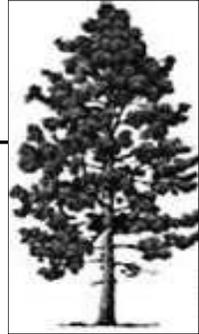


Friends of Lone Pine Cemetery Newsletter

Whitman County, Washington
Summer 2010



LONE PINE CEMETERY HISTORY

In the early history of the Lone Pine area, a single pine tree on a hill side of Section 16 Township 20 Range 45 played an important role as a land mark on the stage route between Farmington and Cheney. Near it was a log cabin which served as a post office, stage depot, general store and school house. All were known as "Lone Pine" after the tree.

In her poem of "The Lone Pine Tree" Audrey Sherrod Cavin mentions the burial of a child beneath the tree. Some pioneers recall this as that of a child who died on the stage coach. This however was not destined to become a cemetery. The tree was killed by a bolt of lightening in 1947. This was the location of the little grave.

It was in 1896 when Marshall Field of Chicago, Illinois was in the area executing real estate transactions that he purchased approximately two acres of ground on a hill top in the northwest corner of Section 21 Township 20 to be used as a cemetery. Burials were already being made there, some dating back to 1883. This transaction is recorded in Book 192 of deeds, page 606 in Whitman County courthouse and reads:

"This indenture made the 21st day of May in the year of 1896 that Reuben Smiley and wife Lucinda Smiley of Tekoa, Washington parties of the first part for and in consideration of the sum of one dollar gold coin of the United States of America to them in hand paid by Marshall Field of Chicago, Cook County, Illinois party of the second part the receipt of which is here by acknowledged by these present remiss-release and forever quit claim unto the party of the second part and to his heirs and assign forever all the two acres in the form of a square in North West corner of North West quarter Section 21 Township 20 North Range 45 East Willamette Meridian, said tract to be known as Lone Pine Cemetery."

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Cal Chase
Lohn Clark
Rod Smith
Terry Smiley
Patti Smiley
Jeslyn Lemke

Dudley Clark
Jim Irwin
Shirley Irwin
Fred Smith
Teresa Pohle
Howard Morgan

The Spring meeting of "Friends of the Lone Pine Cemetery" took place on April 9, 2010 at the C&D Bar & Grill in Downtown Tekoa, Whitman County, Washington

Friends of Lone Pine meeting agenda

September 17, 2010 11:00 am
C&D Bar & Grill in Tekoa

1. Secretary Report
DAHP update
501 C (3) status
2. Treasurer’s Report
Checking account
3. Update on cemetery sign--Howard Morgan project.
4. Plot plan update Rod Smith project
5. Burning of brush piles.
6. Washington State Historical Society—Jim Irwin

Work Day agenda For discussion and action

1. Complete the removal of lilac-brush around perimeter of fence line.
Do we need a new fence? What kind? Cost?
2. Identify the headstones in need of repair, cleaning, or better identification with metal grave stakes.
3. Expand lilac removal in paths and around head stones.
4. Cutting off of tree limbs 16 to 18 feet from ground of eight Fir trees over road entrance and graves.

Friends of Lone Pine Cemetery
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THE LONE PINE TREE

(In the Grainfield near Tekoa, Washington)

In Washington, my native state,
Near that old home of mine,
Standing alone in the grainfield,
Is a tall and stately pine;
It has seen many sorrows and heartaches,
I know, as it stands there so brave,
For people pass by to the graveyard, and
Beneath it there's one lonely grave.

While its great branches sing me a lullaby,
And the soft breezes gently blow
It seems I can almost hear it sigh
And whisper soft and low;
If I could only be in a forest
Amid all the kindred of mine,
Instead of here in the grainfield!
I'm only a lone, lone pine.

This lonely old pine on the hilltop,
Like a sentinel is standing there,
A landmark to all old-timers,
To cut it down, no one would dare.
It shares its name with the district,
The cemetery, church and school,
Where we all went to get our lessons
And learn the golden rule.

I have seen lots of trees that were planted
In straight and orderly line,
But I have never seen a tree
That could rival that old friend of mine.
It is only a pine tree, you murmur,
Only a lone, lone pine,
But a childhood dreams, it still holds it seems,
A place in this heart of mine.

Old pine tree, you may be lonely,
Standing alone on the hill,
But you were put there for a purpose;
I'm sure it was God's will,
To place you there in the grainfield
To guard as the soldier must
The children who grew up around you,
So in God we would put our trust.

AUDREY SHERROD CAVIN

Descendants of those buried in Lone Pine Cemetery prop up a toppled head stone with use of a tractor

By Jeslyn Lemke, Gazette Reporter

Headstones of long-forgotten Palouse pioneers continue to be uncovered by a group of descendants who have been gathering regularly to work on the Lone Pine Cemetery.

The cemetery, located on a hill a few miles outside Tekoa, holds the graves of pioneers starting in the late 1800s and ending in the 1950s.

