

Decoration Day tradition continues in Double Springs, Putnam Co., TN

By JUNE GARRETT

DOUBLE SPRINGS -- Abraham Lincoln once said "You can tell a lot about a society by the way they honor their dead." Look at military cemeteries, city and community cemeteries, family cemeteries: throughout Putnam County small cemeteries dot the hill sides, valleys, and wooded areas.

Many of the small cemeteries in the area no longer have descendants/family living. Many graves seem forgotten and small plots seem to become over grown with thickets, trees or tall grass. Monuments have fallen or are about to fall.

Much of the land contained in the small cemeteries was donated by a loving family member or friend.

Plots were not bought or sold. There were no established funds for the upkeep of the cemetery. Only by the love and care of family members have some of these areas been maintained.

Several years ago there were no power mowers or weed eaters or hired help to mow and trim the grounds; instead family members and friends often established a set time of the year that they gathered together with their sling blades, hoes, and even butcher knives to trim the grass around the monuments.

After the grass, bushes and weeds cut, fresh cut flowers and hand made paper-mache flowers were brought and lovingly placed on the graves. This special day became known as "decoration day."

Many small cemeteries also held a short memorial service under the shade of a tree in the cemetery. Some even had "dinner on the ground," a plot luck covered dish luncheon before the memorial service.

Many cemeteries have host their tradition, but many others in the county still carry on the annual tradition of "Decoration Day." One of these is Double Springs Cemetery located on a hill in Double Springs Community on Hwy. 70.

Sunday July 24, at 2 p.m. the Double Springs Cemetery community will celebrate decoration day. Family and friends of those buried in the cemetery will bring flowers to honor the dead and a short memorial service will be held under the shelter area.

A business meeting will follow the services to discuss the care of the cemetery and to receive donations for the next year's maintenance fund. The public is invited to join in this special tradition.

Donations to the nonprofit up keeping fund may also be mailed to Double Springs Cemetery, P.O. Box 366, Cookeville TN 38503

There are several unmarked graves and plots at the cemetery. The cemetery committee would like to update the records of the cemetery.

If anyone knows of a family member or friend who may have an unmarked plot, please contact one of the cemetery committee members at Decoration day, or write to Double Springs Cemetery. P.O. Box 366, Cookeville TN 38503.

Published July 15, 2005 10:51 AM CDT : Herald Citizen Newspaper, Cookeville, TN

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