

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

Vol. 22, No. 4

*"Heirs Who Care"*

November 1998

## CCWCC OFFICERS

President----- Herman Lauhoff  
 Vice President-----Burt Ballanfant  
 Rec. Secretary----- Rita Davis  
 Treasurer ----- Jim Daily  
 Corres. Secretary - Bernice Mistrot  
 Historian-----Governor Clements

## CCWCC DIRECTORS\*

Sam Belinoski (2001) Edgar Moy (2001)  
 Bill Gay (2000) John Petzold (1999)  
 Vic Gehring (1999) Bill Scott (2000)  
 Gus Mistrot (1999) Carl Young (2000)  
 Leona Zaboroski (2001)  
 \*Three year terms, ending in year shown

## WCHT TRUSTEES

Burt Ballanfant (President)  
 Bernice Mistrot (Secretary)  
 Jim Daily (Treasurer)  
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## Endowment Gets Big Boost

Through the great generosity of the late **Edgar Earl Lackner**, the CCWCC Endowment Fund has grown by over 23% in the last 3 months. His bequest of \$100,000 is the most generous ever received by this organization. While there was a temptation to use some of this money to improve the appearance of the cemetery, such as for monument restoration, the terms of his will were quite specific. His final selfless act brings us much closer to the day, long dreamed of by many, when we will be able to pay for all cemetery maintenance from income on the endowment. For the foreseeable future, however, we will still need donations for special projects.

Who was this Edgar Lackner, who cared so much for Washington Cemetery? He was born in Houston on 8 June 1907, the son of Fred W. and Laura (**Quensell**) Lackner. Both his parents and his mother's parents, William Quensell and Louisa (**Gerding Reinermann**) Quensell are buried here, in Lot A-19. The family were long-time Houstonians -- William Quensell immigrated to Houston in 1852 and Louisa arrived here in 1839 at age 3. Further details of his family history were provided by Mr. Lackner for the Washington Cemetery Centennial Book, published by CCWCC in 1988.

He graduated from Houston's Central High School in 1925, and worked for the Second National Bank of Houston for 25 years, being auditor at the time of his leaving. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1942 and served in the Intelligence Section of a Photo Reconnaissance Squadron with the 9th U.S. Air Force throughout the invasion of Europe. He died 24 April 1998, at age 90, and was laid to rest at Forest Park Lawndale 27 April 1998.

## Monument Repairs

This project is progressing nicely. Nine of the 11 headstones in Phase 4B have been completed; the two badly broken stones that have to be set into limestone slabs will be done as soon as we locate the limestone. We expect the 53 headstones in Phases 4C and 4D to be completed before Christmas.

While much work has already been done to improve the appearance and stability of our monuments, many more still need our attention. We are presently photographing these to obtain bids for their repair in Phase 5. Since Glenwood is doing such a fine job of day-to-day maintenance, CCWCC volunteers are able to concentrate their efforts on this monument repair and the ongoing Strangers' Rest marking. At this time, our greatest financial need is for these two restoration projects. We hope you will be generous.

## Open Letter to Glenwood Cemetery

To Bonnie Ambrus, Glenwood Cemetery Supervisor of Landscaping and Special Care:

"Earlier this week my husband and I were in the vicinity and drove through Washington Cemetery. We were amazed and very pleased to see how nicely our cemetery is being cared for. No offense, Ms. Ambrus, but except for more plants and shrubs in Glenwood, our old cemetery looks as nice as your Glenwood."

"My wish is that many of our CCWCC members who put their hearts and souls into the restoration of Washington Cemetery and have passed on could see how beautifully their cemetery is being cared for. They would be very pleased."

"Thank you and your staff very much."

*Lois King, Member, CCWCC*

## Clements' Corner

### Early History of Washington Cemetery

1887 was the year, and Stephen Grover **Cleveland**, the sitting President, was the first Democrat elected to that high office since 1856. The country was prosperous and at peace. March was the month, and the big news in Houston was that a special train had brought the mail from New York in just two days and twelve hours.

The year had begun on an unusual note, a warm and early Spring. By the third week of March, cotton and early crops had been planted. There was an abundance of vegetation, grass, and flowers. With the weather being so fine, and no indication of an unfavorable change, everyone was preparing for a beautiful Easter.

