

# Friends of the Bryson City Cemetery

Newsletter 2016-003

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## Legal status progress update

Friends of the Bryson City Cemetery (FBCC) is now a North Carolina non-profit corporation. We have also completed the application for Federal tax exempt status as a 501 (c) (3). It may be some time before we get word on the status of that application, which was made electronically using a 1023-EZ form. The application cost dropped recently, so we saved a bit of expense.

## Grounds

The exceptionally dry summer here in the mountains has somewhat reduced the required labor for mowing and trimming, but still almost 100 hours of labor have been expended to date this mowing season.

Kudzu will remain an ongoing issue to deal with because of the huge patch on the north side of the road which encircles the cemetery. Kudzu primarily propagates by runners, but it also spreads by seed. New growth has popped up in multiple locations in the cemetery, but we have stayed after it.

Thank you to the DeHart family (members Connie Pertillo and Barbara DeHart), who paid to have personal property on the west side of the cemetery thoroughly cleaned, with trees cut and undergrowth removed. This has considerably aided efforts to deal with the kudzu.

Poison ivy, which was also rampant when we began our work last year, has been tamed considerably.

So far this summer, only a single yellow jacket nest has been found (there were several last year), but it turned into a painful (10 sting) encounter. That particular nest was enthusiastically dispatched on the following evening by the stinger.

A nice load of crusher run gravel was donated and partially spread by Hillside Baptist Church. With a bit of manual labor, the driveway is now in quite good shape.

Alan Brown arranged to have a load of fill dirt delivered. Some of it has been used to fill in the worst holes, but more work is still needed.

All of our grounds work is strictly voluntary, and we need more volunteers. During this coming quarter, leaf removal will become a major task. Last year, leaf

removal required more than 40 hours of labor. Please contact Don Casada at 828-488-2358 to volunteer.

## Monuments

Six new stones have been acquired and placed at previously unmarked graves. The stones were purchased from WNC Marble and Granite, located between Marble and Murphy. They have been excellent to work with. Photos of the new markers are posted later in this newsletter.

During the winter, a couple of monuments tumbled over, and one headstone was broken in the process. The broken stone has been repaired (as best we could) and both have been reset and cemented to their bases. We will continue to have these sorts of things occur in the absence of preventive measures being taken.

A more troubling episode occurred this month (August). The large upright headstone of Epp Everett, Civil War veteran and early community leader for whom Everett Street is named, was pushed off its base by vandals.



**Tumbled headstone of Epaphroditus (Epp) Everett**

This marble monument, which is larger than it appears in the photo, weighs several hundred pounds and will require lifting equipment to restore it. Lee English has volunteered to help us with this, using his track hoe. Before it is reset, however, leveling work on the base is needed. We are in the process of designing and fabricating tools to help with taking care of not only the Everett, but other bases. Even with appropriate equipment, this is heavy work and will require multiple sets of hands. Please consider volunteering to help with this effort (you can contact Don at 828-488-2358 about this as well).

The heat of summer – and we’ve had plenty of it this year – does not make for pleasant marker cleaning days, but here are a couple of examples that we’ve worked on:



and Sarah (and other family members) are close to the cemetery entrance. Pat put a considerable amount of effort into her pieces, which cover family life from Caswell County to Burningtown, from the top of Schoolhouse Hill to Hazel Creek, on into Clay and Cherokee Counties, and from sticks of celery to the closet under the stairs. I think you’ll enjoy the reading. Bryson City resident and FBCC member Bob Sherrill is a grandson of Joseph and Sarah Wilson, grew up under their nurture and admonition, and remembers both fondly.

Member Wendy Meyers also put together a tribute to little Ida Galbreath (or Galbraith) based on a newspaper account in the Bryson City Times from 1895. Her grave marker is one which is pictured at the left.

The articles are available at the links below.

[Jackson and Ava Rilla Wilson](#)

[Joseph Henderson and Sarah Welch Wilson](#)

[Little Ida Galbreath](#)

#### **Welcomed visitors**

The school year began this week in Swain County. It was a pure delight when we found Mrs. Peggy Seay, 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher in Swain Middle School, taking her class through the cemetery to discuss the grounds and the lives of folks buried there. We strongly encourage school and church groups, civic organizations, and of course individuals and families to visit these hallowed and historic grounds – to enjoy the views and contemplate the lives of those laid to rest beneath the sod. We are plumb tickled to provide historical overviews for anyone interested.

#### **People and places – how many can you name?**

Here’s a quiz: List places in the area which bear the name of individuals buried in the Bryson City Cemetery. In addition to those named specifically for individuals, identify area places which bear the family names of those buried here. Send your lists to either address at the bottom of the page. In our next newsletter, we’ll list those which the editor and others identify.



#### **A little exposure**

The Smoky Mountain Times included an article about FBCC and what we’ve been up to in its July 14 issue. A copy of the images from that issue can be seen [here](#).

#### **Quarterly Biographical Sketches**

Member Pat Queen has provided a pair of biographical sketches of her Wilson ancestors, Jackson Lafayette and Ava Rilla Wilson (her great-great grandparents) and Rev. Joseph and Sarah Wilson (great-grandparents). Markers for Jackson and Ava Rilla are located just west of the driveway, while those of Joseph

### Memberships and Moneys

Joyce Cooper and Ivan Gibby have agreed (well, sort of – they were nominated, seconded, and quickly outnumbered in the vote) at our last monthly meeting to take on the extremely important task of leading the effort to grow our membership and raising funds to help with long-term maintenance and restoration of the cemetery grounds.

We are presently doing all of the grounds maintenance ourselves and paying only for associated expenses (gasoline, weed killer, etc.), so thanks to membership dues and donations, our bank account is gradually growing. But to be able to reach the longer-term goals of dealing with such matters as collapsing walls and more serious grounds maintenance, there are, in the words of Robert Frost, miles to go before we sleep. Please help Ivan and Joyce in this critical undertaking – ask friends and family to join the cause. Annual dues are \$20/person or \$30/family under one roof. Donations are welcome at any time, of course (mailing address is at the bottom of the page). Please consider including Friends of the Bryson City Cemetery as a memorial in lieu of flowers for loved ones as well as including a provision for FBCC in your own estate.

You can contact Joyce and Ivan directly (see below) or send a note to either of the FBCC addresses listed at the bottom of the page.

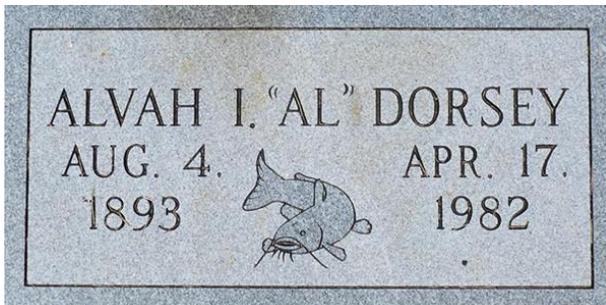
[jacooper1949@gmail.com](mailto:jacooper1949@gmail.com)

[ivangibby@yahoo.com](mailto:ivangibby@yahoo.com)

828-538-4830

### The new gravestones

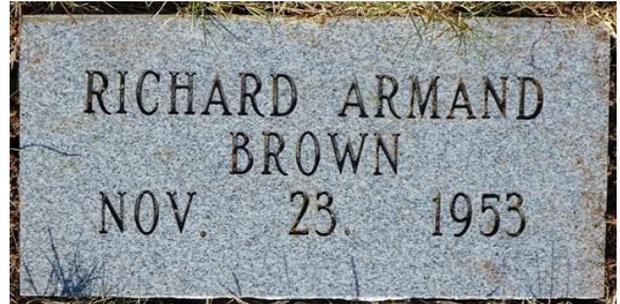
Here are the new grave markers (and sponsors):



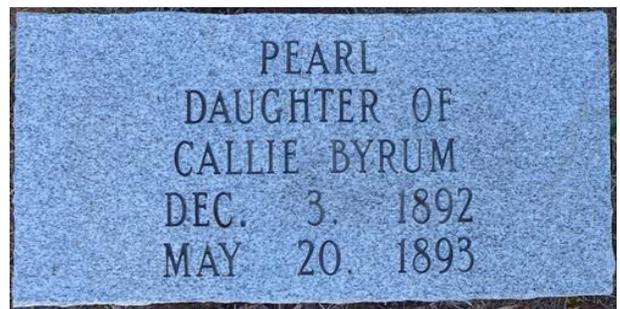
(Deacons of First Baptist Church and Jim Casada)



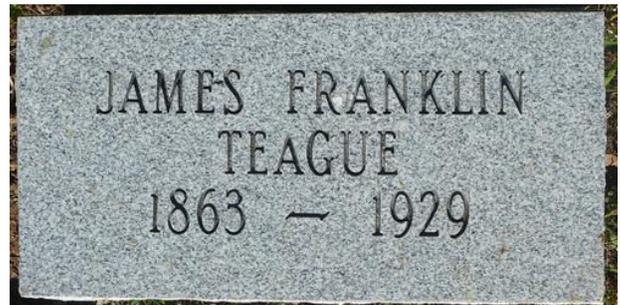
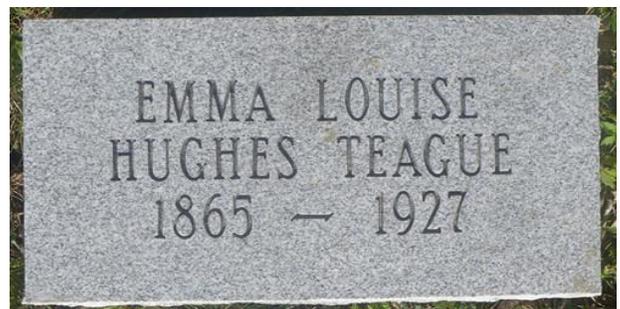
(Jean Douthit)



(Alan Brown)



(Friends of the Bryson City Cemetery)



(Casada family)



**Selah**

Friends of the Bryson City Cemetery, P.O. Box 2223, Bryson City NC 28713

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