

Old Saltillo Cemetery Association Newsletter

P.O. Box 123 Saltillo, Texas, 75478

16th Edition – June 21, 2022

Words From Our President

Hello and welcome to this 16th edition of the OSCA newsletter. As a reminder, between newsletters, we invite you to keep up with the Old Saltillo Cemetery and community events on Facebook at [facebook.com/oldsalttillocemetery](https://www.facebook.com/oldsalttillocemetery) and/or our website at oldsalttillocemetery.com. Plans are taking shape for the annual Old Saltillo Cemetery Association Business Meeting/Memorial Day, at 10:30 a.m., **July 17, 2022**, in the Old Saltillo United Methodist Church, located at 664 County Road 3357, Saltillo, Texas.

The program will begin with congregational singing led by Steve Conley. The opening ceremony will be followed by a brief business meeting that includes a formal report of the activities of the Board of Directors, the financial position of the Association, plans for the coming year, and the election of three Board of Director members for the 2022-2025 term.

A Memorial Program eulogizing loved ones recently buried in the Old Saltillo Cemetery will be observed. Family members present are encouraged to stand to be recognized, as a star is symbolically placed in remembrance of loved ones. Kelli McAfee Tarver and Ginnifer Agee Doyle will present the remembrance. A special musical presentation will be offered by Steve Conley.

B.F. Hicks and John Sellers have been invited to address the Association on the importance of historic preservation, in its varied forms and purposes. Conveying our understanding and appreciation of the past to future generations is the very reason many of our Association members make the annual pilgrimage to Old Saltillo, along with their children, grandchildren, great-grands, and extended family.



(Texas Historic Cemetery marker - July 18, 2021)

Following the featured program, a buffet lunch will be served in the air-conditioned Kirby Memorial Center. You are asked to bring some of your favorite dishes... enough to feed all in your party and share some with others. All eating utensils, plates, iced drinks, and coffee will be provided.

Whether you can attend in person, or must support from afar, your essential, tax deductible financial support is deeply appreciated, to keep the Old Saltillo Cemetery grounds pristine.

Vivian Dennis-Monzingo, President

Old Saltillo Cemetery & Wreaths Across America

On December 18, 2021, the Old Saltillo Cemetery joined more than 2,100 other locations across the United States, at sea and abroad by participating in the national Wreaths Across America day. Kathy Whitten Patterson and Lucas Dennis co-directed our cemetery's first year of participation in a meaningful show of honor and respect for veterans interred within our cemetery, which proved a successful event for our cemetery and the surrounding community.

The program commenced with the Boy Scouts posting flags and leading the congregation in the Pledge of Allegiance. Kathy and Lucas honored Old Saltillo Cemetery Veterans by calling each of their names aloud, followed by a song by Steve Conley. Thereafter, Holland Whitten delivered the day's keynote address, "A Legacy Worth Preserving", poignant and moving.



Holland recalled his father's service, "Roy Atwell Whitten, who rests here, is an example. He was at Pearl Harbor 80 years ago when it was attacked. His hands were scarred forever after carrying hot ammunition out of the burning ship's hold, up to the deck, and dumping it over the side. He served through the war... he exemplifies the courage under fire, humility, and can-do spirit of America's veterans and our greatest generation."

"Every one of the veterans resting here has an equally unique story to tell," Holland said, adding, "I wish I had the knowledge and time to speak of all their sacrifices."

Following the program, attendees braved the cold, damp morning to carefully place all 121 wreaths at the graves of veterans who served in the American Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, Korean War, Vietnam War and Iraq War. Wreaths were laid at veteran graves, addressing each veteran by name and audibly thanking them for their service. Several attendees remarked that they found the event moving and our participation overdue. Board members received comments and compliments for weeks thereafter. By all accounts, our 2021 participation marked the start of a new tradition.



Mark your calendars now, as the Old Saltillo Cemetery wreath-laying event, honoring veterans within our cemetery, will take place Saturday, December 17th, 2022 at 11:00am. The event will again include a brief program and wreath-laying.

