

THE FRIENDS OF BENNETT CEMETERY, INC.

*A nonprofit corporation dedicated to preserving and restoring Bennett Cemetery, designated by the Texas Historical Commission as Lavaca County's first **Official Historic Texas Cemetery**. The I.R.S. recognizes us as a Section 501(c)(3) organization. Donations and bequests are tax deductible. Bennett Cemetery is located one mile north of Sweet Home on the west side of FM 531 at the Texas Historical Marker.*

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Family surnames known to be represented in the cemetery include: Armstrong,* Bell,* Bennett, Berdych,* Bethel, Bingham, Bolsius, Bonneau,* Bradley,* Calhoun,* Clements, Clifton, Cox, Currington, Dew, Durst, Dyer, Ellis, Fisk,* Greenwood, Hagin, Harrison, Harwood, Henley,* Hooper,* Hranitzky, James, Jansky, Kaiser, Koerth, Kuenstler, Kunetka, Layton, Lehmann, Lewis, McCord, McCutcheon,** McGrew, McMurrey,* McVey, Middlebrook,* Moore, Morgan, Mudd, Neely, Niemann, Noble, Oldham, Perrin, Rathke, Saunders, Schlageter, Sharber, Slanina, Spaulding, Stephenson,** Sutton, Tate, Tolleson, Vick and Williams. **James has been tentatively added because of a marker recently found but not confirmed to belong here.**

For the benefit of genealogists and family historians, some of the surnames shown above are the maiden names* of married women. Similarly, when known that a woman was married more than once, we have shown the surnames** of her several husbands.

BOARD MEETING

The Board of Directors of The Friends of Bennett Cemetery, Inc. met on April 14, 2007 at 9:30 a.m. in the social hall of Queen of Peace Catholic Church in Sweet Home. Melinda Berry and Bobbie Brune were re-elected to the Board of Directors for the 2007-2010 term, and Sue Alston was elected to replace James Carr for the same term.

The Board also reviewed the status of projects which were proposed at the last meeting, and set goals and adopted a budget for the coming year. Thanks to the generosity of the **Lavaca County Historical Commission**, we can continue for another year with our program to rescue and restore monuments that are in peril.



Brenda Lincke-Fisseler (right) presents the check to Melinda Berry, President of F.O.B.C.

OUR NEW BOARD MEMBER

We are happy to introduce our new board member, Sue Alston. As you know, we have been asking that someone step forward and take on a job of active participation in the organization. Sue has kindly answered the call, and we certainly welcome her help.

When we asked her for an autobiographical sketch, here is a shortened version of what she wrote.



"My name is Sue Alston and I am interested in the cemetery because so many of my ancestors are buried there. They are:

Richard Campbell
Saunders, Lovinia
Bradley (RCS's
mother-in-law),
Comfort Henley Dew,
Susan North Saunders
Dew (RCS's daughter),
Henley H. Dew, and

another Dew who is a son of Susan's. I think his name is Richard Dew.

I recently moved to McGregor, Texas from Sugar Land. I have been doing genealogy since I was just a child and have been visiting Bennett Cemetery for years. I am thankful that my mother told me about my ancestors being buried there. I am so glad that The Friends of Bennett Cemetery has been working so hard to "upgrade" it.

I am ?? years old and have two children, Robert Bailey Alston, Jr., DDS and a daughter, Lisa Ellen Alston Lucik. My son lives nearby in Lorena, TX, and my daughter still lives in Sugar Land. I have 6 grandchildren - 5 boys and 1 girl. Three of the boys are in college and several of the boys are very, very interested in history. One has visited Bennett Cemetery with me. My husband died about 15 years ago, so I am a widow. I am active in my church and other community affairs. I have a lot of energy and keep very busy. I'm looking forward to being part of The Friends of Bennett Cemetery team."

A PLEA FOR DONATIONS

As all of you know, we have had a very wet spring and summer. That is very good for the farmers and ranchers, but because we need to have the cemetery mowed more often, it wreaks havoc on our budget. Donations for the first half of the year have been very flat, and I would like to ask that you remember to send us a check to help with not only mowing but other expenses.

The cost of mowing and weed killer alone stands at this point at \$1975.00. There are the added costs for such things as newsletters and postage. To date the total of individual donations this year is \$1745.00, and we are just beginning the last quarter.

