

# SAVE AUSTIN'S CEMETERIES

## Summer 2019 Newsletter

### Save Austin's Cemeteries Board Members

Sally Victor, President  
Melissa Rogers, Vice President  
Terri Mirka, Secretary  
Kay Boyd, Treasurer  
Sally Baulch  
Karen Eshliman  
Lowell Herzog  
Scott Meyers  
Jan Root  
Arro Smith

### Inside this Issue:

- Annual Photo Contest
- Historic Monuments at Oakwood
- 13<sup>th</sup> Annual MMM Tours
- SAC Volunteer & Member Appreciation and Election of Officers
- Gravestone Cleaning
- Suzy Lindeman Passing
- Warren Friedrich, Storyteller
- PARD Exhibits and Events at Oakwood
- Photo Documentation
- 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Travis County History Day
- Museum Day 2019

### Newsletter Editors:

Megan Spencer  
Leslie Wolfenden

### Annual Photo Contest by Leslie Wolfenden

It is time for SAC's annual photo contest! The 10<sup>th</sup> annual photo contest started on August 1 and ends through August 31 at midnight. Send in your favorite photos of monuments, statues, flora and fauna, and scenic shots of any of the Austin's five city cemeteries: Oakwood, Oakwood Annex, Austin Memorial Park, Evergreen, and Plummers. The photo can be taken from any time, not just in the last year. Send entries to [calendar@sachome.org](mailto:calendar@sachome.org) through August 31. See contest rules and entry form via the SAC website at [www.sachome.org](http://www.sachome.org).

The top twelve photos will be included in the 2020 SAC calendar and will be announced at the SAC Annual Meeting on October 5, 2019 at the Oakwood Cemetery Chapel. The winning photographers will win a one-year membership to SAC. The top place photographer earns the 2020 Calendar cover. The calendar will be available for purchase in the Fall.



*Three Crows, Austin Memorial Park Cemetery (Photo by Maggie Knight)*

## SAVE AUSTIN'S CEMETERIES 2019

[www.sachome.org](http://www.sachome.org)

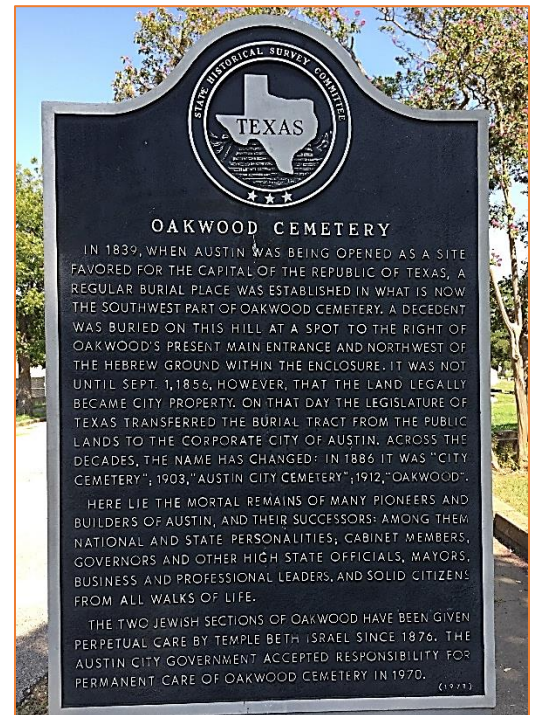
## Historic Markers at Oakwood Cemetery by Terri Hoover Mirka

Through its historic markers program, the Texas Historical Commission (THC) commemorates diverse topics in Texas history, including houses, buildings, religious congregations, military sites, historical events, and individuals who have made lasting contributions to the state of Texas, community organizations, and businesses.

The THC accepts applications for historical markers each fall for the following calendar year, typically during the **application period of September 1 through November 15**. **You must first submit through the county commission so now is the time to submit to the Travis County Historical Commission to get more individuals in our Austin city cemeteries the recognition they deserve.** Please see the THC website for more information. <https://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/state-historical-markers>.