Wreaths are \$15 each, or opt for the "3 for 2" by purchasing 2 wreaths (\$30) and receive a 3rd wreath free! **Deadline: October 31, 2022**

Order your wreaths online:

<https://www.wreathscrossamerica.org/pages/167403>

OR

Old Saltillo Cemetery Association
c/o Lucas & Kathy, P. O. Box 123
Saltillo, Texas 75478

Checks payable to: **"Wreaths Across America"**

Questions: Kathy Whitten Patterson 903-434-2343
or Lucas Dennis 903-588-0973

In Memory

The following individuals have been laid to rest in the Old Saltillo Cemetery since last Memorial Day, and will be recognized during our July 2022 program:

L.C. Knotts

May 6, 1932 – July 26, 2021

Velma Lou Adams Locke

July 9, 1917 – August 23, 2021

Ronald Darwin McGill

August 6, 1931 – October 19, 2021

Barbara Conley Norris

February 2, 1936 – October 22, 2021

Kyle David Wilhelm

October 15, 1981 – November 7, 2021

Ardys Naomi Nelsen Dennis

February 13, 1924 – December 10, 2021

Elmer Louis Agee

February 17, 1933 – January 29, 2022

Jenete Madonna Blackmon Phillips Jones

December 31, 1943 – May 12, 2022

Ralph Wade Phillips

February 19, 1956 – December 26, 2021

*"It's not somethin' you get over
But it's somethin' you get through"*

Cannon Buddy / Willie Nelson

The OSCA Board recognizes three former OSCA Directors, lost since Memorial Day 2021.

Ronald Darwin McGill was born August 6, 1931, to Marlin and Reba Crump McGill in Greenwood, Hopkins County, Texas. He graduated from Sunset High School in 1949 and from North Texas State University in 1962. He also attended their graduate school taking municipal administration courses. He married Constance Almy French on February 13, 1976.



He worked for Neiman Marcus from 1950-1954 in the Marketing and Receiving Division. He moved to Goodyear Tire and Rubber where he became Night Supervisor of Data Processing from 1955-1964 which allowed him to earn his degree. He began his municipal with the City of Irving in 1964, initially as Supervisor of Data Processing. He later served a Personnel Director and Assistant City Manager. He was named City Manager for the City of Lewisville, Texas from 1977 to 1985, and he concluded his career as City Manager for the City of Hereford, Texas from 1985 to 1991. He was involved in many civic and municipal organizations throughout his career, serving on Advisory Boards and held various offices with the Texas City Managers Association and Texas Municipal League. He was President and a Director of the Noon Day Kiwanis Club in Hereford, as well as the Director of Community Concerts.

Darwin and Connie retired to their Hill County farm in Zephyr, Texas in 1991 where he served as Rural Representative to the Brown County Chamber of Commerce. In 1996, they relocated to Mount Vernon, where Darwin served two terms as City Commissioner, one term as Mayor, charter President of the Mount Vernon Kiwanis Club, Director of the Franklin County Historical Association, member of the Franklin County Arts Alliance and Library Board. He also served as Vice President of the Old Saltillo Cemetery Association. Darwin was a member of the First United Methodist Church in Mount Vernon, and a recipient of the Rotary Club's Paul Harris Award.

He is survived by beloved wife, Constance (Connie), daughter Rebecca McGill Bennett (Tom), son Robert McGill, and nephew Michael McGill (Ruth). He was preceded in death by daughter Stephanie McGill Baldock (Mel). Blended family surviving members include stepson Doug French (Marty) and stepdaughter Sally French Tyler (Ed). Grandchildren: Somer Baldock, Trevor Bennett (Amy), Jordan Bennett Wolfe (Brian), Cecilia French Tuttle (Derek), and Kyle Ross French (Abby). He is additionally survived by his beloved great-grandchildren and great-great grandchildren.

