



SAVE AUSTIN'S CEMETERIES

Fall 2019 Newsletter

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Newsletter Editors:

Megan Spencer
Leslie Wolfenden

13th Annual Murder, Mayhem and Misadventure Tours at Oakwood Cemetery by Melissa Rogers

We had a beautiful autumn day on October 26th for our 13th annual MMM Tour. Nearly 400 people ventured out to hear the stories and tour the grounds. Thanks to everyone for helping to showcase the wonders of Austin history. Together, we introduced many folks to our efforts to improve the five City of Austin cemeteries.

Volunteers are the backbone of our group and help make all events and projects successful. Our guides this year were Bobby Cervantes, Dale Flatt, Warren Friedrich, Melissa Rogers, Mark Heep, Marta Stefaniuk, and Bob Ward. These folks walked the groups along the path to hear the stories of murder, mayhem and misadventure. A special thanks to Jan Root and Karen Eshliman for driving the golf cart so that SAC could provide an accessible tour this year. I received a number of thanks from folks who rode in the golf cart and were able to participate in the tour for the first time.



Fourteen actors in costume volunteered to talk about the lives and deaths of eight persons buried in Oakwood. These actors were much appreciated:

- Scott Myers and Laura Luna told about the Holmans – a father and his baby daughter who were struck dead by lightning.
- Jeff Wooley and Harrison Eppright told about Ed Copes, an eager young man who was a proud member of the Austin Rifles, who was killed when his gun discharged while he was cleaning it.
- Beth Pickett and Elizabeth Reid told the story of John Miller who died trying to rescue his girlfriend who couldn't swim from the strong currents at Deep Eddy.
- Ellen Garay portrayed Eula Phillips, the last victim of the Servant Girl Annihilator killer in 1885.

- Elizabeth Garzone and Beth Pickett told the very sad story of the Tumey children who died of diphtheria just one week apart.
- Joan Mead and Rene Kendall portrayed the heartbroken Mrs. Hickey mourning the death of her son, young Joe Hickey, in a hunting accident.
- Rick Nunes and Billy Brookshire told the story of Wild West figure Ben Thompson – it is always a crowd-pleaser!
- Stephanie Mueller and Elizabeth Porterfield told the story of the shooting deaths of Andrew Hopkins and his son Constantine Hopkins on July 9, 1863, by the villainous Ormsby.



Left to right, top to bottom: Elizabeth Reid (John Paul Miller), Elizabeth Porterfield (Andrew & Constantine Hopkins), Rick Nunes (Ben Thompson), Harrison Eppright (Ed Copes), Elizabeth Garzone (Homer & Mabel Tumey), Ellen Garay (Eula Phillips), Beth Pickett (Homer & Mabel Tumey), Rene Kendall (Joe Hickey), Billy Brookshire (Ben Thompson), Jeff Wooley (Ed Copes), Laura Luna (Hardy & Bettie Holman), Scott Myers (Hardy & Bettie Holman), Joan Mead (Joe Hickey), and Stephanie Mueller (Andrew & Constantine Hopkins)

As always, Kay Boyd coordinated all of our “behind the scenes” volunteers and kept all of us on track. We truly appreciate these volunteers: Sally Baulch, Megan Spencer, Sally Victor, Avery Check, Cathy Andrews, Susannah Federowicz, Andrea Weissenbuehler, Heather Sedillo and Meli Trumbomeli. They sold hats, checked in visitors, answered questions, directed traffic flow and set up the Chapel. Eva and Hal Mohrlök always document our events with their beautiful photography and video. Leslie Wolfenden shared her knowledge of the chapel with visitors. Dale Flatt shared his knowledge of Oakwood with the visitors when he wasn’t out leading tours. Aaron Garay, Eleni Georgiou, and Sarah Hildreth came early to help with set up and Aaron returned to help with clean up.

We were also joined by the executive director Robin Grace Soto and board member Shelby Gill of the urban house museum Flower Hill, which once was home to the Smoot family at 1316 West 6th Street. The house museum is now open for tours as of November 10.

<https://www.flowerhillfoundation.org>

We are very grateful to the Oakwood Chapel staff – Jennifer Chenoweth, Chad Williams, Emily Collins, and Greg Farrar. Jennifer was able to video a number of our performers for a Story Map that documents the tour. Here is a link to one of the Chapel’s online exhibits, 13th MMM Tour Story Map, a great way to revisit stories of early Austin!

<https://austin.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=d75207d119124178a2faa7de34870676>



Robin Grace Soto (left) and Shelby Gill (right) of Flower Hill.

Chad, Emily, and Greg opened the Chapel for us, helped with set up, clean up, answering questions, talking to visitors, and generally contributing to the positive atmosphere at the event. SAC’s continued partnership with Oakwood Chapel and the City of Austin enhanced the MMM experience for all the visitors and volunteers. We particularly appreciated the ability to have a volunteer area for food and breaks in the Chapel. Thank you, Oakwood Chapel staff!

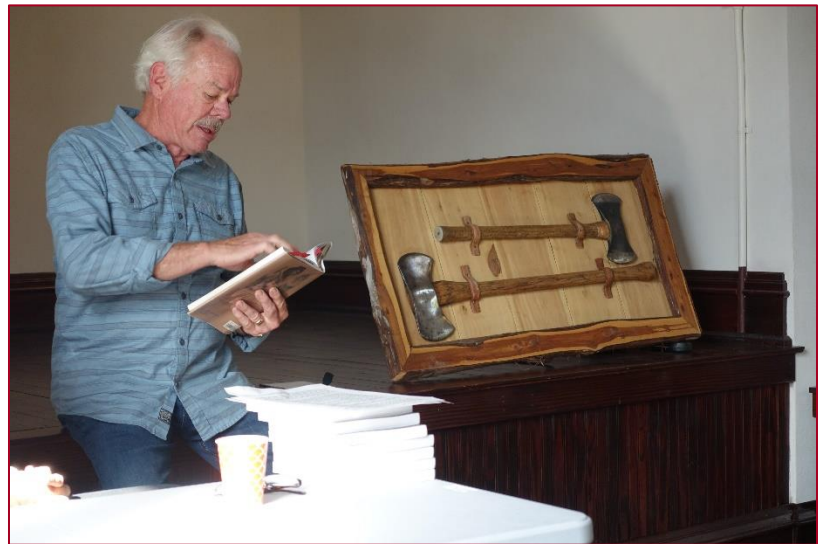
Book Talk with Ken Roberts, Author of *The Cedar Choppers, Life on the Edge of Nothing* by Melissa Rogers

