

# WASHINGTON CEMETERY HISTORIC TRUST

Vol. 27, No. 2

"Heirs Who Care"

June 2003

## WCHT OFFICERS

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## Confederate Headstones Dedicated

On March 22, nearly 90 people attended and participated in the dedication of 14 new Confederate headstones in a splendid ceremony sponsored by WCHT and The Southern Cross Chapter #2502, UDC. Bagpipers **Lars Sloan** and **Al Vacek** led the procession to each of the 14 graves, followed by the the Color Guard of 13th Texas Infantry Camp #1565, SCV. The 1st Texas Volunteer Infantry Reenactors fired a 3-gun salute over each grave, and the Texian Volunteers spiced things up with a salute from their cannons "Rolling Thunder" and "Bigfoot".

Headstones were dedicated for Osburn M. **Bergin**, Henry C. **Black**, Charles **Bonatz**, John L. **Dupree**, John W. **Ellison**, John C. **Goldsmith**, William **Hartung**, Samuel P. **Matthews**, Eustace D. **Parker**, Frederick **Schweikart**, Osgood A. **Shook**, John S. **Swope**, Garrett E. **Van Benthuisen**, and Peter P. **Wilson**.

Another group of new Confederate headstones will be dedicated on **Saturday, October 25, 2003, at 10:00**. We look forward to seeing you there!

At this time, it is expected that the following will be included (subject to change - a final list will be given in the October newsletter, just prior to the event): William Eggleston **Archer**, Philip Daniel **Bowles**, Lafayette W. **Camp**, Almond **Fuller**, Lucian Alston **Gause**, August **Henniger**, Samuel Timothy **Lewis**, Joseph K. **Mayo**, Edmond B. **Reeves**, Charles Frederick A. **St. Jest**, James **Toole**, John C. **Turner**, and Aaron William **Underwood**.

## Phase 8C Monument Repairs Completed

**Bobby Schlitzberger** has just completed stabilization and cleaning of 14 more headstones and cradles in Phase 8C. The repaired monuments are as follows:

*Section A:* J. J. **Cartee** (1873-1958), Ida J. **Cartee** (1877-1937), Sarah C. **Secor** (1905-1989), B. F. **Secor** (1897-1973), Harry **Bell** (1882-1887), Robbie **Bell** (1887-1887).

*Section B:* John T. **Monaghan** (1859-1903), Thomas B. **Monaghan** (1875-1933).

*Section G:* John A. **Ilse** (1889-1891), Bradford **Hayes** (1894-1947).

*Section H:* Alta Grace **Wissman** (1923-1948) & Rosa **Wissman** (1948).

*Strangers Rest:* Mary **Nemec** (1844-1910), Wilhelm **Schneider** (1879-1910), Walter **Schmidt** (1869-1918).

Work is continuing on about 50 additional headstones, cradles, and copings needing attention.

## Headstone Transcription Project

We are pleased to report that the initial transcription work has been completed for 96% of the family plots. Two transcribers are still working on the last 29 plots. Many thanks to all who have worked on this project, especially to **Richard June**, who has done 30% of the transcriptions by himself, and to **Cathy Fitch** and **Eleanor Beebe**, who have together done the next 30%.

Additionally, Eleanor Beebe continues to make good progress on the painstaking task of adding the headstone information to the burial database, including resolving differences between the headstone text and the original burial records.

The final phase will be to print the 767 pages (one per plot) from the database and make a final field check. Also still ahead is transcription of headstones in the Strangers Rest section.

## History Book Expanding

What started out nearly four years ago as a revision of the 1988 Washington Cemetery Centennial Book now appears to be taking shape as several volumes. The history of the cemetery and the 1700+ biographies and 260+ photos will fill at least one volume. The ten pages in the 1988 book devoted to veterans have now expanded to 160 pages and may well top 200, so that will probably be a volume by itself. And when the burial database is complete, that may be printed as a third volume, together with the maps (36 pages for the family plots and 68 pages for Strangers Rest). Please be patient while we assemble all this material.

## Clements' Corner

The following articles are in the format of the new history book.

### PLOT H-5½ W. L. NOLAND

*Submitted (2003) by William L. Noland of Houston, grandson of Willie Lee and Jennie Noland, with research assistance from Gov Clements, Peggy Hensley, Betty Mann, & Bernice Mistrot.*

#### Willie Lee NOLAND (18 May 1878 – 3 October 1941)



Willie Lee, eldest of five children of Frank P. NOLAND (1854-1898) and his wife Ella (1856-1942), was born in Independence, Missouri. The family moved to Houston when Willie Lee was about five years old.