But tragedy struck two groups that interest us - the **Turner** and **Zeidler** families. Each lost a daughter. On Sunday, 20 March, the bodies of the two little girls were buried in the new German cemetery: Miss J. ? Turner, age 1, in Lot B-17 and Miss M. ? Zeidler, age 7, in Lot C-63, E½. The significance to us is that these two little girls were the very first burials in what is now Washington Cemetery.

It is believed that Miss M's parents were Ernst and Pauline **Gottschalk Zeidler** (later **Hess?**), of 112 Winter St. He was a carpenter and the owner of Lot C-63, E½. Unfortunately, we don't know much more than that. There are no census records, no death certificates, no funeral information. The City Physician, Dr. B. **Powell**, does not list either girl in the weekly death report published in *The Houston Post*. The owners of Lot B-17 are listed in cemetery records simply as "Schultz & Turner", and there are eight **Turners** (including James, John, and Joseph) in the 1886-87 Houston City Directory, so there is no way to know which one may be the child's father, or whether "J" is the child's initial or that of her father.

I wish I knew the first names of these little girls, or the names of Miss Turner's parents, but there are so many things I wish I knew about this cemetery...! If there is anyone among our readers who has information about either or both of these little ladies, or their families, please contact me.

The bodies of Misses Turner and Zeidler were not alone in this large cemetery on the edge of the city for long. One who has come to our attention is mentioned in *The Houston Post*, Sunday, 23 Oct. 1887. "*Pavement Paragraphs* -- Robert **Marshall** was buried yesterday afternoon by the Pioneer Assembly,

Knights of Labor #4215 in the new German cemetery. At a meeting of the Lodge, \$40.00 was donated as funeral benefits. It was also determined to take charge of funerals of members hereafter and do whatever is necessary." The newspaper death report by the City Physician states "Bob Marshall, male, white, aged 65 years, malarial fever."

Although Marshall appears to be at least the 14th person buried here, there is no cemetery record of his burial. Harris County deed records show that the Phoenix Assembly of the Knights of Labor #3925 bought Lot A-13 in Sep. 1888, but there is no cemetery record of that purchase; that lot was sold to Mrs. Jane **Donnelly** in 1904. The Phoenix Assembly also owned Lot G-16; the first burial on that lot was that of Mr. F. **Bachmann**, 54, on 14 Nov. 1887. But there is no record indicating that the Pioneer Assembly ever owned a lot in Washington Cemetery. Perhaps the two lodges merged about that time?

\* \* \* \* \*

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 these stories and other family history material are **1 Jan.**, 1 Apr., 1 July, and 1 Oct.

### Treasurer's Report

During the last fiscal year, we have received extraordinary bequests totaling \$136,000, plus 270 donations from individuals and matching contributions. Additionally, we received \$14,850 from our first lot sale. For the first time ever, net investment income exceeded total expenses, but some of that income was due to a one-time gain on sale of stock.

That all sounds wonderful, but we are still very much in need of donations for special projects, such as our ongoing monument repair and beautification project, and locating and marking the Strangers' Rest graves. Consequently, our greatest financial needs at this time are for donations to Washington Cemetery Historic Trust for these projects.

We are also pleased to report that WCHT received \$782 from the **Randalls Good Neighbor Program** (WCHT #2810) for purchases made between Jan. 1 and Sept. 30. **Kroger** will make an annual payment after Jan. 1, based on all 1998 purchases. To obtain a Kroger *Share* card, please contact **Jim Daily**. These programs are a great way to help WCHT's restoration projects.

**INCOME and EXPENSES (Unaudited) – Fiscal Year 1998**

**CONCERNED CITIZENS FOR WASHINGTON CEMETERY CARE, INC.**

<b>Net Assets -- October 1, 1997</b>	<b>\$449,363</b>		
INCOME: Maintenance	\$12,003	EXPENSES: Maintenance/Security	\$24,850
Endowment Fund	100,980	Utility Bills	973
Improvement Projects	38,455	Newsletter	1,125
Research/Legal	0	Postage/Office Supplies	350
Interments	0	Insurance & Bond	1,222
Lot Sales	14,850	New Landscaping	1,360
Net Investment Income	34,156	Legal Fees	2,207
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$200,444</b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$32,087</b>
		<b>Net Assets -- September 30, 1998</b>	<b>\$617,720</b>
FUNDS: Maintenance/Operations	\$15,631	Improvement Projects	\$72,413
Endowment	\$528,290	Research/Legal	\$1,386

