

## Spotlight Upon Unsung Heroes

BY WILBUR THIRKIELD TITUS

### **Loreta Yvonne Titus Phillips Champion of Hope Well Cemetery**

Many times, a person's deeds are used as a criteria to determine whether the person is a hero, a person who is worthy of commendation for deeds that are beneficial to the general public, the global community. Mrs. Loreta Yvonne Titus Phillips is such a person. She challenged the Big Brown Mining Company and saved the Hope Well Cemetery from being disturbed or destroyed when land for the electric plant and mine fields was being acquired during the 1970s.

The citizens of Titus Farm Community were having many traumatic experiences. Their entire way of life was being threatened. They were being pressured to sell their homes for prices which they (the citizens) considered to be less than their homes' value. Hope Well United Methodist Church, Mt. Zion Baptist Church, and Hope Cemetery were considered to be dispensable by the planners of the project.

The mining company was considering several options for the cemetery problem, among them were flooding the cemetery, and moving the cemetery by removing the bodies in barrels and burying them elsewhere.

Neither of these solutions was acceptable to Mrs. Phillips, whose great

uncle, Henry Edward Titus had begun the cemetery, and where her father and other relatives and friends were buried. With only her husband, Louie T. Phillips for support, she went before the Water Commission of the State of Texas, in Austin, Texas and received assurance that Hope Well Cemetery would not be disturbed.

Mrs. Phillips, the daughter of Governor and Amanda M. (Sweet) Hunter Titus grew up in the Titus Farm Community, graduated from Dogan High School, Fairfield and remains active in the interests of Freestone County, especially in the preservation of our cemeteries as an important part of our culture and heritage.

For additional info, see Who Is Who In Hunter and Titus Families: A Profile of Courage and Achievement, The Hunter and Titus Family Reunion, 1903 (Fairfield Library), or contact A. M. Titus Cultural Center, 903-389-3483, bill1919@valornet.com.



Loreta Yvonne Titus Phillips