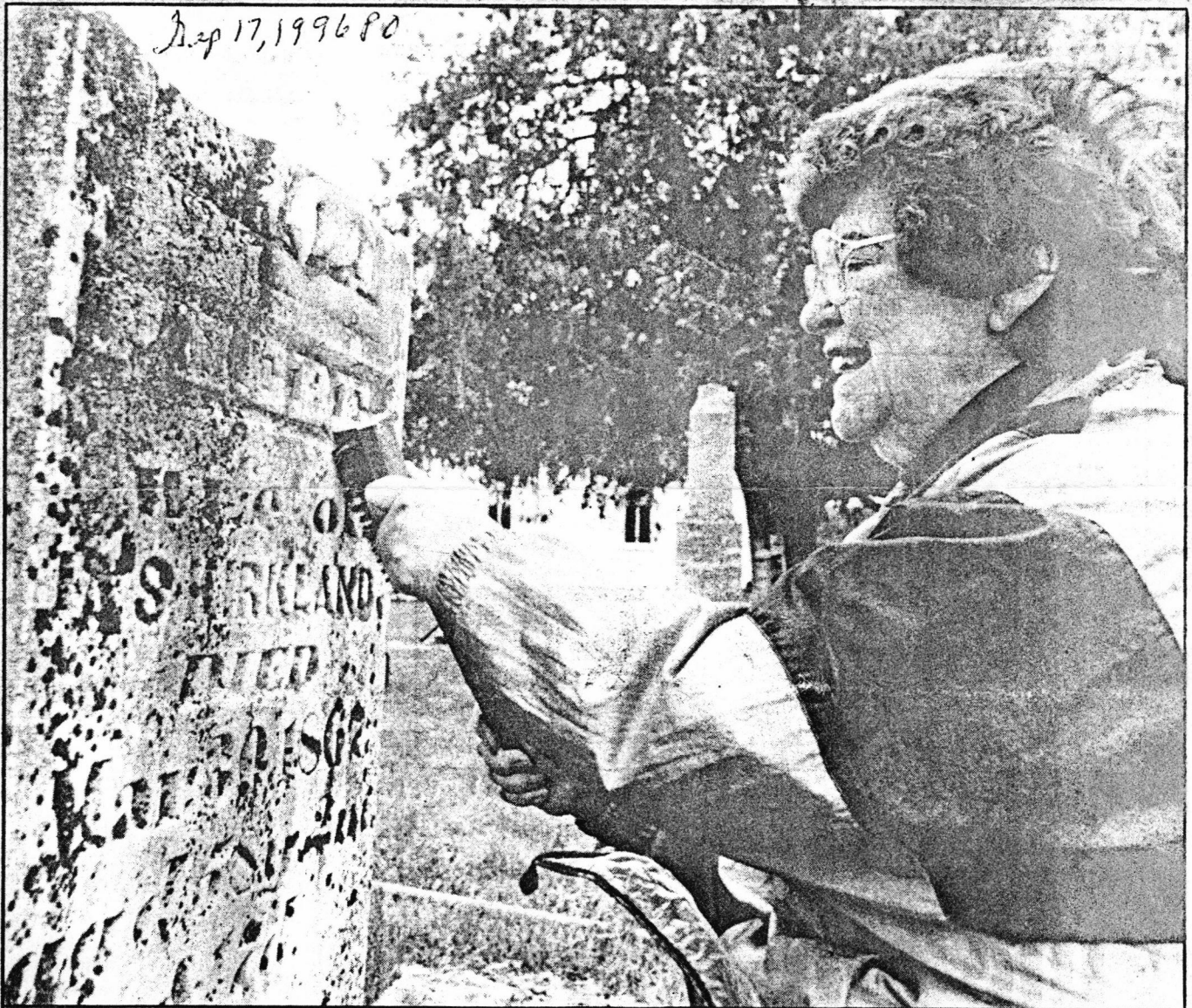


GRAVE NEWS
NEWSLETTER OF STATE ASSOCIATION
for
PRESERVATION OF IOWA CEMETERIES

Vol. I Issue # 2

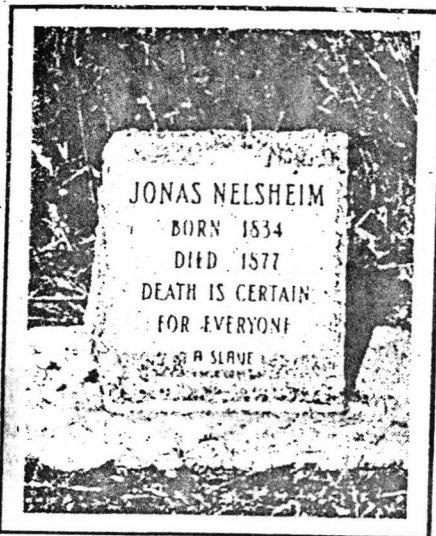
Date October 1996

Cemetery restoration



Helen Schmidt of Decorah uses a wire brush to scrape clean a grave marker at the Freeport Cemetery during a Sept. 12-14 workshop led by specialist Paul Maddy of Perry. The gravestone restoration workshop was sponsored by the Decorah Genealogy Association and the Freeport Cemetery Association. (Decorah Newspapers photo by Randy Uhl)

The above picture of Helen cleaning a gravemarker shows by her facial expression how all the "trainees" felt about their learning experience under the direction of Paul Maddy. Thanks a Million!



Grave of a Slave

One of the oldest cemeteries in Winneshiek County is that of the Hesper Public Cemetery.

Among the many persons interred within its bounds include one person that was born two years before George Washington became president of the United States. There is a soldier who fought in the War of 1812; a nurse who served in the Civil War; a victim of a murder in the area; a slave from the south who found his way north through the underground railroad during the Civil War; the founder of the village of Hesper; a detective from the Detective Agency from Chicago; three victims of a flood, just to name a few.

Hesper was founded in 1851 when the first settler, E.E. Meader arrived in the area from Indiana. Russell Taber, a native of Vermont, was the founder of the village in 1857.

In 1857 the first grave that has a marker, is that of Lydia Wickersham, age 8 months and 11 days who died June 20 of that year.

Abram West, born April 4, 1787, two years before George Washington was elected president of the United States, is the oldest person buried there. His wife, Anna, born in 1799, the same year as Washington died, is buried at his side.