### Oakwood Cemetery Historical Designations

Oakwood received an Official Texas Historical Marker in 1972 by the THC as detailed in a THC subject marker on Main Avenue. Oakwood Cemetery as the “City Cemetery” was placed in the prestigious National Register of Historic Places register in 1985 as part of the “Historic Resources of East Austin” nomination, but there is no plaque for this important designation. Oakwood was also named a THC Historic Texas Cemetery in 2010, but like the National Register, no marker was erected for this recognition. In 1976, Oakwood was designated an Austin Historic Landmark, and small plaques were added to the gates at the Comal Street entrance. The four historic designations have been added into the text in the small kiosk near the Oakwood chapel. Do you think these designations need more recognition? Let us know at [info@sachome.org](mailto:info@sachome.org).



### THC Historic Markers of Individuals at Oakwood Cemetery

**Abner Hugh Cook** (1814-1886, lot 1-158): Noted architect who produced some of the finest Greek revival buildings in Texas.

**Jacob Fontaine** (1808-1898, unmarked grave, marker in the community grounds): African-American preacher, church founder, activist, newspaper publisher, higher education proponent.

**George Washington Glasscock** (1810-1868, lot 1-243): Texas Revolution soldier, state legislator, gristmill operator, donated land for Williamson County. Georgetown and Glasscock County are named for him.

**Johann Jacob Groos** (1822-1878, lot 1-266): Helped found New Braunfels, government official, Texas Land Commissioner of the General Land Office.

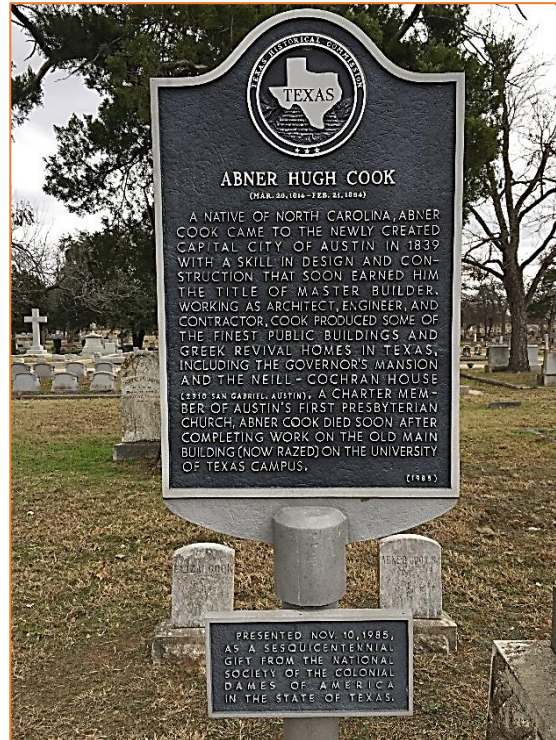
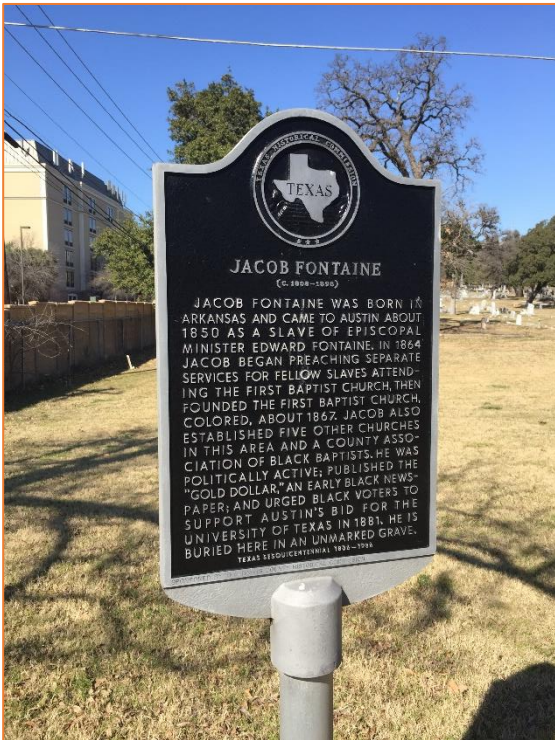
**Andrew Jackson Hamilton** (1815-1875, lot 1-73): Texas Attorney General, state legislator, US Congressman, provisional governor, justice on the Texas Supreme Court. Lawyer.

