



RIVERDALE ~ PORTERDALE

CEMETERY FOUNDATION, INC

VOL. 6, NO. 1

SPRING 2015

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

Check your calendar, mark Saturday, October 24th and save the date for joining the Riverdale-Porterdale Cemetery Foundation in observing the centennial of the 1915 Kennedy Shows train wreck. This tragic chapter in our region's history occurred when the show and circus train was a few miles east of Columbus, bound for a week of carnival performances on the Alabama side of the Chattahoochee River in Girard (now Phenix City) to celebrate the opening of the Dillingham Street bridge.



*Image of circus clown Emmett Kelly
painted by artist Barry Leighton Jones
and reprinted from Wikipedia Commons.com*



Circus Tent Monument built in loving memory of comrades lost in train accident 100 years ago.

Issues of the Ledger and Enquirer-Sun newspapers carry graphic details of the chaos that raged that autumn afternoon and into the night. The show's owner, Con. T. Kennedy, who was on the train, surveyed the wreckage with tears streaming down his cheeks. For those who perished, a memorial service was held at First Baptist Church.

A year later Mr. Kennedy commissioned a monument to be placed in Riverdale Cemetery. The monument of white Georgia marble is a replica of a circus tent with drawn curtains at either end. An inscription reads:

Erected by the
Con. T. Kennedy Shows
In Memory of Their Comrades
Who Lost Their Lives
In a Railroad Wreck Near Columbus, GA. Nov. 22, 1915

Through the years many visitors have paid their respects at this marble circus tent. Among them is an actual survivor of the wreck, who – as a two and a half year old child -- was tossed to safety by her father as he and her mother perished in their sleeping car. It is one of the most visited and photographed monuments in Riverdale.

This event will be a unique opportunity to learn more about an event in local history. and to share a variety of entertainments. Details will follow. *Come one, come all!*

Marker Art and Symbolism



Acanthus



Pine

Correlative Symbolism for Different Leaf Types

Acanthus
Everlasting Life

Ivy
Friendship, Fidelity and Immortality

Laurel
Evergreen Memory

Laurel Wreath
Victory in Death, Saintliness, and Glory

Palm Frond
Victory over Death

Pine
Fortune, Love, Eternal Life, Continuity, and Renewal

Pine Cone
Human Enlightenment



Ivy



Palm Frond



Laurel Wreath

Honorariums and Contributions

In honor of
Mrs. John W. Humes
by
Mrs. Marjorie T. Richardson

In honor of
Mr. and Mrs. Kerry W. Hand
by
Mr. and Mrs. William L. Church

In honor of
Mr. and Mrs. Beau Dudley
by
Mr. and Mrs. William L. Church

Mr. and Mrs. D. Hal Averett
Mrs. William C. Bradley
Mrs. Carolyn Z. Crenshaw
Mrs. Leslie C. Search

Claud A. Sears Family fund
Mr. and Mrs. Clifford J. Swift, III
Mrs. T. Earl Taylor

The Dales Society

Representing all three cemeteries, the Dales Society is our membership organization. Various levels of participation are available and renewal notices are sent on the anniversary of joining. Income derived is used for property improvements, office expenses, and special events. Membership forms may be obtained in the Riverdale Building by calling the cemetery office (706-653-4579), or requests may be made to the Foundation's website www.riverdaleporterdale.org.

Staff Highlights

The maintenance staff for all city cemeteries is an essential part of the well-being of Riverdale, Porterdale and East Porterdale,, and therefore an important asset for our foundation which supports these special places. Here is another installment in our introduction of this staff, so that you may know and appreciate their efforts on our behalf.

Warren Tolbert has been employed by the Public Works Department for 22 years. He was born and raised in Phenix City, and is a single man whose hobby is gardening and working in his yard. A funny story from Warren: In 1993, there was a new employee working in the cemetery. At noon, this employee went to lunch....and here it is 2015 and he's still not back from lunch!



P.O. Box 5128
Columbus, Georgia 31906



Riverdale - Porterdale Cemetery Foundation



Volunteer Opportunities Available

Do you have a little free time?
Do you like local history ... genealogy ... research ... ?

Have we got a job for you!

Prefer sharing your time inside ... or outside?

We're flexible!

The Foundation has a list of volunteer activities ranging from record-keeping to landscaping, from techno-genius to techno-novice! We're even open to your suggestions of how you might improve what we do and how we do it.

Call Deborah, 706-653-4579, to check out the possibilities!

