

SAVE AUSTIN'S CEMETERIES

Summer 2014 Newsletter

Save Austin's Cemeteries Board Members

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It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year...Almost by Beth Pickett

Murder, Mayhem & Misadventure whispers in silence just now, but soon the dark tales of our annual Halloween tour will be rustling the leaves of October in Oakwood Cemetery. Mark your calendar for Saturday, October 25th and prepare to hear about the wild, woolly, and more wicked side of early Austin. Tours commence at 10:00 a.m. and run continuously throughout the day. The last tour is 4:00 p.m. Donations to benefit the city cemeteries are gladly accepted. Wear your sturdy witch slippers or ghoulish boots, as trekking in the cemetery can be...well, a bit ghoulish.

You'll delight grimly in the performances of costumed actors who recount the misbegotten and their shadowy places in Austin history. Be sure to grab a photo op with our dear Mr. Skelly, and why not pick up a copy of our book, *Austin's Historic Oakwood Cemetery, Under the Shadow of the Texas Capitol?* The Oakwood Cemetery Chapel will also be open for viewing—we're happy to report that it has a bright future for rehabilitation in the city's upcoming Cemetery Master Plan.

Oh, but we were talking about murder and mayhem and misadventure in the dark past—do come and join us for some fascinating Austin history in the Halloween season!

Oakwood Cemetery
October 25, 2014
Saturday
10:00 to 4:00

Some of our talented actors from the Austin Tour Guide Association; Mr. Skelly with visitor Beth Pickett.

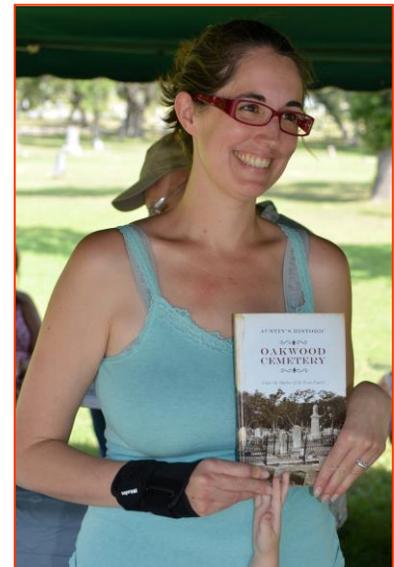


SAC Book Bash Event by Sally Victor

With blue skies and a nice breeze, Save Austin's Cemeteries hosted a Book Bash on Saturday, July 12 to welcome visitors to Oakwood Cemetery and to showcase the terrific history reflected in our recently published book, [Austin's Historic Oakwood Cemetery: Under the Shadow of the Texas Capitol](#). The event was held from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and it was a rousing success! With the help of InterCare Corporation and the cooperation of the City's Parks and Recreation Department and SAC volunteers, we had an enormous tent, our very own Book Bash fans, along with tasty refreshments and cool drinks to enjoy on a warm July day.

As a 501(c)(3) organization, we have two tax free holidays, so this was our second of the year. It was an added incentive to buy! All totaled, we sold over 100 books. Sales of the book continue via the website and direct purchase. Only a limited number remain, so please let us know if you want to purchase a copy for \$15 plus tax, and we will make arrangements to get it to you. We may have a second printing soon! Get your first edition copy before we sell out! To purchase a copy of the book, contact info@sachome.org.

In addition to selling, autographing, and talking about our book, several SAC volunteers conducted cemetery tours to help locate the graves of people included in the book and to acquaint visitors with this very historic cemetery. Visitors included Time Warner Cable News and Ora Houston, a candidate for District One, which includes four of the City's historic cemeteries. Many of our book contributors, descendants of individuals buried at Oakwood, and just friendly neighbors came and met one another. A couple of cousins who had not seen one another in many years met up under the big tent!



Visitors under the big tent. Mandy Kutz is very pleased with her book purchase.

