

Grave News

NEWSLETTER OF THE STATE ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF IOWA CEMETERIES

21813 170th St. Birmingham, Iowa, 52535
<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~iasapc/>

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HOW CEMETERIES CAN BECOME LOST by Bill Reedy

Cemetery preservationists expend a great deal of effort identifying and locating cemeteries, especially those that are in danger of being destroyed. However, at the same time, many older cemeteries and burial sites are disappearing from readily available public records. Although several factors are involved in this loss, two causes seem most common.

Some years ago, Iowa shifted to the use of a forty-year merchantable abstract. Previously, the purchaser of a piece of property received an abstract of all proceedings related to the property from the time of its initial grant or patent. Now, only transactions of the last forty years are shown. Since most cemetery deeds and other relevant documents were issued long ago, these matters may not be covered in a forty-year abstract of title. If a title search does not go back more than forty years, the purchaser is not thereby notified of the existence of a cemetery or burial site on the property.

The second problem has

been with us for some time, but seems to occur with increasing frequency.

As many property descriptions are very lengthy and complex, lawyers or others dealing with them often try to simplify the descriptions. In so doing, they some-times omit parts dealing with exceptions (as for a cemetery within the bounds of the property) or easements. In such a case, the purchaser of the property now holds a deed to the entire parcel, with no indication of a part within it that he does not own.

fiction of this statement. As indicated in a report on this matter at the SAPIC meeting of July 9, 2016, since the statement is not notarized, it carries little legal weight, and does not become a permanent part of the property's record, and is not abstracted. Although the purchaser receives a copy of the statement, this is effectively the end of its legal life. As this statement is neither verified nor notarized, it is of limited reliability, and since it does not become part of the permanent record, it does not offer much

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SAPIC MEETING

Please send in your Pioneer Cemetery interests.

**Saturday, Oct. 8,
2016 Cedar
County, 10:30am**



In recent years, Iowa has required that the seller of property file a Groundwater Hazard statement, indicating, among other things, whether there are any known human burials on the property. However, there is no process for veri-

What
does SAPIC stand
and for?
SAPIC stands
for State
Association
for the
Preservation
of Iowa
Cemeteries

Lost cemeteries continued

help in keeping alive any record of the existence of a cemetery or burial site.

In the event it becomes necessary to establish the existence of a cemetery or burial site, a great deal of research may be involved. If we are dealing with a dedicated cemetery, a deed to it exists somewhere, and should be findable in the County Recorder's files. If one were to examine all subsequent transfers of the property, the point at which the record became lost could also be determined.

Burial sites are somewhat more difficult. The Iowa Code defines a burial site as "any area, except a cemetery, that is used to inter or scatter remains." This category would include family burial sites and other areas commonly referred to as cemeteries that were never formally so designated. There will be no deed for a burial site. However, in many instances, its existence will be noted on a deed transferring the property, often excepting the cemetery from the transfer.

If this exception has been lost from the description, it can only be recovered by researching all transfers of the property.

Many burial sites are never noted in the property record, and, consequently, from a legal standpoint, are not known to exist. It is possible to bring the existence of such a site into the public record.

As provided in Iowa Code 523I.316(1.) any person knowing of the existence of a cemetery or marked burial site may notify the Board of Supervisors (or other applicable governmental unit) of the existence and location of such site. The governmental unit is then required to notify the landowner in question, and to take action to preserve and protect the site. It is im-

portant that the location be described as accurately as possible.

Any person may file and record an affidavit on any subject. The person who has notified the Supervisors of the existence and location of a cemetery or burial site (or any other person) can file an affidavit with the same information with the County Recorder, and it will become a permanent part of the record of that property. (Here the location becomes of critical importance to ensure the statement is attached to the correct piece of property.)

Different use of a tombstone



The tombstone of Reverend Bernard Al Schulte who died in 1913 was used to store booze during Prohibition in the 1920s-1930s.

Ostfriesen Genealogical Society Newsletter (IA), Oct. 2011.



SAPIC meeting on October 8, 2016 at 10:30 AM in Cedar County. At Red Oak Grove Church and Cemetery, 751 King Avenue. Tipton, IA.

Directions: From Interstate 80 take Highway 38 north of Tipton to 175th street (Co Rd F16, turn left (west) and go about two miles. From Hwy 30, take Hwy 38 just east of Stanwood south to 175th, turn right and about two miles.

