

# WASHINGTON CEMETERY HISTORIC TRUST

Vol. 30, No. 2

"Heirs Who Care"

June 2006

## WCHT OFFICERS

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Vice President ----- Catherine Fitch  
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## 11 Citizens of the Republic of Texas Medallions Dedicated on March 25, 2006

Nearly 100 people turned out on a crisp, sparkling morning to honor eleven Citizens of the Republic of Texas who are buried in Washington Cemetery. Elegant bronze medallions like the one pictured have been installed on the headstones of the following Citizens: **Julia Purcell Bergin** and her son **Osburn M. Bergin**, **George Albert Branard**, **Louisa Reinermann Quensell**, **Edmond Reeves** and his sister **Eveline Reeves Toole**, **Emilie Usener Schneider**, **Frederick Schweikart** and his wife **Antoinette Officier Schweikart**, **Osgood Andrew Shook**, and **William H. Williams**. Family members came from as far away as California to take part in this event.



The ceremony featured the Color Guard and Honor Guard of **Boy Scout Troop 1598** of Webster, Texas, bagpipers **Doug McRae** and **Lyric Todkill** of the St. Thomas Episcopal School, and **Anita Cooper**, District VI Representative for the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, who gave the principal address.

We especially want to thank **Judy Henderson**, **Janet Schachtner**, and other members of the **Bluebonnet Branch Chapter, Daughters of the Republic of Texas**, who planned the entire ceremony and hosted a reception afterwards at Trinity Lutheran Church. Our thanks also to **Glenwood Cemetery**, which provided logistical support for the event without charge to WCHT.

## Confederate Headstone Dedication Ceremony Set for October 28, 2006

On October 28, at 10:00 a.m., about a dozen new Confederate headstones will be dedicated at a ceremony cosponsored by WCHT and **Albert Sidney Johnston Camp 67, Sons of Confederate Veterans**. The procession to each gravesite will be led by bagpipers **Al Vacek** and **Jim Hudgins**, followed by the Color Guard and Honor Guard of **Granbury's Texas Brigade Camp 1479 SCV** of Conroe and **Waul's Texas Legion Camp 2103 SCV** of Katy, which will fire a musket salute in honor of each soldier. Relatives of the veterans and members of SCV and UDC will unveil the headstones and read the soldiers' biographies. **Albert Sidney Johnston Camp 67 SCV** will host a reception following the ceremony.

Headstones for these soldiers are either on order or have already arrived: **Joshua Hamilton Ham**, **John Schiller**, **Eduard Bernhard Heinrich Schneider**, **Robert Voigt**. Additional headstones that we plan to order from the VA include: **George A. Bailey**, **Thomas Franklin Kerr**, **John Kreis**, **Joseph Poskey**.

The Confederate service of these men is well documented; however, since they already have family headstones, "VA-style" markers can be added by WCHT with a \$60 co-pay from the families: **Basil Crow Cushman**, **Robert Ferguson**, **Henry Hartmann**, **Charles G. Heyne**, **George Foster Pattillo**, **Nicholas Pippart**, **Herman Richter**. Please contact **Gus Mistrot** by June 25 if you are interested in adding a Confederate marker to any of the above gravesites.

## Clements' Corner

The following articles are in the format of the new history book being compiled. Much of the following text about Julia and Osburn Bergin was read at the recent DRT dedication ceremony.

### PLOT A-133 SAMPSON LYLES

*Submitted by Judy Henderson of Friendswood, TX, great-granddaughter of Thomas William Bergin (brother of Osburn Bergin and Elizabeth Johanna (Bergin) Lyles).*

#### **Julia Anne (PURCELL) BERGIN (ca. 1816 –18 Feb. 1895)**

Julia Ann Purcell was born in New York City. In 1837 she married John William Bergin, who had emigrated from County Cork, Ireland. The Panic of 1837 with 50% unemployment forced many people to move west where there was land, and the Allen brothers wrote a public notice for immigrants to come to Houston Town, which they advertised as “handsome and beautifully elevated, salubrious, and well-watered.”

This appealed to John and Julia Ann, and they decided to move to the frontier town of Houston. John immediately became involved in land sales. In 1839, John is listed in the original book of sales for Houston Town as buying one block of land way out on the edge of town – that block of 12 lots was later purchased by George Hermann, and is now the reflection pool in front of City Hall in Houston.

John held various jobs as a lawyer, carpenter, farmer, and political official for the county. He served in many positions – City Sexton, City Secretary, Precinct Judge, Harris County Assessor Collector, and Assistant Federal Marshal conducting the 1850 Federal census for the City of Houston. They lived in various places in Harris County including the Fifth Ward in Houston, Lynchburg, and the Red Bluff area.