Frank Noland and his older brother Samuel Perry NOLAND (1852-1895) grew up in the Houston area. Orphaned before the age of ten, they were living in separate households in Lynchburg in 1860. By 1870, still in their teens, they were living with Hugh G. PANNELL, an undertaker. Also in the Pannell household was Flint REED, a cabinetmaker. This early association would lead three generations of Nolands to serve in the cemetery business for nearly 100 years. In 1882, Samuel Noland worked for Andrew J. PANNELL in a business described in the city directory as "Undertaker, groceries, wines, liquors."

"Glenwood Rural Cemetery" (as it was called in the 1899 city directory) was founded in 1871, and in 1884, Samuel was its Sexton. By 1886, Samuel had parlayed his carpentry skills into a partnership with William S. WALL, as Wall & Noland, Undertakers. His younger brother, Frank, moved back to Houston and became Superintendent of Glenwood Cemetery by 1887. Following Frank's death on Christmas Eve 1898, his son Willie Lee, not yet 21, stepped in to fill his father's shoes, and held that position until at least 1903. In 1905, he was working for the National Biscuit Company (now Nabisco).

By 1900, Willie Lee and his first wife, Minnie, had two sons, Franklin Pierce (see Plot C-147), and Oliver H.; however, the marriage did not last. He married Jennie Carolyn Sharman, a native Houstonian, sometime prior to 1903, and they had one son, Raymond J.

The *Deutsche Gesellschaft von Houston* (German Society of Houston) established a 27-acre burial ground adjacent to Glenwood Cemetery on 7 February 1887. It soon became known as the German Society Cemetery (or simply German Cemetery). The advertisement on page 3 is from the 1899 city directory.

Willie Lee was Sexton of the German Society Cemetery for one year in 1907; then over the next several years, he worked at a variety of occupations, including carpenter and deputy constable. About 1915, he returned to the German Cemetery as Superintendent. The Nolands lived the rest of their lives in the caretaker's cottage on the cemetery grounds.

In June 1918, anti-German sentiment in the community resulted in the name change to Washington Cemetery. On 1 April 1922,

Washington Cemetery was incorporated for 25 years as a non-profit corporation. The incorporators were Jerome B. COCHRAN (then owner of 9 of the original 37 shares of stock), William H. GOETZMANN (a member of the *Deutsche Gesellschaft* since his father's death in 1899), and Secretary Theodore DREYLING (see *Newsletter, May 2000*). John H. LANG Jr. was installed as President and Willie Lee Noland as Superintendent. Between them, they operated the cemetery until their respective deaths; John Lang in 1935 and Willie Lee in 1941.

Willie Lee was quite a "joiner". He was a member of the Houston Consistory Scottish Rite Bodies, and as a Master Mason, he belonged to Cade Rothwell Lodge No. 1151, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, Knights Templar, Will N. Kidd Chapter No. 424, Royal Arch Masons, Andral Vann Chapter No. 741, Order of the Eastern Star, and Arabia Temple Shrine. He was also a member of the Knights of Pythias, Fraternal Order of Eagles, and Woodmen of the World.

Just a short time before Pearl Harbor, heart problems necessitated that he be admitted to a local hospital, where he died of a stroke at age 63. He was survived by his widow, Jennie, brother Oliver H. NOLAND (1880-1946, see Plot C-102), sister Mollie JOHNSON BATCHELOR (1882-1970), his mother, and his three sons. His funeral was conducted by the Masonic Lodge and by Rev. Detlev BALTZER of the First Evangelical Church.

Just as Willie Lee had followed his father at Glenwood, Raymond now took the lead in operating Washington Cemetery. When Raymond entered military service during World War II, Jennie's brother, Milfred V. SHARMAN, took over until Raymond returned. In 1947, the 25-year charter expired, and was not renewed.

#### Jennie Carolyn (SHARMAN) NOLAND (15 March 1886 – 11 March 1970)



Jennie was a native Houstonian, the only daughter of Joseph R. SHARMAN and Eada (KORTGE) SHARMAN (see Plot P-6, E½). Joseph, also a native Houstonian, was the youngest of 11 children.

Two of Jennie's five brothers are buried in Washington Cemetery: Charles J. (1892-1940, Plot P-7¾), and George R. (1895-1973, Plot P-6½). Her brothers William G. (ca. 1883-1940+), Joseph A. (1889-1972), and Milfred V. (1898-1982) are buried elsewhere.

After the death of her only son, Raymond, on 1 October 1951, the burden of cemetery operations fell on Jennie, now in her 66th year, and her companion, Leona Ella TONN (1905-1977). Miss Tonn had come to work for the Nolands in 1940 as a cook and live-in housekeeper (see *Newsletter, Nov. 1997*). Jennie and Leona now took care of the books, mowed grass, cut weeds, removed limbs and underbrush, and did the best they could to hold back the encroaching jungle. For almost 19 years, they struggled against uneven odds.