2014 Photo Contest by Leslie Wolfenden

SAC has kicked off its fifth annual photo contest, starting August 1 and ending August 31. Shortly after that, the photo entries will be posted on the SAC website to allow the public to vote for its favorite top twelve entries.

The purpose of the contest is to increase public awareness and appreciation of the artistic and cultural value of Austin's city cemeteries. The top twelve (12) entries will be compiled as the 2015 SAC calendar. The calendar will be available for sale at the Murder, Mayhem & Misadventure Halloween tours and via our website with proceeds benefiting SAC projects.



Shine on the Skies over Oakwood Cemetery, August 2014

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The entry receiving the most overall votes will be featured on the calendar cover and also receive a 2015 SAC calendar. The twelve winning entries will receive a one-year membership to Save Austin's Cemeteries.

Last year's photo contest yielded over 50 entries and many people voted for their favorites. This photo seen here is last year's winner by Angela Stipe called Storm on the Horizon.

Send in your photo entries today to info@sachome.org with your filled-out entry form available through our website at www.sachome.org.

Generations in Oakwood: H. H. Parker by Bob Tieman

My great-grandfather, Dr. Huling Houston Parker, a Mississippi plantation owner and Confederate Army surgeon, was the first member of my family to be buried in Oakwood Cemetery in 1894. As years passed, his wife and four sons joined him, along with various other close family members. Twelve are in the original Oakwood and two – a son and a daughter – are in the Oakwood Annex across Comal Street.

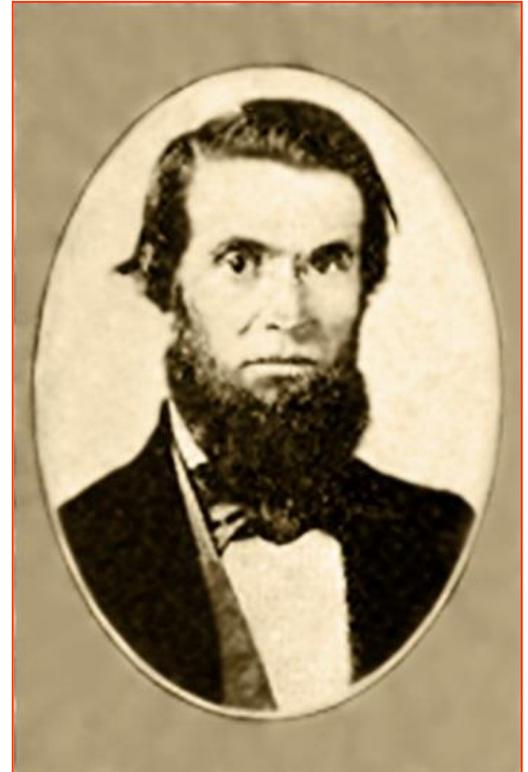
Huling Houston Parker, most often known by his initials H.H., was born in Nashville, Tennessee, on March 29, 1819. He spent his early years in Henry County, Tennessee and Marshall County, Mississippi. He attended Transylvania College in Lexington, Kentucky, studying to be a physician. He returned to Mississippi and settled down in Brandon, a small community a few miles east of Jackson.

He acquired some land a short distance from town, where he farmed and practiced medicine. After losing two wives in childbirth as well as an infant son, he married Martha Jane Shore from Alabama in 1854. Together, they had eight children – seven sons and one daughter.

On January 1861, Mississippi withdrew from the Union and life changed Dr. Parker. He was appointed Surgeon of the Provisional Army, Confederate States of America, and he was assigned to a hospital in Brandon, where he cared for 200 soldiers. After the war, with his crops destroyed and with no workers for the fields, the family's future in Mississippi was bleak. In December 1869, he decided to go to Texas to start anew.

He moved to Salado where in August 1870, he purchased seven acres of land adjacent to the then-existing Salado College. While living there, Dr. Parker operated a drug store and medical practice, and his son, Robert, reportedly practiced as a dentist. Dr. Parker was credited with helping establish the first Grange, a farmer's organization, in the state of Texas.

