



# Douglas County Cemetery Association Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 2

## Greetings From the President

As we see another summer leaving us, I still have to ask, "Where did it go?" That list I made in the spring is not completed and instead it might even be a bit longer. I guess staying busy is good for us. I suppose that is some of the reason so many of you remain on your cemetery boards. Thank you for that. Can't beat experience, but we still seem to encounter something new each year and that can keep it interesting. I admit I'm still learning! Now, if I could just remember what I learned. Your DCCA Board is trying something new this year. In an effort to bring more awareness and interest to our cemetery operations, we are attempting to encourage more family lot owners to think about the business side of our cemeteries; the history involved and the importance of record-keeping; the need for volunteers, etc. We hope to remind family members that we need their financial support on a regular basis as our operating costs increase over the years. At some point, most cemeteries also need improvements and upgrades. The \$3 paid for a lot eighty years ago will not continue to care for that lot. Families may realize that, but they might not think about it unless they are reminded.

In an attempt to remind them, we have contacted our local paper and plan to have several articles about cemetery issues - articles about the Civil War having ended in 1865 (150 years in 2015) and on the Civil War veterans buried locally. Articles about our Douglas County Association and our member cemeteries might encourage people to think about cemeteries more than only on Memorial Day weekends. Perhaps our most involved event is being finalized now. **Our board is organizing an Essay Contest for 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in all of the 14 county schools. The theme is "What stories can the stones tell?"** Local veterans groups have agreed to help sponsor awards of \$75, \$50 and \$25 to students from the 5<sup>th</sup> grade class of each school. Operation Round-Up also contributed \$250.00. We are continuing to seek sponsors in hopes of expanding the awards, and if all goes well we will plan to make the contest an annual student event. District #206 actually has essay writing as part of their 5<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum this year. Several of the essays will be included as part of the local Veteran's Day services. Awarded students will be recognized in local newspapers along with our sponsors. We anticipate the students

will ask their parents or other family members to bring them to cemeteries, talk to board members, veteran's groups, and the Douglas County Historical Society. Perhaps younger families will make contacts and develop more of an interest in participating in their families' cemeteries. We are certain these groups will welcome more interest. We are providing the students with our member cemetery actuary information. We hope you will all be contacted and asked to help provide any records or history the students may be asking for. We welcome your comments or suggestions. Also, please make others aware we are seeking more sponsors and that DCCA is a qualified 501 (c)3 non-profit. Your help is appreciated. The DCCA is again able to mail newsletters to our members' boards. We also established a file of those wanting to receive *emailed* copies. We will add to that file as more are interested. Let us know. Also, please remember our newsletter is available on the website [www.dchsmn.org](http://www.dchsmn.org). Click on "News & Events". Thank you DCHS! What a great group of dedicated and informed people. The spring community education cemetery tour was not planned this year because attendance has not been very consistent.

## Inside this issue:

President's Letter	1
Cemetery Spotlight	2
Gettysburg Address Examined	3
Essay Contest	4
Creative Corner	5
DCCA Info.	6

Our member cemeteries are interested in hosting the tours, but more public response is needed. Our board may need to consider either helping to sponsor the tours, or to start planning our own future tours. One important note from the Douglas County Historical Society: Please submit your Cemetery Burial and Cremation Reports regularly. Their staff makes a huge effort to keep complete and current records, and that information comes only from you. To mail, use the return address on this newsletter, or fax the report to 320-762-9062.

As always, please contact any DCCA Board member with areas of concern, comments or questions. We always welcome your input. And finally, **Thank You** to all of our county cemetery board members. Your continued interest and involvement is appreciated by all.

**John Chlian**  
DCCA President

## Douglas County Cemetery Spotlight

We currently have 42 Douglas County Cemetery members. In this issue we are shining the spotlight on three of them: Carlos Prairie Cemetery, Ebenezer Evangelical Lutheran Cemetery and Lake Charley Cemetery.

### **Ebenezer Evangelical Lutheran Cemetery**

*County Road 5, east of the County Road 6 and County Road 5 "T"*

In 1875, W. Dittberner donated a half-acre for a church. In 1878, the congregation paid Mr. Dittberner \$7 for another half-acre, and was given an additional half-acre by F. Schmidt. In 1881, the congregation received title to all three of these parcels of land, which, with another half-acre donated by R. Schmidt in 1906, comprise the present cemetery. The first church, built in 1875, stood near the southeast corner of the present cemetery with the entrance facing east. It was a log structure measuring 16' x 20'. The congregation decided on February 10, 1891 to build a new church on the present site. This decision also prompted another resolution on February 19, 1891; namely that "the resolution passed in 1890 'that the old church lot forever shall be and remain the cemetery for the congregation 'shall never be amended or rescinded'. This explains why the cemetery, for which a record of graves was begun in 1910, is located where it is.



### **Lake Charley Cemetery**

*Sunset Strip Road*

The Lake Charley Cemetery dates back to at least 1873. There are 14 known grave sites. Two of the graves are Civil War Veterans, one from the 10th Minnesota Infantry, the other from the 81st Ohio Infantry. Ole and Caroline Floding are buried here. Many of their descendants live in the area.



Buried here also is an African-American named John Johnston. The cemetery is maintained by Ida Township.

### **Carlos Prairie Cemetery**

*County Road 42, west of Carlos*



In February, 1891 a meeting was held to establish Carlos Cemetery Association with W.B. Dow as President and J. Pennar as Secretary. The cemetery plot containing 2 acres was purchased from

A. Hasbrouck at \$25 an acre. Members each paid \$3 toward the purchase price of the land. Carlos Prairie Cemetery was formerly known as the Carlos Union Cemetery.

### **Douglas County Cemetery Association Membership**

Bohemian Independent Cemetery, Brandon Cemetery, Calvary Catholic Cemetery, Carlos Prairie Cemetery, Christian Union Cemetery, Christina Lake Lutheran & Mission Convent Cemetery, East Moe Lutheran Church Cemetery, Ebenezer Cemetery, Evergreen Cemetery, Fahlun Cemetery, First Lutheran Church Cemetery- Kensington, Fryksande Cemetery, Geneva Cemetery, Gordon Pleasant Cemetery, Holmes City Lake Finnish Independent Apostolic Lutheran Cemetery, Hudson Cemetery, Kinkead Cemetery, Lake Charley Cemetery, Lake Ida Cemetery, Lake Mary Cemetery, Moe Heights Cemetery, Mound Grove Cemetery, Nelson Cemetery, Oak Hill Cemetery, Oscar Lake Lutheran Church Cemetery, Rose City Evangelical Free Church Cemetery, Rose Hill-Trinity Cemetery, Sauk Valley Lutheran Cemetery, Seven Dolors Catholic Cemetery, Solem Lutheran Church Cemetery, St. Ann's Catholic Church Cemetery, St. John's Lutheran Cemetery, St. Luke's Lutheran Church Cemetery, St. Mary's Catholic Church Cemetery, St. Nicholas Catholic Church Cemetery, St. Petri Cemetery, Trysil Bethesda Lutheran Cemetery, Van Loon Cemetery, Wennersborg Cemetery, West Moe Church Cemetery, White Garden Cemetery, Zionsborg Cemetery

## Gettysburg Address Examined

The battle of Gettysburg incurred death on a scale that we can hardly imagine. With an estimated 51,000 casualties and 7,786 dead, the scale of carnage overwhelmed the town of Gettysburg, which itself only had 24,000 residents. There was simply no way the people there could properly care for the wounded and dead. In three days, Union and Confederate forces had suffered almost as many casualties as in all previous American wars combined. Add to that, 3,000 dead horses lay dead on the battlefield. The task of burying the dead fell to Union soldiers and the townspeople, who faced the unimaginably grim work of burying these people in the summer heat. This is when the North truly felt the impact of the war, as this terrible battle literally brought death home. The stench of decay was so powerful and pervasive that when frost came, months after the battle, townspeople were still smearing peppermint oil on their faces to mask the odor. The battle ran from July 1-3; people could still smell the carnage when the ground froze.



The most powerful part of *Death and the Civil War* is its treatment of Gettysburg and the Gettysburg Address. The film offers so much context for that speech, it's hard to imagine discussing the speech lacking this specific understanding of what was going on around Lincoln as he spoke. Imagine that you lived in Gettysburg, and you had to bury your country's dead in mass graves, and you had to live with that experience for months. Imagine then that a massive new cemetery, one of the first national cemeteries, had been constructed just south of town, and it was so large that it became a primary feature of your local landscape; the government paid to re-bury Union soldiers in that new cemetery at a rate of \$1.59 per body. And then imagine that your president arrives in November, with the stench of death still in the air, and speaks -- he dedicates that Soldiers' National Cemetery (now Gettysburg National Cemetery), but also speaks to the larger responsibilities of the nation to its dead. He speaks in a cemetery where half of the coffins haven't even been buried yet. And this is what he says:

*Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.*

*Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation, so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.*

*But, in a larger sense, we can not dedicate, we can not consecrate, we can not hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us--that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion--that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain--that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom--and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.*

Taken from PBS series *American Experience*, *Death and the Civil War*, a documentary by Ric Burns.

## Essay Contest Creates Public Awareness and Encourages Family Involvement

One of our DCCA Board goals this year is to try to create more public awareness of how cemeteries operate, why they need volunteers and financial support, etc. One approach is trying to involve more young families by having an essay contest for 5<sup>th</sup> grade students in all District #206 schools. We hope the students will encourage their parents or grandparents to bring them to cemeteries, learn some of the cemetery's history; gather stories of veterans; or listen to stories of their earlier descendants. Local organizations are helping us provide cash awards to participating students. The following is the letter to all Douglas County Fifth Grade Students:



### What Stories Can The Stones Tell?

Dear Douglas County Fifth Grade Students,

You have been chosen to be part of something very special! You have the opportunity to make your contribution to the history of Douglas County - the chance to share your words with others and have those words available for future generations to learn from. Here's how you can make a difference in honoring those from our community who helped to make this county such an unique part of Minnesota's history.

We live in an amazing area. Douglas County is rich in talent, natural beauty, and many things of wonder and interest. Our history is as varied as the first people who settled in this rich, fertile land. With the upcoming 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ceasing of the American Civil War being recognized in 2015, we realized that our monuments and stones in the approximately 70 known cemeteries in Douglas County have so many stories to tell about our ancestors and the events that helped shape our communities, and us, into what and who we are today.

The Douglas County Cemetery Association is made up of individuals who wish to help protect and serve those who came before us. We believe in honoring and preserving the memories and monuments of our ancestors and neighbors who rest in these special places. Along with donations from several area veteran's organizations and Runestone Electric Association Operation Round Up, we are sponsoring a county-wide essay contest and we want to hear from you! Now is your opportunity to visit these resting places and marvel at the stones, the descriptions and dates inscribed. Ask your family members, the caretakers and local cemetery associations or veterans organizations for history, and put your stories down on paper. **Three students from each school, and the home school category, will receive monetary prizes of \$75, \$50 and \$25 sponsored by the above mentioned organizations.** Entries will be judged on content, research, and effort put forth. All entries must be turned in by **October 15, 2013** and awards will be announced to the communities in the local papers. Selected essays will be read throughout community veteran's and Memorial Day ceremonies and programs during the following year. All entries must be written on the attached form and will be compiled into book form to be kept at the Douglas County Historical Society for future generations to enjoy.



How do you get started? There are many places that you can go to get more information for your research. The Douglas County Historical Society located at 1219 Nokomis St. in Alexandria has information on each cemetery. You can also visit the local cemeteries, ask cemetery association members for cemetery history, visit with local and family historians, or check church and Douglas County Court House records. There are so many places to look for clues!

All public school student entries should be returned to classroom teachers who will then make them available for pickup by a Douglas County Cemetery Association member on **Wednesday, October 16, 2013** in the elementary school office. Home school entries should be mailed to: Kristi Wussow, 3982 Co. Rd. 5 NW, Alexandria, MN 56308 postmarked by Oct. 15<sup>th</sup>. All inquiries can be directed to: John Chlian, President, Douglas County Cemetery Association, 320-763-7409.

We hope you will enjoy learning more about the amazing history found all around us!

## Creative Corner: The Battle Hymn of the Republic

In 1861, after a visit to a Union Army camp, Julia Ward Howe wrote the poem that came to be called "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." It was published in February, 1862, in *The Atlantic Monthly*.

Howe reported in her autobiography that she wrote the verses to meet a challenge by a friend, Rev. James Freeman Clarke. As an unofficial anthem, Union soldiers sang "John Brown's Body." Confederate soldiers sang it with their own version of the words. But Clarke thought that there should be more uplifting words to the tune.

Howe met Clarke's challenge. The poem has become perhaps the best-known Civil War song of the Union Army, and has come to be a well-loved American patriotic anthem.

The words as published in the February, 1862, issue of *The Atlantic Monthly* are slightly different from her original manuscript version as documented in her *Reminiscences 1819-1899*, published in 1899. Later versions have been adapted to more modern usage and to the theological inclinations of the groups using the song.



Here is "Battle Hymn of the Republic" as written by Julia Ward Howe when she published it in February, 1862, in the *Atlantic Monthly*:

### Battle Hymn of the Republic

Julia Ward Howe

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord:  
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;  
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword:  
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps,  
They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;  
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps:  
His day is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel:  
"As ye deal with my contemners, so with you my grace shall deal;  
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,  
Since God is marching on."

He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;  
He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment-seat:  
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him! be jubilant, my feet!  
Our God is marching on.

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,  
With a glory in his bosom that transfigures you and me:  
As he died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,  
While God is marching on.



**Douglas County  
Cemetery Association, Inc**  
*A Minnesota Non-Profit Corporation*

**Return Address:**

Douglas County Historical Society  
1219 South Nokomis Street  
Alexandria, MN 56308

Email: [kim.dillon@dchsmn.org](mailto:kim.dillon@dchsmn.org)

## Our Mission



*"The Douglas County Cemetery Association will work hard to fulfill its purpose of being a resource for member cemeteries in dealing with the operational*

*problems that arise, creating mutually beneficial relationships between our members, promoting our cemeteries as the guardians of our county's heritage and as a place of lasting tribute to the memory of those who have gone on before us."*

## Our Goals

- To work with many other organizations to provide service to those concerned about our heritage.
- To help those working on family genealogy.
- To support efforts to maintain our cemeteries as well-landscaped and comforting places to visit.
- To collect information to identify notable people buried in our cemeteries and historical gravesites.
- To do mundane chores of developing better deed forms for membership and better transfer records.

**Newsletter Editor:**

Kathryn Liesemeyer

*Katalyst Communications, Alexandria, MN*

## Board Members/Officers

President: **John Chlian**  
Vice-Pres. **Joel Blank**  
Secretary: **Julie Kirscht**  
Treasurer/Membership Chair:  
**Sue Tvrdik**

**Gary Adamson**  
**Donna Gunderson**  
**Ralph Gunderson**  
**Gabriel J. Pipo**  
**Gene Rasmusen**  
**Kevin Sather**  
**Kristi Wussow**  
**Ann Skoglund, ex-officio**

*Annual membership meetings are held the fourth Thursday of April at: First Congregational UCC, Alexandria, MN.*

*We will work closely with the Douglas County Historical Society to maintain cemetery records.*

For more information about DCCA contact: **John Chlian @ [chlian@gctel.net](mailto:chlian@gctel.net)**