



# G.A.R. Cemetery

Grand Army of the Republic  
2801 N Main ~ PO BOX 1288 ~ Miami, Oklahoma  
Phone (918) 541-2288 ~ (918) 542-2124 Fax



## Spring Is Coming!



**KIM HORN**  
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## Roy Woods

"I always knew the Salvation Army was a good organization... never had to use them myself, but many people have told me stories of how it helped them dating back to my grandfather and my mother during WWII."

~ Roy Woods



**Roy Woods**  
G.A.R. Cemetery  
Annual Memorial Day Ceremony



**American Legion Funeral Detail**



**PERRY, Floyd Leslie (1892-1918)**  
American Legion Post 147 is named for Floyd Leslie Perry.

**Roy Woods** is a busy man. Over the holidays you probably saw him at either Wal-Mart or Marvin's ringing the Salvation Army Bell. He took over the bell ringing campaign 3 years ago, and rings the bell when he doesn't have a volunteer to fit a slot. Roy has been a member of American Legion Post 147 since 1980, coordinates the American Legion Funeral Detail, as well as participates in the American Legion Flag Program. When you see the flags displayed so proudly throughout Miami during the holidays, Roy and other American Legion members, with the help of volunteers who all work to maintain that program and put out more than 360 flags.

Roy served three tours in Vietnam in the Navy as a Sr. Chief Operations Specialist (E8) from 1960 to 1980. He has been married to his wife Colleen for 48 years. Roy and Colleen have two children, six grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren and have lived in Miami since 1995.

### **American Legion Funeral Detail**

In 1985 O.C. Macklin and Bob Langston formed the Northeast Oklahoma Veteran's Funeral Detail because they realized there was a need for military honors at Veteran's funerals. They, and multiple Veterans' organizations participated in the detail at that time, and in 2004 it became the American Legion Funeral Detail. To date the detail has 27 members, two of the members, Bob Cline and Harvey Peacock, are from the original detail shortly after it was established. They use a van to transport the members to funerals, and the funeral detail service is provided free of charge. Why do they do it? Each of them has their own reason, but Roy knows that one member had the task during WWII of burying American and Japanese soldiers in trenches that were dug as a grave. It's his way of now giving any Veteran a proper military funeral. The detail recently added three Iraqi War Veterans.

### **Salvation Army**

"After I retired from construction in 2006, I decided to help out, and eventually arose a need for someone to take over the bell ringing campaign in Ottawa County. So I volunteered. Miami is a great community to work in." Roy says that various people and organizations are involved in ringing the bells at the kettles. In 2013, the Salvation Army program raised \$25,003.29. When asked what the goal was that he set for the 2014 season, he simply stated "The Sky is the Limit!" and they collected \$28,601.57.

This month we shine the G.A.R. Spotlight on Roy Woods for all of his work and efforts not only for G.A.R., but throughout the community.



**Thank you Roy!**



### **American Legion Flag Detail**

Roy stated that anyone interested in having a flag placed as part of the American Legion Flag program can call **918-542-6227** and leave a message. Someone from the American Legion will contact you.  
The cost of the flag is \$40.00 for the first year, and \$25.00 for every year thereafter.



**Kem Miller:** Delivering a Memorial Wreath for the G.A.R. Cemetery, Annual British Flyers Remembrance Ceremony



**Kem Miller**

## Kem Miller

"The reaction of the people either at a ceremony or out there working and they drive up and appreciate the flowers. It makes all the sweat and aches and pains of getting down on your knees worthwhile. If just one person a year enjoys it...then it's all worth it."

