**Fact Sheet for Families and Friends Who Care Initiative**

Thank you so much for volunteering to assist with the maintenance of St. Paul’s AME cemetery. The cemetery is located on Main Street next to the Francis Marion Stafford house and the Cagney Restaurant.  To get to the cemetery, you enter the driveway right next to the Stafford House (yellow house on 711 Main Street) and follow it until you see the cemetery. Please do not park at the Cagney restaurant. The following fact sheet gives you a little background about the cemetery and what is expected as part of the maintenance project.

**What is the significance of St. Paul’s cemetery?**

This graveyard was the burial ground for virtually the entire black population of the Kernersville community prior to the Civil War. After the Civil War several black members of the Methodist Episcopal Church established a new church to be known as St. Paul's Methodist Episcopal Church. St. Paul's congregation purchased the Methodist Episcopal Church building and moved it to the site of this graveyard in 1873, becoming the first place of worship for the black community and the third established church in Kernersville. The church is no longer standing at this cemetery.

**Who is buried in the cemetery?**

A number of years ago a census was conducted and it was determined that close to 200 graves have been identified.  A memorial plaque near the entrance lists those graves that have been identified. As you enter the cemetery, unmarked field stones to both the right and the left are unmarked graves placed by family members at the time of burials. Prior to the design and preparation of actual tombstones, this was the custom for marking gravesites....placing small boulders that you will find throughout the cemetery but primarily at the front.

**Who is responsible for the cemetery?**

The Kernersville Historic Preservation Society took over responsibility for clean up and maintenance of the cemetery a number of years ago.  Because the cemetery is located on over an acre of fully treed land, it is very difficult to keep the leaves raked up and removed and the dead branches collected. The membership of the KHPS is small and as a result more volunteers are needed to assist.  Recently, the KHPS established a program to increase the number of volunteers and to keep on top of the maintenance of the site.

**What is the Families and Friends Who Care Initiative?**

In the summer of 2018, the KHPS introduced a new community outreach program to encourage members of the community to adopt a month and take responsibility for cleaning up hard debris and trash for that month. The program was a brainstorm of one of the members who invited her family visiting from out of town to assist in cleaning up during their visit.  The family members simply walked the entire cemetery and picked up trash, cleaned debris from around tombstones, piled up and dragged sticks and branches over to the side wooded area and raked leaves as needed.  It occurred to the membership that many individuals, local organizations and businesses and families would see the importance of maintaining this important historic site.

**What is our volunteer group expected to do?**

The group should schedule one to two main clean up days in the month for heavier cleanup of leaves and branches and trash.  Keep in mind that although leaves are literally everywhere, no one group is expected to rake the entire cemetery.  Each month a little progress is made. If there are leaves piled by the fences, a good effort is to use bags to fill them up and dump then into the wooded area next to the cemetery behind the Stafford house.  If there are piles of branches by the base of large trees, carry them over to the wooded area.  Keep in mind that cleaning up around the tombstones and field stones is a very important part of the cleanup. Also, sometimes there is paper trash, bottles and cans and the group should clean that up as well.  The planters in the back of cemetery next to the bench are not trash receptacles so should be cleaned out. The KHPS volunteer cemetery clean up coordinator will make every attempt to meet you at your first clean up day to give you specific guidance and answer initial questions.  If they cannot meet you, contact them for suggestions. Although the cemetery is not the responsibility of any of the local or county entities, the town of Kernersville also helps in picking up the leaves and debris once piled up as time permits the work crews based on other town responsibilities and weather conditions.

**What does the volunteer group need to bring for the cleanup?**

Please bring leaf rakes, as many as the group can round up, cordless leave blowers, cordless weed whackers, pails for picking up trash, pruners and cutters for branches, large plastic yard bags, small brooms (they help around the gravestones), etc. You may not need all of these tools depending on the time of year and condition of the cemetery. Please take any of the trash with you to dispose of.

You should also bring work gloves and wear work boots or very sturdy shoes.  The ground is very uneven.  Walking sticks are also helpful. Insect repellent is recommended especially if you are very sensitive to insects buzzing you. And bring water or something else to drink. Paper towels are also helpful. You may want hand sanitizer for after clean up.

**Other than the major monthly days for cleanup, what is expected during the clean up month?**
Periodically throughout the month, it is really helpful to return a few times to keep up with trash and downed branches and twigs around the cemetery or other unexpected occurrences (tombstone damage, trees down, etc). If at any time you go alone for the clean-up and you see individuals in the cemetery, wait until they leave or leave and return later.  There have never been any incidents at the cemetery but safety first is important. If you see individuals who look suspicious in any way, call 911 and report the incident immediately and also let the Volunteer coordinator, Christine Gaugler, know what had happened.

**What should we do after our month is over?**

When you’ve finished your monthly volunteer responsibilities, contact the KHPS St. Paul’s cemetery coordinator, Christine Gaugler, to let her know how much progress has been made and report any issues she needs to know about how the clean up went. Christine can be reached via email in hgaugler@msn.com or calling 336-497-4073 or 703-625-1024.  She can contacted any time during the month if you have questions about the process or uncovered some concerns.  Information you pass on to the coordinator will be helpful for the upcoming month. Additionally, in May, the KHPS schedules a clean-up day to celebrate Historic Preservation month and we encourage all groups to attend this clean-up effort, meet members of the Society and other groups, and picnic with us after you are done with the clean-up effort. And of course, we would really appreciate signing up for an additional month the following year.
 **Other than the cemetery, what are the activities of the KHPS?**

The goals of the KHPS include the following:

* Preserve and maintain historical structures through National and Local Historic Designations
* Educate today’s citizens about the Town’s past and the people who lived here
* Preserve the ambience of the Town’s history to co-exist side by side with the necessary modernization and expansion of the town
* Promote the historical treasures of Kernersville for cultural and entertainment opportunities for the citizens
* Support and contribute to other organizations such as the Kernersville Museum and Korner’s Folly to achieve common goals
* Support and contribute to other historical organizations in North Carolina for the common goal of preserving the State’s history.

The KHPS also coordinates with the Kernersville Museum on various activities and events.

**Does the KHPS conduct any regular meetings open to the public?**

The Kernersville Historical Preservation Society meets bi-monthly on the 3rd Monday in January, March, May, July, September, and November at 6:30 PM.  Members are notified about a week in advance of the location, time, and historical topic.  Meetings are held in different locations, frequently at an historical building.  You do not have to be a member to attend. Information about the topic and location are posted on the website.

**How can I become a member?**

If you’d like to become a member, the annual family membership due is only $20.  Many KHPS members are long-time residents of Kernersville who reminisce and share historical anecdotes, some live or work in historic buildings, while others are relative newcomers interested in supporting the preservation efforts.  In addition to the business and history agenda, meetings include a social “meet and greet.”  Additionally, May is Historic Preservation Month and the KHPS has special events planned for the community.

For more information about the KHPS, check out its website at www.kvllehps.com.

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