

The Blue Rock Banner

July 2020
Issue 6

Jaeger-Witte Heritage
Cemetery Association
www.JWHCA.com

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

1. President's Report
2. Ongoing Projects
3. Ongoing Business
4. Family Stories

2020-2021 OFFICERS

President

Jeff Featherston

Vice-President

Steven Jaeger

Secretary

George Zemanek

Treasurer

Debbie Byrd

Grounds and Maintenance

Kay Kulow

President's report

Hello Family,

I hope that everyone is staying healthy and safe during these times of COVID-19. Below are some of our ongoing projects as well as some completed tasks that have been accomplished since last year:

We are happy to announce that we have received our historical cemetery designation and are in the process of applying for a state historical marker. The JWHCA Operating Manual and Burial Reservation Agreement is finalized and will be available on our website. A paper copy can also be requested. George is working on a special project called 52 Ancestors in 52 Weeks. Basically, what he is doing is researching and writing biographies of individuals buried in the cemetery and publishing them on the website.

The Schmidt Trust funded the construction of an interior fence to replace the chain link fence. We will begin the process of sanding and painting it on Saturday, July 11. George and David have primed the outer fence and the painting process is underway. There are also some areas that we will need to repair where welds have come loose.

Unfortunately, the Reunion has been cancelled due to the current situation with the coronavirus. However, in place of it, we are collecting pictures and videos to create a slideshow that will be distributed by the end of the summer.

Thank you all for your continued support of the Jaeger Witte Heritage Cemetery Association. I hope that everyone has a great summer!

Sincerely,
Jeff

Interior Fence Replacement

About 45 years ago, Henry and his son Melvern replaced the wooden post and barbed wire fence with a solid chain-link fence. Lanis created a beautiful archway to mark the entrance. The fence stood for several decades before rusting and warping under the hot summers, frigid winters, and heavy spring rains. Eventually it could no longer be repaired, and the decision was made to replace it entirely.

Jay Tidwell was hired to rebuild the interior fence. The style is similar to the outer fence, which was built by Roy Wunderlich in 2014. Construction took approximately six months and we will begin sanding and painting it on July 11th. The final step will be reattaching the archway.

A big THANK YOU goes out to the Sanford and Mannie Schmid Charitable Trust for underwriting the expense of the project

Headstone Restoration

Local conservationist Lowell Herzog was hired to repair and reset several headstones in the Witte section of the cemetery. The headstone belonging to Elsie Dittrich (Mar. 6, 1891 - Aug. 5, 1914) was reset, and that of Johan Naegeli (Apr. 24, 1854 - Mar. 16, 1901) underwent extensive repair. Two more headstones required minor repairs and we are very happy with the results.

For more of Mr. Herzog's work, visit: www.texasgravestoneconservation.com

52 Ancestors in 52 Weeks

52 Ancestors in 52 Weeks is an annual challenge created by prominent genealogist Amy Johnson Crow. It is a series of weekly prompts to help people think and write about their ancestors. This year, George Zemanek is participating in the challenge. Select entries have been featured on Ms. Crow's Generations Café Facebook page.

Grandpa Henry's two books *The History of Early Pioneers of Winedale* have been valuable resources for this project. The Portal to Texas History digital newspaper program, Houston Public Library, Nancy Carol Roberts Memorial Library in Burton, Washington County Genealogical Society, and Cushing Memorial Library at Texas A&M University have been instrumental in locating historical documents. We also thank Barry Graul, Lillian Rudi, Mavis Robinson, Sondee Weiss, Daren Jaeger, Jerry Jaeger, Joyce Schkade, Jeanette Zemanek, and Grace Boehenmann for providing a wealth of resources and first-hand accounts. The biographical stories are available on our website www.jwhca.com. To request a print copy, please contact George Zemanek at (281) 827-5350.



Fence construction



Completed fence



Rebuilt Naegeli Headstone



Resetting Dittrich headstone

Operating Manual

On August 3, 2019, the JWHCA board of directors adopted a general operating manual to guide us in our care of the family cemetery. It addresses matters such as burials, perpetual care, and record keeping. The manual is available on our website www.jwhca.com. To request a printed copy, please contact George Zemanek at (281) 827-5350.

Burial Reservation Agreement

It is difficult to think about our own funeral and burial, but death is inevitable. One of the most helpful things you can do is to make your final wishes clear to your family while you are still alive. This way your loved ones are not faced with making funeral and burial arrangements during a stressful time. To help with planning, the JWHCA has created a Burial Reservation Agreement. Having a Burial Reservation Agreement on file with us is not a requirement but it is strongly recommended.