Henry Walton Gates, born in 1790, served with the New York Militia in the War of 1812 and died at Hesper in 1863, is the oldest veteran buried there. Veterans of the Civil War are numerous, surpassing the veterans of World War I and II. Cynthia Worth Cameron is the only person to serve as a nurse during the War between the States, serving with Company A of the 18th Iowa Infantry at Jefferson Barracks, MO.

A slave, Nels Nelsheim, found his way north from the state of Mississippi during the Civil War through the underground railroad, to the home of E.E. Meader, for whom he worked. He died in 1877 at the age of 43. His grave is set off from the rest in remote section in the northwest corner.

Mary Cater, 44, one of two people murdered at Burr Oak on Sept. 1, 1894, is in the Cater family plot. Cater was murdered along with George Wemett, in a murder that rocked northeastern Iowa nearly a century ago. Her husband, John D. Cater, was convicted of Wemett's murder and sent to prison, while the fate of Mrs. Cater remains unsolved.

Jonas Wellington and his wife, Cornelia and their grandson, Charles Gage, were among the victims of the Wiesel flood in Fillmore County on August 6, 1866. Wellington was also a Civil War veteran.

Col. George Dellingham, a detective for the Police Patrol and Detective Agency of Chicago, often referred to as Hesper's "mysterious man", lies in an unusual grave. Prior to his death in 1905, Dellingham made a request that his Bible, the American flag and his pistol be buried with him. He also requested that his grave be brick-lined and after his coffin was placed in this receptacle, that iron bars be laid over the casket and then covered with brick and mortar.

