

## NSDAR SPECIAL PROJECTS GRANTS APPLICATION

### PART I – COVER SHEET & GENERAL INFORMATION

#### Organization Information

- Name: Oak Grove Cemetery Society Brunswick Georgia Inc.
- Mailing Address: OGCS, P.O. Box 3029 Brunswick, GA 31521-3029
- Street Address: Oak Grove Cemetery, Brunswick, GA 31520
- Phone: (912) 275-8009
- Facebook: Oak Grove Cemetery Society Brunswick Georgia Inc.
- Federal Identification Number: *removed*

#### Grant Writer Information

- Name: Derek Jackson – OGCS Member
- Address: *removed*
- Phone: (404) 697-7681
- Email: derekjackson3791@gmail.com

#### Principal Officer Information

- Name and Title: Robert M. Gindhart, III - Chairman of the Board and President of OGCS
- Address: *removed*
- Phone: *removed*
- Email: cemeteryoakgrove@gmail.com

#### Project Information

The Oak Grove Cemetery Society (OGCS) plans to restore a section of the original 1858 iron perimeter fence with two newel entry posts and rebuild the collapsed sarcophagus of Georgia Brown Whitfield.

#### Project Budget

Amount of funding requested from the grant:	\$ <u>7200</u>
Amount of funding secured for the project:	\$ <u>2800</u>
Total project cost:	\$ <u>10,000</u>

#### Which Daughters of the American Revolution chapter or state society sponsored this grant application?

The Brunswick, Georgia chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution

#### Has this organization ever received an NSDAR Special Projects Grant, for this or another project?

The Oak Grove Cemetery Society has never received a NSDAR Special Projects Grant.

#### Grant Application Category

Historic Preservation

## **PART II – COMMUNITY & ORGANIZATION INFORMATION**

### **Community Served by Organization**

The Oak Grove Cemetery Society offers a range of programs for the Brunswick, Georgia community and the greater Glynn County area with its 81,508 residents. Within this community, the OGCS serves two main groups of people:

- The 60 known descendants of those at rest in the Cemetery, with whom OGCS consults on restoration, upkeep, and cleaning of grave sites.
- The entire community by working to make Oak Grove Cemetery a safe and tranquil place for them to encounter the history and heritage of early Brunswick through a variety of programs. OGCS continues to create new programs to serve their community with an estimated 500 visitors a year attending their various history walking tours alone.

The following are among the current services and education efforts conducted by the OGCS:

- History walking tours in Oak Grove Cemetery – “Victorian Cemetery Symbolism-Lambs; Lilies & Rosebuds,” “Murder, Mayhem and Madness,” and “Tales from the Tomb.”
- Self-guided walking tour brochure.
- Preservation technology workshop presented by the Georgia Municipal Cemetery Association
- Concerts under the oaks by the Coastal Brass Choir.

### **General Information about Organization**

The Oak Grove Cemetery Society Brunswick Georgia Inc. was founded in 2014 by Robert M. Gindhart, III in cooperation with a group of 16 concerned stakeholder organizations in Brunswick (Glynn County), Georgia. This local group’s desire to create a 501(c)(3) came from a desperate need for an official caretaker to step in and save the forgotten Oak Grove Cemetery. The cemetery was founded by the City of Brunswick in 1838 as its first public burial site, but it fell into disrepair once the city created further cemeteries outside the city limits. Now, along with its 16 stake holder organizations, Oak Grove Cemetery Society has set as its mission to work with the City of Brunswick, the descendants of those at rest, and the public in the protection, conservation, preservation, and maintenance of historic Oak Grove Cemetery.

Representing its 100 members and managing the historic site, a passionate group of volunteers make up the Board of directors, consisting of five Officers and six Member at Large positions selected from community leaders. The Board members are elected for three-year terms with the last election held in 2014. The cemetery’s stakeholders named Robert Gindhart as Chairman of the Board and President of the Oak Grove Cemetery Society due to his previous experience in non-profit work as President of Sonoma, California’s oldest non-profit as well as his position on the Brunswick Historic Preservation Board. Combining the experience from Mr. Gindhart and the Board of directors with the tireless efforts of community volunteers, the Oak Grove Cemetery Society has been able to achieve the following goals in the first 21 months of its existence:

- Memorandum of Understanding with City of Brunswick obtained, declaring Oak Grove Cemetery a local historic site.
- Removable bollard installed to prohibit vehicle traffic in cemetery.
- Arborist brought in to remove trees and limbs detrimental to cemetery and public safety.
- Restoration and cleaning of the site and select funerary monuments undertaken, following guidance from historic preservationists.

