

GREATER JEFFERSONTOWN
HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

October 2016

Vol. 14 Number 5

October 2016 Meeting

The October meeting will be held on Monday, October 3, 2016. We will meet at 7:00 P.M at the Jeffersontown Library, 10635 Watterson Trail. The Greater Jeffersontown Historical Society meetings are now held on the first Monday of the even numbered months of the year. Everyone is encouraged to attend to help guide and grow the Society.

October Meeting – October 3

Catherine Bache will present a program on her Girl Scout Gold Award project, “**Faces of Freedom: Preserving Underground Railroad Stories and Preventing Human Trafficking.**” Underground Railroad myths and truths will be connected to myths and truths of modern day slavery, human trafficking. It is important to preserve the stories of the past so that we can better understand and address the issues that face us in the present. Locust Grove has requested that Catherine and her group present the play portion at Locust Grove on Friday, September 9. This will not be part of our program. The Girl Scout Gold Award is the equivalent to the Boy Scout Eagle Award.

December Meeting

We will have a luncheon at the Café on Main starting at 1:00 P.M.

Possible Meeting Change – Day and Time

Some members have requested we investigate changing our meeting time to the afternoon to accommodate those who have trouble coming to night meetings, especially in the winter months. I’ve talked with Deborah Anderson, Jeffersontown Branch librarian, and we would probably have to change days. It will depend on the renewals of groups that already regularly meet during the day.

What I need from everyone is your feelings on changing. You couldn’t / wouldn’t come because of daytime conflicts, you have no problem one way or the other, you only like nights, whatever. **I need to know. Call me**, John Ulmer, 502-491-6463, or **email** me at my personal email, plasticjtu@aol.com.

August Meeting

Steve Wisner’s and Jack Koppel’s presentation covered Jefferson County cemeteries and "where the bodies are buried." It was a look at a few of the approximately 300 burial grounds that lie within the borders of Jefferson County. They talked about the history, monuments, and notable residents of these final resting locations. Both Steve and Jack are on Facebook if you want to learn more about their various interests.

Louisville was first settled in 1778 by George Rogers Clark and his group of soldiers and settlers on Corn Island, located near the foot of Fourth Street. Before they arrived, Native Americans already had burial mounds in the area. One was located in the block of Sixth Street and Muhammad Ali Boulevard. Just to the north of the mound was a lake that in the 1880s was filled in with the dirt from the burial mound. There is another known Indian burial mound in the Southland subdivision out US 42 in Prospect. There are also remnants of burial mounds located on Louisville International Airport property that Anne Bader of Corn Island Archeology, identified as being 5,000 years old with an unknown number of bodies.

The Denver Airport has the remains of many Indian mounds and has the reputation of being the most haunted airport in the country and you can go to their website, Denver Airport/ghosts, and read more about it.

The 1858 Bergmann Jefferson County Map has a dot for most of the properties in the county, many with their own cemeteries. One of the first large public cemeteries in the county was Western Cemetery located in Baxter Square at 11th & Jefferson Streets, with the first burials in 1786 and ending in 1827. In the 1870s Louisville Mayor Baxter wanted to make the cemetery into a public park and removed "all" the bodies. There was a problem that at the time children's graves were not always marked. One that was identified and known to be there was Rosiland Keats of the poet George Keats family. Some of the family descendants are still in the area. By 1880 the cemetery was a park and in 1958 Sixteenth Street was cut through the center of it.

The twenty-eight acre Eastern Cemetery has some history. There are as many buried there as in nearby Cave Hill Cemetery that has had about 138,000 burials on 300 acres. Jack said he has been probing in Eastern Cemetery and has found a little over three hundred stones that had been buried over time, along with many casket handles and numerous bones. Jack has many of the burial records for Eastern that he will use to answer questions. They had a picture of Hogan's Vault, built in 1895, that was used in inclement weather and to store bodies in the winter until the ground was workable to dig graves.

The nine-acre Portland Cemetery is located at 35th and Bank Streets in Portland.

St. Stephens Cemetery, off East Brandeis, is a German Cemetery that was once considered a Catholic cemetery, but was never officially consecrated by the Church and as a result St. Michaels Cemetery was created in 1851, with forty-eight acres and has about 42,000 souls buried there along with the famous movie actor and one time Louisville resident, Victor Mature.

St. Louis Cemetery, now located on Barrett Avenue with 48,000 souls, has moved around a bit. It was first established at Tenth and Main Streets, then moved into a section of Western Cemetery, and finally to Barrett Avenue. The famous people buried there are Matt Winn of Churchill Downs fame, Otto Seelbach, The Seelbach Hotel, Dennis Xavier (DX) Murphy and James Gaffney, both local architects.

Calvary Cemetery, the largest Catholic cemetery, was established in 1921, has 200 acres with about 55,000 people buried there.

One of the reasons there are Catholic and Jewish cemeteries, is that until the mid-1960s when the Civil Rights Act was passed into law, Cave Hill would only allow white Protestants to be buried there.

All the Jewish cemeteries: Adath Jeshurun Cemetery, 2626 Preston Street; Ansheri Sfar, 721 Locust Lane; Keneseth Israel Cemetery 719 Locust Lane; The Temple Cemetery, 2716 Preston Street; also in Cave Hill is now a section for Temple Shalom. Jack and Steve didn't know why all the Jewish cemeteries are located along Preston. At one time there had been a Jewish Cemetery on Seventh Street that has since been moved into The Temple Mount.

There is a story that in one of the Jewish cemeteries there is a car buried. The caretaker there had an insurance claim that he wanted money for his car, so he dug a large hole with a backhoe and buried it. All was well and good until a grave was dug in the same place and they hit the roof of the car and he got caught.

All of the Jewish cemeteries are grouped together on the west side of Preston except for Agudath Achim Cemetery, on the east side at 2737 Preston, and they didn't know why it was located there.

Louisville Cemetery was established in March 1886 by prominent black citizens Bishop W. H. Miles, H. C. Weeden, J. Meriwether, A. J. Bibb, W. P. Churchill, William H. Gibson, Sr., and Felix Johnson. It was originally 31 acres, but now covers 80 acres and it is full, burying only those who have reserved plots. The cemetery has been in some trouble for the way and the number of people buried there. Famous people buried in Louisville Cemetery are Dr. Robert B. Scott, co-founder of Louisville Red Cross Hospital, educator Atwood S. Wilson, blues guitarist Sylvester Weaver, and community activist Bessie Allen. Others buried there are jockey William "Uncle Bill" Walker, Sr., 1850-1933, born a slave in Woodford County, won the 1877 Kentucky Derby on Baden-Baden. He was an expert on pedigree of the American thoroughbred and is considered to be instrumental in developing the modern racehorse. Earl McDonald, 1885-1949, helped establish Louisville as the home of jug music, Sara Martin, a noted blues singer, and Samuel Plato, a famous Louisville architect, who designed many buildings and houses in Louisville and across the Midwest are all buried there.

Mulberry Hill Cemetery in George Rogers Clark Park at Poplar Level Road and Thurston Avenue started out as the home of John and Ann Clark's family that included George Rogers and William Clark and York, William's slave who accompanied him on the Lewis and Clark Voyage of Discovery. William and York lived at Mulberry until 1803 when they left on the expedition. The house was built in 1785 and razed in 1917 when WWI Camp Zachary Taylor was created. The cemetery was started in the late 1770s and the Clark family members are still buried there.

Saint Andrew Church Cemetery on Cardinal Hill off St Anthony Church Road was established in 1848-1851 by French and German immigrants. The church was on 1.3 acres donated to the Catholic Archdiocese of Louisville by John Jacob Wiser a Prussian immigrant. The first service was on January 4, 1851. St. Paul Church on Dixie Highway replaced St. Andrews Church in 1909, and now maintains the cemetery. Stones from St. Andrew's were used in building St. Paul.

The question is always why is St Andrews Church on St. Anthony Church Road, which is off St. Andrews Church Road, when there has never been a St. Anthony Church in the area. Steve had seen a 1913 county map that placed St. Andrews on Wisertown Road, so sometime after 1913 the road was renamed St. Anthony Church Road, but why and by whom is unknown.

Steve's great, great, great grandparents were the patriarchs of all of it. Wiser with around 66 graves is the most numerous name in the cemetery. Jack's relatives, the Hartlages, are also buried there. Also buried there are the parents of local celebrity and singer Randy Atcher. Jack and Steve have done a great deal of research and work in St. Andrew Church Cemetery.

The Oldham Family cemetery is in the medians of the Kentucky Fair and Exposition. The oldest stone marker in the cemetery is dated 1822. These are not the Oldhams for which Oldham County is named.

Hobbs Memorial Cemetery in Anchorage off of Evergreen and East Osage Roads was started in about 1810-1812 and is still active. James Goslee, a steamboat captain that came up with the anchor and the name for the community, was killed at the Anchorage train station in 1876. While reading the newspaper on the station platform he stumbled and fell off the platform into the path of the arriving train. He was buried in the Hobbs Cemetery, but later his family moved his remains to Cave Hill.

Thompson /Cane Station Cemetery is on Brownsboro Road across from Mockingbird Gardens Drive and the east end of Crescent Hill Golf Course. Cane Station or Fort an early settlement, was just up the road to the north. Jack said there is one stone at the back of the cemetery that is in the back yard abutting the cemetery that he has been unable to learn about since it is on private property.

Selema Hall, 2837 Reidling Road off Zorn Avenue, was the Thompson family residence and is located about a half mile north of the cemetery.

The Hikes family cemetery is located at the corner of Bardstown Road and Hikes Lane where John E's/Bill Boland Restaurants used to be, now soon a CVS Drug Store. Before the new building was started they were required to do an archeology dig to determine if there were any slave burials outside of the cemetery fences. Eight trenches were dug and nothing was found. But Jack thinks there may have been some under the old parking lot. George Hikes, a Revolutionary War veteran came to Kentucky in 1791 from Pennsylvania

The Brown family cemetery on Brown's Lane, just past the Watterson Expressway overpass, is a good quarter mile from the Theodore Brown house, built in 1851, on Hubbards Lane, now the Woodhaven Bed and Breakfast. James Brown who owned all the property, Wildwood Farm, wouldn't allow plowing in certain areas of the farm, because an earlier Dutch community that had lived in the area had been attacked and killed by Indians, so Brown restricted the areas he thought their remains may have been buried.

The Anderson family cemetery on South Hurstbourne Parkway is connected to Richard Anderson Sr., and his home, Soldier's Retreat at 9300 Seaton Springs Road. His son, Robert Anderson, was Commandant of Fort Sumter when the Civil War began. Robert is buried in West Point National Cemetery. He was married to Elizabeth Clark, George Rogers and William Clark's sister. Richard Anderson, Jr. was a diplomat, and Anderson County, Kentucky is named for him.

The Bullitt family cemetery in the Oxmoor Shopping Center is probably the best maintained and documented family cemetery in Jefferson County. The family farm was named Oxmoor.

Just to the west of the Bullitt cemetery is the Alterburn family cemetery behind Kohl's and the restaurants next to it. Jordan and Tarlton Alterburn were slave traders located in the 200 block of First Street in downtown Louisville. There is a historical marker noting where the slave pens were located. Slave trading was strong in Louisville during the 1850s.

At the corner of Breckenridge and Dutchman's Lanes in the shopping center parking lot where Bed Bath and Beyond is located, is the Burks Cemetery. There still several Burks family houses in the area.

The Phillips-Durrett - Clark Cemetery is on the Louisville Zoo property. Jenkin Phillips, born in Loudan County Virginia in 1744, fought with George Washington in the Revolutionary War and helped survey Kentucky for Patrick Henry.

The Churchill family cemetery (Churchill Downs namesake) is located in a small fenced area marked "Historical Reserve Area" off Crittenden Drive by I-65.

Long Run Cemetery and the site of Long Run Baptist Church is a historic church and cemetery on Long Run Road, and is also known as part of the farm of President Abraham Lincoln's grandfather who was killed near this site by Indians, while President Lincoln's father, Thomas Lincoln, age eight, watched. The grandfather is thought to have been buried by his cabin. A stone memorializing Captain Abraham Lincoln was placed in the cemetery in 1937. The church was built on the site in 1844. Richard Chenoweth is also buried there.

Zachary Taylor National Cemetery is interesting in that it is really two cemeteries, one for all the veterans that the government took possession of, and maintains the property, and the other the gravesite of President and General Taylor which the government maintains, but will not take possession.

