

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**. 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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WE'RE HERE TO STAY!

Mr. Henry Cueller, Secretary of State for the State of Texas, in a letter dated April 25, 2001 issued a Certificate of Incorporation to The Friends of Bennett Cemetery, Inc. as a nonprofit corporation. This was in response to our filing the Articles of Incorporation with his office on March 12, 2001. Our Charter Number is 01624752-01. Copies of the Certificate and/or the Articles of Incorporation are available upon request.

There were a number of reasons for incorporating our organization. Probably the most important was to provide a means for permanent care of the cemetery. This will improve the possibility that the Friends organization will survive beyond the lives of all of us. The corporation will be managed by a seven-member Board of Directors who will appoint and supervise officers who will take care of day-to-day activities. Should any director or officer die, become incapacitated, or resign, the directors will select a replacement in accordance with the by-laws of the corporation.

We are no longer dependent on any one person. This procedure should insure the long-term maintenance and preservation of the cemetery.

Also, as a nonprofit corporation, we will have a better chance of securing from the Internal Revenue Service a determination that gifts made to the Friends can be treated as tax deductible by the donor. This will be an advantage to some of our donors and will permit us to also solicit funds from corporations and governmental entities which otherwise would not have considered giving to us before.

The expenses of filing our application for incorporation and the future expenses of applying to the I.R.S. for a determination regarding the tax deductibility of gifts made to the corporation were and will be largely covered by a \$250.00 grant received for these purposes from the Lavaca County Historical Commission. We received this grant in February and quickly made our application to the Secretary of State. Your donations were not committed to these expenses. We are very grateful to our good friends with the Historical Commission for their very special gift.

The new corporation will not issue (sell) stock, nor will it have members.

The directors and officers will not receive compensation for serving in those capacities for the corporation.

YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Friends of Bennett Cemetery, Inc. will be managed by a seven-member board of directors. The initial directors, three of whom will serve for three years, two for two years, and

two for one year are as follows:

Three year term:

Donald E. Noble of Houston
Bobbie Brune of Palacios
Melinda Berry of Mesquite

Two year term:

Tom Finger of Shiner
Jimmie Ruth Eash of San Antonio

One year term:

W.L. "Bill" Yolland of Wharton
Gene Bethel of Dallas

This is a fine, representative group of people. Although these are not requirements to serve as a director, all have ancestors buried in the cemetery and all have been generous donors to our preservation efforts. They will do a good job.

The board has recently adopted bylaws for the corporation and is now proceeding with the business of managing the corporation by appointing officers, approving an expense budget, selecting a corporate banking arrangement and various other matters necessary to run the corporation.

John M. "Jack" Greenwood, Jr.

We are very sad to report the death of Jack Greenwood on Sunday December 24, 2000. He was known personally to many of us. Others will remember him from the historical marker dedication in October 1999. Jack dedicated a marker to his kin, John Greenwood IV (1797-1849) and his wife, Joiney D. Dickinson Hooper Greenwood (1796-1847). Jack then dedicated a second marker to Beverly Carter "B. C." Greenwood (1819-1895) and his wife Terressa Bennett Greenwood (1822-1851). The two beautiful granite monuments are located on "memorial row."

Jack was a member of The Sons of the Republic of Texas, and it was he who personally made the arrangements for the Wm. Barret Travis Chapter of San Antonio to participate, with their beautiful flags, in the dedication ceremonies. He was a member also of the Sons of the American Revolution and other heritage societies. We will miss him.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE FRIENDS

A group of Friends met on Saturday April 7, 2001 at the Parish Hall of the Queen of Peace Catholic Church in Sweet Home for the organization's annual meeting. It was a beautiful south Texas spring morning and the bluebonnets and paint brushes were gorgeous.

We had hoped to have the Certificate of Incorporation in time for the meeting, but since we didn't, the directors-to-be proceeded to discuss and consider the many matters the board will need to decide in the very near future. It was a

productive meeting, lasting about two hours. We thank all who were able to attend and hope that more will attend our next general meeting.

The Parish Hall of the church was, in an earlier life, the public school in old Sweet Home. When the building became surplus some years ago, the church bought it, moved it to its present location, and remodelled it. It has a very interesting history, and Viola Kunetka, who attended our meeting, had pictures and stories to prove it. As a young girl, she attended the school. Thank you, Viola, for bringing the pictures and taking the time to tell us about those "golden rule days" in old Sweet Home.

the piles of dead brush. We expect future mowings and trimmings to be more thorough. It will take time for all the planned improvements to be made - but watch for them. Please let us have your comments when you next visit the cemetery.

Despite the very nice anonymous donation mentioned above and a number of donations already received this year, we will need more money to properly maintain the cemetery through the summer. We need your donations.

Last summer was drought conditions in Lavaca County and we were able to postpone mowings during the worst of that dry spell. We have had a normal spring this year, and the grass is growing like weeds. Please consider making a donation in the near future if you haven't already done so.

PLEASE HELP US - NOW. We are going to save the cemetery and are going to preserve our family heritages for our descendants.

CEMETERY SIGN-IN BOX

A rural/suburban type mail box has been erected at the entrance of the cemetery. We hope all visitors will sign in when they visit the cemetery. We'd like to add their names to our newsletter address list. If you are already on the list, we'd just like to know that you visited. A one page "flyer" setting out information about the cemetery is available for visitors to carry home. A copy of the flyer is shown on the next page.

VETERANS

We know of only a handful of military veterans who are buried in the cemetery. We believe there may be many more. Please help us and tell us of any that you know of, or that you think might have been a veteran. We need this information for the short biographies that we are developing on those buried in the cemetery. We would also like to work toward a cooperative arrangement with the American Legion or some other patriotic organization to have the graves of all veterans marked with a flag on holidays such as Veterans Day and Memorial Day.

MEMORIAL GIFT

Early in May we received a contribution made in memory of a recently deceased friend from one of our regular contributors. Similarly, after Jack Greenwood's death, we

DONATION

We have recently received a very special donation. The donor has asked to remain anonymous and we will certainly respect that request, but we are extremely grateful for the gift. Thank you very much, Anonymous Donor. Your help is very much appreciated.

NEW MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

Beginning about the middle of May we made a change in our cemetery maintenance program. We hope you will approve after you see the results. Work has begun on clearing the fence lines. Plans are being made to dispose of received a donation in his memory.

Donations are always acknowledged. In the case of memorial gifts, a letter of acknowledgment is also sent to the person designated by the donor to receive such letter. The size of the gift is not mentioned.

A very nice way to remember a friend and help save Bennett Cemetery. Please think about it.

YOUR COMMENTS

With the issuance by the State of Texas of our nonprofit corporate charter and the selection of our Board of Directors, you may think that we do not want and need your suggestions. WRONG!

Please feel free to contact any of the Directors on any matter affecting the cemetery. We want your ideas, suggestions and, yes, even your concerns and complaints regarding the cemetery. Most of the directors live many miles from Sweet Home and see the cemetery only once or twice each year. The more input we have from you and other visitors, the better job we can do.

We also solicit biographical information on all persons buried in the cemetery. Over time, we hope to develop a Who's Who of everyone interred there. We need your help with this, too!