

Bluffton Cemetery Association Newsletter

84 years since the BCA was formed by the citizens of Old Bluffton
~ Over *150 years* since the Bluffton Cemetery was established ~
October, 2015

The Bluffton Cemetery

“Pages of the Past from the Annals of History”

What do most people think of when they see a cemetery? Many think simply that it's a place where dead people are placed, and many times forgotten. Those of us who are involved with the Bluffton Cemetery know that this is indeed not the case. The space between the birth and death dates of a person buried there oft-times contains stories that are well worth remembering.

Pioneers

The Bluffton Cemetery is the final resting place for numerous people who shaped the early history of this part of central Texas. Three Davis boys, Thomas Henry, Edward W. (Ned), and Caleb A., all sons of Billy and Elzira Davis, and Isaac Byler (Ike) Maxwell were the earliest settlers to enter the Bluffton area of Llano County. Other pioneer families include Arnold, Atkison, Blevins, Casner, Chadwick, Chism, Coggin, Croft, Gooch, Hammons, Hill, Pankey, Shults/Duff, and Watson; though this is not an all-inclusive list. At the time the Old Bluffton Cemetery was dismantled and moved there were 127 family surnames listed in the cemetery. These pioneers truly hacked out a living and developed a civilization from the wilds of central Texas.

Those Who Served

The Bluffton Cemetery is the final resting place for many who have served their country.

This includes veterans from as early as the War of 1812 to as late as the Vietnam War. As of this date we do not have any veterans from Desert Storm, or Iraq and Afghanistan. Some of our veterans served in multiple theatres of war: such as Willard Jordan, who served in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.

Others served in early militias, local law enforcement, and even as Texas Rangers. One such person was Monroe Blevins, whose “Former Texas Ranger” marker is shown to the right.



Murder and Mayhem

In at least three cases, men's lives were cut short as their lives were taken by the actions of others.

On a summer day in 1884, 30 year old Radford Watson was in his field shocking corn stalks. He bent over to pick up some more stalks to shock and was killed by a bullet from an unknown assailant's rifle. Rumors flew as to who was responsible, but no one was ever held accountable.

On a spring night in 1899, 23 year old Jimmie Power and his father-in-law, Bud McGuire were spending the night in an old Dorbandt ranch cabin by the Colorado River. They argued, and Jimmie drifted off to sleep. McGuire savagely killed Jimmie and dumped his body into the river.



Edkar P. Cowan, 23, was a recent veteran of World War II. He was a youngster who had joined the army in 1938, at age 16, and saw action in the European theatre of war from 1942 to 1945, from Algeria to Germany. He was even slated to go to Japan before the war was ended by the dropping of the atomic bomb. Sixteen days after Japan surrendered, and hardly back in Llano County, he went into a bar called the B-C Club. He accused the owner of cheating him and a fight ensued. He was hit in the back of the head by a set of ice-hooks, and as he lay on the floor, was cold-bloodedly shot to death by the owner of the bar. The bar owner was never charged with the crime.

The River Claims Victims

Twenty year old Louis Everett was drowned on March 16, 1905. His tombstone says “He was cut down in the bloom of youth while attempting to cross the river caused from a water spout of ice and water.”

The Burnet Bulletin reported on March 25, 1926, that “young Robert Jenkins, 14, drowned in the Colorado River about two miles below Bluffton at 10'clock Sunday evening, March 21, while bathing.” Almost 96 year old Bill Hallmark remembers riding by wagon with his grandparents from the Atkison/Friedsam ranch headquarters at present day Inks Lake State Park to the funeral at Bluffton.

(See **HISTORY** - next page)



Recent Passings - October, 2014 through Present

The following have passed away and have been interred in our cemetery since our last meeting.

Atkison, Glen Dale
 Brock, Helen Nell (Sullens)
 Brock, Roy Manney
 Few, Ersie J.
 Jordan, Lennie L. (Nobles)
 King, Doris Jean (Taylor)
 Meador, Mable L. "Wampie"
 Miller, Merrilee
 Payne, Roger Alan
 Plumley, Franklin Gene

Prew, Gregory Daniel
 Reville, Kenyon Grady
 Shores, Margaret Lucille
 Steffey, Sonja Kay (Richerson)
 Sutherland, Norma Jean
 Todd Leverett, Shirley M.
 Wright, Larry Don

Our condolences are extended to the families and acquaintances of these departed souls. May you all find comfort and peace as you visit their final resting places here at the Bluffton Cemetery.

Changes to the BCA Bylaws

At our recent trustees meeting, we reviewed the bylaws as they relate to patrons being required to place permanent markers at grave sites. We require permanent markers, but the wording needs to be clarified, with additional requirements and incentives being included. These proposed changes will be discussed and voted on at the upcoming October business meeting. Your input is needed so it is important that you make every effort to attend.

The current bylaws are posted on our web site, blufftoncemetery.org, and copies will be available at the annual business meeting. It is important that we ALL abide by these bylaws to insure the integrity of our fine Bluffton Cemetery.

New Corner Fencing Going Up

In efforts to better define and protect the boundaries of the cemetery, new chain fencing is being placed at corners of the cemetery. This fencing also protects graves that are located in these areas.

The northwest corner is being fenced to protect that corner. This is much needed as there are graves that have been driven over by cars for many years.

On the southwest side of the cemetery, fencing is being placed on the southwest corner of the cemetery. This results in four additional plots being made available. On the southwest side, nearest the chapel, fencing is being placed to



better define that area of the cemetery as well. On the southeast side of the cemetery, fencing is also being installed which defines that area of the cemetery and protects the roadway that has been re-worked within the last year.



Posts are also being placed to protect the culvert under the roadway. At one time this culvert was completely stopped up by dirt and debris which resulted in flooding during rainy periods.

The fence line all around the cemetery is also being cleared of underbrush; on both sides of the boundary fences. This will result in it being much easier to maintain and drive the roadways around the cemetery.

Your patience is much appreciated as this project is being completed. Hopefully, the project will be wrapped up prior to our annual meeting this next month.

(HISTORY Continued)

Stories Continue

As can be seen from the previous stories, history abounds in our cemetery. We have hardly scratched the surface with memories of our loved ones. With this in mind we will be trying to document stories this next year. How are we going to do this?

We hope to expand our website with individual pages dedicated to the memories of our loved ones. Obituaries, pictures, biographies, articles, etc., are all things we would like to include. Additionally, eventually we hope to place permanent QR codes on the tombstones which will allow this information to be accessed on smartphones, tablets, and other Internet accessible devices. A one-time setup fee will be charged to those who want to participate in this project.



Example QR Code

So, it can be seen that in the annals of history, the Bluffton Cemetery certainly has many pages - pages that need to be saved.

Cemetery Stats

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**Burials - 1,380**

**Plots Assigned to Individuals/families, designated for future burials - 321**

**Plots Assigned to Individuals/families, but not designated - 1,111**

**Available plots - 263**