

**Mayor's Award for Historic Preservation  
"Preservation Service Award"  
Master Gardeners  
Prairie Cemetery**



The Masters Gardeners have received the 2017 Mayor's "Preservation Service Award" for advocacy and landscaping of the Prairie Cemetery located at 20th Street W and Western Ave S.

Although known locally to be a cemetery, little was known about the interments in the Prairie Cemetery until the Masters Gardeners took it on as a project in 2014. When the Master Gardeners first took interest, the cemetery was overgrown with few identifying features. The infant Carrie Georgiane Aady was said to be buried there in 1880. In 1884 Ole Helgeson deeded one acre of land including the infant burial to the Medary Lutheran Synod of Volga for cemetery purposes. It was used for a few years until the dissolution of the church, when some of the burials were removed to Brookings First Lutheran and Lake Campbell cemeteries. After which, the cemetery was abandoned and largely forgotten. In 1915 the cemetery was threatened by farming, though ultimately saved by local recognition of the cemetery. The only other formal recognition of the cemetery was through efforts of the local 4-H Clubs, who placed a small iron cross at the site prior to 1960 and in 1964 when 4-Her Dwayne Knutson erected a white pipe cross.



Since there were no owners of the property, the City of Brookings filed a quit claim deed and has taken over the mowing and protection of the property. The Master Gardeners were asked to maintain landscape plantings. The Prairie Cemetery was dedicated as an historic place on August 19, 2016.

Since 2014 the Master Gardeners and other interested community members have contributed time and monies to identifying burials, and to property and assets improvements that includes placing of permanent markers and landscaping. In 2015, the cemetery was surveyed by ground penetrating radar revealing some 14 burials, majority of which were infants.

