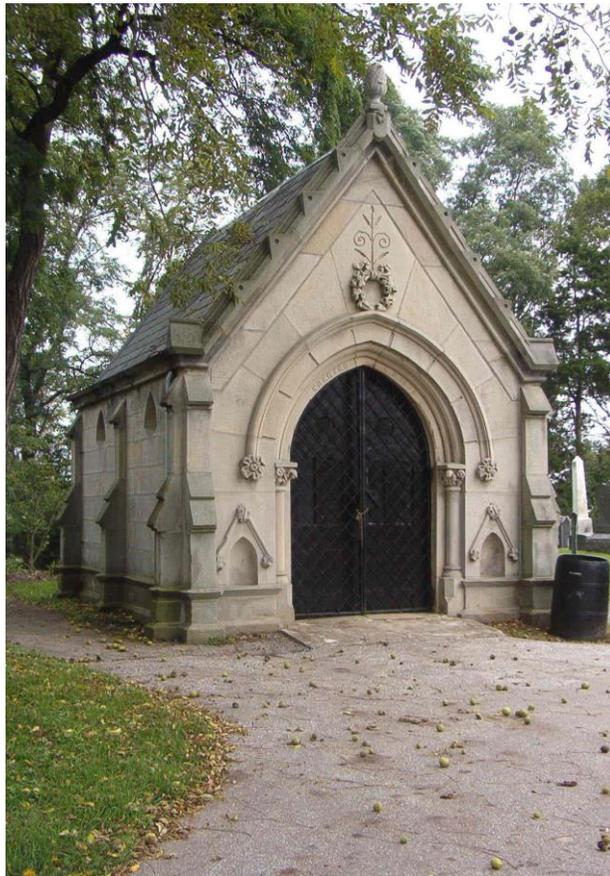


A
Brecksville –Highland Drive
Cemetery Walk

The Brecksville Historical Association



The Vault, 1878



The History of the Walk

Welcome to the Brecksville-Highland Drive Cemetery. This cemetery is one of five cemeteries owned and maintained by the City of Brecksville. (The other cemeteries are: Riverview, Barr, Fitzwater, and the Waite gravesite).

This cemetery's original name, Brecksville Cemetery, is what you saw on the decorative arches as you entered. These arches, installed in 2001, are reproductions of the original arches from the 1800s. You may have read or heard this cemetery referred to as the Highland Drive cemetery.

This cemetery walk was originally envisioned in 1985 by Ms. Kathy Wilmer, then the Branch Manager at the Brecksville Branch of the Cuyahoga County Library. Her walk had school-age children in mind. We have taken her original walk and expanded on it to include additional families, veterans, and other historically important people.

You can learn a lot about local history in a cemetery! The Brecksville Historical Association conducted this Walk in 2015 and 2016. This document is the booklet handed out at the walk. You can use it to do the Walk on your own or just explore the cemetery. Join in the historical hunt by answering the questions we pose here (answers are on the last page).

We ask that you remember, whenever you are here, to treat this cemetery with care and consideration. There's not just history buried here, but our loved ones too. Finally, be careful walking through the grave rows. The ground, especially in the older sections, is uneven. Be alert for tree roots, black walnut nuts, and other items that may be slip or trip hazards.

If you have any suggestions for additions or improvements to this Walk, please let us know.

Enjoy!

The Brecksville Historical Association

The Walk

Begin the walk by going north on the entrance road toward the vault. As you walk along, be sure and look at family names that are also street names in the Brecksville area. Hint: this will help you answer the last question in the booklet.

1. The Vault: The vault was used to store the deceased during winter when burials were difficult. Today it's used for equipment and supply storage. This structure was built in 1878 and has lots of decoration and symbolism. On the peak of the building is a symbol of immortality. Do you know what it is? _____.

Walk east down the cemetery road toward the Square and turn right at the third set of steps. Look for a marker that looks like a set of logs. Then go south to the Miller family plot (looks like there may have been a rail around it at one time)...

2. The Miller Family: The Miller family came to Brecksville sometime between 1830 and 1840 according to census records. Part of Chessman Miller's farm is now Maple Crest Farm. This tall monument contains a draped urn on top. The urn represents the soul. When was this memorial erected? _____

Go back to the road and turn east looking for the Stone family marker on the left.

3. Julius White: On the back of the Stone monument is the inscription for Julius White. Mr. White was a carpenter and is responsible for the building of the Brecksville Old Town Hall and the original Central School. What was his wife's name? _____

Walk back to the road, turn right (west) to the steps. Then go north 2 rows looking for the Snow family marker.

4. Snow and Wilcox Families: These are two important families in Brecksville history. They have been here for many generations and have made many important contributions to the Brecksville community.

On the east row, find the marker for Dorcas Snow. The row includes her parents and her siblings. Dorcas was a much-loved piano teacher in Brecksville and wrote a dozen history books about Brecksville. Check the birth dates of the siblings. Who was the youngest? _____

The Wilcox family gave Brecksville a famous water color artist, Frank Wilcox Jr. (1887-1964). You may have seen some of his paintings in City buildings. Can you find a person who is both a Snow and a Wilcox?
_____.

Since Brecksville was such a small community it's not surprising that families intermarried.

Walk west toward the Vault and the green water faucet to the Dillow family marker.

