



# SAVE AUSTIN'S CEMETERIES

## Summer 2012 Newsletter

### Save Austin's Cemeteries Board Members

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Kay Boyd, Vice President  
Leslie Wolfenden, Secretary  
Barbara Surlles, Treasurer  
Danny Camacho  
Dale Flatt  
Megan Spencer  
Bob Ward

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### Austin Historical Wiki Provides New Opportunities to Promote Awareness of Cultural Assets, Historic Cemeteries

by Andrea Roberts

#### *What is the Austin Historical Wiki?*

A research project out of the University of Texas at Austin has re-envisioned historical surveys. A team of faculty, graduate students, and professional staff at the UT Schools of Architecture and Information created a web tool to assist in the survey of historic resources in Austin, from downtown along Congress Avenue all the way to its city limits. The Wiki displays information on the history and architecture of over 3,000 buildings and other kinds of historic places, from historic bridges to sidewalk inscriptions. Launched on June 4, 2012, UT developed the Austin Historical Survey Wiki for the City of Austin Historic Preservation Office and tested the web site in pilot neighborhoods. The Wiki is an experiment in new ways to conduct surveys and share the results. The vision for the Wiki is that it becomes a living inventory of historic places, able to accommodate routine changes better than a final report. The site enables the City of Austin Historic Preservation Program to make official information available, while supporting residents who may notice neighborhood change more quickly.

Wiki statistics	
Places:	2859
Images:	3178
Documents:	908
Users:	185
Survey Efforts:	11

The Austin Historical Survey Wiki is a new interactive tool for the City of Austin. The Wiki allows you to find and contribute information about historic buildings, sites, and landscapes of the past and present that tell the history of Austin. A historical survey is a way to research, identify, and share information. The Wiki is a living survey database where information from previous historical surveys can be accessed and new information can be contributed by Wiki users. The Austin Historical Survey Wiki is a resource for planning Austin's future and sharing its history.

Search Places to see what has been added to the Wiki. Create a login to add or edit places. Read more about the project on the Wiki User Guide.

50 Most Recently Added Places

Map Satellite

Continued by Google

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Continue to full map >>>

*Get Involved!*

The Wiki website provides a place for professionals, community leaders, and citizens to work together to identify and share information about the places that matter. Most of the information available on the Wiki comes from professionally conducted surveys completed during more than 30 years. Some comes from volunteers researching their neighborhoods with the aim of establishing local historic districts. Additional information comes from interested Austinites sharing information and photos of places they consider important.

The Wiki and SAC’s missions are similar. Both are dedicated to documenting places that matter. The Wiki team encourages SAC members and friends to provide information about those who once lived in a particular property or place. By doing so, you are not only helping the Austin Historical Wiki project, but also increasing the City’s awareness of SAC and the significance of historic cemeteries.

Any registered user can contribute photos, documents, and information online. Registering at the website (<http://beta.austinhistoricalsurvey.org>) is easy. Once entries from volunteers are moderated (usually within 24-48 hours), submitted information is published immediately.

SAC members and friends can help build and promote the Wiki by:

- Cross-referencing the names of those buried in historic cemeteries with Historic Landmark properties or sites. Note the name of the cemetery where former property owners are interred.
- Sharing headstone photography with the Wiki site. The web site permits users to upload photos.
- Using the advanced search feature to generate a list of objects or places associated with a nearby cemetery. Once you’ve added cemetery information to various property entries, use the resulting list during special tours or as additional interpretive materials for docents.
- Noting that certain properties are adjacent to historic cemeteries or in some cases beneath other properties.
- Scanning documents and ephemera associated with properties or individuals who may have lived in a historic property and upload to the web site.
- Surveying places that matter in your own neighborhood. Document places and objects in an iPad version of the website.



