

GRAVE NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF STATE ASSOCIATION
for
PRESERVATION OF IOWA CEMETERIES

Vol. II Issue 2

Date May 7, 1997

UNCOVERING HISTORY

(Taken from 11 Nov 1996 THE HAWK EYE, Burlington, IA, Ann Riley Feature Editor--written by Criss Roberts, New London Twp.)

WHEN he scratched the dirt off and saw the letters 'EH' on the buried tombstone, John Danielson knew he had hit a second mother-lode.

He'd been told there werent any gravemarkers left at the old Ebenezer Cemetery in this far northwest corner of New London Twp in Henry County. But Bill Anderson who farms there, knew there were



a few stones left in the thicket of trees and unmowed grass near his farm pond.

That was enough for Danielson. With Anderson's blessing, he and
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friend, Emmett Frazer, both of Burlington, brought shovels and machetes and saws to clear off the spot where records said Danielson's great-great grandmother Margaret Ehrhart, who had died in 1876, was buried.

Following the end rows of Anderson's corn, bumping over waterways and parking in prairie grass, they arrived at the all-but-abandoned pioneer cemetery last month to search. They had a list of burials from an old story in a local newspaper and a scattering of granite bases marking where the gravemarkers once stood. Here and there an intact tombstone was hidden by grass and bramble.

Gingerly, Danielson began digging. He found a stone, then moved on. If the newspaper list was correct, the fourth grave would be Margaret's.

"When I uncovered the 'EH' I knew we'd found it," Danielson said.

Understandably, he wanted to share his discovery. So 10 days ago he took his 90-year-old mother Eva, of Burlington, to visit her great grandmother's grave. Along for the trip were siblings Linda Danielson Martinez of San Francisco and Ross, of Portland, OR, as well as his son Richard.

"When you approach a grave of someone who was an ancestor, you approach it with a certain amount of awe, a certain amount of respect," he said at a Mount Pleasant restaurant where the family had gone before piling into vans and trucks to visit Margaret's hilltop grave.

As a genealogical researcher, Burlington's John Danielson is a pup. An energetic pup, but with only 11/12 years of record digging under his belt, he is a pup none the less. Still, that hasn't stopped him from compiling an impressive amount of information on several branches of the family. Longtime genealogy buff Frazier and his computer program helped make a logical order out of the records.

The pair have gone through library records, cemetery records and courthouse records, where Danielson found what he calls his first motherlode, a census listing which added several branches to the family tree.

Time consuming, yet fascinating, genealogy searches provide important bits of information about family health. Danielson found many relatives who lived well past 90, explaining in part his mother Eva's hardiness at that age.

Still, he started the search for much the same reason many begin. "I'm interested in family history," he said.

WHERE TO START?*****

The Burlington Library has these suggestions for tracing your family history:

ALWAYS start with yourself, then work backward through parents, grandparents and old family friends.

DO ONE STEP at a time. Don't skip generations.

ALWAYS use a pencil. Especially when you're in the library, since librarians frown on ink marks in the books.

KEEP careful track of dates. It's common to find several relatives with the same name, so dates keep them sorted.

ASK questions. Interview grandma, find family letters. Genealogy is a family affair.

LEARN to love libraries-you'll spend a lot of time in them.

LIBRARIANS tend to be very pleasant people to spend the day with.

OTHER PLACES to search include genealogical society meetings, continuing education classes, the courthouse, church and cemetery offices and the INTERNET. If putting together a family tree is like building a puzzle, any place could have those missing pieces.

(Editor--May I add, consult you Cemetery Commission, Supervisors, too.)

Members and guests present at the May 3, 1997 meeting of SAPIC:

President--Ted Siek

Vice-Pres.- (Loren Horton absent)

Secretary--Fran Jeffers

Treasurer--Keith Street

Board Members--Calvin McVay, Michael Magee, Paul Maddy, Dean Gipple

Guests--Ethel McVay, Winterset; Lee Sloan, Jefferson; James D. Miller, Francis Wright, Mary Dodson, Connie K. Penick and Sean Dodson all of Oseola; Dean Clark, Shirley Clark, Clare Robson, Marge Robson, Richard B. Buzard, and Anna Kuehl all of Jefferson; and Eugene Nonahan, Charidan, .

