

WASHINGTON CEMETERY HISTORIC TRUST

Vol. 29, No. 3

"Heirs Who Care"

December 2005

WCHT OFFICERS

President ----- Gus Mistrot
Vice President ----- Catherine Fitch
Secretary ----- Bernice Mistrot
Treasurer ----- Lloyd Shenberger
Historian ----- Gov Clements

WCHT TRUSTEES

Eleanor Beebe	Edgar Moy
Charles Jackson	John Petzold
Richard June	Carl Young
Elizabeth Larimore	Leona Zaboroski

New Confederate Headstones Dedicated

On October 8, 2005, WCHT and **Albert Sidney Johnston Camp 67, Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV)** cosponsored the dedication of new headstones for twelve Confederate veterans who are buried in Washington Cemetery. Twelve members of **Granbury's Texas Brigade Camp 1479 SCV** and four state and brigade officers of SCV provided an impressive color guard and honor guard during the ceremony.

Headstones were dedicated for veterans Maximilian F. **DeBajligethy**, George Washington **Gibbs**, William Henry **Hill**, James R. **Little**, Porter Martin **Neel**, Carl William Adolph **Quensell**, Zephaniah W. **Redd**, James Benjamin **Rives**, William **Warnicke**, David Sherrell **Williams**, Charles Allen **Younger**, and Herman H. **Youngst**.

Among the 108 attendees were 50 relatives of the soldiers, including two grandsons of George Gibbs and a granddaughter of James Rives, all three of whom remember visiting with their Confederate grandfather. Mr. Gibbs and Mr. Rives are the last two Confederate veterans buried in Washington Cemetery – at least as far as we know at this time.

New Confederate headstones have been received for Joshua Hamilton **Ham** and John **Schiller**. We are hoping to locate relatives of these men prior to the next dedication ceremony, which is tentatively scheduled for October 28, 2006. Research is continuing on about two dozen more Confederate veterans and several Union veterans.

Citizens of the Republic of Texas to be Honored on March 25, 2006

Judy Henderson and her committee in the **Bluebonnet Branch Chapter, Daughters of the Republic of Texas (DRT)** are putting the final touches on the applications for headstone memorial markers (4½" bronze medallions) identifying citizens of the Republic of Texas who are buried in Washington Cemetery. These memorial markers will be formally dedicated in a ceremony on Saturday, March 25, 2006.

Anyone who resided in Texas prior to February 19, 1846 is eligible. Those who were born in Texas are fairly easy to prove. The difficult cases involve those who came to Texas as young children. At this time, we are pretty confident that the following will be included in the program on March 25: Julia Purcell **Bergin** and her son Osburn M. **Bergin**, George Albert **Branard**, Louisa **Reinermann Quensell**, Osgood Andrew **Shook**, and William H. **Williams**.

We need just one more piece of evidence on each of these: Edmond **Reeves** and his sister Eveline **Reeves Toole**, Frederick **Schweikart** and his wife Antoinette **Officier Schweikart**, and Emilie **Usener Schneider**. We are not placing medallions at this time for our two veterans of the Battle of San Jacinto, Ellis **Benson** and William **Gammell**, because we hope to eventually get Texas Historical Markers for them.

If you know of any other citizens of the Republic of Texas buried here, please contact Judy Henderson or any WCHT Trustee as soon as possible.

Clements' Corner

The following articles are in the format of the new history book being compiled. Much of the following text was read at the recent dedication ceremony.

PLOT SR- X048

GEORGE WASHINGTON GIBBS

Compiled by WCHT Secretary Bernice Mistrot, with assistance from Kendall Stratton, grandson of George W. Gibbs.

George Washington GIBBS (6 June 1844 – 16 Nov. 1933)

George Washington Gibbs was born in Ruckersville, Elbert Co., Georgia. He lost his parents at an early age, and moved with his grandparents Dr. Thomas Fortson Gibbs and wife Caroline Rebecca Harris to Memphis, Tennessee, where Dr. Gibbs died in 1859. Between 1860 and 1861, George moved to Texas.