In 1884, Dr. Parker purchased acreage in southeast Travis County and his family relocated there. On July 9, 1894, he died and was buried in Oakwood Cemetery. His wife, Martha Jane, was buried next to him in 1918.



Tour Guide Training at Oakwood by Dale Flatt

Do you like to spin a yarn? Are you comfortable speaking to a group of people? Would you like to find a way to work on those skills and have fun at the same time? Have we got a deal for you! Come learn these skills and lots more when you learn how to be a tour guide at Historic Oakwood Cemetery. SAC is holding a free workshop at 10:00 a.m. on October 11th at Oakwood Cemetery where you will learn many interesting facts about Austin's history and Oakwood's history, as well as the fascinating stories of our long departed residents.

Perhaps your talents lie in doing research – we still have a deal for you. Every life and death tells a story and many are just waiting to be told. It is through our tourism program that we can reach large groups of people and raise awareness about the history and the needs of the cemeteries.



Update on Parks & Recreation and a Cemetery Master Plan by Megan Spencer

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department will hold the next community meeting for the Cemetery Master Plan process on **Saturday, August 23 from 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at the Ruiz Branch Library, 1600 Grove Blvd., Austin, TX 78741**. This will be the third of five public meetings to be held as part of the planning effort for the city's five historic municipal cemeteries, which include Austin Memorial Park Cemetery, Evergreen Cemetery, Oakwood Cemetery, Oakwood Cemetery Annex, and Plummers Cemetery.

The City of Austin recently selected AmaTerra Environmental, Inc. to develop the master plan, which is expected to take a year to complete. The master plan will include recommendations related to historic preservation, tree care, and cemetery management issues. This will be the first planning effort for the city's five historic municipal cemeteries. For more information, visit a special website maintained by PARD that is dedicated exclusively to the Cemetery Master Plan process. <http://www.austincemeteryplan.com>

Basics on Caring for Your Family's Photos: Part 3 by Jan Root

Labeling photos and negatives

In the ideal world, all photographs and negatives would have some sort of identification, letting us know exactly who is in each shot and when and where it was taken. But we all have envelopes of unidentified photos and negatives. If you feel industrious enough to go back and identify as many as you can, then there are tools of the trade to use that will cause the least amount of damage.

It is best to use pencil if you will be writing any identification on the back. Apply gentle pressure if you must use a ballpoint pen. Pressing too hard (with either a pen or pencil), can cause bumps on the print side of the photo, which has a tendency to flake off, losing irreplaceable pieces of the print.

Later photos were printed on RC (or resin coated) paper, giving it a waxy feel. It is very difficult to write in pencil on the back of these prints. The only way to write any information is to use a pen designed for negatives and prints, or a fine tip Sharpie-type permanent marker. Be sure to let the ink dry before stacking the photos or else you will get ink on the print below if stacked.

If you are labeling negative strips, whether they are 35 mm, older 120 mm, or if you're lucky to have a glass plate collection, you will need to use the same type permanent marker. It is best to get as close to the edge of the negative as possible and not on the emulsion.

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.

SAC Board Meetings

SAC Board Meetings are the second Saturday of each month, typically at Oakwood Cemetery at 10:00 a.m. If you are interested the city's cemeteries, please join us. Contact info@sachome.org to confirm the time and place.

SAC Calendar

Please join us for these upcoming events!

Aug. 23	PARD Cemetery Master Plan Meeting #3 10:30-12:30 at Ruiz Branch Library
Sept. 13	SAC Board Meeting
Sept. 21	Austin Museum Day at Oakwood Cemetery 9:00 to 12:00
Oct. 4	Volunteer Action Day: Photo Documentation and Grave Cleaning at Oakwood Cemetery
Oct. 11	Guest Speaker Session: Tour Guide Training, Oakwood Cemetery 10:00 a.m.
Oct. 25	Murder, Mayhem, and Misadventure Walking Tours at Oakwood Cemetery 10:00 to 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.