During his 29 years residency in Hesper, he would often disappear riding a white horse with a gun at his side and would be gone for long or short periods of time.

A native of St. Alban's Main, he taught school, served as a private in the Civil War and at times even filled the pulpit at the Hesper Friends Church.

There are many unique monuments of various sizes and descriptions, which revive old legends or stories. Some tell of military history, others of a profession or a hobby that was pursued.

The Robert McMillen family has a red polished marble 12-foot monument, resembling a colonnade similar to one of the royal mosques in Ishahan.

Testifying to her artistic ability, Sattie Worth has a small unimposing grey monument on which a painter's palette is carved.

Like the trunk of a large tree deprived of its branches and surrounded at the base by fern-type leaves, stands the monument to Hon. Horace B. Williams, a native of Batavia, NY, who arrived in Hesper in 1858. He served four terms in the Iowa State Legislature.

A tool shed, patterned after a Chinese pagoda, was erected in 1905 by Will Camp. It has withstood vandalism and the element for the past 83 years. It stands just south of the entrance gate.

The Hesper Cemetery Association was organized on June 11, 1904 at Tabor's Hall. Present officers are Fay Harvey, Pres.; Bernard White, Vice Pres.; Burr Griswold, Secy., and Robert Street, Treas.

THOUGHT FOR TODAY: Lust and immorality are a canker to the mind, a corrosive to the conscience, and a curse to a nation.

Feb 1988 Mabel Record p.3

To left an article by Burr Griswold as printed in the Mabel, MN Record in Feb. 1988 on p.3.

Below is an article from the Waterloo Courier, Mar.15,1996.

REMEMBER__ TAKE THIS NEWLETTER TO THE Oct. 12 meeting at 7 AM UNION BLDG, IA City.

Mom sues cemetery over son's injuries

DAVENPORT (AP) — A Quad-Cities woman is suing a Davenport cemetery where a 300-pound tombstone fell on her 3-year-old son, resulting in severe brain damage.

In a lawsuit filed in Scott County District Court, Julia Wilson, 27, of Rock Island, Ill., alleges that the owners of Oakdale Memorial Gardens should have known their facility "posed a significant risk of serious personal injury" to her son and other members of the public.

She also accuses the cemetery of negligence for failing to correct the "dilapidated, unstable condition and state of disrepair" of many of the monuments on the cemetery grounds, according to the lawsuit.

Wilson was pulling weeds Oct. 9, 1995, at the cemetery under the terms of a court-ordered community service sentence.

Her son, Keith, was playing on a 6-foot-7-inch grave marker when it toppled over, fracturing his skull in five places and breaking two vertebrae.

Wilson was able to lift the obelisk off the boy and pull him free. She then drove him to a nearby hospital.

After receiving extensive treatment at University Hospitals in Iowa City, Keith was brought back home. But he remains unconscious.

Jim Weerts, president of Oakdale Memorial Gardens, declined comment on the lawsuit.

"That's for the courthouse," he said. "I don't intend to try this in the paper. ... It will be properly tried in the courts."

"It was just an unfortunate accident." Wilson is seeking unspecified damages.

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE STATE ASSOCIATION
FOR THE PRESERVATION OF IOWA CEMETERIES:

As I complete my term as president of the State Association for the Preservation of Iowa Cemeteries, I must admit that there is far more to be done than I had initially anticipated. In many areas, we have not been as effective as we could have been, but we have made a start!

The challenges lie in at least three important areas:

- (1) Membership Development. While I am concerned that we get as many people as possible involved in cemetery preservation (such as every genealogist, local historian, cemetery official, etc.), this is not my concern at this moment. It is, rather, the development of a functioning network of people who can help each other, serve as resource people, and keep the needs of all Iowa cemeteries, especially those where our pioneers are buried, in the public eye.

I believe that it is mandatory that we develop area "chapters" (for lack of a better word), so that the resources of the organization are available to each member and cemetery organization. In some areas, this may be a county group, but perhaps we could start by targeting each district of the Iowa Genealogical Society, cultivating members in each district to serve as liaison/resource people to county boards and other legislative bodies, cemetery organizations, and all other interested persons.

