

Inscriptions

VOLUME 11, NO. 1

SPRING 2015

Remembering a Friend of President Jefferson Davis Abraham Weill

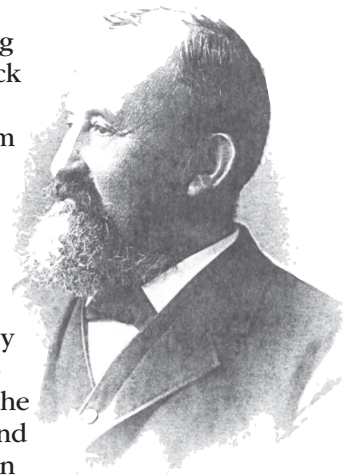
As the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the American Civil War winds down, Abraham Weill is remembered for his friendship and hospitality to President Jefferson Davis in the closing days of the war. Just before the surrender of General Johnston's army in 1865, the Weills were living in Charlotte and entertained the Davis family for several days as they hurriedly made their way from Richmond to their former home in Mississippi. The ex-president never forgot this kindness and remained in frequent contact with Weill for the remainder of his life. Also, Mrs. Davis mentions the family's hospitality in entries in her diary.

Weill was born on October 1, 1831 in Lamsheim, Rheinpfalz, Bavaria. He immigrated to America and arrived in Philadelphia in April 1848. The next year he came to



Wilmington to represent the firm of S.&T. Teller, a position he held until 1853, when he and S. Anthan established a dry goods and clothing business in the first block of Market Street. The general merchandise firm continued in business until 1865 when Mr. Anthan died.

When the Civil War broke out, Weill enlisted in the company raised by Col. John J. Hedrick. By 1862 he was sent to Charlotte to become a purchasing agent for the Confederacy, securing medical and hospital supplies for the southern cause. While in Charlotte, he also entertained Judah P. Benjamin, Secretary of State for the CSA.



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Calendar of Events



Friends of Oakdale Cemetery Annual Meeting

Tuesday, March 10, 2015, 12:00 noon.

Kenneth Sprunt Office Building, Oakdale Cemetery.

Friends of Oakdale Board Meetings

Second Tuesday of every month, 12:00 noon. Kenneth Sprunt Office Building, Oakdale Cemetery.

Easter Lily Sale

Deadline for ordering lilies is March 23, 2015. Easter is April 5, 2015. Once again, Friends of Oakdale is offering for sale full, fresh Easter lilies for the graves of loved ones. These lilies will be placed on graves in the week before Easter and will be removed when they wane. They are \$35.00. (See Easter lily order blank on page 4 of this newsletter).

Funerary Art Tour – Sunday, April 5, 2015, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m..

Easter Sunday Tour with Architectural historian, Janet Seapker, who will explain the evolution of the rural garden cemetery and the opening of Oakdale Cemetery in 1855. Ms. Seapker will focus on the symbolism of Victorian funerary art. \$10, non-members; free for members.

Horticulture Tour – Saturday, April 25, 2015, 10:00 a.m. to noon

Horticultural Tour led by Eelco Tinga and Eric Kozen, Oakdale Superintendent. These two gentlemen have a combined fifty years of horticultural experience. They will delight you with the knowledge of the flora of the cemetery. \$10, non-members; free for members.

Walking Tour – Saturday, May 16, 2015, 10:00 a.m. to noon

Local historian, Robin Triplett, will be the guide for the tour. Ms. Triplett will delight you with the history of the cemetery and tell some interesting tales of those who are interred in the cemetery. \$10, non-members; free for members.

Walking Tour – Saturday, June 20, 2015, 10:00 a.m. to noon

Kenneth Newland, a local historian, will lead this tour focusing on the

Civil War. Enjoy your stroll through Oakdale and hear interesting stories about some of the Civil War notables buried in the cemetery. \$10, non-members; free for members.

Flashlight Tour – Saturday, July 18, 2015, 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Historical walking tours of North Carolina's oldest rural cemetery will be given by local historians, Chris Fonvielle, Ed Gibson and Eric Kozen. Each of these gentlemen will lead you through the cemetery and speak about the history of Oakdale, Civil War veterans, Funerary Art as well as a glimpse of Oakdale's prominent citizens. Tour is from 8:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. \$15.00 per person. You must supply your own flashlight.

Flashlight Tour – Saturday, August 15, 2015, 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Chris Fonvielle, Ed Gibson and Eric Kozen will again lead a flashlight tour of the cemetery, concentrating on the varied history of the occupants of Oakdale. Tour is from 7:30 p.m. until 9:30 p.m. \$15.00 per person. You must supply your own flashlight.

Walking Tour – Saturday, Sept. 19, 2015, 10:00 a.m. to noon.

Mike Whaley, local historian, will be the guide for the walking tour. Mr. Whaley will tell some interesting stories about the folks interred in the cemetery. \$10, non-members; free for members.

Walking Tour – Saturday, October 17, 2015, 10:00 a.m. to noon

The leader of this tour will be David Rice, a local historian. Mr. Rice will be accompanied by Eric Kozen, Oakdale Superintendent. They will emphasize the time of the Yellow Fever Epidemic of 1862. \$10 for non-members; free for members.

Fifth Annual Luminary Event – Saturday, November 7, 2015

Tours depart main gate 6:15, 6:30, 6:45 and 7:00 p.m. Over 600 luminaries will line the route through the cemetery. The graves of Oakdale's medical doctors will be featured. Refreshments will be served. Admission is \$15.00 for everyone.



ALL TOURS ARE CANCELLED IN THE EVENT OF INCLEMENT WEATHER.

NEW & RENEWING MEMBERS

(Recorded between July 1, 2014 and December 31, 2014)

If you joined or renewed your membership during this time and we failed to list your name, please phone the office and we will correct the listing in the next issue of *Inscriptions*.

BENEFACTOR

\$1,000–\$2,499

Andrews Mortuary
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Mrs. Henry Longley

Mr. George Rountree, III
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SPONSOR

\$500–\$999

Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Dill

Mr. and Mrs. Michael C. Stovall, Jr.

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The Rev. and Mrs. Robert Cook
Ms. Martha Davis
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Mr. and Mrs. Donald W. Fisher
Mrs. Susan Flynn
Mr. Terry Fulbright
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Mr. and Mrs. Emsley A. Laney, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Harry Latimer
Mr. and Mrs. John Leonard
Mrs. Doris R. Lewis
Mrs. Mayo Little
Mr. and Mrs. David T. Lockey
Mr. Daniel H. Lockey, Jr.

Mr. Walter Love
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas P. May, Jr.
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Ms. Shirley M. Mikulas
Ms. Elaine H. Neuwirth
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Mr. and Mrs. John A. Newton, Jr.
Ms. Ann Nunnelee
Ms. Shirley Orrell
Mrs. Mary Palmer
Mrs. Walter L. Parsley
Dr. Frank Reynolds
Dr. Lloyd E. Roberts
Ms. Margaret Rorison
Dr. and Mrs. Marvin Rozear
Dr. and Mrs. Robert Schiffel
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Mr. and Mrs. Ben Steelman
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FAMILY

\$40–\$99

Mr. and Mrs. Richard (Skip) Albers
Mr. and Mrs. Pete Bieber
Mr. and Mrs. William M. Biggs
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Mr. and Mrs. Frank S. Conlon
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\$30

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Mrs. Anna Benton
Mrs. Imogene C. Biggs
Mrs. Elma Porter Bowden
Ms. Janis Carroll
Ms. Jo Chadwick
Mr. Joseph A. Clendenin
Mrs. Bonnie Cooper
Ms. Marie V. deRosset
Ms. Cornelia Doss
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Mrs. Marguerite Fey
Miss Pauline Formyduval
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Mrs. Kay Skandalakis
Mrs. Judith McFadyen Smith
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Mrs. Geraldine Steel
Ms. Caroline N. Swails
Mr. Ernest F. Tienken
Mrs. George F. Tilley
Ms. Feriba Weltin
Mr. John Winecoff
Ms. Julia S. Worth
Ms. Carla Ann Yeager

STUDENT

\$15

Mr. Francis "Chad" Farriss
Mrs. Sandra L. High

Master Robert Henry Ziegler

A REMINDER

To all the Friends of Oakdale, when receiving this periodic publication news and events of the Friends, this is not a reminder of your membership status. The Membership Committee sends out a specific letter. These letters are mailed to you annually when the time arrives according to the month you had renewed last or joined.

VOLUNTEERS WELCOMED!

If you would like to become more involved with the Friends of Oakdale Cemetery, Inc., we have lots of opportunities for you.

 **910-762-5682** 

Abraham Weill

Continued from front page

In May 1865, Weill was appointed an alderman of the city of Charlotte and assisted in framing the charter and ordinances of that city. Following his resignation as alderman, he returned to Wilmington for a short time. After establishing a wholesale clothing business in Philadelphia in 1867, he moved his family and business back to Wilmington in 1869. He remained in that business until 1879, when he accepted a position as soliciting agent for the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, a position that he held at his death.

His wife, the former Barbara Mayer, predeceased him in 1885. The couple had eight children – three sons and five daughters. One of his sons,



Solomon, was a distinguished lawyer and New York State Assemblyman and was the first Jewish graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The elder Weill

was a faithful member of the Temple of Israel, the Order of B'Nai B'rith and the Royal Arcanum and North State Lodge No. 222. He was also a member of the True Brothers Burial Society, which was instrumental in establishing the Hebrew section in Oakdale Cemetery.

In 1902, Weill either fell or jumped into the Cape Fear River from a dock between Orange and Ann streets. He was pulled out by two laborers who were working nearby and carried to

his boarding house at 517 Dock Street, where two days later he died.

At his funeral, the Cape Fear Camp, United Confederate Veterans honored his service to the Confederacy. His grave in Oakdale Cemetery is marked by a handsome obelisk and a smaller stone which tells of his famous encounter with Jefferson Davis.



SOURCE: Bill Reaves File of Wilmington Newspapers, North Carolina Room, New Hanover County Public Library. ❖

Funerary Art

Oakdale Cemetery has some wonderful examples of Victorian Funerary Art. In this newsletter, we have highlighted an example of a Tree Stone. A healthy tree is nurtured in the landscape and grows to a good height. Suddenly, something tragic occurs to the tree and the limbs and trunk are severed, symbolizing the early loss of life. The accompanying photograph of the tree stone shows two trees out of one trunk, which signifies that the two graves beneath the stone are those of a married couple. Tree Stones were a short lived cemetery fad, lasting only about twenty years or so, starting



in the 1880s. Monuments during this period were geared towards individuality and designed to stand out from the rest.

There were other versions of tree stones, most notably those from the Woodmen of the World Insurance Agency. It was part of your policy with them to have your grave marked with such a marker. Unfortunately this became an expensive endeavor for the Company and they discontinued covering the marker in their policies. They did offer a separate rider policy if clients wanted the stone. ❖



Project of the Friends

An ongoing Friends' project has been the restoration of some of the pipe rail fencing in the cemetery. This style evolved from the more ornate cast iron fencing. The pipe rail style was a much more economical way to delineate a family lot. Time has taken a toll on this fencing. Some of the pipes have been removed or rusted away. The Friends have had two molds made of the ornate ends, which allows the pipe to be connected to the granite or marble foundations. Thus far, over twenty lots have been restored. ❖



BOARD MEMBERS UPDATE

We welcome a new member to the Friends of Oakdale Cemetery Board. Nell Hooper Graham was born and raised in Wilmington. Her husband, Fred, is also a native. They have four married children and nine grandchildren. She has always had an interest in Oakdale Cemetery and is very excited to be on the Board. As a child, she and her family always visited the cemetery after church. Her grandmother, Louise Hooper, told her stories of the girl in the rum cask, the fireman and his dog and the Confederate spy, Rose O'Neill Greenhowe. Nell has taken several of the historical tours and is very interested in the history and preservation of the cemetery. She has been a broker with Intracoastal Realty Company for twenty-one years and enjoys her work and her clients.

Nell replaces Tee Woodbury, who has served two terms on the Friends Board. Tee has contributed many hours as one of the editors of the newsletter and has consented to continue serving the Friends as an ex-officio member of the Board.

Friends of Oakdale Cemetery, Inc.

520 North 15th Street
Wilmington, NC 28401

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Eric Kozen, *Superintendent*
Oakdale Cemetery Company

Inscriptions is published periodically.
Ann Hutteman and Tee Woodbury, *Editors*

Order Your Easter Lilies NOW



**ORDERS MUST BE PLACED BY
MONDAY, MARCH 23, 2015**

Friends of Oakdale Cemetery are offering
for sale full, fresh Easter Lilies for graves of loved ones.

**\$35 for members & non-members of
Friends of Oakdale Cemetery.**

These lilies are **beautiful, substantial two-stemmed plants**
with foil and a bow.

(NOT THE SINGLE-STEMS THE DISCOUNT STORES SELL.)



**Easter
is April 5.**

*The lilies will be placed on
the graves starting the week
before Easter and will be
removed when they wane.*

**PLEASE MAIL THIS
FORM WITH
YOUR CHECK
MADE PAYABLE TO:**

**Friends of
Oakdale
Cemetery, Inc.**

520 North Fifteenth St.
Wilmington, NC 28401

(910) 762-5682

Please provide the name of the person(s) buried on the lot:

NAME OF DECEASED: _____ NAME OF DECEASED: _____

NAME OF DECEASED: _____ NAME OF DECEASED: _____

Please provide your name, address, phone number in case we need to contact you for further information.

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____ E-MAIL _____