We will have coffee and donuts/rolls before the meeting.

We are having lunch brought in. Cost is \$8.00. It will be ham and chicken salad 1/2 sandwiches, 2 salads and 2 soups, with bars for desert. I think it would be too far to go back to Tipton, but just in case, Tipton offers a variety of restaurants: Subway, Dairy Queen, Pizza Hut, Happy Joe's, etc.

We do want to do a program about "us." Since we are new I think we have lots to tell: how we started, our progress, funding, etc. I'll also have pictures.

Tipton Motel is on the south end of Tipton on Hwy 38 and South Street, the Spear Bed and Breakfast, Tipton, the Lincoln Bed and Breakfast, Lowden are available for overnight stays.

Contact: Sandy Harmel, 563-343-0197 or cchsmus@netins.net

Veteran's Gravestones

An Up-lifting Event

In the City of Des Moines Municipal Cemeteries there are thousands of veteran's graves that are marked by government issued gravestones. These include both upright markers as well as flush-mounted stones that are placed at or slightly below ground level.

Under extant city ordinances the care and maintenance of these stones are the responsibility of the family members of the veterans interred there. In many cases, those families have either passed on or have moved away from the area and there is now no one to make certain that those stones are maintained.

Local veterans groups as well as some fraternal organizations volunteer hundreds of man-hours every year to clean, straighten, and make certain that flags fly over the graves of our veterans from wars all the way from colonial times up to the modern day. Sadly these efforts are not enough and many hundreds of gravestones are in desperate need of assistance.

The Des Moines Parks and Recreations Department that oversees the seven municipal cemeteries in Des

Moines have undertaken a program to enlist the aid of volunteers to spend a few hours of their time in the process of lifting and straightening several hundred in-ground stones so that new underlayment materials can be placed and the stones levelled. City workers will be on-hand at all times, and equipment and supplies will be provided. Participants should be in good physical health and capable of aiding in the lifting of approximately forty-pound markers as well as shoveling and tamping of sand and underlayment materials.

The first "work days" for this fall are tentatively scheduled for September 14th through 17th, from 9:00am to 3:30pm for Glendale Cemetery, 4909 University Avenue, in Des Moines.. Any amount of time that can be volunteered will be most helpful, and you need not be in attendance for the entire period of the event.

Individuals and/or groups wishing to volunteer to assist in this project, are asked to contact Ganesh Ganpat at Glendale Cemetery, 515-248-6320; or, e-mail him at gnganpat@dmgov.org, to learn more about this worthwhile endeavor.

David M. Lamb
Iowa Military Heritage Society
Board Member, Iowa
Genealogical Society

Life Member, SAPIC
Committeeman, DM Cemeteries
Vet's. Stone Leveling Project

Would This Work for Your County?



Headstone of Civil War Soldier to Be Fixed After 154 Years

*Some mistakes are never too late
to fix.*

A Civil War soldier misidentified when he was buried at an Ohio cemetery more than 150 years ago is to get a new headstone.

Confederate soldier Augustus Beckmann was fatally wounded in the Battle of Shiloh on April 7, 1862. But he was buried at the Camp Chase Confederate Cemetery in Columbus under the wrong name, A. Bergman, and wrong company, The *Columbus Dispatch* reports (<http://bit.ly/2bzX8Ji>).

Beckmann's brother's great-great-grandson, Greg Beckman, discovered the error when he visited Camp Chase last Memorial Day.

Beckman, who teaches government at a high school in Placentia, California, pulled together the necessary documentation and asked the National Cemetery Administration to fix the headstone. He recently learned his request was approved.

An administration spokeswoman says approved stones are typically in place within 60 days.

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Beckman's great-great grandfather, William Beckmann, was Augustus' brother. The two came to America from present-day Germany between 1858 and 1860 and enlisted in the 2nd Texas Infantry in Galveston.

"William never learned the fate of his brother, as August was buried under the wrong surname of Bergman all those years," Beckman said. "The last time they saw one another was on the battlefield of Shiloh."

August Beckmann was buried under the name Bergman at Camp Denison near Cincinnati, and the incorrect name followed him when his remains and those of 30 other soldiers were removed in 1869 and reinterred at Camp Chase. Beckman said he was happy to visit his relative's gravesite, but wasn't content with the incorrect inscription.