**Peter Henry Oberwetter** (1830-1915, lot 2-467): distinguished botanist and author, landscape artist for the state of Texas.

**Swante Palm** (1815-1899, lot 1-72): leader of early Swedish immigration to Texas, active in many public offices, church founder, devoted book collector. An Austin school was named in his honor.

**Major William Martin “Buck” Walton** (1832-1915, Old Grounds-Walton): lawyer, Texas attorney general, well-known public speaker, author, and civic leader.

**Colonel Lewis Miles Hobbs Washington** (1813-1857, memorial marker in lot 3-714): Texas Revolution soldier, Republic of Texas official, news reporter



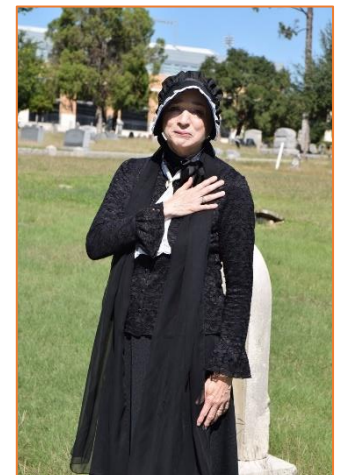
Please see our SAC website for a longer version of this article with photos of all the historic markers.  
<https://www.sachome.org/cemeteries/Oakwood.html>

### 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Murder, Mayhem and Misadventure Tours at Oakwood Cemetery by Melissa Rogers

Lucky Number 13! Fall will bring a chill to the air and the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Murder, Mayhem and Misadventure Walking Tour will send a chill down your spine! Please join us on October 26<sup>th</sup> (10 am – 4 pm) at Historic Oakwood Cemetery at 1601 Navasota/Comal.

This year’s tour features eight residents buried in Section One and includes the perennial favorite, Ben Thompson, Eula Phillips (the last victim of the Servant Girl Annihilator), and Joseph Hickey (the great-uncle of SAC’s own Mark Heep). We have lots of good stories to tell!

Tours start approximately every 15-20 minutes between 10:00 am-3:15 pm at the check-in tents erected for the tour. Children under adult supervision are welcome,



but please leave your pets at home. We encourage everyone to wear closed-toed shoes as the ground is uneven in places along with hazards such as gravel and ants.

To help make the day a success, we need to team up with our wonderful volunteers. We are still in need of costumed actors to tell the stories at each stop. Actors may work the morning shift 10 am–1 pm or the afternoon shift 1 pm–4 pm, and they need to arrive about 15–30 minutes before the shift starts. Volunteers can participate as tour guides as well, leading groups from stop to stop along the route. We always need help with set up, take down, clean up, registration, and assistance at the information table. If you can help in any role on October 26th, please contact us at [info@sachome.org](mailto:info@sachome.org).

## **SAC Volunteer & Membership Appreciation and Election of Officers - Oct 5<sup>th</sup> by Sally Victor**

It's time again for our volunteer and membership appreciation and election of officers. Hats off to all the wonderful volunteers and members of Save Austin's Cemeteries who work together to improve Austin's five city cemeteries. On Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am, we will meet at Oakwood Cemetery to vote. Members will vote for the new officers. Jennifer Chenoweth, PARD Museum Site Coordinator, will give a talk about art at Oakwood Cemetery entitled *Place and Purpose*. Afterwards, votes will be counted, and our new officers will officially begin their terms. There will be food and cold drinks for all. All volunteers and members of SAC are invited to attend. This event will take place right after the monthly headstone photo documentation session (9–11 am).

