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INC.

Annual Membership Drive

It’s time once again to send in your tax-exempt contribution to our annual membership drive. These funds are a major contribution to the work we do throughout the year at Oakland Cemetery. Please use the membership renewal/signup coupon on the following page and give generously.

Cemetery Update

The past year was another very productive one for the Oakland Cemetery Preservation Society (OCPS.)

Anna Maria Sparke Keele, President, OCPS, was elected a member of the newly formed Shreveport Historic Preservation Commission. Anna Maria will help the commission set up guidelines and priorities on this important new group.

OCPS, in conjunction with the City of Shreveport (SPAR), continued to right many monuments in the cemetery that were in danger of collapse. This not only improved the look of the cemetery but also saved the monuments from irreparable damage. More gravesites are now being identified for monument righting and stabilization. (See photos on page 3.)

OCPS was included as a listed historic place with Louisiana by the Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation, highlighting Oakland’s ongoing renovations.

Oakland Cemetery was open during the Maker’s Fairs conducted on November 8, 2014 and April 11, 2015. OCPS manned a booth to highlight the cemetery and provided tours of the cemetery to interested parties. It also provided a venue for visual artists to market their wares and support Oakland at the same time. We had a wonderful time showing off “Our Oakland” to visitors of the Fairs.

Also, on November 8, 2014, the Rev. Sally Fox, Holy Cross Church, conducted three dedication ceremonies for park benches dedicated to the memories of Carolyn Nelson and Eric Brock, former board members, and in honor of Virginia Shehee, Board Member Emeritus. The park benches were funded by a grant from the City of Shreveport and the generous donations from you, the supporters of the OCPS.



OCPS is investigating a self-guided tour app that could be used to tour the cemetery. The tour would feature highlights of the cemetery and in-depth discussion of some of the focal points of Oakland. Visitors would tour the cemetery at their own pace and seek additional information when desired.

Two of OCPS's board members, Vice-president Dr. Gary Joiner and Dr. Cheryl White, have written a new book about Oakland! It is entitled Shreveport's Historic Oakland Cemetery, published by The History Press, Charleston, SC. The book is on sale now, and is dedicated to those who died in the great yellow fever epidemic of 1873 in Shreveport. Cheryl and Gary have pledged the proceeds from the sale of the book to OCPS. We are very fortunate to have such dedicated members on our board and encourage all to purchase and enjoy this important part of Shreveport's history.

In December, Mr. Scott Williams, an accomplished gravestone cleaner, visited Oakland. Using specialized tools and chemicals, Mr. Williams demonstrated the proper procedure to clean cemetery monuments. OCPS representatives were there to learn and be able to transfer that knowledge to other volunteers interested in revitalizing and preserving these treasures that are found in the cemetery.

During the coming months, OCPS intends to commission detailed landscape and electrical lighting plans for the cemetery that will allow us to place carefully thought-out plantings in strategic areas of the cemetery and extend the use of the cemetery. The plantings will be done over the years and will adhere to the master plan in place. OCPS is currently exploring grants to help with both plans.

JOIN/RENEW MEMBERSHIP IN "THE FRIENDS OF OAKLAND"

YES, I want to help by joining or renewing my membership in the "Friends of Oakland" organization to further the Oakland Cemetery Preservation Society's efforts to restore and preserve the cemetery.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ **STATE** _____ **ZIP** _____

- Individual \$25** **Family \$40** **Friend \$100**
 Patron \$250 **Benefactor \$500** **Founder \$1000** **Student \$10**

Memorial/Honorarium Contribution \$ _____

In honor/memory of: _____

Please Notify (name and address) _____

- Please contact me about volunteer opportunities**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Anna Maria Sparke Keele



Two of the 35 Monuments Returned to an Upright Position with new bases



This Wall has Been Replaced and Fence Repaired at the Lister Plot

It has been a year of community connections for the Oakland Cemetery. By being a part of the Texas Avenue Makers Fair, we have brought visitors and local residents alike into the cemetery for perhaps their first glimpse of the wonderful history available to us here. In addition, we have placed benches in honor of three of the greatest supporters the Oakland Cemetery has known – to-date. Drs. Gary Joiner and Cheryl White have continued their dedication to the cemetery with their new book and I am thankful for their spotlight on my personal connection to Oakland – Julia Sparke Rule. Check out their Chapter on Julia when you pick up a copy.

Board member and historian, Steve Smith has continued in his efforts to save those monuments in most dire need of repair. His vigilance in the cemetery is a wonderful asset for us. The real driving force for the Oakland Cemetery is its former president, Hines Vaughan, who has kept the progress moving and to whom, I am very grateful.

Now, we need you more than ever, to rehabilitate more of our larger monuments. Commitments have already been received to assist in rebuilding the Jacobs, Jones, and Lister plots, which are in a great state of disrepair. Our Adopt-a-monument program has participants who stand ready to assist with both equity AND sweat equity. With your help, we can make even more magic happen by the end of this year or the beginning of 2016.

We look forward to working with you again in the coming months to continue to polish Oakland Cemetery to be the jewel in the crown of this area. **Please join/renew your membership this month! If you would be interested in joining a group of intrepid “hands on” volunteers, please let us know! WE NEED YOU!!!!**



**Oakland Cemetery
Preservation Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 52131
Shreveport, LA 71135**

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

With much of the infrastructure now in place, we are now turning to gainfully utilize the talents of the Friends of Oakland Cemetery. The organization is up and running, and we are looking for volunteers.

Specifically, we need help in the form of monument inventory and restoration; advertising and public relations; tour guides; website development; tour documentation, design and implementation; events planning and operation; family history documentation; civic event speakers, re-enactors, and more. You can do as much or little as your time will allow.

Please use the form on page 2 to indicate that you would like to help us. We need your help to restore and preserve this grand old cemetery! We promise a rewarding experience!

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**Checks and Change of address
notices should be sent to
OCPS, P.O. Box 52131,
Shreveport, LA 71135**

www.oaklandcemeteryla.org