~ Kem Miller

**Kem Miller** is carrying on the tradition of another Miamian-Mrs. Frances Hill. Mrs. Hill was a local woman who for forty years cared for the graves of the fifteen British Cadets buried at G.A.R. "Ann (Kem's wife) knew Mrs. Hill because Ann's mother and Mrs. Hill were big flower people. They would get together and compare notes and trade flower bulbs. My brother-in-law actually lived next door to Mrs. Hill. He would tell stories how Mrs. Hill would walk out of her house and follow the railroad tracks to G.A.R. Cemetery to decorate the British graves," said Kem Miller. "I'd heard the Mrs. Hill stories from both my brother-in-law's family and my mother-in-law so when the opportunity popped up to care for the graves it just seemed the natural thing to do to honor all of those people in my family plus the fifteen British Cadets," said Kem Miller.

Kem, his wife Ann, and their son Jason all participate in the care of the British Graves. G.A.R. contracts with Kem and Ann to plant and maintain the floral portion of the graves. "It makes me proud at the yearly ceremony when I see people enjoy it. That's the payoff. I've never been at G.A.R. working when someone hasn't driven by and stopped to tell me a story that either their Uncle was an instructor at B.F.T.S. #3 or every once in a while a person from England will stop," said Kem Miller.

Kem Miller grew up in Baxter Springs, KS and married Ann Miller in 1972. Ann grew up in Miami so they moved back here in 1978 from Baxter Springs. Kem says he's always gardened and liked anything outdoors. Kem would garden, and Ann would insert the flowers. "It's been second nature to both of us to garden and work together outdoors," Kem said.

Kem worked for Yellow Freight until retiring at age 54 when he realized he really wasn't ready to retire. He did a few other jobs, and then when he decided it was time to really retire he started helping in the family business, Ann's Flowers and Gifts. "I come to the flower shop each day, but I don't have any creative talents so they let me help where I can," Kem said.

When asked what he likes most about caring for the British Graves, Kem responded, "The reaction of the people either at a ceremony or out there working and they drive up and appreciate the flowers. It makes all the sweat and aches and pains of getting down on your knees worthwhile. If just one person a year enjoys it...then it's all worth it."

This month we shine the G.A.R. spotlight on Kem Miller and his family for their care of the British Graves.



***Thank you Kem, Ann, and Jason!***





**Kim Horn**

G.A.R. Cemetery Director

Each person experiences grief in their own way. There is not a “right” or “wrong” way to grieve. I’m blessed to work with grieving families every day, and sometimes I still feel at a loss for words to give a family comfort. The following quote by Victoria Alexander resonated with me, because it defines what a person who is grieving needs:

There are three needs of the griever:

1. To find the words for the loss,
2. To say the words aloud,
3. And to know that the words have been heard.

-Victoria Alexander



The most important element in this quote is....listen. Sometimes it isn't what we have to say, but just being there to listen when someone needs to talk about their loved one.

The website [www.grief.com](http://www.grief.com) lists the following things that one should and shouldn't say to someone when they are grieving:

## The Worst Things to Say to Someone in Grief

1. At least she lived a long life, many people die young
2. He is in a better place
3. She brought this on herself
4. There is a reason for everything
5. Aren't you over him yet, he has been dead for a while now
6. You can have another child still
7. She was such a good person God wanted her to be with him
8. I know how you feel
9. She did what she came here to do and it was her time to go
10. Be strong

## The Best Things to Say to Someone in Grief

1. I am so sorry for your loss.
2. I wish I had the right words, just know I care.
3. I don't know how you feel, but I am here to help in any way I can.
4. You and your loved one will be in my thoughts and prayers.
5. My favorite memory of your loved one is...
6. I am always just a phone call away
7. Give a hug instead of saying something
8. We all need help at times like this, I am here for you
9. I am usually up early or late, if you need anything
10. Saying nothing, just be with the person

There are multiple resources available to assist people during the grieving process. The following is a listing of just a few of them:

Grief support groups through your local hospital or church.

[www.grief.com](http://www.grief.com)

[www.opentohope.com](http://www.opentohope.com)

[www.webhealing.com](http://www.webhealing.com)

[www.bereavedparentsusa.org](http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org)

[www.hellogrief.org](http://www.hellogrief.org)

Compassionate Friends is a national organization dedicated to assisting parents who have lost a child or siblings who have lost their brother or sister. Their mission statement is "Friendship, Understanding, and Hope. Supporting Family after a Child Dies." More information about Compassionate Friends can be found at [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org).