MINUTES

The STATE ASSOCIATION for the PRESERVATION of IOWA CEMETERIES met at Jefferson, IA (The Family Table Restaurant) on May 3, 1997. The meeting was called to order by Pres. Ted Siek at 10:33 AM. Members and guests were introduced. The Secretary read the minutes as printed in the Vol.II-Issue 1 Grave News. MSP

The treasurer reported that the last balance (in Jan.) was \$1337.30 and that after expenses and collection of dues, the present balance is \$1089.26. MSP

Dean Gipple was asked to give an up-date of legislative action and a report on what he has done. The suggestion was made to the state legislature that incentive monies be given to county cemetery commissions. No action. In Louisa County Bronze plaques have been erected honoring the 4-H groups who have cleaned up cemeteries. They are 1 x 24 x 24 inch marble plaques. The cemetery group has an "open-end" supply of cement for use in repairing work; "Trees Forever Foundation" located in Marion, IA gave a grant of over \$1000 for trees and the FFA helped plant them. Formerly it cost \$1200 a year for 3 cemeteries to be mowed---a mower was purchased for the Commission and now they can be mowed for \$100.

Dean suggested Commissions apply for grants. Items needed for repair of markers; cleaning and clearing overgrown brush supplies; cost of trees to plant around cemeteries with no stones; and monies to promote tourism for the area. A list of organizations or companies who give grants may be received from State Historical Soc. in Iowa City.

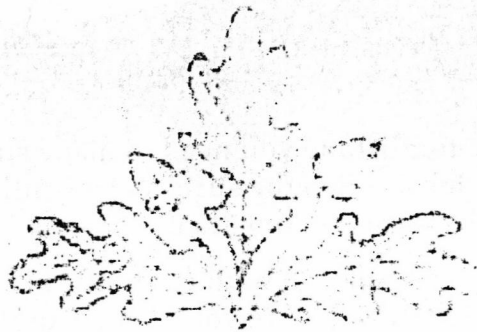
The report was followed by open discussion by those present with Dean offering solutions. "Go for publicity on graves being plowed over...the law does not allow this. Work WITH Trustees and Supervisors."

Regarding the ROBERT CARTER MEMORIAL AWARD--Keith Street requested that nominations be sent to him or Dean Gipple by June 30. A copy of the award criteria was printed in the last GRAVE NEWS. If YOU need another copy, request it from the secretary including SASE. A motion was made by Mike Magee that the IGS representatives send letters of request to their area genealogy societies asking for a list of Pioneer cemeteries in their area. MSP (A Pioneer Cemetery has had 6 or fewer burials in the last 50 years.) It was requested that the IGS Reps collect the lists and send to SAPIC.

A correction was made regarding the election of Board members. Dean Gipple was elected to a 3 year term, Bill Lemke is in this year, and two board members have not renewed memberships--thus, until they do, they are not on the board. The matter will be resolved at the July 19th meeting. Location will be announced by postcard--likely in the Waterloo - Cedar Falls area. A VCR will be needed for a video presentation. Lunch.--Meeting adjourned at 1:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Fran Jeffers, Secy.

How to Do Tombstone Rubbings



by Richard Lupu
with notes by Joel GAZIS-SAX

I am really just an amateur, but I have found that rubbings are a beautiful form of art. It is a fairly easy and inexpensive hobby that is a wonderful way to learn about history. There are some basic rules you should follow and some tools you need to get started.

Rules:

If you plan on doing rubbings of your family or relatives then some of these won't apply. I like to rub very old tombstones. They have a certain charm about them.