Almost half a century of neglect and harsh weather has hidden many headstones beneath densely overgrown bushes, rotted the fence outside the cemetery, knocked over headstones and erased names.

Friends of the Lone Pine Cemetery, a group of Lone Pine descendants and their spouses, have been working over the past three years to restore the cemetery. Scattered throughout the northwest, members of the group have been meeting a few times a year to work on the cemetery.

Several members April 10 used a tractor to stand up two massive headstones which had fallen over. Over the entrance roadway to the cemetery they installed the frame for what will eventually be a board sign hanging over the road.

With the aid of several very old maps, they have waded through the brush to locate old headstones. They are also working on two sides of the fence.

“I was in there snipping barb wire and I saw something crisp and sharp in the dirt there and it was a monument with initials, one [monument] on top of the other,” said Rod Smith, a descendant who lives in Kettle Falls. His great-grandparents, Reuben and Lucinda Smiley, donated the original plot of land for the cemetery in the late 1800s.

Lone Pine Cemetery was recently certified as a Washington Historic Site (*Note: application is still in process.*) with the state Department of Archaeology. They are now looking into becoming a 501C3 organization which qualifies donations to be tax deductible for the donors.

One descendant, Jim Irwin of Walla Walla, said he has a keen interest in genealogy.

“It kind of gives me more of an idea about who I am,” Irwin said. His lingering interest in his family has found an outlet when he and his wife work to restore the cemetery.

“I want to record a lot of that for my family,” Irwin said.



(Continued from page 1)

In the early 1930's, Marshall Field Jr., was in the area in an attempt to sell this cemetery. Both August L. Wolf, owner of said quarter of land, and I. N. Clark, pioneer with several graves in the cemetery, were approached. Neither was interested in such an investment, so no deals were made. In the Marshall Field will and distribution of property, this cemetery is mentioned several times. Once a \$500 value was placed on it. Since no records have been found to the contrary, it is assumed that this property still belongs to the Marshall Field heirs whoever they may be.

Originally the entrance to the cemetery was from the county road on the west side. Each winter when the Northeast winds came over the hill top with the snow this county road blocked. This sufficed during horse and buggy days but with the introduction of cars and a school bus this road became impassable at times. August L. Wolf agreed to accept this section of county road in exchange for a detour thru his quarter on the east side of the cemetery. This changed entrance from the original west to the present east side and alleviated the snow drift problem to a great extent. It also created community interest in a general cemetery clean up. Brush was cut, grass mowed and a new iron gate was installed. Arthur Clark, Charlie Chase and Earl Hall were elected directors. (See enclosed sheet) Members of the Lone Pine-Fairbanks club planted an evergreen tree on either side of the gate with Mrs. August (Mary) Wolf and Mrs. Fred (Margaret) Jones doing the honors.

Over the 1974 Memorial week, a bulletin board was placed at the entrance asking all who visit the cemetery to please sign their name and indicate the grave they visit. Five signatures were obtained and only one grave was mentioned. Some have moved their caskets and love ones to other cemeteries. Records of early burials are sketchy or non existent. The first are those of Kizer twins born in 1882 and died in 1883 and that of Ruthie Cozier in 1883.

The last interment was that of Valentine Higbee in January 1953. No more burials are permitted. According to a chart at Kramer's Kimball Funeral Home in Tekoa, a total of 115 burials have been made there. Only 56 have markers or can be accounted for.

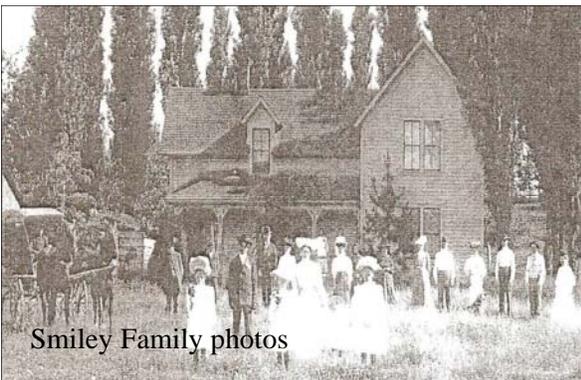
Since then all three directors are deceased and no one was elected to replace them. Things have deteriorated, tomb stones have crumbled or were tipped by vandals, brush has over grown so it is quite impossible to find some graves especially those marked only with a brick. The gate too has fallen.

AS TO THE FUTURE

In contacting some who have an interest in the cemetery, I find two widely different opinions. Some think a weed eradicator should be used and all vegetation killed followed by a general clean up. Others feel that with another clean up the vegetation should be spared as it is about the only sizeable acreage in a wide radius where native flowers and shrubs as well as prairie bunch grass still may be found in their natural state.

Research and written by Mrs. Mary A. Wolf (Deceased Dec. 1988) Tekoa, Washington

Assisted and typed by Marian Kramer, Tekoa, Washington



Smiley Family photos



If you have information, articles, or pictures or would like to make a donation, please send to:
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