History of Lambrecht Cemetery Association of Pierce County, Nebraska

1984-2020

Providing sufficient revenue for payment of costs for maintaining a cemetery has always been an issue for the Lambrecht Cemetery Association, and its predecessor in name. As the word "association" in its title indicates, it is a group of people associating together for a common purpose, i.e., a burial ground for the deceased former members of that group and their minor children. A cemetery association is an entity created by applicable statutes of the State of Nebraska. In 1883, when the Pleasant View Cemetery Association was formed in the home of August and Louise Lambrecht, the cemetery association statutes were codified in Chapter 11 of the Nebraska statutes. Today, those same statutes are located in Chapter 12 of the Nebraska statutes. Those statutes proscribe, among other items, the method of raising funds for the general maintenance and capital improvements of the cemetery grounds through the sale of burial spaces and monetary assessments of the members of the association. Obviously, monetary donations and free labor on behalf of the Cemetery Association are always welcome. The assessment process is straightforward. Essentially, if you own a burial space in the cemetery, the cemetery association should levy an annual

assessment upon that burial space for the general upkeep of the cemetery. If the assessment is not paid for a period of three years, the cemetery association has the statutory authority to reclaim the burial space and resell it to another person. Review the treasurer's ledger book for 1939. Note the \$1.00 payments and the \$2.00 payment for two Lots. Those were payments of the annual assessments for the prior fiscal year of the Lambrecht Cemetery Association. Twelve

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families were providing financial support for the maintenance of the Lambrecht

Cemetery. As these family members died or they moved on to another location, the members paying assessments declined and so did the financial health of the Lambrecht Cemetery.

The same state statutes provide for there to be an annual meeting of the members of a cemetery association. There exists a secretary's book for the Lambrecht Cemetery Association for the annual meetings of the Association

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members beginning in 1946 to the present year. We know that the original secretary's book was lost in a fire at the Homer Birch farmstead. We also know that the minutes of the early meetings of the Association were typed and recorded with the Pierce County Register of Deeds in 1938 when the members of the Association changed the name of the Association to the Lambrecht Cemetery Association.

The secretary's book beginning in 1946 to 2020 for the Lambrecht Cemetery Association has been copied and is on this website under the History tab. The original has been donated to the Pierce County Historical Society. Reading the minutes of those meetings is to gain an insight into the care and maintenance that the members over the years have placed into the cemetery

and also an insight into the many financial struggles of the members on behalf of the Cemetery Association. An example is the minutes of the 1953 annual meeting.

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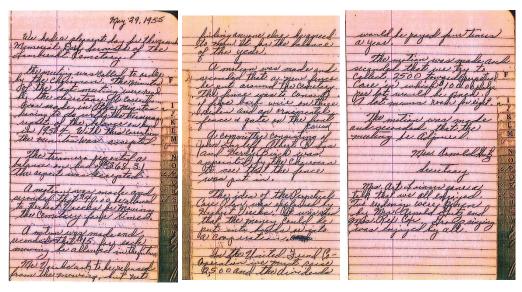
These annual meetings were usually held on the Sunday before Memorial Day, which before 1971 was May 30th of each year. They were first held in School District No. 22's schoolhouse which was known locally

as the Tawney school. This schoolhouse was located just a quarter mile or less northwest of the Lambrecht Cemetery. These minutes of the 1953 annual meeting reflect that the annual assessment was to be \$5.00 for each Lot owner. Remember, a Lot consisted of eight burial spaces. The annual meetings continued to be held at the Tawney schoolhouse until that school district dissolved. The meetings were then held in the Birch school located a mile or so east of the Lambrecht Cemetery until it no longer was a public school at which time the meetings were held in the private homes of members of the Cemetery Association or at the Lambrecht Cemetery itself, and more recently, at the United Church of Christ church in Pierce, Nebraska.

Paying the ongoing expenses of the Cemetery Association through revenues generated by the sale of Lots and assessments levied upon the members of the Cemetery Association left the officers of the Cemetery Association struggling to pay for the general maintenance of the cemetery, the main expense being the periodic mowing of the grasses and other vegetation growing in the cemetery. Ideally, the annual assessments upon the members of the Cemetery Association should have covered and paid for the annual expenses of maintaining the cemetery. However, it is evident that not all assessments were paid. Considering the relationships and the friendships among the members of the Cemetery Association, no attempt was made by the officers of the Cemetery Association to collect those unpaid assessments or to start the reclaiming process of the Cemetery Lots owned by the non-paying members. Was there a better method of raising money for the Cemetery Association?

The treasurer's ledger book from 1923 to 1990 for the Lambrecht Cemetery Association has been copied and is on this website under the History tab. The original has also been donated to the Pierce County Historical Society. The last entry in it for collection of assessments is in the year 1955. Why were there no assessments paid after that year? The answer is in the secretary' book. At the 1954 annual meeting of the members of the Cemetery Association, it was proposed by Herbert Voecks, a grandson of August and Louise Lambrecht and the eventual donor, with his wife, Leona, of the entrance arch to the Lambrecht Cemetery, that a perpetual care fund be created for the Cemetery Association. No action was taken. However, at the 1955 annual meeting, it was agreed that a perpetual care fund be created by each Lot owner contributing \$100.00 for a total of \$2500.00 and the money be invested in United Fund Cooperative, the

dividends of which would be paid four times per year to the Cemetery Association and used to pay the ongoing annual expenses of the Cemetery Association. In the



minutes of the 1957 annual meeting, it was reported that the \$1600.00 invested in the United Fund had grown to \$1995.77.

Does this imply that sixteen families had contributed \$100.00 per family to the perpetual care fund and nine families of the initial twenty-five families had not contributed? Presumably so. Through investments, sale of burial spaces, and monetary donations to the Cemetery Association by its members, the Cemetery Association, since 1955, has been able to pay its annual expenses without levying an annual assessment upon its members. When available funds have been scarce, the officers of the Cemetery Association have requested those interested

in the Lambrecht Cemetery to make voluntary

Association. It was reported in the 1996 minutes of the annual meeting that Winell (Buss)
Suckstorf, as Treasurer, had sent a letter to numerous families and individuals requesting a monetary donation of them to the Lambrecht Cemetery to pay the expenses of its maintenance. She reported that the responses and donations had helped the Lambrecht Cemetery's cash flow.

year 1995:		
Mary and Leota Pittack	Norfolk, NE	
Lloyd and Erma Kuhl	Council Bluffs, IA	
Beth (Kuhl) Petersen	Marvsville Kansas	
Clarence and Winell Suckstorf-	Pierce, NE	
Jack and Norma Donaugh	Morivia, IA	
Gerhart Kuhl	Plainview, NE	
Alyce Sporleder (Honzu)	Pierce, NE	
Joann Voecks (Danny)	Arizona	89
Ethel (Turek) Retz###	Wausa. Ne	
Pat Kuether (Gordon)	Pierce, NE	
Leona Voecks (Herbert)	Grand Island, NB	
Delilah (Buss) Johnson		
Rod and Lajcan Price	Lincoln, NE	
Lloyd Synovec	North Platte, NE	
Maxine Gutz	Foster, NE	
Maxine (Lambrecht) Patrick	Seattle, Wash.	
Mildred Petersen (Wachholz)	Plainview, NE	
Delbert Kreuger	Pierce, Ne	
Wilma (Kreuger) Griffith	Wheatridge, Colo.	
Susan Viola (Kreuger) Evans	Arnold, Maryland	
Darlene (Kreuger) Bassford		
George Kreuger	Banning, Calif.	
Fred and Helen Wachholz	Pierce, NE	
Derothy (Kuhl) Lindahl-		
Vivian (Wachholz) Cox		
Louise (Wachholz) Braddly		
Rosemary Suckstorf (Martin)		
Lester Synovec		
For the year 1996:	,	
Maxine (Lambrecht) Patrick	Seattle, Wash	18
Chuck and Arlene Price	Pierce, NE	
FRONIE VOECKS	PIERCE NE	

A list of those contributing was added to the minutes of that annual meeting.

