

THE WADENA CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

A fire destroyed some of our records of earlier years but by bits and pieces recovered from old tombstones and other information given us we have managed to pull together a few facts concerning the beginnings of our cemetery.

The cemetery is not owned by the City of Wadena though it is within the confines of the City. Anyone owning a lot in the cemetery belongs to the Cemetery Association, and may attend any or all of the meetings of the Cemetery Board. The City of Wadena has in years past been most helpful to the Cemetery in a monetary way when the board found itself without funds to carry on the caretaking work during the summer months. The City supplies water and electricity and removes snow during the winter months. The Cemetery pays no tax.

L.R. Nyberg has been on the cemetery board for over thirty years, being chairman most of that time. Through his efforts and that of the board the Cemetery has become self-supporting. There has been much improvement, extension and improvement of the grounds, platting of existing land, planting trees and paving roadways.

A state law demands that a certain percent of monies received in payment of the lots be put into a perpetual-care fund, of which only the interest may be used for expenses.

We are proud of our Cemetery. We keep a caretaker and several part time helpers through the summer months. Vincent Smith was one such caretaker who while conscientiously at work died in the cemetery while performing his duties. Carl Nicholson, the present caretaker, has worked faithfully in the Cemetery a good many years.

Albert Lehman was chairman of the board during hard times of the thirties, and some folks couldn't afford to purchase a lot, so Albert apportioned a few plots at the South end of the cemetery for a "potters field". There are several graves there, among them that of a transient passing through Wadena and killed by a train, and never identified. From the records at that time we note that Albert was instrumental in cutting the speed limit to ten miles per hour; the caretaker being appointed to enforce that law.

After several years of deliberation, through the efforts of John F. Peterson and other interested citizens, a Mausoleum Association was organized. This consisted of board members of the Calvary Cemetery (Catholic) and our protestant cemetery board members. In 1945 the mausoleum, for winter storage, was built. This consists of a small chapel, and a storage room. This has proved almost satisfactory arrangement through the years, though there were misgivings in making this type of interment during the winter months, at first.

(Wadena) Cemetery Association PJ 1981

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One night in 1970 teenage vandals overturned at least hne hundred monuments in the cemetery. Workmen from a granite works in Little Falls spent a day replacing the overturned stones back on their bases at no cost to the cemetery. The boys responsible were caught and placed on parole for a time. The Cemetery Board pressed no charges

Except to enlarge and to beautify there has been little change in the cemetery. To remind us of days long gone there are several old iron hitching posts, where horses were tethered during interment services. There is also an old chain link fence still in use at the South end of the cemetery. In our search the oldest marker to be found bears the date 1820, but other stones crumbling away may have had a much earlier date.

There are more trees ^{than} usually found in cemeteries the size of ours which has made it a bird and squirrel sanctuary. A place of beauty and peace.

By Elmira Maxson.

Nostalgic Names from lists of
Board Membebs of long ago:

Ruby Haughey	E.T. Carroll
Lydia L. Coon	Alice Parker
Andrew Hall	Colonel Whitney
Eugene Boss	Carter Stedman
Edna Dower	Harold Parker
Fred Claydon	Vern Robertson
Maud V. Yetter	George Yetter
Nellie Field	Wesley Johnson

Present Board Members:

L.R. Nyberg, Chairman
Harold Sunby
Don Brown
Rex McDonald
Miles Rowe
Almirs Maxson