

Long-awaited Jackson County cemetery book provides valuable new genealogy resource

Betty Rodgers, local historian, said it best: “The book is a work of love by those who documented and did the footwork, and is a phenomenal job by those who stood until the last of the information had been edited and printed.”

The project that got nicknamed “The Book” is a beautiful hard-bound deluxe edition of 719 pages containing nearly 50,000 names of those interred in

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the more than 250 cemeteries inside Jackson County, including all cities, communities and rural areas. A byproduct of the research was the discovery of lost cemeteries and, in some cases, improved cemetery care.

The first publication that includes all known African-American cemeteries, the book also has more than 50 cemeteries that have never been previously recorded. Editor Else Martin’s footnotes add genealogical information to many of the entries. Military buffs will discover a number of military graves that have been identified.

Maps are provided for many of the cemeteries. A description of each cemetery’s location is included and often contains interesting historical information on the cemetery. A comprehensive index lists first and last names for ease of searching. In many cases, it even includes cross-referencing by maiden names of married women.

“The book itself is beautiful and would be a wonderful addition to a personal library as well as being available in public places,” said Liz Ford, chairman of the Pascagoula Historic Preservation Committee. “It will be a great asset to those who research for personal, business or legal purposes.”

Tommy Wixon, past president of the Jackson County Historical and Genealogical Society, said

recording burials from the Colonial era to the present gives a significant amount of knowledge about the people and their history of Jackson County.

“The vast majority of these records are not available from official government records,” Wixon said. “Only legions of hard workers tromping through brambles and brush could have produced such a valuable document.”

The genesis of the book came from three earlier volumes published by the Genealogical Society in the 1960’s and 70’s called Requiem I, II and III. Over the years, local historians and researchers added cemeteries and updated existing ones.

The new cemetery book is the first major work to be published by the Society since 1989 when it issued the definitive “The History of Jackson County, Mississippi,” a 438-page hardbound compilation of histories of families, places, institutions and events.

“The Cemeteries of Jackson County, Mississippi: A Requiem” is now on sale at the Pascagoula Public Library’s Local Genealogy and History Department located on the second floor. Copies are \$50, plus \$3.50 tax for Mississippi residents. Orders may be e-mailed to Owens at pggen1@jgrls.org or posted to JCHGS, P.O. Box 984, Pascagoula, MS 39568. Add \$6 for shipping and handling.



Members admire new Cemetery Book.