

GRAVE NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE STATE ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF IOWA CEMETERIES

21813 170TH ST.

BIRMINGHAM, IOWA

www.rootsweb.com/~iasapc/

Volume #10 Issue #3

July, 2005

The October 8, 2005 meeting of the State Association for the Preservation of Iowa Cemeteries will be held at the Urbandale Public Library at 10:00 a.m. (Des Moines area). Take the 86th St. exit off of Interstate 80 which is the next one west of the Merle Hay Exit. Turn south as you exit and travel south on 86th St. across Meredith Dr. and Douglas Ave. Turn right at the next stop light, and that takes you to the Urbandale Library. The meeting room will be available until 12:30. For more information, contact Larry Davis (see page 2).

The first Memorial Day

In the summer of 1865, the scars of the Civil War were fresh in the nation's psyche and hundreds of thousands of war casualties filled cemeteries across the country. Waterloo, NY druggist Henry C. Welles suggested to Gen. John B. Murray that honoring the war dead by placing flowers on their graves would be a fitting tribute. Murray, a Civil War hero and town clerk in the neighboring village of Seneca Falls agreed, and the two gathered supporters. On May 5, 1866, the town of Waterloo observed the first Memorial Day. In 1966, Congress officially recognized Waterloo as the "birthplace of Memorial Day." Veterans groups in Waterloo, NY have observed Memorial Day on May 30 without interruption each year since 1868.

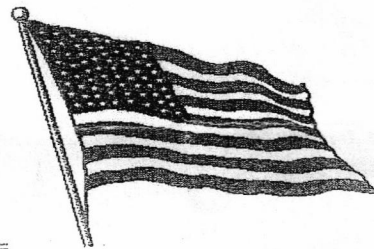
From American Profile magazine, May 29-June 4, 2005

The Origins of Memorial Day

Three years after the Civil War ended, on May 5, 1868, the head of an organization of Union veterans -- the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) -- established Decoration Day as a time for the nation to decorate the graves of the war dead with flowers. Maj. John A. Logan declared it should be May 30. It is believed the date was chosen because flowers would be in bloom all over the country. The first large observance was held that year at Arlington National Cemetery, across the river from Washington, D.C.

From:

www1.va.gov/visns/visn03/kids/memorialday/htm



Reportedly seen on a stone in Riverview Cemetery (IOOF) in Monticello, Indiana:

"I've been in many a deal, but I went in the hole on this one."

Device for 21-gun salute invented by Navy veteran. An 83-year-old Navy veteran from Missouri said he expects to patent a device that would provide a 21-gun salute to deceased military members. The contraption he built out of scrap metal which he carries in the back of his pickup, could solve the problem of fewer volunteers available to fire the ceremonial volleys or play taps for military honors at funerals. Bill Crabb said he got the idea during Memorial Day last year, when American Legion members in Kidder, MO, could not find enough volunteers to fire a salute in the local cemetery.

From Copper's magazine, July 5, 2005.

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563-427-5354 dstory@netins.net

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WHERE TO GET PROBES

Agri-Drain
340 St.
Adair, IA 50002
1-800-232-4742
Sizes range from 4 1/2' to 8'. \$18.50 and up

WHERE TO GET EPOXY

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Tucker, GA 30085-2206
1-800-458-6222
http://www.granquartz.com

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Des Moines, IA 50314
515-244-3131

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Granite City Tool Co.
PO Box 411 11 Blackwell St.
Barre, VT 05641 1-800-451-4570
granitecitytoolvt.com mkewinter@aol.com

WHERE TO GET SIGNS

Iowa Prison Industries
Box B
Anamosa, IA 52205
1-800-336-5863 Ask for Tammy Deseberg

VETERANS' HEADSTONES

See <http://www.cem.va.gov/hm.htm>
Or telephone 1-800-697-6947

STATE CEMETERY REGULATOR

Dennis N. Britson, Director
Regulated Industries Unit
Iowa Securities Bureau
340 Maple St.; Des Moines, IA 50319
Dennis.Britson@comm6.state.ia.us
515-281-4441

OFFICE OF THE STATE ARCHAEOLOGIST

Shirley J. Schermer, Director, Burials
Program
700 Clinton Street Building
Iowa City, Iowa 52242-1030
319-384-0740 shirley-schermer@uiowa.edu

SAPIC has a 35MM camera that may be borrowed
for photographing cemeteries and
gravestones, courtesy of SAPIC member,
Sidney Louis. Contact Pat Shaw for details.

State Association for the Preservation of Iowa Cemeteries
Board Meeting Minutes
July 9, 2005

Vice President Linda Zintz called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. at the Uptown Cafe in Jefferson, Iowa with seventeen members and guests present. The minutes of the previous meeting, April 9, 2005, were read and approved. The Treasurer's Report was presented illustrating a balance of \$10,645.74 consisting of \$7,022.35 in the Working Account and \$3,623.39 in the Reserve Account. Moved by Pat Shaw that the Treasurer's Report be accepted. Seconded by Mike Magee. Motion carried.

Conferences: The April 9, 2005 Cemetery Conference was reviewed and after considerable discussion, it was recommended to have another conference in 2006. Larry Davis noted that speakers at the last two conferences did not request expenses or fees which resulted in a relatively economical registration fee. Davis also pointed out that future conferences may require speaker expense and perhaps funds could be authorized from the SAPIC budget for such expenses. Moved by Larry Davis that speaker expenses for the 2006 Cemetery Conference be authorized as an item in the SAPIC budget for an amount not to exceed \$1,000.00. Seconded by Mike Magee. Motion carried.

Cemetery Monument Conservation Workshop: Linda Zintz and Larry Davis attended the Midwest Regional Cemetery Monument Conservation Workshop in Omaha, Nebraska on May 24-26, 2005 sponsored by the United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, and National Center for Preservation, Technology, and Training. They gave a brief report on various topics the workshop covered. Moved by Valerie Ogren that Linda Zintz and Larry Davis be reimbursed for the Midwest Regional Cemetery Monument Workshop registration fee. Seconded by Steve Story. Motion carried.

Board Member Vacancy: Moved by Pat Shaw that Ethel McVay be appointed to fill the vacant unexpired term of Board Member Calvin McVay. Seconded by Mike Magee. Motion carried.

Nomination Committee: Ethel McVay was appointed chair-person of the Nomination Committee.

Robert Carter Award: Moved by Pat Shaw that July 1 be the deadline for submitting nominations for the Robert Carter Award. Seconded by Larry Davis. Motion carried.

Legislation: It was noted that Iowa legislation was recently passed as House File #836 relating to cemeteries. However, it appears the one priority item that SAPIC was asking for in regard to access to cemeteries was not included.

The meeting adjourned at 12:02 p.m.

Larry Davis
Secretary

From the *American Funeral Director*, Sept., 2004: "Ten Speed Press, Berkeley, California, Releases Book on Funeral Rituals." The book, *Death Warmed Over: Funeral Food, Rituals, and Customs from Around the World* by Lisa Rogak takes a look at 75 unusual, entertaining and quirky rituals in cultures around the globe, from the Amish and Hmong to Mongolia and Morocco. The author chose only the most peculiar, intriguing traditions that provide a twist to the mourning process. The book explains the background and proper timing for such culinary curiosities as passing a hen and loaf of bread over a grave as dirt is shoveled onto the casket; serving chocolate caskets and skull-shaped cakes at a funeral; and baking a funeral pie to acknowledge the passing of a loved one. Dishes representing such diverse locales as Ecuador (potato and cakes), Iceland (fried skate) and Tibet (sweet people cookies) are included as are unusual recipes like Bearded Seal Flippers (Eskimo) and Frog Eye Salad (Morman), so named for the small bits of pasta mixed in the dish. For more information, visit www.tenspeed.com or call 510-559-1600.

Thanks to Terry Altheide for contributing this information.