Evergreen Cemetery on Preston Highway out past Male High School had its first burial in 1914 and was the first cemetery in the area to have a mausoleum in 1926. Local TV star and singer Randy Atcher is interred in the mausoleum.

Resthaven Cemetery on Bardstown Road between Fegenbush Lane and Breckenridge Lane intersections is where “Cactus” Tom Brooks, Randy Atcher’s sidekick on television, is buried there, as is Marvin “The Louisville Plumber” Hart, the heavy weight boxing champion 1905-1906.

There several family cemeteries in Jeffersontown, the Bechtold-Snyder family cemetery in the Bluegrass Industrial Park, that Jack had no information on; the Duncan family cemetery is back off Electron Drive, just up from Watterson Trail. The Duncans were an African American family. The Funk family cemetery is on Canterbrook off Taylorsville Road behind the Cherry Springs house. As we learned a few months back at the Nunnlea presentation, the Funks had one of the first operating race tracks in Kentucky on the land that is Taylorsville Road in front of the Stoney Brook Center.

The German Reformed Presbyterian Church and the Christ Lutheran Church cemeteries are side-by-side at the corner of Watterson Trail and Shelby Street in J’Town. The German side is the older (1799 and is the fourth oldest cemetery in Kentucky) and the Lutheran Cemetery starts behind the old church building, now the home of the Thoroughbred Chorus. The Lutherans first built on the lot in 1833. Many of Jeffersontown’s founding families are buried in these two cemeteries.

Holloway Drive Cemetery had only one stone in it that could be read - ? E. Hobbs, born in October 1860 and died in August of 1867. Anne Bader said she had found some other headstones in the cemetery that were not readable.

Jeffersontown Cemetery has been around since the early 1800s and is still active. Its claim to fame is the Confederate Martyrs monument, commemorating the execution of four Confederate soldiers without cause or trial and was the only significant event of the Civil War in Jeffersontown.

The Jeffersontown Colored Cemetery is located in the 9000 block of Watterson Trail and behind it is a cemetery named Simpson Gardens with just flat markers, and Jack was in there taking pictures, when a fellow Jack thought may be the owner started chasing him off. Jack tried to explain to him why he was taking pictures, but the fellow wasn’t having anything to do with it.

St. Edward Cemetery was established in the fall of 1907 when the Roemele family donated a small plot of land. The Louisville Archdiocese newspaper, The Record, reported on October 14, 1909, the cemetery was ‘attractively enclosed within a stone wall, with (a) handsome entrance, gates, and driveway.’”

Steve closed out their presentation with some unusual burial sites, most we have heard of before or know of, such as St. Martin duTours Catholic Church on Shelby, has the remains of St. Magnus, a Roman centurion, and St. Bonosa, a virgin, who were put to death by the Roman emperor Diocletian in the third century A.D.

Steve asked what Louisville institution has the worst grave robbing history. The old Louisville General Hospital & the old Louisville Medical College (U of L). James Guthrie said they needed more bodies to experiment on, so he got the Transylvania Medical School moved from Lexington to Louisville.

Who is buried on the University of Louisville campus? Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis and his wife were cremated when they died and their remains are interred in the entrance of the Law School building.

Several bishops are buried in crypts under the Cathedral of the Assumption on Fifth Street.

Find a Grave on the Internet is a good place to start a search for someone's grave, but be careful.

The Jewish cemeteries have a website where they keep track of everyone buried in their cemeteries – www.myerfuneral.com/Jewish%20Cemeteries.htm.

St. Paul Church has a site for St. Andrew Cemetery – www.St.paulparishlouisvilleky.org/cemetery.php.

Cave Hill Cemetery has a very friendly search site. Steve recommends starting with the person's last name.

For Cave Hill tours call 451-5630.

Urton Lane Extension Update

Councilmen Stuart Benson and Kevin Kramer held an overflow meeting in August at the Jeffersontown Firehouse covering mostly the Urton Lane extension. The building of the road will be done mostly by the developers of properties along the road under Kentucky Transportation Department supervision. The bridge over the Norfolk Southern railroad tracks will be built by the state. The 'bridge to nowhere' construction is expected to begin within the next two years, whenever the money becomes available.

Durrett/Dr. Bryant/Spring Lake Farm

I haven't heard anything about the sale of the Durrett place.

Contact Us

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