Annual Meeting 2004

The 2004 Annual Meeting was held on May 22, 2004 at the Vera Chandler Farm North of Springfield. Board meeting was at 10:30 to 11:00 A.M. After a short meeting, business was adjourned to 1:00 P.M. for the general meeting. President Robb Chandler called the annual meeting of the Union Campground Cemetery Association to order.

There was reading of the minutes of the last annual meeting and financial report read by Elaine Mott, Sec’y-Treas.

The new trail from Valley Water Mill Road down to the Cemetery was discussed at length. There were several people involved in getting approval of the State Highway Department to get permission to make a small trail along the east side of the State property. Robb had several meetings with the State Hwy Dept. then, Cindy Jefferies Davidson, who has ancestors in the cemetery, was aware of the problem and also mentioned the problem to the powers at the State Hwy Dept. As luck would have it, things started to move. Robb was back in the saddle and riding herd on the new activities.

Elaine Mott heard through a coworker about a young Boy Scout in need of a work project for his Eagle Scout Award. Elaine mentioned it to Jean Rayl and Jean said to contact Robb. Robb knew the father of the scout, set up a meeting to discuss the project. Joe Kensel, son of Scott and Carol Kensel of Rogersville, had all of his requirement for his Eagle Scout Award except the work project. I know from experience, about the Eagle program, when our oldest son was working for his Eagle Scout Award several years ago. Joe and his dad met with Robb and details worked out on how the trail was to be constructed and the amount of labor and costs that would be needed. Robb, Joe and Scott met about the first of April and went in with axes, chain saws and a tractor and made a path down through the undergrowth. They worked on this a couple of days and had a small walking path to the cemetery’s property. Then Robb called and asked if I would help the next Saturday with my tractor and loader. We started early and with the help of Joe and Scott and the 2 tractors we made a trail wide enough for a tractor to drive up and down. The following week Scott Kensel borrowed a 10 wheel dump truck and hauled 5 large loads of wood chips from the city chip pile west of Springfield. Robb worked the bigger part of 2 days with my loader scattering the chips along the trail. On Saturday May 1, Joe showed up with members of his Scout Troop in Rogersville. With a total about 20 people from Scout Troop 46, including fathers and scouts, the chips were scattered and trash was picked up along Valley Water Mill Road. The work was finished about 1:00 P.M. and then everyone celebrated with a big Pizza Party furnished by the Cemetery Assn. Joe and his parents were at the Annual meeting. Joe was presented a certificate by Pres. Robb for a job well done. Thanks to Joe and Scott.

Robb cut the fence and installed a wire gate for the present. It was discussed and approved to install a 12 foot metal gate in the fence and a small 3 foot walk through gate just north of the larger gate. Also there is a security cable and lock across the opening of the trail at the entrance on the South end. The Hwy Department has concerns about dirt bikes being on the trail.

We now have a way to get small tractors and mowers into the cemetery to mow and clean. There will have to be several work days to clean the fallen trees on the fences and in the cemetery proper.

The next big project will be to repair and reset the broken stones that have been overturned. This should bring everyone up to date on the happenings of the trail.

Larry Voris

The election of officers followed and they are listed on the back cover of this newsletter. It was discussed about having a web page to keep members informed.
Excerpts from an interview conducted in 1936-1938 by a worker employed with the Federal Writers' Project in Missouri. “Uncle” Fil Hancock was 86 at the time, living in Rolla, MO.

His story is important to the Union Campground Cemetery Association because he mentions in his recollections, “If I can leave enough when I die, I want to be buried at the Union Graveyard in Greene County, MO where my mammy is buried since three years before the Civil War. My daddy was buried there in 1863.” Here is his story. Only selected portions are included due to limited space.

“I was born 1851, de 28th of February. My Grammy come here with her missus Hancock when de brung de Cherokee Indian tribe here from middlin’ Tennessee, de time dey moved de Missouri Indians back to Oklahoma, what dey called Indian Territory way back bout 135 ta 140 years ago. Our ol’ missus maiden name was Riggs. My ol’ mastah was Scotch-Irish. A big red faced man wid sandy hair, mostly baldheaded. He weren’t ‘lowed to whip us. Ol’ missus wouldn’t let him tech us. We had to mind him, though. But she done de whipping. My own mammy whipped us good and proper. She used a razor strop, and shore poured it on us. She was puny and sick most all de times. De said she had com-pumption. Nowadays de calls it T.B. But it was plain old com-pumption in dem days...