Barbara Conley Norris was born on February 2, 1936 to Raymond and Ovetta Conley in Saltillo, Texas. She passed away on Friday, October 22, 2021 in Sulphur Springs, Texas.

Barbara graduated from Saltillo High School in 1954. She began her college career that summer at East Texas Teachers College in Commerce. She started working first in the cafeteria and later in an office at East Texas. She completed her course work in 2 1/2 years and then started her student teaching. Barbara began dating the love of her life, Rex Norris, and married him a couple of months later on September 21, 1956. She was a member of Retired Teacher's Association, Delta Kappa Gamma, Eastern Star, and the Old Saltillo Methodist Church.

She began her teaching career in Daingerfield - Lone Star school district and retired from there 36 years later. She loved her students especially the first graders. Every year in the fall her family heard "this is the cutest group ever".

She was a wonderful wife and mother and there was little she could not do. Sewing, knitting, embroidery, porcelain painting, and gardening were her constant pastimes. Barbara could drive a tractor, run a chainsaw, and play the piano. She was often an assistant to Rex in their many endeavors.



After retirement she and Rex moved to her family's farm in Saltillo. There she spent time enjoying their three grandchildren. The two traveled in the US and Europe and spent time each year at their favorite place in Destin.

During her final years she waged a fierce battle with Alzheimer's and held off the worst for several years.

She was preceded in death by her parents; brothers, Bob Conley, George Payne, and her favorite son-in-law, Steve DeWolf.

Barbara is survived by her husband of 65 years, Rex; daughter, Tammy DeWolf; son, Randy Norris; grandchildren, Jake DeWolf, Riley and Jett Norris; nephews, Steve Conley, Ronnie Conley, David Payne, Mark Norris, David Norris; and several cousins. Her much loved dogs and cats survive her.

Elmer Louis Agee was born February 17, 1933 to Clarence and Jessie Caudle Agee in Saltillo, Texas, and departed this earth for his heavenly home on January 29, 2022. A third-generation native Texas, Louis was raised in the Old Saltillo community, near the Hopkins and Franklin county line, where his great-grandparents settled ca. 1853. Louis graduated from Mount Vernon High School in 1951 and always cherished the memories and friendships made as a Mount Vernon Tiger, especially playing four winning seasons of football for the legendary Texas Sports Hall of Fame Coach "Catfish" Smith.

From his teenage years mowing the Gulf pipeline, to his days rough-necking in the oil fields of Texas, Louis had a strong work ethic. He returned to Northeast Texas to marry Jo Ann Castle of the Greenwood community on May 26, 1953. The couple raised their sons, Randy and Joe Dan, in Garland, TX. Louis joined Sterling Drug in 1958, where he would work until the pharmaceutical company's facility closure in 1986, which prompted Louis' return to 'country life'. In the years that followed, Louis and Jo Ann would grow their cattle operation across three counties. During this period, the couple became active in Greenwood Baptist Church. Louis would eventually join the church, serving as Sunday School Superintendent, sponsoring RA Boys' outings, serving on church committees and supporting various church activities. Louis and Jo Ann traveled extensively with friends and family, crisscrossing the US and beyond.

By 2010, the couple retired (again) to spend more time with family, especially their great-grandchildren. It was during this period that Louis began navigating his years-long struggle with Alzheimer's Disease, with the help of family members, dear friends, and caregivers. Louis was preceded in death by his parents, Clarence and Jessie Agee; his parents-in-law, Aubrey and Hazel Castle; and sisters, Wilma Ramsay and Billye Jean Crane. He is survived by his wife of 68 Years, Jo Ann Castle Agee; sons, Randy (Patti) of Sulphur Springs and Joe Dan (Lorri) of Mount Vernon; grandchildren, Ryan Agee, Trapper Pace, Ginnifer Agee Doyle (Landon) and Daniel Agee (Amanda); and great-grandchildren, Aubrie, Avery, Lexie, Layton, Ellie Jo, Kabel and Andie Mae.

