



## Douglas County Cemetery Association Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 1

### Greetings From the President

**Y**our DCCA Board is planning our 16th Annual Meeting and **you are invited!** Even if your cemetery is not yet a member, you are all welcome. Join us at the First Congregational Church on April 26th at 7 p.m. The church is located on the corner of 7th and Elm, one block west of Broadway in Alexandria and is handicapped accessible. Please use the east and north parking spaces and the east entry door for easy access to the church lower level.

Our Annual Meeting will include an election for four board positions. We sincerely thank **Lola Anderson, Denise Hoppe, Mary Alice Huwe, and Cheryl Johnson** for each having served six years on the board and for their interest and dedication. Please bring your suggestions for 2012 board nominations.

We are planning a presentation about [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com).

Family members have already entered many of our cemetery burials. Check it out before our meeting. Also, we ask you

all to bring suggestions for topics of interest or needs for future annual meetings and possible ideas on how we can be more of a resource for your cemetery. If you would rather provide written comments, a suggestion box will be located near registration.

And finally, a special thanks to our speaker for the evening, **Curt Lind** of Lind Family Funeral & Cremation Services who will present *“Everything you ever wanted to know about funerals, but were afraid to ask”*. We are sure you will find it very interesting and informative. Bring your questions ... and ask!

You are all encouraged to attend the annual cemetery tour planned for this year. Please look for details in this issue.

Inserted in newsletters sent to each cemetery treasurer, please find a cemetery information/annual dues request form.

The board is in the process of updating our current *Douglas County Cemeteries Guide*. Watch for a survey mailing in May. This survey will also be used to compile

updated cemetery pricing information for a report to be made available to county cemeteries. We are also asking for your “policies and procedures” in an effort to help make your board decisions easier.

Following the meeting you are also invited to join us for refreshments. It’s a good time for talking shop or to just meet your neighbors. I hope to see you all on the 26<sup>th</sup>, and again, thank you for your interest...and most of all... thank you for your commitment to all of our county cemeteries!

**John Chlian**  
DCCA President



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**Please Join Us!**  
**DCCA Annual Meeting**  
**Thursday, April 26**  
**7 p.m.**  
**First Congregational UCC**  
**Alexandria**

## Douglas County Cemetery Spotlight/Tour Opportunity

**B**eautiful shaded hillsides and prairies are the setting for many cemeteries, and are a living monument to our predecessors. Each and every site is special.

(Taken from a letter written by George Gaffaney, Former Chairman, Douglas Country Cemetery Association.)

The following are just a couple of these precious historic places ...



### Brandon Cemetery

*One mile west of Brandon, off County Road 82*

August Swanson donated three acres of land to the Brandon Village in 1889 for a public cemetery. In 1889, lots sold for \$5 each and a deed was given to the buyer. The earliest monument records the burial of P.J. Carlson in 1883. C.J. Blatt, a Civil War veteran; John Knudson, one of the first electricians in the county; and Fred Mathison, a co-founder of the Douglas County Historical Society, are among the pioneers buried here.

Don't miss your opportunity to participate in a guided tour of cemeteries in Douglas County on Wednesday, May 30th from 12:30-4:30. Cemeteries featured on the tour will be: **East Moe, West Moe, Moe Heights, and White Garden**. Tour guides will point out notable headstones and tell stories. The tour is sponsored by Douglas County Historical Society.

**Contact Alexandria Community Education Office for information- 320-762-3310 or visit [www.alexandria.k12.mn.us](http://www.alexandria.k12.mn.us).**



### Kinkead Cemetery

*City of Alexandria, northwest side*

In 1875, 13 men met at the local Methodist church to organize Kinkead Cemetery Association. Most of the by-laws that were adopted then are in use today. The cemetery has established a permanent care fund that has grown over time and provides some of the income for its operation. A perpetual care memorial flower fund provides for live flowers, planted each year in planters on lots designated by the purchaser. The earliest burial was in 1865, before the cemetery was officially organized. Some of the early pioneers buried here are: Senator Knute Nelson, members of the Cowing families, the Robards families, and John Abercrombie. A music tower plays appropriate music every 15 minutes all year round.

### Douglas County Cemetery Association—2011 Membership

**Alexandria Township:** Geneva; **Brandon Township:** Brandon, St. Ann's Catholic; **Carlos Township:** Carlos Prairie, Trinity/Zunker; **Evansville Township:** Mound Grove, Zionsborg; **Holmes City Township:** Christian Union, Oscar Lake Lutheran Church, Rose Hill/Trinity, Trysil/Bethesda, Van Loon; **Hudson Township:** Hudson; **Ida Township:** Lake Charley, Lake Ida; **LaGrande Township:** Evergreen, Kinkead/Sunset Memorial Park, St. Mary's Catholic, White Garden; **Lake Mary Township:** Bohemian Independent, Lake Mary; **Leaf Valley Township:** Ebenezer Lutheran Church; **Moe Township:** East Moe Lutheran Church, Moe Heights, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, West Moe Lutheran Church; **Osakis Township:** Fahlun Lutheran Church, Nelson, Calvary Catholic; **Solem Township:** First Lutheran Church, Our Lady of the Runestone Catholic, Solem Lutheran, Church, Wenersborg; **Urness Township:** Fryksande, St. Petri Lutheran Church; **Todd County:** Gordon Pleasant Hill, Sauk Valley



# FIND A GRAVE

[www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com)

Find a Grave is a virtual cemetery resource for anyone finding the final disposition of family, friends, and “famous” individuals. Currently there are over 70 million memorial records and it is growing daily. This site is mostly made possible by the thousands of contributors who submit new listings, updates, corrections, pictures and virtual flowers.

Uses of this site include: using as a virtual visiting place for loved ones, research tool for genealogists, historical importance, and for keeping memories alive. DCCA is starting a project to register known burials in the county on Find A Grave. They are looking for a group of 5-10 dedicated individuals to work on this. *If interested, please contact Julie Kirscht at 320-834-3272.*

**Find out more about this site at our DCCA Annual Meeting.**

## Revelations about Ancestors through Cemetery Art



**G**enealogy research can lead to cemetery visits and tombstone reading. Cemeteries reveal much about our ancestors, as information can be gleaned from the words and symbols carved on the headstones. Symbols on headstones can express ethnic identity, religious affiliation, association membership and so on. Whether or not you are able to interpret the meaning of the symbol or artwork,

you can enjoy the beauty and workmanship in these intricate designs. The following denotes some of these designs and their interpretations.

Angel.....	<i>guardian</i>
Chalice .....	<i>sacraments</i>
Crescent .....	<i>Muslim</i>
Crown .....	<i>glory of life after death</i>
Sacred Heart .....	<i>Christ's suffering for our sins</i>
Menorah .....	<i>Judaism</i>
Arrow .....	<i>mortality</i>
Broken column .....	<i>loss of the family head</i>
Scythe .....	<i>harvest</i>
Axe, steel knife .....	<i>butcher</i>
Hoe, flail, corn .....	<i>farmer</i>
Wedge and level .....	<i>mason</i>
Anchor, sextant .....	<i>mariner</i>
Scales .....	<i>merchant</i>

Open Book .....	<i>teacher</i>
Rooster .....	<i>resurrection, awakening</i>
Sun .....	<i>renewed life, life everlasting</i>
Butterfly .....	<i>short life</i>
Dove .....	<i>innocence, peace</i>
Morning Glory .....	<i>beginning of life</i>
Poppy .....	<i>eternal sleep</i>
Rosemary .....	<i>remembrance</i>
Ivy .....	<i>friendship</i>
Lamb .....	<i>grave of a child/innocence</i>
Palm branch .....	<i>victory and rejoicing</i>
Laurel .....	<i>accomplishment and heroism</i>
Lion .....	<i>guards the tomb/courage</i>
Thistle .....	<i>Scottish descent</i>

## Revelations About Ancestors—cont.

Flame, light, torch .. *immortality of the spirit*  
 Star ..... *spirit shines in darkness*  
 Garland or wreath ... *saintliness and glory*  
 Fruits ..... *eternal plenty, fruit of life*  
 Weeping Willow .... *perpetual mourning and grief*  
 Roses ..... *brevity of earthly existence*  
 Oak leaves/acorn ... *power, authority, victory*  
 Lily ..... *innocence and purity*  
 Dog ..... *good master worthy of love*  
 Full-bloom rose .... *died in the prime of life*  
 Wheat sheaves ..... *divine harvest*  
 Birds ..... *eternal life, resurrection*



Portions taken from "Cemetery Art and Symbolism" by Pam Reid



## DCCA Board Member Spotlight

*Current board member, Gene Rasmusen ...*

DCCA Board Member, **Gene Rasmusen**, a lifetime resident of Osakis, wears many hats. He is currently the Osakis Township Supervisor, on the board of *Gordon Pleasant Hill Cemetery*, and is a Trustee of Osakis United Methodist Church, having also served as President. He is Vice President of Nelson Men's Club, and a member of REA Board. He owns Rasmusen Excavating and Sound and Solid Home Inspection Services (NACHI) Certified. He is married to Connie Nolan Rasmusen and has three children; Mitch Rasmusen, Holly (Dave) Blume, and Lori Rasmusen. Our thanks to Gene for his hard work and dedication to DCCA.

*Outgoing board member, Mary Alice Huwe shares her thoughts ...*

"What a learning and **fun** time I had on the Douglas County Cemetery Board. As an out-going board member this year, I want to say thank you. I was born in Douglas County and have lived here most of my life. My parents, too, were members of Douglas County all their lives. They were born in the early 1900s and that era was about visiting with neighbors and relatives. What wonderful stories all those people could tell. Listening was what I could do very well, so I did. Their stories included adventures they had as children, the depression, working on farms with horses, helping neighbors with shared machinery, among many others. With all those stories wandering around in my mind, it made my time on the board so much fun!"

## Cremation Rate Continues to Grow

*Kevin Waterston, Vice-President of the Cremation Association of North America spoke at the MAC annual convention in 2011. Points of interest from his presentation included:*

- ◆ In 2010, cremations outnumbered burials in the state of Minnesota.
- ◆ The Minnesota state cremation rate is 49 percent, and the burial rate is 48 percent (does not include those donated to science).
- ◆ Cook County has the highest cremation rate at 78 percent; Hennepin County's rate is 57 percent (40 percent burials).
- ◆ The national cremation rate in 2010 was 39 percent.
- ◆ Top 10 states with the highest cremation rates include those with larger migratory populations like Nevada, Washington and Hawaii.
- ◆ Trends causing the cremation rate to increase include: people dying older, migration, cremation more acceptable, environmental concerns, less religious tradition.
- ◆ Some funeral homes are now calling themselves "funeral home & cremation services".
- ◆ The biggest reason people choose cremation: to save money.



## Creative Corner: Tomb of the Unknown Soldier

Located in Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia, the **Tomb of the Unknowns** is a monument dedicated to American service members who have died without their remains being identified. It is also known as the **Tomb of the Unknown Soldier**. It is located in Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia. The World War I "Unknown" is a recipient of the Medal of Honor, the Victoria Cross, and several other foreign nations' highest service awards. The U.S. Unknowns who were interred afterwards are also recipients of the Medal of Honor, presented by the U.S. presidents who presided over their funerals.

### "Known but to God"

Those words evoke emotions like no others. Laid to rest in this place of honor lies unknown soldiers from World War I, World War II, and Korean War.



### The Sentinel's Creed

*My dedication to this sacred duty  
is total and whole-hearted.  
In the responsibility bestowed on me  
never will I falter.  
And with dignity and perseverance  
my standard will remain perfection.  
Through the years of diligence and  
praise  
and the discomfort of the elements,  
I will walk my tour in humble  
reverence  
to the best of my ability.  
It is he who commands the respect I  
protect,  
his bravery that made us so proud.  
Surrounded by well meaning  
crowds by day,  
alone in the thoughtful peace of  
night,  
this soldier will in honored glory  
rest  
under my eternal vigilance.*

*Simon 1971*

### About the Sentinels who Guard the Tomb:

- Twenty one steps he takes, alluding to the twenty-one gun salute, which is the highest honor given any military or foreign dignitary.
- He does not execute an about face. He stops on the 21st step, then turns and faces the tomb for 21 seconds. Then he turns to face back down the mat, changes his weapon to the outside shoulder, counts 21 seconds, then steps off for another 21 step walk down the mat.
- He faces the Tomb at each end of the 21 step walk for 21 seconds.
- The sentinel repeats this over and over until he is relieved at the guard change.
- The guard is changed every thirty minutes during the summer and every hour during the winter. During the hours the cemetery is closed, the guard is changed every two hours. The tomb is guarded, and has been guarded every minute of every day since 1937.
- The weapons used by the guards are fully functional and are kept ready for use at all times.
- It is considered the highest honor to be chosen and bestowed the honor of guarding the tomb. These men are there for one reason only, for their creed.



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

**Return Address:**

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

Email: [bardo@dchsmn.org](mailto:bardo@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. **Barbara Sather**  
Secretary: **Julie Kirscht**  
Treasurer/Membership Chair:  
**Lola Anderson**

**Darrel Anderson**

**John Conard**

**Donna Gunderson**

**Denise Hoppe**

**Mary Alice Huwe**

**Cheryl Johnson**

**Ruth Johnson**

**Gladys Paulzine**

**Gene Rasmusen**

**Rachel Barduson, 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)**