1. Many cemeteries are private property. Be sure and ask before you start rubbing tombstones. Trespassing fines are not cheap. Many do not understand what rubbing is or have ever heard of it.
 2. Treat each tombstone as if it were your own mother's. Somebody loves these people and old tombstones can be delicate.
 3. Make sure and clean off all marks accidentally left on tombstones. Leave the cemetery cleaner than when you got there.
 4. If it is a private cemetery or a municipal cemetery, don't rub at night. Your actions will most certainly be mistaken by local law officials. You would think this would not have to be mentioned but a friend of mine wanted to get some rubbings done when he got off of work one night. Bail is not cheap either.
-

Tools:

1. A soft brush. The kind you might use to polish your shoes work well. A tooth brush is also a good thing to bring.
2. Paper, White or rice paper works best. I like rice paper. It has a really nice feel to it and can be surprisingly strong.
3. Black or gray chalk. I like chalk, it can be messy but if you're careful it makes a

very nice texture. Flat black crayons and rubbing wax are the most common, but I still like chalk.≤

4. Scissors or exacto knife.
5. Masking tape or painters tape
6. Small spray bottle and a soft absorbent rag.
7. If you use chalk you will need Chalk spray. Krylon makes the best.≥

Method

Once you have found a nice tombstone you need to make sure it is clean. Use the soft brush and remove dirt and debris from the surface. Be gentle, and respectful, if the it looks as if you might scratch the tombstone then move on.

After you get most of the dirt off spray it with the bottle and then wipe with the rag. Let the tombstone become perfectly dry before you go on. Cut the paper larger than the tombstone itself and wrap tightly around the stone. Tape it very securely so that it doesn't move, if the paper moves when you start rubbing you will probably have to start over.

Start rubbing on the outside edges and make yourself a frame of sorts. You don't need to rub real hard, you can always make it darker by going back over it but you can never make it lighter. You should start to see the patterns emerging at this point.

Once you have the darkness down to you liking carefully spray the paper down with the Chalk spray. Be careful not to get any on the tombstone. When it is dry you can remove it and trim it in the shape of the stone or leave a border around it. This is all there is to it. Practice with it and develop your own style.

I live in Texas and have found a couple of old cemeteries that are all but abandoned. The dates on a lot of these date back to the late 1800's. If you also live in Texas, E-mail me (rlupu29@iadfw.net) and I will give you directions.

Remember the respect you show now will ensure that tombstone rubbing will always be looked at as a way to preserve history and not as vandalism.

Caretaker's Notes

πRice paper was recommended by nearly all the Caretaker's advisors on this page. Butcher paper was mentioned as a cheaper substitute. I had a bad experience with a grainy drawing paper. Smooth surfaces work much better than grainy ones, though you may decide otherwise.

≤In my experience, chalk was a bit messy. Other contributors suggested using charcoal. You can also use ink if you follow the method used in China for making stone rubbings.

≥There's an alternative to Krylon and that is hairspray -- "the cheapest you can find" as one advisor put it.

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The Caretaker also wishes to thank Lydia Thompson, Carolanne Szoke, and other contributors to alt.society.funerary for their tips.

Do you have samples of your own rubbings? Send me a gif or jpg.
I will display your best work.

From DES MOINES REGISTER Des Moines (AP)--Gov Terry Branstad has signed a law to help out old, forgotten cemeteries.

The law will expand the tax base used to pay for the upkeep of pioneer cemeteries. It also shifts responsibility for the work from township trustees to county supervisors, who can appoint commissions to maintain the cemeteries.

Dean Gipple of Columbus Junction has led the push to repair the cemeteries. He attended Wednesday's bill-signing ceremony at the Statehouse. Gipple, 78, said he's getting an unbelievable response from Iowans who have heard about his work and are interested in repairing cemeteries in their area.

"I'm going to keep working as long as I can go," Gipple said.

Pioneer cemeteries are those that have had six or fewer burials in the past 50 years.

Many of the cemeteries are abandoned, their gravestones falling down or broken.

Gipple, who helped start the State Association for the Preservation of Iowa Cemeteries, estimates there are 3000 pioneer cemeteries in the state. He says taxing all property in a county will provide more money for cemetery upkeep.

Taxes for the cemeteries now are collected only on farm land.

Under the new law, county supervisors will be able to levy up to 6 3/4 cents per \$1000 in property value to maintain the cemeteries. That would mean \$6.75 in taxes on a \$100,000 house.

In June, Gipple plans to meet with members of the state Historical Society and encourage them to establish cemetery commissions in each Iowa county to repair and maintain the cemeteries.