About thirty people gathered in the Chapel on Sunday, October 20, to hear Ken Roberts, author of *The Cedar Choppers, Life on the Edge of Nothing*, discuss his book. Ken’s talk was entertaining and the photographs that he shared brought the stories in his book to life. Ken also brought along a couple of examples of cedar chopper axes. It was impressive to think that a good cedar chopper could chop down a small tree with four swings of a sharp axe. Books were available for purchase.

In his book, Roberts tells the history an infamous clan of Scots-Irish people who lived in the hills around Austin known as the cedar choppers. These people first settled in Appalachia but moved into Central Texas following the Civil War. For generations, the cedar choppers eked out a meager existence hunting, fishing, distilling moonshine, and cutting cedar, some of which they burned to make and sell as charcoal. Their distinctive culture survived well into the 20th century. Roberts interviewed a number of cedar choppers and their families to write his book. One of the stories that he shared – the story of the murder of John Gest by cedar chopper John Teague in 1911 – was a stop on the Murder, Mayhem and Misadventure tour in 2018.

Descendants of some of the cedar choppers who are mentioned in the book were among those gathered to hear the talk. One gentleman shared photos of his great-grandfather, Homer Teague, a famous cedar chopper who

was made a deputy constable by the local police force. Although the majority of the cedar choppers were buried in family cemeteries, a few are interred at Oakwood. Marta Stefaniuck, Jennifer Chenoweth, and Emily Collins did an amazing job building a story map that links the stories from Ken's book with the locations of the cedar chopper graves at Oakwood. Following the presentation, Marta gave a tour of the cedar chopper graves to interested parties, including some of the descendants.



This book talk was the first in what will be a series of presentations co-sponsored by Save Austin's Cemeteries and Oakwood Chapel.

2019 Photo Contest Winners Announced by Leslie Wolfenden

Thank you for all the photo entries to this year's photo contest! We received 72 photo entries. The overall winner was "Angel of Sorrow" by Harrison Saunders. His photo is featured on the cover of SAC's 2020 Calendar. Congratulations to Harrison and the other eleven winning photos that make up the calendar. The 2020 calendar is available for sale for \$17.99 plus tax and shipping through the SAC website:

<https://www.cafepress.com/saveaustinscemeteries>

Other 2019 Photo Contest Winners:

- Sally Baulch with Draped Urn
- Katie Cowden with Statue 1
- David Hawkins with Graves in a Cemetery
- Janice Jenkins with Mountain Laurels
- Maggie Knight with Life After Death
- Terri Mirka with Pink and Blue
- Terri Mirka with Chapel in Bloom
- Eva Mohrlök with Oakwood Annex
- Eva Mohrlök with Shades of Pink
- Hal Mohrlök with Old Section
- Harrison Saunders with I am with You always



Angel of Sorrow - Blue Mountain East - Photo by Harrison Saunders

SAVE AUSTIN'S CEMETERIES 2020

www.sachome.org

It's My Park Day at Plummers Cemetery by Arro Smith

One of many events sponsored by the Austin Parks Foundation is the bi-annual *It's My Park Day* (IMPD), where groups and individuals host a project in one of the City's parks. Once a project is submitted to the Foundation and approved by the City, volunteers can sign up to for various service positions throughout Austin's parks—and each participant gets a cool t-shirt!

Save Austin's Cemeteries has sponsored IMPD projects for several years in Oakwood and Board Member Sally Baulch organized a cleaning project at Oakwood again this year; but this year we had another City Cemetery, Plummers, to work. I led a new IMPD project in order to continue the research started by SAC volunteers in 2019. The Fall IMPD fell on All Soul's Day, also known as Día de los Muertos, so spending a cold morning in the cemeteries felt particularly appropriate.

Plummers, located at the corner of Springdale Road and Airport Boulevard, was originally a private cemetery popular with the African American community. The earliest grave is believed to be from 1898, and the cemetery was possibly called Mount Calvary originally (not to be confused with the other Mount Calvary in Austin). Deed records show Thomas P. Plummer (1860–1926) acquired the cemetery and worked as the sexton. Although the cemetery name should probably have a possessive apostrophe—Plummer's—it has been known as Plummers without the apostrophe since joining the City's Parks system when Givens Park (which surrounds the cemetery) was annexed.

At Plummers, we had enough IMPD volunteers for two different projects. Half of the volunteers were recruited to augment the work of SAC founder, Dale Flatt, and SAC Member, Terri Hoover Mirka, who had already carefully mapped and documented the graves at Plummers. These volunteers used their smartphones to open the Find-a-Grave app, where they were able to fill in missing information on decedents, photos, and GPS information. Terri and her volunteers had previously populated Find-a-Grave with almost all of the identifiable graves; however, the IMPD volunteers, equipped with Dale's map and grave inventory information, were able to successfully add or augment several of the entries.

