

Grave News

NEWSLETTER OF THE STATE ASSOCIATION FOR THE PRESERVATION OF IOWA CEMETERIES

21813 170th St. Birmingham, Iowa, 52535

sapiciowa.org

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January, February, March 2019

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APRIL 13, 2019 SAPIC MEETING

Do you remember the SAPIC meeting when the late Calvin McVay of Winterset was acknowledged for his interview about grave witching or grave dowsing in the December 23, 2001 Des Moines Sunday Register? Calvin was presented the Robert and Phyllis Carter Award in 2001. As SAPIC Life members, Ethel and the late Calvin McVay served on the SAPIC board and contributed many hours in the preservation work of our cemeteries.

It is time to return to Winterset at the invitation of the Madison County Historical Society and the Madison County Historic Preservation Commission. SAPIC members and guests will gather in the limestone lounge in the Madison County Historical Museum on April 13, 2019. Coffee and treats will be served when the doors to their museum open at 9:00 a.m. prior to

our 10:00 a.m. meeting.

The Madison County Historical Complex is located at 815 South Second Avenue, Winterset, Iowa. Attendees may take John Wayne Drive south from the Courthouse with a sharp right (west) which is approximately 5 blocks south of the Courthouse square onto Summit Street. Travel one long block and turn at the first left (south) onto South 2nd Avenue. Stay on South Second Avenue to proceed to the Madison County Historical Museum parking lot. The Museum is east of the Madison County Hospital. **SAPIC attendees may tour the 1856 Bevington Mansion following the meeting. (Other buildings on the 18 acres open in May with an invitation to return.) Following our meeting, you may visit Madison County pioneer cemeteries, covered bridges, the John**

Wayne Museum, the Iowa Quilt Museum and more. Restaurants and The Bakery on the square (yum!) welcome visitors.

Please let us know that you plan to attend by contacting Mary Richards at 515-386-4750 or mrichards@netins.net or Pat Shaw at patshaw@netins.net.

We look forward to seeing you on April 13 in Winterset.

Here are some links that you may find useful:

Madison County Historical Complex - www.historyonthehill.com

Dining - <http://www.madisoncounty.com/dining/>

Shopping - <http://www.madisoncounty.com/shopping/>

Attractions - <http://www.madisoncounty.com/attractions/>



SAPIC Spring 2019 Meeting

**At the Madison County Historical Museum, Winterset, IA
April 13, 2019
10:00 am.**

Coffee and treats will be served when the doors to their museum open at 9:00 a.m. prior to the 10:00 am meeting.

Topic Responses for SAPIC January Virtual Meeting

1. Advertising:

Yes, advertising should be accepted if it fits the philosophy of the Association. Yes, there should be fees charged for advertising in Grave News or on the website.

2. Attending State Organization Genealogy-Historical Conferences.

Yes, but there were no offers to volunteer.

3. Class and workshop information

No known SAPIC supported spring class/workshops scheduled.

4. Special reduced membership rates for schools and youth groups

Yes! Response was very positive to this suggestion. One response added individuals in high school through college age.

5. Should non-members continue to receive complimentary Grave News issues?

Mixed responses; OK with emailed issues. "No" to mailed complimentary Grave News issues. Recipients should pay for postage.

6. Suggestions for simplifying and upholding SAPIC's

purposes and goals

Received several responses and these will be discussed during April meeting.

7. Establish organization goals that are specific, achievable, realistic, timely, evaluated and revised. What direction do you want the Association to go?

Very similar to number six and will be on April's agenda.

8. Improving the SAPIC web site.

Responses like the presented ideas; photos, how-to-do-it section, interesting links.

9. SAPIC symbol, trademark or ID

Like the suggestion, but no one presented material.

10. For 2020, thoughts about establishing a central location for quarterly meetings.

Most members live in the eastern part of the state. No offers for a central location.

11. Cultivate associate editors, publishers, reporters

Present members who are the volunteers for these "titles" welcome anyone who is willing to help.



TREASURER'S REPORT FOR GRAVE NEWS

Funds on hand as of March 21, 2019, consist of



\$5,473 in a share draft (checking) account, \$655 in a reserve savings account, and \$7,605 in time certificates of deposit.

These funds total \$13,733 and are slightly higher than balances on hand of \$13,091 at year-end 2018 and \$12,661 year-end 2017.

However, current deposit balances will be reduced somewhat by any grants awarded next month. An expanded treasurer's report as of quarter-end March 31 will be submitted for approval at the April meeting of SAPIC.



