

Lincoln Cemetery Project Association Papers

Adams County Historical Society

Accession No: 2004.001

Home Location: Rm. 206, Rack 3, Shelf B

Preface

The Adams County Historical Society was established to “foster interest in the history of Adams County and vicinity, conduct research, preserve records and objects, mark sites, and pursue such activities as may be related to the history of the community.” The Society’s collections are privately held, maintained, and made available to the public for research purposes at the discretion of the governing authority of the institution and its staff.

Introduction

The Lincoln Cemetery Project Association Papers were acquired by the Adams County Historical Society on January 8, 2004 as a donation. The collection was processed by Trevor C. Lane in February 2013. The collection is housed in one box.

The Collection contains the papers of the Lincoln Cemetery Project Association, a group dedicated to the restoration of Gettysburg’s dilapidated African-American cemetery. The Association was formed in 1999 and was successful in drastically improving the cemetery, as well as holding annual Memorial Day and Remembrance Day ceremonies. This collection is a testament to what a group of individuals can accomplish for a cause that they believe in. It offers research possibilities to those interested in African-American history in Gettysburg, as well as providing a blueprint for those looking to begin their own restoration project for an area that they care about.

Access

This collection is open for research, and viewing access to the materials is unrestricted. However, restrictions apply concerning the use, duplication, or publication of items. Please consult research room staff for specific information regarding the Society’s policies.

Preferred Citation

Lincoln Cemetery Project Association Papers, Adams County Historical Society, Gettysburg, PA.

Biographical Sketch

The Lincoln Cemetery was established in 1867 to act as the burial site for Gettysburg's African-Americans. Due to laws dictating that they were to be segregated, even in death, 30 men who had served in the Civil War were denied the honor of being buried in Gettysburg National Cemetery. Approximately 400 people were laid to rest in the cemetery. This included notable Gettysburg residents such as Abraham Brian, whose farm played a key part in the Battle of Gettysburg, and Basil Biggs, who operated a stop along the Underground Railroad. The cemetery is also the final resting place of veterans from the Spanish American War, World War I, World War II, and the Korean War. Sadly, the cemetery was neglected for many decades and it fell into serious disrepair. In 1991, a group of concerned citizens honored the cemetery with a Memorial Day observance, and in 1999, they formed the Lincoln Cemetery Project Association in order to "restore, preserve, and provide continuing support for the cemetery. Thus, bringing proper honor and dignity to those buried there... for whom neglect and deterioration has been their fate for decades." The Association was remarkably successful, securing enough funding to turn the Lincoln Cemetery into the dignified, respected, and neatly groomed burial ground that is seen today. Projects undertaken by the Association include the erection of fencing, a flagpole, a rostrum, a memorial, and a roadside marker. Other contributions include tombstone repair, landscaping, and securing on-going maintenance. Along with these improvements, the Association put together annual Memorial Day and Remembrance Day programs. This collection not only contains information about the Lincoln Cemetery and African-American history, but is also a case study for anyone looking to begin a restoration project. It shows how much of a difference a group of concerned citizens can make, and shows the steps that must be taken for such a project to be successful.

Scope and Contrast Note

The collection was organized into three binders and three folders. In keeping with the principal of original order, this is how the folders were organized. The binders follow a general trend of the first containing older documents and the third containing newer, with the three folders being organized by their specific contents, rather than date. Binder 1 was already organized into tabs by the Lincoln Cemetery Project Association, and each folder was thus labeled with the tab's original description. Binders 2 and 3 were not divided into tabs, and were thus sorted and categorized at the processor's discretion. There is some repetition of categories between binders. The folders were kept as they were.

Container Listing

Binder 1

1-1 Minutes, Treasurer's Report, Miscellaneous Reports- Info from meetings, 2000-2001.

1-2 Meeting Notes- Project updates, treasurer's report, 2002.

- 1-3 Decision Memorandums-** Fencing, flag pole, rostrum, sound system, and memorial, 2000.
- 1-4 Letters- Caba. [sic.], Legislative, Fundraising-** Letters to and from Association leadership, 2000-2001.
- 1-5 Cost Estimates, Plans-** Restoration, fencing, and sound equipment, 2000-2001.
- 1-6 Grant Applications, Including Wal-Mart Foundation-** Process of applying for grants, 2000-2001.
- 1-7 Borough Matters-** Appeal to Borough for curb around cemetery, 2000.
- 1-8 Sample Posters, Brochures-** Designing and ordering posters and brochures, ?-2002.
- 1-9 Survey Report-** Historic resource survey project, S. Washington St.- Breckenridge St., 1998-1999.
- 1-10 Newspaper Articles-** Includes related letters, 2000-2001.
- 1-11 Cemetery History-** Pictures of restoration process.
- 1-12 Incorporation Paper-** Association's incorporation, 1999.
- 1-13 Legislative Matters and Letters-** Project synopsis and vandalism, 2000-2001.
- 1-14 E-Mail-** Jay Purdy to Sherman Hoy, about meeting with Rep. Roebuck in Washington, January 14, 2001.
- 1-15 Resignation of Chair-** Resignation of Sherman W. Hoy, August 4, 2001.

Binder 2

- 2-1 List of Interred-** Includes separate list of all veterans, 1999.
- 2-2 Memorial Day 2002-** Newspaper clippings and program, 2002.
- 2-3 Remembrance Day 2001-** Newspaper clippings, program, and e-mails, 2001.
- 2-4 Remembrance Day 2002-** Newspaper clippings, program, script, and e-mails, 2002.
- 2-5 Remembrance Day 2001 and 1999-** Newspaper clipping and programs, 1999-2002.
- 2-6 Newspaper Articles-** Topics include overview of project and news of restoration work, 2001
- 2-7 Contributors-** Includes list and more info about grants from Mott's and Robert C. Hoffman Charitable Endowment Trust, 2000-2001.
- 2-8 Maps of Cemetery-** Maps of cemetery location and layout, 1993-2000.
- 2-9 Project Objectives-** Status of objectives, 2002.
- 2-10 Borough Matters-** Legal matters involving the Borough, including quiet title and interpretive plan, 2001-2002.
- 2-11 Meetings-** Outlines for monthly meetings, 2000-2002.
- 2-12 Tours and Visitors-** Letters and e-mails regarding tours, concerns about conduct of visiting Boy Scouts, 2001-2002.

Binder 3

- 3-1 Membership List, Newsletters, and Meetings-** Info about the running of the Lincoln Cemetery Project Association, 2002-2003.
- 3-2 Restrictions on Burial-** Legal regulations on cemetery, 2002.
- 3-3 Cemetery History and Book-** Timeline of cemetery, picture of Basil Biggs, info about book *Segregation in Death: Gettysburg's Lincoln Cemetery* by Betty D. Myers, 2002.
- 3-4 Memorial Day 2003-** Scripts, program and e-mails, 2003.
- 3-5 Miscellaneous Pictures-** Pictures from unknown ceremony and "Silence and Respect" sign, 2002-?.
- 3-6 Memorial Design and Roadside Marker-** Plans, meetings, and applications, 2001-2003.
- 3-7 Brochures-** Miscellaneous brochures and flyers, e-mail about printing brochures, 1999-2003.

Folder 1

- 4-1 Newspaper Articles-** Miscellaneous newspaper articles, 1998-2003.

Folder 2

- 5-1 Construction and Reconstruction-** Details about construction work and cost, 1999-2001.

Folder 3

- 6-1 Bylaws-** Legal regulations for Lincoln Cemetery Project Association, 1999(?).