The second group of volunteers at Plummers were the women and men of my Odd Fellows Lodge (I.O.O.F Capital Lodge #23). This group removed brush at the back of the cemetery. Odd Fellows showed up with loppers, shears, hoes, and enthusiasm to clear overgrowth that surrounded five specific gravesites at the back of the cemetery identified by the Parks and Recreation Department for abatement. One of these areas included the graves of the Plummer family. Another grave that was visible but being crowded by shrubbery belonged to Horace Hill, “born 1842 and age 100 years.” While removing the brush around Mr. Hill's marker, another stone was found lying under thick vegetation and swallowed by scrub. It was already marked on Dale's map but listed as unidentified. It was lost, and now it is found (although still unidentified—no markings survive on the stone). All the volunteers left with a nice purple t-shirt after a rewarding Días de los Muertos morning caring for our dead.



Top to bottom: Arro works with volunteers at Plummers; Volunteers show off their snazzy IMPD t-shirts; Volunteers at Plummers take a break.

We also hosted *It's My Park Day* at Oakwood Cemetery for cemetery clean up and photo documentation of headstones. The photo documentation session is one of our monthly events that is held on the first Saturdays of the month (October through May). Over 10 years ago, SAC started a project to photograph and thoroughly document each headstone in detail at Oakwood Cemetery. Many of the beautiful monuments we see today may not be here in twenty years or even tomorrow, as we have seen in recent years with occurrences of vandalism and storm damage. These photo reference shots will help us in the future when the headstones are impacted by time/aging, weather, theft, or vandalism.

Photo documentation sessions are held at Oakwood Cemetery the first Saturdays most of the months October-May, weather permitting. Sections 1, 2, and 3 have now been completed at Oakwood, so Section 4 is our current focus area. Please visit our Events page and Facebook for the current schedule. It takes about 2.5 years to document a section at Oakwood – that's a lot of time and dedication by our great SAC volunteers. We can't do it without them.

Editorial note: SAC volunteers and PARD Cemetery Division volunteers crossed paths with one another at Evergreen Cemetery. Evergreen is located not far from Plummers at E. 12th St. and Airport Boulevard, where PARD volunteers picked up trash and collected brush. In all, IMPD volunteers worked three of five City Cemeteries! Thank you all so much!

*Evergreen volunteers
of all ages!*



SAC to Participate in the Inaugural African-American Genealogy Conference, *Growing Your Roots*, Presented by the Austin History Center - January 31-February 2, 2020 by Melissa Rogers

kYmberly Keeton, the African-American archivist at the Austin History Center and one of SAC's new Board members, has asked SAC to work with Huston-Tillotson University and Oakwood Chapel to present at the Inaugural African-American Genealogy Conference, *Growing Your Roots* that she is organizing for the Austin History Center. The conference will take place at the Austin Central Library on January 31-February 2, 2020. It is free and open to the public.

Arro Smith, SAC's Secretary, extensively researched African-American funeral homes in East Austin. That research forms the basis of SAC's contribution to the presentation entitled, *Connecting Roots: Huston-Tillotson University, African American Cemeteries and Burial Sites in Austin* that is scheduled for Saturday, February 1 at 10 a.m.

In addition to contributing to the presentation, SAC will have a table at the Resource Hub throughout the conference. If you are interested in volunteering to staff the table and provide information about SAC and the five City cemeteries to conference attendees, please contact Melissa Rogers at info@sachome.org or Jennifer Chenoweth at jennifer.chenoweth@austintexas.gov.

kYmberly has lined up some excellent speakers including Dr. Edmund Gordon, Vice-Provost of Diversity, Professor of African/African-American Studies, University of Texas at Austin, who will be the Keynote Speaker, Petra Lewis, Writer, Historian and Media Influencer who will be the Keynote Workshop Facilitator, and Kris Graves, Photographer, and Documentarian who will be the Keynote Closing Speaker. Please plan on attending the conference and spread the word about this wonderful event.

A Facelift for Historic Beth Israel #1 by Dale Flatt

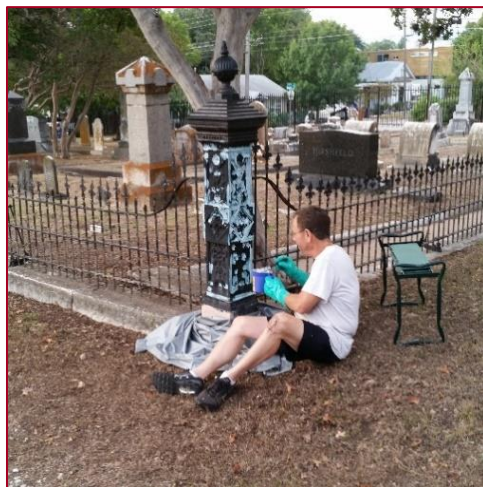


By Dale Flatt, SAC founder

Save Austin's Cemeteries has had a long and beneficial relationship with Congregation Beth Israel's Cemetery chairman, Mr. Phil Baum. Starting back in 2005, a small group of us mapped and photographed Beth Israel #1, which dates back to 1866. Mapping and photography were completed at Beth Israel #2 a few years ago. This summer, we took on the task of documenting, cleaning, and painting the historic ironwork. The work is ongoing. Beyond the entrance archway and the post, we have 207 feet of fencing and 572 individual pickets to inspect, clean, prep, and paint - all of which is done by hand with the notion that we do no harm to the fence work or the monuments, which are in close proximity.



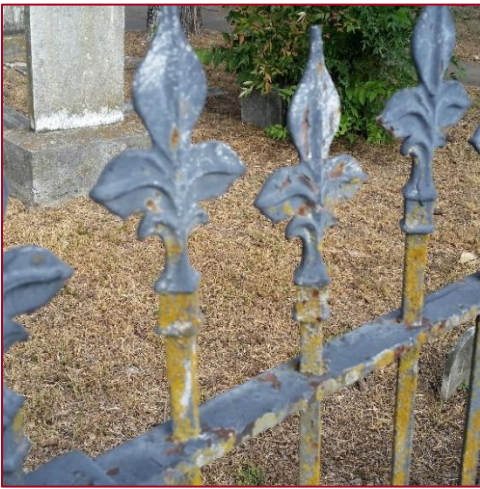
Before



During, Phil applies Rust Reformer



After damaged base has been repaired



Before: Damaged pickets and rails

After: Cleaned, prepped, and painted.

This project has been a great learning experience for those of us at SAC, who would like to do more volunteer work like this at Oakwood Cemetery. It is important to note that all the monuments and historic features at any cemetery are considered the property of and the responsibility of the families that placed them on-site. Once placed, they become part of the historic fabric of the site and become protected under many state laws. The City of Austin affirms that they are private property and apart from public safety concerns, the city is not authorized to use public monies to care for private property.

Due to the amount of time that has passed since Oakwood Cemetery was founded in 1839, many of the families have died off or moved away from the area, thus leaving many monuments essentially abandoned and a few that are considered at-risk. Having the ability to raise funds and fulfill the need for preservation is the premise under which Save Austin's Cemeteries was founded back in 2004.

In my retirement, I continue to learn more about caring for these historic sites. I will continue to work with SAC to raise funds and awareness and encourage the City of Austin to develop a budgeted program, to hire a qualified person with specific duties and a proper job title to work with city council for authority and funding for the program, as well as families and SAC on preservation issues.

We are getting closer to that day, one fence picket at a time. Come on out and visit the site and chat with the staff at the chapel and attend some of the many new programs that are being offered.

To learn more about how to preserve historic ironwork, visit this link
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6fAacWpM8XQ&t=120s>

Mary Fessenden Revisited by Kay Dunlap Boyd

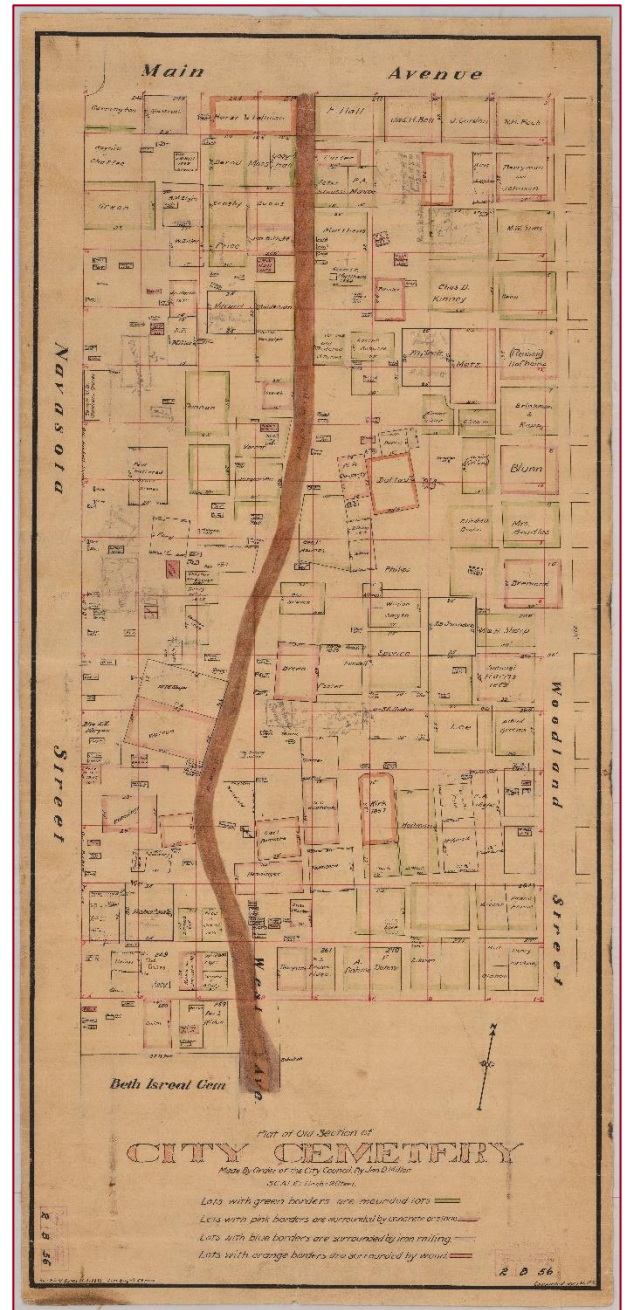
Inside the west gate about 135 feet up the first road to the right, there is a burial with no marker on the right side of the road. There are many people with no markers. Perhaps 160 years or so ago, these sites were marked with rocks, wooden crosses, or other now unreadable stones. Presently they rest in the ground with the location known only to those who are also gone.

Several years ago, a map was located drawn in 1911 by City of Austin Engineers of the older section of Oakwood. On this map, there are names we recognize and some that are new to researchers. One of the new names was “Phessenden, 1840.” This find was documented as Mary Fessenden in an article: <https://www.sachome.org/e-newsletters/2017%20Winter%20enewsletter.pdf>

This would be the earliest identified location of someone buried in Oakwood. History states that the first burial was in 1839, but we do not know the precise location. There are the markers for Black and Dolson and Gideon White killed in 1842, and Mary Mussett who died in 1843, but Fessenden is a new name to place in history.

The Randolph lot borders the road and directly west of it are tombstones of others including M.K. Miller and his family. In front of the Miller stones is an outcropping of old limestone that is believed to be the former stone of Mary Fessenden.

The City of Austin, PARD Department, recently marked these stones with a small plaque attached to low fencing that states her name, “Mary Bowles Fessenden 1818-1840.” This is a step forward in recognizing Mary’s burial location. As historians, we are very pleased when a new find is discovered.



