

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

Vol. 23, No. 1

"Heirs Who Care"

February 1999

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## Monument Repairs, Phase 4B

Natural Stone, Inc. has repaired and cleaned 9 more old headstones for \$1,535, or an average of \$171 each. The newly restored headstones in Section A are: Henry J **Moy** Sr. (1838-1909) & Mary E. **Moy** (1858-1935), Edward L. **Rabby** (1863-1901), Ernest H. **Holdgraf** (1867-1950) & Emma K. **Holdgraf** (1875-1937). In Section B: Julia **Kelly** (1883-1888). In Section C: Aegidi **Molk** (1909-1980), Caroline **Artz** (1835-1898), Alexander **Dietrich** (1837-1897), Robert F. **Weeden** (1864-1896), Judith A. **Thompson** (1857-1902).

The marble Kelly headstone was broken and had two large chunks missing, which were replaced with new pieces cut to fit. To really appreciate the restorations, please stop by the cemetery on our next visitor day and compare the before-and-after photos.

We are close to completing the stabilization, repair, and cleaning of 55 more monuments in Phases 4C and 4D, at an average cost of about \$250 each. We are working now to identify broken headstones to be repaired in Phase 5 and obtain bids for that work.

## Work Day Successes: Lost ... and Found!

We had picture-perfect weather for the visitor/work day on January 23. A small group of volunteers discovered four more markers in Strangers' Rest in less than an hour. But the more heart-warming discoveries came in Sections B and C.

While admiring the "new" Julia **Kelly** headstone on Lot B-42, we noticed some loose footstones propped up on nearby curbs. After a little detective work, we reinstalled the lovely marble footstone inscribed "Pauline" on the grave of Pauline **Beuermann** (1834-1895) in Lot B-43. A marble footstone marked K.L.K. (found on Lot B-52) was returned to the grave of infant Katie Linda **Kropp** (1897) on Lot B-48.

A 2"x10"x20" marble footstone with the name **Kolbe** in *bas-relief* on the top was leaning on a Kolbe headstone in Lot B-46, but is obviously not of the same style as that headstone. It appears to be part of a cradle, ca. 1890-1900, however, we did not find one. If anyone in the Kolbe family can identify this stone, we'll be glad to put it back where it belongs.

On the **Guese** lot, C-61, we found a small marble footstone marked M.L.F. While searching in vain for a headstone to match it [perhaps "M.R. **Fawcett**" (1897-1899) Lot C-64?], we discovered a completely buried coping around the **Wise** lot, C-60. Because of its depth (6") and poor condition we did not uncover it. But just a few feet away, there was an empty headstone base with a small fragment of stone (1/2" x 6") visible in the dirt next to it. After an hour or so of digging, the "fragment" was revealed to be a beautiful 108-year-old marble headstone, lying on top of a marble cradle, both in excellent condition.

The headstone, which has been removed for safe-keeping until it can be permanently installed, reads:

OUR DARLING  
 JOHNNIE (A.)  
 Daughter of J(ohn) H. and V(irginia) WISE  
 Born Oct. 29, 1889 Died Jan. 22, 1891  
*Shed not for her the bitter tear,  
 Nor give the heart to vain neglect  
 Tis but the casket that lies here,  
 The gem that filled it sparkles yet.*

Happily, the name and location match the record book, though the date of interment is recorded as May 21, 1891. Raising this cradle and resetting the headstone is a high priority for WCHT. The cost will be about \$350.

## Clements' Corner

### Lot D-103: Conrad Schwarz

*Prepared with assistance from Mrs. Emilie A. Ratcliffe of Deer Park, TX., niece of Laura (Thonig) Schwarz and Loretta Villar of Bethel United Church of Christ.*

One of the most prominent monuments in the cemetery is a tall marble shaft that occupies the center of Lot 103, Section D, and marks a single grave -- that of Conrad **Schwarz**. He was born about 1845 in Prussia.

When he arrived in Houston in 1876, he was a blacksmith and single. He took employment in that field, and within two years, he formed a partnership with Frederick **Hurtie**. "Schwarz and Hurtie" was of short duration. Schwarz bought out his partner, and began a singularly successful career.

An 1894 booklet touting "The Industrial Advantages of Houston, Texas and Environs" stated:

**"C. Schwarz, Manufacturer & Dealer in Carriages, Buggies, Etc., 601-605 Preston Ave. (at Smith).**

Among carriage manufacturers in South Texas, who have gained a reputation for their products, none stand higher in the estimation of the public than does Mr. C. Schwarz, who with lengthened experience and at the head of his present establishment for the past sixteen years ... turns out a line of carriages, buggies, spring wagons, etc., made in any of the approved styles, and equal to the finest which the skill of the present day can produce. ... Mr. Schwarz is agent in Houston for the celebrated Studebaker, Old Hickory and Tennessee wagons, equal to the best made of their class. This gentleman is a well-known resident, interested in the city's advancement and progress, and he is identified as a stockholder in some of Houston's most important industries. ..."

