

Washington County Genealogical Society Adopt A Cemetery Newsletter

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The Adopt A Cemetery project members of the Washington County Genealogical Society are happy to report, that, despite the long unrelenting winter weather, cemetery preservation work has been accomplished. The great turnout and enthusiasm shown at the Adopt A Cemetery kickoff event last October 9th at the Ant Street Inn in Brenham has led to the improvement of at least two of Washington County cemeteries.

Our first adoption is the Palestine Community Cemetery on Ellermann Road in the Sandy Hill area. Although it is a community cemetery, it has predominantly been associated with the Palestine Baptist Church which dates back at least to April 21, 1883, and possibly earlier; at that time, it was called the Palestine Colored Baptist Church. The church land was acquired from Burrell McCowan; it is not clear whether it was purchased or donated. The Palestine Community Cemetery appears to have been a gift from Juliaann Dailey who deeded the property on Oct 11, 1894, to Warren McCown & Moses Jameson, both trustees of the Freedman Graveyard Community. The earliest stone found to date is 1917.

November 15: Twenty one kids and adults from LDS Cub Scout Pack 1620, led by Dee Dee Michel, braved threatening weather to clear a good portion of the Palestine Cemetery located on Ellermann Road in the Sandy Hill area. They cleared the underbrush near the entrance to the cemetery, finding two headstones and a metal marker that had been hidden for years.



Cutting & Cleaning



After Cleanup



LDS Cub Scout Pack 1620 & Parents



*"A monument exists because someone lived,
not because someone died."*

Mary Brennan, Family Motto



February 14: Following the workday by the Scout troop, the Latter Day Saints Church decided to adopt Palestine Cemetery and sponsored a group on Valentine's Day to continue clearing the brush at the cemetery. There were 42 people working, resulting in the discovery of more tombstones. They plan to have another workday on March 21.



Cleaning Palestine Cemetery



Church of Latter Day Saints
Cemetery Cleanup Crew

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*"To speak the names of the dead is to make them live again"*  
*Ancient Egyptian Belief*

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Also on February 14, the Washington 4-H Club led by Misti Corn worked at the Good Hope Cemetery, on William Penn Road. Twenty-one kids and adults assisted Daniel Perez who is the primary caretaker of the cemetery. They proudly helped their community by cutting down dead trees, picking up sticks and painting the pipe fence.



The Good Hope Cemetery is a part of a 3-acre tract on which there was also a church and school. This tract is located on William Penn Road in the Jonathon Newman League. The church was being built in Nov 1879, and was roofed and weatherboarded, but building was temporarily stopped due to lack of money. We have found mention of the church being in existence into the 1890s, but have not yet found when it ceased to exist. The school is only listed in 1880-1881 school year.



Washington 4-H Club at Good Hope Cemetery



Planning is underway with several other groups interested in adopting a cemetery. Soon, with spring weather near, we hope to report on more success stories that are stimulating the enthusiasm of our Washington County residents and leaders. It validates what we saw at our October kickoff event. If any of you receiving this newsletter are interested as a group or individually or know of a group or individual eager to help or contribute in any way we would appreciate your contacting us. This is a community project and effort. For more information, please contact Jan Kelm at (979) 277-9637 or jankelm@texasbb.com.

Washington County Genealogical Society is a 501c3 organization and all monetary donations are tax deductible. Donations will be used toward our Adopt-A-Cemetery Project. Mail to Suite 105, 2211 S. Day Street, Brenham, TX 77833.