Oakwood Chapel Happenings by Jennifer Chenoweth, Museum Site Coordinator

Collaborations are exciting and expand the scope of what we do. The Winter 2019-2020 Oakwood Chapel exhibit “*Caminar (To Walk)*” honors Tejanos buried in Oakwood Cemetery. Visitors have an opportunity as they walk through Oakwood Cemetery to reflect on the history and culture of Austin’s early Mexican American community during the times of legally enforced segregation. Events include a ceremonial dance, storytelling, and a musical procession to enhance a digital map of burial sites. *Caminar* will help illustrate how due to racism, many of Austin’s Hispanic families were only allowed to be buried on the edge of the cemetery.

With the collaboration of Maria Solis of the Tejano Genealogy Society of Austin (<http://www.tgsaustin.org/>), Marina Islas, the Latinx Archivist at the Austin History Center, Veronica Aranda Rice, Coka Trevino, and Alan Garcia, we are planning events to honor and acknowledge these people at Oakwood. The dates of the exhibit are December 21, 2019 – March 18, 2020.

Event dates are as follows:

Saturday, December 21, 2019 2:00 pm

Danza Azteca “Blessings of the Four Corners” ceremony and dance, followed by a processional walk around Oakwood with a remembrance of Tejano’s names read aloud, and a viewing of Nohrbords’ *Solsticio* video in the Chapel.

Saturday, February 1, 2:00 pm

Tamalada storytelling by *Mary Jane Aranda* and tamale-making performance for Día de la Candelaria.

Saturday, March 7 at 9:00 am

El Sacrificio will include a traditional music procession by *Robert Ojeda and the Bronze Band*.

Storytelling and family history writing workshops in English and Spanish will also be held on additional dates, to be announced. Save Austin’s Cemeteries members are welcome to help with events and planning.

If you want to volunteer to read names on December 21, sign up here:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040D4FACA82DA1FC1-caminar>

Our tour guides at the Chapel are all working on individual projects:

Emily Collins is authenticating the database records for interments. She will be creating a project on Pokémon Go at the Cemetery. Apparently, there are some amazing PokéStops and Pokémon Gyms at Oakwood.

Chad Williams is researching beer garden owners in advance of the Spring 2020 “To Hear” exhibit, which documents musicians who played their music at our original beer gardens in Austin. His master’s thesis at Texas State University in Geography focuses on creating affordable housing cooperative models for Austin.

SAC member Karen Eshliman was recently hired. Her focus will be on creating a Save Austin’s Cemeteries docent program for the Chapel, and possibly for other City of Austin cemeteries. Using her experience as a former tour guide, Karen will help with weekend visitors.

Greg Farrar is the great, great grandson of Dr. Reuben Shannon Lovinggood, an Oakwood “resident” buried in Section 4. Dr. Lovinggood the first President of Samuel Huston College, which later became Huston-Tillotson

University. He will be helping map the legacy of Huston-Tillotson University in Austin. You can read more about Dr. Lovinggood here: <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/flo87>

Isabel Alonzo is an undergraduate at The University of Texas at Austin in studying Urban Planning and Architecture. She is helping promote events and is helping research the legacy of Charles Page and Oakwood Architects on architecture in Austin for “To Design” exhibit in fall 2020.

Note: kYmberly Keeton, the African-American Archivist at the Austin History Center, is planning “Grow Your Roots” genealogy conference January 30-February 1, 2020 at the Austin Central Library. Melissa Rogers and Jennifer Chenoweth attended a planning meeting and will help with the event. Attendees and table volunteers are welcome to join. Please see previous article, *SAC Participates in Inaugural African-American Genealogy Conference*.

Save Austin’s Cemeteries Membership Drive by Sally Victor, Membership Chair

It’s that time again! Pull out your wallets, credit cards, and checkbooks because Save Austin’s Cemeteries has a bargain just for you. The Board of Directors voted to reduce the annual membership fee to a mere \$15.00 per year for students and elders (over 60) and \$20.00 per year for everyone else.

As you consider the wonderful discount you will receive, here are a few reasons to join SAC and/or maintain your membership:

- We work to memorialize and honor all those interred in five City of Austin cemeteries, whether an individual has a marker or not;
- We research family and individual histories;
- We work with the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department on identifying and completing improvement projects;
- We have intriguing annual meetings. Some previous topics include the Sneed and Bremond/Robinson families, geology of monument materials, and symbolism in cemetery artwork.
- We hold a least two cemetery tours each year, Murder Mayhem and Misadventure in October and another on varying topics in the Spring.
- In addition to all these wonderful things that we do, we have fun together, you just can’t beat having fun!

You can now become a member using a link on Save Austin’s Cemeteries website. It is a temporary page, but it serves the purpose until we get our new improved website up. If you wish to use PayPal, please fill out the online form and make your membership donation here: <https://www.sachome.org/join/join.html>.

If you prefer to mail your membership donation, please make your check to “Save Austin’s Cemeteries” and mail it with a completed membership form to: Save Austin’s Cemeteries, PO Box 16411, Austin, Texas 78761. (See the last page of the newsletter for the Membership Form)

Save Austin’s Cemeteries - Election of Officers by Megan Spencer

On Saturday, October 5, we met at Oakwood Chapel for a SAC Volunteer & Membership Appreciation at our Annual Meeting along with elections to vote for SAC Officers. There was a variety of tasty food and cold drinks. Melissa’s chocolate cake was a hit. Rumor has it that she was passing out the recipe – a family favorite! Eating, voting, and visiting kept everyone busy and we all felt appreciated!

Jennifer Chenoweth, PARD Museum Site Coordinator, gave a talk about art in Oakwood Cemetery, entitled *Place and Purpose*. After the presentation, voting was closed, and the votes were counted. Our new officers officially began their terms. The people who serve as Officers have already given their time and energy to SAC in many ways and we are sincerely thankful for their continued roles in preserving our City Cemeteries and honoring those who are buried there. Officers are elected by the membership and they serve a two-year term plus one additional term if able and willing. We are grateful to all our SAC Officers – past and present!