The Burial Reservation Agreement and master plat is available on our website www.jwhca.com. To request a printed copy, please contact George Zemanek at (281) 827-5350.

Historic Cemetery Designation

The Jaeger Witte Cemetery has been recognized by the Texas Historical Commission as a historic cemetery. The next step is to have our application for a historical marker approved. This can take up to two years due to a backlog of applications.

How You Can Help!

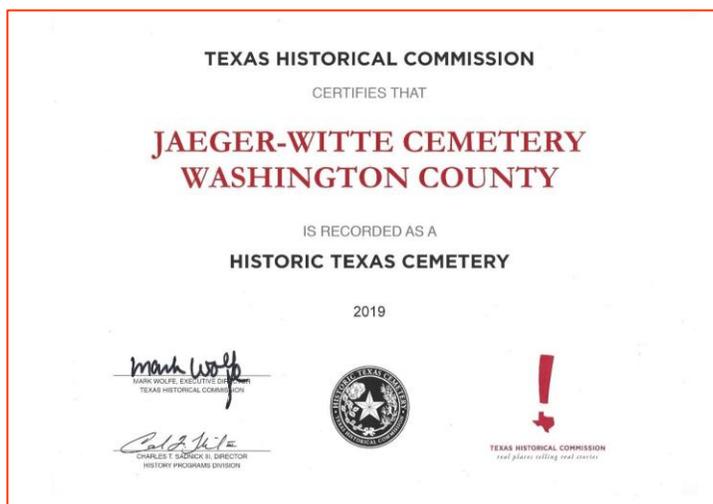
The family meets throughout the year for routine maintenance. The 2020 cleanup days are scheduled for Aug 15, Sept 12, and Oct 3. We begin around 9am and finish by noon. Please contact Kay Kulow at kaylynnkulow.ka@gmail.com or (979) 277-8807 with any questions.

We also rely on financial assistance from family and friends. Your tax deductible donations are used to cover the cost of maintenance and to fund special projects such as restoration and repair efforts. Donations can be given to any board member or mailed directly to:

JWHCA
3802 Costa Rica Rd
Houston, TX 77092

Please make checks payable to JWHCA

Thank you for your ongoing support!



Family Stories: Favorite Photo

By George Zemanek

Everyone has a favorite photo. Sometimes it's a recent family portrait and other times it's a snapshot of your new car. For my mother, Jeanette (Jaeger) Zemanek, one of her favorites is that of her grandfather, Henry Jaeger Sr., sitting with his grandchildren on the front porch of the Jaeger home in Port Arthur. The year was 1942 and it was a warm Sunday afternoon, possibly late spring. The family had just returned home from church and Delores, Bernhardt, Melvern, Wilburn, and Jeanette paused a moment for an impromptu portrait with their beloved grandfather.

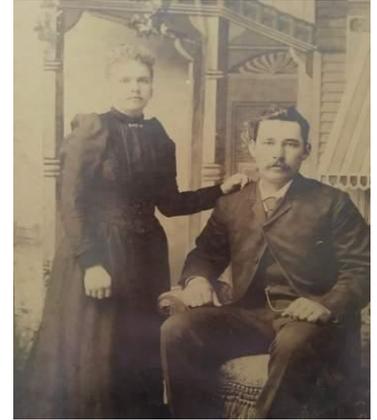
Henry, the oldest son of Peter and Regina Jaeger, was born on March 12, 1864 in Winedale, Texas. He took full charge of the family farm while his father, Peter, was operating the ox freight line. Henry married Alvine (nee Tonn) in 1893. They bought the von Bieberstein farm in 1899 and moved there in 1900. Henry and Alvine grew cotton, corn, and sorghum and raised seven children (two died in infancy).

Henry and Alvine sold their farm to their youngest son Henry and his wife Lillie in 1932 and went to live with them. Alvine passed away in 1936. In 1939 Henry moved to Port Arthur with Henry, Lillie, and their children. He died in 1943, just one year after this photo was taken. After his funeral in Port Arthur, he was transported to Burton and interred at the Jaeger Witte Cemetery next to Alvine.

This photograph is the last one Henry took with his grandchildren and is a family treasure.



*Henry with his grandchildren
(left to right) Wilburn, Delores, Jeanette, Melvern, and Bernhardt*



Henry and Alvine's wedding photo, 1893



Henry and Alvine, with daughter Elsie and grandson Earl, 1918



Headstones at Jaeger Witte Cemetery

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