“My ol’ missus Hancock named me, herself; called me Filmore Taylor Hancock, after two presidents who took der seats in 1850. Ol’ Colonel Hancock was our mastah an’ he was de richest man in Greene County, MO...His wife, ol’ missus, was born in 1804. My own Grammy on my mammy’s side was born in 1805. My Grammy was given to missus, as her own, de day she was born. Course ol’ missus was only a year old den. Der was thirty two of us slaves on our ol’ missus place, and eleven of us sprung from ol’ Grammy.

“We had five young missus names were Winnie, Elizabeth, Lucinda, Luella and Tennessee. Dey was so rich and proud...

“My boss - Hancock - was de biggest slave holder in Missouri when de war first come up. He settled four miles east of Springfield, MO. He owned close to 1200 or 1500 acres of ground, from Springfield to Strafford, east. We had 375 acres in cultivation—corn, oats, wheat, rye, and clover was our main crops.

“My daddy belonged to a man named Lou Langston. There is a railroad station named for this same Langston, what was known as the Gulf Road. I took my mammy’s white folk’s name...

“In ‘61 I see General Lyons when he passed right by our house. All de Union sojers had to pass by our house time of de war. We lived on the main road from Rolla to Springfield...

“All de Union sojers stopped at our house to get water. We had a runnin’ stream that never did go dry. They filled their canteens there. All us chillun fussed ‘bout ‘em takin’our milk and butter outen de spring house. Ol’ missus keep all her milk and butter and cheese in dere to keep it cool. When de Union sojers come by our house to Rolla dey took so much of the water to fill dere canteens it nearly took our spring dry. Took every thing we had in de spring house...I don’t remember how dey was dressed, but dey all had on sumpin’ blue. Uniforms, I guess...

“De Rebels held Springfield from 1861 til 1862, when General Fremont come in and took it. Marmaduke and Price had de biggest armies of de Southerners. Frement come sneaking in, wrapped his wagon wheels with old blankets so dey wouldn’t hear his coming, and dey had a body guard of three hundred. Fremont come ‘bout daybreak, and started shooting de town up. He got de town and held it...

From Lennis L. Broadfoot’s book, Pioneers of The Ozarks, another interview with Filmore Hancock gives the following information:

“I didn’t leave mah mastah, but de solders come along in Novembah, aftah de Battle of Wilson’ Creek, which was fought August 10, 1861, and picked me up an’ stole me away, an’ took me to Yellville, Ark., an’ set me down. Dey took me on horseback. Dey had an ahmy camp in Yellville, an’ dey kept me foah a while an’ tahmed me loose, an’ der I was, way fum my mastah, to ‘root hog aw die, ‘an’ say, mistah, it sho wuz tuf. When de sojers stole me ‘ways fum mah mastah, I sho had a hard time for a long time, an’ nearly stahved to deaf, and wished to be back on ol’ mastah’s farm, but after I run loose fo a long time, I lannahd to get by...”

The original interview continues:

“Ise seed six Civil War generals in mah live. I seed General Shelby, General Marmaduke, an’ General Price, who was Southern generals,
FILMORE HANCOCK was very observant, interested in his surroundings and acutely aware of events and people. He had an amazing memory concerning dates and everyday activities. His story unfolds to paint a vivid portrait of a momentus period in American history. He is buried in the Rolla Cemetery in Phelps County. Either his wishes to be buried beside the graves of his parents were unknown at the time of his death or there was not enough money to ship his body to Greene County. The dates on his tombstone reads:

Born: Feb. 8, 1851
Died: Feb. 18, 1944

The tombstones of his parents no longer exist in Union Campground Cemetery. We can surmise his mother’s surname was Hancock and his father’s surname was Langston. Note: John Hancock owned property east of Union Campground Cemetery. He also owned acreage to the south and southeast. In partnership with his brother-in-law, John Morton, he owned additional properties. He was a Southern sympathizer and later moved his family to Texas.