"I knew something had to be done about it," he said. Information from: *The Columbus Dispatch*, <http://www.dispatch.com>



Bakken Pipeline

From the *Ottumwa Courier*, June 22, 2016: "Bakken pipeline will run under sacred tribal site." Iowa officials will allow work on a four-state oil pipeline to go forward after the company submitted a plan to avoid disrupting an American Indian burial ground.

Department of Natural Resources spokesman Kevin Baskins says the Texas-based Dakota Access LLC was given an amendment on its permit to dig at Big Sioux River Wildlife Management Area. Instead of a trench, the pipeline will be built about 85 feet underground using special boring equipment. State Archaeologist John Doershuk said the company's plan is satisfactory, but Indigenous Environmental Network organizer Dallas Goldtooth says his group opposes the decision to allow construction to go forward.

From the Campaign for America's Future web site, September 13, 2016: Bolstered by an extraordinary order from the Obama administration to halt construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline at a site con-

sidered sacred and environmentally vulnerable by Standing Rock Sioux in North Dakota, thousands upon thousands of pipeline opponents will participate September 13 in "#No DAPL Day of Action" events around the country, including an event at the White House featuring Sen. Bernie Sanders (D-Vt.). At the same time, a broad coalition of organizations has launched a petition drive calling on President Obama to cancel oil and gas sale leases on public lands, such as the Bakken fields that are the source of the of the crude oil that the Dakota Access Pipeline is being built to transport.

From the IGS newsletter:

According to a CBS News article, two people were found dead in a Western New York cemetery. Authorities believe that the two were struck by lightning. Just a reminder to be safe and to watch the weather while connecting with your buried relatives. To read the entire article, go to:

<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/police-2-found-dead-in-ny-cemetery-were-struck-by-lightning/>





COUNTY REPORTS

CEDAR

The Red Oak Grove Presbyterian Church -- 125 Years June 19, 1966.

The Red Oak Grove Church was the first Presbyterian Church in Cedar County, and the twelfth Presbyterian Church in the state of Iowa. It was organized by a number of loyal Scotch Presbyterian pioneers on March 1, 1841.

There were ten charter members. Their organization meeting was conducted by the Rev. Michael Hummer, an itinerant Presbyterian missionary. Three more members were received in May, and by November 1847 there were twenty-two members. During the first ten years the church had no regular pastor. It was served by the Rev. Hummer and other traveling missionaries.

In 1851 the Red Oak Church requested Presbytery for permission to change its location to Tipton. Permission was given and the church was known as The First Presbyterian Church of Tipton. Meanwhile, the people of Red Oak Grove had built a church and asked Presbytery for a separate organization. Their request was granted and in October 1859, a new church called "The Presbyterian Church of Red Oak Grove" was organized.

Presbytery dissolved the relationship between the churches at Tipton and Red Oak Grove in 1860 because of a disagreement over the time of the services on Sunday mornings. Next, Presbytery suggested that Red Oak Grove and the Presbyterian Church of Mechanicsville work together. The Rev. R. Boag, pastor at Mechanicsville, became Red Oak's pastor also in 1860.

The young people's society, the Christian Endeavor, was organized about 1894. The present manse was erected about 1899 just north of the church on ground given by Mr. Henry Britcher. Rev. J. C. Fawcett, in 1901, was the first to occupy the manse.

In August of 1913, Rev. W. A. Dillon left and for a period of about nine months Red Oak was without a pastor.

Good times were enjoyed by the members, friends, and children at "Family Night" gatherings for several years. A potluck supper usually preceded an evening of fun with games or slide pictures.

On November 16, 1963, the U.P.W. (United Presbyterian Women) was organized with fourteen charter members. Each year since, the members of the U.P.W. have held an annual supper and program. The free will offering is used for missions.

North Cemetery was organized in 1848. The original plat was made by A.L. Safley, map was redrawn January

1964: finished by Archibald & Ethel Safley March 1, 1976. The current version, December 2008 has been transcribed & illustrated by Lori Ostrich under the direction of Robert Rickard.

The South Cemetery was originally plotted in May of 1907 by a committee consisting of William Penningroth, William Welty, James Williams, W.L. Smith, A.L. Safley, and G.H. Escher. Original plat made June 18th, 1926. The map was redrawn January 1964 by Ritche Safley, and finished by Archibald & Ethel Safley in 1976. The current version was redrawn January of 2009 by Robert Rickard and Lori Ostrich, current revision is dated November 11th, 2009.

The Red Oak Grove Church will be the site of the October 8 SAPIC meeting.

DECATUR

From the *Le-on Journal-Reporter*,

June 1, 2016 "Garden Grove Memorial Day Service," contributed by Mary Richards. Two hundred eighteen flags placed at veterans' graves and the Avenue of Flags graced the Garden Grove Cemetery on Memorial Day. Pastor Brad Funk gave the invocation following the welcome by SAPIC member Mary Richards. Others on the pro-



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gram were Cierra Clark who sang the National Anthem, Jaelah Funk and Joel Funk. Diane Fenton, David Baker, Charles and David Coffey and the Mormon Trail students placed 125 flags on the east and west sides of the cemetery.

IOWA

At our ICPC meeting in July, we voted to put a new larger fence around Mary Wright's gravesite as I have discovered there are still other bodies buried near her. Four for sure and I think at least three more, but they need to cut some brush so I can do a better job of witching to know for sure.

The huge tree on the west side of the Spicer Cemetery has been removed so there is no danger of that falling on Newell Wright's stone if we move it to the SW corner of the cemetery where it belongs. *Contributed by LaVerna Moser*

MARION

From the minutes of the Marion County Pioneer Cemetery Commission, May 31, 2016, by Bev Jones, secretary: Steve Vander Hart completed the stone repair around the Parson/DeHamer Cemetery. Val Van Kooten, Steve Klein, Carl Nollen and eight Central College students tore out the old rail fence and installed a new rail fence at the Monster Cemetery. A sign will be installed

at the Walters Cemetery this fall. Stones will be repaired at the Monster Cemetery by Larry Davis.

POTTAWATTAMIE

From the *Ottumwa Courier*, August 2, 2016: "Human remains found may be from early pioneers." The human remains found last week at a Council Bluffs construction site may offer clues about the Mormon pioneers who crossed the region in the 1800s. Sister Terry Latey is a research librarian with an Omaha chapter of the Church of Latter Day Saints. She says the area where human remains were found was likely part of the Mormon Trail that hundreds of pioneers followed west to Salt Lake City.

SCOTT

From TV station WQAD8 in Quad Cities, July 14, 2016 by Elizabeth Wadas.

A gravestone buried about four inches into the dirt under a concrete wall that's 169 years old was found in a Davenport backyard by Jeff Martin of J&R Landscaping. On the stone is the name "Mary E. Wright" who lived in Montpelier, Iowa. She was buried in Muscatine County at Nye Cemetery when she was 19 years old just four months after she married William P. Wright. The mystery of how the stone ended up in Davenport, 25 miles away,

remains. Jeff hopes to return the stone to a living family member.

WINNESHIEK

Decorah newspaper. Jo Porter



Girl Scouts.

A Decorah girl has earned the highest award in Girl Scouts

through her dedication to serving her community.

Ashley Darling has earned her Gold Award through Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western Illinois by cleaning gravestones and inspiring her community to take up the cause in the future.

Ashley noticed that some of the gravestones in her city's cemetery were being neglected and falling to decay.

She felt that this issue stemmed from a lack of knowledge of how to properly care for gravestones, and about the people and history that are buried there. Ashley used her leadership skills learned through Girl Scouts to take action and make a plan to improve the Bluffton Community Cemetery. By holding her own workshop day, where the community had the opportunity to learn the method for cleaning gravestones, Darling helped to share with her community the importance of caring for cemeteries so that they will be there for future generations to enjoy and learn from.

"I created a book of the history of the cemetery, where I found and compiled all of the obituaries of the people buried in Bluffton Community Cemetery. This will have a long term effect in that it will help later generations to remember the people," Darling said. Ashley found that her summer project was a big accomplishment. "The most successful aspect for me was how much the stones have changed," she said. She hopes that the successes from her project will spread to other communities and that there will be a change in the way people perceive caring for cemeteries. "The Gold Award represents a girls' dedication to making the world a better place by beginning to make improvements in her own community," says Claudia Reich, manager of age level support at Girl Scouts of Eastern Iowa and Western IL.