John and Julia Ann had nine children, four of whom were born under the flag of the Republic of Texas: William Purcell (1838), John William, Jr. (1840), Edward Andrew (1844), and Osburn M. (1845). All four were baptized together at Annunciation Church on 25 May 1847. William, John, and Osburn served in the Confederacy; William was killed in the battle of Corinth, Mississippi, and John, Jr. was wounded. The younger Bergin children were George, Mary Catherine, Thomas Gammell, Elizabeth Johanna, and Thomas William. Seven of Julia Ann's nine children preceded her in death, either as infants or adults. This woman certainly knew the meaning of heartache.

John William Sr. died on 17 November 1864. His son John William Jr., as the oldest living son, went AWOL from the army in Galveston to help his family during this time of crisis. John Sr. left Julia Ann with three minor children: Mary, Elizabeth, and Thomas William. It is assumed that because of the financial and emotional stress of the war that John Sr. was buried on their property along Buffalo Bayou near Red Bluff Road, for his grave has never been located. For this reason he is recognized on the headstone as Julia Ann's husband.

Julia Ann outlived her husband by about 30 years. John had left her with property to live on and rental property to support the family. However, with the depression of the 1870s and 1890s, times were hard, and she was forced to sell some property to support herself and any children left at home. In Julia Ann's

later years, her daughter Elizabeth Johanna Bergin Lyles took care of her. Julia Ann died at the age of 79, three months after Elizabeth's death from consumption.

#### **Osburn M. BERGIN (22 April 1845 – 30 March 1917)**

Osburn, fourth son of John and Julia Bergin, was the last of their children to be born in the Republic of Texas. At age 19, in the summer of 1864, he enlisted in Company D, 2nd Texas Infantry, where he served with Joseph POSKYA (also spelled PAUSKA and POSKEY, see Plot F-15). On 5 December 1864, he was transferred to the Navy, serving on the Ironclad *Missouri*. Osburn was surrendered 14 May 1865 on the Red River above Alexandria, Louisiana. He received a Confederate pension from 1909 until his death.

After the war, he moved to Calvert for a time, where he worked as a hide dealer. He moved back to Houston before 1877 and became a carpenter. On 30 December 1882, he married Margaret Eliza TEVIS in Beaumont, Texas. They had two children:

Maud Adele (27 Jan. 1884 – 26 Oct. 1962, buried in Forest Park Lawndale), married Stewart Hill DUFFIELD (see Plot H-40)  
Ned C. (27 Aug. 1886 – 19 Jul. 1921)

Margaret died of pneumonia on 26 December 1886, leaving Osburn with an infant and a toddler, so his mother Julia Ann helped him rear the two young children. He worked briefly as a policeman, then operated a “club room” for a couple of years before returning to carpentry. For the last eight years of his life, he and his children lived at 1407 Jameson.

#### **Ned BERGIN (27 August 1886 – 19 July 1921)**

Ned, only son of Osburn Bergin, was a switchman for the railroad. He died in an auto accident, being one of two men killed when their small truck ran off the road and overturned in a ditch near the San Jacinto battleground. He was survived by his wife Clara and married sister Maud Duffield.

#### **Elizabeth Johanna (BERGIN) LYLES (8 October 1854 – 25 November 1894)**

Elizabeth, younger daughter of John and Julia Bergin, was born in Texas and confirmed at Annunciation Catholic Church in 1871. She married Sampson LYLES in Houston on 16 October 1878, and became stepmother to his three small children, in addition to having two children of their own, Julia (1879) and Arista Beulah (1882). In 1887, she was a dressmaker, according to the Houston city directory. At the time of her death, they lived at 3202 Odin in the Fifth Ward.

Also buried here (their stories will be in the new history book):

#### **Sampson LYLES Sr. (Aug. 1847 –25 Feb. 1912)**

Husband of Elizabeth Johanna Bergin and owner of this plot.

#### **William T. LYLES (Oct. 1872 – 9 Aug. 1901)**

Eldest son of Sampson Lyles.

#### **Arista Beulah (LYLES) STERNS (14 Oct. 1882 – 22 Oct. 1918)**

Daughter of Sampson Lyles and Elizabeth Bergin.

#### **George C. STERNS (8 Aug. 1879 – 30 Oct. 1920)**

Husband of Arista Beulah Lyles, and nephew of Joseph Poskey.

#### **Infant Son of William Elwood GREER (10 Sep. 1927)**

Son of Beulah (Sterns) Greer and grandson of George C. Sterns.

#### **Lottie (LYLES) SHERRILL (Mar. 1885 – 29 Sep. 1913)**

Niece of Sampson Lyles.

