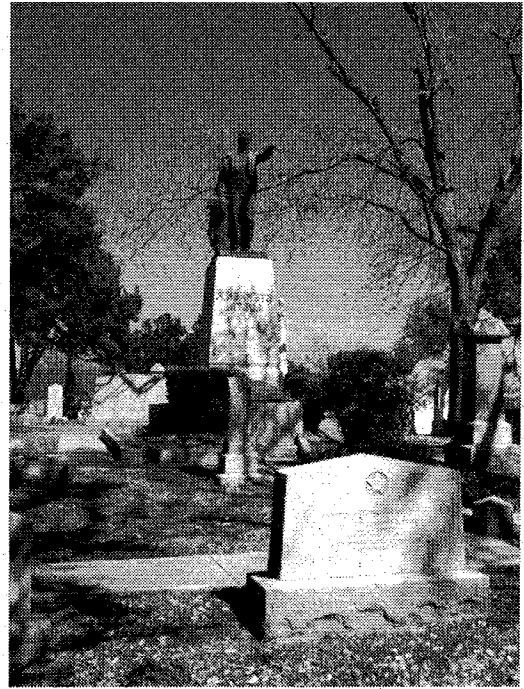


Texas Preservation Guidelines

Preserving Historic Cemeteries



Cemeteries are among the most valuable of historic resources. They are reminders of various settlement patterns, such as villages, rural communities, urban centers and ghost towns. Cemeteries can reveal information about historic events, religion, lifestyles and genealogy.

Names on grave markers serve as a directory of early residents and reflect the ethnic diversity and unique population of an area. Grave marker designs and cemetery decoration and landscaping represent a variety of cultural influences that helped shape the history of Texas.

Established in large part for the benefit of the living, cemeteries perpetuate the memories of the deceased, who bequeathed their communities the amenities that give a place character and definition. In communities that have a strong sense of history, people are more likely to protect and maintain cemeteries.



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COMMISSION

The State Agency for Historic Preservation



(left)
Angels are among the most common images found in cemeteries.

(cover)
The grave site of Texas hero Stephen F. Austin can be found at the State Cemetery in Austin.

Unfortunately, historic cemeteries do not necessarily remain permanent reminders of our heritage. They are subject to long-term deterioration from natural forces such as weathering and uncontrolled vegetation. Neglect accelerates and compounds the process. Development activities and construction projects are also a threat to these precious resources.

With this booklet, the Texas Historical Commission presents steps to aid in the preservation of the state's historic cemeteries. None of these steps, however, will be successful without the involvement of individuals who have an interest in local culture and history and a commitment to saving the physical remnants of Texas' heritage that are present in our communities.

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Cemetery Laws

Neither the Texas Historical Commission nor any other state agency enforces cemeteries laws. This responsibility belongs to county and municipal law enforcement officials. If a cemetery is being vandalized or destroyed, contact your county sheriff or local police department. Enlist the support of other individuals or groups, including the county commissioners court, local media, county historical commission, local preservation societies or family members of individuals interred in the cemetery.

Following are some of the state and local laws or court decisions regarding cemeteries. They provide an overview of the legal steps that have been successful in preserving some of the state's burial grounds. This information does not take the place of legal counsel. Consult the county or city attorney or other legal counsel for more information about laws related to cemeteries in Texas. Most of the Texas laws regarding cemeteries are in Chapters 694-712 of the Health and Safety Code.

Perpetual Care

Chapter 712 of the Health and Safety Code covers the operation of perpetual care cemeteries, which the State Banking Commission regulates.

Dedication

Section 711.035(f) of the Health and Safety Code states that once property is dedicated for cemetery use, it cannot be used for any other purpose unless the dedication is removed by a district court or the cemetery is enjoined or abated as a nuisance.

Texas courts have said that no special ceremony or record is required to dedicate a cemetery; actual use as a cemetery is suffi-

cient for dedication. *Damon v. State*, 52 S.W.2d 368 (Tex. 1932). Enclosure of land for use as a cemetery and evidence of burial are among the criteria for dedication. *Smallwood v. Midfield Oil Co.* 89 S.W.2d 1086 (Tex. Civ. App.- Texarkana 1935, writ dismissed).

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Ownership

Section 711.021 of the Health and Safety Code allows nonprofit corporations to establish, manage, maintain, improve or operate a private cemetery.

Property dedicated to cemetery purposes and used as a burial ground may not be sold in such a manner as to interfere with its use as a cemetery. *State v. Forest Lawn Lot Owners Assn.*, 254 S.W.2d 87 (Tex. 1953). However, such property may be conveyed in fee simple as long as it is still used as a cemetery and the grantee continues to maintain the cemetery for the benefit of the public. *Barker v. Hazel-Fail Oil Co.*, 219 S.W. 874 (Tex. Civ. App. - Fort Worth 1920, writ refused).

A living person who has relatives buried in a graveyard does not, by that fact, own the land or plots in which they are buried. That person can, however, visit, ornament and protect the graves from desecration. *Gibson v. Berry Cemetery Assn.*, 250 S.W.2d 600 (Tex. Civ. App. - Dallas 1952, no writ).

Abandonment

The fact that the remains of the dead buried in a cemetery have not been removed and that tombstones mark the places of burial is sufficient to show that the cemetery has not been abandoned. *Michels v. Crouch*, 122 S.W.2d 211 (Tex. Civ. App. - Eastland 1938, no writ). In *Markgraf v. Salem Cemetery Assn.*, 540 S.W.2d 524 (Tex. Civ. App. - San Antonio 1976, no writ), the court decided that land outside a cemetery fence was not abandoned because several graves were still evident.

Petition for Guardianship of Abandoned Historic Cemetery

Chapter 715.002 through 715.014 of the Health and Safety Code states that a non-profit corporation may be organized to restore, operate and maintain a historic cemetery by following a procedure set forth in these laws.

Local Cemetery Laws

Sections 694.003 and 713.001 of the Health and Safety Code provide that Type A

general law municipalities may regulate burial of the dead and may purchase, establish and regulate a cemetery. The municipal government may enclose, regulate and improve cemeteries belonging to the city.

Section 713.002 of the Health and Safety Code generally provides that any city or town that owns or has control of any cemetery has the power to maintain the cemetery.

Section 713.009 of the Health and Safety Code states that a city with a cemetery within its boundaries or jurisdiction may take possession and control of the cemetery on behalf of the public health, safety, comfort and welfare. Perpetual care cemeteries and private family cemeteries are exempt from this section.

Section 713.021 of the Health and Safety Code states that any county commissioners court may create a trust fund for the maintenance and upkeep of neglected public and private cemeteries in the county.

Section 713.028 of the Health and Safety Code states that a commissioners court

Vandalism appears to be on the increase in cemeteries across the state. The three individuals who vandalized this Hays County cemetery were apprehended and brought to trial. The gravestones were reinstalled, but some of them suffered permanent damage.



may use public funds, county employees and county equipment for the maintenance of cemeteries for purposes of historic preservation (i.e., with graves more than 50 years old) and protection of the public health, safety and welfare.

Access

Section 711.041 of the Health and Safety Code states that any person who wishes to visit a cemetery that has no public ingress or egress shall have the rights for visitation during reasonable hours and for purposes associated with cemetery visits. The owner of the lands surrounding the cemetery may designate the routes for reasonable access.

Desecration

Section 42.08 of the Texas Penal Code states that a person who intentionally or knowingly disinters or disturbs a human corpse has committed a Class A misdemeanor.

Section 711.0311 of the Health and Safety Code states that a person who destroys, damages or removes remains of a decedent has committed a felony of the third degree. Defacing, vandalizing and/or removing gravestones or other features is a Class C misdemeanor.

Theft

Section 31.30 provides that "an offense under this section is . . . a felony of the third degree if . . . regardless of value, the property is stolen from the person or another or from a human corpse or grave."

In addition to state or local laws, other methods to protect historic cemeteries exist. Under certain circumstances, federal authorities can become involved in matters pertaining to the relocation or destruction of burial grounds.

State Involvement

If a historic cemetery is publicly owned by a state agency or political subdivision of the state (i.e., counties, cities, utility districts, etc.), the burials are protected as archeological sites under the Antiquities Code of Texas (Title 9, Chapter 191 of the Texas Natural Resources Code of 1977, revised Aug. 30, 1995). To some degree the headstones associated with interments may also be protected, either as part of the archeological deposits or as separate architectural features associated with the site as a whole. According to the Code, no such deposits may be "taken, altered, damaged, salvaged, or excavated without a contract or permit" from the Texas Historical Commission, the state agency that administers the Code (Section 191.093).

A permit application must be submitted to and granted by the Commission before a publicly owned cemetery that is 75 years old or older can be altered in any way. The Commission has the legal authority to prevent the destruction of a cemetery; however, potential damage usually can be mitigated by respectful removal and relocation of the endangered interments. Such removal must be performed as archeological excavations by a qualified professional archeologist under the additional legal auspices of the State Cemetery Code. This means that legal arrangements must be made with the County Coroner or mortician, local law enforcement officials and possibly the district judge. The exhumation of human remains under the auspices of the Antiquities Code and the State Cemetery Code currently is conducted on a case-by-case basis due to the unique characteristics of individual cemeteries, the nature of the proposed adverse impacts, the concerns of the descendants and/or the concerns of local citizens. In the case of unintentional impacts to cemeteries or individual burials on public land, the impact must be reported, first to local law enforce-

ment officials, then to the Commission. All construction or development work affecting the interments must stop until the proper legal, administrative and archeological procedures have been followed.

Cemeteries on public land can also be officially designated as State Archeological Landmarks. For designation information, contact the Texas Historical Commission, P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX 78711, 512/463-6096.

Federal Involvement

Several federal laws protect cultural resources in the United States; however, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, is the principal legislative tool for protecting cultural resources. The Act promotes a national policy to preserve historic properties, significant historic and prehistoric sites, buildings and objects that are either eligible for or listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires federal agencies that fund, license, permit or approve projects to consider the effects of the undertakings on historic properties. Section 101(b)(3) of the Act states that one of the responsibilities of the State Historic Preservation Officer (in Texas, the officer is the executive director of the Texas Historical Commission) is to advise and assist federal, state and local governments in carrying out their historic preservation responsibilities and to insure that all are taken into consideration at each level of planning and development. Cemeteries are one kind of cultural resource that must be considered by federal, state and local agencies during an undertaking. The 1980 and 1992 amendments to the Act further reinforce cemetery protection measures by requiring federal agencies to develop preservation programs for identifying and protecting historic properties, and by expanding and maintaining the National Register of Historic Places in a

way that considers the preservation of their historic, archeological, architectural and cultural value.

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is divided into three divisions at the Texas Historical Commission: National Register Programs, Division of Architecture and the Division of Antiquities Protection. These divisions review and monitor federal projects and consult with individuals and agencies as needed. They evaluate all sites, including cemeteries, for their eligibility for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

These preservation laws can affect cemeteries if they are within the boundaries of a federal project area, if they have been determined to be eligible for inclusion in the National Register and if they are to be affected by the development project in some manner. Sometimes cemeteries in a project area must be moved. The move is made according to policies developed by the federal agency in consultation with the SHPO and any interested parties.

The agency involved is usually requested to have professional archeologists make a map of the cemetery and document the gravestones and other cultural features (depressions, fencing and plantings) associated with the cemetery. Archeologists and physical anthropologists may be present to identify and study human remains and grave artifacts during manual excavation of the interment. Often information is recorded from the gravestones to provide historical documentation, such as the length of occupancy of a land tract or ethnic affiliations in the community. This documentation can assist archeologists and historians in interpreting other historic properties within a federal project area.

For questions involving possible federal involvement in projects that will affect historic cemeteries, contact National Register Programs and the Division of Antiquities Protection.

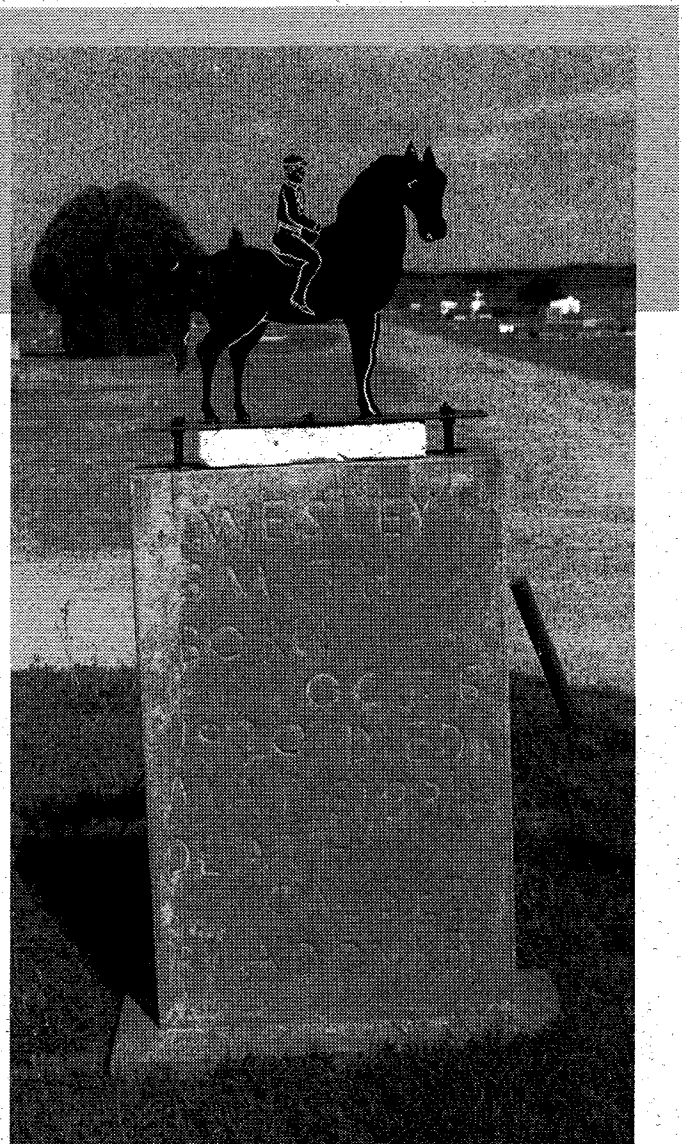
Homemade headstones are fashioned from various materials, including cast stone (concrete), metal and wood. This marker is located in northwest Texas.

Protection for Historic Cemeteries

Communities can protect historic cemeteries by documenting their locations. Enlist the support of county historical commissions, Junior Historian chapters, scout troops or area historical societies. The U.S. Geological Survey publishes topographical maps that identify sites such as cemeteries. County maps, available from the Texas Department of Transportation, also identify the locations of known cemeteries. Do not overlook older maps found in libraries and archives — often information is changed or not transferred when maps are updated. Some cemeteries are small and unmarked. These are often difficult to locate. Talk to the older people in the community for their recollection of burial grounds. These oral histories often are an invaluable aid to locating small family plots.

Once located, historic cemeteries can again become an integral part of the community. Stage periodic clean-up days or run short columns in the local paper about the lives of individuals or families buried in the cemeteries. Encourage students at all levels to explore cemeteries and write essays about tombstone designs, burial customs or community history, including infant mortality, local epidemics or catastrophic accidents.

In all cases, however, balance common sense with practical considerations. There are times when publicizing the location of a cemetery is detrimental to its preservation. Vandals can desecrate secluded cemeteries that are located away from the eyes of the



protective community. Keep statistical and historical information readily available for public use, but be discreet about the exact location of vulnerable cemeteries.

National, state and local historical markers provide a focal point for drawing public attention to cemeteries. Historical markers provide an overview of the individuals or institutions associated with a site. For information on the State Marker Program, contact the THC's Local History Programs office at 512/463-5853. For information on the National Register of Historic Places, contact National Register Programs at 512/463-6006.

Historical markers, cemetery clean-up

Cleaning Stone

Before cleaning any stone, carefully check its condition. If the surface readily falls away, or you notice other conditions that indicate the stone is brittle or vulnerable, do not clean it. Cleaning may irreparably damage the surface.

The Cleaning Process

1. Use a non-ionic soap. One of the most readily available soaps is Orvus®, commonly used in association with horse and sheep husbandry. It can be found in feed stores. Mix a solution of one heaping tablespoon of Orvus® to one gallon of clean water (it comes in either liquid or paste form).
2. Pre-wet the stone thoroughly with clean water and keep the stone wet during the *entire* washing process.
3. Thoroughly wash the WET stone using NATURAL BRISTLED, WOODEN HANDLED BRUSHES of various sizes. The use of plastic handles is not recommended, as color from the handles may leave material on the stone that will be very difficult to remove.
4. Be THOROUGH. Wash all surfaces and rinse thoroughly with lots of clean water.
5. When cleaning marble or limestone, one tablespoon of household ammonia can be added to the above mixture to help remove some greases and oils. Do not use ammonia on or near any bronze or other metal elements.
6. Lichens and algae can be removed by first thoroughly soaking the stone and then using a wooden scraper to gently remove the biological growth. This process may need to be repeated several times.
7. Not all stains can be removed. Do not expect the stones to appear new after cleaning.
8. Do not clean marble, limestone or sandstone more than once every 18 months. Every cleaning removes some of the face of the stone. However, occasionally rinsing with clean water to remove bird droppings and other accretions is acceptable.
9. Keep a simple treatment record of the cleaning, including date of cleaning, materials used and any change in condition since last cleaning (such as missing parts, graffiti and other damage). These records should be kept at a central location where the condition of the stones can be monitored over time.

*Developed from data supplied by John R. Dennis,
Dallas Museum of Art Conservation Lab.*



*Family member cleans a stone at
Oakwood Cemetery in Austin.*

days and publicity efforts are tools that will increase public awareness of these important cultural resources. Such awareness and education are among the best ways to guarantee the preservation of a cemetery.

Prehistoric grave sites contain fragile, easily destroyed remains that tell us about our past. Investigation by qualified archeologists is necessary if the history in these sites is to be properly preserved. Questions about prehistoric grave sites should be addressed to either the Division of Antiquities Protection at 512/463-6096 or the Office of the State Archeologist at 512/463-6090.

What To Do If A Cemetery Is Being Destroyed

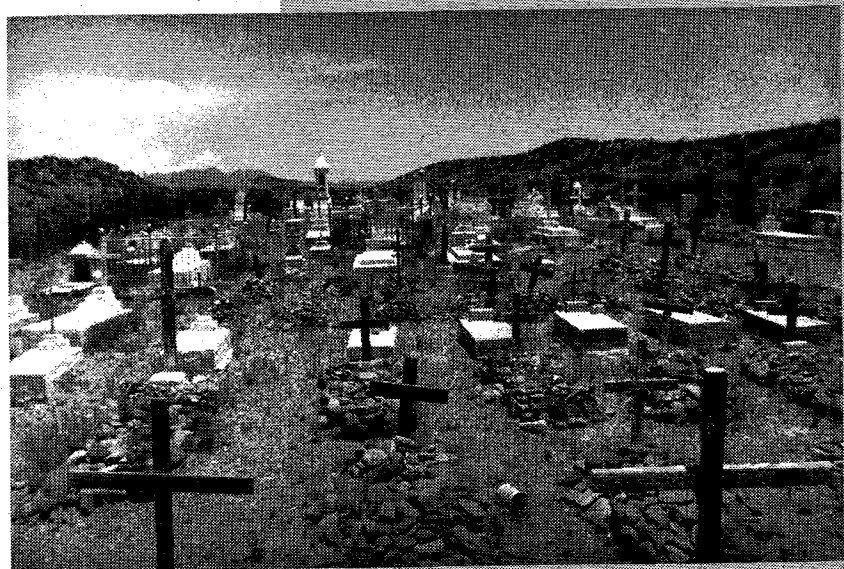
Should you see a cemetery being disturbed by vandals, looters or construction equipment, whether or not it is marked by headstones or a fence, call local law enforcement authorities at once. State laws protect cemeteries and provide a legal framework for removing the grave remains in a dignified manner. All burials must be removed according to legal statutes before the landowner can use the property for any other purpose. The same protection applies to isolated burials. However, you may know more about obscure cemetery statutes than the authorities, so be sure to inform them of pertinent cemetery laws.

After contacting local law enforcement authorities, notify the local heritage society, county historical commission,

newspaper and the Texas Historical Commission about the destruction of a cemetery. Stay involved. Do not condone the willful destruction of cemeteries with silence or by turning a blind eye. The memory of those who have lived before us should not be forsaken for reasons of expediency or economics.

There are times when criminal action is not always appropriate. A civil lawsuit may be the only means of resolving a conflict involving a cemetery. For instance, a county historical commission in Central Texas undertook a survey of the historic cemeteries in its area. Several years later, the fence and gravestones surrounding one of the surveyed family cemeteries were removed. No stones remained to provide evidence of the graveyard; thus, only the survey proved the cemetery's existence. Since the site was being considered for development, the records of the county historical commission were crucial to the future disposition of the land. In this case, the descendants of those interred in the cemetery filed suit and

*Hispanic influence is evident in this
Presidio County Cemetery.*



were compensated in an out-of-court settlement.

In Collin County, a cemetery occupied a prime lot in one of the largest residential developments in Texas. Developers petitioned the court to remove the cemetery's dedication so that the remains and stones could be moved to a perpetual care cemetery. A local preservation group, along with the descendants of those buried in the cemetery, led a vocal protest that received wide news media attention. The court decided the cemetery should remain in its original site. With the cemetery now preserved, the new residents of the development can appreciate the cemetery as a reminder of their local heritage.

While it is disturbing to lose cemeteries to development pressures, it is perhaps even more disturbing to lose them to criminal acts of vandalism and looting. Vandalism can range from intentionally pushing over gravestones to spray painting graffiti on cemetery chapel walls. The demand by collectors for 19th-century artifacts has contributed to the increasing disappearance of elaborately carved gravestones. This demand also leads to the digging and looting of graves for valuable objects such as jewelry, firearms, buttons and buckles.

If a cemetery is destroyed, use that fact as a rallying point for the preservation of a community's remaining cemeteries. Nothing can substitute for the preservation efforts of individuals. You and other interested people and groups must develop an active role in the preservation of local cemeteries today in order to walk among the gravestones and read the tender thoughts of enduring human emotions tomorrow.

Cemetery Restoration

Even though the most disturbing threats to any cemetery are the acts of vandalism that may be directed against grave markers or tombs, simple neglect of maintenance

is perhaps a more common and damaging problem. To assist in cemetery restoration, the Texas Historical Commission makes the following suggestions.

Get Permission

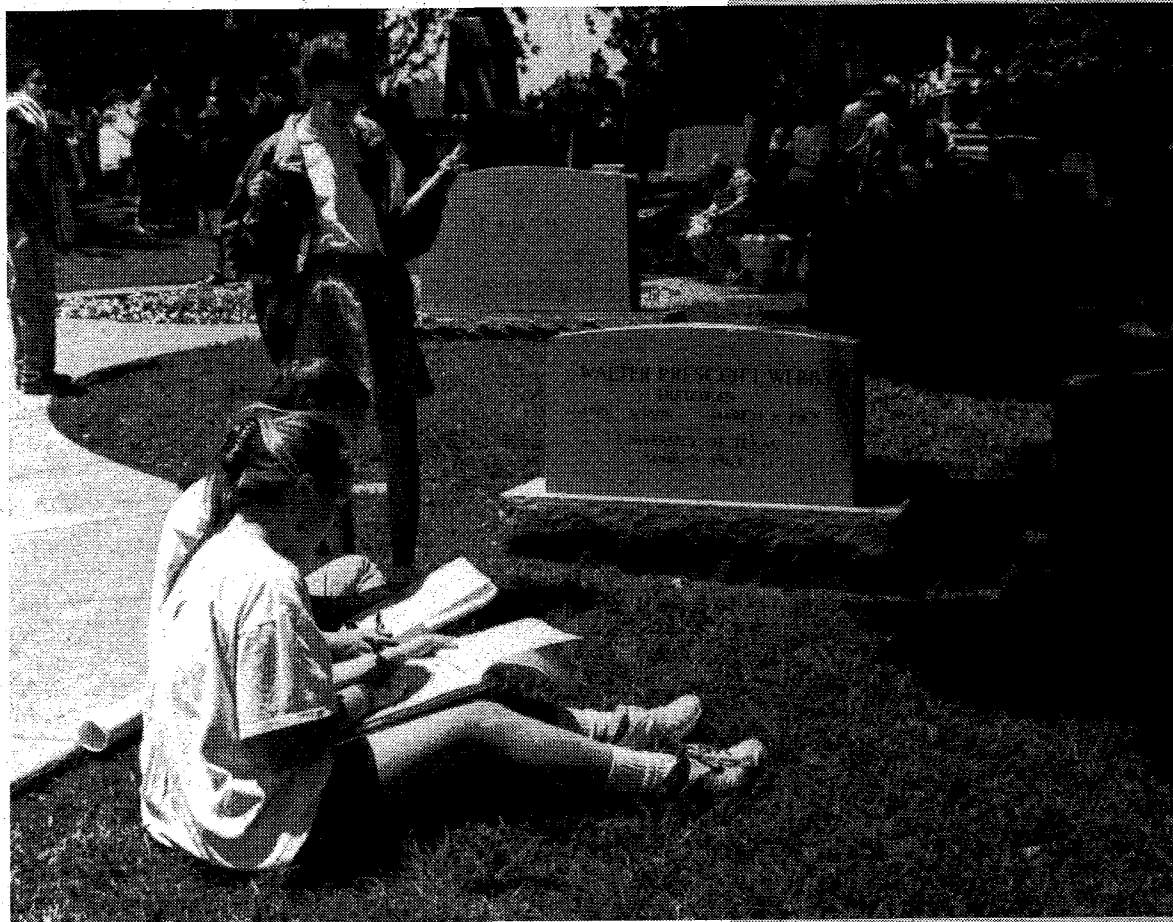
Find out who has legal jurisdiction over the cemetery and get written permission for restoration. If it is on public land, contact the federal, state or local government entity with the authority to protect the property. If the cemetery is on private land, contact the landowner or his/her representative and negotiate access, in addition to obtaining the necessary written permission. Cemetery associations govern many Texas cemeteries. If a cemetery association is involved, become familiar with its rules and regulations. If a cemetery is not clearly established in the county deed records, work with the county clerk to record it. This may be the single most valuable act of preservation that can be done for any cemetery.

Security

Before any plans are made for restoration, make the cemetery secure. Contact law enforcement officials and ask them to add the cemetery to their route patrols. Request their advice when creating security measures for the cemetery. Develop a good relationship with the local police department or sheriff's office.

Contact neighbors living near the cemetery. Ask them to report any suspicious activity to the police. Let the neighbors know that an effort is underway to restore the cemetery and tell them who to contact if they notice any problems.

Make sure the gate and fence are in good repair. If a historic fence is in place, repair and restore it as soon as possible. If a historic fence is not in place, erect appropriate fencing that will keep livestock out of rural



cemeteries (livestock can knock down grave-stones) and deter vandals from entering urban cemeteries, while allowing people to see in.

Also, vandals and other criminals like high, solid fences that hide their illegal activities. So when appropriate, use lights to illuminate the dark corners of the cemetery.

Do not restrict access to cemeteries, but consider posting rules and regulations. Post signs at entrances to let visitors know who to contact for access, and to show that the cemetery is maintained.

Survey and Inventory

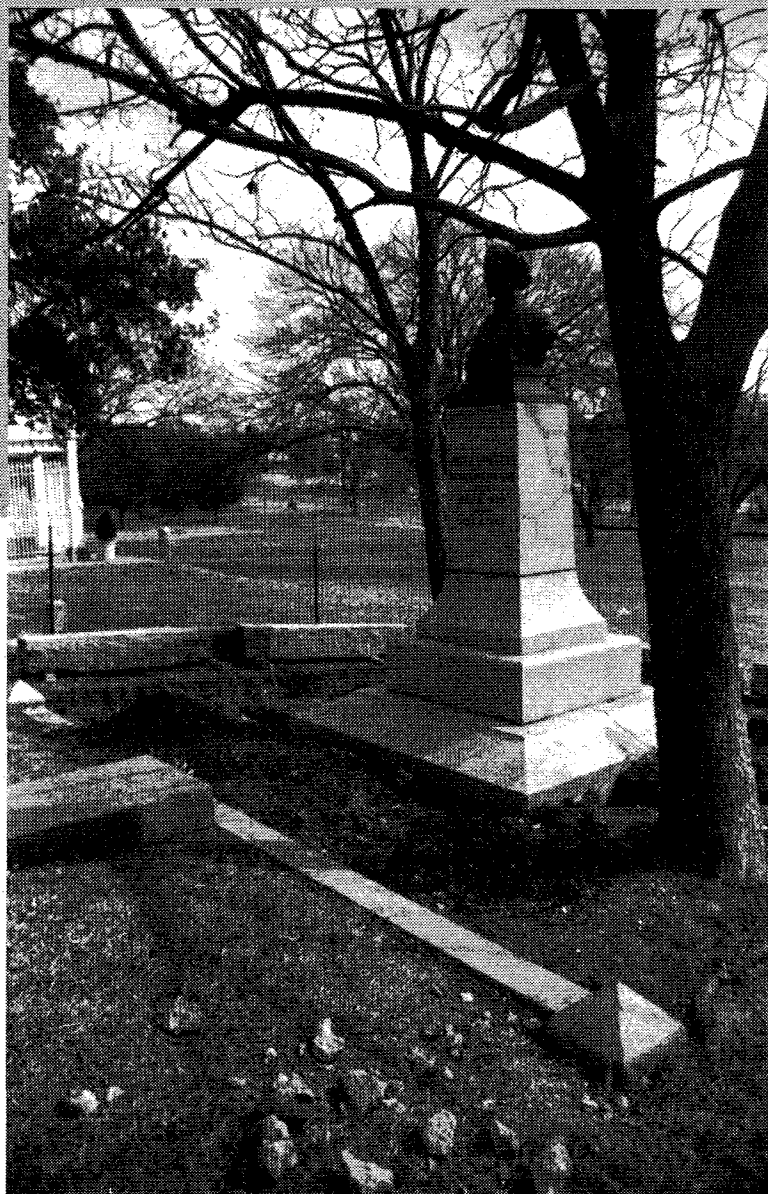
In order to fully document a cemetery, grave markers, fences and buildings must be inventoried. Following is one method to inventory cemeteries.

- Create a map of the cemetery grounds that includes the location of trees,

One of the best ways to protect cemeteries is to educate our school children. They are our future as preservationists. Lessons can be developed using scavenger hunts to teach history, art, math, geology and sociology.

bushes, fences, gates and other landscape features. Note the location and orientation of each grave marker, mausoleum, crypt and monument. Include the orientation of all marked and unmarked graves. Assign each physical feature (i.e., headstones, footstones, fences, benches, etc.) a control number that will tie together the written, photographic and map records.

Careful planning and the proper equipment should be used when moving headstones and curbing. Stones can weigh up to 165 pounds per cubic foot. Here, the curbing of the Wharton Monument at the State Cemetery in Austin undergoes restoration.



- Make a written record that includes the following information: control number, date of record, name of cemetery, type of marker (headstone, footstone, crypt, obelisk, etc.), size of marker, description of material used to make the marker (limestone, granite, marble, wood, iron, zinc, etc.), condition of the stone, name of deceased, vital dates, description of carving, exact inscription and any other identifying characteristics. A sample survey form is included in this brief.

- Record each headstone in a systematic method. Divide the cemetery into sections and record the graves down the rows. After completing a section, spot check it to make sure nothing was missed. Have another person recheck the recorded information against stones to make sure no errors are in the transcription.

- In order to read partially obscured inscriptions, try recording information in the morning. Most grave markers face east. The morning sun may make inscriptions more leg-

ible. When it is not practical to record in the morning, use a mirror to angle the sun onto the grave marker to illuminate indistinct letters and numbers. Never use chalk or talc on the face of a stone grave marker. Contrary to popular belief, chalk and talc do not always wash away and often damage the delicate stones.

- If time and money allow, photograph the grave marker, labeling the photograph with the control number. It is best to use 35mm, black and white slow speed film (about 100 ASA). Black and white photo-

graphs do not fade as quickly as color photos, and the slow speed film usually provides a sharper image.

- If a computer is available, the inventory information can be easily stored and retrieved using word processing or data base software. Programming may be available from members of a community computer club or a computer student needing a challenging project.

Master Plan

Before a blade of grass is cut, before a stone is leveled, before any work is done, it is essential that a master plan for the restoration of the cemetery be developed. The master plan will act as a framework for restoration activities. Once it is developed, the interrelationship between the different elements of the cemetery can be examined. A step-by-step guide will identify the scope of the work as well as necessary workers needed to perform it. Some projects may be handled by trained volunteers while others will require professional expertise. The plan should attempt to estimate accurately how much money is required for services and materials. Additionally, the master plan should include goals, priorities and a realistic time frame for the completion of all project work.

When creating the master plan, consider the customs of those buried in the cemeteries. Often cemeteries contain burials from many different ethnic and religious groups with diverse burial customs. Cemeteries are an expression of a community, including the varied cultural beliefs that make the community unique. Respecting the dead means extending that respect to their living descendants. Input from relatives and other interested individuals should be solicited.

Realistically evaluate the skills of the volunteers working on the restoration. Some aspects of the project will be better left to professionals. Archeologists, architects, histori-

ans and landscape architects are examples of the types of professionals who could be useful to a cemetery restoration project.

Take into consideration all the aspects of the cemetery and how they will interact. Will grading a road create runoffs that might undermine a monument foundation? Will cutting down a tree increase deterioration of a neighboring grave marker? Will stone repair accelerate natural weathering? Consider all these questions and more. Develop a philosophy of "cemetery ecology" and incorporate it into your master plan. In addition, the adage "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" is generally true when applied to cemetery restoration. Some of the worst restoration disasters have been brought about by well-intentioned improvement attempts.

Conservation and Repair

Historic grave markers, fences and structures are delicate artifacts that must be repaired with care and expertise. Modern repair methods and materials will often harm items created 50 or more years ago. Specially trained craftsmen and conservators should undertake most repairs. However, careful volunteers can repair some artifacts within cemeteries.

Grave Markers

Most historic grave markers in Texas are carved from one of three different types of stone: marble, limestone or sandstone. These stones are relatively soft and easy to carve; as a result, they were used extensively in Texas cemeteries during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Unfortunately, because these stones are soft, they are more susceptible to the effects of weathering than harder stones such as granite.