Gipple has had several heart attacks, surgery to remove cancerous tumors from his kidneys and an operation to remove a blood clot in his leg. His physician has advised him to stop his cemetery repair work, but Gipple doesn't plan to heed the advice.

"I've finally got this thing going my way, why quit now?" he asked.

President Ted Siek is sending a mailing to all counties to their Supervisors regarding their appointing a cemetery commission to oversee the up-keep of Pioneer Cemeteries.

From the CARROLLTON GAZETTE, Carrollton, IL letter to the editor:
When John and Bertha Witaschek deeded the Cummins Cemetery SW of Carrollton to Woodville Twp in 1898, I wonder if they had any idea of the neglect that was in store for their family's burial ground almost 100 years later.

Today the cemetery is overgrown with brush and weeds, and can hardly be reached by anyone wishing to pay their respects to the family members who are buried there.

At one time an easement assured access to the cemetery site, which was fenced off back when I was a child and which is located on property owned today by Greene County resident Edward Gilbert. Somehow, no records of that easement remain today.

Acting on my own, I contacted the Dept of Corrections boot camp south of Roodhouse and asked if a work crew might be made available to clean up the cemetery. The Corrections officers were very helpful and said a detail of prisoners from the boot camp could be used for that purpose, but only if the property owner granted permission for access to the cemetery.

This Mr. Gilbert declined to do telling me that he feared the prisoners would use the work detail to "case" his property for some later crime. But he did offer to let me clean up the cemetery myself--a task



that is far too great for any one individual to attempt in any reasonable amount of time.

Over the past two years I have periodically contacted Woodville Twp supervisor Evelyn Eickmeyer in an attempt to determine the township's responsibility in this matter, but to no effect.

Is there nothing that can be done about this dreadfully neglected cemetery? I feel that allowing this situation to go on is not only disrespectful to the persons buried in Cummins Cemetery, but to their surviving family members as well.

The needless neglect of this cemetery is a blot on the entire county --especially when the means to take care of the problem has already been offered by the Illinois Dept of Corrections. I say shame on everyone responsible for this sorry situation (signed) Betty Schmidt

JEAN GROUT of Riverside, CA writes:.....Jesse and Jane Thompson, together with some of their children and grandchildren are buried in a small cemetery on the original farm in Poe Twp (Ringgold County). The immediate family is within a walled area; others from the community are buried outside the wall in an area that has grown up in weeds.

This plot of land was withheld when the land sold but was not deeded to the township trustees as a cemetery. Is there any way that this can be maintained as a cemetery at this point in time?

There are still family members in the area with more in Decatur Co than in Ringgold County.

Sincerely,
Jean Grout

29 April 1996

MAUREEN WILSON of Urbandale, IA writes (May 1996)----My cousin from Belvidere, IL, my brother from Anamosa and I have completely reclaimed "our Reynolds" Cemetery in NW Delaware Co. It had become completely overgrown and a year or two more would have been "unfindable!" Stones are now reset--it is chain link fenced with gate and sign---a proper cemetery. The last grave opened was in 1906 for my great-grandfather. Also, in it is buried his mother-in-law, my great-great grandmother, Hannah Nye Worley, a true daughter of the Revolution--her father was a Minute Man from Hardwick, MA. To have some organized maintenance of these old cemeteries will be wonderful!

Sincerely,
Maureen Wilson

THE NAZARETH DECREE

(Author unknown)

The Nazareth Decree is an inscription cut on a slab of white marble. In 1878 it was found and is now on display in the Louvre.

The decree runs: "Ordinance of Caesar: It is my pleasure that graves and tombs remain undisturbed in perpetuity for those who have made them for the cult of their ancestors, or children, or members of their house.

If, however, any man lay information that another has either demolished them, or has in any way extracted the buried, or has maliciously transferred them to other places in order to wrong them, or has displaced the sealing or other stones, against such a one I order that a trial be instituted, as in respect of the gods, so in regard to the cult of mortals.

For it shall be much more obligatory to honor the buried. Let it be absolutely forbidden for anyone to disturb them. In the case of contrvention I desire that the offender be sentenced to capital punishment on the charge of violation of sepulture."