Our officers are elected by the SAC membership and can serve a two-year term, plus one additional term if able and willing. Below are our 2019 candidates for President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer for the coming term. A short biography of each is below:

### **President - Melissa Rogers**

Melissa Rogers has been fascinated with cemeteries since her childhood. She appreciates the unique historical perspective that cemeteries provide to a community. She has volunteered with SAC since 2016 as a member of the gravestone cleaning crew and as a tour guide for the MMM and other tours. She has a Doctor of Jurisprudence degree but is not currently a full-time attorney.

### **Vice-President - Jan Root**

Jan Root has worked as an archivist at the Austin History Center and is currently working at the General Land Office Map Center. She has been a supporter and volunteer with SAC for many years. She is a fixture at all our events.

### **Secretary - Arro Smith, PhD**

Arro is a new member of SAC Board of Directors. He is a member of the Odd Fellows Lodge and is currently working as a City of San Marcos Librarian. Arro has already ordered and received library style chairs for the Oakwood Chapel conference table. He has also been a volunteer and tour guide at our tours and worked on the WWI project.

### **Treasurer - Sally Baulch**

Sally Baulch has been a member of SAC Board of Directors for over a year. She has been a member of the gravestone cleaning crew and is a regular volunteer for the headstone photo documentation sessions. In her spare time from volunteering, she has worked at Texas Parks and Wildlife in Austin and across Texas.

**Board Member news:**

SAC Board Member, Cynthia Evans, has decided to step down from the SAC Board after accepting a new job. She has served as head of the genealogy room at the Carver Library and her experience in the museum, library, and archival field has truly benefitted SAC. We will miss her ideas, humor, and go-to attitude. Good luck, Cynthia! We hope you can stay in touch and participate in future SAC activities.

If you can attend our board meetings, once every two months on Saturdays at Oakwood Chapel and have time/energy to become more involved, we welcome you to join the SAC Board of Directors.

**Gravestone Cleaning: Three-Year Progress Report** by Terri Hoover Mirka

In the Spring 2016 SAC newsletter article, “Oh No! Who Bleached My Ancestor’s 1862 Gravestone?,” I wrote a detailed article about D/2 Biological Solution after discovering some of my ancestor’s 1860s marble obelisks no longer had mold and mildew and had been restored to their original white color thanks to a cousin. After researching D/2 and finding out that it is the preferred cleaner of the U.S. National Cemetery Administration and the Department of Veterans Affairs for veteran headstones, I experimented with D/2 on another family member’s marble stone and used the approved processes and D/2 as shown in the photos below.



Photo 1. Pre-cleaning March 2016: 1896 marble gravestone located in full sun, so it is not as deteriorated as headstones in the shade (Oakwood Lot 1-366)

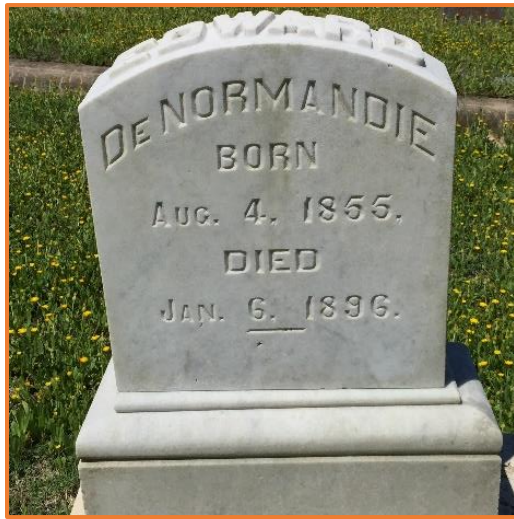


Photo 2. Gravestone in April 2016 after using the “quick result method” twice, plus the “no scrub longer term method.” Notice the yellow flowers.