07-24

STATE ASSOCIATION for the PRESERVATION of IOWA CEMETERIES

Treasurer's Report for 2nd Quarter - 1 April thru 30 June 2005

Balance in "Working Account" 31 March 2005, Home State Bank, Jefferson \$6608.56

Income

Dues	495.00
Conference Registration	450.00
Donations	35.00
Bumper Stickers	.75
Interest 4/30/05	2.86
Interest 5/31/05	3.73
Interest 6/30/05	<u>3.50</u>

Total Income \$ 990.84

Expense

Ck #163 - Georgios - Conference lunch	308.68
Ck #164 - Friends of Prairie Learning Center - Conf. Mtg.	100.00
Ck #165 - Pat Shaw - newsletter expense	54.14
Ck #166 - Valerie Ogren - membership cards	14.83
Ck #167 - Pat Shaw - Conf. Reg. refund	15.00
Ck #168 - Joyce Wiese - Conf. Reg. refund	15.00
Ck #169 - Dean Gipple - Conf. Reg. refund	15.00
Ck #170 - Pat Shaw - newsletter expense	<u>54.40</u>

Total Expense \$ 577.05

Balance in "Working Account" 30 June 2005 \$7022.35

Balance in "Reserve Account" 31 March 2005, Home State Bank, Jefferson \$3623.39

Income

(none this quarter)

Balance in "Reserve Account" 30 June 2005 \$3623.39

I am keeping an accounting of the amount which had been held in savings and have added Life Memberships and Memorials to it; however, all the money is in one account at the bank.

Combined Balance on Hand 30 June 2005 \$10,645.74

Respectfully submitted,

Valerie Ogren, Treasurer

108 N. Oak

Jefferson IA 50129-1841

Ph 1-515-386-4784

E-mail: <vjogren@netins.net>

Conference Income	\$645.00
Less refunded registration	<u>- 45.00</u>
Total income	\$600.00
Expense	<u>-518.56</u>
	\$ 81.44

Advertised in the *American Funeral Director* magazine, Nov. 2004: "Bring Life Back Into Your Cemetery," *American Cemetery* magazine can give you the edge to stand out from the rest! This award winning publication is full of up-to-date editorials designed to keep you on the cutting edge of the funeral profession. To subscribe call:

1-800-287-2223

Thanks to Terry Altheide

Found in an old German Cemetery:
"Here lies an awful liar,
his tales were really trying
Death did not reform him,
here he is still lying."

CANADIAN CEMETERY SIGNS. Photos of cemetery entrance signs from cemeteries all over Canada -- submitted by volunteers.
<http://www/freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~cemsigns/>

Actual headline: **Typhoon Rips Through Cemetery; Hundreds Dead**

There is a book called *Caring for the Dead* that outlines a lot of state laws. This varies from state to state, from very stringent -- Louisiana -- to Michigan, which states "Family graveyards under one acre outside city or village limits are permissible. Such land is exempt from taxation and must be recorded with the county clerk." Most other states seem to require permission from the local zoning people and health departments. Search Amazon or Google if you are interested in the book.

Epitaph supposedly found in Massachusetts, Tennessee, and Scotland:

**Beneath this stone, this lump of clay,
Lies Under Peter Dan'els
Who, early in the month of May,
Took off his winter flannels.**

A couple of sites with information on stoneweld:
www.lithichrome.com/showitem.cfm?itemnum=479&catnum=0

www.acstone.com/products/stoneweld/stoneweld.html

Information on electronic metal detection:

<http://www.har-indy.com/>


-- Rich Green of the Historical Archaeological Research in Lafayette, Indiana.

From the *American Funeral Director*, Nov., 2004: **HAMPSHIRE, ENGLAND** -- Jean Pyke created a makeshift cemetery in her backyard containing the remains of 22 pets, along with the cremated remains (as per his wishes) of her husband! When Jean died, her \$700,000 home is to become a cat sanctuary, and all her savings will go to animal charities. And, of course, she will also spend eternity beside her husband and, as she has said, "be next to all my loved ones forever."

From the *American Funeral Director*, Sept., 2004:

According to the *Orlando Sentinel* a Florida man stored his father's body in a rented 5' X 10' air-conditioned storage unit for 3 months because he thought he could not afford funeral costs. After owners of the unit contacted the man about a foul odor, he admitted that he was only storing the body until he could come up with the money to bury him. He was unaware that the state aids families that cannot pay funeral costs.

From the *American Funeral Director*, May, 2005:



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Imagine the surprise of funeral business owner, Jimmie Crowder when he saw his advertisement being featured on the "Headlines" segment of The Tonight Show with Jay Leno. Displaying the advertisement, Leno read aloud the service mark and quipped, "Is that the best crematory, really? Do you really wanna see grandpa in there?" Crowder sent a letter to Leno thanking the comedian for "giving us all a laugh and good time during these troubling times we live in." Crowder says the firm will change the advertisement.

Thanks to Terry Altheide for contributing the 1 article above.

Taken from The Book

"Iowa, The Land Across The River"
by Don Doyle Brown

PRAIRIE GRAVE

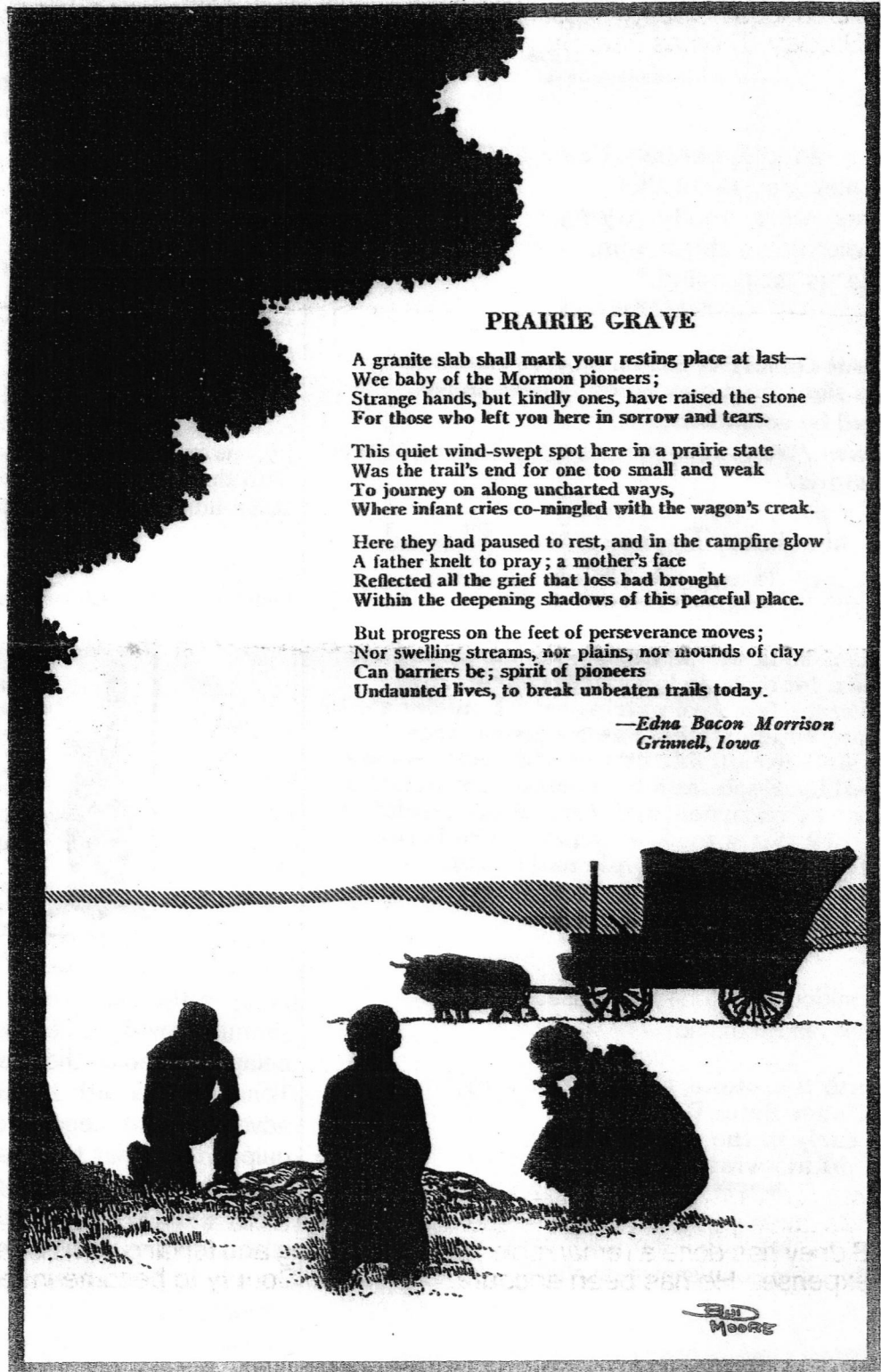
A granite slab shall mark your resting place at last—
Wee baby of the Mormon pioneers;
Strange hands, but kindly ones, have raised the stone
For those who left you here in sorrow and tears.