## Headstone Transcription Project and Burial Database

We're happy to report that all headstones in the cemetery, including Strangers Rest, have now been transcribed. Over the summer we will work on transferring those pencil notes to the computer database, so that proofreading the computer printouts can resume in the fall. Proofreading of the database printouts for the family plots is close to complete, while the Strangers Rest input is just getting started. Our thanks go to all who have put many hours into this project recently, including Eleanor Beebe, Cathy Fitch, Beverly Gilstrap, Richard June, Bernice Mistrot, and Helen Reddy.

### Contacts

#### Glenwood Cemetery:

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

**Burial Database:** Eleanor Beebe.

**Veterans Database:** Gus Mistrot.

**History Book Text:** Bernice Mistrot.

**History Book Photos:** Ginger Daily.

**Newsletter Editor:** Bernice Mistrot. Deadline for material for October issue: September 1, 2006.

## Treasurer's Report (June 1, 2006)

The total assets of WCHT, consisting of cash and investments, at May 31, 2006 equal \$219,375, of which \$86,778 is held in the Improvements Fund for continuing projects. Investments are carried at cost. As of May 31, 2006, the current market value was below cost by \$10,646.

The fiscal year 2006 unaudited fund balance statement for the four months ending May 31, 2006 follows.

Fund Balance – Jan. 31, 2005	\$217,503
Income – Donations	6,444
Income – Investments	<u>3,829</u>
Total Income	10,273
Expenses – Gravesite Restoration	2,700
Expenses – Historical Projects	2,537
Expenses – Newsletter & Postage	727
Expenses – Administrative	<u>2,437</u>
Total Expenses	8,401
Fund Balance – May 31, 2006	\$219,375

During the four months ended May 31, 2006, WCHT received 77 donations from individuals. WCHT also received funds from the Randall's *Good Neighbor* Program (WCHT #2810) and Kroger *Share Card*. During this period WCHT also received gifts totaling \$2,500 in memory of Katherine Couch and designated for the Improvement Fund, and \$2,000 from ExxonMobil Foundation Cultural Matching Gift Program.

Major capital expenses included purchase of a computer, \$2,267, and a portable sound system for our historical ceremonies, \$1,425.

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Please return the form below with your check and mail to the **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) _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2006 ANNUAL Donation (\$20.00) <input type="checkbox"/> GRAVESITE RESTORATION <input type="checkbox"/> HISTORY/RESEARCH	Surname(s) of Deceased _____
<input type="checkbox"/> TOTAL	Plot Number(s), if known _____
	Matching Gift from _____

## Phase 8H Monument Repairs Completed

**Bobby Schlitzberger** has just completed leveling and cleaning of seven more headstones and copings in Phase 8H for a total of \$2700.00. The repaired monuments are as follows:

*Section B:* Prof. F. W. **Schmidt** (1827-1906) [two headstones], **Halphen** coping.

*Section C:* Henry **Waegner** (1890-1890).

*Section G:* Alesanah **Holloway** (1872-1891).

*Strangers Rest (Section H):* John M. **Beatty** (1832-1900), **Dinehart** coping – Jeremiah **Dinehart** (1841-1911) and one unmarked grave.

This completes the contract WCHT had with Bobby Schlitzberger. Most future repair work of this type will be done by Glenwood, though we may call on Schlitzberger for extremely large or technically difficult projects. We are very grateful to him for the work he has done over the years to restore the many beautiful old monuments in Washington Cemetery.

## Photos of Republic of Texas Dedication Ceremony Now Available

Judy Henderson has prepared a set of two CDs containing all of the photos taken during the event, plus a PowerPoint presentation of the highlights, with printed titles. If you would like a copy of these CD's please contact **Bernice Mistrot**. A small donation to WCHT would be appreciated.

## Glenwood Annual Meeting on June 15

The Annual Meeting of Glenwood Cemetery, Inc. will start at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 15, 2005, at the offices of Fulbright & Jaworski, 51st Floor, 1301 McKinney (Chevron Tower), Houston, Texas 77010.

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 the Glenwood Annual Report and 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. You may also write to Glenwood Cemetery, 2525 Washington Ave., Houston, Texas 77007 or send e-mail to <info@glenwoodcemetery.org>.

### Calendar of Events

#### Glenwood Cemetery Annual Meeting

Thursday, June 15, 2005, 10:00 a.m.

51st Floor, 1301 McKinney (Chevron Tower)

#### Washington Cemetery Visitor/Work Day

Saturday, October 14, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

#### Dedication of New Confederate Headstones

Saturday, October 28, 2005, 10:00 a.m.

#### Washington Cemetery Visitor/Work Day

Saturday, November 18, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

## WASHINGTON CEMETERY HISTORIC TRUST

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED