inside with a table in centre. ...The whole building to be painted inside and outside, the roof to be red, ... trimmings and ceiling inside to be white with the latticework light drab inside and outside."

Later German Society minutes state that several meetings between 6 Sep. 1903 and 7 Apr. 1913 were held there (minutes after 1913 do not include the location). If any reader remembers this building or has a photo, please share those memories with us.

\* \* \* \* \*

We need historical material for the next newsletter. Please send any historical tidbits, anecdotes, etc. pertaining to Washington Cemetery or to your loved ones buried here to our Historian, **Gov Clements**. Deadlines for family history material to be printed in each issue are January 1, April 1, July 1, & October 1.

Please send any newsletter suggestions or other material to be included, including spaces wanted to buy, sell, or donate, to the newsletter editor, **Bernice Mistrot**.

\* \* \* \* \*

Please return the entire form below with your check and mail to **Julie Itz, Treasurer**. All individual donations are deductible on Form 1040 (Schedule A). If your company (e.g., Exxon, Southwestern Bell, Tenneco) will match your donation, please make your donation to the WASHINGTON CEMETERY HISTORIC TRUST; otherwise, please make your annual donation to CCWCC, INC., as usual. **PLEASE NOTE!!** CCWCC and WCHT are separate organizations with separate bank accounts. Please do not combine donations to both organizations in one check!

## Treasurer's Report (February 1, 1997)

We're happy to be able to say "**THANK YOU**" to the 109 individuals and corporations who have already made their 1997 contributions, and a very special *THANK YOU* to **Mrs. Lillian Rembert** for her generous donation of 110 shares of appreciated stock. To those who haven't yet contributed this year, we ask you to remember that donations and interest are our only sources of income to cover the ongoing expenses of caring for the final resting place of *your* loved ones. We hope to hear from you soon.

Now for the facts and figures. The total value of CCWCC is about \$449,500, including \$421,700 in the Endowment Fund. The total value of WCHT is about \$20,100, which includes \$7,500 reserved for future road maintenance.

Combined expenses of CCWCC and WCHT since September 30 include \$8,800 for routine expenses of grounds maintenance, utilities, postage, and printing. and \$16,700 for monument restoration (including Strangers' Rest). Combined donations over the same period include \$4,700 for routine expenses and \$4,400 for monument restoration. The \$4,100 difference between maintenance donations and expenses was paid from the \$7,400 of income generated by the CCWCC Endowment Fund since September 30.

Our most urgent needs are for current maintenance (about \$2,300 per month) and Monument Restoration, but of course, we always gratefully accept any and all donations.

Donor Name _____		Surname(s) of Deceased _____	
Please send acknowledgment <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		Plot Number (if known) _____	
CONCERNED CITIZENS FOR WASHINGTON CEMETERY CARE, INC.		WASHINGTON CEMETERY HISTORIC TRUST	
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____ ENDOWMENT FUND		____ HISTORY/RESEARCH	
Phone Number _____		Matching Gift from _____	

## 1996 Burials in Washington Cemetery

The following persons were laid to rest in Washington Cemetery in 1996.

	<u>Lot No.</u>	<u>Burial Date</u>
Irene Gonzales	H-059 E½	24 Feb. 1996
Joe Rentz, Sr.	H-051	27 Mar. 1996
Odessa Rentz (ashes)	H-051	27 Mar. 1996
Elsie Shaefering	H-021 W½	14 Apr. 1996
Elizabeth Schifer	A-110	6 Sep. 1996
Roy E. Bobo	D-027 W½	9 Oct. 1996

## Spring Open House and Work Days

Last year's **Spring Open House** at the cemetery was so successful, we're doing it again on **Saturday, March 22**. We'll have the record books and people to help you locate the final resting place of your loved ones. The cemetery looks better and better every day -- please come and see it for yourself.

We had delightful weather for the work day on January 25, but not many workers. We hope more of you will join us for the **Work Days** on **February 22** and **April 26**. Hours are roughly 9-4 (or 10-5 if it's cold) all three days.

Please put these dates on your calendar now. **Leona Zaboroski** has all the details. We look forward to seeing you there!

### THE MONUMENT COMPANY

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## CONCERNED CITIZENS FOR WASHINGTON CEMETERY CARE, INC.

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## Lots for Sale/Lots Wanted/Lot Donations

Members wishing to buy or sell burial spaces may list them in the next newsletter at no charge. There is no commission and all sales are private matters between the buyer and the seller. CCWCC makes no warranty, express or implied, of either the lot or the title thereof. Buyers must satisfy themselves that the seller has title and/or authority to sell.

CCWCC also has a small number of burial spaces available for sale, all of which were donated to CCWCC by the families. All proceeds will go to our Endowment Fund. For more information, please contact **Herman Lauhoff**.

## Reminder: New Area Code 281

Most phones outside Beltway 8 in Houston have changed from area code 713 to 281, but calls between the 713 and 281 areas are still toll-free. Use of the new area code becomes mandatory on May 2, 1997 for calls across the new area code boundary line. Several CCWCC volunteers are in the 281 area. Please check the number you are calling to be sure you have the right area code.

## Randalls Good Neighbor Program

Randalls will donate a percentage of your purchases to WCHT, at no extra charge to you. Just tell the checker you want your *Remarkable Card* linked to **Washington Cemetery Historic Trust**, number 2810. Your card will be linked to WCHT for all future purchases anywhere in the store, including the pharmacy, until you notify Randalls otherwise. Please note that WCHT does not receive any information on who participates or how much you spend -- just a nice check at the end of the year.

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