This quiet wind-swept spot here in a prairie state
Was the trail's end for one too small and weak
To journey on along uncharted ways,
Where infant cries co-mingled with the wagon's creak.

Here they had paused to rest, and in the campfire glow
A father knelt to pray; a mother's face
Reflected all the grief that loss had brought
Within the deepening shadows of this peaceful place.

But progress on the feet of perseverance moves;
Nor swelling streams, nor plains, nor mounds of clay
Can barriers be; spirit of pioneers
Undaunted lives, to break unbeaten trails today.

—Edna Bacon Morrison
Grinnell, Iowa



COUNTY REPORTS

APPANOOSE

From *The Ottumwa Courier*, June 9, 2005: "Appanoose County Historical Society holding inaugural Historic Cemetery Tours." The tour was held on June 11 at the Oakland Cemetery as part of the Hometown Heritage Days celebration in Centerville. A walking tour began at the chapel and guides led the group to each of 10 featured gravesites where a storyteller or re-enactor presented the story of that person's life and significance in Appanoose County history. Sites visited were Governor Drake, William Vermilion, William Bradley, Thomas Fee, Susannah McKee, Johnathon Stratton and others.

BENTON

Contributed by Frieda Davis

From the *Cedar Valley Times* (Vinton), June 16, 2005: "The rare recognized good deed," by Dean Close, CVDT Editor. This article is printed on the next page. It was just too good to summarize and leave out any of it. Frieda mentions that Gene Davis has withdrawn from the cemetery commission in Benton County for the time being due to health concerns, including a hip joint replacement on July 12. We wish Gene a complete and rapid recovery.

BLACKHAWK

Contributed by Mike Magee

From the *Cedar Falls Record*, Aug. 11, 1905: "No burials in Winter -- Waterloo will have Crypt Capable of Holding Seventy Bodies." The crypt and a chapel to accommodate mourners in inclement weather will be built in Fairview Cemetery and used in winter, when it is very difficult to dig graves and when the general aspect of nature is repelling and forbidding. Interment can be postponed until spring when conditions are not so forbidding.

From the *Cedar Falls Record*, January 26, 1906: "Buy Many Bodies." The state of Iowa purchased through the university, bodies for use in the dissecting rooms of the two colleges of medicine to the amount of \$4470.27. While the university receives a great many cadavers from the poor farms of the state and from the unknown and unclaimed dead, the number thus supplied would not be enough to teach the growing doctors half they want to know about the human anatomy. Consequently the agents of the university are forced to go outside of the state for the largest amount of its material of this nature. While the secret of the supply is kept well guarded it is pretty well understood that the larger number of the bodies come from the southern states. The regular price is \$25 to \$45, f. o. b.

Mike reports that he helped repair about five gravemarkers at Waterloo Cemetery in Waterloo, including one that was stolen. He helped put out flags at Elmwood Cemetery before Memorial Day. He instructed persons affiliated with Elmwood how to repair stones. Mike and Allan Norbrock went to the site of the Carr Family Cemetery in Poyner Township and determined the four corners of the cemetery within about five feet. Allan is retired from a firm that does a lot of surveying and a member of the local genealogical society. The cemetery has very sandy soil and will need a four wheel drive vehicle to access it, if they get a work crew together to work on it. Mike and Allan walked to the site.

BOONE

Contributed by Sidney Louis

Sidney reports that he will be in Iowa in October to complete legal arrangements by which an Iowa bank will become trustee for the Schlicht Cemetery Care Trust Fund. This has taken years to complete and will be a great relief to him when it is accomplished. Sidney has done a remarkable job of renovating and fencing this site, all at his own expense. He has been encouraging Boone County to become involved in SAPIC.

The rare recognized good deed

Today's column is a note to every person who's volunteered to help clean up or fix up one of the many "Pioneer Cemeteries" in Benton County.

As you worked in the hot sun, lifting heavy stones, raking leaves away from markers that you could barely read at a cemetery that seems like 10 miles away from the nearest black top, you might have wondered if anyone would care, or even notice what you were doing and how you were trying to help.

Well, they do notice, and they do care in ways that might amaze you.

I walked back into the office this afternoon and a car with California plates was parked right outside the Times door. A man inside the office stood at the counter and showed me a page he had printed off the Internet.

"Last year," he said, "you went to McBroom Cemetery."

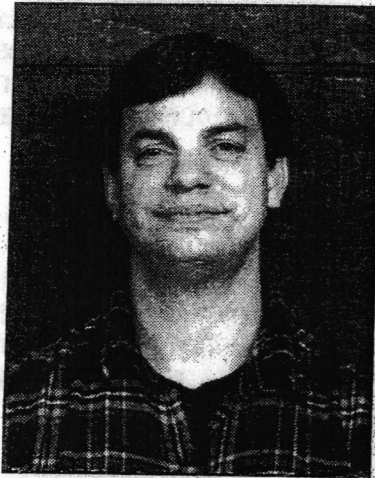
He showed me the article he had printed on his computer in California. It was from our paper's Web site, www.cedarvalleydailytimes.com. The article was about volunteers restoring and McBroom Cemetery.

I remember that article because it was one of the more mysterious I have ever written:

On Monday, June 17, 1895, Evaline Gillis and all three of her children - Omer, age 9, Eugene, age 7, and 4-year-old Oniea - died.

On Saturday, April 17, 2004, several people stood at McBroom Cemetery north of Shellsburg and wondered how and why the mother and children all died on the same day. Nobody there knew. Some wondered if they would ever learn the history of that family's tragic day.

The man standing at the counter on Wednesday afternoon knew the answer to that mystery, because Evaline Gillis was his great-grandmother.



INSIGHTS OF THE TIMES

Dean Close
CVDT Editor

The guy, Arno Gillis, 69, lives in California and hasn't been to Iowa in 50 years or so. He is driving to eastern Pennsylvania to visit relatives and see America while he can. He and his wife retired from their jobs a couple of weeks ago.

Arno — he said his unusual name come from his mother's side of the family — said he may never get another chance to see McBroom Cemetery and the mysterious tombstones I wrote about more than a year ago.

He came to the Times office with an answer to my question.

He told me that Evaline Gillis had recently had a baby who had died and was probably experiencing grief along with what is now called post-partum depression when she poisoned herself and her three youngest children with strychnine.

Arno told me he was amazed when he saw the article, and it started him on the journey that led to the cemetery this week.

He wanted to fill me in on the details. While Evaline Gillis killed herself and her three youngest children, her three oldest sons were out working. One of those sons, Porter, would become Arno's grandfather.

Arno also came to the office with a question. He has an aunt who lives in Cedar Rapids. This lady recently visited McBroom Cemetery and she was amazed at how well-kept the cemetery and the tombstones were. She wanted to know who to thank for taking such good care of the place where her ancestors are buried.

On Wednesday, Arno said, he was going to have dinner with that aunt and show her the article about the Benton County Pioneer Association and the members and the many volunteers who have made incredible improvements at McBroom and other cemeteries around the county.

So to you members of the Cemetery Association, and to everyone who has done anything to donate to or support the project — and I know that includes hundreds of area residents — if you've wondered if your efforts really matter, if anyone else will appreciate what you've done, well now you can know for sure.

And you can be sure that there are lots of people out there like Arno who are thankful for your efforts, or one day, will be.

CHICKASAW

Contributed by Mike Magee

In an E-mail message dated August 10, 2005, Mike reports that he went to the Cagley Cemetery near the Little Brown Church near Nashua to help the Chickasaw group. In spite of the hot weather, they were able to form and pour cement for two gravemarker bases. Jerry Tieskotter, member of the Chickasaw County Pioneer Cemetery Commission, barbecued pork loins and the ladies brought baked stuff for lunch. Now these folks really know how to do cemetery restoration right!

DALLAS

Contributed by Pat Shaw

From the *West Central Valley Voice* (Dexter, Menlo, Redfield & Stuart), June 2, 2005: "Dexter Cemetery receives new flag poles, bases," by Bryon Weesner. Pictured is a unique flag pole base that was unveiled on Memorial Day at the Dexter Cemetery. The base was dedicated to unknowns of all wars by the Legion members, along with help from Boy Scouts. A year ago, a sudden, powerful windstorm came through the area and destroyed many of the poles and flags that are flown every Memorial Day weekend. Dexter Legion member, Gaylord Herring, told the assembled crowd that the Legion would like to replace the bases in which the poles are set to make them more stable. They would also like to replace the plates that are inscribed with the name, birth date, death date, and military service of each veteran for whom the flags were purchased. They hope to have this accomplished by next Memorial Day.

