

## Franklin County Cemetery Commission

1010 Franklin Avenue  
Brookville, IN 47012

January 11, 2012

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INDIANA HISTORICAL BUREAU

Pamela J. Bennett  
Indiana Historical Bureau  
140 North Senate Avenue, Room 130  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2296

Dear Ms. Bennett:

The Franklin County Cemetery Commission was formed in 2001. Five members were appointed by the Franklin County Commissioners, October 15, 2001, according to the provisions of IC 23-14-67-2. The officers of the commission for the year 2011 were as follows: Donald L. Dunaway, president (term expires 2014) and R. Edward Baker, vice-president (2016). The other members of the commission are John Estridge (2012), Patricia Smith (2013) and Julie Schlesselman (2015). All except Julie Schlesselman have served since October 2001. This letter is the cemetery commission's report as required by IC 23-14-67-3.5.

The cemetery commission held eight regular meetings in 2011. No meetings were held in January, February, June and December.

A total of 127 Department of Natural Resources survey forms have been completed and submitted to DNR to-date. None were completed in 2011; however several are in process. There is estimated to be more than 170 cemeteries within Franklin County with 150 found; 100 or more of these are considered pioneer cemeteries according to the requirements of IC 23-14-67-1 of Chapter 67, "Care of Cemeteries by Counties." We will continue to work on locating more of the small, isolated pioneer cemeteries, make an on-site assessment, complete the survey forms for them and submit them to DNR-DHPA when we gather sufficient information.

Since we first received funding in 2004, a total of 67 cemeteries have been restored in the county by the Cemetery Commission, volunteers and a township trustee. Two other trustees have provided partial financial support for cemetery restoration and maintenance in their townships. A total of 1416 cemetery stones have been repaired. Fencing has been provided for 22 cemeteries and 67 cemeteries have been cleaned

A budget of \$21,400 was approved by the County Council for funding the Cemetery Commission in CY 2011. The budget was used for cleaning and fencing, where needed, and restoring seven cemeteries: St. John, Highland Township, Hinds, Springfield Township, Harmony, Bath Township, Stone Church, Blooming Grove Township,

Asbury, Springfield, (second restoration required by cattle damage), Fruits, Brookville Township and Bochum, Laurel Township. In addition, Roy Hall, Whitewater Township Trustee paid for restoration of the Freeman - Stokes Cemetery in Whitewater Township. The commission intends to provide identification signs for all eligible county cemeteries. To-date 82 signs have been purchased by the commission, plus 19 funded by Whitewater Township, but through the commission. As of the end of CY 2011, 94 signs have been erected in Franklin County.

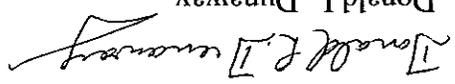
The Cemetery Commission budget for CY 2012 is \$21,400, the same as last year. We are evaluating six cemeteries for restoration and cleaning and fencing as needed. In addition, we plan to mow 40 cemeteries three or more times during the growing season. As we progress in restoring our pioneer cemeteries, more funds will be used to maintain them.

In addition to the above, Cemetery Commission members were involved with events in connection with the Franklin County Bicentennial Celebration. Ed Baker led tours of four pioneer cemeteries in October. In addition, Ed prepared a book: Pioneer Cemeteries of Franklin County, Indiana. Funding for publication of the book was provided by the Brookville Foundation. Copies of the book were given to selected area libraries including the State Library and to area historical societies.

The Cemetery Commission worked with the FC Veteran's Officer in procuring a military tombstone for Civil War veteran Christopher Meyncke. The original stone had been destroyed or stolen years ago. The federal government provided the stone and it was place over the grave by volunteer labor. The Brookville American Legion participated in a dedication of the stone by the Cemetery Commission in October.

Julie Schlesselman attended the annual cemetery workshop at Southport in August.

Sincerely,



Donald L. Dunaway  
President, Franklin County  
Cemetery Commission

Copies to:

Franklin County Commissioners  
Franklin County Cemetery Commission Members