Filmore mentions the daughters of John Hancock and their names can be verified through the 1860 Federal Census of Campbell Township.

Since forming our cemetery association, there have been many stories about soldiers camping on the Union Campground during the Civil War. Filmore Hancock’s reminiscences would appear to verify the presence of Union soldiers near the old graveyard, and raises the possibility of some soldiers being buried there.

The pen and ink drawing of Filmore Hancock is from Pioneers of the Ozarks Lennis L. Broadfoot.

Article prepared by:
Jean Rayl

Visitors from California

On their way across country, enjoying a long-deserved vacation, Raymond and Beverly Ellison visited Branson, MO. Besides taking in a show or two during their stay, they decided to spend a few hours in Springfield.

The Ellisons called one warm and sultry day in July, expressing a desire to see Union Campground Cemetery. We met at a designated place and proceeded to Valley Water Mill Road, where we parked our cars and walked down the newly created pathway. We found the cemetery had reverted back to its previous overgrown, neglected condition. Large trees were down, limbs scattered everywhere, with the worrisome buckbrush and weeds obstructing former pathways that were cleared only a few years ago.

We finally located the Ellison plot in the oldest part of the cemetery. The three moss covered tombstones of Thomas Ellison, his wife and a son, were barely visible.

Since one of the Ellison daughters had married a Caldwell, we threaded our way back across the graveyard to look for the Caldwell graves. We almost gave up on the search before we found them. Years ago, the tombstone of Jane C. Caldwell had been broken into three sections. The largest section seemed to be missing.

After prodding under dirt and leaves, we finally found it. This shows how quickly tombstones can be lost.

When the cemetery was rediscovered in 1993, the name of Raymond Ellison was mentioned as a descendant of Thomas Ellison, one of Greene County’s earliest settlers. Raymond is currently serving on our board of directors.

Article prepared by:
Jean Rayl

Greetings from the President

This year has been an eventful one, and I want to thank each and everyone of you for your help in making this a successful year for the cemetery association!

We have on project from 2004 that we are working on. We are trying to get a 2005 calendar put together (similar to the one done by the Fair Grove Historic Society) for our membership to enjoy. We are trying to produce this at a minimal cost, and to make it available to you as soon as possible. If you have an old picture you would like used, please try to get it to me as soon as possible and we will try to use it (if room permits). The anticipated cost will be no more than $10.00, and the calendar will be available prior to Christmas. There will only be 100 available this first year, so please don’t delay in ordering! Please contact me of you would like a calendar for you and your family. I hop this holiday season finds you and your family all well...

God bless you, and I hope to see you in the New Year.
Robb Chandler
417-833-4501

You all keep in mind that we need to have a work day at the cemetery sometime this winter or early spring. Call Robb for dates that you can work. Thanks
OFFICERS 2004-2005

Rob Chandler, President
Bettie Hickman, 1st Vice Pres.
Jean Rayl, 2nd Vice Pres.
Elaine Mott, Secretary
Larry Voris, Corresponding Sec’y
Pansy Hanrey, Treasurer

Directors
Clarence Stiver  2005
Betty Jane Turner  2005
Jean Rayl  2005
Joanna Coonrod  2006
Raymond Ellison  2006
Ben Gravely  2006
Douglas Rayl  2007
Bernie Stiver  2007
Hazel Voris  2007

Cemetery Location:
US Hwy 65 North of I-44 at Valley Water Mill Road, Springfield, MO.

Address all inquiries to:
Rob Chandler, President
Union Campground Cemetery Assn.
4875 E. Cimarron Lane
Springfield, MO 65803
417-833-4501

UNION CAMPGROUND CEMETERY ASSOCIATION
TREASURERS REPORT
September 1, 2004

Balance, April 22, 2004 $3,811.25

Receipts:
Dues $375.00
Sign Rental 150.00

Total Receipts: $525.00

Total Balance and Receipts $4,336.25

Disbursements:
Newsletter Printing 70.26
Supplies: 18.39
New Walkway 152.12

Total Disbursements: 240.77

Balance, September 1, 2004 $4,095.48

Signed: Pansy Hanrey, Treasurer