From the *West Central Valley Voice*, June 9, 2005: "Gravestone restoration workshop coming to area." The workshop conducted by Lorna Grow and sponsored by the Conservation Board Office held on June 17 and 18 was publicized. The article states that this is a good service project for a church group, 4-H, scouts, or service club. The workshop was held at the Pleasant Hill Cemetery near the Keuhn Conservation Area in Union Township in Dallas County.

From the *West Central Valley Voice*, July 14, 2005: "2005 Dallas County's State Fair Hall of Fame Inductee." Pictured is Lorna Baldner Grow who will be inducted into the 2005 Hall of Fame on August 21 in the 4-H Exhibit Building at the Iowa State Fair. This event is sponsored by the Iowa 4-H Foundation. Lorna has been a 4-H leader for 39 years and has led workshops on photography, babysitting, money management, and gravestone restoration, to name a few.

HENRY

Contributed by Stan Hill

From the November 1, 2004 minutes of the Henry County Pioneer Cemetery Commission: Reports were given on the Hightower, Ebenezer, Williford, Baltimore/Abby, Roth, Pickard, Jefferson Township, Carnahan, and Oak Grove cemeteries. Items covered were cleaning of cemeteries, stone repair, fencing, and reseeding. A proposed budget for 2005 was submitted. Beverly Bethune has been contacted about leading a workshop in 2005.

From the May 2, 2005 minutes of the Henry County Pioneer Cemetery Commission: Chairperson, Stan Hill, reported that he had met with the county supervisors on the progress made by the commission and thanked them for their support and assistance. Reports were given on the Cholera Hill, Crook-in-the-Road, Farlow, Reece, Ebenezer, Old City, Old Richwoods, Pickard, Traxler, Williford, Abraham, Falkner, Roth, Jefferson Township, Scott, and Carnaham cemeteries. The East Grove Cemetery in Jackson Township is being cared for by the property owners. There is one stone existing with probably 3 or more burials. There had been an old church there back in the woods.

June 7, 2005

Pat Shaw

SUBJECT: Henry County Pioneer Cemetery

I wanted to let you know that the Henry County Pioneer Cemetery Commission is alive and well. We have been very busy since being established in Feb 1999.

I am sending minutes of our last 2 meetings for your info, don't expect you to publish all the contents of them, but parts if you want to.

The following is info from our meeting on June 6, 2005 for publication if you wish. Thanks for getting the bulletin to me.

Artical:

The Henry County Pioneer Cemetery Commission meets the 1st Monday of each month at 1PM in the HC Board of Supervisors Room, in the Courthouse during the months of May through Novemeber.

The Officers of the Commission are:

Stanley E. Hill, Chairperson	319-385-7153
Chad White, Vice Chair	319-385-7684
Charlotte Zihlman, Secretary	319-986-2166
Betty Inglebright, Historian	319-385-2807

The Commission met on June 6, 2005 at 1PM.: The Commission discussed with Ingrid Teboe, Field Service Coordinator, from IDOT, access to three Pioneer Cemeteries in Henry County, that were affected through construction of new Highway 218. Namely the cemeteries are Menfie, Pickard and Willeford. Discussion and negoti ation has been on going for some time on Pickard and Willeford. Our hopes is yet to get some type of permanent access to these cemeteries.

A new vinyl fence will be built around Willeford Cemetery. This cemetery is located almost adjacent to new Highway 218 South and adjacent to the Cities new bike trail, therefore the commission wanted to spruce the surrounding of the cemetery up a bit, due to public exposure.


A new wire fence will be built around Roth cemetery sometime this summer.

Chad White is working on Grave Stone Repair and Resetting in Ebenezer Cemetery.

The Commisssion has been involved with financially or phyically cleaning up, signing ~~xxx~~ maintaining and Stone Repair in at least 20 Pioneer Cemeteries since being established in Feb 1999. Our work and/or assistance includes but not limited to has been, locating neglected cemeteries, cleaning them up, purchasing and erecting signs, Grave Stone repair/replacement, fencing if needed, spraying, seeding, trying to aquire accesses, mowing and maintaining.

This work at times becomes what may seem to be a slow process and requires a lot of patience, but, we as a commission believe that our time spent and the efforts put forth has produced great success. We have a busy and productive work season planned for the summer of 2005. We would invite those who may be interested in our efforts to visit us when possible.

SUBMITTED BY:


Stan Hill, Chairperson
HCPCC
319-385-7153

MITCHELL

Contributed by Neal DuShane

MCPCR has budgeted that if all work and materials were hired or purchased, to restore the 39 Pioneer Cemeteries in Mitchell County, an expenditure of over \$64,000 would be required to bring them back to honorable and presentable condition. This does not include future care, repair, maintenance or inflation.

You can see that MCPCR is in need of financial donations. Reducing this expenditure would be volunteering equipment, materials, supplies and volunteer labor.

100% of donations to MCPCR are used for restoration; we are all volunteers and Not-For-Profit. Assistance from the State Association of Iowa Pioneer Cemeteries (SAPIC), Mitchell County Board of Supervisors, various Townships, Booster Memberships, business and individual donations has provided very limited working capital. We are less than 1 % to our goal.

The majority of our working capital has been raised through volunteer, private donations, two Townships, SAPIC and "In kind" assistance from the MCBOS of \$500. All greatly appreciated but is far from what is needed. Volunteers are reaching their limits as to involvement if outside assistance can't be found.

We have talked to the County Treasurer, Township Trustees, Board of Supervisors, business's, churches, organizations, civic groups etc. with limited success. They all agree it's an excellent effort but little funds come forth.

Can you give us direction for additional funds that are available from Federal, State, County or Business's that would help us install fences and other needed items, yearly maintenance and generally bring this projects up to a honorable restored status. We have been unable to find anyone to stand up and say "it was our responsibility and we have failed over the years . . . but we will take care of it now."

Loren Meyer from Ontranto Township has accepted the position as Coordinator in MCPCR.

Iowa County Pioneer Cemetery Commission

Our group was approved by the County Supervisors on 13 December 1996. There was an ordinance establishing control and maintenance of Pioneer Cemeteries. This was done to assume jurisdiction and control of pioneer cemeteries. People had been working prior to that to try to reconstruct some cemeteries in the county. We are appointed by the Iowa County Supervisors and they also support us financially. The first meeting was June 18, 1998.

The goal has always been to not interfere with what the Township Trustees are doing and to work with them. Some of the Townships had taken an interest in all the cemeteries and were already maintaining some of the pioneer cemeteries. We have done work in some of them, but we try to talk to them first and not cause problems among the two groups. Mostly though the pioneer cemeteries were in poor condition.

Officers are elected in November of each year. Those offices are Chairperson, co-Chair, and Secretary. Meetings are the fourth Thursday night of the month from April through October at 7:00 p.m. They are held at the Pioneer Heritage Museum in Marengo.

At this time we have nine positions on the commission, but one of those spots is filled by a husband and wife together. Randall Betz is currently the Chairperson and Ed Gleason is the co-Chair. Members of the group are Randall Betz, Ed Gleason, Bill Kurth, Delmar Schindler, Ken Mather, August Sr. and Sherry Sinn, Lana James, David Gorsh, and Twila Gerard as the Recording Secretary. Randall is an excellent leader and there are some very good members of the group. We are volunteers, but we are covered by the county's insurance if we are injured while working on a cemetery project.

Basically the first thing we did was tour the cemeteries so that we knew what we were challenged to do and what order to do the work. We got listings of cemeteries and the locations. We were concerned about the legal aspects and what we could do and not do

At this time there are 16 Pioneer cemeteries in Iowa County and 22 abandoned cemeteries, which includes some Indian burial grounds.

In order to work in the cemeteries we needed to purchase a weed whip; which we have done. It is available to the workers whenever they need to use it.

I have enclosed copies of those cemeteries and what township they are located in. The ones that we have been monitoring at this time are as follows: Athey or Sayers, Campbell, Clothier, Kumer, Old Scotch, Nelson or Neilson, Nile Sprague (Granny Sprague), Spricer/Spooner, German Lutheran Cemetery or Old Maas, Longstreth, Hixon or Dayton Cono, Titler, Old Marengo, Conn or Trade, Dane or West York and Pleasant Ridge (Baptist). As you can see this is quite a few. Many of them have more than one name.

The first cemetery that was worked on was the Old Marengo Cemetery. It had quite a few burials

and was rather large for a pioneer cemetery. Different groups had already been working on this project and when it was restored a dedication ceremony was held. We planted trees and hired someone to keep it mowed. The tombstones were restored, reset and cleaned. It is a lovely place and many people go there to walk. There has been some additional work done as far as stones and keeping the brush out. Gates and fencing were put up with nice access to the cemetery. A very nice sign was erected along the main road showing the location of the cemetery. The road leading back to the cemetery is a dirt road.

In 1999 the Williamsburg fire department burned old grass and other growth at the Pleasant Ridge Cemetery. Brush was cut and piled and low spots were filled at the Dane Cemetery. The brush was burned. That cemetery is mowed.

Tree removal has been a big item in quite a few of the cemeteries. It is expensive, but very necessary. Some of the dead trees needed to be taken down before someone was injured by a falling limb. We are still working on removing trees.

A considerable amount of time was spent on identifying the easement at the Spicer/Spooner Cemetery East of Homestead. It was surveyed several times. A gentleman that owned land by the cemetery worked with us on this cemetery. A man from Benton County started working on cleaning and making the cemetery accessible. He literally had to use a corn knife so he could even walk through. By this time there was a couple from Cedar Rapids that became interested as well and they visited the County Supervisors. Since there was so much poison ivy in the area and it was the wrong time of year it was determined that it needed to be sprayed. When fall came then the work would begin; which it did.

We are very proud of the accomplishments in this particular cemetery. It was in such bad condition; but now it is being kept in good order. The couple from Cedar Rapids made a layout of the cemetery and the stones. Dead trees were removed and stones were repaired. Gates and fence were installed. There was stump removal done. We had grass seed sowed and have someone to mow the area. Gravel was purchased and spread there. A sign is up showing the location of the cemetery. Thank you notes have been received from several people regarding the Spicer/Spooner Cemetery.

Mowing is being done in quite a few of the cemeteries now. Some of them are Old Baptist, Granny Sprague, Longstreth, Old Marengo, Conn/Trade, and several others. It is very important to keep that brush out. The mowing is hired done.

Old Scotch Cemetery has been another challenge. Again the poison ivy was there to give our group some unpleasantness. Cleaning and burning of brush was done. Old fence was removed and the area was leveled off. Fence and gates have been erected and later some were vandalized. That has been repaired again. We asked the Snyders about doing an inventory of the stones which they did. They mapped and logged stones. During that process they found one that had straight down in a hole. They also found a 10 foot error on the deed.

Fence was put up at the Longstreth Cemetery. It is mowed by the people that live right beside the

cemetery.

Forecasting the needs for 2005 we project that there are more limbs to be cleaned up. There is brush removal that needs done. Many of the cemeteries need stones repaired. We really need to make a tour again and evaluate where we stand.

This group has been very dedicated and methodical in their work to try to get the Iowa County Pioneer cemeteries in a state of good repair and then to keep them in good shape. We have discovered that it doesn't take very long for the weeds and brush to return. Again we are volunteers and do this because we care about the pioneers that have preceded us here in Iowa County.

Submitted by Twila Gerard

JONES

Contributed by Pat Shaw

From the *Anamosa Journal-Eureka*, July 21, 2005: "Dedicated Volunteers Restore Jones County Pioneer Cemeteries," by Marlene Flory. Pictured are Ron Ruess as he shovels cement, while LaVerta Langenberg, Lou Langenberg, and Cortney Balichek finish repairing a tombstone in Madison Village Cemetery. On a windy, hot summer afternoon, seven people dug, heaved, and pulled tombstones from the ground at Madison Village Cemetery. They were recovering, repairing and resetting the stones of early settlers and their families. In 1879, Horace Fay was named as the founder of Madison Village, which was on a mail route from Maquoketa to Anamosa. A store and wagon shop were started, but the place did not prosper and the post office was disbanded. John Lockard deeded the property for the cemetery in 1868, even though it wasn't recorded until 1875. Half of the stones in the Madison Village Cemetery have now been repaired and placed in straight rows by volunteers, who work in one or two cemeteries each year. In the early 1960's, Marvin Lacock was asked by a county supervisor to mow the head-high weeds in the cemetery. They continued to keep the weeds down and still mow the lane leading to the cemetery, which used to continue through to the next country road. A decorative metal fence and arch encloses the grave of a young girl who died in the 1860's. A tall blue-gray obelisk stands in memory of Mary Jane Bills, who died in 1862. The memorial is hollow and made of zinc. A school stood where the two roads joined. Evidence of a foundation near the cemetery lane leads one to speculate that a church may have stood there, also. A short history of the commission and the Olin FFA Chapter's involvement was explained by Nick Balichek. The article ends with a plea for more volunteers to learn the craft of stone restoration, which they insist is not difficult.

LEE

Contributed by Terry Altheide

The Summer issue of the newsletter of the Lee County Pioneer Cemetery Association, *Preserving Our Past*, spotlights the Oilar Cemetery in Jackson Township, contains a tribute to Danny Sallen who hauled rock to stop erosion in Beeler Cemetery, tells of a fundraiser that netted over \$1000, and describes many other activities of this very active group. This 21-page newsletter, edited by Aaron and Diane Kruse, holds the reader's interest in that it contains many quotes, poetry, and even a crossword puzzle!

From the *Daily Gate City*, May 10, 2005: "Wagon trains played role in county's settlement," by Terry Altheide. Terry tells of many Connestoga Wagons that passed through the Keokuk area on their way west, including those on the Mormon exodus of Nauvoo, Illinois in 1846. Many of these carried people who never made it to the Great Salt Lake region. Hundreds of these pioneers died before reaching their final destination. In the summer of 2002, Terry and three others were given permission to try to locate the burial site of some of these pioneers. After much searching, they uncovered the stone of Nancy Jane Sturdivant and Margaret French on the farm of Glenn and Ruth Conlee. Within the next few weeks, the Lee County Pioneer Cemetery Association and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Keokuk branch, teamed up to clean this cemetery. Leyda, Burrus & Metz Monument Company of Burlington volunteered to refurbish the stones and on Dec. 7, 2002, the stones were once again erected, bringing dignity and honor back to this historical site. The Lee County Pioneer Cemetery Association held its second annual Pioneer Parent's Day ceremony at the Conlee Farm Cemetery when the public was invited to see the beautiful marble stone of Margaret French and others in the restored burial site.

From the *Daily Gate City*, May 24, 2005: "Cemetery Appreciation Month." Pictured are Lee County Pioneer Cemetery Association members Belinda Stice and Terry Altheide with Keokuk Mayor Dave Gudgel after he recently signed a proclamation in honor of Cemetery Appreciation Month in Keokuk.

From the *Daily Gate City*, May 31, 2005: "Pioneer Parents' Day ceremony draws crowd." Pictured are members of the Lee County Pioneer Cemetery Association, along with landowners Ruth and Vic Conlee at the Conlee Farm Cemetery that may contain as many as 25 burials. The ceremony, that drew a crowd of about 75, featured speaker, Mike Foley, director of the Mormon Trail Visitor's Center in Montrose. Pioneer Parents' Day is a day set aside by the association each year on the third Saturday of May to honor pioneer families of Lee County, many of whom are buried in abandoned and forgotten cemeteries.

From the *Daily Gate City*, June 23, 2005: "Citizen urges community to honor veterans." Terry compares the memorial described in the fourth chapter of the Book of Joshua from the Bible to the construction of the Keokuk Veterans Memorial that is underway at the entrance to the Oakland Cemetery. With a listing of more than 1,400 veterans' names, this long overdue memorial will stand as Keokuk's newest landmark, not only to honor veterans, but also to allow its citizens the opportunity to reflect on its reason for being and to refresh their memories of those listed on it. Terry urges the public to show their support by attending the dedication of the new memorial on July 4.

Lifetime SAPIC member Betty Giese of Brookfield, Illinois, writes that her husband, John, passed away on June 12, 2005. Betty's ancestors' graves are in the Wilson Cemetery west of Ft. Madison.