Thanks to all SAPIC members that have paid 2019 dues and also to

those who have sent money for postage and mailing costs, if they requested the newsletter sent by U. S. Mail.

COUNTY REPORTS

CLAYTON

A marker for Charles Seitzberg (1843-1913) who served in the Illinois 12th Infantry during the Civil War is located two miles north of Marquette, Iowa.

The grave of Emma Eastman Kellogg Van Sickle Cunningham Cameron Bowles Sharp Van Sickle Stence Wilson (also known as "Virgin Em," believed to have been married nine times) is also located in Clayton County. For more information about the interesting life of Virgin Em, contact SAPIC member Ronald G. Harris, 2802 50th St. S., Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494. Phone 715-421-4113. Email: harris@wctc.net For a picture, contact the McGregor, Iowa, Historical Society. or <https://archives.lacrosselibrary.org/blog/emma-cameron-toast-of-the-northwest-or-femme-fatale/>

FAYETTE

From the *Fayette County Newspapers*, Feb. 20, 2018:

"Fayette County Pioneer Cemetery Commission turns 20." The Fayette County Pioneer Cemetery Commission turns two decades old this year (2018). In 1998, the County Board of Supervisors set up a pioneer cemetery commission to oversee



and improve the pioneer cemeteries in the county. The Commission hosted a luncheon to show its appreciation to all those who have volunteered their time to the organization over the twenty-year span. Steve Story gave a brief presentation on what all the volunteers' hard work has accomplished. The first cemetery on which the Commission started working was Boale, formerly known as Ames Cemetery near West Union.

HENRY

From the Senior Lifestyles supplement to the *Van Buren Register*, March, 2019:

"The 92 Cemeteries of Des Moines County," by Laurie Cochran.

A suggestion is made to take a walk back in time by accessing the website

<http://iagenweb.org/desmoines/Cemeteries>

instead of watching another rerun on TV. A dedicated group of volunteers, including SAPIC members Herb Price, Paul French and Stacy Bliensener have contributed information listing every cemetery in Henry County plus names, locations, dates and fascinating stories of Des Moines County's early settlers. Driscoll Cemetery, for example, wasn't an ordinary cemetery because the bodies were originally buried in a natural cave. Hawkeye Cemetery sits high on a bluff on land donated by the Swank family in memory of their daughter who died in 1837 at the age

of 2 years. Five Civil War soldiers are buried there. Jester Cemetery is located in Geode State Park and was discovered by a group of honor prisoners from the state penitentiary working there in 1957. The North Walker Cemetery contains the stone of Civil War soldier Nelson Bundy that was placed there by Mrs. Neal Walker to preserve it. Interesting stories are associated with most of the cemeteries and visits to the burial sites are encouraged when the weather is warmer. Seven veterans of the Revolutionary War are located in Henry County cemeteries. Their names are listed on a plaque at the courthouse in Burlington.

LUCAS

From the blog, "The Lucas Countyan," January 15, 2019: "Robert Hanell's tiny tombstone leads to a dead end," by Frank D.

Meyers, Chariton, Iowa.

The author of the blog discovered a tiny tombstone bearing only the name, "Robert Hanell," at the far west end of the Chariton Cemetery's oldest section. In an attempt to find out more about this person, Meyers found that cemetery records mention no one by that name. The only published trace of Robert seems to be this paragraph from *The Chariton Patriot* of March 4, 1874: "Robt Hannell, aged 24, died in this place last Saturday, of typhoid fever. He was a



promising young Swede, having formerly clerked at Braden's but later of the 1st National Bank." Eight years later, records show that a young woman named Ebba Hanell, who might have been Robert's sister, was married. However, that relationship is not certain and Ebba died in 1923 with little information to be found about her, also. And that, for the time being at least, is the dead end that little tombstone in the Chariton Cemetery has run me (Frank Meyers) up against.

MADISON

From a report submitted by the Farris (Cemetery) Advocacy Group dated February 23, 2019:

A review of activities regarding the restoration of the Farris Cemetery include the identification and repair of existing stones by SAPIC Board Member, Ben Mayer, research by Linda Smith, Ground Penetrating Radar completed by Dr. Glenn Storey from the University of Iowa, meeting with landowner, removal of fence, meeting with Union Township Trustees and the discovery of the easement. Future plans are to do a land survey prior to the installation of a fence, discuss installing an appropriate sign and rededication of the site in late summer. Descendants of the Beedle family, whose graves are located in the cemetery, have made contact with the group. The

Farris Advocacy Group received a SAPIC grant in 2018. A financial report by Molly Clause was attached to the report, along with a request for funds to complete



the project.

