

Bluffton Cemetery Association Newsletter

85 years since the BCA was formed by the citizens of Old Bluffton
~ Over *150 years* since the Bluffton Cemetery was established ~
October, 2016



- Texas Proud - "A Tribute to the Texas Rangers"



By far, the best known, and respected law enforcement officer in the state of Texas, is the Texas Ranger. In fact, a professional baseball team takes its name from this very same group of officers. In 1897, the Former Texas Rangers Association (FTRA) was established "... to preserve and perpetuate the true history and heritage of the Texas Rangers...and to bring Rangers, former Rangers, and Ranger families and descendants together for fellowship, support, and mutual purpose."

A very important and beneficial project of the FTRA is the "Memorial Cross Program." With continued support from the Texas Historical Foundation, Texas Ranger Memorial Crosses are provided at a nominal cost to mark the graves of former honored Rangers' graves. Currently the Bluffton Cemetery has two former Texas Rangers, Seth Monroe Blevins and Hiram Casner, whose graves are so marked.

To date over 600 cross ceremonies across Texas and several other states have been held. Typically the ceremonies are very well organized with representatives from the FTRA present, current Rangers, and other law enforcement officials present, and sometimes with Texas Rangers Reenactors in attendance. Most times following the formal dedication of the Ranger Memorial Crosses, a reception is held where further history and recollections of the honorees is presented.

One such honoree is our own Hiram Casner, whose remains are located in lot 2, grave 4. Hiram was born on April 29, 1839 and passed away on August 25, 1917. He was initially buried along the west side of the Colorado River in the Casner, also known as the Holland, cemetery, and his remains were among the first relocated to the current Bluffton Cemetery in



July of 1931.

So, why is this article being written? It turns out that there are at least nine verified others in our cemetery who are eligible for this prestigious honor. These include Elijah Arnold, William K. Arnold, Arnold A. Atkison, Delivan Chadwick, Caleb Davis, Edward W. Davis, Henry Davis, Isaac Maxwell, and Dr. J. M. Young.

What is necessary for a former Ranger to be so honored? The Memorial Crosses are provided to members of the FTRA to mark their honored Ranger's grave. The crosses are furnished at no cost to families who are members of the FTRA and are limited to one cross per member. Crosses are shipped for a nominal fee, and it is the responsibility of the FTRA member to have the cross installed at the gravesite.

So, we need sponsors. If you are related to one of those who have been listed above and would like to serve as a sponsor, please let us know. The cost of membership in the FTRA for a descendant is \$40. Persons who are interested in sponsoring a former Texas Ranger, but are not related to same may do so as well, but the cost is \$100. The Bluffton Cemetery Association and the Llano County Historical Commission will assist in the placement of the Memorial Crosses and will plan a ceremony for those being honored. You may reach us at info@blufftoncemetery.org, or by mail at P. O. Box 111, Bluffton, TX 78607. You may also reach one of the directors at the phone numbers listed on the invitation cover page in this mailout.

If possible, we would like to obtain the necessary sponsorships, get the paperwork completed, the crosses ordered, and get them installed in time for a spring dedication ceremony, when the cemetery is at its peak in color with the spring wildflowers. If you are interested, please contact us as soon as possible.

Recent Passings - October, 2015 through Present

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

Baker, Michael Dennis
Chism, Ray Lynn (Rusty)
DeMoville, Wiggins B. (Wig)
Dodd, Claudine Nixon
Downs, Tacie Louise (Emerson)
Hoskins, Helen Beth (Kinser)
Howe, Juanita Katheryn
Kay, Doris Marie (Williams)
Maxwell, Clara Janet (Cowan)
Meade, Sandra Lee

Mihills, Ora Blanch (Hallmark)
Palmer, James Edward
Pemberton, Dubby Francies
Reeves, Kuykendall, Chelsea Lee
Rose, Ruby Ann (Richardson)
Schurz, George Frederick
Warren, Robert Joe

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.

To Expand, or Not

Over the years, it has been the desire of some to expand the size of the cemetery. Recently, land to the west of the cemetery has been listed for sale. An inquiry was made to see if the owner would have an interest in selling the Association four to six acres. At this time the response is "no", but the realtor indicated that a future buyer might be interested in selling us a parcel.

The question is, "Do we want to expand?" This is a major decision that needs to be fully discussed and thought out; so, this will be discussed at our meeting. Be thinking about this and be prepared to give us your ideas and opinions.

We Need Leaders

The success of any organization is totally dependent upon the availability of those who are willing to serve. The same is true for the Bluffton Cemetery Association. Your current directors are working hard to insure the success of our organization, and to maintain the beauty and dignity of our cemetery, but time marches on. The three of us are in our sixties and seventies, so, looking to the future, there is room for the participation of others.

What kind of leadership is needed? Actually, anyone who serves the association is a leader. The primary jobs required include maintenance, showing & selling plots, marking & overseeing the opening of graves, placements of markers, monuments, etc., clerical work, planning for the future and insuring the integrity of the cemetery. (Plus, a lot of other "miscellaneous" things!)

Maintenance is a major part of the care of the cemetery - timewise, and monetarily. This includes mowing, trimming, etc., grave maintenance, repair of stones and other parts of the cemetery, relocating stones and other items that have been placed incorrectly in the past, making sure the restrooms are usable prior to funerals, placing flags at veterans' graves, and the list goes on. So far we have been able to hire out the mowing and trimming of trees, brush, etc., but this has to be supervised to insure it is done properly and timely.

Clerical work has become a very important part of the success of the as-

sociation. First, accurate and concise records are necessary. The days of scribbling a note down, or simply writing some general information on a card are long gone. Today's records are maintained on a computer with multiple backups for safety and security. Concise information is required



to insure the accuracy of all data relating to the cemetery. Financially, an accurate set of records is required, and annually, federal forms must be filed as necessary. For the last several years, our website has taken on more and more importance and we have many people who use the website regularly and have commented about its availability of information to them. Also, when individuals buy plots, this information must be handled properly: The same being the case when plots are returned to the association. The annual newsletter is a big task as more than 500 newsletters are mailed out, and

this is a major source for donations to our organization annually.

Public relations is important as well. When meeting with families and individuals, normally these are during stressful times in their lives and an understanding heart must be exhibited at all times.

So, how can you help? If you would like to just volunteer to do some specific thing, let us know. If you would like to serve as a trustee in the future get involved and let us know of your interest. If you would like to do clerical/secretarial work, again, let us know. We could use a person to assist with the website. So, finally, please consider the future of our fine Bluffton Cemetery, and take on the challenge - **we want YOU!**

Cemetery Stats

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**Burials - 1,397**

**Plots Assigned to Individuals/families, designated for future burials - 339**

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

**Available plots - 264**