**WASHINGTON CEMETERY HISTORIC TRUST**

<b>Net Assets -- October 1, 1997</b>	<b>\$33,065</b>		
INCOME: Operations/Administration	\$1,820	EXPENSES: Newsletter & Postage	608
Project "PATHH"	0	Administration	21
History	100	Historical Projects	13
Gravesite Restoration	7,606	Monument Repair	12,750
Interest	632	Strangers' Rest Markers	1,714
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$10,158</b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$15,106</b>
		<b>Net Assets -- September 30, 1998</b>	<b>\$28,117</b>
FUNDS: Operations/Administration	\$6,179	Project "PATHH"	\$7,536
Historical Projects	\$678	Gravesite Restoration	\$13,724

Please return the entire form below with your check and mail to **Jim Daily, Treasurer**. All donations are deductible on Form 1040 (Schedule A). Donations may be made to either organization, but if your company (e.g., Exxon, Southwestern Bell, Tenneco) will match your donation, please donate to the WASHINGTON CEMETERY HISTORIC TRUST. **PLEASE NOTE!!** CCWCC and WCHT are separate organizations with separate bank accounts. Please do not combine donations to both organizations in one check!

Donor Name _____	Surname(s) of Deceased _____
Please send acknowledgment <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Plot Number (if known) _____
<b>CONCERNED CITIZENS FOR WASHINGTON CEMETERY CARE, INC.</b>	<b>WASHINGTON CEMETERY HISTORIC TRUST</b>
____ 1999 MAINTENANCE Donation (\$50.00)	____ 1999 ANNUAL Donation (\$50.00)
____ IMPROVEMENTS & REPAIRS	____ GRAVESITE RESTORATION
____ RESEARCH/LEGAL FUND	____ HISTORY/RESEARCH
Phone Number _____	Matching Gift from _____

## August Newsletters

We apologize for the late delivery of many of the August newsletters. The Post Office has made the mechanics of preparing the bulk mailing so complex that we have decided to go back to first-class mailing. It will cost about \$150 more per mailing, but will be much faster for the volunteers who prepare the mailing and deliver it to the Post Office.

For those who missed the CCWCC annual meeting on September 20, the following Board members were re-elected for three-year terms: **Sam Belinoski, Eddie Moy, and Leona Zaboroski.**

## Lot Ownership Transfers Now Possible

In response to requests from our members, we have developed a mechanism for changing the lot owner on our books after the owner of record has died. The person or persons now claiming ownership must pay a transfer fee and demonstrate either that there are no other heirs, or that any other possible heirs have agreed to the proposed change. You may request a copy of the form from **Bernice Mistrot.**

## Winter/Spring Visitor Days

We had lovely weather for the Open House on October 25. At that time, we also attached the 30 Strangers' Rest nameplates listed in the May newsletter. As has been our custom, we have designated the following Saturdays as visitor/work days: **December 5, 1998, and January 23, February 27, March 27, and April 24, 1999.** Please come and visit with us. For more information or a reminder, please call **Leona Zaboroski.**

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

## Long-Range Planning Committee

The CCWCC Long-Range Planning Committee (LRPC) has met several times this year for the purpose of finding a permanent way to care for the cemetery. The number of people coming to the CCWCC annual meeting is dwindling, as is the number of donors. Most of the Board members qualify for AARP, and most have been on the Board for many years. They are getting tired.

We have been very pleased with the maintenance services provided by Glenwood during the last two years. Since July 1, Glenwood has also been responsible for administrative functions relating to lot sales, current interments, and record keeping, under a contractual arrangement with CCWCC.

It is now time to find a way for Glenwood to have full permanent responsibility for the complete care and maintenance of Washington Cemetery. We believe it is in the best interests of both cemeteries for Glenwood to utilize their experience, expertise, staff, and equipment to make Washington look, as Lois King said on page 1, "as nice as Glenwood." Glenwood's momentum will keep Washington Cemetery looking great long after those who are now on the CCWCC Board have departed this earth.

We of the LRPC and Board are excited by the prospect of finally being able to know that the cemetery will be well cared for, without having to do it ourselves. The details are being still worked out by the attorneys, who will present a specific proposal to the Glenwood and CCWCC Boards for approval. The LRPC invites your thoughts. The committee members are **Gus Mistrot (chair), Sam Belinoski, Burt Ballanfant, Herman Lauhoff, and Carl Young.**

BULK RATE
U.S. POSTAGE
<b>PAID</b>
HOUSTON, TX
PERMIT 2512