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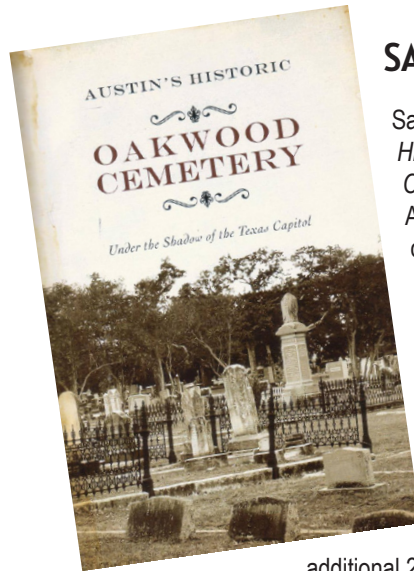
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Newsletter

Editor - Megan Spencer

Editor - Leslie Wolfenden

Designer - Marta Stefaniuk



SAC's Book Reprinted Again!

Save Austin's Cemeteries has reprinted our book *Austin's Historic Oakwood Cemetery: Under the Shadow of the Texas Capitol*. Its narratives and photographs create connections from Austin's start as a 19th century wild outpost to the 21st century city we know today.

When first published, 306 books were printed in 2014. Since 100 books were purchased at our first book event, 300 additional books were ordered. They sold out by 2018.

Although the board hopes to expand on the contents of this book in the future, that is a lengthy process. Therefore, it was decided another reprint was necessary to meet the requests for our book. The 2021 reprint was for an

additional 200 books. Our book is for sale for \$20. It is available for purchase online on our [website](#) and in-person at Oakwood Cemetery Chapel and at SAC events.

Marta Stefaniuk, SAC Member and Volunteer

Membership Drive

It is Fall in 2021. SAC sincerely hopes that everyone had a tremendous year and few, if any, onerous events. As the leaves on the trees change colors and the weather gets cooler, we want to remind all members, and of course, members-to-be that 2022 dues are now payable. Please use your Internet browser to access the [membership page](#) and choose the level of membership and preferred method of payment. There are three levels of membership:

\$20 - Individual Annual Membership

\$15 - Student Annual Membership

\$15 - Age 60+ Annual Membership

\$500 - Lifetime Membership

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY

With great pleasure, we announce that we now have 23 lifetime members! They are descendants, historians and architects. That means these rarefied folks have paid their memberships for the rest of their years. All memberships help SAC to fund projects throughout the year. Take a look at our accomplishments in the rest of this newsletter and be amazed at how SAC can combine various grants with our matching funds and in-kind services.

At a recent SAC Board meeting, two potential entities associated with cemeteries are about to apply for an SAC grant to construct fencing and supply needed equipment. Thank you one and all for your continued support of SAC and the myriad activities it undertakes.

Sally Victor, Board Member

LOOKING FOR DESCENDANTS

OF ANCESTORS BURIED IN OAKWOOD'S SEGREGATED SECTION

SECTION 4: COMMUNITY GROUNDS

NEH Grant Update

The Oakwood Chapel received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to create a digital 3D model of the segregated section (Section 4 - Community Grounds) of Oakwood Cemetery. The Chapel staff is busy researching records and finding out what digital platforms would be best for the project.

Oakwood Chapel is actively looking for descendants of ancestors buried in this section. Spread the word! Please contact jennifer.chenoweth@austintexas.gov if you have family buried in this area. The Chapel would love help from volunteers to research genealogy records on-line. Contact Jennifer to volunteer to assist with this research.

Jennifer Chenoweth, Oakwood Chapel Museum Coordinator



photo: Leslie Wolfenden

SAC Photo Documentation

Since 2007, SAC volunteers have gone from lot to lot taking photographs of each and every headstone in Oakwood Cemetery. This is done to have a record of how the headstones look, their condition, and where they are located in relation to other headstones. This is especially useful when the stones are damaged by falling trees or vandalism, get stolen or are misplaced. Other stones just experience wear and tear of time, making their text and details indecipherable.

This photo documentation process has taken place every first Saturday from October through May, with a few sessions canceled due to inclement weather. It takes approximately 2.5 years to complete a full Oakwood quadrant. We are currently in the last section – Section 4 – and will finish this section by the end of the year. We could not have done this without our wonderful volunteers, so many, many thanks to all of you who have proffered your time and efforts. SAC plans to do more photo documentation in the future. Stay tuned!