- \$20,000 gained through fund raisers.
- Victorian brick terrace built at entrance to Oak Grove Chapel.

#### The Relationship Stakeholders that Compose Oak Grove Cemetery Society

- City of Brunswick
- Descendants of Those at Rest
- Public
- Coastal Georgia Genealogical Society
- Friends of Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation, A Chapter of Friends of Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites
- Historic Brunswick Foundation, Brunswick, Georgia
- Magnolia Garden Club, Brunswick, Georgia
- National Society of the Colonial Dames XVII Century, St. Simons Island, Georgia Chapter
- National Society of the Daughters of the American Colonists, St. John's Parish Chapter
- National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Brunswick, Georgia Chapter
- National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Fort Frederica Chapter
- National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, Brunswick & St. Simons Island, Georgia
- National Society United States Daughters of 1812, Catherine Littlefield Greene Chapter
- Signature Squares of Brunswick, Georgia
- Sons of Confederate Veterans Inc. Thomas Marsh Forman Camp # 485, Brunswick, Georgia
- United Daughters of the Confederacy Lanier of Glynn Chapter, St. Simons Island, Georgia

#### Organization's Financial Information

As a non-profit organization with 501(c)3 enabled status, the Oak Grove Cemetery Society holds no salaried positions and focuses its entire budget on projects, events, fundraisers, and supplies.

Operating budget for most recently completed fiscal year:

\$ removed

- N/A – Percent of budget used for personnel salaries and benefits
- N/A – Percent of budget used for maintenance of buildings and grounds
- 88% of budget used for projects
- 6% of budget used for special events and educational programs
- 2% of budget used for marketing and promotion
- 4% of budget used for insurance and other operating costs

### PART III – PROJECT INFORMATION

#### Description

The Oak Grove Cemetery Society has created a Master Plan to find areas of need in the cemetery with a focus on developing the public areas to both protect the cemetery's artifacts and make it safe and comfortable for visitors. The current preservation project will help the OGCS meet these goals by first restoring a section of the original 1858 perimeter iron fence, which has begun to erode and deteriorate. This project, designed under the guidance of Tidewater Preservation, Inc., will restore ten fence sections at \$660 each and two newel posts at \$1,120 each. Enberg Mold and Tool will make castings and remove

the fence in sections for repairs, preserving the integrity of the fence to help enforce the cemetery's boundary and protect its monuments. The other part of this project is making the interior safe by restoring the collapsed brick sarcophagus of Georgia Brown Whitfield, which currently leaves her remains nearly exposed and creates a hazard for guests touring the site. Including the need for a brick mason and archaeologist, this restoration is estimated at \$4,460 by Savannah preservationist Sam Beetler II. Both projects are ready to be started immediately under the supervision of project manager and OGCS President Robert Gindhart with a goal of completion by July 2017.

## **Phases**

The iron perimeter fence restoration is an ongoing project at Oak Grove Cemetery. For funding purposes, Oak Grove Cemetery Society has an agreement with Enberg Mold and Tool to split the fence restoration into several smaller projects. Currently, the first phase, which includes five fence sections and two newel posts at the main entrance, is complete.

## **Project Need/Urgency**

The Victorian era architecture and the history it shares is one of the main reasons heritage tourists and community visitors come to Oak Grove Cemetery each year. Tragically, though, some people come to the cemetery and see the collapsing grave sites and dilapidated, rusted fencing and believe that Oak Grove Cemetery is abandoned and proceed to vandalize the already fragile monuments. This extended at one time to visitors driving through the cemetery and over grave markers, knocking them over and leaving tire tread markings on their stone surfaces. Thankfully, the recent gift of a steel bollard has limited the admittance of general traffic through Oak Grove Cemetery, but trash and vandalism in the site persist. The restoration of the cemetery's historic fencing will help set a clear boundary that will further prohibit undue traffic in the site and represent visually to the public that the cemetery is a protected and cared for local historical site.

The historical value of Oak Grove Cemetery's iron perimeter fence is another reason that this project needs to be addressed before the fence is destroyed any further. It tells an integral part of the history of the community. The north, east, and south sides of the fence stand in the same places today as they were originally placed in 1858, but the west fence was moved when the size of Oak Grove Cemetery was reduced by 50 feet in 1869. Graves within those 50 feet were up-rooted and their residents moved, including the grave of a Norwegian captain who is now resting on the opposite side of the cemetery from where historic images place him.