The Lee County Pioneer Cemetery Association will hold its Pioneer Patriot's Day ceremony on Oct. 1st. Featured speaker will be Charles Larimer, author of the book, *Love and Valor*. Later that evening, Mr. Larimer will speak at another location. Two buglers from Buglers Across America will play echo TAPS and Keokuk's American Legion will have an honor guard present with a 21-gun salute and presenting of the flag. For more information about this impressive ceremony, contact Terry Altheide at: sweetpeaandbigun@msn.com

The Lee Co Pioneer Cemetery Association will have a party for its third birthday on Sept. 19.

LOUISA
Contributed by Connie Street

From: "Keith/Connie Street" <ckcasey@louisacomm.net>
Subject: **news story**
Date: June 20, 2005 10:59:10 PM CDT
To: <patshaw@netins.net>
1 Attachment, 13.4 KB

From the June 20, 2005 Muscatine Journal

The pros and cons of preservation: Inmates get a welcome reprieve from the confines of prison and help local volunteers clean up a piece of history

By Connie Street of the Muscatine Journal

COLUMBUS JUNCTION, Iowa - Prison inmates have completed clearing a long-neglected graveyard. Now, community volunteers can begin restoration of cemetery stones at the Carpenter-Coffin Cemetery in Oakland Township northwest of here.

Six inmates from the medium-security Mount Pleasant Correctional Facility and other volunteers completed clearing trees and brush Friday, finishing two weeks of voluntary work. The inmates volunteered for the work detail and will each receive \$5 per day. The money is being provided by donations to the project.

The inmates told the Muscatine Journal they enjoyed being in the fresh air away from prison walls, even though temperatures some days topped 90 degrees. They also said they felt a sense of pride and accomplishment with the work in helping restore the cemetery.



"This is a positive way to help the community," said inmate Cody Bailey of Burlington. "I hope we can do more projects like this in the future."

Inmate Dennis Pines of Oskaloosa said he liked doing something for a good cause and Melvin Mathis of Tama did similar work before being sent to prison. He described the work

as "fun."

Louisa County Sheriff Curt Braby organized the prison labor through the Iowa Department of Corrections.

Mount Pleasant correctional officers Paul Corbin and Todd Cross and maintenance worker Chuck Hafferman supervised the project. They have worked with the inmates on other projects such as tree removal and repairing flood damage outside the prison walls. The inmates also take pride in gardening work on the Mount Pleasant prison grounds

The cemetery, measuring a little more than an acre, was clear-cut, leaving no trees. Each of the workers showed evidence of their labor with scars from poison oak, even though the area had been sprayed with weed killer before they began their

work on June 6.

Besides volunteers from the correctional facility, Louisa County Conservation Board employee Frank Williams, 81, and AmeriCorps member Laramie Garner, 31, worked side by side with the inmates on the project.

"It has been interesting to see these old stones," Garner said. "I saw one where the person was born in 1802 and died about 1896. We are being careful not to disturb the stones."

The Conservation Board provided the chainsaws for the work, while the city of Wapello donated a wood chipper for the project.

Two neighbors to the burial ground also toiled as volunteers.

Both men, Justin Schlichting, 70, and Don Williams, 72, are friends of Conesville native Janet Peters of Abingdon, Ill., who helped get the county interested in the cleanup. Schlichting is descended from the Crocker family, who are buried at the cemetery, and Williams is a cousin of Peters.

Since 2000, Peters and Nancy Wagner of Morning Sun have been spearheading the effort by writing letters and visiting with the Board of Supervisors to get the abandoned cemetery cleared. Both have ancestors buried in the cemetery, which has been known by several names through the years.

Peters and Wagner are organizing volunteers to help with setting and repairing stones and possibly doing some grave witching to locate areas where there might be graves that have no markers.

At least seven Civil War veterans are known to be buried at the cemetery. Dave Wehmeyer, who owns land neighboring the cemetery, said he hopes those graves will be treated like those of other veterans now that the cemetery is cleared and that flags will be placed near the stones on Memorial Day each day.

Peters noted that several of the antique metal star-shaped Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) markers had disappeared since she visited the cemetery about a year ago. Only two markers that are damaged remain.

Maintenance of the cemetery once restoration work is complete has not yet been resolved, according to Peters.

Contact Connie Street at: 319-527-8164 or ckc Casey@louisacomn.net

LOUISA, continued

Contributed by Dean Gipple

From the *Columbus Gazette*, June 22, 2005: "Work on Oakland Cemetery project completed," by Dean Gipple. Pictured on the front page are volunteers as they help remove trees at Oakland Cemetery. Work on the Oakland Twp Cemetery was completed by prisoners and guards from the Mt. Pleasant Prison, along with other volunteers. Cold pop and Kentucky Fried Chicken was provided. Prison labor will be used to work in 2 other cemeteries this fall. Dean plans to have trees planted around the outside border. Local sheriff Curt Braby hauled wood out that will be used as a fundraiser for Ducks Unlimited at a Motorcycle Roundup. Several loads of wood cut by Frank Williams were also hauled to the Grandview 4-H Camp.

From the *Columbus Gazette*, June 22, 2005: "Sheriff Curt Braby reports on Oakland Township cemetery project." Sheriff Braby reports that the cemetery was completed on June 17 and rescued from 60 years of overgrowth and neglect. The first step in the project was the county road crew cutting a road on the easement to the cemetery. Then Sheriff Braby contacted the State Department of Corrections about getting an inmate crew to assist. A "point man," who was sent from the prison in Mt. Pleasant, estimated that it would take ten men two weeks to complete the job. Five prisoners, two correctional officers, and their correctional trades leader participated. Prisoners received \$5.00 per day from funds provided by the Louisa County Pioneer Cemetery Commission and donations. All trees and brush were removed, majority of the headstones were stood up in place, the ground was leveled, and flags placed on veterans' graves. Sheriff Braby feels that the project is a fitting tribute to those folks that had a hand in the early history of Louisa County.

To inquire about getting prisoner labor, contact the Department of Corrections, local law enforcement, or Todd Cross, 1200 E. Washington, Mt. Pleasant, Iowa 52641.

Ruth Gipple, Dean's wife of 67 years, passed away on July 26. Services were held in Columbus Junction on August 6.

MAHASKA COUNTY

Contributed by Jo Vernooy

My Mother passed away on June 22, 2005. Perhaps some of you will remember that my Dad died approximately ten months before that. How thankful I was that there were those who cared about Mom and my family, and how important those ties are for each of us. I had family and friends around me. Pioneer women often had no one other than their husband and immediate family. Their grief was a solitary one. Sometimes they were forced to bury their loved ones and go on to their destination, leaving their children and family members' graves to those of us who are trying to preserve them. Each Pioneer Cemetery is full of stories -

We are working this summer on gravestones in the Centennial Pioneer Cemetery, or, I should say, Larry Davis is doing some repair work for us. He has reset and repaired approximately one-half of the stones needing repair. We are thankful for his expertise. Centennial is a true Pioneer Cemetery with prairie grasses and flowers. Family from California visited the Cemetery recently and lamented that it was not mowed. It is not mowed because it is a Pioneer Cemetery. Once again I am reminded that people expect to see "memorial gardens" and not prairie. Leroy Nugteren of our Commission is also on the County Conservation Board, as well. He works with the Conservation people in our area to effectively rid the Cemetery of what we don't want there, while preserving what we do. It is sometimes a delicate balance. Leroy has been on our Commission since its inception, and we are SO grateful to have him.

I want to commend the members of our Commission for their unfailing devotion to the preservation of Pioneer Cemeteries in Mahaska County.

Jo Vernooy

POLK

Contributed by Phyllis Rothlauf

From the *Des Moines Sunday Register*, May 20, 2005: "Like night and day: Markers cleaned," by Lucas Grundmeier. Pictured is Gerald LaBlanc, shown with a carbon-covered grave marker in May 2000 at Glendale Cemetery in Des Moines. LaBlanc led a drive to have the markers professionally cleaned. He raised \$15,000 -- not only did the markers get a fresh look, but landscaping was also added. Prairie Meadows and the city also paid for two new benches that commemorate both world wars. Also pictured is the stone after steam cleaning was done. A year ago, the markers and cemetery were completely neglected, according to LaBlanc who city officials describe as a "champion" for the city's cemeteries. The markers had accumulated years of carbon from Des Moines furnaces burning coal in the first half of the 20th century. The markers are all located in the northwest corner of Glendale Cemetery, on University Avenue. The marker cleaning was performed by All Brite Steam Cleaning. LaBlanc also replaced eight markers that had been vandalized and added new flowers. "It is important to pass on to the next generation too, to let them know the great sacrifice that many of these veterans made," he said.

