

**Subject: Re: Cemeteries of Henderson County**

**Date: Tue, 26 Jan 1999 22:38:21 EST**

**From: SaveGrave@aol.com**

**To: donjon@tvec.net**

Frank, thanks for your telephone call today. Save Texas Cemeteries looks forward to receiving your books on Henderson County Cemeteries, as well as sharing membership between your organization and ours.

(This transaction has led me to cogitate on a way to prolong our relationship indefinitely, without the need to continuously swap books. I'll bring this up later.)

You warned in your call that there are some cemeteries that you do not wish to publicize. It is understood that there are situations which are not properly protected and maintained, and therefore do not need any additional exposure to "the forces of evil." Unless I am mistaken, we know what you're saying without you having to say it. And, we will honor your request.

I'll let you know when the materials all arrive here.

--

Michael Emery

Information Systems Coordinator

Save Texas Cemeteries, Inc.

<http://members.aol.com/savegrave/>

**Subject: Cemeteries of Henderson County**

**Date: Fri, 22 Jan 1999 22:26:01 -0600**

**From: donjon <donjon@tvec.net>**

**To: Michael Emery <savegrave@aol.com>**

Michael,

Sorry for the delay in replying but our local power company attempted to fry my computer and then blame it on a squirrel ! Odd thing however, they never could produce 'neither hide nor hair' of the little critter ! I was off line for 10 days for repairs.

It will take me a week or more to clear the backlog on my computer so I will send the application by snail- mail along with the three books on Monday. Volume One of the "Cemeteries of Henderson County" has been out of print for a number of years so I had to made you a photostatic copy of that one.

I have the last copy of the last newsletter which I received before my membership expired so it isn't necessary to send another copy as all of my previous copies are on file at the Henderson County Historical Commission Archives. I realize STS needs all the individual memberships it can get but having to live on Social Security alone puts a crimp in one's participation in worthwhile organizations so with the '99 membership taken care of, I will see that in 2000 the Commission continues its membership into the 21st Century !

When I get the time I will send you the story about the elephant in the Cemetery. I told it to the STS President when she presented a program to the Athens Genealogical Organization (AGO) several months ago! You were correct about January being a blur but I don't see the rest of the year being any better !

Best Regards,

Frank E. La Rue, Jr.

Chairman

Henderson County Historical Commission

**Subject: Re: Cemeteries of Henderson County**

**Date: Sat, 16 Jan 1999 18:49:55 EST**

**From: SaveGrave@aol.com**

**To: donjon@tvec.net**

Frank, today was a directors meeting of Save Texas Cemeteries. I posed the question about swapping books for membership, not knowing if a vote was required for this. There was unanimous approval of your proposition -- and unanimous denial of the need for a vote -- so I guess we're now primed and ready to complete the proposal.

Save Texas Cemeteries would like to extend a one year membership (through the end of December 1999) to the Henderson County Historical Commission in exchange for your donation of a three-book series on the cemeteries of this county. Please fill out the STC membership form sent under separate cover and return it to me by email; I'll turn it over to the membership officer for processing.

As for the books, it would be fine to send these by 4th class mail to this address:

Save Texas Cemeteries, Inc.  
PO Box 202975  
Austin TX 78720-2975

I'll let you know when we receive the books from you, and send you the last newsletter we published, if you'd like.

Also, I'll hopefully get back to you for some questions on Henderson County cemetery preservation soon. The month of January has been a blur to me so far. It should let up soon.

Best regards...