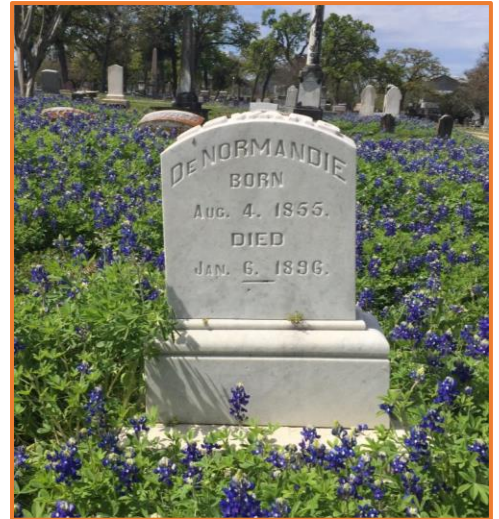


Photo 3. Gravestone in March 2019 to show progress on cleaning over time and the lasting effect of D/2. Notice the Texas bluebonnets have now taken over the area.

(All photos by Terri Mirka)

Fortunately, D/2 Biological not only safely cleans the surface of the headstone of environmental pollutants like mold, mildew, and lichens, but also penetrates below the surface to fully flush out toxins and kill the roots. (SAC receives no benefit from this endorsement of D/2 and has used it to clean over 1,000 headstones). The difference can be seen by comparing all the cleaned headstones near the Oakwood chapel and along most of Main Avenue with neighboring, uncleaned headstones.

Spring 2016 article: <https://www.sachome.org/e-newsletters/2016%20Spring%20newsletter.pdf>

## Suzy Lindeman Snyder Passing by Leslie Wolfenden

SAC lost one of its Lifetime Members, Suzy Lindeman Snyder, on June 18, 2019. She was a longtime resident of Austin, Texas with a deep love of family and a tireless commitment to community and early childhood education. Also known as Granma Suzy, Suzy strongly believed in the importance of community engagement, the power of volunteering, and early childhood development, and put her beliefs into action by championing various local organizations, including Save Austin's Cemeteries, The Women's Symphony League, Austin Community Nursery School, International Hospitality Council of Austin, Head Start, Austin History Center Association, Austin's Settlement Home for Children, Girl Scouts, and the list goes on. She was also the Director of the Parent Family Life Center at Huston Tillotson College. She often hosted ice cream socials, parties, puppet shows, caroling parties, dance parties (square and ballroom), and many other social events.

On Saturday, August 17, 2019 at 3:00 pm, the family hosted a memorial for Suzy Lindeman, a private event, but we believe all who knew her were welcomed. Her family plot is located directly east of the chapel.

A last word from Granma Suzy: "I really believe the world would be a better place if we had more ice cream socials." She had a joy and zest for life that will missed.



Left photo: Granma Suzy. Right photo: Granma Suzy (seated), Anne Wheat (Suzy's daughter and SAC member), Leslie Wolfenden (SAC member), and Kim McKnight (City of Austin PARD) at the Oakwood Chapel re-dedication ceremony in 2018.

## Warren Friedrich, Storyteller by Kay Dunlap Boyd and Megan Spencer

Warren Friedrich is a docent at the Bullock Museum, and he is a Storyteller with Save Austin's Cemeteries. Warren will give a presentation on November 18 to the Stephen F. Austin chapter of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas. Titled *Tales and Taller Tales of Texas*, this program will highlight stories that are well-known and some that are not as well-known. If you have attended tours at Oakwood, you may have heard some of his sketches, but we wanted to highlight a few of them for you. Here are three examples:

- When Sam Houston was baptized at Independence, Texas by the Reverend Rufus Burleson, Sam was reported to have said that he really felt sorry for the fish downstream!

- Governor Rick Perry was baptized in the same water hole some 160 years later. Note: Perry did not make mention of the fish!
- The Reverend Burleson also baptized Susanna Dickinson in Buffalo Bayou. Watch out for alligators!

Warren brings Texas history to life with funny anecdotes and surprising, little known facts. You will find yourself laughing your head off or you might feel tears welling up in your eyes. He almost always ends his presentations with “You can’t make this stuff up!”