Families who have lost a loved one in the military can utilize the resources listed at Military One Source [www.militaryonesource.mil/casualty](http://www.militaryonesource.mil/casualty) and Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors [www.taps.org/survivors/](http://www.taps.org/survivors/).



*"Grief is like the ocean; it comes on waves ebbing and flowing. Sometimes the water is calm, and sometimes it is overwhelming. All we can do is learn to swim." -Vicki Harrison*





**Chad Masterson**  
G.A.R. Cemetery Foreman



**The G.A.R. Cemetery office**

## *FYI...*

### **... More Changes on the Way...**

You may remember last spring when we received the new markers for the British cadets that are buried here in G.A.R. Cemetery that made such a tremendous difference in the appearance of the British Block. Well there are more changes on the way. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission liked it so well that they approved the money for new landscaping. That's right, a new sprinkler system, zoysia sod, and a row of boxwood hedge. That will really make that section stand out!

Speaking of changes, have you noticed the office? The installation of siding, windows and two new doors made a huge difference in the curb appeal of the cemetery.

Moving forward I believe even more changes are on the way!

## ***A Day at G.A.R.***



**Nancy Bro**  
G.A.R. Cemetery Office Manager



**Cover Photo:**  
Babyland Circle/G.A.R. Cemetery  
Spring 2014

Photography has been a hobby of mine for several years, and one of the things I enjoy about working here at G.A.R. Cemetery is that I always have the opportunity to capture so many beautiful moments with a simple click of a button. Of course the continually changing weather can make a huge difference in the appearance of each section of the cemetery, but I think my favorite time of the year to photograph would have to be the spring. I love seeing all the birds, squirrels and butterflies dancing upon the freshly mown grounds that our dedicated grounds men work so proudly to maintain.

Each day as I glance out the windows of my office I am continually thinking of new ways to share our beautiful cemetery so that everyone can enjoy the treasures that I am blessed to be close to every day.



The meaning of most symbols have remained fairly consistent throughout the centuries. Crosses for Christians, hearts for love, lambs for innocence. But they can also tell you more intimate things about the people that they honor. Like what religion they were, what clubs and organizations they belonged to, their occupation or hobby or even what their favorite flower was. I took a stroll and here are a few of the interesting and unique markers and engravings that are found here on our beautiful G.A.R. Cemetery grounds.











James "Madison" McGee's marker that was obtained from the VA honoring him as a Civil War Veteran.

## Did You Know?

### ➤ ... Madison and Virginia McGee?

- ✓ James "Madison" McGee was born in 1842. He served in the Confederate forces during the Civil War. Virginia was his second wife of 32 years.

### ➤ ... What battles did he fight in?

- ✓ According to an affidavit given before the Adjutant General of the State of Missouri in 1910, Madison served at such battles as Gettysburg, Bull Run, and Drury's Bluff.

### ➤ ... Madison was in an unmarked grave for over 75 years?

- ✓ In 2009 Madison's 3<sup>rd</sup> great-grandson, Michael McGee was traveling through and decided to stop and see Madison's grave. After a long search it was obvious the neither Madison nor Virginia had a marker for their graves.

### ➤ ... Veterans can receive a marker free of charge?

- ✓ After visiting with a friend who was a Civil War buff, Michael learned that he could obtain a Veteran's marker for Madison Free of Charge by contacting The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) at the following link:

<http://www.cem.va.gov/hmm/>

And in 2014, Virginia McGee finally got her marker.



Virginia McGee's marker was placed at her gravesite in November 2014.



Michael McGee, his father, Dr. Norman G. McGee and family at the graves of Madison and Virginia McGee.

Dr. Norman G. McGee and his son Michael McGee at the site of Madison and Virginia McGee's graves.