OUT OF IOWA OREGON

From the History Channel (A&E Networks), September 2, 2016: "Vets on Harleys escorting Civil War soldier's ashes home," by Christopher Klein. Hundreds of volunteers on motorcycles are escorting the unclaimed ashes of Civil War private Jewett Williams from Oregon to his home state of Maine for a proper burial. When Jewett Williams died in an Oregon psychiatric institution in 1922, no one



came to claim the Civil War veteran's grizzled body. Like thousands of other lost souls, the old man's cremated remains were poured into a copper canister and unceremoniously shuffled from one location to another on the grounds of the Oregon State Hospital in the state capital of Salem until they were locked out of sight for years in a storage room. As a final indignity in death, the Maine native's name wasn't even spelled correctly on the label attached to his remains.

In 2004, Oregon Senate President Peter Courtney discovered his ashes and those of more than 3,600 others. A ceremony in front of an outdoor memorial that displayed the copper canisters of unclaimed remains behind a glass wall was held in 2014. Williams's ashes were then entrusted to the Patriot Guard Riders, a group of motorcycle-riding volunteers who transferred the precious cargo from state to state as part of a cross-country relay that took Williams home to Maine to be buried with full military honors.

SAPIC OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

President: Steve Story
Grave News E-mail Editor: Donna Story
18883 250th St.
Hawkeye, IA 52147
563-427-5354 dstory@netins.net

Vice-president: William Reedy
3046 Everly Ave
Brandon, IA 52210
319-474-2443 reedypart@jtt.net

Secretary: Larry Davis

5716 Kingman Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50311-2006
515-277-4917 ld2mstone@q.com

Treasurer: Brad Hughes
308 Sunset Lane
Grimes, IA 50111
319-269-8937 Llynman2@gmail.com

Board Member (2016): Jean Ann Ripley
2650 Inkpaduta Ave.
Webster City, IA 50595-7313
jbripley2@gmail.com

Grave News Editor and Board Member (2016): Pat Shaw
21813 170th St.
Birmingham, IA 52535
319-293-3899 patshaw@netins.net

Board Member (2018): Mike Magee
638 Englewood
Waterloo, IA 50701
319-232-8762 Digger4045@yahoo.com

Board Member (2018): LaVerna Moser
Amana, IA
319-361-0556 maidyourweek-end@southslope.net

Board Member (2017): John Heider
988 Iron Horse Place
Monticello, IL 61856
217-762-2422 jheider@mchsi.com

Board Member (2018): Benjamin Mayer
317 E. Green St. Winterset, IA 50273
515-462-5841 mayben@yahoo.com

Board Member (2017) Mary Richards
2201 R. Ave.
Jamaica, IA 50128
515-386-4750 mrichards@netins.net

Board Member (2018) and Web Page: Tony Bengston
1503 River Road Blvd.
Independence, IA 50644
319-415-1175 tonybengston@yahoo.com

SAPIC dues:

Individual for one year: \$10.00

Household for one year: \$15.00

Business or organization for one year: \$20.00

Lifetime individuals: \$100.00



Were on the web:

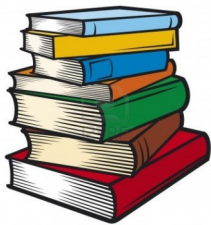
<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~iasapc/>



SAPIC is on Facebook!

Donations welcome and tax deductible.

Send dues to:
Brad Hughes, 308 NW Sunset Lane
Grimes, IA 50111



Contact SAPIC member John Heider for a list of suggested cemetery supplies and where to purchase them.

SAPIC Lending Library has books and other materials related to cemetery preservation; the list can be found on the SAPIC web site.



WHERE TO GET SIGNS

Iowa Prison Industries
Box B
Anamosa, IA 52205
1-800-336-5863

VETERANS' HEADSTONES

<http://www.cem.va.gov/>

Telephone: 1-800-697-6947

STATE CEMETERY REGULATOR

Dennis N. Britson, Director
Regulated Industries Unit, Iowa Securities Bureau
601 Locust Street, 4th Floor
Des Moines, IA 50309-3738
E-Mail: Dennis.Britson@iid.iowa.gov
(515) 281-5705 or toll-free (877)-955-1212
Christina.hazelbaker@iid.iowa.gov
paula.fastenau@iid.iowa.gov (compliance officer)

OFFICE OF THE STATE ARCHAEOLOGIST

Lara Noldner, Bioarchaeology Director
700 Clinton Street Building
Iowa City, IA 52242-1030
319-384-0740 lara-noldner@uiowa.edu