Our newly elected SAC Officers are:

- President - Melissa Rogers
- Vice-President - Jan Root
- Secretary - Arro Smith, PhD
- Treasurer - Sally Baulch

Something New May be on the Horizon! by Dale Flatt, SAC founder

Last month, I had the opportunity to travel to Savannah, Georgia, to attend a three-day annual conference hosted by the Georgia Municipal Cemetery Association – www.GMACweb.org. They are a 501c6 Non-Profit Org. It is a statewide organization that networks with municipalities from all over the state of Georgia that operate or care for an historic cemetery. What a great idea!

Unlike Save Austin's Cemeteries, which is a 501c3 Non-Profit, a 501c6 is described by the IRS as “an association of people with a shared business interest. The league must promote the common interests of its members, must not be engaged in business for profit and must not provide services to individuals the way a for-profit business does. Business leagues and other organizations in this category are allowed to engage in political lobbying.”

This is important as the cemetery laws here in the State of Texas are behind those of other states, a situation that often creates unresolved issues at the city level on how to address monuments as abandoned property and other issues. A network of municipal leaders as well as those who operate religious and fraternal cemetery sites could work to help identify common issues and to strengthen the state statutes.

There was a slate full of speakers over several days who spoke about historic preservation and fundraising as well as about the common challenges that people who maintain historic cemeteries deal with. What I found most beneficial was the networking. I spent time with a group of four people, one of whom was the mayor of a small town, who came to try to figure out what they can do about an old cemetery in their city and how to approach the problem.

Beyond the annual conference, they hold workshops in different areas of the state of Georgia. That happens already here in Texas with the Texas Historical Commission, as well as county-level historical commissions offering workshops. What I found most interesting is that sponsors underwrite most of the cost for workshops and the annual conference, with the balance being paid for by memberships.

While that sounds great, Texas is five times the size of Georgia, so establishing a new nonprofit is a daunting but doable thing. I have my work cut out for myself. There are 1,695 cities in the state of Texas in 254 counties! These cold rainy days are perfect for computer time. Great things coming in 2020.

Clarifying the City of Austin's New Cemetery Operations Fee Schedule by Melissa Rogers

SAC has received some inquiries regarding the City of Austin Fee Schedule for Cemetery Operations that went into effect on October 1, 2019. According to the Fee Schedule, under the Title, *Inspection Fee*, "All work performed at City of Austin cemeteries is subject to inspection fee." The Inspection Fee is \$85. The language regarding the Inspection Fee changed from the previous City of Austin Fee Schedule that indicated that an inspection fee would only be charged when an independent contractor was used to set a monument.

Following this change to the Fee Schedule, SAC reached out to the City of Austin for clarification. SAC is pleased to report that Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation, Anthony Segura, has clarified that, "[c]ontinuing with its longstanding policy, PARD will not charge owners who do their own work on their own plots and will not charge Save Austin Cemeteries (SAC) for the projects it undertakes using volunteers." Assistant Director Segura is also going to clarify when the inspection fee will be applicable as both he and Ms. Walls-Davis of Cemetery Operations have indicated that it is not their intention to charge an inspection fee in all cases.

If you are contemplating preservation or restoration work on a monument at one of the city cemeteries, SAC encourages you to contact Ms. Izabella Nuckels of Cemetery Operations for guidance and clarification regarding your project. Cemetery Operations is committed to documenting all restoration and preservation work done on the monuments and plots in the five City Cemeteries, so please coordinate with them, even if you are doing the work yourself. You can contact Cemetery Operations at cemeteries@austintexas.gov.

Book Talk by Ed Crowell, Author of *Barton Creek*, Dec 7th 3:00 pm by Melissa Rogers

SAC is pleased to continue its co-sponsorship with Oakwood Chapel Book Talks appearing under the Oakwood Chapel banner of *To Write*. SAC and Oakwood Chapel are inviting authors to speak about books that have specific interest in, or connection to, Oakwood Cemetery or the Austin community. All interested SAC members, volunteers and friends are invited to these free events.

The next Book Talk is scheduled for Saturday, December 7 at 3 pm at the Oakwood Chapel. Author Ed Crowell will discuss his book *Barton Creek*, which tells the history of the fight to save Barton Springs in the 1980s and 1990s that resulted in land protections and stricter water standards. "Following the creek from downtown Austin's Barton Springs Pool to its source as a cow-pasture trickle, longtime resident and journalist Ed Crowell explores the creek's contentious political history, its historic and current residents, and the mounting environmental pressures threatening it. *Barton Creek* highlights the passionate individuals involved in the stream's preservation, from city scientists to local landowners, who want to see the creek running clear and clean for future generations. Striking photography and vivid descriptions will entice readers to fall in love with Barton Creek all over again."

Mr. Crowell's presentation will be followed by an opportunity for questions and discussion. He will have books available for purchase following the talk. The photographs in this book are stunning and it would make a wonderful holiday gift for any Austin resident. I hope to see you all there.

Here is a link to the StoryMap of History and Inspiration in Austin Parks website:

<https://austin.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=ec5d3032f7ac4096a92d477eb6a03adf>


Two Oakwood Families by Kay Dunlap Boyd

Travis County History Day highlighted Oakwood Cemetery families on November 1st. Some families who were remembered with displays were the Camachos, the Hennas (including the Palms and Swensons) descendants. The Camachos were selected to represent Hispanic families and the Hennas represented one of the many Swedish families from Travis County. The Henna family was represented in SAC's Murder, Mayhem, and Misadventure Tour in 2018.