--

Michael Emery  
Information Systems Coordinator  
Save Texas Cemeteries, Inc.  
<http://members.aol.com/savegrave/>

RECEIPT FOR DOMESTIC INSURED PARCEL (Not for International Mail)	
ADDRESSED FOR DELIVERY AT (R.O., State & ZIP Code) <b>S.T.C.</b>	
POSTAGE <b>203</b>	POSTMARK OF
INSURANCE FEE <b>85</b>	
SPECIAL DELIVERY	
SPECIAL HANDLING	
TOTAL <b>288</b>	
INSURANCE COVERAGE <b>\$50.00</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Fragile <input type="checkbox"/> Liquid <input type="checkbox"/> Perishable	
POSTMASTER (By)	
SENDER - Enter name and address on the reverse and read information regarding insurance coverage and claims.	
PS Form 3813, January 1991	



**Subject: Cemeteries of Henderson County**  
**Date: Sun, 10 Jan 1999 18:04:26 -0600**  
**From: donjon <donjon@tvec.net>**  
**To: Michael Emery <savegrave@aol.com>**

For the past 40 years the Henderson County Historical Commission members have been surveying the Cemeteries of our County. Todate we have published 3 softback books giving gravemarker information on 106 of the 170+ - Cemeteries in the County. We estimate that there are some 30 to 40 small family Cemeteries which are now lost.

There was no uniformity in the publications. Some of the survey information was taken and put in alphabetical order! Others were listed by rows and spaces but each ceemetery started from a different corner ! There were no plats to the Cemeteries so once a person was found in the index it was still difficult to pin point the location within the Cemetery.

We now have a retired couple, Betty & Frank Hollowell, members of our Commission, who are re-surveying the Cemeteries and providing not only the full name,date of birth and death, as they appear on the gravemarker but they also list native stones, bricks and other objects marking unknown graves in addition to an index to a plat for each cemetery. In the past six months they have completed the survey of 30 cemeteries.In the near future we hope to have their work published in hardback volumes.We hope in time to discover the names of some of the 'unknowns' through newspaper coverage.

One prime example of their work may be found in the 'Pioneer Section' of the Athens City Cemetery. This section was created in 1857 and everyone just marked off their 'space' and buried their family members but a plat was never made. I served on the Cemetery Board previously for a 17 years and was never able to get a plat made. Now we have one !

We are very proud of the fact that one of our members, Mrs.Nell Velvin, took the responsibility of obtaining a " Historic Cemetery Designation " for the Shelby Chapel Cemetery located just outside the City Limits of Athens. Shelby Chapel Cemetery was the 4th Cemetery in Texas to receive this designation.The Shelby Chapel Association and the Shelby Chapel Cemetery Association have now joined together to purchase a Historical Marker for both the Church and the Cemetery.

We even had a report of an elephant being buried in one of the community Cemeteries - but that is another story !

Respectfully submitted,

Frank E. La Rue, Jr., Chairman  
Henderson County Historical Commission

**Subject: Re: Cemeteries of Henderson County**

**Date: Tue, 12 Jan 1999 01:44:55 EST**

**From: SaveGrave@aol.com**

**To: donjon@tvec.net**

Thanks, Frank, for the fine report on the state of grave affairs in Henderson County. May I have your permission to reprint it in the upcoming Save Texas Cemeteries newsletter?

It would be good to include all pertinent contact information (address, email, URL et cetera) as well.

And also, STC would love to look at your inventory data, so I'd like to know how much you sell your three books for?

--  
Michael Emery  
Information Systems Coordinator  
Save Texas Cemeteries, Inc.  
<http://members.aol.com/savegrave/>

**Subject: Re: Cemeteries of Henderson County**

**Date: Tue, 12 Jan 1999 01:43:00 -0600**

**From: donjon <donjon@tvec.net>**

**To: SaveGrave@aol.com**

REPLY : CERTAINLY YOU HAVE MY PERMISSION TO REPRINT.

THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION DOES NOT HAVE AN E-MAIL ADDRESS. I USE MY PERSONAL AT TIMES TO EXPIDITE DELIVERY BUT I DO NOT WANT IT GIVEN OUT FOR GENERAL USE. THE COMMISSION MAY BE CONTACTED AT BOX 1412 ATHENS, TEXAS 75751 OR BY PHONE AT 903 675 6199. OFFICE HOURS ARE 8-4 MONDAY & TUESDAY & 8-2 FRIDAYS. WOULD YOU CONSIDER AN EXCHANGE OF THE 3 CEMETERY BOOKS FOR A YEAR'S MEMBERSHIP IN STC FOR THE COMMISSION ?

SaveGrave@aol.com wrote:

> Thanks, Frank, for the fine report on the state of grave affairs in Henderson  
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> Cemeteries newsletter?  
>  
> It would be good to include all pertinent contact information (address, email,  
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> And also, STC would love to look at your inventory data, so I'd like to know  
> how much you sell your three books for?  
> --  
> Michael Emery  
> Information Systems Coordinator  
> Save Texas Cemeteries, Inc.  
> <http://members.aol.com/savegrave/>

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**From:** SaveGrave@aol.com [Add to Address Book](#)

**Date:** Tue, 12 Jan 1999 23:52:57 EST

**To:** donjon@tvec.net

**Subject:** Re: Cemeteries of Henderson County

Greetings, Frank. Your Post Office address is perfectly fine to use. I think that I would like to ask you some more questions about your organization's work and history in general in Henderson County for this newsletter story we've talked about. Time isn't on my side at this moment though; in a couple of weeks things will perhaps be better for me. I hope that you are amenable to answering my questions then.

As for the membership-for-books deal, that sounds very doable, but I suspect that STC will be getting the better part of the deal. ;-)

There's a directors meeting this-coming Saturday, so I'll bring it up then and let you know the results soon. Our annual membership cycle ends on the last day of each year, so the timing is not too shabby.

Thanks a bunch, Frank.  
--  
Michael Emery

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**From:** SaveGrave@aol.com [Add to Address Book](#)**Date:** Sat, 16 Jan 1999 18:49:55 EST**To:** donjon@tvec.net**Subject:** Re: Cemeteries of Henderson County

Frank, today was a directors meeting of Save Texas Cemeteries. I posed the question about swapping books for membership, not knowing if a vote was required for this. There was unanimous approval of your proposition -- and unanimous denial of the need for a vote -- so I guess we're now primed and ready to complete the proposal.

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Save Texas Cemeteries, Inc.  
PO Box 202975  
Austin TX 78720-2975

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Best regards...

--

Michael Emery  
Information Systems Coordinator  
Save Texas Cemeteries, Inc.  
<http://members.aol.com/savegrave/>

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**From:** SaveGrave@aol.com [Add to Address Book](#)

**Date:** Sat, 16 Jan 1999 18:49:58 EST

**To:** donjon@tvec.net

**Subject:** STC membership form

Save Texas Cemeteries, Inc.  
PO Box 202975  
Austin TX 78720-2975  
Information (512) 257-5688  
<<mailto:savegrave@aol.com>>

SAVE TEXAS CEMETERIES MEMBERSHIP FORM  
=====

YOUR NAME

YOUR ORGANIZATION OR  
CORPORATION (if applicable)

ADDRESS

CITY

COUNTY

STATE

ZIP CODE (plus four)

YOUR TELEPHONE NUMBER

YOUR FAX NUMBER OR EMAIL ADDRESS

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ (NOT APPLICABLE)  
NEW  
RENEWAL

(circle one)

Please provide us with your zip+4 code so that we can take advantage of the nonprofit postal rates. Make your check payable to "Save Texas Cemeteries, Inc." and mail it and this form to the address above. Thank you for your generous support.

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**Subject: Re: Cemeteries of Henderson County**

**Date: Sun, 24 Jan 1999 00:24:53 EST**

**From: SaveGrave@aol.com**

**To: donjon@tvec.net**

It's good to hear from you again, Frank. Let's hope that your local squirrels don't suffer any Y2K problems that they can blame on your electric utility company. :-)

We look forward to receiving your application, along with the records for Henderson County's cemeteries. This will do much to improve the Save Texas Cemeteries database.