Just four days short of her 84th birthday, Jennie succumbed to melanoma cancer at the caretaker cottage. She was buried beside her son, her husband, and their five stillborn infants. She was survived by her only grandson, William Lee NOLAND, and brothers Joseph A., George R., and Milfred V. SHARMAN.

H. HARTMANN, E. B. H. SCHNEIDER, H. KASCHE,  
PRESIDENT. TREASURER. SECRETARY.

# THE GERMAN SOCIETY CEMETERY

SOUTH SIDE WASHINGTON STREET,  
TWO MILES FROM COURT HOUSE.

**THIS BEAUTIFUL CEMETERY** is situated close to the west city limits of Houston. Street Cars on the Leading Avenues from the City. It is Well Drained, has Water Works Connections, which are Free to Lot Owners. Perfect Titles are furnished Purchasers of Lots.

Parties wishing to Buy Lots will find the Plans and all Necessary Information at

**H. KASCHE,** 1517 WASHINGTON ST.  
COR. TRINITY

OFFICE HOURS:  
 8 to 12 a. m., 2 to 6 p. m., Daily, Except Sunday.

**TELEPHONE 456.**

**Treasurer's Report (June 1, 2003)**

During the last four months, WCHT has received 66 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 serve as great ways to help finance WCHT's restoration projects.

The total assets of WCHT amount to \$164,100, of which \$96,600 is held in the Improvements Fund for continuing projects. The unaudited financial statement follows.

Fund Balance - Jan. 31, 2003	\$163,100
Income - donations	2,600
Income - investments	<u>2,800</u>
Total Income	5,400
Expenses - historical projects	600
Expenses - newsletter and postage	800
Expenses - gravesite restoration	<u>3,000</u>
Total Expenses	4,400
Fund Balance - May 31, 2003	\$164,100

The gravesite restoration expense was for restoration of 26 monuments in Phases 8B and 8C of our restoration program, and installation of 18 corner posts in Strangers Rest.

**Contacts**

- History Book Text: Bernice Mistrot.
- History Book Photos: Ginger Daily.
- Burial Database: Eleanor Beebe.
- Newsletter Editor: Bernice Mistrot. Deadline for material for October issue: September 15, 2003.

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

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

## General Manager's Report

Earlier this year we continued our tree-planting program in Washington Cemetery. Approximately 500 pine trees were planted along the western fence line as far as we could go towards Memorial Drive. These trees were home grown from seedlings purchased from the Texas Forest Service. This planting will go a long way towards buffering the apartments to the west of the cemetery. We have also planted an assortment of trees of differing varieties throughout the cemetery.

Additionally, we have begun filling the ditch next to the roadway as you enter the cemetery. Once completed, this will greatly enhance the entryway into the cemetery proper and allow us to develop the vacant land at the front of the cemetery.

Lot sales have been very slow and the day-to-day traffic through Washington Cemetery is almost nonexistent. I expect all of this to change as we continue to improve the visual aspects of the cemetery each year. The ongoing monument restoration work completed by the WCHT is of tremendous value in that regard. Thanks to all of you who stop in and tell us how nice the cemetery looks. We appreciate those compliments.

Richard A. Ambrus  
Vice President and General Manager  
Glenwood and Washington Cemeteries

## Strangers Rest Plot Numbers Installed

To make it easier to find graves in the large Strangers Rest area, we have divided that portion of Section H into 25' x 25' plots, and assigned plot numbers starting at H-101. Numbered aluminum markers have been placed every 50 feet, marking the corners of each plot.

## Glenwood Annual Meeting on June 19

The Annual Meeting of Glenwood Cemetery, Inc. will start at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 19, 2003, at the offices of Fulbright & Jaworski, 51st Floor, 1301 McKinney (Chevron Tower), Houston, Texas 77010. The primary purposes of the meeting are to elect the Board of Directors and to review the important events of the year.

All original Owners of lots in Washington Cemetery (or surviving spouses, executors, or descendants of deceased lot owners who have completed a Glenwood Declaration/Proxy form) should have already received an invitation to attend this meeting.

If no one in your family has received the Declaration/Proxy for your lot this year, and you wish to become the representative for your family lot, please contact the Glenwood office at (713) 864-7886 as soon as possible. You may also write to Glenwood Cemetery, 2525 Washington Ave., Houston, Texas 77007.

### Summer/Fall Calendar of Events

#### Glenwood Cemetery Annual Meeting

Thursday, June 19, 10:00 a.m.  
51st Floor, 1301 McKinney (Chevron Tower)

#### Cemetery Work/Visitor Day

Saturday, October 11, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

#### Dedication of New Confederate Headstones

Saturday, October 25, 10:00 a.m.

#### Cemetery Work/Visitor Day

Saturday, November 22, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

## WASHINGTON CEMETERY HISTORIC TRUST

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED