

WASHINGTON CEMETERY HISTORIC TRUST

Vol. 26, No. 1

"Heirs Who Care"

February 2002

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Changing of the Guard

Herman Lauhoff, the longest serving Board member of CCWCC and an original Trustee of WCHT, has "retired" after many years of dedicated service. In the formative years of CCWCC, some of the interested parties approached State Representative Herman Lauhoff to see if a state statute could provide relief for abandoned cemeteries. He was instrumental in passing a measure that provided some potential relief and became interested in Washington Cemetery. Subsequently, he joined CCWCC, served on its Board of Directors for 22 years, and purchased a plot for his family. He served as President for 19 of those 22 years, presiding over major accomplishments such as the state district court recognition of CCWCC as the control entity for Washington Cemetery and the merger of CCWCC with Glenwood Cemetery Inc. He has also been a WCHT Trustee for nearly 10 years. This organization owes him a great debt of gratitude and thanks for his time, effort, and leadership, which have led to the enhanced condition of the cemetery that exists today. Thank you, Herman!

Ginger Daily, wife of Treasurer **Jim Daily**, has spent many hours in the service of Washington Cemetery, assisting Jim in the computer parts of the Treasurer's job and preparing family photographs for the new Washington Cemetery History Book. She has become very skilled at restoring damaged photos, and the book will be much enhanced by her efforts. Ginger has been appointed to fill Herman's position as Trustee. Welcome, Ginger!

We are looking for a few active, involved, "young" people to join the Trustees. At present, their average age is about 65, and most of them have been on the Board of CCWCC and/or WCHT for upwards of 12 years. Trustees attend 3 or 4 meetings a year and participate in the various cemetery improvement projects. If you would like to serve as a Trustee or would like to recommend someone for the position, please contact any Trustee.

Phase 7A Monument Repairs Completed

Our monument repair project is back on track. **Bobby Schlitzberger** has just completed restoration of 34 headstones, footstones, and cradles, at a total cost of \$4730. (The work was completed after the end of January, hence the expense is not reflected in this Treasurer's Report.) Most of these were fairly small headstones that were loose and needed to be secured. The price also includes cleaning these monuments and treating the marble monuments to inhibit growth of algae. He is now working on about 100 more in Phases 7B and 8. The repaired monuments are as follows (in plot number order).

Section A: Emma B. **Williams** (1853-1899), Carl **Reinhard** (1885-1940).

Section B: John T. **Zischang** (1855-1947) & Mary **Zischang** (1863-1926), two **Sawyer** footstones, Joseph **Witcher** (1879-1891), Lillie Belle **Friedenhaus** (1887-1895), Georgie H. **Byers** (1891-1892), Arthur W. **Byers** (1892-1893).

Section C: Monroe C. **Dickson** (1881-1892).

Section F: Herman **Kiesewetter** (1835-1911) & Adelheid **Kiesewetter** (1847-1929), Walter L. **Underhill** (1874-1849), Helene **Suhr Arfken** (1856-1950), Loma Jewel **Harris** (1879-1903), Agustina **Basquez** (1867-1945), Maria G. **Guerra** (1877-1944), Miguel **Martinez** (1871-1945), J. F. **Rodriguez** (1892-1893).

Section G: Julia Elizabeth **Odgen** (1823-1890), Infant Daughter of A.R. & A.M. **Ostrander** (1898), William **Daley** (died 1894, age 43), Milton Franklin **Black** (1878-1878), Elizabeth **Goldsmith** (1891-1927).

Section H: Alexander **Campbell** aka Jack **Wilson** (died 1905, age 63), Frank **Veselka, Jr.** (1927), Ray **Schedler** (1899-1932), Beverley Jane **Greene** (1926), Peter C. **Arvesen** (died 1905, age 61), R. E **Smith** (1894-1922).

Section I: Kathrine B. **Bissonnet** (1869-1915) & Jerome G **Bissonnet** (1906-1915) & Benn J. **Bissonnet** (1906-1915) & John W. **Bissonnet** (1908-1915), Albert Lee **Clifton** (1924-1951), Pet **Watson** (1902-1952), William **Oberpriller** (1881-1955), Chester **Oberpriller** (1919-?).

Clements' Corner

The following article is from the new history book.

PLOT SR-X5 LYDA BELL MOULDS

Submitted (2001) by Lula (Moulds) Varnell of Humble, TX, sister of Lyda Bell Moulds.

Lyda Bell MOULDS (27 July 1918 – 3 June 1931)



Lyda Bell was born in Groveton, Texas, daughter of Charles and Nora (PRUITT) MOULDS. Her tragic death was front-page news in *the Houston Post*. School was out for the summer, and the Optimist Club had chartered three buses to take children belonging to Boy and Girl Builders on a tour of several major Houston companies. The tour included the Trinity Portland Cement Company, National Biscuit Company (Nabisco), Coca-Cola, and the Standard Rice Mill (later American Rice Company) adjacent to Washington Cemetery, among others.

As the bus drove through the gate at the Standard Rice Mill, some of the children in the first bus were leaning out the windows and waving at those in the rear buses. But the bus came too close to the gatepost and Lyda Bell was one of three girls who collided with the post. The other two were hospitalized for observation, but their injuries were not life threatening.

Until very recently we had no idea where in Strangers Rest she was buried. Then about a year ago, we began finding small pieces of a thin marble or slate plate that was once attached to a one-piece terrazzo headstone and cradle. Less than one square inch of the headstone remained in place, but the plate at the foot reading "Daughter" was intact. The first dozen pieces suggested that the name could be hers. Diligent searching over the last year has yielded 49 pieces, 20 of which contain letters or parts of letters. Now that we have determined the original wording, the name plate will be replicated and her grave will again be marked, for the first time in many, many years.



**OUR DARLING
LYDA BELL MOULDS
1918 — 1931
AT REST**

Cemetery Burial Database Up to Date

It has taken ten years, but we are delighted to announce that all recorded Washington Cemetery burials, 1887 through 2001, are now in a searchable database, thanks to the untiring efforts of **Eleanor Beebe**. This completes Phase One, entry of all pre-1907 burials from Book 1 and all post-1903 burials from the chronological list of burials.

At this time, the database lists 7460 interments. When CCWCC was founded in 1978, there were 6421 burials recorded in the "current" book (Book 3). Since then, there have been only 210 more burials, which suggests that hundreds of names were omitted when Book 3 was copied about 1943. Most of them are single-grave burials prior to 1903. We now have an index to those "missing" names.

We are continuing to refine the database through review of the other two cemetery record books, headstones, obituaries, church records, and death certificates. The list does contain a few duplicates, due both to bodies being moved from one plot to another within the cemetery, and to various recording errors. But we have found also several headstones for which there are no burial records, and those names will be added to the database as well.

Headstone Transcription Underway

A small but dedicated group of transcribers met at the cemetery in beautiful weather on January 26 to kick this project off. Another group met on Feb. 9, and several have gone on their own. Most of Section A and a small part of Section B has been completed.

Each plot is being transcribed on one or two pages. Every word on every marker is recorded on a plot layout showing the location of every marker. The key data (name, dates, military service, and organizations such as Masons or Woodmen) is being added to the burial database. The original transcription pages, which include the poetry and notes about the condition of the markers, will be copied and presented to Clayton Library. An every-name index to the transcriptions will be printed from the database.

Those who have worked on this project so far are **Eleanor Beebe, Gov Clements, Carolyn Bonnin, Michele Bonnin, Ed Feusse, Beverly Gilstrap, Scott Gilstrap, Richard June, Bernice Mistrot, and Dana Radano**. We can always use more help - there's plenty of work to share. If you can lend a hand, please contact either Eleanor Beebe or Bernice Mistrot.

History Book Progress Report

Maybe this should have been titled "List of Excuses" instead. Between the holidays, changing over to a new computer system (both hardware and software), preparing for the headstone transcription project, and working with the new contractor on monument repair, direct progress on the history book has slowed in the last quarter. However, much of the effort on the burial database and headstone transcription will be incorporated into the history book. We have been able to help quite a few people find relatives here recently, and some of them will be adding new biographies to the book as a result.

Glenwood General Manager's Report

I am pleased to report that the old cyclone fence along the back half of the westerly side of the cemetery has been replaced with a new wrought iron fence by the developers of the apartment project. This attractive fence will ultimately be extended all the way to Washington Avenue. Perry Homes has acquired the front section of the old Rice Mill property fronting on Washington Avenue and adjoining Washington Cemetery. It is my understanding that townhomes will be built on this location.

We are optimistic about further benefits to Washington Cemetery including developer-funded drainage improvements to the property directly behind the postal facility. We will keep you posted.

Our tree-planting program for this year is in progress and we are in the process of planting approximately two hundred pine trees along the westerly fence line in addition to several live oaks throughout the cemetery. The pine trees should

eventually provide a buffer for the cemetery. The results of this effort will not be evident immediately but we hope that future generations will benefit from these efforts as these trees mature.

Richard A. Ambrus
Vice President and General Manager

Treasurer's Report (February 1, 2002)

During the last four months, WCHT has received 79 donations from individuals. In addition, WCHT continues to receive funds from the **Randalls Good Neighbor Program** (WCHT #2810) and **Kroger Share Card**. To obtain a Kroger Share Card, please contact **Jim Daily**.

While WCHT is currently receiving funds through the matching gift programs of **ExxonMobil** and **J. P. Morgan Chase Foundation**, many other corporations have matching gift programs for employees and retirees. All of these programs are a great way to help finance WCHT's restoration projects.

The total assets of WCHT amount to \$165,900, of which \$109,500 is held in the Improvements Fund for continuing projects. The unaudited financial statement follows.

Fund Balance - September 30, 2001	\$156,300
Income - donations	8,000
Income - interest	<u>3,400</u>
Total Income	11,400
Expenses - newsletter and postage	600
Expenses - administrative	1,000
Expenses - gravesite restoration	<u>200</u>
Total Expenses	1,800
Fund Balance - January 31, 2002	\$165,900

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Please return the entire form below with your check and mail to **Treasurer Jim Daily**. All donations are deductible on Form 1040 (Schedule A).

WASHINGTON CEMETERY HISTORIC TRUST	
Donor Name _____	Phone Number _____
E-mail Address (if applicable) _____	
_____ 2002 ANNUAL Donation (\$20.00)	Surname(s) of Deceased _____
_____ GRAVESITE RESTORATION	_____
_____ HISTORY/RESEARCH	Plot Number(s), if known _____
_____ TOTAL	Matching Gift from _____

2001 Burials in Washington Cemetery

The following persons were laid to rest in Washington Cemetery in 2001.

	<u>Lot No.</u>	<u>Burial Date</u>
Ruby Edna Gabler Meisler	F-030 W½	2 Jan. 2001
Kathryn McGrenera	B-048	20 Mar. 2001
Dorice Ann Sevier	C-089	17 Apr. 2001
Elmo E. Calmes, Jr.	D-116	28 Apr. 2001
Lewis Fleig Rueckert*	F-033	5 Jun. 2001
(*ashes; died 1 May 1996)		
Laverne Reichert	C-067 E½	3 Nov. 2001

Confederate Memorial Day Services Scheduled at Washington Cemetery

Confederate Memorial Day Services will take place in Washington Cemetery on **Saturday, April 27, 2002, beginning at 1:00 o'clock p.m.** The ceremony will be conducted by the ladies of District One, United Daughters of the Confederacy, Texas Division. A warm invitation is extended to all readers of this Newsletter.

Graves of all known Confederate veterans will be marked with Confederate battle flags. Colors will be posted by the John Bell Hood Sons of Confederate Veterans Color Guard and the Texian Volunteers of the Sons of the Republic of Texas.

The main service will take place at the Dick Dowling Camp United Confederate Veterans Plots G-66 and G-67 and a shorter service will follow at Plot A-75, the first plot purchased by the UCV. The Daughters will lay a memorial wreath at each site. Attendees at the service may participate by bringing a flower to lay in remembrance of their Confederate ancestor(s),

including those who may be buried in other Texas locations or in other states.

The memorial program will consist of music by vocalist, piper and fife, poetry, scripture, prayer, a short dedication speech, and Taps, concluding with a rousing cannon and musketry salute by the Texian Volunteers. Period dress by participants and audience is welcomed. Attendees may bring lawn chairs for their comfort. The UDC Chairman for the event is **Betty B. Mann**.

Please put this date on your calendar now, as there will not be another newsletter prior to the event. If you would like a phone or e-mail reminder, please contact **Gus Mistrot**.

Spring Visitor/Work Days

Please join us on **Saturdays, February 23 and March 23**, anytime between 10:00 and 4:00. Projects will include (a) transcribing headstones, (b) photographing monuments for the restoration program, and (c) continuing the search for buried Strangers Rest markers. The record books will also be available.

These days are also good times for you to come and visit the cemetery, knowing that other people will be there. Spring is already evident in the daffodils and redbuds, and it's worth a trip just to see the results of our restoration program. We look forward to seeing you there!

Confederate Memorial Day Services
Saturday, April 27, 2002
Program starts 1:00 p.m.

WASHINGTON CEMETERY HISTORIC TRUST

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED