

Report of the Marion County Pioneer Cemetery Commission

January 2018

The Marion County Pioneer Cemetery Commission (MCPCC) had another productive year. In our seventh year, things are swinging more toward maintenance and less toward ensuring that pioneer cemeteries aren't destroyed.

In 2017, we worked on 3 cemeteries and scouted another 6-8 for future repairs:

Stotts-Whitlatch Cemetery:

Stotts-Whitlatch is located in Washington Township, a mile east of Columbia. It is accessible by a field road, not marked.



Stotts-Whitlatch before...



...and after

MCPCC had worked on cleaning up Stotts-Whitlatch in 2016; last fall several commission members worked on straightening stones. This is a small cemetery in a beautiful location.

Wheeling Cemetery:

Wheeling Cemetery is located in Pleasant Grove Township, off Highway 5 near Pleasantville. Commission members worked on straightening about a dozen stones and epoxying a few others.



Hull-DeWitt Cemetery:

Hull-DeWitt Cemetery is located in Knoxville Township, about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile south of Graceland Cemetery. For the past several years, the Friendly Guys 'n Gals 4-H Club has taken this cemetery on as a project. They are doing as much of the work themselves as they can, but in 2017 they hit a roadblock and needed to hire someone to do many of the stone repairs. MCPCC gave the group \$2,500 toward their stone repairs.

Recovered Gates:

For many years, MCPCC members have kept their eyes open for fixtures that once belonged in cemeteries that have been moved out, sold, or just plain taken. The old Victorian gates for Greenwood Cemetery were found at one of the township trustees from that area. He wanted them moved. Several commission members moved the gates last winter. They are now residing at commission chairperson Val Van Kooten's house until we can find a use for them at one of our cemeteries.

"Triage" Tour:

We continue to survey our cemeteries for needed work. Some on the roster for 2018 are Hughes, Wheeling (continued), Bridges, and Klein.

Publicity:

Val spoke to two groups in Marion County: the Knoxville Federated Women's Club; and the Pella PEO group. We had 14 requests during 2017 via our website, asking for information on burials. We were able to help most of those inquiring.

Summary:

We are learning more ourselves on stone repair, as we do not have a professional at this time to do it. It has been slow work, but we're getting there. Much of our work this year focused on upkeep and not new work.

We have been good stewards of the money that Marion County has provided to us and ask for a renewal of the \$5,000 to be received July 1, 2018.

Please contact me if you have questions.

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