The 12th Annual Travis County History Day was sponsored by the Travis County Archives, Records Management, County Clerk's Office, Travis County Historical Commission, Austin History Center, and this year the Austin Genealogical Society. www.traviscountyhistory.org


The Luna - Castro - Camacho Family Pillars of the Mexican-American community in Austin

"I can't help but feel the presence of my ancestors."
-Danny Camacho




Danny Camacho

Daniel and Lorraine's son Danny Camacho followed in his parents' footsteps, by becoming a community leader and also a historian, with an expertise in the history of East Austin, where he grew up. His research helped unearth the history of Latinos in the Austin area. He passed away in 2016.




Lorraine "Grandma" Camacho Center



Lorraine Camacho

Lorraine was most well-known for her contributions to elementary education in East Austin. In her later years, Lorraine Camacho became known as "Grandma" Camacho. She passed away in 1999. In 2000, the City of Austin opened the Lorraine "Grandma" Camacho Center, a computer center for low-income children, in her honor.



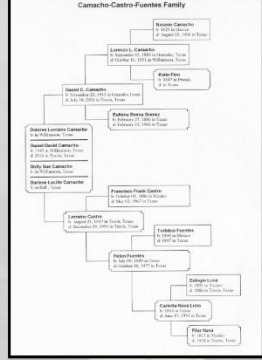
Danny Camacho

In the 1970s, Daniel Carrasco was known as "mayor of Austin's East Side" to fellow citizens who sought his advice and assistance in political matters. He passed away in 2001.

Few people knew more about Mexican-American history in Austin than **Danny Camacho**, which begins with his ancestors coming to Austin. Much of his information was obtained through oral histories with family members, as Mexican-American history in the area was not always well-documented in official records.


Pilar Nova came from China, Mexico, where she was born in 1833. She married Eulogio Luna in 1837 in Nuevo Leon, Mexico. They moved to San Antonio in 1851, and then to Austin in 1879, along with seven children and their extended family. They might have been the first Mexican-American family to do so. They settled in an area near the mouth of Shoal Creek called 'Mexico.'

This area, due in part to Pilar and Eulogio, became a vibrant business and cultural community for the Mexican American community. Republic Square Park, then known as Mexican Park, was the cultural heart of the area.




Camacho-Castro-Fuentes Family

Carolina Nova Luna
Carolina Nova Luna was one of Pilar and Eulogio's children. She married Teodoro Fuentes and had several children, one of whom was Helen Fuentes.




Helen Fuentes
Helen married Frank Castro, and their daughter Lorraine was born in Austin in 1917.



Frank Castro

Lorraine married Daniel Camacho in Taylor in 1940. They returned to Austin in 1949, where they raised their children Daniel (Danny), Dolores, Dolly and Darlene in East Austin. Both Lorraine and Daniel were active in politics from the 1960s until the late 1990s, campaigning for Hispanic politicians and promoting the importance of voting. They became well known and well respected members of their community.




Lorraine Camacho as Miss Teen Queen

Lorraine and her family moved to Taylor, Texas in 1927, where she attended school. She was later crowned Taylor's Miss Teen Queen in 1935.

From Sweden to Round Rock


Tracing the roots of the Henna Family

The modern Henna family has roots in Sweden. Swedes Anders Jaensson and Ingried Bolmqvist had 3 children, Johannes A. Palm, Svante J. Palm, and Margaret Andersdotter. Svante Palm and Svante Magnus Swenson, son of Margaret, became two well-known names in Texas.



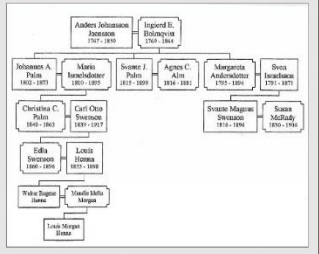
Svante Magnus Swenson

Born in Sweden, **Svante Magnus Swenson** migrated to America in 1836. He came to Texas in 1838 and is thought to be the first Swedish immigrant in Texas.



Svante Palm

Svante Palm followed his nephew to Texas in 1844. He became a promoter of Swedish immigration to Central Texas, was a noted book collector, and is the namesake of the Palm School in Austin.




Anders Johanson Jaensson 1797-1895 & **Ingried B. Bolmqvist 1790-1884**

Children: Johannes A. Palm (1802-1873), Maria Andersdotter (1807-1895), Svante J. Palm (1817-1899), Agnes C. Alva (1818-1891), Margareta Andersdotter (1797-1884), Sven Swenson (1797-1873)

Children of Svante J. Palm: Carl Olof Swenson (1849-1927), Emma Magnus Swenson (1848-1896)


Children of Carl Olof Swenson: Edla Swenson (1887-1975), Louis Henna (1873-1938)

Children of Edla Swenson: Walter Eugene Henna, Louis Morgan Henna




Walter Eugene Henna

Walter married Maudie Morgan and had two children, **Louis Morgan Henna**, the elder child, was born in Round Rock in 1914. In the 1930s, he started a garage and filling station, which is still operating today as a family owned and operated business, Henna Chevrolet. Louis Henna became the Mayor of Round Rock from 1952-1956.

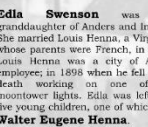


Louis Morgan Henna


You've driven on the road; you know about the car dealership; but who exactly was **Louis Henna**?



Henna Motor Company, 1946.
Photo No. 44-46-293-03, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library



Edla Swenson was the granddaughter of Anders and Ingried. She married Louis Henna, a Virginian whose parents were French, in 1879. Louis Henna was a city of Austin employee; in 1898 when he fell to his death working on one of the moon tower lights. Edla was left with five young children, one of which was **Walter Eugene Henna**.



FELL FROM ELECTRIC TOWER
Edla Swenson, one of the five children of Mrs. M. C. Chapin, who performed the ceremony. The parties united in the holy bonds of matrimony were Mr. E. H. Swenson and Miss Edla Swenson. There were no guests at the wedding. There were no music, Mr. Chapin acted as best man, Mr. Chapin acted as officiant. It came from Kentucky, and Mr. Henna is a Virginian.