*The Austin Historical Survey Wiki was funded through a Certified Local Government grant from Texas Historical Commission with additional support from the City of Austin, the Preserve America program of the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Parks Service, and the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training.*

**Speaker Event: Bull Hill Cemetery** by Bob Ward

Save Austin’s Cemeteries was honored to have Nedra Lee speak at our speaker session on July 14<sup>th</sup> at the North Branch Library. Ms. Lee is a doctoral student at the University of Texas and specializes in archeology and the African diaspora. She spoke on the Bull Hill Cemetery, an African American cemetery in Falls County that she documented during part of her undergraduate studies. The documentation included extensive historical research along with oral histories of living descendants and community members. Her talk was accompanied by an extensive power point show along with video of the cemetery marker dedication ceremony. The Bull Hill Cemetery received recent recognition as perhaps the long lost resting place of the Texas Ranger James Coryell. (DNA identification has been inconclusive). Nedra is currently writing her dissertation on her work at the Ransom and Sarah Williams Farmstead in southwest Travis County.



**Membership Drive 2012** by Leslie Wolfenden

As we wrap up the 2012 Membership Drive, we would like to welcome new members to Save Austin’s Cemeteries and thank them and returning members for their generous support. Without their support, Save Austin’s Cemeteries would not be able to carry out the projects that help preserve the historic cemeteries in Austin through documentation and education, and promoting historic cemeteries of Austin as cultural resources.

New Members

- Dorothea Adams
- Carol Castlebury
- Richard Chaffee
- Rick Cloud
- Joan Culver and family
- Helen Fleming
- Joseph Cole Norman
- Carolyn Griffin
- Billy Harrell
- Lauren Jones-McClain
- Terri McClain
- Hunter Miller
- Jim & Kathleen Nitschke
- Ramona Reeves
- Roy Richardson
- Susan Rubio
- Jean Shroyer
- C. Aubrey Smith, Jr.

New Lifetime Member

- Emily Little

Renewing Members

Jo Adams  
 John Bormann  
 David Bowles  
 Kay Boyd  
 Mary Ann Bradfield  
 James Brenner  
 Danny Camacho  
 Charles Clinger  
 Wallace Davenport  
 Donna Flippin  
 David Gracy II  
 Liz Hicks  
 Jerry Don & Connie Kanetzky  
 Elisabeth Kihlberg  
 Iva Kinnaird  
 Susan Lassell  
 Annette & Henry Lucksinger  
 Kelly Mahmoud  
 David Martin  
 Kim McKnight  
 Terri Mirka  
 Larry Nale  
 Beth Pickett  
 Jan Root  
 Susan Salinas  
 Mike Schneider

Renewing Members con't

Eugenia Schoch  
 Abbie Smith-Howe  
 Nancy Springen  
 Angela Stipe  
 Barbara Surlles  
 Margaret Taylor  
 Lin Team  
 Sally Victor  
 Roger Waguespack  
 Jacquie Wilson  
 Alan & Kathleen Wolfenden  
 Leslie Wolfenden

Donations

Dorothea Adams  
 Rick Cloud  
 Wallace Davenport  
 Billy Harrell  
 Annette & Henry Lucksinger  
 Susan Lassell  
 David Martin  
 Kim McKnight  
 Larry Nale  
 Margaret Taylor  
 Lin Team

With Member support during 2011, Save Austin's Cemeteries has actively supported the following programs, among others:

- **Public Education:** Every year, SAC hosts several walking tours that educate the public about Austin's past citizens and cemetery preservation, incorporate our youth by having them actively participate as storytellers, and raise money for cemetery projects. SAC also conducts private walking tours for school groups and scout troops upon request. This year, SAC added a Texas Heritage Day event at Oakwood Cemetery, featuring multiple non-profit history groups, guest speakers, walking tours, craft demonstrations, storytelling, and more to raise awareness of Austin and Texas history.
- **Cemetery Preservation:** SAC has teamed with Heimsath Architects for the 1914 Gothic Revival Chapel Rehabilitation Project at Oakwood Cemetery. The project includes the physical restoration, programming for future community uses of the space, and launching a capital campaign to raise the funds to make it all happen.
- **Advocacy for Local Cemetery Issues:** SAC raises public awareness of Austin's historic cemeteries by attending City meetings relating to cemetery issues, helping other local cemetery groups get started with their own cemetery programs, giving presentations to other organizations about historic cemeteries, keeping the City aware of issues – such as vandalism or storm damage, and letting its members know about the latest cemetery events.
- **Guest Speaker Series:** SAC invites expert speakers to present at SAC's quarterly meetings. Past speakers have talked about symbolism, Jewish burial customs, paranormal investigations, local family histories, and ethnic heritage, to name a few.