Links to a few resources on cemetery history and preservation:

Cemetery Lists and Directories

- [The Political Graveyard](#), a locator for dead politicians that I'm still working on.
- [Find-A-Grave](#), a locator for dead celebrities in general.
- [World Wide Index of Cemeteries on the Web](#).
- [Internet Cemetery and Crematoria Directory](#).

Collections of Cemetery Links

- [The WWW Post-Mortem Page](#), with links annotated and rated (see also [City of the Silent](#)).
- [Death, Dying and Grief Resources](#), with a huge number of links to all kinds of even vaguely related sites.
- [The Tombstone Tourist](#).
- [Dark Side of the Web](#).
- [World Wide Index of Cemeteries on the Web](#).
- Yahoo's [Cemetery page](#).

Organizations and Publications

- [Association for Gravestone Studies](#) home page.
- [Benton County \(Ark.\) Cemetery Preservation Group](#) home page.
- [Tomb With A View](#), cemetery interest newsletter.
- [Books about cemetery history and preservation](#) from Frontier Press.

Other General Information

- [City of the Silent](#) with many different categories of information.
- [Cemeteries and the Sociology of Death](#).
- [White American attitudes concerning burials](#) (with much interesting history).
- [Poe's 100 Words for Graveyard](#) (or add your own!).
- [Gravestone designs](#) from early New York and New Jersey.

Specific cemeteries and sites: U.S. by state

- Boot Hill, Tombstone AZ: the [Jewish cemetery](#).
- Pioneer Cemetery, Coloma CA: [History](#).
- Jewish Cemetery, Marysville CA: [History](#).
- Evergreen Cemetery, Santa Cruz CA: [home page](#) by Michael Kinsella with many pictures; [brief history](#).
- Woodland City Cemetery, Woodland CA: [brief intro](#).
- Grove Street Cemetery (New Haven Burying Ground), New Haven CT: [Detailed history](#).
- Oak Hill Cemetery, Washington DC: [Brief history](#) (with emphasis on connections to Smithsonian Institution).
- Greenwood Cemetery, Tallahassee FL: [Illustrated history](#).
- [Old City Cemetery](#), Tallahassee FL. [Another page](#) with additional information.

- Punchbowl National Cemetery, Honolulu HI.
- Graceland Cemetery, Chicago IL.
- Rosehill Cemetery, Chicago IL.
- St. Boniface Cemetery, Chicago IL.
- Calvary Cemetery, Evanston IL.
- Forest Home Cemetery, Forest Park IL.
- Resurrection Cemetery, Justice IL.
- Greenwood Cemetery, Michigan City IN. History.
- Cemeteries in New Orleans LA: Page Page
- Harvard Center Cemetery, Cambridge MA
- Princeton Cemetery, Princeton NJ.
- Greenwood Cemetery, Brooklyn NY: photos of statues by Melissa Aldana; more photos by Stephen Renaker.
- Mt. Hope Cemetery, Rochester NY: intro and history, Rochester NY.
- Congregation Mikvah Israel Cemetery, Philadelphia PA.
- Oakwood Cemetery, Austin TX.
- Cemeteries of Denton County, TX
- Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington VA.
- Barger Cemetery, Blacksburg VA.

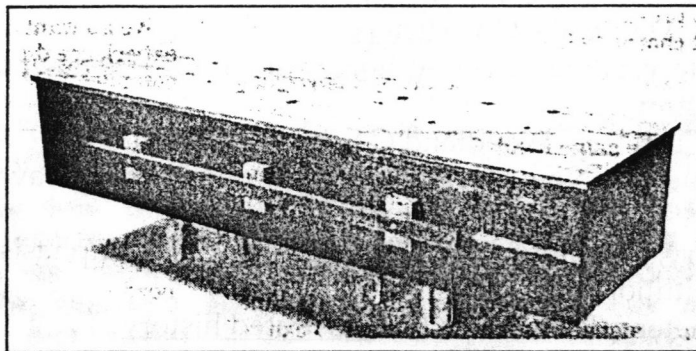
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CAGLEY CEMETERY RESTORED by Paula Kuhn & Christi Lines
Ionia Rustlers 4-H Club

Members of the Ionia Rustlers 4-H Club have worked over the summer to restore Cagley Cemetery in Bradford Twp in Chickasaw Co. The cemetery was established in 1857 but had not been maintained in recent years. The club chose this project for a long-term community service project and was awarded \$455 from the IA 4-H Foundation and the IA Sesquicentennial Commission through an IA Sesquicentennial Grant to support their efforts.