Warren and some friends will present a program in January 2020 for the Daughters of the Republic of Texas focusing on the survivors of the War for Texas Independence telling the stories of Oakwood residents Susanna Dickinson, Mary Rabb, and John Crittenden Duval. DRT events are open to members of the local chapter. Be sure to attend the annual Murder, Mayhem and Misadventure tour at Oakwood Cemetery on October 26th to hear more from our friend, Warren.



## **PARD Exhibits and Events at Oakwood** by Jennifer Chenoweth, PARD Museum Site Coordinator

Austin Parks & Recreation Department events began this month and are scheduled through early 2020. Several community memorials have been held in the newly rehabilitated Chapel, which is now available as rental event space for appropriate occasions. September and October will bring in (hopefully) cooler air for Museum Day and the Murder, Mayhem and Misadventure Tours. In November, Oakwood will be included in the East Austin Studio Tour. It is true that inside Oakwood Cemetery visitors see history and art in any direction.



Please mark your calendars for these events happening at Oakwood throughout the fall and winter. Don’t miss the exhibits inside Oakwood Chapel either! PARD exhibits can be seen anytime during regular Chapel hours, 12:00 pm – 5:00 pm, Wednesday through Sunday.

### **Community Memorials:**

On Saturday, August 17, 2019 10:00 am, a Remembrance for Danny Camacho was held at Oakwood Chapel in collaboration with the Tejano Genealogy Society of Austin and Save Austin's Cemeteries. Friends and family told stories relating to Danny and left written remembrances.

On the same day, Saturday, August 17, 2019 at 3:00 pm, we hosted a memorial for Suzy Lindeman, a private event, but we believe all who knew her were welcomed.

### **Upcoming events:**

Our fall exhibit, *To Believe*, will be a collaboration with an interfaith group and East Austin community leaders. It will be on display in Oakwood Chapel from September 21 through December 20, 2019. We will visit many approaches to faith and belief in our culture through a digital exhibit and live events. iACT, Interfaith Action of Central Texas, will produce a video that examines practices of faith at a few local churches. Chapel staff are

creating a digital map of East Austin churches, historic and contemporary, with information about Jacob Fontaine's churches and his influence on Austin. Events include an opening reception on Saturday, September 21 from 2:00-5:00 pm with W.C. Clark performing at 3:00 pm in the Chapel.

September 22, 2019 is Austin Museum Day. SAC will feature the beautiful Oakwood Chapel and Cemetery on that day. The Chapel will be open from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm.

The East Austin Studio Tour runs between Sat/Sun November 16-17, 2019 and Sat/Sun November 23-24, 2019. During the Tour, Oakwood Chapel will be open for talks by architect Ben Heimsath and Reverend Daryl Horton of Mt. Zion Baptist Church. There will be a gospel choir performance as well.

On Thursday, November 21, 2019, Preservation Austin will host a panel discussion in partnership with Sightlines Magazine and Big Medium in Oakwood Chapel. The "tentative" time is set for 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm.

Our winter exhibit, *Caminar (To Walk)*, will be our winter program at Oakwood Cemetery. It will run from December 21, 2019 through March 18, 2020. This exhibit will be a remembrance of Hispanic burials at Oakwood Cemetery. William Delgado, a summer exhibit specialist at the Chapel, has researched burials with Hispanic names and documentation, and will be creating a digital map with the known information. We will be collaborating with Mariana Islas at the Austin History Center, the Tejano Genealogy Society of Austin, and local performing artists for an event to walk the outer streets of Oakwood Cemetery, listening to traditional Tejano music, and hearing names of marginalized people at Hispanic monuments, as many were buried along the fence line. Event dates TBD.

Our Spring exhibit, *To Hear*, will run from March 19 through June 19, 2020. *To Hear* recognizes Austin's earliest influential musicians who performed in Austin's local halls and beer gardens through the exhibit. Event dates TBD.