Leslie Wolfenden, SAC Member and Volunteer



Grey Ellis filming Mark Heep, photo: Melissa Rogers

SAC's Virtual MMM 2021

SAC decided to create a virtual Murder, Mayhem and Misadventure Tour (MMM) this year to comply with the City's COVID restrictions. Mark Heep, Sally Victor, Scott Myers, and Warren Friedrich told some wonderful stories. Oakwood Chapel staff member Grey Ellis did a great job filming. This year's tour would not be possible without her help and the support of all of the Oakwood Chapel staff. Thank you all! Please take a moment to view this year's virtual [tour](#).

The SAC Spring History Tour has been scheduled for April 2, 2022. That tour will feature stories from the Iron Front Saloon. Hope to see you there!

*Melissa Rogers, Board Member,
SAC President*

SAC Participates in the French Legation's Grand Re-Opening

The last Saturday in October usually finds most SAC members, volunteers, and friends at Oakwood Cemetery for SAC's annual Murder, Mayhem and Misadventure Tour. With MMM having gone virtual this year, it freed us up to attend the Grand Re-Opening of the [French Legation](#). The French Legation staff invited SAC to participate and we had three costumed actors on site to tell some of the stories that we would usually be telling at MMM. Thanks to Billy Brookshire, Warren Friedrich, and Mark Heep for bringing the stories of Ben Thompson, the Hickey Family, and the Servant Girl Annihilator to life.

The French Legation is a beautiful, historical site located in east Austin. The history of the site is fascinating. Please [take the time to stop by](#) and check it out. There is no admission for access to the grounds and they even have a Starbucks in the Visitor Center.

*Melissa Rogers, Board Member,
SAC President*



Photos: (top left) Melissa Rogers, (rest) French Legation's social media

It's My Park Day – Back Live and Better Than Ever

It's My Park Day was back after a COVID hiatus. On November 5, SAC participated with two projects – the placing of flags on Veterans' graves for Veterans' Day at Austin Memorial Park Cemetery (AMP) and at Plummers Cemetery, and sapling and tree start removal at Oakwood Cemetery.

On Friday November 4, approximately 25 University of Texas students, members of the [UT American Medical Students Association](#), placed flags in Sections 4, 5A, and 5B at AMP. The next morning, another 25 volunteers placed flags in Sections 1, 2, and 3. We also placed flags at Plummers. Over 700 flags were placed by volunteers as part of the It's My Park Day event.

Meanwhile, at Oakwood Cemetery, Sally Baulch, SAC's Treasurer, led a group of volunteers grappling with self-seeded tree saplings that can damage or destroy stones if not removed. The group at Oakwood worked all morning and had great success in removing these invasive plants. Sally also planted some new flowers in the Butterfly Garden flowerbeds to attract pollinators. Stop by and enjoy the flowers.

A huge THANK YOU to all of our wonderful volunteers!

*Melissa Rogers, Board Member,
SAC President*



photos: Melissa Rogers





Forget the Alamo - An Author Talk in Zilker Park

“IT PAINS ME TO REALIZE HOW LATINO CHILDREN MUST HAVE FELT WHEN THEY LEARNED THAT THE HEROES OF THE ALAMO WERE ALL WHITE AND MEXICANS WERE THE ‘BAD GUYS’ (THAT’S PUTTING IT LIGHTLY).”

On October 22, 2021, a friend and I spent a lovely evening listening to an unforgettable author talk held outdoors at the Zilker Hillside Theatre. The event was hosted by the Museums and Cultural Programs Division of the Parks and Recreation Department in conjunction with the Brush Square Museums Foundation, Save Austin’s Cemeteries, and Oakwood Chapel. Authors Bryan Burrough, Chris Tomlinson, and Jason Stanford talked about their new book, *Forget the Alamo: The Rise and Fall of an American Myth*. What these authors presented was eye-opening!

The authors attack the myths about the battle itself and the reason for the Texian revolt against Mexico. The struggle with Mexico was about bringing slavery to Texas. Most settlers came from the South and they wanted to continue cotton farming – a booming industry at the time and dependent on slave labor.

It pains me to realize how Latino children must have felt when they learned that the heroes of the Alamo were all white and Mexicans were the “bad guys” (that’s putting it lightly). Tejano character was denigrated and their history completely ignored in the “Heroic Anglo Narrative” started by Sam Houston and promoted by Walt Disney, John Wayne, and Lyndon Johnson throughout the 1950s and ‘60s and way beyond. These myths are carefully examined in this fine work. It is historiography at its best! In spite of the serious subject, the book is sprinkled with humor throughout and it is a great read! A Q&A session ended this very enlightening evening.

The *Forget the Alamo* Author Talk is now [on-line](#).

To listen to an NPR [Fresh Air interview with Bryan Burrough](#) about *Forget the Alamo*.

Megan Spencer, SAC Member and Volunteer

photos: Grey Ellis



AT 6:00 PM ON NOVEMBER 29TH, 2021
PARD ENGAGED THE INTERFAITH ACTION OF CENTRAL TEXAS TO DELIVER
A BRIEF BLESSING FOR THE REBURIAL OF THE 36 CHILDREN, WOMEN AND MEN
FOUND DURING THE CHAPEL'S REHABILITATION.

photo: Kim McKnight



Rest in Peace

Oakwood Re-interment

It was a chilly, autumn evening, just after sunset. From both cemetery entrances, a long line of simple, white luminaries guided visitors down Oakwood Cemetery's Main Street to the Chapel. Walking through the darkness of the cemetery, one's focus narrowed, one's mind quieted. The sole beacon of light in the distance was the Chapel, with candles lit in its Gothic arch windows, and the beautifully lit tents waiting for visitors to arrive. A single voice singing broke the silence, beckoning those who came to pay their respects to meditate on the string of events that occurred over the past 107 years that created the need for this ceremony. But on this night, gone were the controversies, unrest and complications. The dedicated work of many people and organizations finally culminated in a moment of peace and dignity and it was perfect.



photos: Marta Stefaniuk

PROGRAM

music: Alan Garcia - Accordion

blessings:

Simone Talma Flowers - Executive Director,
Interfaith Action of Central Texas

Fr. Larry Covington - St. Theresa Catholic
Church

Rev. Daryl Horton - Mt. Zion Baptist Church

music: Javier Jara - Guitar

Master of Ceremony:

Laura Esparza, Executive Director,
Museums and Cultural Programs.

The ceremony was produced by the unified efforts of many PARD departments: CEU (Community Engagement Unit, formerly Marketing), Historic Preservation and Heritage Tourism, Cemetery Operations and Museums and Cultural Programs.

A larger event will be scheduled for the public at an announced date in the future.

Watch the [ceremony on-line](#).

[KXAN coverage](#) of reburial.

[Fox 7 coverage](#) of reburial.

Learn more about the [Oakwood Chapel rehabilitation](#) and archaeological process.

*Marta Stefaniuk, SAC Member
and Volunteer*





photo: Grey Ellis

To Relate Digital Exhibit

The Chapel's Fall exhibit, *To Relate*, shows the history of Indigenous People in Austin and the geography of the region that provided the resources for Native Americans to thrive here. It includes a history of which tribes were in Texas, when and why they were here. A video documentary tells the story of the El Camino Real de los Tejas in Austin, a trail documented by Spanish missionaries who were led on the trail by Native guides. Authored by Amy Heath, a member of the Caddo Nation of Oklahoma, the project explores the very under-told long history of Texas people.

[To Relate](#) digital exhibit

[El Camino Real de los Tejas: A Documentary](#) on the Historic Native Trail video (also in exhibit)



[El Camino Real de los Tejas: Crankie Suite](#) video of performance in Onion Creek Metropolitan Park of musician Brian Beattie and artist Valerie Fowler

Jennifer Chenoweth, Oakwood Chapel Museum Site Coordinator

SAVE THE DATE!

To Write

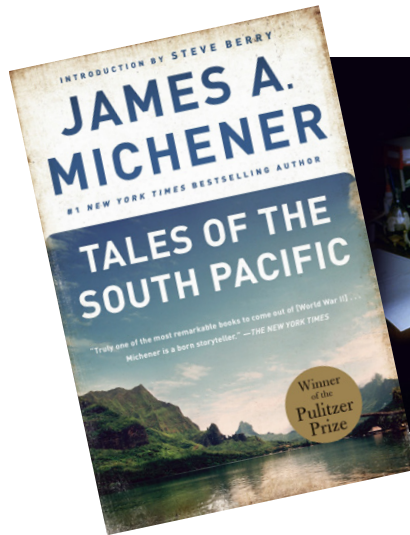
OAKWOOD CEMETERY
Chapel

**2:00pm Saturday
January 22, 2022**

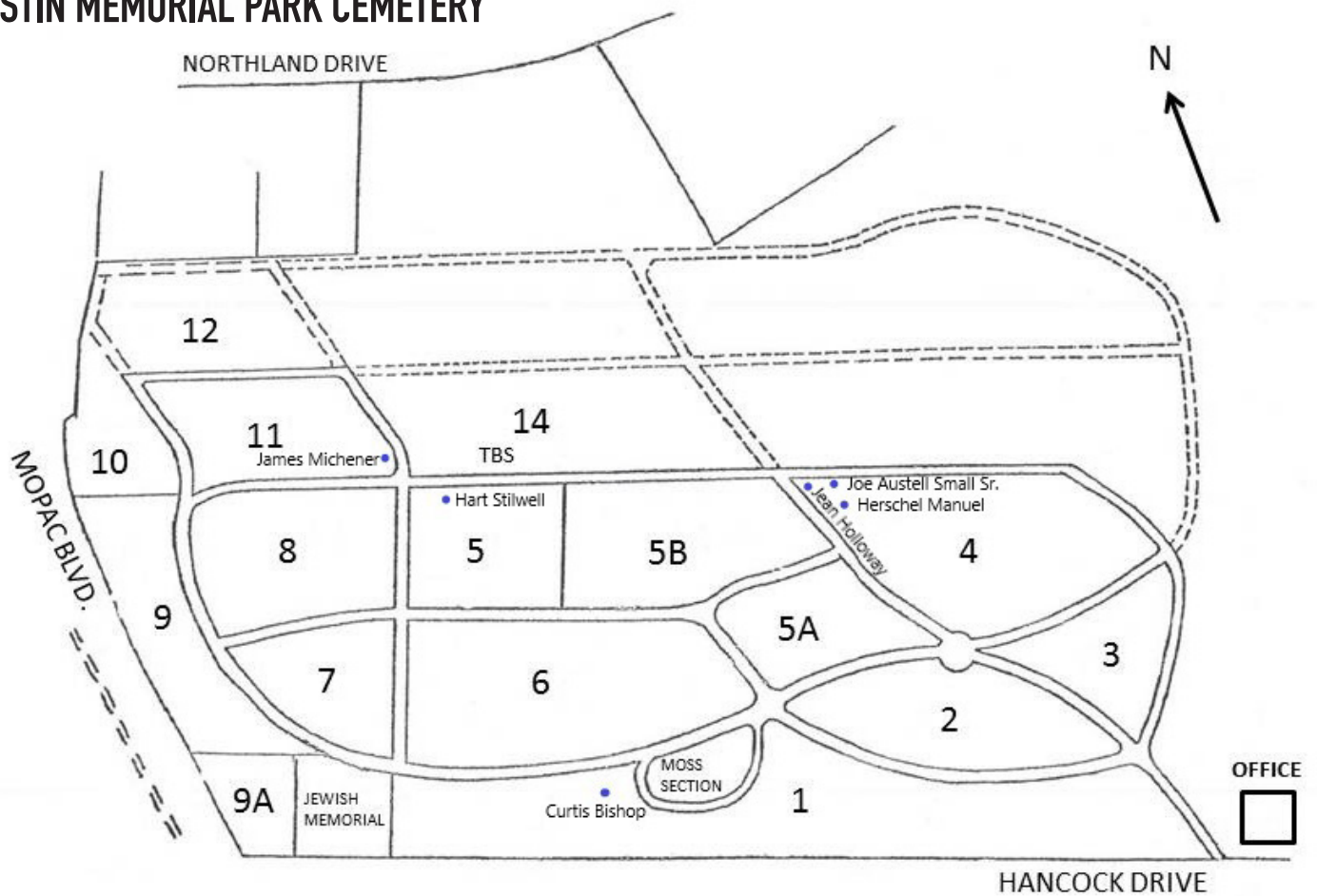
Nation Writers Month QR Codes

In honor of National Writer's Month (November), Cemetery Operations featured nine authors who are buried within three of the City of Austin Cemeteries: Austin Memorial Park, Evergreen, and Oakwood.

Some names stand out, for example [James Michener](#), author of the book that was turned into the Broadway musical *South Pacific*.



AUSTIN MEMORIAL PARK CEMETERY



Another is [Fania Kruger](#), who wrote *To a Young Mother*. This short story was published in the October 1960 issue of *Redbook* magazine, then produced and televised in Austin. Others names, like [Joe "Hosstail" Small](#), creator of *True West Magazine*, are less known.

Keep an eye out for the QR Code signs throughout the cemeteries and take the time to scan them when spotted!

Caitlen Hill, Cemetery Operations, Program Manager



photo: Hal Mohrlak - SAC Photo Documentation



BREAKING NEWS



HISTORIC CEMETERY DAMAGED AFTER ROLLOVER CRASH
EAST AUSTIN



photo: Marta Stefaniuk

Car Accident in Oakwood Cemetery

On Monday, May 25, 2021, just after midnight, a silver Honda driving north on San Bernard Street ran into Oakwood Cemetery. A neighbor who witnessed the accident stated that the driver of the car did not realize the street dead ended at 14th Street and hit the Oakwood Cemetery fence at full speed. The vehicle flipped and landed in Section 1, Lot 336. The driver survived, got out of his overturned vehicle, spoke with the witness neighbor, then ran from the scene, leaving several historical monuments severely damaged. This account was told to several board members who went to see the damage after the June board meeting. The neighbor approached us to explain in detail what he saw that night.



By 7:35 am, Kay Boyd had shared a video of the story that aired on [KXAN](#) with the SAC Board. As SAC board members began arriving at the cemetery after 8:00 am, Tonja Walls-Davis, Division Manager of Cemetery Operations, was already there supervising city employees as they gathered monument pieces, secured the perimeter of the lot and fixed the fence.

At the same time, Kay quickly discovered that the damaged lot belonged to the Miller family, related to the former mayor of Austin, Tom Miller. She found a descendant of the family, a SAC member. She informed him who to contact at the City regarding the accident.

Thanks to SAC's Photo Documentation Project, we were able to share 40+ photographs of the lot intact, from every angle.

The Cemetery Operations Division is working with the family member and local gravestone repair vendors to do a full damage assessment and to get cost estimates for repairs. They are also the contact point with the Austin Police Department. No details of the investigations have been released.

SAC posted about the accident on our Instagram account and tagged numerous news

media outlets in town to get more coverage. Click the links of the following organizations to watch their coverage of the story: [KVUE](#), [Fox 7](#), [CBS Austin](#). Sadly, the city's cemeteries are damaged by vehicle accidents on an almost yearly basis.

Next issue of the SAC Newsletter will have the history of the Miller family, whose grave markers were crushed.

Marta Stefaniuk, SAC Member and Volunteer

Butterfly Garden Update



The flowers SAC planted this spring on the east side of Oakwood Chapel took root, grew all summer, and are still blooming.



photos: Marta Stefaniuk

Save Austin's Cemeteries Board of Directors Update



Eleanor Faye Thompson is our newest SAC Board Member. Eleanor's family has been in Austin for at least five generations. She has family buried in Austin and nearby county cemeteries. [Eleanor](#) is busy with civic activities, including [Six Square](#), a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that celebrates and preserves the great arts, culture and history of Central East Austin and Juneteenth celebrations. She is a community advocate, leader, and executive associate of the East Austin Economic Development Corporation. A longtime East Austin resident, Eleanor has been involved in collecting and preserving local African American history for many years. She has been instrumental in preserving African American history through her work with the Austin History Center and other groups. We look forward to using her resources and working with her in our activities!

photo: Cindy Elizabeth/The Guardian



Marta Stefaniuk is stepping down from the SAC Board. Marta is working on a fantastic [project](#) about the [Watson House](#), doing marketing for five of Austin's history museums, as well as continuing her location scouting, which frequently takes a lot of her time. Due to her busy schedule, she felt that she could not give the Board the time and attention that it deserves. We thank Marta for all the incredible work that she has done for SAC in the past three years. We will miss seeing her at our Board meetings, but she is going to continue working with SAC – doing our website, newsletter layout, and Instagram. And we are counting on her being a tour guide for us once we are able to have live tours again. Thank you Marta!



Leslie Wolfenden is a founding member, past president, and a board member of SAC for many years. For the last 14 years, she has faithfully led the photo documenting activities at Oakwood Cemetery, which is in its final months of photographing all of Oakwood Cemetery's headstones – about 12,000 of them. As SAC's Historic Preservation Officer, Leslie led the efforts for fundraising and grant writing for the re-roofing of the Annex building and organized the groundwork preparations for the [rehabilitation of the 1914 Gothic Revival Chapel](#), including the Measured Drawings, Building Condition Assessment, Materials Testing, Geotechnical Report, and raising grassroots awareness of the need and importance of the chapel. She also volunteered regularly for SAC walking tours and It's My Park Days. She is "retiring" and will probably run a few more half marathons. Leslie, we thank you for your dedication!

Kay Dunlap Boyd, Board Member, SAC Historian

Cemeteries: Historical and Recreational

Our SAC [website](#) has a [blog](#). Recently, Emily Jones, friend and follower of SAC, wrote about the history of cemeteries. [Please click to read this blog post.](#)

“The Rural Cemetery Movement of the 1830s and 1840s opened people's eyes to the possibility of the living and non-living sharing these beautifully preserved landscapes.”



Submit to the SAC Newsletter

If you would like to submit an article to the SAC Newsletter, have an idea for an article, have photos to share (especially from SAC and Oakwood Chapel events) or a tip about things going on in the historic cemetery community, please email info@sachome.org.

SAC Board Meetings

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

Calendar Summary

Subject to COVID restrictions, SAC is planning live events in the Spring of 2022. We hope that you can join us for one or all of the following:

date	time	location	event
Jan-Mar		Oakwood Chapel & on-line	<i>To Liberate: The Watson Chateau</i> - digital exhibit
Jan 22	9am	Oakwood Cemetery	Footstone Resetting
Jan 22	2pm	Oakwood Chapel	Author Talk - To Write: Flower Hill by Rosa Walston Latimer Come hear the author of <i>Austin's Flower Hill Legacy: A Remarkable Family and a Sixth Street Wildscape</i> discuss her book at the Oakwood Chapel (subject to Covid restrictions).
February	TBD	TBD	<i>The Voices of Evergreen</i> Premier The videographers, Multimedia Maze, will introduce the making of SAC's Evergreen Cemetery tour. This project was funded, in part, by a Heritage Grant from the City of Austin, Development Department, Heritage Tourism Division.
March	TBD	TBD	Cemetery Photography Workshop
Mar 26	9am	Oakwood Cemetery	Footstone Resetting
Apr 2		Oakwood Cemetery	Spring History Tour: Iron Front Saloon
Apr 23	9am	Oakwood Cemetery	Footstone Resetting
Apr-Jun		Oakwood Chapel & on-line	<i>To Fika: Swedish-Texan History</i> - digital exhibit
Spring	TBD	Oakwood Cemetery	Patterson and Anderson Monument Dedication & Volunteer Appreciation Day
Jun-Sept		Oakwood Chapel & on-line	<i>To Emancipate: Juneteenth in Austin</i> - digital exhibit

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

sachome.org



Save Austin's Cemeteries



@save.atx.cemeteries



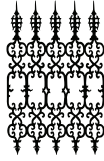
Save Austin's Cemeteries

Save Austin's Cemeteries



Board of Directors

President - Melissa Rogers
 Vice President - Jan Root
 Secretary - Arro Smith PhD
 Treasurer - Sally Baulch
 Historian - Kay Boyd
 Bobby Cervantes
 Karen Eshliman
 Mark Heep
 Scott Meyers
 Eleanor Thompson
 Sally Victor



Save Austin's Cemeteries

a non-profit 501(c)3 organization

Save Austin's Cemeteries (SAC) Membership Year 2022

Type of tax-deductible membership:

- \$ 20 Individual Annual Membership
- \$ 15 Student Annual Membership
- \$ 15 Senior (age 60+) Annual Membership
- \$ 500 Lifetime Membership
- \$ _____ Other _____

Payment method

- check
Please make payable to: Save Austin's Cemeteries. Mail check & form to: P.O. Box 16411, Austin, TX 78761
- credit card/PayPal
To charge your membership, please fill out form on-line: <https://www.sachome.org/membership>

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"/> historical research | <input type="checkbox"/> tour guide |
| <input type="checkbox"/> graphic design | <input type="checkbox"/> marketing/PR | <input type="checkbox"/> video production |
| <input type="checkbox"/> headstone restoration | <input type="checkbox"/> photography | <input type="checkbox"/> write newsletter stories |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> social media | |