UNION

Contributed by Jessie Thompson

Jessie reports that she wrote a news article about Cemetery Appreciation Month that was printed in the Creston newspaper. Sadly, Jessie's husband passed away in June as a result of suffering a stroke and having heart disease.

VAN BUREN

Contributed by Pat Shaw

From the *Van Buren County Register*, May 19, 2005: Stockport news by Melva Jane Workman reports that Governor Tom Vilsack has designated the month of May as Cemetery Appreciation Month. Melva states that "as we visit our loved ones this Memorial day, take the time to look around and see if there is something you can do to help improve the looks of their resting places. Labor or donations are always appreciated.

From the *Ottumwa Courier*, May 25, 2005: In a Letter to the Editor from Rich Lowe, he describes the work that has been done by a small, but hard working group of volunteers headed by Don Aldrich of the local genealogical society. In addition several pioneer cemeteries have been "adopted" by private individuals who have taken it upon themselves to repair stones, weed and mow. Rich, who is the Van Buren County Gen-Web Project Coordinator and the Iowa Gravestone Photo Project Coordinator, lists the mission of these organizations which is to archive the images of headstones, thus saving important records and assisting genealogists in their research in the future. Nearly 140,000 gravestones are now online at: www.iowagravestones.org

From the *Van Buren County Register*, May 26, 2005: In a Letter to the Editor from Darell Ramsey, he asks the public, "What do you think when you drive past one of our local cemeteries? How many monuments do you not see because they are lying on the ground, and of those, how many of them are still in one piece?" Darell describes in detail the Presbyterian Cemetery in Birmingham that had 18 of the 54 stones fallen over and broken. At the time the letter was written, 20 had been repaired. He describes his admiration for Don Aldrich, who has spent time with him working in cemeteries, and he thanks Don for trying to bring back the dignity that our cemeteries once had.

From the *Van Buren County Register*, July 7, 2005: In a Letter to the Editor from Don Aldrich, he describes the small Miller Cemetery located in Mt. Sterling and submitted a picture showing its neglected condition. Don received permission from the landowner to work at the site and was gratified when contacted by Andy and Mary Downey who expressed an interest in "adopting" the cemetery. He will meet with the Downey's at the site to outline the problems and offer suggestions. Don appreciates them for stepping forward to be a part of our responsibility to the Pioneers of Van Buren County who reside beneath broken and toppled gravestones.

VAN BUREN, continued

Contributed by Pat Shaw

From the *Van Buren County Register*, July 21, 2005: In a Letter to the Editor from Don Aldrich, he tells of the broken stone of "William, son of J. & A. Watkins who died Aug. 11, 1881, aged 7 yrs. 3 ms., 6 dys" that is located in the Landess/Watkins Cemetery south of Keosauqua. He describes in detail how the stone, which was broken into 4 pieces, was meticulously repaired, missing pieces rebuilt, and an extension added that allowed the inscriptions to be set above ground level. He also tells of leveling and straightening the stone by placing it on a bed of river rock to a depth of 40 inches below the ground. He invites the public to visit the cemetery or the Van Buren County Genealogical Society Room at the Public Library in Keosauqua.

From the *Van Buren County Register*, August 11, 2005: "Cemetery Restoration," by Don Aldrich. Pictured are Dick Elliott, Warren Beatty, Gary Kingsbury, Harry Grabowski, Tom Gould, and Pat Shaw as they work in the Presbyterian Cemetery in Birmingham. Don and Shirley Aldrich also participated in the workday. Darell Ramsey, who has been working in the cemetery, had been unable to work for awhile and they wanted to pitch in with just a little bit of help. During the very hot morning, they dug drainage basins for eight stones, made repairs on one medium sized stone, and reset one large stone. They worked until noon and decided to call it a day ending with the promise: "We will return."

WAPELLO

Contributed by Pat Shaw

From the *Ottumwa Courier*, May 23, 2005: "A Story from beyond the grave (stones)," by Jeff Hutton. The front page article states that gravestones tell us stories, not only a glimpse into the person whose final resting place is just below ground, but they also tell the collective story of who we are and our shared history. Time and elements, however, are slowly erasing some of these stones. There are organizations, groups, and individuals who see the importance of restoration these monuments. He cites the example of Beverly Bethune who is a member of the Wapello County Pioneer Cemetery Committee. She held a workshop earlier at the Agency Cemetery, in recognition of Cemetery Appreciation Month in Iowa. She showed the group assembled there that preservation sometimes means a little elbow grease and TLC. Pictured within the paper on page 3 are Kay Boyajan, Beverly Bethune, and Keith Collins, as they work on cleaning, straightening, and resetting gravestones. The use of the product Photo-Flo mixed with water for cleaning was demonstrated, along with the use of pea gravel and construction-grade dirt to help reset and straighten a stone. She warned against the temptation to just yank at the top of a stone to pull it into place; stones can be fragile, especially if elements such as moisture has seeped into it. Bethune said, "A gravestone is like a grand old lady...treat her like a grand old lady."

From the *Ottumwa Courier*, May 26, 2005: "Memorial Day adornments must meet cemetery regulations," by Scott Niles. In a color picture, 2 women are shown decorating a grave in the Ottumwa Cemetery. The article addresses the issue of following rules and regulations regarding decorative items and flowers. Bob Swanson, superintendent of Ottumwa's city cemeteries says the rules are necessary for safety and maintenance. "It's hard to mow if there is a lot of stuff around a grave," he said. Many of the regulations deal with breakable items. Workers go through the cemetery after Memorial Day and remove 'non-regulation' items, but do not destroy them. Family members can pick them up; the rest of it stays on the graves until October.

From the *Ottumwa Courier*, May 31, 2005: "A day to remember," by Scott Niles. Several pictures in color show scenes from the dedication of the war memorial erected to pay respects to the men and women who served in the military. The ceremony was held in the Calvary Cemetery in Ottumwa with Mayor Dale Uehling as the main speaker. Also participating were members of the Knights of Columbus Honor Guard.

From the *Ottumwa Courier*, June 3, 2005: In a Letter to the Editor from the membership of the Knights of Columbus, the contributors to the Veterans Memorial and attendees at the ceremony were thanked.

From the Ottumwa Courier, July 27, 2005: "Preserving the beauty of cemetery grounds." Pictured is John Winblade, director of Shaul Cemetery Association in Ottumwa, as he points at a sizable tree with huge roots near a gravesite. A big concern has been trees planted too close to gravestones, which can heave up gravestones and disturb the burial site. When a clean-up crew was in the cemetery after a recent storm, one downed tree revealed an advanced disease and permission was asked to prune certain trees in some areas. The majority of trees removed were sycamores, which drop leaves, sticks, and bark all year long. Picking up debris before mowing adds to the labor of workers and strains the budget. Currently, the only tree allowed is an ornamental pear.

WASHINGTON

Contributed by Mike Magee

From the *Waterloo Courier*, July 30, 2005: "Mysterious tombstone leads to cemetery in Washington, Iowa," by Tina Hinz. The mystery of an 1855 tombstone unearthed in a Waterloo back yard may have been solved. A stone bearing the inscription "Victorie, wife of John Therion," rests in Woodlawn Cemetery in Washington, Iowa. While the spelling of the last name differs from "Thirion" on the marker found in Waterloo, the death date -- Dec. 26, 1855 -- matches. Ryan Jensen found the woman's tombstone while digging a walkway July 20 at 837 Western Ave. Marjorie Neil, librarian at the Washington County Genealogical Society, says, "There's no name around that can't be misspelled, no matter how simple it is. Or probably, somebody got mad and decided to change the spelling of it. My own father changed the spelling of his name." Neil speculated that John Therion may have married twice and that Victorie was his first wife. She said the marker that turned up in Waterloo may have been the original and it was replaced when John Therion died in 1871. Jensen was relieved to hear the news of a possible resolution. He plans to take the stone back to the place where he found it.

