

Hamilton County Cemetery Commission

384 North 11th Street, Noblesville, IN 46060-2146

1 December 2004

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INDIANA HISTORICAL
BUREAU

To Board of Commissioners
Hamilton County, Indiana

In February the developers of Canal Place in Fall Creek Township as per their previously announced intention to fence Faucett Cemetery and then convey it to Hamilton County, did so after erecting a wrought iron fence and almost immediately we had calls calling for the removal of the fence because the restriction of the subdivision prohibited the erection of fences on residential lots. We countered with the idea that the cemetery was not a residential lot and besides the developer had erected the fence and it was in place when the cemetery was conveyed to the county. The calls then changed to calls asking that the bodies be exhumed and moved to some other location. We explained the procedure to the callers and told them that since the cemetery was now in the County's name we would not consent to exhuming the bodies. In addition we wrote the Indiana State Board of Health stating the position of the county and asked that if an application was received to remove the bodies that we be notified as we intended to oppose any such action. Sometime later we received a telephone call from the Board of Health stating that no application had been made.

In last years report we pointed out the fact that trash had been dumped in Burke Cemetery and that vandalism had occurred in Taylor Cemetery. We felt that padlocked gates should be installed in the lanes to each of these cemeteries to prevent driving back to the cemeteries.. However, there existed adjoining farmers etc. that would have a legitimate reason for access to these lanes. A considerable amount of time was expended in getting permission for all those affected by this, which we finally received. This gate was placed on the abandoned portion of Prairie Baptist Road south of 141st Street . Access by walking is still available to the public, but motor vehicles will be prevented from gaining access to the cemetery. The same has been done for Taylor Cemetery in Jackson Township, but as of the date of this report we have not received the statement of costs involved. We have funds available to pay for this work and had hoped that we would have paid for it before the making of this report

Cooperation by most of the township trustees continues, however, the Washington Township Trustee has created a Township Parks Department and erected a sign in the Pleasant View Cemetery stating that it was "Pleasant View Park" We received several calls objecting to this and we notified them that we felt the law mandating the township trustee to maintain these abandoned cemeteries, it did not grant him the power or right to change the usage of the cemetery land At a meeting between our commission and the head of the Washington Township Park Department, we agreed to permit the girl scout organization to plant flowers etc. and the Trustee could erect a gazebo. In return they agreed to remove the sign tht stated it was a "Park." A recent visit to this cemetery revealed that the Park sin was still in place but an additional sign was attached to the fence saying "Cemetery", we feel that this is a blatant attempt to circumvent the agreement made at our meeting. We are currently in contact with the state organization of the

Methodist Church about conveying this cemetery to the County of Hamilton. This would place us in the position as owner and could squelch the park idea. To us, the name "Park" indicates Recreation and this could be detrimental to the existence of the tombstones remaining in this cemetery. In addition to this, we contacted the Attorney General asking if our interpretation of The township trustee's law concerning maintenance of abandoned cemeteries was correct and by phone was informed that to get a legal opinion from the Attorney General would require a request made to them by the County Attorney. In September we wrote the County Attorney requesting that he make such a request, but to date we have heard nothing from him.

We have continued trying to find the heirs of William Winship Conner who was the last owner of record of Weaver Cemetery at his death 1890. We have made considerable progress in this matter but there are some that are proving very difficult to locate

We have become increasingly concerned with the number of individuals and organization who without contacting either this commission or the trustees have taken upon themselves to work in some of the cemeteries either on the cemetery as a whole or on individual stones. While their intentions may be good, the manner in which they do the work does not always conform with the best interest of preserving the stones. This causes additional expenses, that otherwise would not be necessary.

We have had some difficulty in that where we have been maintaining some cemeteries that owners of adjoining land have died and their heirs have made it difficult for the trustee to get his mowing crew to the cemetery or in one case when a new owner of requested to mow a cemetery enclosed by his land and permission was granted but now is failing to do so and denies that anyone had given him permission to do so. This permission was given in writing and the Trustee involved has promised to keep us informed how this turns out.

A small cemetery located in Ritchie Wood in Delaware Township was conveyed from the Children's Museum to the Town of Fishers. Some stones have appeared and have been placed to the west of the actual cemetery. The Children's Museum disclaims any knowledge of from where these stones appeared. Danesa Stolz has been placed in charge of this area by the town of Fishers and she has indicated that she will cooperate with us in preserving this pioneer cemetery.

We experienced some down time because of malfunctioning of our riding mower and mechanics ere unable to find the cause of this trouble. We paid over a thousand dollars this past summer in order to keep our cemeteries mowed, so the commission decided to eliminate this problem by trading in this mower on a new one. And this was done following the close of the mowing season.

The term of Martha Gascho expires on 31 December 2004, upon inquiry she has indicated that she would be willing to accept another term on the Commission if offered. The Commission then voted to recommend her reappointment to another 5 year term.

Respectfully Submitted:

Joe H. Burgess
Chairman

JHB/jb
Copy to Hamilton County Council
Copy to Indiana Historical Bureau
Copy to file

NAME OF CEMETERY	MOWED (No.)	TREES & SHRUBS	FENCED	STONE WORK
Strawtown	X (18)			
Duscher	X (18)			
Hurlock	X (18)			
Hammack (LaMong)	X(16)			
Philips	X (16)			
Greenwood	X (14)			
Thos. B. Moore	X (14)	X		
Burke	X (10)	X	X	
Teter	X (10)			
Lennen	X (10)			
Bradley	X (9)	X		
Finch	X (9)			
Henry Gasho	X (9)			
Moppis	X (9)			
Burris	X (6)			
Faucett	X (6)			X
Little Carey	X (4)			
Taylor			X	
Helms	(Checked out complaint by individual)			
McKay	(Checked out complaint by neighbor)			

Financial report

Balance forwarded 30 November 2003 14,452.63

Receipts:

Annual Appropriation 19,000.00
Interest on Checking Account 107.88

Sub-total 33,560.56

Disbursements:

Labor	9,796.00	
Trips	896.00	
Reimbursement for gas etc.	200.10	
Title & Lien searches	259.00	
Bureau of Motor Vehicles	24.75	
Postage	37.00	
Reynolds Farm Equipment, Inc.	3,529.95	
Repairs (Farm Plan)	237.00	
Ditch Assessment	10.00	
Barn Rental	120.00	
Glidden Fence Co. Inc.	695.00	
Administrative Expenses (checks etc.)	196.52	
Search for heirs (Weaver Cem.)	155.00	17,136.32

Balance forwarded 30 November 2004 16,424.24

Balance forwarded on savings account 1,847.08

Receipts: Interest 13.90
Disbursements: None 0.00

Balance forwarded on Savings Account 20 November 2004 1,860.98

Checking account is broken down as follows:

Operating Account	13,086.15
Reserve Account	3,338.09