

# Monuments & milestones

VOL 5 NO 2 FALL/WINTER 2009

## Living History Tour 2009

by Bill McKee, Nashville City Cemetery Board Member

The early history of middle Tennessee is inextricably tied to the Nashville City Cemetery. This sacred plot of ground located at Fourth Avenue South at Oak Street is not only a burial ground, but also this community's finest historical outdoor museum.

Each fall the City Cemetery Association welcomes the community to a Living History Tour, where local actors portray a few of the extraordinary individuals who lie here, and town criers share tales about this plot of ground. Citizens interred at the Nashville City Cemetery in the 1800s mirrored the entire Nashville community – black and white, wealthy and poor, slave and free. They came from every walk of life, every religious faith, every temperament. The Tour provides an opportunity to hear accounts of people who changed the city's future, as well as a few whose stories have been lost to history.



*Mable Imes, an early member of the world-famous Fisk Jubilee Singers.*

You will meet W. R. Cornelius, Nashville's leading undertaker ... Septima Sexta Middleton Rutledge, whose father and father-in-law signed the Declaration of Independence ... Dr. John Shelby, East Nashville land owner, medical school

founder, and noted physician ... John McNairy, middle Tennessee's first judge ... Sally Thomas, who rose from slave to Nashville business woman ... Captain William Driver, who named the American flag "Old Glory" ... and George Washington Campbell, Tennessee Supreme Court Justice, U.S. Representative, and U.S. Secretary of the Treasury.



*William Driver, of "Old Glory" fame, is a dramatic story teller.*

Founded in 1822 and now listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the City Cemetery is a community treasure. In an effort to preserve it for future generations, the Metropolitan Council recently funded a multi-year restoration and revitalization project. These improvements are nearing completion. Tombstones, box and table tombs, markers, and vaults have been cleaned and repaired. Carriage lanes were resurfaced, period lighting and fencing installed, and interpretive signage developed. All proceeds from the sale of tour admissions are used to continue these restoration efforts.



*Two soldiers pause for a chat.*

The Nashville City Cemetery Association invites you to attend this year's "Living History Tour" on Saturday, October 17, from 2:00 until 5:00 p.m. The admission fee is \$5.00 for individuals and \$10.00 for families.

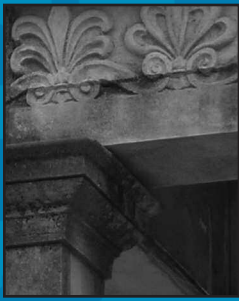
Prepare to spend an autumn afternoon walking through Nashville's past. It is an event you will long remember.

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

ON MAY 21ST, THE METROPOLITAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION (MHC) honored the Nashville City Cemetery Association (NCCA) with its Commissioners' Award for this organization's dedication to the preservation, restoration, and promotion of the Nashville City Cemetery. In addition to honoring the association as a whole, the MHC presented individual Achievement Awards to NCCA Board Members Dr. Bobby L. Lovett and Mrs. Carol Kaplan. [See article, page 5.] We are grateful for this recognition and hope that it helps to spread the word about the tremendous progress that is being made by our organization, as we have partnered with the Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County to bring about the first comprehensive restoration of the Nashville City Cemetery in the last half century.

Our next opportunity to highlight the progress being made at the cemetery will come when we host the annual Living History Tour on October 17th (cost: \$5 for individuals and \$10 for families). This year's event will present an opportunity to showcase the recent restoration work to a national audience, as attendees from the National Preservation Trust conference and the Nationwide Cemetery Preservation Summit are being invited and encouraged to visit. As these preservationists travel from across the country to see and support the Nashville City Cemetery, we hope that you will do the same. Our organization needs not only your continued financial support, but also your participation as a volunteer in our many events and activities. Please learn more by visiting: [www.thenashvillecitycemetery.org](http://www.thenashvillecitycemetery.org).

Thanks in advance for being part of preserving our city's past and enriching its present!



**Jason Holleman**  
NCCA President

## Editor's Note

I moved to Nashville in June of 2003 and quickly embarked on a crash course in its history. Everyone I met seemed driven to tell me all the city's stories and secrets, from long-married couples who met at Tootsie's, to recipes for spice round! One grey Sunday afternoon my husband and I drove to the City Cemetery to pay our respects to the memory of James and Charlotte Robertson, William Driver of "Old Glory" fame, and some of the earliest Fisk Jubilee Singers. I remember feeling a little sad that the final resting place of these worthy individuals was such a rundown, unkempt little graveyard, with its broken, dingy stones and tumbledown fences. I was disappointed that Nashvillians could turn their backs on such a vital part of their history.

But then miraculous changes began to happen. At the urging of the NCCA Board and other dedicated preservationists, Mayor Purcell and the Metro Council approved a generous sum for repair and restoration of the City Cemetery, and teams of hard-working individuals began the

painstaking process of bringing the place back to life. Visitors to our Living History Tour last fall were delighted by what they saw – cleaned and restored tombstones, new fences, and elegant and colorful landscaping. The Cemetery, open from 9:00 to 5:00 every day, has once again become a favorite venue for the city's walkers and runners.

But that wasn't the end of it. One chilly evening last winter, I left work at dusk and took the long way home, down 4th Avenue. Twilight normally softens the rough edges of the city streets and quiets the daily tumult, but on this evening there was something more. The cemetery had come alive with light! The rows of new streetlamps, just installed, imparted a timeless elegance to the place. The cemetery looked larger now, and there was a new sense of history there. At last I felt we were truly honoring our beloved dead, and bringing respect to this sacred place. Drive by some evening. You'll see.

— Kathy Lauder

**Monuments & milestones**

P.O. Box 150733  
Nashville, TN. 37215-0733

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The Nashville City Cemetery Association is a not-for-profit organization founded to preserve and protect the history and memory of those who are laid to rest there.

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visit us at: [thenashvillecitycemetery.org](http://thenashvillecitycemetery.org)

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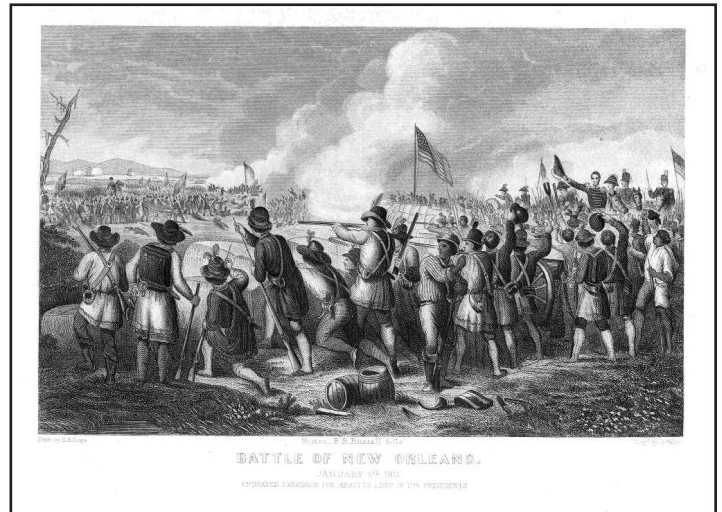
**NASHVILLE**  
**City Cemetery**  
1001 FOURTH AVENUE SOUTH

## To Live in Hearts We Leave Behind Is Not to Die

by Carol Kaplan, NCCA Board Member

Jeffrey Lockelier was a black man, born free in North Carolina in 1788. A young fellow with a taste for adventure, he came to Nashville in 1807. Because the idea of soldiering appealed to him, he joined the militia, serving under Andrew Jackson during the War of 1812. He distinguished himself in the Indian Wars at Enitachopco and Emuckfau Creeks and in the deadly Battle of Horseshoe Bend, which finally crushed the Creek Nation, forcing them to turn over 23 million acres to the U.S. Government. Lockelier served with distinction in every conflict: his obituary stated that "none could boast of a heart more devoted to his country's cause," for "his military services terminated only when his country ceased to have enemies." After the 1815 Battle of New Orleans, Jeffrey Lockelier, now known as "Major Jeffrey," returned to Middle Tennessee, where he met and married a woman named Sabina, a slave of the Sumner family in Williamson County. He soon purchased his wife from Thomas Sumner and petitioned the court to grant her freedom in July of 1817. The census taker spelled their entry as "Major Locklun."

Struggling with a heart ailment in his early 40s, Major Jeffrey "endured a long confinement," during which he was visited by his old commanders, President Andrew Jackson and General John Coffee. He "enjoyed, to a high degree their good opinion and friendship." Lockelier's death occurred



African-American soldiers fight at the Battle Of New Orleans during the War of 1812.

September 22, 1830, at the age of 42. His obituary appeared in newspapers across the country, including the *New York Evening Post*, which marveled: "Though a very humble member of society, still it may be truly said, but few enjoyed the esteem and good will of the community to a greater extent than he did. His universal benevolence was a distinguished trait in his character; and it seemed to be the business and the pleasure of his life to serve others without even the expectation of reward."

The admiring obituary that appeared in the *National Banner & Nashville Whig* 27 September 1830, ends like this:

*"One should not be forgotten who bestowed his best days to the service of his country; who lived a life of active benevolence, and died praising the goodness and mercy of his God."*

Jeffrey Lockelier was not forgotten by the city planners who named Nashville's Locklayer St., near the Bicentennial Mall, in his honor. Unfortunately, the stone which once marked his grave in Nashville's historic City Cemetery no longer exists, but it is scheduled to be replaced as part of the cemetery's tombstone restoration project, which recently replaced missing stones on the graves of Sally Thomas and Angeline Brady.



A faithful crowd comes out on a rainy Saturday to help dedicate new tombstones for Sally Thomas and Angeline Brady, who both died in the early 1850s.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

The Nashville City Cemetery is open to visitors every day from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

**General information:** The free tours begin at 10:00 a.m. on the dates listed below and last about 45 minutes. In case of unfavorable weather (i.e., tornado, drenching rain, hail, or piles of snow!), a cancelled tour will take place the following Saturday.

**October 13-17, 2009**

## THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION 2009 CONFERENCE

The National Trust for Historic Preservation has chosen Nashville as the site of its 2009 Conference. Its theme this year is "Sustaining the Future in Harmony with Our Past." One highlight of the week is expected to be the NCCA's Annual Living History Tour.

**Saturday, October 17, 2009, 2:00-5:00 p.m.**

## THE ANNUAL LIVING HISTORY TOUR

This is one of our few events that involve a small cost: \$5 for adults; \$10 for families. Come and meet some of Nashville's earliest settlers –uniformed soldiers, prominent citizens, town criers, wealthy and simple folk from our history. This popular event makes a delightful outing for the whole family.

**October 19-21, 2009**

## NATIONAL CEMETERY PRESERVATION SUMMIT

The National Center for Preservation and Technology Training (NCPTT) will hold its Nationwide Cemetery Preservation Summit in Music City this year, starring the Nashville City Cemetery!

**Special Saturday Tour Series, November 14th, 2009 – 10:00-10:45 a.m.**

## CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS

"Civil War Soldiers," a tour of some of the military burial sites in the City Cemetery, has been led for the past several years by John Allyn, battlefield preservationist and NCCA Board member. No matter how much you know about the Civil War, you will always learn something new on these tours. An annual highlight – not to be missed!

**Saturday, April 17, 2010 – 10:00-10:45 a.m.**

## SPECIAL SATURDAY TOUR SERIES

Come and join us for our first Saturday Tour of the year! You can look forward to a wonderful surprise – everything from stories about some of the fascinating former Nashvillians who are buried in the City Cemetery to a hands-on lesson by the Master Gardeners, who are always willing to share helpful information about gardens, past and present. Bring the family for a walk through history on a spring morning.

**Monday, May 31, 2010, 8:00 a.m. (beginning at Greer Stadium)**

## THE ANNUAL MEMORIAL DAY DASH

Our annual 5K Run/Walk will begin at Greer Stadium, 534 Chestnut Street, at 8:00 a.m. Visit the Nashville Striders website for registration forms and information. <http://www.nashvillestriders.com> or <http://www.active.com>

**Saturday, June 14, 2010**

## A CELEBRATION OF FLAG DAY

This celebration is sponsored annually by the Daughters of the American Revolution. Check our website for time and other details.

Have you seen our website lately?



View colorful photos of the Memorial Day Dash & the Restoration in Progress.

## READ ABOUT THE REMARKABLE 186-YEAR HISTORY OF CITY CEMETERY

\* **Buy a Book or a T-shirt.** \* Find out about exciting upcoming events and tours.

LEARN MORE ABOUT A FAMILY MEMBER BURIED AT CITY CEMETERY BY STUDYING  
THE RESOURCE MAPS, OBITUARIES, AND TOMBSTONE INSCRIPTIONS.

Connect to the 19,745 Interments on the Nashville Public Library website.

share your family history

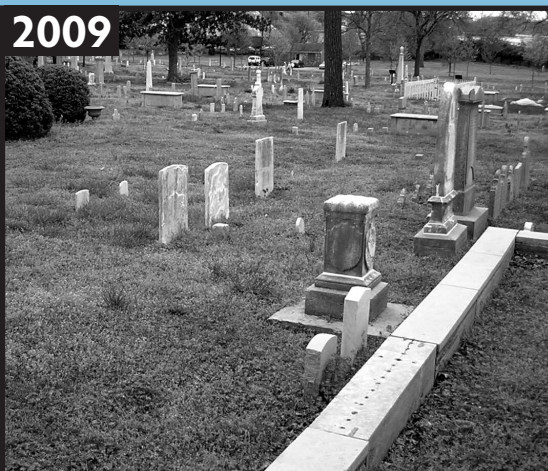
...AND BE SURE TO JOIN THE NASHVILLE CITY CEMETERY ASSOCIATION!