## Photo Documentation by Leslie Wolfenden

Headstone photo documentation sessions will start again on October 5, 2019 after taking the summer off to avoid the heat. The session will start at 9:00 am behind the Oakwood Cemetery Chapel near Beth Israel II burial grounds. Bring your digital camera and water to drink and wear close-toed shoes. If you come alone or don't have a camera, don't worry, we will partner you with someone. Training is provided. These sessions help to document the thousands of headstones located in the cemetery. The photographs will help us in the future when the headstones are impacted by time/aging, weather, theft, and vandalism.





## 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Travis County History Day by Christy Costlow, Travis County Archivist

Travis County History Day is an annual event that celebrates the rich history of Travis County. Since 2008, History Day has explored a variety of topics, including Heman Marion Sweatt and the Travis County Courthouse; William Barret Travis, the namesake of Travis County; early settlement; past and present elected officials; the history of law enforcement; and the centennial of World War I.

2019 marks Travis County's 12th History Day celebration. This year's theme is "Everyone has a Story. Find Yours." The event will explore the topic of genealogy by providing an introduction to genealogy research and genealogical resources in Travis County and beyond. The event will be emceed by Travis County Commissioner Gerald Daugherty and will feature several speakers, exhibits, free computer access to Ancestry.com, giveaways, light refreshments, and representatives from numerous local archives, libraries, and genealogical groups to answer your questions.

The event will take place on Friday, November 1, 2019 from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm at the Hall of Government, First Floor, 700 Lavaca Street. Travis County History Day is presented by the Travis County Archives and the Austin Genealogical Society, and sponsored by the Austin Bar Association, Austin History Center, and Travis County Historical Commission. For more information, please visit <https://www.traviscountyhistory.org/travis-county-history-day/> or <https://www.facebook.com/TravisCountyHistoryDay/>



Oakwood Cemetery families who will be remembered with displays are the Camachos, the Hennas, the Palms, the Swensons, and Bohls descendants.

## Museum Day, Sunday, September 22nd by Megan Spencer

The Austin Museum Partnership (AMP) will celebrate its 22<sup>nd</sup> annual Austin Museum Day on Sunday, September 22. Austin Museum Day is a chance to discover (or rediscover) some of the wonderful museums throughout Austin. Enjoy free access to all of the museums. For the past nine years, Save Austin's Cemeteries has participated in the art tour and we welcome curious visitors to Oakwood Cemetery, an historic outdoor museum. SAC will offer guided tours and answer questions. Please take advantage of the chance to visit museum exhibits and activities throughout Austin. Tours will be 9 am to 11 am and the chapel will be open from 9 am to 5 pm. For more information, see the AMP website: <http://www.austinmuseums.org/museumday/>

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:info@sachome.org) to confirm the time and place of the next board meeting.

## Calendar

Please join us for these upcoming events!

Sept 21 - Dec 20	Oakwood Chapel Fall Exhibit <i>“To Believe”</i> opens
Sept 21	Opening Reception <i>“To Believe”</i> Exhibit - Chapel 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm. W.C. Clark performs
Sept 22	Austin Museum Day, 9 am – 5 pm, tours 9 am – 11 am
Oct 5	Photo documentation session 9 am – 11 am
Oct 5	SAC Annual Meeting, Election & Volunteer Appreciation 11 am
Oct 26	Murder, Mayhem and Misadventure Tours at Oakwood 10 am – 4:00 pm
Nov 1	Travis County History Day at Hall of the Government, 10 am – 1 pm
Nov 2	SAC It’s My Park Day: Clean Up and Photo Documentation 9 am – noon
Nov 21	Preservation Austin hosts Panel Discussion at Oakwood. Tentative time is 6:00 pm – 7:30 pm
Nov 23-24	East Austin Studio Tour – Yes! Oakwood Cemetery is on the tour!
Dec 7	Photo documentation session 1 pm – 3 pm
Dec 21– Mar 18, 2020	PARD Chapel Winter Exhibit <i>“Caminar To Walk.”</i> Event dates TBD
Mar 19 - Jun 19, 2020	PARD 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](mailto:info@sachome.org).