In reviewing the minutes of the annual meetings of the members of the Cemetery Association, note the minutes of the 1983 through 1985 annual meetings and the paragraphs relative to locating unmarked/unoccupied grave sites. It is apparent in those minutes that the determination of the location of a grave site in the Lambrecht Cemetery was based upon measurements from the Pierce County Historical Society boulder/rock located at the entrance gate to the Lambrecht Cemetery. Apparently, the committee formed to propose and develop a better system of measurement did not immediately accomplish their task. However, the 1987 annual meeting minutes state that the graves in the cemetery had been marked so it will be easier to find them in the winter. What this marking system consisted of is not stated and was not foolproof. This was evident in 2016 when Winell (Buss) Suckstorf, the Lambrecht Cemetery Association Treasurer, related that in the winter of 2013, after the death of a young child, she and Shirley (Voecks) Hoffman, Secretary of the Lambrecht Cemetery Association, on a very cold, snowy, and windy day, had attempted to locate the burial space for the deceased child so that the grave could be dug. They did their best to measure and locate its location, but they ultimately discovered, well after the committal, that they had missed the mark. There had to be a better system of locating burial spaces.

In calendar year 2016, the officers of the Lambrecht Cemetery Association authorized Loren Lindahl, a great grandson of August and Louise Lambrecht, to work with the JEO Consulting Group, an engineering/surveying company, to locate the corners of the twenty-five Blocks in the cemetery. If the corners of a Block were located, then it would be a matter of measuring from one or more of those corners to find and locate the burial spaces in that Block. Once before, the corners of the Blocks had been located and marked. Referring to the 1937 article in the Pierce County Leader newspaper (History tab-History 1883-1938) regarding the Lambrecht Cemetery, it is stated that "In 1894 red cedar stakes were placed to mark lots at a cost of \$3.15." Later in the same article, it is said that "In 1910 it was voted to replace the red cedar marking stakes with bricks set one inch above the ground." The first statement implies that these red cedar marking states were set at the corners of all of the Lots, which would include the four corners of each Block. The second statement would imply that those red cedar stakes had been removed and replaced with red bricks protruding one inch above the ground. In 2013, no red bricks could be seen in the Lambrecht Cemetery. It was

apparent that they had deteriorated or been covered up with accumulating soil, or both. But what about the red cedar stakes? Had they been removed? There was no visual evidence that they existed. To answer these questions would require additional effort.

On a warm early August day in 2016, three members of JEO and Loren Lindahl met at the Lambrecht Cemetery to look for buried red cedar stakes. The three



members of JEO had brought with them various surveying tools and a sod cutting machine. Based upon their research of the measurements utilized by Mr. Bishop in his original survey of the Lambrecht Cemetery in 1883, which identified an acre 5 chains (330 feet) and 77 links (609.84 inches) east of the Northwest

Section 25-26-4, they were able to determine where the corners of the Blocks were and by inference, where there should be buried a red cedar stake. The sod cutter was employed to remove the top layer of sod at a corner of a Block and then shovel and spade and eventually a trowel was used to dig into the ground in search of a red cedar stake. Success was instantaneous. The first red cedar stake was found hiding below the surface of the ground.



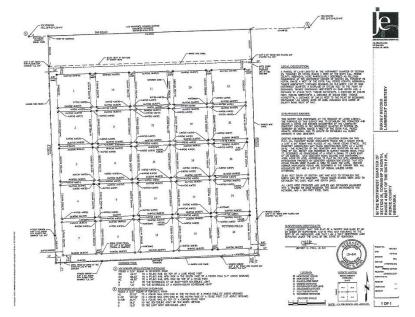


Amazingly, the GPS surveying coordinates of the location of that red cedar stake matched almost exactly the location based upon the Bishop survey and plat.

corner of

The JEO crew then moved onto the next Block corner and subsequent Block corners in search of red cedar stakes. Many were found. Some were not. Evidence of red bricks was only occasionally found. The wood red cedar stakes had survived through the years. The red bricks had not.

The next step for the JEO crew was to establish through the use of GPS the location of the corners of each Block and then to drive rebar into the ground at



each Block corner location. An outer boundary survey was also completed, and a detailed plat prepared of the Lambrecht Cemetery.

Realizing that the top of a 5/8ths inch thick rebar at ground level is not easy to locate without a metal detector, in 2017 it was determined that each rebar should contain on it a survey marker cap. On each

survey marker cap would be the number of the Block which it is marking, an arrow positioned to point to the center of the Block, and the words "Lambrecht Cemetery, Pierce County, Nebraska, 1883-2017." Now, locating burial spaces in each Block is much easier than measuring from a rock.

Now that JEO had a current legal description for the Lambrecht Cemetery acre of burial grounds, this would be the appropriate time to revise the August and Louise deed to the cemetery by updating the legal description. The minutes of the Pleasant View Cemetery Association of October 1, 1883, reflect that a deed had been prepared, given to August and Louise Lambrecht



to sign, acknowledged, and given to the President, Joseph Forsythe, to take to the Pierce County Register of Deeds for recording. However, a search of the deed records of the Pierce County Register of Deeds did not reveal that deed. For whatever cause or reason, the deed of October 1, 1883, to the Pleasant View Cemetery was never recorded with the Pierce County Register of Deeds. What to do now?

After the JEO survey, the Lambrecht Cemetery Association had a current legal description for the Lambrecht Cemetery. Obviously, August and Louise

Lambrecht had passed on and were lying in their graves in the Lambrecht Cemetery. They could not execute a deed conveying their one acre of land to the Lambrecht Cemetery Association. Fortunately, the land upon which the Lambrecht Cemetery was situated was still owned by a relative of August and Louise Lambrecht. The relative and owner was Jeff Lambrecht, a great great grandson of August and Louise, and his wife, Amy. In May of 2017, Jeff and Amy executed a deed conveying the land upon which is situated the Lambrecht Cemetery to the Lambrecht Cemetery Association of Pierce County, Nebraska. That deed was then given to the Pierce County Register of Deeds to record and index against the NW1/4 of Section 25, Township 26 North, Range 4 West of the 6th P.M., Pierce County, Nebraska. Finally, after 134 years, legal title to the burial grounds of the Lambrecht Cemetery Association was in its name and title.

Another issue facing the members of the Lambrecht Cemetery Association was Lots and burial spaces in the cemetery which appear from the Bishop plat and the Voecks plat to be owned by individuals or families who had either died and were buried elsewhere or had moved from the area of the cemetery and had no further interest in the cemetery or in being buried in it when they died. There may have been a written record of those Lots and burial spaces being returned to the Cemetery Association in the original secretary's book, but those records were destroyed in the Homer Birch house fire of 1943. Those Lots and burial spaces needed to be reclaimed by the Cemetery Association and again made available for sale.

Fortunately, the Nebraska statutes pertaining to cemetery associations do provide a mechanism for the reclaiming of unused burial spaces. However, it is based on annual assessments being levied upon the members of the cemetery association and those annual assessments being unpaid for three or more years. As noted above, the Lambrecht Cemetery Association has not been levying an annual assessment since 1955. However, another clause of the Nebraska statutes relative to cemetery associations states that if there has been no burial in a burial space for twenty years and no assessment paid in that time, then the cemetery association may begin the process of reclaiming those burial spaces. Obviously, in 2018, those burial spaces on the Bishop and Voecks plats which indicated owners who were no longer in the area or who had died, more than twenty years had elapsed, and no assessments had been paid in that time period. (Of course, no assessments had been levied in that time either)

Accordingly, at the 2018 annual meeting of the members of the Lambrecht Cemetery Association, it was determined to proceed to reclaim those "spoken for" but "unused" burial spaces. This was accomplished through publications of several legal notices in the area newspapers to the alleged owners of those Lots

and burial spaces. At the 2019 annual meeting of the Lambrecht Cemetery Association, the members adopted a Resolution declaring those

LAMBRECHT CEMETERY RECLAIMED BURIAL SPACES

August 18, 2019

LAMBRECHT CEMETERY ASS OF PIERCE COUNTY, NEB	
PARTICULAR TANADA TANADA	

WHERBAS, the Board of Truston of Lum'reubt Cemetery Association of Pierce Cotaly, Nebraska, zeromby levely of the Lumbrach Cornetory Association of Pierce County, Nebraska, a Nebraska y Association funds opurament to Neb. New Stat \$12.504 is now, and within it he legal owner of the olds Carnetory Jocated in Willow Creek Township, Pierce County, Nebrasko, and,

WHERHAS, Neb. Rev. Stat. §505(2) provides a procedure for the Board of Trustees of a Cornekry sides to reclaim unused burist spaces in a Cornetery governed by an Association for which there has burish for more from twenty (20) years; and,

WHIREAS, five (5) Legal Neiloes as to the unoccupied Burlat Spaces in the Lembreuist Canadery for them are records, zow exhaling or which may have outfird in the prest but which no longer can be brand, on that these monocined Burlat Spaces in the Lambereuit Canadery were it nor the owner. In the Canader Swanger and the State of the Canader State of the Canader Swanger and the Petron Lander Namager and in the Editories Ween, recompany to forcent devalation in Please Canader.

WHERHASI, the Certification of Shirley A. Hoffman, Clerk of the Board of Trustees of Lambecht y Association of Pierce County, Nebraska, as to said Legal Notices and their publications, is attached ad incorporated incrin by reference and attached to said Certification are the aforemeted Legal Notice.

NOW, THERNHORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of Lumbrecht Cemetraly clietton of Pierce County, Nebraka, as follows:

That the following Buriel Space(s) in the Lambrookt Cometury are learnly reclaimed by umbreacht Cometury Association of Pierces County, Rebreaks, to writ:

4. That stough it is atmitted by required that a verified copy of this Resolution, together with out of polithenation of the required Legal Notions, to filled in the office of the Pierce County ClastRegistic Deads, the Pierce County ClastRegistic Ol Nools has no shifty in recent and their cost all Annations and of effice to less not continuous years to be called the recording and Intelesting Countery Deads for my of the another is benefall in Pierce County, Noberdon. Therefore, the advented statistics requirement is found.

DATED: August 18, 2019.



"spoken for" but	BLOCK	BURIAL SPACES RECLAIMED/AVAILABLE
•	1	A1-6; B1; B3-8; C3-4; C7-8; D1-8
"unused" burial	2	A1-8; B1-5; B7-8; C3-6; C8; D5-8
	3	A1-8; B1-4; B6-8; C3-8; D2; D4-8
spaces in the	4	A1-8; C1-5; C7-8; D1-8
•	5	A1-8; B1-8; C1-8; D1-6
Lambrecht	6	A1-8; B2-8; C4-8; D5-8
	7	A2-4; B1-4; B7-8; C2-8; D1-8
Cemetery as	8	A1-8; B2-4; B6-8; C1; C6-8; D1-8
•	9	A2-4; A6-8; B1-8; C1-8; D3-4; D6-8
being reclaimed	10	A1-3; A5-7; B1-7; C1-8; D2; D5-7
being rediamiled	11	C1-2; C4; C6; D4-8
by the	12 13	A5-6; B3-5; D1-4; D8 B1; D1; D8
by the	14	A1-4; A6; B1-4; C1-3; C7-8; D-1
Lambrecht	15	A1-8; B1-8; C2-8; D4-8
Lambredite	16	A8; B1; B3; B8; C1-8; D1-5
Cemetery	17	A2-4; A8; B1-8; C1; C3-5; D1-8
Semeter,	18 .	A1; B1-8; C1-3; C6-8; D1-8
Association and	19	A2-3; B1-8; C1-2; D1; D3-4; D5-8
	20	A1-3; A5-7; B2; B5-8; C1-5; C7-8; D2-4; D5-8
available for	21	A1-3; A5-8; B1-8; C5-8; D5-8
available for	22	A2-4; A6; B1-6; C1-4; C7-8; D2-8
sale.	23	A1-5; B1-8; C7-8; D7-8
Juic.	. 24	A1-6; A8; B1-5; B7-8; C1-6; C8; D1-8
	25	A1-2; A4-8; B1-2; B4-8; C1-2; C4-8; D1-2; D4-8

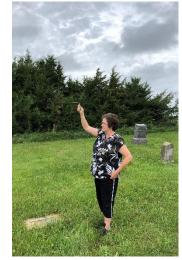
DESIGN A



Another concern of the members of the Lambrecht Cemetery Association was the location of unmarked graves. Unmarked graves could be as the result of there never being a headstone or tombstone for the deceased's burial site or if

there had been a wooden or temporary marker, it had deteriorated and been lost over time. The names on the Bishop plat and the Voecks plats indicating locations of burial sites were

reviewed and compared with the physical evidence of a burial site, such as a marker of some permanency, in the Lambrecht Cemetery were reviewed. That review determined that there were unmarked graves in the Lambrecht Cemetery. The question was how to verify that there were burials in those alleged unmarked graves.

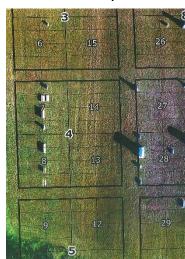


Exhumations were not feasible. The next best process would be the non-scientific but fairly common practice of "witching" the Lambrecht Cemetery for unmarked graves. Enter Judy Carlson of nearby Wausa, Nebraska. Judy has a long history of interest in cemeteries in northeast Nebraska and has a reputation of being able to locate unmarked graves by the use of two copper wires. Judy was contacted to "witch" the Lambrecht Cemetery for unmarked graves and a date and time was determined. Judy walked and "witched" the Lambrecht Cemetery on September 3, 2018. Unmarked graves were located. Several, in Block 25, Potter's Field, were discovered in locations other than as indicated on the Bishop and Voecks plats. Judy can also determine by lifting one copper rod above her head while standing on or close to a grave the age and sex of an infant burial. Sex is determined by the rotation of the rod, either to the left or to the right, and the age by the number of full rotations of the rod.



Another project of the Lambrecht Cemetery

Association was also undertaken in the fall of 2018. This project was to determine the locations of tombstones in relation to their supposed burial



space. JEO's survey work produced GPS coordinates for the Lambrecht Cemetery. Now a drone could be employed to take aerial photos of the Lambrecht Cemetery. Those photos could then be superimposed over the location of each Block in the Lambrecht Cemetery, with the burial spaces drawn in, and the location of each tombstone would be shown relative to its burial space. The result is an aerial photo of each Block showing the tombstones on that Block and their location in relation to the burial spaces. "Witching" will then determine, such as in the Block 4 photo, if the burials were to the front or to the back of the tombstones.

The next large capital improvement project for the members of the Lambrecht Cemetery Association would be to enhance the appearance of the Lambrecht Cemetery by addressing the issues of tombstones needing cleaning and of straightening tilting and leaning tombstones. This project would be known as the Tombstone Restoration Project for which there is a special section of this website.