James "Madison" McGee was born in 1842 in Carroll County, Virginia, the 10th of 11 children. The McGees were a family of farmers and miners who lived a hardscrabble life in the rugged terrain of Appalachia. Slavery hardly existed in Carroll County, and when the Civil War broke out the McGee boys entered the fray on the Southern side, not in defense of the peculiar institution, but more out of an age-old Scotch-Irish antipathy to anyone telling them what to do. At least five of the brothers would serve in the Confederate forces and four of them in the 29th Virginia. According to an affidavit given before the adjutant general of the state of Missouri in 1910, Madison served at such battles as Gettysburg, Bull Run, and Drury's Bluff. He also reported being wounded in "a little fight in Tennessee."



Photo Courtesy of Bing Image Search

According to historian John Perry Alderman, "A federal force in East Tennessee was threatening Bristol on the Virginia border. Major General Samuel Jones did not have enough troops to deal with the threat. The 29th Virginia left Petersburg on September 14th and riding on flat cars, freight cars, and the tops of cars they arrived at Zollicoffer Station in Sullivan County, Tennessee on September 16th having made 340 miles in little over two days. After serving on picket for two days there was a skirmish and two were killed and four were wounded." These included Madison, shot through both thighs, leaving him partially crippled for the rest of his life, and his brother Anderson, shot through the hand.

Madison married Elizabeth Jane Lyons in 1860 and they had seven children. Life was even harder in Carroll County after the war and many of the McGees, including Madison, his brother, and many of their adult children would settle in the Missouri Lead Belt to work in the mines. In 1900, after 40 years of marriage, Madison's first wife died. She is buried in Bonne Terre, Missouri. After her death, Madison returned to Virginia for four months and in 1901 would marry Virginia Freeman, a young woman of 19, while Madison was 59 years old. Many of the McGees who had settled in the Lead Belt later moved to Duenweg, Missouri and Zincville, Oklahoma in the early nineteen-teens to work the mines there. The two would remain married for 32 years until Madison's death at age 91 in 1933. The couple had no children of their own, but Virginia did raise several of Madison's grandchildren. The two were active in the Assembly of God church and Madison is given the title "Reverend" in his obituary in the Miami News Record. Virginia died in 1965. ~ Michael McGee

## January Interments

Stogsdill, Bobby Jo  
Morrison, Robert  
Windle, Leonard  
France, Charles Eugene, Jr.  
McDowell, Boyce Neil  
Timothy, Junior  
Osburn, William James, Sr.  
Beaver, William II  
Lamb, Larry  
Lehman, Mary Elinor  
Stephens, Bessie Mae  
Nance, Alene S.  
Hardcastle, Mary

## February Interments

Rice, Doris  
Garcia, Juan Alberto  
Bond, William "James"  
Osborn, William "Willie" E.  
Lannon, Joe

## March Interments

Trease, Norma Jean  
Hargrove, Lee P.  
Mathias, Pauline  
Turley, Florence Ellen  
Smith, Charles Eugene  
Stanford, Dorothy Louise (Swedling)  
Black, Ellen  
Wagner, Bessie  
Bailey, Betty  
Trudgeon, Charles H.  
Fahnestock, John R.  
Vaughan, Donald G.  
Mottl, Susan S.  
Gilmore, Heather Lynn (Miner)  
Smith, Terry  
Hopper, Avanglina Louise  
Tolliver, Harriett L.  
Stauffer, Billie Jean

## April Interments

Crabtree, Sondra  
Turner, Earl F.  
Thompson, Julie Marie  
Vanderham, Lynn H.  
Brooks, Esther R.  
Radford, Hazel  
Hill, Lester R.  
Thompson, Loucille  
Conrad, Charles Thomas  
Oliver, Ura Claire  
Carver, Charlotte  
Dannels, Donald D.  
Fullerton, Priscilla  
Hoggard, Darlene  
Whitecrow, Jane Marie  
Buckert, Wanda L.  
Clarke, Sophia Charlene  
Brewster, Woodrow W

## May Interments

Owens, Paul  
Minyard, Barbara Jean  
Winton, Nancy Jean  
Paul, Robert Don, Jr.  
Landrum, Rosemary  
Jennings, Mildred L.  
Mayer, Maxine O. (Harlin)  
Helmick-Fisher, Cara Jane  
Babbitt, William V.  
Smith, Walter III  
McDaniel, Karolyn S.  
Dru, Glenna Lee (Conner)  
Scott, James  
Smith, Candace G.  
Dale, Pat  
Dale, Gary  
Dawson Lois B.

## June Interments

Todd, Marlene Grace  
Mahurin, Billie June  
Feken, Timothy Rex  
Price, Norma Jean  
Schuelein, William  
Jones, Lutie Irene  
Brasher, Leonard  
Martin, Patsy Lou  
Asbell, Robert W.  
Collier, Mary E. (Conrad)  
Cleveland, Dennis Eugene  
Harris, Nancy Carolyn (Mailath)

## July Interments

Case, Lela  
Tinsley, Carlean  
Lunsford, Rebecca  
Coker, Rebecca Carol (Pendergraft)  
Cawyer, Harold Sr.  
Ciano, Larrie Kaye  
Bradley, George Patrick  
Neal, Mary Janice  
Shephard, Mary  
Herndon, Kenneth Stephen

## August Interments

Thacker, Charles Eugene "Gene"  
Poole, Opal  
Turner, Robert F., II  
Moore, James E.  
Dubois, David E.  
Hall, Richard A.  
Meeks, Betty Lou  
Graham, Velma  
Drake, Daniel  
Marshall, Imajean  
Bond, Frank  
Brewster, Maxine  
Thomas, Robert  
Perry, Etheline  
Bahnsen, Marsha Raelene  
Dry, Bill

## September Interments

Barbee, Carl  
Siemens, Carol  
Hall, Donald  
Fredrich, Clifford  
Apodaca, Julie F.  
Cook, Preston Owen  
Anderson, Rayann  
Harper, Billie

## October Interments

Andrews, Lucille  
Watson, Raymond  
Williams, Karen  
Mahurin, Christopher George  
Wyrick, Nancy  
Hart, Betty L.  
Beebout, Mary Ann  
Lawson, Herbert  
Huddleston, Lee Douglas  
Whitson, Jean B.  
Harper, JoWilla  
Burtrum, James  
Slack, Ralph E.  
Morris, Marvin David  
Power, Robert C.  
Hudson, Dollie Anne  
Fahnestock, John Richard  
LaFolier, Johnny  
Hart, Kenneth Leroy, Jr.  
Moore, Ethel Ruby

## November Interments

Schillhahn, Rebekah  
Hall, Mary Bell  
Altebaumer, William Raymond  
Richards, Judson  
Severs, Nellie  
Jones, Wanda Lee  
Fleming, Gay Nelle  
Jenkins, James E.  
Jenkins, Daniel J.

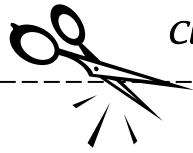
## December Interments

Hulsey, Alice  
Alderman, Grace Lydia  
Tompkins, John William  
Stanley, Helen Louise  
Ginn, Betty L.  
Harper, Robert Earl  
Mott, John Charles  
Wheeler, Susan  
Reeves, Kyra  
Walters, Marie June  
Wyatt, Sharon Ruth  
Robinson, Kathryn  
Jurgensmeyer, Margie  
Robinson, Deloris G



## 2014 EVENT SCHEDULE

- ❖ **Memorial Day Ceremony**  
Monday, May 25, 2015  
@ 10:00 a.m.
- ❖ **British Flyers**  
**Remembrance Ceremony**  
Saturday, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
@ 2:00



*Clip And Save!*

### G.A.R. Cemetery Decoration Removal Schedule

**\*\*All Decorations Must Be Removed From Graves By 8:00 a.m.  
On The Dates Listed\*\***

DECORATION REMOVAL	DATE
First Monday in February	02/02/2015
Second Monday Following Easter	04/13/2015
First Monday Following Memorial Day	06/01/2015
First Monday in October	10/05/2015

- Wrought iron basket hangers are not permitted except for the time period of December 15<sup>th</sup> through January 15<sup>th</sup> and one week prior to Memorial Day until the first Monday following Memorial Day.
- Notices for our decoration removal schedule will be posted on signs at cemetery entrances the week preceding decoration removals.
- All decorations not collected by date and time listed will be disposed of with no exceptions.
- For more information about the G.A.R. Cemetery decoration removal schedule, please call the cemetery at 918-541-2288.

*Walking, I am listening to a  
deeper way. Suddenly all my  
ancestors are behind me.  
Be still, they say. Watch and  
listen. You are the result  
of the love of thousands.*

Linda Hogan (b. 1947)  
Native American writer

## Interested In Genealogy?

*Visit the City of Miami Public Library!*

### Miami Public Library

200 N Main  
Miami, OK 74354  
[www.miamipl.okpls.org](http://www.miamipl.okpls.org)

### Barbara Becker

Genealogy Department  
[geniedept@miami.lib.ok.us](mailto:geniedept@miami.lib.ok.us)  
918-541-2292

### Staff Hours

Mon, Wed, Thu. 10:00 a.m. - noon, 1:00-5:00 p.m.  
Tues 9:00 a.m. – noon, 1:00-4:00 p.m.



What  
YOU  
do today  
can  
improve  
ALL  
your  
tomorrows

## We're on the Web!

*Visit us at:*

**[www.miamiokla.net](http://www.miamiokla.net)**

*Try to be  
a rainbow in  
someone's cloud.*

- Maya Angelou -

## Adopt~A~Flag Today!

Purchase an American flag for \$50.00 that will be displayed proudly at G.A.R. Cemetery on Memorial Day, 4<sup>th</sup> of July, and Veterans Day. If you wish, the name of a person to be honored will be inscribed onto a plaque that will be displayed with the flag. This program is a great way to show appreciation for a loved one and your country.

### Don't Delay!

Order by MAY 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015 to be displayed this Memorial Day!!!

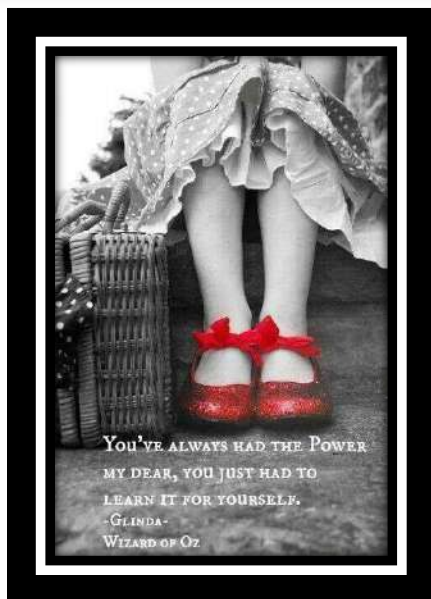
For more information visit us at [www.miamiokla.net](http://www.miamiokla.net)  
Or call 918-541-2288

## G.A.R. History Hunt

Do you have family at G.A.R. Cemetery? Do they have an interesting history? We are always looking for additions to our Living History Tour. Please send your interesting historical documentation and photographs to [nbro@miamiokla.net](mailto:nbro@miamiokla.net) and you never know... you *could* see your family member featured in our next issue!



*"The Present is the living sum-total of the whole past."*—  
Thomas Carlyle, *Characteristics*



## A Friendly Reminder

All Decorations Must Be Removed  
From The Graves by 8:00 a.m.  
On The First Monday in February

**February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015**

## We've Got News

Our goal is to supply updated news and event schedules to everyone who has an interest in G.A.R. Cemetery. If you know anyone who would like to be on our mailing list,

Send your request to: [nbro@miamiokla.net](mailto:nbro@miamiokla.net)

Or Call: (918) 541-2288