

Hamilton County Cemetery Preservation Society
Report to County Supervisors – May 12th, 2015

I'm here to provide you an update on what your Hamilton County Cemetery Preservation Society has been doing this past year.

As an overview, we were organized in 2012 to help identify and preserve the pioneer cemeteries in Hamilton County. There are 30 cemeteries in Hamilton County - six (6) of these cemeteries meet the pioneer cemetery criteria. That is defined by Iowa law, cemeteries having less than 12 burials in the past 50 years.

These cemeteries are:

- Boe Cemetery – Ellsworth Twp - *South of Randall*
- Ellsworth-Clear Lake Twp Cemetery - Ellsworth Twp - *between Randall and Stanhope*
- Old Randall Cemetery - Ellsworth Twp – *North of the Mt Olive Cemetery in Randall*
- Homer Cemetery – Webster Twp – *East of Homer*
- Hetland Cemetery – Scott Twp – *SE of Ellsworth*
- Zion Cemetery – Hamilton Twp – *NE of Stanhope*

It was a full year with many learning opportunities!

Signs

- We completed our very first goal made when we organized in 2012. That was to identify and place a “Pioneer” sign at each of the pioneer cemeteries. The last of the signs were put in place last fall.

Stone repair/cleaning

- Stone repair at Old Randall Cemetery
 - Notified by township trustees that a tree had fallen during a late summer storm knocking off the large cross on top of the stone.
 - We were able to repair the stone cross and reattach it to the large headstone. (pictures)
- Work continues at the Homer Cemetery
 - Straightening, cleaning, repairing and resetting headstones (pictures)
 - Mowing/trimming is easier; cemetery looks well cared for when looking at whole cemetery.
 - Last fall, we found at least 12 more headstones that had toppled over and almost disappeared into the ground.

Education

- Cemetery Walk
 - We sponsored a Cemetery Walk at the Hetland Cemetery on June 6, 2014. Approximately 35 people from around the county enjoyed an evening learning about this pioneer cemetery. Attendees also tried their hand at “witching” to find unmarked graves and listened to descendents talk about the lives of their relatives in the cemetery.
- Two educational presentations were:
 - A Morning Kiwanis’ meeting in WC
 - A township trustee meeting for townships supported by the Jewell Fire department.

- A Website highlighting our activities was developed <https://www.facebook.com/cemeteryhamiltonco>
- Because we are a non-profit organization, we have applied for two grants to help pay for repair materials

Looking ahead to 2015:

- We are waiting for the weather to clear up before starting work at the Homer cemetery.
- We have been asked to look into some stone repairs at the Boe Cemetery, south of Randall.
- This year's Cemetery Walk will be at the Zion Cemetery on Wednesday, July 8th.

Hopefully, as flowers are placed this memorial day, everyone can spend some time enjoying our pioneer cemeteries and remembering the pioneers who helped settle Hamilton County.

Thank you.