Before beginning any treatment on a gravestone, check it for soundness. Is the surface grainy and crumbling? Are there any

large cracks? Are the vertical strata of the stone separating into sheets and flaking off? If the stone has any of these problems, or appears in any other way to be unsound, do not clean or repair it. The stone will require expert care from a stone conservator.

If the stone appears to be sound, cleaning and simple repairs may be possible. Test any treatment on a small, hidden portion of the stone. Wait a few days or weeks and evaluate the results. If the test is successful, begin cleaning the whole stone.

A stone's appearance can be greatly improved with a simple cleaning. Follow the cleaning instructions highlighted in this brief.

Do not apply portland cement, epoxies, chemical cleaners (besides those mentioned) or sealants. Do not use metal bolts or braces. Do not sink stones into concrete. Never sandblast a gravestone or spray it with an excessive force of water.

Other Restoration Concerns

Grave markers are the focal point of most cemeteries and are given the first consideration when repairs are required; however, don't forget other historic cemetery features such as gates, fences, chapels, tabernacles, mausoleums, crypts and grave houses. Contact a preservation architect before restoring these complex structures.

Maintenance

Once a cemetery has been carefully restored, attention must focus on proper maintenance techniques. Clear brush by hand when possible. When hand cleaning is impractical, use hand mowers, but not close to the gravestone. For close work, use hand tools.

Be careful when using pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers. Acidic chemicals can deteriorate limestone, sandstone and marble, while alkaline chemicals can deteriorate gran-

ite. In most instances, organic methods of eradicating weeds and pests are better than chemical methods. Do not burn brush or rubbish near cemeteries. Uncontrolled fire could severely damage gravestones and destroy wood markers or structures.

Funding

Funds for the care of historic cemeteries are particularly difficult to obtain. Funding, however, is one of the most important tasks in preserving cemeteries, since much of the restoration and maintenance of old grave markers and cemetery structures can be costly.

Here are a few suggestions:

- Form a nonprofit cemetery organization.
- Solicit donations from descendants of the deceased buried in the cemetery.
- Research bank records for unused trust funds designated to maintain specific graves.
- Request help from county commissioners courts and city councils. Though they may not be able to allocate funds, they may be able to use county or city equipment and personnel to maintain cemeteries for health and safety reasons.
- Request donations from associated businesses, including funeral homes and monument companies. Businesses often look for ways to "give back" to the community.

With the money collected, establish a trust fund for the care of cemeteries. The Parker County Historical Commission has successfully established such a fund. It has also used standard community fund-raising activities such as bake sales and rummage sales to raise money for the restoration and maintenance of historic cemeteries in the county.

SAMPLE SURVEY FORM

Name of Cemetery: _____

Location Reference No.: _____ Name of Recorder: _____

Date: _____ Photo Date: _____ Negative No.: _____

Name on Marker: _____
last first middle

Orientation (marker faces): N S E W NE SE NW SW

Marker Type: head foot table obelisk tomb modern
 surface mounted others _____

Number of Stones: _____ Number of people: _____

Material: granite marble limestone sandstone cast stone
 brick stucco zinc wood iron fieldstone
 other _____

Dimensions: Height _____ Width _____ Thickness _____

Carved Surfaces: front back top side panels end panels
 other _____

Description of Design:

Condition of Carving:

Overall Condition: soiled stained efflorescence graffiti
 biological activity erosion losses
 blistering/flaking/scaling fragmented cracking
 tilted/fallen/sunken open joints
 other damage _____

Other cemetery features: iron fencing wood fencing paved walkways
 historic metal objects (urn/bench) grave goods
 wall vegetation (specify) _____
 others _____

Previous Repairs: adhesive repairs replacement portland cement
 encased coatings iron pins/braces
 other _____

Repairs (dates): _____ Work Performed: _____

Inscription (copy exactly as found on marker; use back of survey form if needed):

Conclusion

Perpetual maintenance and community awareness are the best long-term solutions to the survival of any historic cemetery. The hard work of recording and restoring a cemetery may be worthless if the community is unaware of its existence. Historic cemeteries are lost to development and vandalism because only a few family members, if anyone, may know of their locations and importance. The community as a whole can take an active part in the preservation, maintenance and protection of local cemeteries. Civic organizations, church groups, scout troops and historical societies all are potential assistants in efforts to care for historic cemeteries.

Educate city and county officials about cemetery preservation issues. Inform state legislators of the need for stronger state laws. Elected officials are not always aware of historic preservation problems in the community and they will welcome input. A working knowledge of federal, state and local cemetery laws is essential, as is an effort to publicize attempts to protect and care for cemeteries when possible.

Keep the Texas Historical Commission informed of cemetery preservation projects taking place in the community. If you need additional help or information about preserving cemeteries, contact the Texas Historical Commission, P.O. Box 12276, Austin, TX, 78711, 512/463-6100.

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The Association for Gravestone Studies, a national nonprofit organization that works to further the study and preservation of gravestones, publishes a quarterly newsletter. Write Association for Gravestone Studies, 30 Elm St., Worcester, MA 01609.

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