- (2) Education. Some kind of program should be instituted to make the general public aware of the need to protect and restore our (pioneer) cemeteries. Perhaps we could submit well-written articles to newspapers, historical/genealogical newsletters, etc. Broadcast media is another area that needs investigation. We must get the word out! Iowa can take the lead in cemetery preservation, protection, and appreciation!

A seminar---or better still a series of seminars---should be developed to equip our members in the various areas in which their input is needed (public awareness, legal issues, "hands on" cemetery restoration, etc.) Until every member is well versed in the goals and methods of the organization, we will continue to be only a "fringe" group, and thus we will not reach peak effectiveness.

Not only must we develop our own newsletter into an dynamic publication worthy of the public's attention, but we should also consider some kind of a legislative newsletter to inform, challenge, and encourage our legislators, and to express our appreciation for their efforts.

(3) Legislation. Thanks to the extraordinary efforts of Mr. Dean Gipple, we have legislation permitting county boards to take action in preserving pioneer cemeteries. Our organization owes him a great debt of gratitude for those efforts!

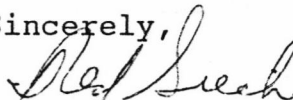
As mentioned above, we must keep the needs of our cemeteries ---all of them!---before our legislators. There are areas in "our" bill that will need attention, and perhaps change as time goes by. It is a great start, but we must do more!

Laws should be passed to establish harsher penalties for cemetery desecration. Access to cemeteries needs to be more clearly defined. Public ownership of all burial sites should be assured. No longer can we allow old gravestones to be piled against a fence or buried, so that more crop land is available for the "owner" of the land!

I call your attention to the enclosed material by Paul Maddy. He has done us a great service in preparing it, and I am sending a copy to each of you, hoping that you will thoughtfully consider what both Mr. Maddy and I have to say, and then that you will come to our meeting ready to discuss what we have written, as well as your own insights and suggestions.

I would hope that the members of our organization can come together and enhance the public's awareness of the special heritage of our pioneer cemeteries. The challenge is great, but we can meet it!

Sincerely,



Ted Sieck, President
State Association for the
Preservation of Iowa Cemeteries

September 3, 1996

TO: Members of the State Association
for the Preservation of Iowa Cemeteries

THRU: President Ted Sieck
Box 283, Irwin, IA 51446
Tel. (712) 782-3300

FROM: Paul E. Maddy *dem*
1515 Warford St.
Perry, IA 50220-167
Tel. (515) 465-3472

SUBJECT: Committee Challenges

For all the responsibilities, or the opportunities before us, our occasional meetings give us insufficient time for all the challenges we have. Anyway, I missed the last meeting, regrettably due to my own error.

As we look ahead at the problems and the opportunities, each of you are probably doing some thinking about what should be on our agenda.

Here are some of my thoughts about possible agenda items. I am routing these through our president so that (1) his agenda concerns and the overall interests of the committee are not unduly distorted by just one member; (2) he can borrow what he wants from this draft to add to his present thoughts and his vision of near-term planning priorities for our committee.

This is not a message about what I think I can do so long as the Commission blesses the start. Near the end I identify where I think my efforts should be. So most of this is thought about what should be on the agenda for everyone to share in, to struggle with.

INTRODUCTION:

When THE NEW BILL had just been passed, Mr. Gipple called me with a question. (What were my thoughts about) how my presentation could be seen and heard by all Boards of Supervisors in Iowa?

It was a flattering question, and I appreciated it. But my first action was to congratulate Mr. Gipple for his stunning "over-night" success in getting a bill through in just one year. But of course Mr. Gipple had been preparing for over-night success his whole life, and especially in his retirement years.