Club members, their families, leaders, and friends of the project from the community worked to find tombstones and tombstone bases, mark them for future repair, and clean up the grounds. As brush and small saplings had over-run the cemetery grounds, this proved to be quite a task. Throughout the summer volunteers then rotated mowing duties to maintain the areas that had been reclaimed from the wild. The club plans to clear additional space and continue the tombstone repair phase of the project next spring.

As part of the Grant project, members of the Ionia Rustlers also researched the cemetery records that were available at the New Hampton Public Library. Marion Cagley, chairman of the Cagley Cemetery Board of Trustees also assisted in the project and shared valuable historical information about the cemetery.

In 1750 George Cagley came from Germany to Anneville, PA. In 1786 he moved again, this time to the hills of VA. In that same year his son, John, was born. In 1820 John moved to Indiana. He lived there until 1853 when he moved with his family of 13 children (and some of their married families) to IA. They settled from south of Horton in Bremer Co to just north of Ionia in Chickasaw County.

When John died in 1857, his family buried him on their own land in a family plot because there were no public cemeteries in the area. In 1859 the Cagley family deeded the ground to Chickasaw Co to be used for a public cemetery. John was Marion "Bub" Cagley's great-great grandfather. His great-grandfather, Michael Cagley is also buried there. Some of the stones are inscribed with the name KEGLEY. Apparently some members of the family eventually changed the spelling of the name after moving to IA because of a family argument.

By the time Bub was a child in the 1930's, the cemetery was no longer being tended, hazelbrush and trees grew up and the plot records were lost. Even as late as the early 1950's, however, the road was used as a route into town. The bridge would wash out occasionally, but they would simply replace it over the creek and use the road again. Finally, the bridge was also abandoned, and today the road ends in a dead-end at the cemetery.

Over the years various groups have attempted restoration of the cemetery and have mowed and maintained it periodically. According to Chickasaw Co cemetery records found at the New Hampton Public Library, the Cagley Cemetery was canvassed by Miss Avice McGregor of Nashua and plot records were compiled by Mrs. Marguerite Schneider of New Hampton in 1976.

Ionia Rustlers plan to continue the restoration and maintenance as a community service project in future years. Anyone who wishes to donate time, labor, or financial support to the project, or who would like to have a club member share information about the project with community groups, should contact a club leader (Dick Schilling, Cora Lynch, or Christi Lines.)

Ionia Rustlers 4-H Club
2495 Exeter Ave., Nashua, IA 50658

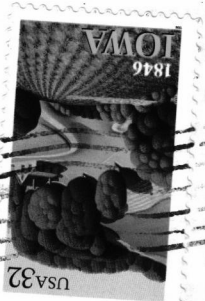
Yearly membership dues are \$20 for a person or an association (one vote).
Send to SAPIC Treas. 325 Franklin, Wappello, IA52653.



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ADDRESS



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COMING EVENTS of INTEREST

- June 19-20-21 --- Dallas Co. Genealogy Society will have PAUL MADDY's WORKSHOP - a miles west of Perry, west of Dawson 1 mile (Restoration training workshop)
- July 10-11-12---Jackson and Jones Counties will have a PAUL MADDY WORKSHOP near Maquoketa. Contact Joan Caven at 319-652-2516
- July 19, 1997--State Association for the Preservation of Iowa Cemeteries Board meeting near Waterloo/Cedar Falls. Time and exact location will be forthcoming via postcard.
- October 9, 10, and 11 in Marshalltown. Annual SAPIC meeting will be held during the Iowa Genealogical Society Conference.

For your information: Jones, Jackson and Louisa Cemetery Commissions are organized. Iowa, Dubuque, Clark, Madison, Guthrie and Winneshiek are working on recognition. Let your Editor know when your county commission is organized or and recognized by your County Supervisors, please. Your Editor welcomes material to be included in your newsletter.

Thank you!
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