Oakwood Featured on Univision by Megan Spencer

The American Spanish-language television network, Univision, featured historic Oakwood Cemetery for a Halloween story that was shown October 31. I can't believe I missed this opportunity to see deceased people walking around Oakwood while a Spanish language reporter gives a walking tour of Oakwood! Fortunately, we have the Univision video. It features some of the actors who portray historical characters during our annual Murder, Mayhem, and Misadventure Tours every October. There are also some behind-the-scenes photos of SAC member interviews and actors getting ready to "go live!"

We are thrilled that the history of Oakwood Cemetery, its monuments, residents, and stories were featured in the beautiful Spanish language. As a bilingual speaker of Spanish, I love to hear it spoken, but I admit I had to listen several times to catch it. My Spanish-speaking friends will love this video. I am glad that the Univision reporter reminded viewers that SAC events are always free and open to the public. Thanks, Univision for your story about Oakwood Cemetery.



See the video through this link: <https://www.univision.com/local/austin-kakw/este-cementerio-antiguo-de-austin-tiene-residentes-interesantes-que-cuentan-su-historia-video>

Calling All SAC Volunteer Docents by Melissa Rogers

Karen Eshliman, SAC Board Member, has joined the Oakwood Chapel staff and will be helping to develop and coordinate tours of Oakwood Cemetery. Anyone interested in serving as a volunteer docent at Oakwood – and at the other four City cemeteries in the future – should contact Jennifer Chenoweth to volunteer. Jennifer is available via email: Jennifer.chenoweth@austintx.gov.

Many of the people who visit the Chapel at Oakwood are interested in getting a tour and Jennifer is hoping that SAC can assist in providing those tours. I have accompanied many of you on tours of Oakwood and I know that SAC members provide the most informative and entertaining tours about this special place.

Chapel staff is planning to schedule a meeting for prospective docents for a date in early 2020. At that meeting, staff will review resources available for docents and discuss the logistics. In the meantime, Jennifer has provided this link if you would like to sign up for a shift at the Chapel now.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040D4FACA82DA1FC1-save>.

If you are interested, please find a time to sign up and share your knowledge about Oakwood with the public.

SAC on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter

You can follow Save Austin's Cemeteries on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. These links will take you to Save Austin's Cemeteries.

Facebook (link to: <https://www.facebook.com/SaveAustinsCemeteries/>)

Instagram (link to: <https://www.instagram.com/save.atx.cemeteries/>)

Twitter (link to: <https://twitter.com/SaveATXCemetery/>)

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

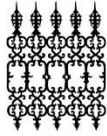
If you are interested the city's cemeteries and would like to attend a board meeting, please contact info@sachome.org to confirm the time and place of the next board meeting.

Calendar

Please join us for these upcoming events!

Sept 21 thru Dec 20	Oakwood Chapel Fall Exhibition " <i>To Believe</i> "
Sat Dec 7	Photo documentation at Oakwood Cemetery 1-3pm
Sat Dec 7	Oakwood Chapel Book Talk <i>Barton Creek</i> by Ed Crowell 3:00pm
Sat Dec 18	Oakwood Chapel - Screening of <i>Nohbords' Solsticio</i> film.
Dec 21 thru Mar 18	Oakwood Chapel Winter Exhibition <i>To Walk (Caminar)</i>
Sat Dec 21	Oakwood Chapel - Danza Azteca " <i>Blessings of the Four Corners</i> " ceremony and dance, followed by remembrance processional. 2:00pm
Sat Jan 4	Photo documentation at Oakwood Cemetery 1-3pm
Sat Feb 1	Oakwood Chapel - <i>Tamalada</i> storytelling by Mary Jane Aranda and tamale making performance for Día de la Candelaria.
Sat Mar 7	Oakwood Chapel – Traditional music procession <i>El Sacrificio</i> – Robert Ojeda & the Bronze Band. 9:00am
Sat Mar 7	Oakwood Chapel – Action of remembrance by Francisco Gonzales; followed by screening of films by Mayra Silva and <i>Building the American Dream</i> by Chelsea Hernandez. Noon
Mar 19 thru Jun 19 2020	PARC Chapel Spring Exhibit " <i>To Hear</i> " Event dates TBD.

If you would like to stop receiving SAC emails, or if you have updated contact information, please send an email to info@sachome.org.



Save Austin's Cemeteries

a non-profit 501(c)3 organization

Save Austin's Cemeteries (SAC) Membership Year _____

Type of tax-deductible membership:

- \$ 20 Individual
- \$ 15 Student (with copy of current ID)
- \$ 15 Senior (60+ years of age)
- \$ 500 Lifetime Membership
- \$ _____ Other _____

Payment method

- cash
 - check enclosed (please make payable to: Save Austin's Cemeteries)
 - credit card or PayPal
- name _____
- address _____
- city, state, zip _____
- email _____
- (optional) cell _____
- (optional) home _____

Ancestors

Do you have ancestors buried at any of the city cemeteries, if so, which one(s)? (check all that apply)

- Austin Memorial Park
- Evergreen
- Oakwood
- Oakwood Annex
- Plummers

May someone from SAC contact you to do an oral history? Yes No

Volunteering

Want to volunteer for SAC projects and events? (check all that apply)

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> event actor | <input type="checkbox"/> marketing/PR | <input type="checkbox"/> tour guide |
| <input type="checkbox"/> graphic designer | <input type="checkbox"/> oral history taker | <input type="checkbox"/> video production |
| <input type="checkbox"/> grounds restoration | <input type="checkbox"/> photo documentation | <input type="checkbox"/> website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> headstone restoration | <input type="checkbox"/> social media | <input type="checkbox"/> write newsletter stories |
| <input type="checkbox"/> historical research | | |