
SUGAR GROVE CEMETERY

SERVING SHERMAN, MOUND PRAIRIE AND PALO ALTO TOWNSHIPS SINCE 1857

Volume II

Spring 2005

Cemetery Walk Planned for September 24

The Jasper Co. Historical Society, Newton Community Theater, Metz Community Church and the Sugar Grove Cemetery Association will host a dinner, program and cemetery dramatization on Saturday, September 24, 2005.

A limit of 175 tickets will be sold for \$10 each beginning September 1st.

Cemetery walks have been happening around the country for some time and the walk this fall will be the second in Jasper County.

A cemetery walk is a dramatization of the life of selected individuals that are buried in the cemetery. Members of the community theater will dress in period costume and assume the role of the person, telling about their life and history.

The purposes of the walk are to help people better understand history based on the lives of real people and to honor those who have lived before us.

The committee has selected eight people to feature in the walk. Those people are:

1. Anna Sims, the first family in the area and the first burial in the cemetery.
2. Maria DeGraff Miller, the matriarch of the Miller and Hitchler families.
3. The Clement family, probably Stephen Clement, who died as a result of an automobile crash at the county fair.
4. Andrew Engle, a Spiritualist, an inventor and adventurer.
5. George Simeon Kennedy, who was murdered by an unknown person.
6. The Maytag connection – Veach and Kennedy families.
7. Moses Manning, War of 1812 veteran and father of Sarah, wife of Calvin Hickman.
8. Durbin family who lost family members to that dreaded disease, diphtheria.

All families in the cemetery will be honored in the program held in conjunction with the dinner and walk.

Program Materials Needed

Barbara Hug, chair of the research committee for this event is looking for lots of assistance from cemetery families.

Besides the research needed for the dramatizations, she wants to put together a slide show featuring the history and families of the area.

These are the types of information she is looking for:

- Photographs or drawings of scenery – farmsteads, fields, homes, etc. of the area for any period of time between 1857 and now.
- Photographs of individuals or families of people that lived in the area, including people buried in the cemetery.
- Diaries or other written accounts of the day-to-day life of the times.
- Written accounts of unusual events that happened in the past, especially early life on the prairie.
- Anything else that explains how people lived in the past.

Please contact Barbara at 2715 W 66 ST S, Newton, Iowa 50208-8888 or (641) 791-9485 or bhug@prairieinet.net if you have information to share.

Also check out the cemetery web site for information.

www.usgennet.org/usa/ia/county/jasper1/metz/cemetery/



Aerial View of Sugar Grove Cemetery

The Cemetery Association

Sugar Grove Cemetery is somewhat unique in its organization. Most cemeteries are owned and operated by a governmental unit or a private company.

Our ancestors were wise enough to form an Association back in the 1880's to take care of our cemetery. The idea was to have family members who cared about the burial grounds take an active part in the care and upkeep of the cemetery. Therefore any person who has a relative buried in the cemetery is automatically a "member" of the association.

This is why the trustees ask that you either participate in volunteer work for the upkeep of the cemetery or provide funds through donations, estate planning and/or memorials.

Volunteer opportunities are:

- Routine maintenance – as you drive or walk through the cemetery pick up decorations that have blown off graves sites as well as sticks and other debris that blows into the cemetery.
- Maintain your family plots by keeping plant materials trimmed back and cutting back plant material in the fall of the year.
- Participate in special projects such as the fencing project and gravestone repair mentioned below.
- Trustees can be contacted in the following ways:
 - John Cannon at (641) 792-8183.
 - Robert Hitchler, Jr. at (641) 792-3871.
 - Barbara Hug, bhug@prairieinet.net or (641) 792-9485.

Gravestone Upkeep

If your family gravestones are more than 20 years old, chances are they were not put on a foundation. These stones tend to sink into the ground over time and eventually disappear. Some stones are at ground level now. You might want to consider contacting a monument company to put foundations under these stones, perhaps doing one or two a year for the larger family plots.

Some of the old stones have been broken off and we plan on hiring someone to fix these stones. However there are a number of smaller stones that we can fix ourselves if we have the volunteer help. Please contact Barbara Hug to volunteer.

Clean up day – April 2, 2005 at 9:00 a.m.

Cemetery Business

The annual meeting of the Sugar Grove Cemetery Association was held March 2, 2005 after being advertised in the Newton Daily News.

Barbara Hug was elected for a three-year term as trustee. Other trustees are John Cannon – 2006 and Robert Hitchler, Jr. – 2007. Clerk is Dean Lane.

The association voted to spend \$300 to repair old stones and \$3,000 for mowing for 2005.

Concern was raised regarding the poor condition of the fence on the west and north sides of the cemetery. The association asked the trustees to investigate costs and alternatives for new fencing as well as to determine the cost to hire someone to put in the fence versus having the work done by cemetery family volunteers.

Burials in the cemetery in 2004 were:

- Richard Sille, July 30, 1908 – April 4, 2004
- Maxine Emmack Sille, April 11, 1916 – Oct 16, 2004
- John W. Clement, April 28, 1920 – May 16, 2004
- Mary Lou Engle Lincoln, d. June 20, 2004

A memorial stone was placed for:

- Bill Smith, Feb. 2, 1945 – January 4, 2004

Reminders for Grave Decorations

1. Select and place decorations that can be mowed around so the cemetery and your lot look nice all summer.
2. Keep plant materials cut back so they don't take over the lot and to make mowing easier. Some plantings, especially the peonies and iris need dividing.
3. Keep grave decorations fresh. We'll remove decorations from the ground on April 2nd and July 1st for easier mowing.
4. When you take off old materials, please take them with you instead of throwing them behind the shed.
5. Whenever you visit the cemetery, pick up any trash you see and take it with you for disposal.

Financial Support

Expenses for the cemetery are paid with interest from a small investment made up of estate giving and lot sales.

Please consider the cemetery in your estate planning, memorials or tax-deductible contributions to ensure the future care of the cemetery.

For information on burials and lot or setting of stones please contact Clerk, Dean Lane at 641-792-9426 or 641-521-9426.
Web site at www.usgennet.org/usa/ia/county/jasper1/metz/cemetery/ e-mail: bhug@prairieinet.net