

Magnolia Cemetery receives historic designation

On June 10, 2015, City Council approved the Magnolia Cemetery, located at 816 Montrose Boulevard at the intersection of Montrose Boulevard and Allen Parkway, as a historic landmark. It was established in 1884 by members of First German Methodist Church of Houston (later known as Bering Memorial Methodist Church) for use of its congregation. The original name of the cemetery was Magnolia Graveyard. Burials were opened to nonmembers of the church in 1892. With more than 3,800 interments today, Magnolia Cemetery Corporation operates as a non-profit perpetual care cemetery insuring proper care and maintenance for all future generations.

The cemetery originally extended north to the south bank of Buffalo Bayou. When the City of Houston paved Allen Parkway in 1929, all cemetery property north of Allen Parkway was ceded to the city. Today, the cemetery is walled off from the heavy traffic along Montrose Boulevard and Allen Parkway, giving it a park-like setting.

While the burials in Magnolia Cemetery are a good mix of solid, hard-working citizens, the most well-known is Gus Sessions Wortham, co-founder of American General Insurance. Wortham told his friends that he hand-picked his last resting place so he could "keep an eye on things," alluding to the business at American General, which is located adjacent to the cemetery.