Conrad reached the pinnacle of material success building a product and a reputation, just as the automobile began to replace carriages, buggies, harnesses, etc. But that was just over the horizon -- for the moment, it was still the good life.

In 1899, Conrad, 54, married August Thonig's daughter, Miss Laura **Thonig**, 23, who was Texas born, but of German ancestry. They made their home at 417 Park Avenue at Cedar in the Magnolia Grove addition. He was a member of several German singing societies, as well as the *Deutsche Gesellschaft*. Cemetery records show that he owned three of the 37 shares of stock in the early 1900's, and was an officer of the company for three years - Treasurer in 1904 and 1905, and President in 1906.

When Conrad sold the business to South Texas Implement and Vehicle Company in 1910, it was an

amicable arrangement. He did not retire, but continued to maintain an office at the old workplace, and managed his extensive properties in the city. He was a very frugal man, and used the money he saved to purchase a considerable number of houses and pieces of real estate.

Soon after the Evangelical Lutheran Beth-el Church (now Bethel U.C.C.) was organized in 1918 as a mission of the First Evangelical Lutheran (now Central Congregational) Church, and just three months before his death, he offered to build the new church, provided the congregation agree to change the name to Conrad Schwarz Memorial Ev. Luth. Beth-el Church. The congregation declined this offer, but accepted the large stained glass window behind the altar that he gave instead. This window was moved to the new church building in the 1950's.

In the years just prior to WW1, Conrad made annual trips to Germany by himself. Just before the war broke out, he returned from one of these trips with a young lady named Lena. This created quite a "big to-do." "Get her out of this house! Either she goes or I do!" cried Mrs. Schwarz. Divorce papers were filed and granted. Eventually, he married Lena, but she proved to be unfaithful, following his example.

He passed away at his residence at 3:15 am, Sunday, 20 October 1919, at age 74, of a heart attack. The funeral services Monday were held by Houston Undertaking Company at the residence, and burial followed at the newly named Washington Cemetery. Among the six pallbearers was R. H. **Spencer**, President of the South Texas Implement Company. He was survived by his second wife, Lena, nephew Christian Schwarz, and relatives in Germany.

## New Confederate Headstone Installed

Private Thomas Jefferson **Calmes**, C.S.A., 17 Sep. 1824 - 1 Nov. 1897 now has a fine bronze headstone, thanks to his great-grandson Elmo E. Calmes, Jr. Although Calmes' name does not appear in our record books, his obituary in the *Houston Daily Post*, Nov. 3, 1897, makes it clear that he is buried here:

### Another Old Confederate Goes to His Last Resting Place

Thomas **Calmers** [*sic*] of Co. B, 9th La. Reg't, Gen. Harry T. **Hays** Brigade A.V. Bayou Rouge Prairie Avoyelles Parish, La., died at St. Joseph Infirmary yesterday [*sic*]. He was not a member of the United Confederate Veterans, but a deserving Confederate soldier, hence Commander **Beavens** of Dick Dowling Camp issued orders for the digging of a grave in the Camp's lot [A-75] in the German cemetery ...

For information on obtaining a government headstone for a veteran in your family, please contact **John Petzold**.

## Entrance Improvements

The next time you visit the cemetery, slow down a bit as you approach the sign and enjoy the colorful flower beds on both sides of the road. These were planted by Glenwood at no extra charge to us.

Pause too, to appreciate the matching pair of marble benches flanking the sign. The bench in memory of Alvin H. and Lou Ella **Riess** and Lota **Dietze Diaz** was installed in 1996; the newer one, in memory of Mary Lorraine **Fischer**, was added early this year.

## Stories and Photos Wanted

A lot has happened in the 12 years since we wrote the last book. We've located over 700 "lost" graves in Strangers' Rest, repaired over 200 headstones, discovered more veterans, written 23 Clements' Corner columns, -- the list goes on and on. There are also 72 more people buried here now. The time has come to gather all this information together in a new history book, to be published by WCHT early next year.

If your family is not in the current book, or if new or better information has come to light, please let us know as soon as possible, so we can start planning. Improved computer technology will allow more words on each page plus photos of your loved ones. We'll also upgrade the maps, especially in Stranger's Rest. *But it can't happen without your help.* Please send new or revised material to our Historian, **Gov Clements**. We also need volunteers to type, check facts at the library, read headstones, etc. **Bernice Mistrot** is coordinating this effort.

\* \* \* \* \*

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!

## Treasurer's Report (February 1, 1999)

We want to thank the 108 donors who have made donations since the start of our 1999 fiscal year. We appreciate their generosity, which will help in the care and improvement of the cemetery grounds. In addition, we received almost \$5,000 interest income on maturing Certificates of Deposit. Legal expenses of \$2,000 were incurred in connection with the proposed new agreement with Glenwood. The unaudited combined financial statement of CCWCC and WCHT follows.

Fund Balance - September 30, 1998	\$645,800
Income - donations	7,100
Income - interest, dividends	<u>12,300</u>
Total Income	19,400
Expenses - maintenance, administration	9,400
Expenses - monument repair	1,500
Expenses - legal	<u>2,000</u>
Total Expenses	12,900
Fund Balance - January 31, 1999	\$652,300

The total value of CCWCC is now about \$624,600, including \$528,500 in the Endowment Fund and \$74,300 in the Improvements Fund. The total value of WCHT is about \$27,700, including \$12,600 in the Improvements Fund and \$7,500 for road repair.

Our greatest financial needs at this time are for the WCHT Improvements and CCWCC Legal/Research funds, which will help with monument restoration, Strangers' Rest location, identification and marking, and legal expenses. Please help as much as you can.

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
____ 1999 MAINTENANCE Donation (\$50.00)	____ 1999 ANNUAL Donation (\$50.00)
____ IMPROVEMENTS & REPAIRS	____ GRAVESITE RESTORATION
____ RESEARCH/LEGAL FUND	____ HISTORY/RESEARCH
Phone Number _____	Matching Gift from _____

## 1998 Burials in Washington Cemetery

The following persons were laid to rest in Washington Cemetery in 1998.

	<u>Lot No.</u>	<u>Burial Date</u>
Gregory H. Hawley (ashes)	D-010	27 May 1998
Ann Kennedy Monroe	G-051 W½	8 Oct. 1998
Betty Jane Branham	A-114	9 Oct. 1998
Ralf A. Kuehm	G-089	5 Nov.1998
Bertha Johanna Guese	A-140 E½	20 Nov.1998

## Washington Cemetery Lots For Sale

It seems to be a secret that it is once again possible to purchase both traditional family plots and single spaces in the historic German Society Cemetery, called Washington Cemetery since 1918. We need your help in spreading the word -- in your churches, lodges, bridge clubs, or wherever. Income from lot sales will help reduce the need for donations.

We offer competitive prices and monument privileges on every space (not just one monument per lot, like most modern cemeteries). At least 25% of the lot purchase price will go into the Endowment Fund, to assure income for future care (most cemeteries set aside only 10% for this purpose), and at least 50% will be used for site improvements, especially monument restoration, Strangers' Rest recovery, and more landscaping. All of these projects will enhance the beauty and serenity of the cemetery grounds, while honoring our loved ones and ensuring that they will be remembered.

These lots have never been sold, and are located in Sections A, C, D, G, H, and I. At this time, there are 18 full lots (12 spaces each), 13 half lots, 18 quarter lots, and 63 single spaces available. Please call **Glenwood** at (713) 864-7886 for more information.

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

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## Driveway Repairs Rescheduled

Now that concrete seems to be available again, we'll try once more to repave the driveway between the street and the gate and replace the broken sidewalk in front of the cemetery. This work will require closing the cemetery to automobile traffic for up to two weeks, starting just after Easter (we hope). To avoid disappointment, please call Glenwood to check the status of this project before visiting.

## New Edition of History Book Planned

We have had several requests for reprints of the Washington Cemetery Centennial Book. Rather than simply reprint it, with all the known errors and omissions, we'd like to issue an expanded, updated "millennial" book early next year. Only about 12% of the people buried here were profiled in the earlier book. If your family members are among the other 88%, or if there were errors in the text, here's the chance for you to correct the oversight. But we **must** have your input. Further details on page 3.

## Spring Visitor/Work Days

We invite *you* to join us for the next **Visitor Days** on **Saturdays, February 27, March 27, and April 24**, between 10:00 and 5:00. Board members will be there with the record books in hand to help you locate the final resting places of your loved ones. We look forward to seeing you there! Please call **Leona Zaboroski** for further details.

(We apologize to anyone who visited the cemetery December 5 and found no one there. At least three of the half-dozen or so "regulars" were attending family funerals, one was recuperating from surgery, and the rest had various family commitments.)

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