What was the reason for the move? A spur track of the railroad was planned to run through that land to serve the planning mill and Lang's hardware across the street from the cemetery. The accuracy of this story is evident by the six sections of fence that no longer match the rest, but clearly came from the fencing of Brunswick's downtown squares and is also seen in the missing newel post in the southwest corner where the two fences are tied together instead of meeting at a post. The historic quality of the fence extends all the way down to the rare support system that the city installed. Anchors and lifting supports raise each fencing panel giving the whole length of fence the appearance that it is floating in place above the soil with posts only needed at the corners and entrance. For these reasons, Oak Grove Cemetery's Pre Civil War iron fence is an important historical artifact, not only to the cemetery, but the City of Brunswick as well and justifies its rescue.

Oak Grove Cemetery is home to more than 1200 graves including 200 Civil War soldiers. The majority of people at rest in the cemetery no longer have ancestors alive to care for their grave sites. One of those people is Georgia Brown Whitfield. Today, her sarcophagus lies in ruins as the top has collapsed inside, allowing vines to grow inside and further tear apart the monument. Now open to the elements, water

damage is creating further deterioration to the sarcophagus. Georgia Brown Whitfield died in 1885 at the age of 28, and due to heavy flooding at the time of her death, she was laid to rest above ground in a sarcophagus. The raised nature of the grave site creates a hazard for all guests who visit Oak Grove Cemetery as many try and lean over it to see in and risk falling on it and injuring themselves or causing further damage to the site.

Another part of this grave site that needs repairing is what appears, at this time, to be a small pile of bricks, but this is the grave of Mrs. Whitfield's 3 month old child that passed away only four short days after her mother. Both mother and child were new to Brunswick with Mrs. Whitfield dying only two years after arriving to the city. Her story is one of many that the Oak Grove Cemetery Society is fighting to preserve. There are 418 unmarked graves in the cemetery, leaving their resident's stories forgotten to history, but this part of the restoration project will make sure the story of Georgia Brown Whitfield and her daughter are remembered.

Obituaries of Coastal Georgia; transcribed by Amy L. Hedrick. (n.d.). Retrieved March 19, 2016, from <http://www.glynnngen.com/newspapers/obits/W.htm>

### **Project Outcomes and Benefit**

The goal of the Oak Grove Cemetery Society in undertaking this project is to preserve and protect the historical architectural elements within the cemetery to create a safe environment for the community to explore Brunswick's history.

By restoring the architecture and monuments within the cemetery, the Oak Grove Cemetery Society hopes to fulfill its mission to preserve Brunswick's past and maintain the resting place of many of the city's founding citizens. The OGCS has a duty to protect grave sites of the people at rest who no longer have descendants to care for them. By creating a distinct boundary to deter vandalism, the OGCS will be able to keep its grounds clean and its monuments intact. Also, by restoring broken monuments like that of Georgia Brown Whitfield, the OGCS can make sure the cemetery is a safe environment for members of the community to enjoy, free of dangers like crumbling funerary artifacts. The further goal of this project and all other projects that the OGCS undertakes is to create a place that the local community will be proud of and want to visit. This will allow the programs on offer at the cemetery to shine and create a more reliable income stream that will help in the further upkeep and preservation of the historic site.

Oak Grove Cemetery's monuments relate the history of Brunswick and are the basis for all historical content shared with the community through tours and special events. As such, the Oak Grove Cemetery Society counts on contributions from the community in the form of membership dues, donations, and ticket sales from specialty tours to maintain the integrity of the site. The Oak Grove Cemetery Society hopes to achieve the following outcomes by the completion of the proposed restoration project:

- Increase the number of visitors to the cemetery by 25% from the current 500 visitors a year based on 2015 estimates.
- Expand membership to the Oak Grove Cemetery Society by 15% from the 100 current members.
- Increase funds raised by 25% beyond the 2015 total of \$20,000.

The Oak Grove Cemetery Society serves visitors by maintaining the cemetery as a green space within the city and offering programs and tours recounting the early history of the City of Brunswick. The Oak Grove Cemetery Society hopes to offer the following benefits to the community and visitors:

- Increased heritage tourism for the City of Brunswick with Oak Grove Cemetery offering a 45 minute stop as presented by OGCS volunteers.
- Restored public areas that offer a safe and tranquil green space within the city limits.
- Offered additional community volunteer opportunities that give the public a sense of community pride and shared ownership.
- Provided additional cultural activities like concerts, lectures, and workshops that engage members of the community in a conversation about history and preservation.

