

ST. JOHN'S HISTORIC CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

SEPTEMBER 2013 NEWSLETTER

SUMMER WORK IN THE CEMETERY

Summertime always presents a challenge in upkeep for St. John's Historic Cemetery. A new grass-cutting contractor hired by the church vestry is doing a splendid job and being careful about not damaging tombs—an ongoing maintenance issue. The cemetery awaits removal of old tree and bush stumps along the fence line followed by some drainage work to alleviate ponding after heavy rains. The live oaks look well since the trimming was finished early 2012. Wildflowers, caladium, and other lillies have added some spring and summer color along the edges of the Cemetery. For this, and more, your continuing interest and support are valuable. •

TREE "ADOPTION"

The Cemetery Association has established a separate bookkeeping account strictly for donations earmarked for tree preservation. The expense of trimming a single large oak tree now can run over \$1,000, depending on tree size and condition. Fertilizing trees can run over \$100 each. Mulching, which now is recommended, also is expensive and often requires specially prepared hardwood mulch. The St. John's Historic Cemetery has over thirty old oaks, which receive damage from hurricanes and periodically need major work. The fund will assist in meeting such costs.

If you have any wish to contribute money for the purpose in addition to your regular contribution to the Association, please allocate such payments to Tree Adoption Fund. You will receive due recognition in future newsletters. •

[Your membership contributions help to pay for normal maintenance to the Historic Cemetery. Please mail donations to St. John's Historic Cemetery Association, 718 Jackson Street, Thibodaux, LA 70301. The Association is a 501 (c) (3) organization founded to preserve and inform about the Historic Cemetery. Donations are deductible to limits provided by law.]

TOMB RESTORATION



Since the last newsletter, the James Springer and Marcus Zills tombs have been restored by Theodore Pierre and his crew of New Orleans. He is contracting with the Vestry to begin work on another several tombs, which hopefully will be completed by the end of the year. Additionally, and importantly, St. John's has asked Pierre to hold a Saturday workshop for local masons who lack the needed skills in techniques for restoration of 19th century tombs. •

FUNDING

A wonderful grant arrived last winter from a friend of the St. John's Historic Cemetery Association and a Nicholls family descendant, Jo Wallis. Formerly from New Iberia, Mrs. Wallis now lives in Tennessee. The Association has allocated the funds, in differing amounts, for tomb restoration, drainage work, and cemetery signage and a brochure. Money is still needed to finance a detailed Church Campus Plan, which will provide a sensitive entranceway to the main cemetery gate.

The Association is also paying for some of the cost of treated mulch, which will be spread around the live oak trees next January. A grant has been requested from a local foundation for restoration of the front and rear gates and for all post finials, which are missing.

Additional grant funds also were received from Azby Fund for tomb work. •

WORK DAY

The customary Saturday-in-October Work Day is planned for October 5, beginning at 8 A. M. There are tasks which we volunteers can perform in the cemetery, including removing vegetation from tombs, removing tree vines, pruning shoots at the bases of crepe myrtles, and cleaning tombs. Thanks go to Lee Shaffer, III, who already has cut down small trees growing out of a few tombs.

Please also remember that any one who wishes to clean, paint, or repair a tomb has available some guidelines from the secretary at the Church Office, LaDonna Alexander: stjhnoffice@bellsouth.net, 985-447-2910. •