Archaeologist Glenn Storey, right and Jennifer Mack, a representative from the office of state archaeologists spent the day in Union Township at the Farris cemetery aiding the preservation commission in research.

POLK

From the *Des Moines Register*, Jan. 19, 2019, "Gerald LaBlanc, crusader for Iowa's memorials and monuments, dies," by Charles Flesher. Gerald LaBlanc, a former Des Moines Public Schools teacher, who led efforts to restore monuments to veterans on the state Capitol grounds and preserve the city's cemeteries, died in January. LeBlanc,



88, was instrumental in efforts to restore Iowa's Civil War Monument, the Soldiers and Sailors Monument, the Gold Star Monument and the creation of the state's Korean War Memorial that was installed on the Capitol grounds in 1989. However, his true passion was the preservation and restoration of stones in the Woodland Cemetery where he raised thousands of dollars to purchase new markers of Civil War veterans and pioneer infants, and also for the historic arch at the cemetery's entrance.

OUT OF STATE

DELAWARE

From the Emerging Civil War website: "Preservation News: USCT's Headstone Discovered in Delaware," posted Feb. 23, 2019 by Emerging Civil War. In Sussex County, Delaware, archaeologists discovered the headstone of Pvt. Charles S. Hall of Company K, 32nd United States Colored Troops. Hall's unit served throughout South Carolina and participated in the Battle of Honey Hill and the occupation of Charleston. He was discharged in 1864. It will take time to confirm his actual gravesite location, but the stone is a significant discovery for the community and for all Delawareans who value and appreciate the state's rich history. Hopefully, Sussex County can protect and preserve this cemetery from

TENNESSEE

From the American Legion web site: "Showing respect while taking on a cause," by the American Legion, Feb. 13, 2019.

Members of American Legion Riders Chapter 55 in Martin, Tenn., are covering the costs of installing Department of Veterans Affairs foot markers on the graves of veterans buried in Weakley County, Tenn. The markers have been stored at local funeral homes, some for as long as 40 years. The cost of installing the markers, quoted at \$275 each, is being covered by the American Legion and members of Chapter 55 are installing them. They also hired a lawyer to get forms drawn up to allow the funeral homes to turn the markers over to the Legion members. The chapter is now receiving donations to cover the cost for families that cannot afford to have markers installed. A local granite company, Quality Kitchens & Baths, has offered to cut the granite at below cost, enabling the Chapter members to install the markers for about \$40 each. In addition to installing foot markers, they have also erected a memorial for crew members killed in a U. S. Army B-17 crash in the area in 1943.



NEW YORK

From Channel 6 News, WRGB, Albany. New York, Feb. 7, 2019: LAKE GEORGE, N.Y. --

Several state archaeologists are expected to return to Lake George to work on a site where the remains of at least 11 people have been found. Pewter buttons dating to the Revolutionary War were found at the site indicating that some of the burials may have been soldiers. The buttons are not British or French, but American, so the remains are possibly those of American pa-



trients. Since there was a small pox hospital in the area, there is a remote chance that the remains are patients. Excavation of the area for the development of town homes is being put on hold until all the remains are accounted for and that those interred receive a respectful burial.



TEXAS

From the *Dallas Morning News*, February 17, 2019: "More life in death than life gave him at birth," by Robert Wilonsky. The final resting place of Andrew McCrew, whose body was displayed as "The Amazing Petrified Man" -- a carnival attraction -- for 60 years after his death, was finally given a Christian burial at the Lincoln Memorial Cemetery in Dallas. McCrew, a black homeless man, died in 1913 in Marlin, just southeast of Waco, Texas, as a result of a fall from a railroad box car that severed his leg. Since no one claimed his body, the funeral director sold his body to a carnival owner. Folk singer Don McLean who wrote "American Pie" saw a story about McCrew in the *New York Times* and didn't want him to be forgotten, so he wrote "The Legend of Andrew McCrew." Lott's Mortuary in Marlin buried his remains for free and jock Roy Leonard of WGN radio station in Chicago covered the cost of a headstone. The words of a verse from Don McLean's song are etched on his stone:

"Well, what a way to live a life and what a way to die.

Left to live a living death with no one left to cry.

