

Beaumont

Research: Bob Dodd and Lou Malcomb

Beaumont Cemetery is an obscure cemetery in the county. Although the 1998 County Cemeteries of Monroe includes Beaumont, it has no listing of burials. It is also improperly located in the listing. Cemetery Committee members Lou Malcomb and Bob Dodd were unable to locate the cemetery until we talked with Mr. Lloyd Smith, a resident of the area who has a special interest in the nearby Richland Cemetery. He mentioned that there was another cemetery near Richland that had been extensively desecrated but had as many as a hundred stones including Revolutionary War veterans. He was able to give us the exact location. The cemetery is on property recently willed to the Sycamore Land Trust (SLT) by David Porter. SLT calls it the Porter West Preserve. They have yet to develop the property extensively except for a gate at the entrance and a short trail up a wooded hillside. John Lawrence from SLT was not aware that there is a cemetery on the property, but John, Lou, and Bob went to the location in a grove of trees and found only four stones, only one of which had a readable inscription. The other stones were leaning and/or partially buried.

Mr. Smith told us that he remembered the cemetery when he was a boy as being much larger than the few stones on a small knoll that we see today. He indicated that Mr. Porter did not like having a cemetery on his property. He used part of the property as a dump and, according to Lloyd, bull dozed soil and trash onto the cemetery.

SLT and the MCHC Cemetery Committee had a joint workday at the cemetery on March 22. We removed much of the trash and some of the fallen timber from the area including along the path to the cemetery. We also cleared small brush and leaves from the area around the 4-5 stones still visible on the small knoll. One stone was standing and its inscription could be read. The crude lettering included the name "Elizabeth Zincks" and gave a death date of 1818. We unearthed another stone that was leaning at a high angle and mostly buried. The equally crude lettering on this stone gave the name "Jean Zincks" and a death date of 1820. Daniel Zincks purchased land in section 32 (the section where the cemetery is located) from the state in 1816, the year the area was opened for purchase. Blanchard's history of Monroe County makes no further reference to the Zincks. Daniel "Zink" and Jacob "Zink" are listed in the 1820 census as heads of household. The Zincks likely lived in the area before the county was organized in 1818. This must be one of the oldest cemeteries in the county. (Rose Hill Cemetery was started in 1818.)

The Cemetery Committee plans to do additional work on the cemetery, especially probing for additional stones. The 100 stones that Lloyd Smith remembers may be a bit excessive, but surely there were many more than those currently visible.