At the board meeting, our good neighbor, Harvey Matussek, pointed out the necessity for fence repair. We checked it out and found that indeed repairs were needed to help extend the life of the fence. Once again, **H. & N. Fence Company** came to our rescue. Kirk Harrell not only did the repairs at a very low cost, but also donated some time to make it even lower. We are so very fortunate to have such wonderful friends in Lavaca County. We do need to keep in mind that the fence is old and badly rusting in some areas. It will have to be replaced in the not-too-distant future.

Also, Tom Finger, our Vice-President, Lavaca County went to check on the state of the cemetery and found that a hackberry tree is dying and needs to be taken down before it falls and damages monuments. That will be taken care of by Mr. Earl Schacherl in the next few weeks, but it is also an unexpected expense.

To sum things up - there are many expenses involved in maintaining and improving Bennett Cemetery. All of us who have ancestors there or who just have an interest in preserving history need to donate whatever we can to make its preservation certain.

Donations for the expenses involved in keeping our efforts alive should be sent to:

The Friends of Bennett Cemetery
c/o Bobbie Brune, Treasurer
P. O. Box 195
Palacios, TX 77465

Don't forget we are a 501(c)(3) corporation, and your donations are tax deductible.

OUR MYSTERIES

So far we have not received answers to our first two mysteries - the marker with a July 10, 1890 death date and the yellow PVC pipes. We hope that some day we will find the answers. If this date rings a bell or you know anything about the pipes, please let us know.



THE NEW MYSTERY SOLVED

In the last newsletter we reported the finding of the marker shown above. Almost immediately we found the answer. One of our board members, Jimmie Ruth Eash, wrote to say that her family records showed that Leanna Permelia Bennett was born on January 30, 1835, married Nathaniel H. Cox, had two daughters, and died August 5, 1870.

One of their granddaughters, Rebecca Cox Youngkin, who was born in 1895, attended the dedication of the historical marker. She told Gene Bethel at that time that when she found Leanna's marker missing and Nathaniel's on the ground, she had Nathaniel's moved to a cemetery in Yoakum.

This piece was found, face down, in front of a concrete base and the same type of concrete base next to it is no doubt where Nathaniel H. Cox is buried. It would be wonderful if a family member would have Nathaniel Cox's marker moved back to Bennett Cemetery. Meanwhile, we will put the location on the cemetery map as soon as we determine its exact placement.

A NEW NAME DISCOVERED

Brenda Lincke-Fisseler, who has been such a help to us over the years, sent information which, without doubt, adds a new name to the list of those interred in Bennett Cemetery. It is that of Emily Rosa or Rosa Emily Neely who was the wife of James Franklin Neely and the daughter-in-law of George A. and Ellen J. Neely, both of whom rest there. While the cemetery was being surveyed and mapped, dowsing rods indicated two unmarked graves within the chain-link fence of the Neely plot. Now, thanks to Brenda, we have the name of one of them.

MARKER RENOVATION PROJECT

As you may remember, the association applied to the Lavaca County Historical Commission for a grant to be used for the renovation and repair of monuments in the cemetery. We are very grateful to the commission for its grant of \$500.00 to be used for this purpose.

The board adjourned to the cemetery to determine which of the monuments would be included in this year's selection. This time we were looking for both monuments which were in peril of falling over and some that were easily straightened and put back together. The ones selected were a very large family marker in the Bennett plot, and four with the names McCord, Jno., Bonnie G. Dyer, Johnie Erie Dyer, and John P. Dyer.

The grant from the Historical Commission will only cover about half of the cost for this renovation work. In addition, the Commission notified us that in the future they will only be funding Texas State Historical markers. We are very grateful for all of their past support, but now we ask that, if at all possible, the descendants of these people make a donation and note that it is being sent for that purpose. If we get enough money, we can get all of them done. Please help if possible. Send your check to: The Friends of Bennett Cemetery
c/o Bobbie Brune, Treasurer
P. O. Box 195
Palacios, TX 77465

HELP!!!

Folks, as you can determine from this newsletter, we have been working very hard to renovate and preserve Bennett Cemetery, but this writer is very disappointed in the lack of financial help from so many of you. Surely some of you have just let Bennett Cemetery slip your mind. Now that you are being reminded, **please** see if you can come up with even \$15 or \$25. If everyone contributes a little, it all adds up to success in our efforts and the continuation of this newsletter. Send your contribution to Bobbie Brune at the above address. We thank you and your ancestors —

THANK YOU!