INFORMATION TO BOARDS OF SUPERVISORS - AND BY WHAT METHODS:

Later I shared with my family Gipple's compliment-question. Our Des Moines daughter works for the Governor's office on state-wide health care information/education issues. She offered an immediate answer to the question. "You and the Committee are going to use the new State Fiber-Optic TV Network, aren't you?" (She has.) Hmm. On target! But if so, then what messages on that medium and when? These concerns can become agenda items for us. But first, yours:

YOUR AGENDA CONCERNS:

Enter here your early agenda concerns.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Now with some possible duplication, I'll add others of mine.

ANTICIPATE SLOW IMPLEMENTATION RATE:

The new law is not mandatory. That wasn't politically possible. It is permissive. Boards of Supervisors CAN do this OR NOT. But why would they not do this?

To us it seems logical that Boards would soon go our way. But early on we shall probably find most Boards will not rush to adopt our vision of the problems and the solution. Why not?

A short answer. Board members are like other people, other Iowans. It is my 10-year finding that people have been and are "handcuffed"

by a number of beliefs, or understandings, or "facts" that are not true. My belief: if this were not so, we probably would not have so much accumulated neglect in our rural cemeteries. A mere brief listing here of these erroneous "facts" will probably not convince. You will need to have my free presentation in your community and/or read my book.

Certainly we will be grateful to those Boards who do act favorably soon. AND I suggest we will want to tap into their reasons when counties do act, AND circulate these reasons statewide to other Boards. The rest of the prescription will be "Repeat as needed." Probably for several years we will need to take advantage of the info in every county that acts. If so, all of this means a series of newsletters. What do you think? Yes or no? What else?

NEWSLETTERS AND _____:

VCR presentations--not one but several? VCR presentations of what? This leads me back to Mr. Gipple's question and an important partial answer.

THE COMMITTEE'S MESSAGE IS _____:

Maddy's presentation alone will probably NOT achieve what you and the Committee want to accomplish. This Committee needs its own voice, its own message. As already stated earlier in the year, the Committee is free to borrow what concepts it likes from Maddy's book themes in creating its own message.

INPEDIMENTS TO EARLY ACTION:

Besides the needs of everyone for fuller understanding of essential facts and paralyzing fictions, what else impedes? Boards of Supervisors no doubt have full agendas. It is hard for any organization to just set policies. My guess (just a guess) is that Boards of Supervisors don't find enough time "for everything". Anyway, their agendas are prepared by the auditors who are secretaries to the boards. So isn't it the auditors who are high on our list of targets for better understanding of rural cemetery problems and solutions?

AUDITORS AND SUPERVISORS AS COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Maybe I am not correct in this, but if I am, then I suggest we want to be inviting into our membership supervisors and ex-supervisors, auditors and ex-auditors to help us shape our messages and strategies--and to be important avenues of communications, not just

in the near future, but over the years as we will again, again and again be spreading the word, educating, informing. Possible issue: Full working membership - or advisory - or . . . their choice - or . . . ?

But the analysis above is based on my assertions. Am I approximately correct or off target? I expect President Sieck will appreciate it if you contact friends who are auditors or ex, supervisors or ex, and affirm or deny the assertions here, and bring that information to the Committee for tally.

VCR MESSAGES:

VCR - very easy to print 3 letters. But it will not be easy to get good ones produced. But once a good VCR is produced, copies can convey essential information in many places at the convenience of the audience as they are assembled for their regular meetings with the VCR tape message an extra feature. Once a good message is produced, then can it be shown in a lot or all counties at the same time via the State's new fiber-optic network?

VCR TARGET AUDIENCE:

Would a VCR message be only for Boards of Supervisors and Auditors? I suggest it should be one that any and all of us could take anywhere and everywhere so that the public learns what the cemetery needs are. Then the public and can tell Boards of Supervisors what action they believe best for pioneer cemeteries.

QUALITY AND PRODUCER:

But I also envision a VCR message that is professionally polished and complete enough in text and message so that it does NOT require us to be presenters and translators of the VCR messages. That, I think, would have to be the standard for use over the fiber-optic network.

Question: Who should produce the text? I have no doubt the draft text can be produced by this committee, probably polished by a skilled editor.

