

# ST. JOHN'S HISTORIC CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER, OCTOBER 2011

*Your Association Board of Directors decided that a newsletter will assist the members and general public in keeping up with developments in the Historic St. John's Cemetery. We welcome your comments and questions.*

## OUR TREES

Last spring the St. John's Vestry contracted arborist Scott Courtright of Trinity Tree Consultants of Gonzalez, LA, to undertake a full survey of the cemetery trees. His recommendations included the removal of 13 out of the 41 old oaks that were in bad shape and dangerous and were crowding others, the termite treatment of one oak, pruning of all remaining trees, and full mulching and fertilizing. After estimates for the work were obtained, St. John's Historic Cemetery Association provided a \$10,000 gift. Another \$31,000 will be required. Already, three trees in the worst condition have been removed in the west corner of the cemetery, and the termite treatment is complete. The Association is looking for funding for the remainder of money needed.

## OUR TOMBS

In order to provide an estimate of tomb repair cost for the cemetery, the St. John's Vestry associated a recommended restoration mason from New Orleans. The cost will exceed \$85,000 for at least 50 of the 19th century masonry tombs in need of restoration. Tomb walls are deteriorating, tomb tops – especially those on flat tombs – are sinking or weathered with mortar missing or damaged, and tomb corners frequently have crumbled. A proper restoration on these old tombs, which contain soft bricks and lime mortar, often overlain with lime wash, is time consuming and expensive. In order to begin this winter, a funding search is underway. The work will be ongoing for years.

## OUR CEMETERY MAINTENANCE AND OUR MEMBERSHIPS

This year's hurricane season so far has spared the cemetery. It has been well maintained through what was an abnormally dry summer. Association income from donations still is below what is required to cover the regular mowing

and trimming, and we are renewing our request for memberships. There now are 46 members in the Association, and we want at least to double that. If you are not a member, please join and send us the form included with this mailing.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

## SILAS T. GRISAMORE (1825-1897)

*The first of short histories of "occupants" of St. John's Cemetery whose lives have given the place such a unique history. Thanks for information from Bobby Marcello of Thibodaux, who portrayed Grisamore during the Grave Affair program in the cemetery several years ago.*

(CONTINUED ON BACK)

## MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please fill in the form in its entirety, and return to us in the envelope provided to 718 Jackson St., Thibodaux, LA 70301. Please make out your tax deductible donation to **St. John's Historic Cemetery Association.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_