

History of Bear Cañon Cemetery

By David J. Pack

To start off I am going to give a brief history of Bear Cañon Cemetery. In February 1872 a church was founded. It was the first church built in Douglas County. The Saint Philip In-The-Field Church is on the National Register of Historic Places. In the year of 1873, David T. Wolf deeded three acres of land adjoining the church for a burial ground.



St. Philip Episcopal Church
(1st Church built in Douglas County)



Old Sign and Gate

In the early times, families would just bury wherever they wanted. This has made it hard for the sexton now. Sometimes, when they are digging for a new burial, they find remains of someone they did not know was there.



New Sign



New Gate

On June 13th 1965, a flood hit Sedalia. The sexton at this time was Albert W. Manhart. His home was destroyed in the flood. The records for the cemetery were in his basement. The Sedalia Historic Group helped in restoring the recorders in 2004. Since the County Court House in Castle Rock burned down in 1978 and lost all their records. The society could not turn there for help. These “Mortuary Mice,” as they were known, went to the mortuaries and funeral homes in Castle Rock to find the dates needed. In time they were able to put together records for the cemetery. However, even with their careful search they still had many unknowns. They knew of people who were buried in the cemetery but did not know where. At the start of the project, there were 124 such unknowns. My project has helped locate the final resting place of 89 of these individuals.



Bear Cañon Cemetery is unique compared to other cemeteries; it has many tombstones that are one of a kind. Here are two of my favorites:



Aaron Pope
June 12, 1979 to January 21, 2004



Prescott Family