But we must clearly see that "how to do gravestone restoration" is NOT where to start with our problem; therefore it should not be the subjects of our first messages. Our first messages and repeats have to deal with the why--why the past and present system is so inadequate to preserve our heritage.

Question: Who should then produce the VCR? My view is that the production should not be by amateurs (us).

THEN GET STARTED ON A "HOW TO DO IT" VCR:

Twice in recent years I have participated in attempts to get my gravestone restoration field-day techniques onto VCR. Both times, noise (distant truck noise and farm tractor noise) botched the attempt. It is now clear to me that the audio should go on after the "how to do it" tape is produced and edited, at least most of it. Professional guidance expected.

It is clear to me now that the photography of the demonstration of techniques will need to be at times arranged just for the photography. Most of it cannot be accomplished during public demo events.

There is a great need for a "how to do it VCR".

FUNDING:

If after thoughtful sifting of everyone's input some of my thoughts are still on your agenda, then funding possibilities become a top agenda item. Realistically, some facts on this will help shape the decisions on what VCR messages would be initiated.

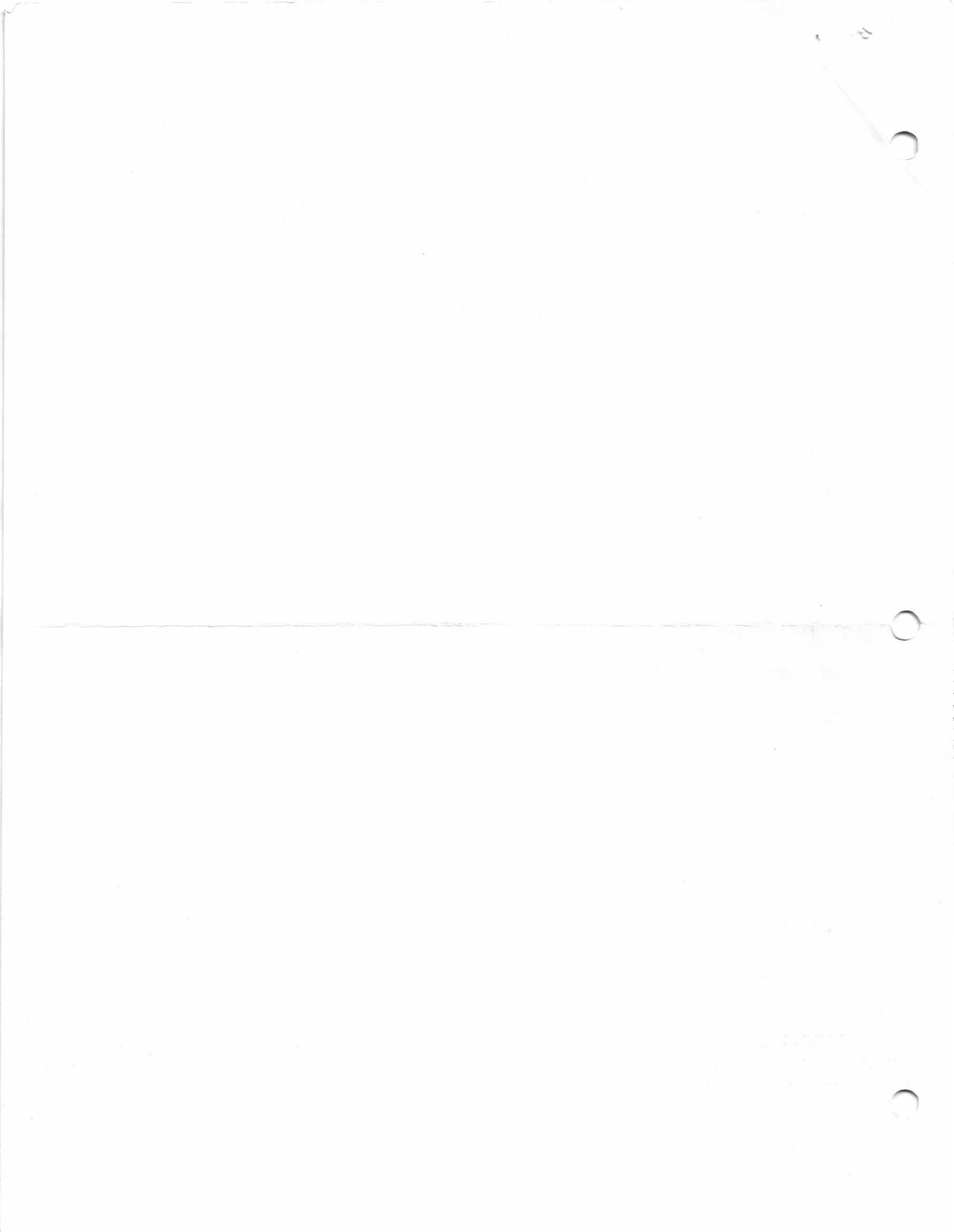
IN CONCLUSION:

