



NEWS RELEASE

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Revitalization Project Begins at Cleveland Historic Cemetery

Cleveland, Georgia (May 27, 2009) – The Cleveland Better Home Town Historic Preservation Committee broke ground today on a new entrance for the Cleveland Historic Cemetery. For more than a year the organization has been raising funds for a formal entrance and was able to begin work on the project this week.

Judy Lovell, the chair of the Historic Preservation Committee, has spearheaded the project and design for the new entrance. George Hlavenka, who serves on our board and is a professional architect, donated his services to create a design of the cemetery entrance. “We had enough money for the rock columns and our committee accepted a bid from Mark Irvin to begin the work,” said Judy Lovell.

The Committee also partnered with the Trustees who are responsible for the care and maintenance of the historic cemetery. “There is a misconception that because it’s the “Cleveland” Historic Cemetery that the City of Cleveland is responsible for it, which is not correct,” said Lovell. A board of trustees made up of Bill Black, Shirley McDonald, Barbara Chambers, Aubrey McIntyre, Betty Highsmith and Judy Lovell are responsible for the grass being cut regularly and recently removed an area of overgrown trees that had covered some of the graves. “It was only natural that Cleveland Better Home Town partner with the trustees on the cemetery project,” she said.

At the Cleveland Better Home Town board meeting earlier this week, the trustees presented two checks to the board. The Telford Foundation donated \$1,000 in support of the cemetery revitalization and Pinky Black, brother of Bill Black donated an additional \$1,000 to the project. Speaking for the Trustees, Bill Black then informed the board that the Trustees had decided to make up the difference of the cost to install the rod iron arch bearing the name of the cemetery. Cleveland Better Home Town had raised enough money for the pillars, but did not have the funds yet for the arch. “With the two donations, plus our contribution we can have the pillars and the arch done together,” said Bill Black. “We hope that these three contributions will encourage others to lend their support so we can complete the rest of the cemetery project.” The committee also reported that two companies submitted bids to do the iron work and the committee accepted the bid from a local company, Owens Welding. In his bid, Mr. Owens reduced the price of the by \$1500 as his contribution to this project.

Last Friday the Historic Preservation Committee received a visit from 94 year old Retired Navy Commander, George Mauney. He heard Cleveland Better Home Town was working on the cemetery revitalization and wanted to support the project too. Mr. Mauney presented a check for \$1,000 to the committee, which will be used for a gate entrance on the IGA side of the cemetery. Additional funds will be needed for the fence, but we are one step closer to its reality. Mr. Mauney’s gift is the first donation toward the fence project and we sincerely thank him.

The plans for the cemetery revitalization call for a paved driveway with brick pavers lining each side and a beautiful rod iron fence around the entire cemetery. The committee also hopes to work with the RDC to clean and possibly repair some of the leaning or broken stone markers, as well as catalog the cemetery and create a historic brochure. “It’s a tremendous undertaking and we are proud to have partnered with the trustees on this historic revitalization project,” said Garrison Baker, Chairman for Cleveland Better Home Town. “Our Better Home Town program is all about creating partnerships that help the community and these contributions will help us to give the Cleveland Historic Cemetery the dignity it deserves. It’s part of our history as a community and we owe it to the people that founded our community and who are buried there,” Baker went on to say.

Cleveland Better Home Town is a Nationally Accredited “Award Winning” Main Street Program. As a non-profit 501 (C) 3 charitable organization, all donations to Cleveland Better Home Town are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law and assist with the organization’s revitalization projects. If you would like to donate to the Cleveland Historic Cemetery revitalization please contact, Cleveland Better Home Town at (706) 969-3336.

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