



Photo courtesy of Paula Hinkel

Savannah Update

El Monte Cemetery Association

Volume 3, Number 3

March 2009

Letter from Your President

Dear Family and Friends of Savannah,

2009 is moving fast and the economy is slow. I wish you and your families good health and all the best. We have been blessed by your support as well as that of the City of Rosemead.



Our Annual Meeting was held on January 10, 2009. Anna Guess Pick and Victor Haddox have concluded their terms on the Board and elected not to run again for the Board. They both are greatly appreciated and will continue to do wonderful work for Savannah. Walter White was nominated for the Board and was elected unanimously. Mr. White's family plot holds many that contributed much to the San Gabriel Valley. We welcome Walter to the Board and appreciate his service.

I urge all of you to come to the Memorial Day Clean-Up and grave decorating which will be on Saturday, May 23, 2009 starting at 9:00 a.m. Memorial Day Ceremonies will take place on Monday, May 25, 2009 at 10:30 a.m. This year please bring your families. They should see and learn about this historic place. The Savannah absolutely needs to be preserved for all future generations.

Your Board is moving forward to attain historic status for the Savannah. Heather Hooper and Sue Redding, members of our Board have worked above and beyond to complete the California Historic Landmark application. We are going to ask both the cities of El Monte and Rosemead to declare Savannah a historic site by resolution. After 159 years in existence, it is appropriate.

The City of Rosemead was incorporated in 1959 and Savannah became the oldest historic site in the City. On behalf of all the supporters of Savannah, I wish the City of

Rosemead a "Happy 50th Anniversary". The people of Rosemead have been exceedingly supportive. Savannah has become a part of their pride.

Please monitor our website (www.savannahcemetery.org). There are some very important events that will be announced shortly.

Sincerely,
E. Randy Wiggins
President

*May 23, 2009
9:00 a.m.
Annual Clean-Up
Bring your family and
come help tidy up
your family plot or the
cemetery in general.*



MEMORIAL DAY



*May 25, 2009 -
10:30 a.m.
Come join us for an
inspiring ceremony.*

Inside

Notable Quotable	2
An Early Pioneer . . .	2
Calendar of Upcoming Events	2
Financial News	3
Our Generous Supporters	3
Thank You, M. C. Gill Corporation	3
From the Past	4

NOTABLE QUOTABLE

“However brilliant an action, it should not be esteemed great unless the result of a great motive.”

Francois de La Rochefoucauld, *Maxims*, 1665



An Early Pioneer . . .

James Bascom Freer

James Bascom Freer, the second son of William H. Freer, whose name is known and honored throughout Southern California as that of a pioneer, was born in Trenton, Grundy County, Missouri, April 15, 1843, remaining a resident of his native state until 1849, when he was brought across the plains to California.

Although a child of but six years, the events of that ever-memorable journey remained fresh in his mind until his death. His duty was to assist in driving the cattle on the six months trip and although parties ahead and behind them were attacked by the Indians, they were mercifully spared this added trial.

Leaving Missouri in April they arrived in California in September, and in 1850 they located in San Jose, being interested principally in the raising of grain. In 1869, he came as far south as Ventura County and purchased a stock ranch in Hopper canyon, improved the place and at the same time raised cattle in the mountains. He remained a resident of that section until 1884, when he located north of El Monte, conducted his father's place for two years, then farmed in the Rowland tract near Puente, for several years. In 1888 he went to Oregon and near Pennington, Umatilla County, he followed stock raising for two years, after which, for one year, he was located in Puente. In 1891 he located on a tract east of El Monte, consisting of forty-five acres, at that time all set in walnuts.

In Santa Clara County, March 25, 1868, Mr. Freer was united in marriage with Miss Sarah Hopper, who was born near Lone Jack, Missouri. Her father, Ari, was born in Indiana and removed to Missouri, where he engaged in farming. In 1850



<i>Calendar of Upcoming Events</i>	
April 4, 2009 10:00 a.m.	Board of Directors Meeting
May 23, 2009 9:00 a.m.	Annual Clean-Up at Savannah
May 25, 2009 10:30 a.m.	Memorial Day Ceremony

he crossed the plains to California by means of ox teams, and for a time following his arrival, worked in the mines. He returned to Missouri by way of the Isthmus of Panama, and in 1852 once more made the trip across the plains, bringing his wife and two children to California. They located first in Petaluma and then in the Santa Clara Valley. In

1859, Mr. Hopper settled in Ventura County, where he purchased land in what was afterward known as Hopper Canyon. He farmed there for many years, eventually removing to Covina, where he spent his last days, dying January 22, 1898, at the age of seventy-six years. He was survived by his wife, formerly Susan Easley, a native of North Carolina, whose parents removed to Missouri, when she was a child. She passed away at Covina, November 18, 1905, at the age of seventy-eight years.

In 1911, Mr. Freer retired from active work on his ranch, and, with Mrs. Freer, moved to Monrovia where they purchased a home. Here they spent the remainder of their lives. Mrs. Freer died in 1918, five years before the death of her husband, in 1923.

Mr. and Mrs. Freer became the parents of eight children, Albert, Eldridge, and Wallace, engineers residing in Santa Paula, George of Monrovia, Ida, (Mrs. Avis) of Monterey Park, Henry of Ojai, and Mary and Nettie, the last two being now deceased.

Mr. and Mrs. Freer were members of the Baptist Church, and politically Mr. Freer was an active Democrat, having on a number of occasions, acted as a delegate to County Conventions. He was a member of the Los Angeles County Pioneers.

Source:
http://www.cagenweb.com/re/losangeles/EIMonteBios/FREER_JameSB.htm

Financial News

	<i>Year Ended</i>
	<i>12/31/08</i>
<i>Donations</i>	<i>\$27,293.92</i>
<i>Plot sales/burials</i>	<i>6,450.00</i>
<i>Other income</i>	<i>6,500.21</i>
<i>Total Income</i>	<i>\$40,244.13</i>
<i>Administrative expenses</i>	<i>\$4,354.90</i>
<i>Cemetery maintenance</i>	<i>28,393.20</i>
<i>Utilities</i>	<i>7,111.30</i>
<i>Other expenses</i>	<i>12,090.72</i>
<i>Total Expenses</i>	<i>\$51,950.12</i>
<i>Net Income (Loss)</i>	<i>\$(11,705.99)</i>

*Help balance these numbers! Send a donation:
El Monte Cemetery Association
P. O. Box 4247
El Monte, California 91734*

OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS



- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Joy Allen | Ken Pike |
| Don & Mary Alley | Betsy & Howard Rigdon |
| Patricia Capone | Ronald Roesner |
| Consolidated Disposal | Rosemead Moose Lodge |
| Melinda Chase Cook | Robyn & Bruce Stee |
| Kate Godfrey | Mary Lee Tippet |
| Nancy & Stan Goldbloom | James & Diane Tollefson |
| Victor Haddox | Janice Wiggins White |
| Janet Chase Hassler | Sara Wilson |
| Bonnie Lott | Tom & Marilyn Wilson |



Thank you, M. C. Gill Corporation

Our maintenance building received a long-overdue and thorough cleaning as well as a new roof thanks to a generous donation of M. C. Gill Corporation of El Monte. They are the world's largest manufacturer of honeycomb, high performance floor panels, cargo compartment liners and original equipment for passenger and freighter aircraft. We extend our deep appreciation to them for their continued support of our efforts to preserve and protect our beloved and historic cemetery.

PLEASE SUPPORT SAVANNAH

Only through your support will we be able to preserve and protect Savannah into the future.

We must build a reserve that will provide for the long-term care it deserves and shields it from any possible risk.

Please send a donation to:

El Monte Cemetery Association, P. O. Box 4247, El Monte, CA 91734

A 501(c)(13) non-profit corporation

From the Past



Los Angeles Times, May 31, 1907

OLDEST PROTESTANT CEMETERY

Such Is Claim for Savannah Burial Place Where Flowers Were Strewn Yesterday.

EL MONTE, May 30. – Although no ceremonial programme had been arranged, few in this great district did not make their pilgrimage with floral offerings to Savannah Cemetery today. Many also came from Los Angeles and other neighboring cities.

It is claimed that Savannah is the oldest Protestant cemetery in Southern California, in which interment is now made. There have been burials there since 1850, and it is contemporary with the old Los Angeles cemetery, now closed.

Many of the early settlers in this section came from the South, and the “Blue and Gray” lie side by side. Here also sleep a few of those who nearly three score years ago wrested California from the domain of Mexico. Floral tributes were lavish and beautiful to a degree unusual even in California.

El Monte Cemetery Association
P. O. Box 4247
El Monte, California 91734