One of your neighbors perhaps, Betty C. McCoy, has been working on the Evans Chapel Cemetery in Chandler. Are you familiar with this one? She recently sent us a cemetery information sheet on it, revealing that a developer destroyed maybe one half of the site before the destruction was halted by residents.

--

Michael Emery

# HENDERSON COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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*Duplicate  
copy*



Box 1412  
Athens, Texas 75751

June 15, 1984

Research and Marker Department  
Texas Historical Commission  
P.O. Box 12276  
Capitol Station  
Austin, TX 78711  
Dan K. Utley  
Research and Marker

Dear Mr. Utley:

The Henderson County Historical Commission is making an application for an official Texas Historical Marker for the Fisher Robinson Cemetery, Athens, Henderson County, Texas.

Enclosed is the narrative of the Fisher Robinson Cemetery and also the documentations.

Respectfully

*Marian G. Westbrook*

Marian G. Westbrook  
Henderson County Historical Commission  
Chairman  
P.O. Box 1003, Athens, TX 75751  
PH. 214/675-5073



Plan to Restore Fisher Robinson Cemetery, Athens  
Final Resting Place of Henderson County Black Ancestors  
by Marian G. Westbrook

During February which is Black History Month, many Blacks take time to visit the final resting places of those whom they consider their heroes. Notable among these are Dr. Martin Luther King, Sojourner Truth, Booker T. Washington, Bishop Richard T. Allen, and Carter G. Woodson.

Dr. King's leadership inspired an entire generation of Blacks to press for long-denied civil rights. Sojourner Truth is remembered for her early efforts on behalf of abolition and women's rights and other causes, winning for herself a secure place in Black history. Booker T. Washington lifted the veil of ignorance from thousands of his students at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Bishop Richard T. Allen, even two centuries ago, refused to bow to racial oppression and became the first national leader of the Black community. Bishop Allen was the founder of the African Methodist Church in Philadelphia.

Closer home, there are other men and women whose talents were not so great. But they are heroic figures to their families and friends, whose memories are cherished and respected by both the white and black people of the community. The final resting place of some of these well-known Black ancestors of Henderson County has been neglected and forgotten by many citizens of Athens and Henderson County. Where is this Forgotten Final Resting Place of these Black Ancestors?

This Final Resting Place was known as the Fisher Robinson Cemetery. The land that was once used as a Black cemetery is located on the old Palestine Highway South, now known as Robbins Road. This cemetery, though forgotten by many is well identified in legal records of the county.

Efforts are under way, sponsored by the Henderson County Historical Commission, to improve the site by markers and placement of a monument to the Black people who are buried there.

Stories vary as to what happened to identifying headstones and markers which had been at the graves. One story is to the effect that the headstones all disappeared in the dark of night many years ago. Another is that the grave markers and headstones were trampled down by livestock when the fence was broken down. Nevertheless, in county legal records, the burial ground is identified.

This final resting place became a concern of Mrs. Mary Ann LaRue-Perryman, an historian and member of the Henderson County Historical Commission.

In 1980 Mrs. Perryman, with determination and enthusiasm, began the task to save the Lost and Forgotten Final Resting Place of some Black men and women of Henderson County. From her work, the following information developed:

The cemetery is part of Block 5 of the Dilcy Ruffin Partition that lies north of the Old Palestine Highway South. The Old Palestine Highway South (Robbins Road) cut off this sliver of land from the Dilcy Ruffin tract of 40 acres which lies in the Thomas Palmer Survey. The 40 acres were divided among the five heirs of Dilcy Ruffin.<sup>1</sup>

"Being called Lot 3, Blk. 31 O.T., City of Athens, Henderson County, Texas; also being part of Block 5 of the Dilcy Ruffin Partition, recorded in Book K, page 401, of the District Court Minutes, Henderson County, Texas and more particularly described as follows:

"Beginning at the S.W. corner of land now owned by Mrs. Nannie Carroll. Thence South 50 feet to stake for corner;