# THEN & NOW

From the Nashville Room photo archives at the Nashville Public Library, a glimpse of the City Cemetery from the past and how it appears today.



1955 This wrought iron fence shows considerable damage, most likely the result of a fallen tree. (Photo courtesy of the Nashville Public Library, The Nashville Room.)

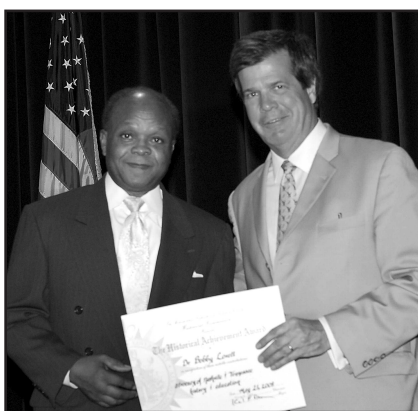


2009 Today, not only has the iron fence disappeared, but the urn atop the marker in the middle of the picture is also missing. (Photo by Jeff Thomeycraft)

## Nashville City Cemetery Receives Significant Honor

On May 21, 2009, the Metropolitan Historical Commission held its 34th annual Preservation Awards Ceremony at the Nashville Public Library. Mayor Karl Dean was on hand to present the awards, as well as to read a proclamation announcing May as National Preservation Month. Of the 44 properties nominated this year, 15 received the esteemed Preservation Award, and five others were recognized with Honorable Mentions. Of particular interest to historians were the Hodge House reconstruction in Warner Parks and the restoration of the Senate and House chambers in the Tennessee State Capitol, both entries in the Education/Institution category. Other award categories specified religious, commercial, infill, and residential properties.

To our great honor, the Nashville City Cemetery Association (NCCA) received the highly coveted Commissioners' Award for the group's dedication to



Bobby Lovett receives an Individual Achievement Award from Mayor Karl Dean.

the preservation, restoration, and promotion of the Nashville City Cemetery. We were further delighted to learn that the recipients of both 2009 Achievement Awards are members of the NCCA Board of Directors. These awards recognize individuals who have made significant contributions to the community's knowledge and appreciation of local history and historic resources. This year's winners are Dr. Bobby Lovett, professor, historian, and former member of the Metropolitan Commission, and Mrs. Carol Kaplan, author and story-teller, longtime librarian with the Nashville Room, and advocate for cemetery preservation.

The ceremony concluded with a lovely reception hosted by Historic Nashville, Inc., to honor all award recipients.



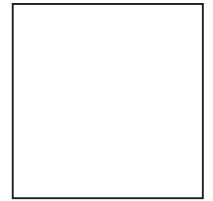
Carol Kaplan receives a coveted Achievement Award from the Metropolitan Historical Commission. Pictured, left to right, are Margaret Slater, Nashville Mayor Karl Dean, James Hoobler, Carol Kaplan, and Executive Director Tim Walker.



Group Photo, left to right: Margaret Slater, Metro Historical Commission; Jason Holleman, Fletch Coke, Lynn McDonald, and Nick Bailey of the NCCA Board; and Tim Walker, Executive Director, Metro Historical Commission.



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**Address Correction Requested**

## JOIN OR RENEW YOUR NCCA MEMBERSHIP TODAY!

Please take the time to become a member of the Nashville City Cemetery Association this year. Your membership is valuable to us and helps the NCCA offer such programs as **Descendants' Day**, the **Memorial Day Dash**, and the **Living History Tour**. So sign up today and help support our effort to restore and preserve this invaluable historic resource.

I would like information about:  
(check all that apply)

- ☐ NCCA Membership
- ☐ Tax Letters
- ☐ Volunteer Opportunities

### NCCA Membership Levels (circle one)

Individual	\$20	Preserver	\$150
Family	\$35	Conservator	\$500
Protector	\$75	Restorer	\$1000

(All members receive the newsletter and invitations to special events. )

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number (    ) \_\_\_\_\_

Names of ancestors buried at Nashville City Cemetery (if applicable):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Fill out this form, clip out and mail to:  
P.O. Box 150733, Nashville, TN. 37215-0733.