

## Memorial Service planned

Wednesday, July 09, 2003

### Tribune Staff Report

It is unknown how baby Jessie Jones got to Mount Hope Cemetery in Peru.

Until last year, no one remembered that she was there. Cemetery officials at Mt. Hope stumbled upon Jessie Jones' grave in a search for the oldest grave on the premises.

Similarly, stillborn infants have little proof of existence. Oftentimes there is no funeral, no grave stone, no mourners — just the mingled mass of mixed emotions felt by helpless parents.

That is why Mt. Hope Cemetery will be conducting a remembrance service tonight at 6:30 p.m. on the grounds of Mt. Hope Cemetery Chapel in memory of not only baby Jessie, but stillborn and other babies who died prematurely in Miami County.

Chaplain Steve Fleck will officiate the service.

"The Lord was letting us know that mothers needed a place to go," said Beverly Jeffers, secretary of Mt. Hope Cemetery. "We want to use Baby Jessie's place as a place of healing."

It was believed that Baby Jessie's grave is the oldest in the cemetery, since she was laid to rest shortly after her death July 9, 1830. She was just three months old.

To this day, no one knows where Baby Jessie came from, who her parents were, or why she died. Her previously unmarked grave was the only evidence that she ever lived at all.

Mothers of stillborn infants have had no place to grieve for their lost child either — until now.

This event is open to the public and families who have encountered this pain are encouraged to attend.

Source: Peru Daily Tribune

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