A petrified amazement, a wonder beyond worth.

A man who found more life in death than life gave him at birth."

SCOTLAND

SAPIC member David Lamb and his wife returned in January from a 3-month visit in Scotland where they visited many cemeteries in which ancestors have been at rest since as far back as



the 11th century. One fascinating discovery was a grave on the Isle of Jura that marks the final resting place of a man



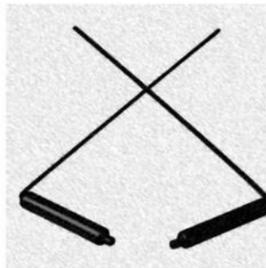
named "Gillouir MacCrain" who was said to have passed 180 Christmases in his own house. He died in 1645.

A few miles from this cemetery was another where Gillouir's daughter, Mary was buried. Her gravestone claimed that she saw over 120 Christmases. The seeming longevity

of these two can be explained by the fact that in Scotland, both the Julian and Gregorian calendars were widely in use up into the 19th century. Thus, it was possible to observe two Christmases and two Easters in every year of one's life.

In the Kilmun, Argyll and other cemeteries, the iron gated "mort safes" were on display that were used to protect recent burials in the 17th - 18th centuries when fresh cadavers were bringing top prices on the medical school dissection markets.

UK, obsolete) The pall spread over a coffin; black cloth indicative of mourning; funeral hangings.



Grave Dowsing

Kirkwood Community College Regional Center
at the University of Iowa, Coralville, Iowa
May 30, 2019 – Thursday 6-9 pm
June 1, 2019 – Saturday 1-3:30 pm
Tuition - \$39.00
Register at
<https://kirkwood.augusoft.net/> or
call 1-800-332-8833

Grave dowsing: Fact or fiction? Does it work? What do archaeologists say? What does science say? Come find out the answers to these questions and more. This is an introductory class that will examine dowsing methods used to locate unmarked graves and the age and gender of the deceased buried there. We will also cover Iowa laws that pertain to the unlawful disturbance of graves, both historical and modern, and what you should do in the event that you find an unmarked burial. This class requires you to have an L-rod dowsing tool: you may bring your own or purchase one from the instructor at the time of the class for \$19.99. There will be a field trip to a local cemetery to practice the dowsing methods learned in class. Students must provide their own transportation to the cemetery.



Tombstone Rubbing and Foil Casting Review Session

Kirkwood Community College Regional Center
at the University of Iowa, Coralville, Iowa
May 8, 2019 – Saturday 1-3:30 pm
Tuition - \$19.00
Register at
<https://kirkwood.augusoft.net/> or
call 1-800-332-8833

Individuals who have previously completed a "Grave Topics: Tombstone Rubbing" class may want sign up for this practice session that will review methods and techniques. Students must provide their own transportation to the cemetery and their own tombstone rubbing kits and foil casting supplies.

Two workshops at Kirkwood Community College

May 8, 2019 Saturday 1-3:30 pm.

Tombstone Rubbing and Foil casting Review Session
\$19.00

May 30, 2019 Thursday 6-9:00 pm

June 1 Saturday 1-3:30 pm
Grave Dowsing
\$39.00

Register at: <https://kirkwood.augusoft.net>

or

Call 1-800-332-8833

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SAPIC dues:

Individual for one year: \$25.00

Household for one year: \$35.00

Business or organization for one year: \$40.00

Lifetime individuals:
\$200.00

Donations welcome and tax deductible.

Send dues to:

Brad Hughes, 308 NW Sunset Lane
Grimes, IA 50111

Were on the web:

sapiciowa.org

SAPIC is on Facebook!



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

Cleaning Headstones

I recommend a chemical product called KEYSTONE that is very similar to D2, a comparable product. There are less expensive products, but if you're going to spend the effort and time, choose one of the following chemical cleaners:

D2 comes as a one gallon RTU product and cost about \$60 delivered.

KEYSTONE is a concentrate, comes in a quart, and makes 2 gallon of cleaner. Cost is \$25 delivered.

D2 may be ordered from Miles Supply, 1660 West Broadway, Rockville, MN 56369; 1-800-789-0813.

KEYSTONE may be ordered from R.I.P., Ltd., 988 Iron Horse Place, Monticello, IL 61856; 217-898-2422. --

John Heider

VETERANS' HEADSTONES

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

Telephone: 1-800-697-6947

WHERE TO GET SIGNS

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

STATE CEMETERY REGULATOR

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