I'll say it again. Regarding any messages to everyone or to all Boards of Supervisors about the why, I think the Committee should find its own voice, its own message -- the voice of you, you and you. Meanwhile, (a) my Cemetery Demonstration Days, (b) plus more research on methods, and (c) in-door slide programs around the state are where my efforts should continue to be.

YOUR AGENDA CONCERNS:

Early on I invited you to put down your agenda concerns. Let's have them down on paper. Let's not overlook the thoughts you already had before you received my thoughts. And all of us will be listening to them in October.

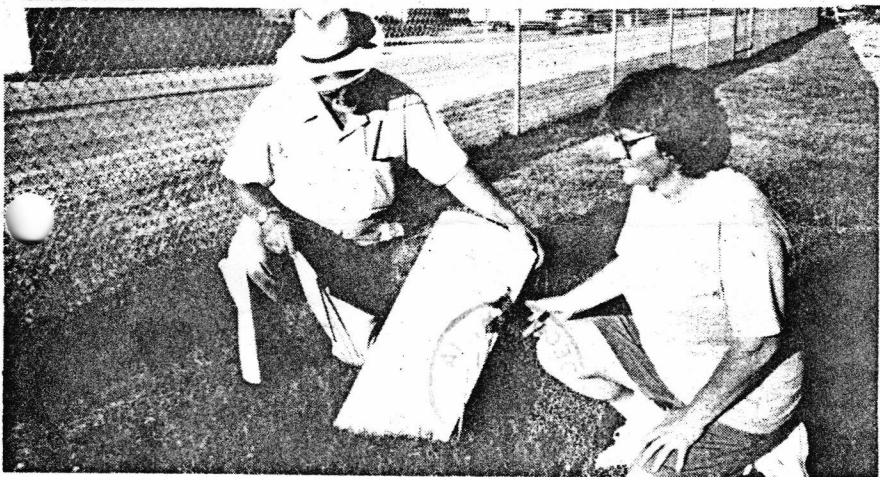
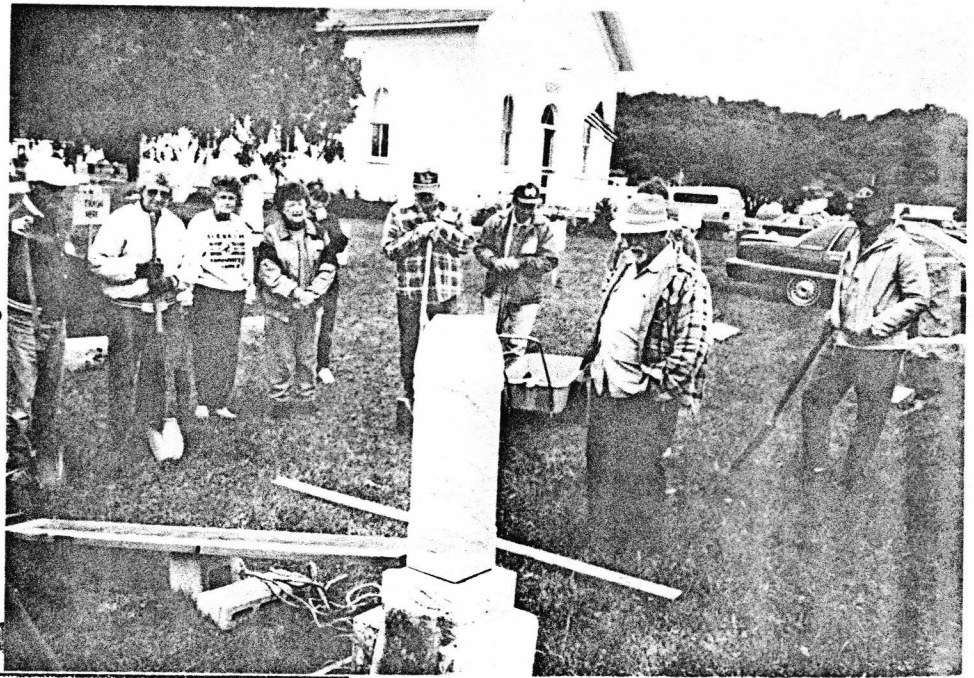
IPCC.ltr



September 12, 1996

Paul Maddy teaching part of the Freeport/Decorah group "how to..."

DECORAH JOURNAL
THUR AUG 29, 1996



Paul Maddy of Perry assists Julie Pitz, president of the Freeport Cemetery Association, in examining gravestones in preparation of a restoration workshop. (Submitted photo)

Pioneer gravestone restorer will present Freeport workshop

Paul Maddy, a noted pioneer gravestone restorer, will conduct a hands-on workshop at the Freeport Cemetery Sept. 12-14.

A \$15 fee will be charged for the three-day workshop. The fee is to cover the cost of materials.

The workshop is open to all people interested in learning how to repair and preserve our ancestor's and pioneer grave sites.

Maddy, a resident of Perry, in recent years has provided restoration skills to as many as 1,000 people.

He also explains how county supervisors, trustees, cemetery boards and volunteers can without fear of any legal hassles handle cemetery care problems expeditiously.

Maddy's visit is sponsored by the Decorah Genealogy Association and the Freeport Cemetery Association.

Representatives of both groups have found at least 13 abandoned or unkempt cemeteries within Winneshiek County. Members say they are certain there are more such cemeteries in the county and are concerned about their preservation.

Gravestone workshop offered

Paul Maddy, a noted pioneer gravestone restorer, will conduct a hands-on workshop at the Freeport Cemetery Sept. 12-14.

A \$15 fee will be charged for the three-day workshop. The fee is to cover the cost of materials.

The workshop is open to all people interested in learning how to repair and preserve our ancestor's and pioneer grave sites.

Maddy, a resident of Perry, in recent years has provided restoration skills to as many as 1,000 people.

He also explains how county supervisors, trustees, cemetery boards and volunteers can without fear of any legal hassles handle cemetery care problems expeditiously.

Maddy's visit is sponsored by the Decorah Genealogy Association and the Freeport Cemetery Association.

Representatives of both groups have found at least 13 abandoned or unkempt cemeteries within Winneshiek County. Members say they are certain there are more such cemeteries in the county and are concerned about their preservation.

Public Opinion Sept 10, 1996

LETTER WITH YOU TO THE MEETING!!!
UNION BUILDING AT IOWA CITY, IOWA. BE SURE TO TAKE THIS NEWS-
PRESERVATION OF IOWA CEMETERIES--OCTOBER 12th at 7AM in the
REMEMBER THE OCTOBER MEETING OF THE STATE ASSOCIATION FOR THE
Maureen Wilson's correct phone number is 252-0929.

F. Jeffers, Secy & Editor
St.Assoc.for Preservation of
Iowa Cemeteries
507 Jefferson St.
Decorah, Iowa 52101-1711



Address Larry D. Davis
571 1/2 Kingman Ave
Des Moines, IA 50311