On 20 April 1861, he enlisted at Bastrop in Co. E, First Texas Mounted Rifles, giving his age as 25, though he was a few weeks shy of 17. He was mustered out at the end of service in April 1862. On 4 May 1862, a man named George W. Gibbs, age 20, enlisted at Burlson in Co. A, Cavalry Battalion, Waul's Texas Legion. He was "left in Texas to attend the sick" in August 1862, arrived at Vicksburg, Mississippi, in October 1862, and was on scouting duty in February 1863. There is no further record of him in Waul's Texas Legion. Finally, in 1864, George Washington Gibbs joined Co. E of David S. Terry's Texas Cavalry (David Terry was a younger brother of B. F. Terry, of the famed Terry's Texas Rangers). He received a formal parole from this unit at Galveston on 21 June 1865, stating that his home was in Memphis.

Little is known about the next 15 years of George's life. By 1880, he was a railroad clerk living in Navasota with his aunt and uncle, Rebecca and Peter Harris. On July 13, 1885, George married Emma Hamm in Bell County, Texas. He was 41; she was 17. They moved to Houston about 1889, where he continued to work for the Santa Fe railroad. Their six children were Lida, Evelyn, Mildred, Robert, Walter, and George Jr.

George applied for a Confederate pension in 1914 and collected it until his death in 1933. He is the next to last of the known Confederate veterans buried here. His wife Emma then collected a Confederate pension until her death on 11 March 1962. She is buried in Forest Park Lawndale Cemetery.

PLOT SR-X53

JAMES BENJAMIN RIVES

Compiled by WCHT Secretary Bernice Mistrot, with assistance from Bernice Snowden, granddaughter of James B. Rives.

James Benjamin RIVES (3 Apr. 1846 – 12 Dec. 1934)

James Benjamin Rives was born in Alleton, Wilcox Co., Alabama. His father, Benjamin S. Rives, and older brother, John H. Rives, served in the 17th Alabama Infantry, and both were wounded at Shiloh in April 1862.

At age 17, James enlisted on 4 August 1864 in Co. H, 62nd Alabama Infantry, also known as First Alabama Reserves, at

Mobile, Alabama. Most of the men in this unit were ages 16 to 18. The regiment served at Mobile and the bay forts. James took part in the Battle of Spanish Forts in March 1865, and was admitted to Ross Hospital in Mobile with intermittent fever three days later. He spent three weeks recuperating and returned to duty shortly before the surrender.

James moved to Texas about 1870, and on 13 March 1873, he married S. A. Belden in Grimes County. They soon settled in Hockley, where he made his home for the next fifty-plus years, moving to Houston shortly before 1930. During his time in Hockley he served as Justice of the Peace for two years and as deputy sheriff and constable for 15 years. James and his wife had six children, three of whom survived to adulthood: Mary Elizabeth Rives Crisp, George H. Reeves, and Charles S. Rives.

James applied for a Confederate pension in 1916, stating that he had served in the "First Alabama Regiment," but failed to add the key word, "Reserves." The pension was denied, because the Adjutant General could find no record of him in the First Alabama Infantry – a totally different unit. He appealed, giving affidavits with more particulars of his service and naming other men who had served with him. Again it was denied. Finally, after more than a year, and 36 pages of documents and correspondence, the pension board relented and granted his pension. He got the last laugh, however, because he collected it until his death in Houston in 1934, at age 88. He is the last Confederate veteran known to be buried here.

WCHT Receives Generous Bequest

Christmas came to WCHT early this year. In late October, we were contacted by a bank in Dallas and told that WCHT would receive unrestricted bequests from the Pierce and Jeanette Williamson Trust of \$10,000 in memory of Regina and Faust **Nadolny**, \$10,000 in memory of Emil **Kolarz**, and \$5,000 in memory of Eugene D. **Gorski**.

Jeanette Gorski Williamson has been a steady supporter of CCWCC and WCHT for many years. Her grandfather Emil Kolarz, mother Regina Nadolny, and stepfather Faust Nadolny are buried in Washington Cemetery's Strangers Rest section; her brother Eugene David Gorski died in Nueces County (his burial site is unknown to us at this time).

Jeanette and Pierce **Williamson** had been married 68 years at the time of her death in 2002; he died early this year, at age 99½. We are so grateful to them for including Washington Cemetery in their estate planning. Their generous gift will be used to continue the restoration and historical projects in Washington Cemetery.

Contacts

Burial Database: Eleanor Beebe

Veterans Database: Gus Mistrot

History Book Photos: Ginger Daily

History Book Text & Newsletter Editor: Bernice Mistrot, Deadline for next issue: January 15, 2006.

Glenwood Cemetery, 2525 Washington Ave., Houston, TX 77007-6020, phone (713) 864-7886, fax (713) 864-6429, <info@glenwoodcemetery.org>.

Financial Report

During the last fiscal year, we received 168 donations from individuals, plus additional donations from the **Randalls Good Neighbor Program** (WCHT #2810) and **Kroger Share Card**. To obtain a Kroger Share Card, please contact **Lloyd Shenberger**.

The expenses in our Monument Restoration Program were for restoring 18 headstones in Phases 8 and 9. Most of the historical expenses were related to the marking of veterans' graves, including the recent headstone dedication ceremonies.

INCOME and EXPENSES (Unaudited) – Fiscal Year 2005

WASHINGTON CEMETERY HISTORIC TRUST

Net Assets – October 1, 2004	\$177,176		
INCOME: Operations/Administration	\$4,661	EXPENSES: Monument Restoration	\$4,898
Historical Projects	1,045	Historical Projects	2,366
Gravesite Restoration	1,610	Newsletter & Postage	1,986
Total Donations	\$7,316	Administration	542
Net Investment Income	13,680	Glenwood Master Plan	5,000
Total Income	\$20,996	Total Expenses	\$14,792
		Net Assets -- September 30, 2005	\$183,380
FUNDS: Cash in Bank	\$3,275	FUNDS: Operations/Administration	\$88,123
Money Market Account	49,365	Historical Projects	8,878
Securities	130,740	Gravesite Restoration	86,379
	\$183,380		\$183,380

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

WASHINGTON CEMETERY HISTORIC TRUST	
Donor Name _____	Phone Number _____
E-mail Address (if applicable) _____	
_____ 2006 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

We are pleased to report on progress toward preparation of a Master Plan to guide the future of Glenwood Cemetery and Washington Cemetery. The Glenwood Cemetery Historic Preservation Foundation has raised almost all of the project budget. The SWA Group, an international firm with a strong Houston office, has been chosen to prepare the Master Plan and work has begun.

A major goal of the Master Plan is identification of the highest and best use of cemetery land. The Master Plan will also produce design standards to ensure the continuing excellence of the cemeteries while maintaining their historic integrity. The Master Plan will address both long-term needs and immediate needs, such as a new source of irrigation water.

Another project that is proceeding concurrent with preparation of the Master Plan is the effort to control serious erosion along the gully that runs from the east side of Washington Cemetery all the way through Glenwood. The piles of fill dirt that are visible from the entrance road to Washington Cemetery will be used in conjunction with the erosion control project.

Thank you for your interest in the future of Washington Cemetery and Glenwood Cemetery.

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

WASHINGTON CEMETERY HISTORIC TRUST

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

1903-1909 Harris County Death Records

The Texas Death Index 1903-1940 includes very few Harris County deaths prior to 1910, making it hard to corroborate cemetery records in that period. WCHT has now obtained copies of 2700 death records kept by Harris County from April 1903 to July 1909. While only about 20% of the burials in Washington Cemetery are included, it's a start. For lookups in this time period, please contact Bernice Mistrot.

Cemetery Visitor/Work Days

One Saturday each month during the cooler months (January to April) is designated as a Visitor/Work Day, during which some of the Trustees will be at the cemetery with the record books to assist you in finding the graves of your loved ones. The usual hours are from about 10-4.

We invite you to join us in the continuing search for hidden markers in Strangers Rest, transcribing headstones, or proofreading maps.

Calendar of Events

Washington Cemetery Visitor/Work Days

Saturday, January 28, 2005

Saturday, February 25, 2005

Saturday, April 29, 2005.

Dedication of Republic of Texas Medallions

Saturday, March 25, 2006, 10:00 a.m.