Please help us continue to serve the preservation needs of Austin's historic cemeteries. Let's work together to preserve these important cultural resources. Go to the SAC website for more details and to sign up as a member. <http://www.sachome.org/join/join.html>

### **Austin Museum Day** by Beth Pickett

We had so much fun being a part of last year's Austin Museum Day that we're doing it again! *Community* is the theme, and our city cemeteries certainly fit right in as symbols of Austin's historic and enduring community. The big day this year is Sunday, September 23rd, and we'll be available for information and tours at Oakwood Cemetery from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Tours will commence at 9:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., and 11:00 a.m. Mark your calendar, and come help us showcase the unique perspective on community that our cemeteries offer.

### **Historic Oakwood Cemetery Book Project** by Kay Boyd

We are in the process of gathering information and photos to publish a pictorial history book of Oakwood Cemetery. We are collecting materials and we will need help in pulling all of the information together. If you would like to be involved in this project doing research, layout, proofing, editing, or anything else, please contact Kay Boyd at [mkdb1405@aol.com](mailto:mkdb1405@aol.com) or by calling 512-836-7484.

### **Murder, Mayhem & Misadventure VI Walking Tours** by Kay Boyd

Plans are underway for our annual Murder, Mayhem and Misadventure Tour on October 27. We will have costumed actors telling the stories of some of the people who met untimely deaths. These chilling tales of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century murders and other untimely deaths shed new light on Austin's history and will put you in a ghoulish mood. This is our sixth year for the MMM tour and each event is better than the last so do plan to attend. This event is free and open to the public, but donations will benefit cemetery preservation projects such as the Oakwood Cemetery Chapel Restoration Project.

### **Upcoming Speaker Event: Cemetery Stones** by Kay Boyd

On October 13, you are invited to join us on a walk through Oakwood Cemetery with Professor Emeritus of Geology, Earle F. McBride. Professor McBride will talk about the materials that make cemetery headstones and monuments. During our visit to the cemetery we will examine the response of different rocks to the elements and microbial growth and see how both the texture of natural stone and its treatment by stonecutters influence legibility with time.

The event begins at 10:00 a.m. at Oakwood Cemetery. Please wear sensible close-toed shoes as the terrain is uneven and weather appropriate clothes. If the weather does not cooperate, the presentation will be held inside the chapel at Oakwood Cemetery at 1610 Navasota Street (south of UT baseball field and east of I-35). Free parking is available in the cemetery.

### **Upcoming Photo Contest** by Leslie Wolfenden

SAC will be sending out notice for the Third Annual Photo Contest in the very near future. In the past, this has been a hotly contested competition resulting in many beautiful photos of the five city cemeteries. The top twelve entries get their photos in the next year's SAC calendar and a one-year free SAC membership. The top entry gets the coveted front cover of the calendar along with a free calendar and one-year free SAC membership. To see last year's calendar and winning entries, go to <http://www.sachome.org/shop/store.html> to get inspired for this year's competition. Start looking through



your existing cemetery photos or get out into the city cemeteries with your cameras and get clicking! With the recent rains, the cemeteries are still green.

**Submit an Article to the SAC E-newsletter**

If you would like to submit an article to the SAC e-newsletter, please send your article or idea to [info@sachome.org](mailto:info@sachome.org).

**Calendar**

Please join us for these upcoming events!

Sept. 23	Austin Museum Day Oakwood Cemetery, 9:00 – 1:00
Oct. 13	Guest Speaker Session: Cemetery Stones by Earle F. McBride Oakwood Cemetery 10:00 – 11:00
Oct. 27	6 <sup>th</sup> Annual Murder, Mayhem & Misadventure Walking Tours for Halloween Oakwood Cemetery 10:00 – 4:00

*If you would like to stop receiving SAC emails, or if you have updated contact information, please send an email to [info@sachome.org](mailto:info@sachome.org).*