The Board of directors of the Oak Grove Cemetery Society will use the national standards for historic preservation as a reference to evaluate all work done in the cemetery. The preservation of the cemetery’s antebellum artifacts is a top priority for the Oak Grove Cemetery Society and all work done must meet those standards. At the beginning and end of each activity that requires removal or reconstruction of elements in the cemetery, as proposed in the attached timeline, the Board of directors will publish a report on the work completed by the community partners to ensure that it meets the aforementioned standards. As the cemetery is a site of historical value for the community, the Oak Grove Cemetery Society Board of directors will also collect and publish an account of current attendance and membership records in the cemetery for 2015 as a base line for further evaluating the success of the project.

**Project Promotion**

To recognize The Daughters of the American Revolution for their help with the cemetery restoration project, The Oak Grove Cemetery Society will promote the partnership during the preservation process through local news outlets, including *The Brunswick News* and *The Islander*. Also, promotion will reach members through newsletter and webpage updates. At the conclusion of the project, The OGCS will hold a dedication ceremony where they will recognize the DAR as an integral partner in the restoration effort, and during the event the OGCS will unveil plaques at the project sites that commemorate the partnership.

**PART IV – PROJECT BUDGET, IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS AND TIMELINE**

**Project Budget**

LINE ITEM	GRANT FUNDS REQUESTED	SECURED FUNDS	TOTAL COST
Restoration of 5 fence sections – each fence section will cost \$660 as estimated by Enberg Mold and Tool, including a flat rate for all work.  Fence Contractor: Gary Knappenberger Enberg Mold & Tool Yulee,FL	\$2,000	\$1,300	\$3,300
Restoration of 2 newel posts at northwest and northeast corners– each newel post is estimated at \$1,120 each  Fence Contractor: Gary Knappenberger Enberg Mold & Tool Yulee, FL	\$1,240	\$1,000	\$2,240
Preservation plan and supervision of brick tomb of Georgia Brown and infant restoration	\$500		\$500

Preservationist: Sam Beetler II			
Reconstruction of Georgia Brown Whitfield sarcophagus. Brick Mason will be hired to rebuild the sarcophagus. Services offered at a flat rate.  Brick Mason: Joe Smith	\$3460		\$3460
Archeologist needed to protect remains. An archeologist survey is needed to remove and protect remains during reconstruction of the grave site. Service is offered at a flat rate.  Archeologist: William Weeks		\$500	\$500
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>\$7,200</b>	<b>\$2,800</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>

### In-Kind Contributions

Donor: <i>removed</i> Contribution: Old Savannah Brick for grave site restoration.
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### Project Timeline

Project Timeline			
Activity	Projected Start Date	Projected End Date	Key Person/Group Responsible
Removal of fence and newel posts for restoration.	05/1/2017	05/26/2017	OGCS President
Written review by OGCS Board of directors of work performed by Enberg Mold and Tool to ensure no damage was incurred to the site during removal process.	05/8/2017	05/12/2017	Oak Grove Cemetery Society Board of directors
Written plan of action by preservationist on restoration brick sarcophagus of Georgia Brown Whitfield.	05/1/2017	05/12/2017	Director of Cemetery Grounds and OGCS President
Written review by OGCS Board of directors of preservation plan before work begins.	05/15/2017	05/19/2017	Oak Grove Cemetery Society Board of directors
Teardown of Georgia Brown Whitfield brick sarcophagus	05/22/2017	05/26/2017	Director of Cemetery Grounds and OGCS President
Written review by OGCS Board of directors of work performed by brick mason to ensure safe teardown of Georgia Brown Whitfield brick sarcophagus.	05/29/2017	06/2/2017	Oak Grove Cemetery Society Board of directors
Evaluation by archeologist and protection of	06/5/2017	06/9/2017	Director of Cemetery

remains			Grounds and OGCS President
Written review by OGCS Board of directors of evaluation by archeologist to ensure protection of the remains of Georgia Brown Whitfield.	06/12/2017	06/16/2017	Oak Grove Cemetery Society Board of directors
Reinstallation of the newly restored fence sections and newel posts.	06/12/2016	06/16/2017	OGCS President
Rebuild of Georgia Brown Whitfield brick sarcophagus	06/19/2017	06/23/2017	Director of Cemetery Grounds and OGCS President
Written review by OGCS Board of directors of work performed by brick mason to ensure proper reconstruction of Georgia Brown Whitfield's brick sarcophagus.	06/26/2017	06/30/2017	Oak Grove Cemetery Society Board of directors

**PART V – SIGNATURE OF ORGANIZATION’S PRINCIPAL OFFICER**

**Authorization Statement**

I, the undersigned, certify that all information contained in this application is true and accurate, and that I am authorized to submit this application to the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution through the Special Projects Grants program.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_