



Established in 1858

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ATHENS CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

A newsletter sponsored by the
Friends of the Cemetery

Vol. 12

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ATHENS CEMETERY NEWS



Happy Holidays

**ATHENS CEMETERY IS A DESIGNATED STATE HISTORICAL CEMETERY
ESTABLISHED IN 1858**

Friends' News

VETERANS MEMORIAL COURT DEDICATION

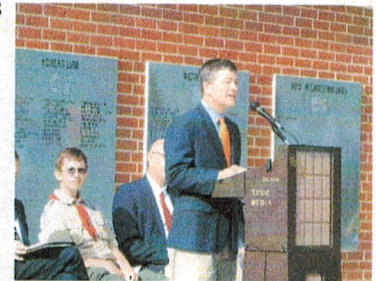
May 27, 2013



The highlight of our year was the dedication of the newly constructed Veterans Memorial Wall that honors veterans interred in the cemetery. The impressive 50' long 10' high brick structure honors veterans who served their country in the Cherokee Indian War, the Civil War, the Spanish American War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars and all other conflicts during the time of war and peace.

The memorial, which is illuminated at night, consists of eight granite panels inlaid in brick. An American flag flies proudly over the memorial and the adjoining Veteran's Court, creating a sense of reverence. The wall was made possible by generous donations from the "Friends of the Cemetery".

The official dedication was held on Memorial Day, May 27, 2013. Congressman Jeb Hensarling provided some inspirational and patriotic words that honored the veterans of our great nation buried at the Athens Cemetery.



A Color Guard was provided by the Naval Air Station in Ft. Worth, Texas. BSA Troop #343 offered the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Howdy Martin Camp of the Sons of the Confederacy gave an authentic tribute to the Civil War Veterans of both sides of the greatest conflict our country has ever endured as well as a 21 gun musket salute. An emotional playing of Taps ended the program.



Over 200 attended the event and witnessed a tribute to long time cemetery liaison and board member, Bob McDonald. Congressman Hensarling presented Mr. McDonald an official Congressional Record which acknowledged Mr. McDonald's service and dedication to the historic Athens Cemetery. In addition, State Senator Robert Nichols and State Representative Lance Gooden's office provided proclamations from the Texas Senate and House floors acknowledging Mr. McDonald's outstanding dedication and selfless efforts to improve and enhance the beauty of the Athens Cemetery.

John Baxter Miller – Union Soldier

When the veterans' memorial was dedicated at our cemetery earlier this year, there was a good bit of conversation and speculation among attendees about the lone Union soldier shown in the Civil War section. How did he come to be buried in our cemetery? Where was he from? How did he end up in Athens and what was he doing here?

Research reveals that John Baxter Miller, the Union veteran, was born and raised in Ripley, Brown County, Illinois. His father, Joseph Miller, was a farmer but there was a pottery company nearby and several of Mr. Miller's sons, including John Baxter, worked there from an early age. By 1860 at age 18, John Baxter's occupation was already being shown as "potter".

During the Civil War as troops were being recruited from Ripley and the surrounding area, John Baxter enlisted and was assigned to Company K of the 10th Illinois Cavalry Regiment. The 10th Illinois Cavalry saw a considerable amount of action against Confederate forces in Missouri and Arkansas, and was involved in the siege of Vicksburg, MS. But John Baxter Miller did not enlist until October 15, 1864, so he missed most of the action that his unit had been involved in earlier in the war. Overall, the 10th Cavalry lost one officer and 24 enlisted men killed or mortally wounded during the war, but lost three officers and 262 enlisted men to disease, pointing out the lack of medical care and supplies that troops from both sides experienced during the war.

Following the war, John Baxter returned to Ripley where he married Catherine, and resumed his occupation as a "potter" as shown in the 1880 Illinois census.

Another son of Joseph and Sarah Jane Miller, Mack Kendree Miller (sometimes referred to as McKendree Miller), also worked at the pottery company in Ripley as a potter and soon followed his occupation into Missouri and later into Louisiana. While in Louisiana, Mack Kendree heard of the clay deposits around Athens that were excellent for making pottery and thought that an opportunity existed to begin a pottery company there. Accordingly, he first moved his family to Dallas to explore the possibilities that Athens offered, and then to Athens around 1891. He started the Athens Pottery Company soon afterwards. His three sons, Pearl Eli, C.K. and J.E. Miller, worked in their father's pottery company with Pearl Eli "Pearlie" eventually becoming the president although he was the youngest of the three.

Catherine, the wife of John Baxter Miller, died in Ripley, Illinois at the family home in 1894. It appears that there were no children born to this union so John Baxter was left alone as a widower at age 53.

John Baxter's brother, Mack Kendree Miller, died in Athens in 1893. With the Athens Pottery Company having already become successful, his sons reached out to John Baxter, an experienced potter, to come to Athens to help with the company. This he did and lived the rest of his long life in Athens.

While involved in helping his nephew Pearl Eli run the company, John Baxter lived in Pearl's home as a boarder. In 1905, John Baxter retired at age 65 after 10 years with the Athens Pottery Company. He continued to live with his nephew for a number of years but eventually moved to the home of his niece, Mrs. Eva Isabel Wright, a retired music teacher, who lived at 205 West Corsicana Street in Athens. It was there at Mrs. Wright's home that John Baxter Miller died on October 4, 1932 at age 91, reputed to be Henderson County's oldest citizen at the time of his death. His funeral service was conducted at Mrs. Wright's home, officiated by Rev. Nemmo Goldston, pastor of First Christian Church.

John Baxter Miller (1841-1932) was laid to rest in the Athens Cemetery next to his brother, Mack Kendree Miller (1834-1893), in section F, where a number of other Miller family members rest, including Pearl Eli and his wife, Ambrosia, and Mack Kendree (II) the son of Pearl Eli. Whereas John Baxter Miller does not appear to have had any children, his brother Mack Kendree Miller had a large family and many of his descendants lived in Athens and surrounding areas their entire lives, including, among many others, such notable persons as Peggy Miller Wolfe, first wife of Dr. Dan Wolfe, and Mary Elmina (Mina) Miller Lehr, wife of Ed C. Lehr.

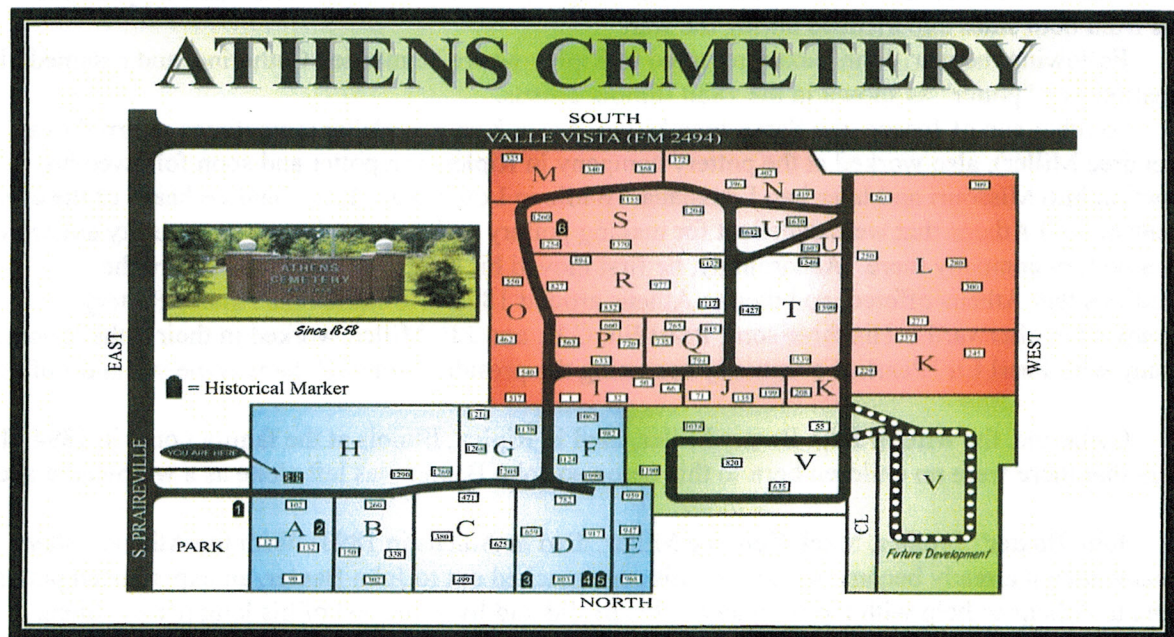
Contributed by Art Hall
Athens Cemetery Board Member & Historian

The Athens Cemetery is maintained by the Athens Cemetery Association, a non-profit organization whose purpose is to maintain and preserve our historic cemetery. The Athens Cemetery depends on lot sales, internments, special gifts and planned giving to operate. Costs to maintain the cemetery have continued to increase, but the challenge has been met. The Board of the Athens Cemetery Association is dedicated to being good stewards of the funds provided to see that the cemetery remains a beautiful sanctuary for reflection, meditation and celebration of past and future generations.

The Board of the Athens Cemetery Association would like to thank the Friends of the Athens Cemetery for their continued support. Donations from the "Friends" are used exclusively for the beautification and permanent improvement to the cemetery.

We would like to introduce Mr. Bobby Glass as the new Cemetery Liaison. Bobby is a long time Athens resident and is taking the position previously held by Bob McDonald.

4,000 lots are available including cremation lots and columbarium niches. Call Bobby Glass at (903)477-7281 for further information.



Space Prices:

Principal and Historic Section - \$1,100.00

Celtic Cross Section - \$1,450.00

Multi-Lot Family Section - \$1,100 (burial spaces sold in groups of 8 or more and may be landscaped to suit buyer)

Internment Fee - \$200.00 on non-holiday or \$250.00 on recognized holiday

Columbarium Fee - \$1,500 (price is for two inurnments)

Special thanks to Board Member and outgoing Cemetery Liaison, Bob McDonald, for his dedication and untiring service to the cemetery.

"For all who visit our cemetery, may it remind them of all those who have gone before and of the nobility of life well lived. Remember that nothing is ended until it is forgotten. Whoever is kept in memory still endures."

SCENES FROM THE ATHENS CEMETERY



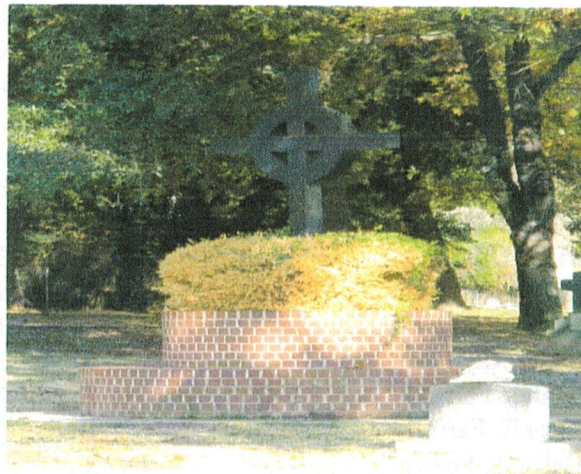
Veteran's Memorial



Information Kiosk



Columbarium



Celtic Cross Section



Pioneer Section

The hallowed grounds of the cemetery continue to be meticulously maintained and provide a special place of reverence, solitude and beauty.

The sprinkler system has been updated and general maintenance and upkeep of the grounds and monuments are being maintained on an ongoing basis.

The Athens Cemetery would like to extend a special thanks to all our "Friends" that have supported the beautification of the cemetery.

"Become a Friend in 2014!"

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