OUT OF IOWA

OKLAHOMA

Contributed by Pat Shaw

"Cemetery Preservation: Making Good Choices" (2005 Cemetery Preservation Workshop)
Friday, October 28 and Saturday, October 29, 2005
Muskogee Campus, Northeastern State University, Muskogee, Oklahoma

Through a lively mix of slides, demonstrations, hands-on examples, and in the cemetery exercises, you'll learn a bout the different kinds of cemeteries, the basics of developing a preservation plan, and issues that every cemetery must consider. The workshop will help you determine what monuments need immediate intervention, which monuments you can tackle safely yourself and which ones need a professional conservator. This two-day workshop is intended for caretakers, sextons, genealogists, and cemetery superintendents. Anyone interested in cemetery restoration and preservation at any experience level may attend. The goal is to provide individuals with the knowledge and skills to determine immediate preservation needs, implement simple strategies, and evaluate conservation proposals.

Workshop instructors are Debi Hacker and Michael Trinkley provided by the Chicora Foundation, Columbia, South Carolina. Both have been involved in cemetery preservation and restoration workshops and projects throughout the country. Debi, Chicora's Conservation Administrator has a B. A. from Tulane University. Mike has a doctorate from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and is the Foundation's Director. They are Associate members of the American Institute for Conservation of Artistic and Historic Works and subscribe to the AIC Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.

Contact: Oklahoma Cemetery Preservation Association, Inc. rootsweb.com/~okcps/ocpa.htm
PO BOX 1933 Muskogee, Oklahoma 74402-1933

SOUTH DAKOTA

Mowing Cemetery Successful Project in South Dakota
By Richard Pence (richardpence@pipeline.com)

Over the weekend I attended a 75th birthday party for a former colleague and a fellow South Dakotan. Another colleague, also a South Dakotan, was there and he told me what his project has been over the past few months.

This gentleman is a World War II Marine carrier pilot and well past 80. He and his wife still own the family farm in South Dakota, which was homesteaded by his grandfather. The little Norwegian Lutheran church they attended is long gone but the cemetery remains, although it hasn't always been kept up. With the help of others with family members buried at the cemetery they solicited all the others with relatives there they could find.

Remarkably, they raised \$36,000 -- one mailing! I think he said this was from 47 families. Mowing is the main expense in keeping up the cemetery and that is but a few hundred dollars a year, so there will be upkeep at the cemetery for a long time.

My friend and his wife, who have lived near George Washington's Mount Vernon for 50 years, say they plan to be buried there and just wanted the place to look nice.

My friend is also lucky in family history. A few years ago he visited relatives in Norway and upon leaving a second cousin presented him with a large packet of letters my friend's grandfather had written to his brother back in Norway in the 1880s. Besides the recounting of their life and times, the two main themes were the crushing oppression of the grasshopper plagues and how great America was.

Too often we hear about cemeteries that get no upkeep at all, so I thought perhaps you would enjoy hearing a warm fuzzy.

ILLINOIS

Contributed by Terry Altheide

From the *International Cemetery & Funeral Magazine*, January, 2005: "Tour with a twist brings history alive." The Chippiannock Cemetery Heritage Foundation, Rock Island, Illinois received a Superior Achievement Award from the Illinois Association of Museums for its Grand Epitaphs program, which was no ordinary cemetery walk. Costumed volunteer actors performed vignettes on a stage set up to look like a Victorian porch. They portrayed 10 people involved in the 1854 Grand Excursion, a trip made to mark the linking of the East Coast to the Mississippi River by rail. In addition to vignettes, visitors were treated to horse-drawn carriage rides, live period music and refreshments, including "epitaffy," salt water taffy in packages labeled with epitaphs from Chippiannock. Local landscapers planted Victorian gardens at each featured grave. The general location of the 10 gravesites was noted on a four-color brochure created for the event. Each featured gravesite was marked with a numbered granite post created by Granite Resources Corp., Nashota, Wisconsin. Victorian symbolism was also explained in the brochure. The brochures and posts make a self-guided tour easy, so the cemetery will continue using them. This year, Chippiannock will be celebrating its own 150th anniversary with a series of events.



Buried Alive

by Dick Grayson

While browsing through the M.I.T. bookstore in Cambridge, Massachusetts last month, I happened to find *Buried Alive* by Jan Bondeson, M.D. (Published by W.W. Norton & Co., New York & London, 2001, \$14.95.) This is a scholarly account and history of premature interment that is also interesting, often amusing and thoroughly documented.

Many of the tales refer to the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries when fear of being buried alive started during plagues when thousands were given up for dead. The most common stories were of thieving sextons who were out to steal the jewelry of recently deceased wealthy women, who "revived" as rings were being removed.

From these troubled times comes the story of a Frenchman who was forced by his parents to become a monk. In his travels he stopped at an inn where the innkeeper asked him to watch over the body of his recently dead daughter. Months later the monk returned to find the girl alive with a baby in her arms. He then revoked his vows and married her, confessing that he had raped the "corpse."

I had always thought that Humane Societies were for animals, but Dr. Bondeson points out that they were started in Amsterdam in 1767 and were soon spread throughout Europe and the U.S. by physicians for the purpose of resuscitating people "found in a lifeless condi-

tion." By 1790 there were concerns, especially in Germany and France, about premature burial, and "waiting mortuaries" were built, equipped with strings to fingers and toes attached to bells to save apparently dead people. Over a million corpses passed through that system with none awakening!

The fear of early burial was not as prevalent in the U.S. as in Western Europe. However, General Robert E. Lee's mother was declared dead by her physician after a seizure. As the sexton was filling the grave she knocked on the lid of the coffin and

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screamed: She was rescued! The daughter of the president of the Continental Congress was apparently dead of small pox, but awoke during her visitation, and died of old age. There are also stories of dogs reviving their masters and those in coffins who woke up upon hearing a favorite hymn during a funeral service -- and joined in the singing! Probably the most interesting case in the U.S. concerned a woman in Blackville, South Carolina, who was pronounced dead by a physician and

placed in a coffin. The funeral was postponed to permit her sister to attend. There was a long service and the sister had not arrived so the coffin was placed in the grave. However, the sister then arrived and the coffin was raised so the sister could see her for a final time. The "deceased" then sat up and smiled while the three preachers fell backward into the grave; she lived for 40 more years.

Dr. Bondeson points out that prior to the 20th century stethoscopes were rather crude and unreliable; the only clear indication of death was putrefaction and rigidity. He also notes that most countries now require a physician to confirm death, and that sometimes an EEG, a carotid angiography, or brainstem test is mandatory. Still, he believes that, especially in underdeveloped countries, some people are still being buried alive. He ends with the following: "The growing practice of embalming and cremation also effectively deters fear of premature burial; American morticians were right to claim that any corpse that had passed through their embalming workshop would never wake up again."

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Dick is an attorney who specializes in mortuary law, and who taught the subject at the University of Minnesota for over 35 years. He has been a presenter at Dodge Seminars, as well as other meetings throughout the nation.

TEXAS

Contributed by Sidney Louis

From the *Ft. Worth Star Telegram*, May 4, 2005: "Vandals upend historic cemetery in Thurber," by Art Chapman. The Thurber Cemetery located west of Ft. Worth was struck by vandals sometime around the 15th of April. The oldest grave, belonging to Eva Chapman, who died in 1890, was destroyed. Once a thriving town, Thurber was owned by the Texas and Pacific Coal Co. Hundreds of European immigrants, representing nearly 20 ethnic groups, worked as coal miners and brick makers. Its cemetery was divided into sections -- one for blacks, one for Catholics and one for white Protestants. Leo Bielinske, one of the volunteer members of the cemetery association, says that the vandals must be caught and made to pay for the repairs. They are offering a \$2,500 reward for information that leads to an arrest.

From the *Ft. Worth Star Telegram*, May 21, 2005: "Group preserves a piece of the past," by Art Chapman. North of Ft. Worth, in Montague County, is the site of the Red River Station, once a town of nearly 300 people. It served as a portal for millions of cattle that were ushered from the interior of Texas to the Red River and up the Chisholm Trail to Kansas railheads. The only reminder that commerce once visited these plains is a small, unkempt cemetery. Time, neglect and grazing cattle have been hard on the cemetery, but Danny Russell, chairman of the local historical commission and mayor of nearby Sunset, has helped bring about an awareness of the cemetery. County work crews have been on the property trimming and mowing, cutting paths, and righting stones. When the herds moved on to another trail, Red River dried up completely. The county historical commission is dedicated now to preserving what is left.

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