5. Dillow Family: The Dillows are another early pioneer family. Members of the family include veterans and businessmen. The first Dillows to arrive from Pennsylvania were Andrew and Elizabeth. Can you find their grave? Where is it? _____

Walk 3 rows west to the Breck obelisk.

6. Breck Family: Obelisks are Egyptian and are meant to represent a ray of sunlight. This family monument marks the graves of the family that gave Brecksville its name. Can you tell where the Brecks came from?

A Breck lived in Brecksville until 1934. Who was the last Breck to live here? _____

Continue walking west to the vault. Look for the heart-shaped headstone.

7. Chauncey Ellsworth: Mr. Ellsworth was a businessman. He owned a drugstore and a harness shop. He was also the first person in Brecksville to own an automobile. What is his epitaph? _____

Facing the Ellsworth headstone walk to the left downhill looking for 4 small, flat, red headstones.

8. Wiese Infant Graves: These four children are all from the same family. This is a reminder of how high infant mortality was in the late 1880s. Each stone has a flower carved on it representing innocence and purity. Do you know what the flowers are? _____

Walk back to the west side of the Vault. Four rows west, near the road find the headstone of Jonah Stoner.

9. Jonah Stoner: This is the grave of a young child who died about 3 years old. His fairly long epitaph is hard to read now. It gives his dates of birth and death and says he died with rosey cheeks. The rest says:

"His little spirit is gone to God.

God gave it and took it.

Be ye also ready to meet your God in peace."

What do you think is meant by rosey cheeks? _____

Go one row west and find the praying hands stone.

10. McCreery Family: The McCreery family was one of the pioneer families in Brecksville. This is the headstone of Clyde and Nellie McCreery descendants of the original family that came to Brecksville in the early 1800s. The McCreery family descendants were business people: A McCreery still owns the Red Brick Store; there is still a McCreery funeral home on Brecksville Road.

What is the well-known epitaph on this stone? _____

Walk 2 more rows west to find the Quartus Stebbins grave on the north end of the row near the sugar maple trees.

11. Quartus Stebbins: Stebbins was a veteran of the War of 1812. Can you tell what he died of? _____ . Notice the carver's spelling of Brecksville on the headstone as "Bricksville".

Walk another 2 rows west looking for the Newell family monument.

12. Thaddeus Newell: Thaddeus is a veteran of the Revolutionary War. There are only five veterans of this war buried in Brecksville. Can you tell from the marker what army he served in? _____

Walk 1 row west to find the Bourn Family

13. Bourn Family: Lemuel Bourn, the family patriarch, walked from Massachusetts to Brecksville twice. His grave marker boasts of doing something else when he arrived the second time. What was it?

Find the small grave with a circular, flower-like symbol on the top. Whose grave is this?

Notice how the carver left out a letter in Bourn and had to insert it later.

Walk 2 rows west, first grave on the north end of the row.

14. Eleanor Jenkins: This is the earliest grave on this Walk. It is an unusual grave, possibly a portrait tomb. Can you convert the Roman numerals for Eleanor's year of death and age?

The use of Roman numerals is often seen on graves in New England cemeteries. Her epitaph reads:

*"In peaceful slumber here I rest. (Now blest.)
Within this hollow tomb....
We part with you our dearest friend
In joyful hope when time shall end
That we with you shall join and sing
The lasting praise of Christ our King."*

Notice how the stone carver needed to fix the word "dearest".

Walk south to the swale that marks the southern end of the old section and then west to a grave on the end where the stone is missing (approximately 6 rows).

15. Rich Family: The missing stone is Charles Rich's.** It's his home on Brecksville Road where the Brecksville Historical Association maintains their museum. Charles, called the "Squire", was a farmer and a Justice of the Peace. He and his wife Ann Jane came to Brecksville from Lebanon Springs NY in 1835. Charles was 76 years old when he died in 1883.

**Note: Since the last Walk, the Brecksville Historical Association has replaced Squire Rich's headstone. Be sure to look and see how closely we were able to reproduce it. Does it look old enough to be original, or does it look like a replacement?

How long did Ann Jane live? _____.

Walk 2 rows west toward another obelisk marking the Wallace Family.

16. Emily Moses Wallace: Emily Wallace is considered Brecksville's first female financier. She was the widow of a well-to-do canal boat captain, and she lent the town's trustees a tidy sum of \$3,000 to build a Town Hall. It opened in 1874. The great-great granddaughter of Emily Moses Wallace, Shirley Elish, still lives in Brecksville and is a Historical Association trustee. How old is Old Town Hall now? _____

Walk south back to the swale and walk east. Turn right (south) at the (once) missing Rich headstone. Look for the Harris Family memorial.

17. Bert Harris: Mayor Harris was the first mayor of Brecksville. He served three tenures as Mayor while Brecksville was a village. He was Mayor for 20 years total. In 1948 he retired from both his business and government service. How many years of retirement did he enjoy? _____

Walk south toward a large spruce, looking for a shorter, wider obelisk that is marked "O'Connor". Just in front of the monument is the grave of Don Faulhaber, Mayor of Broadview Heights, 1971-1977.

Broadview Heights was once part of Brecksville Township but became its own separate village in 1927 after a dispute over equality of services between the eastern and western areas of the township.

18. O'Connor Monument: This stone has an insignia on the front for the Woodmen of the World organization, a benevolent organization or society whose motto was that no member would have an unmarked grave. There are three Latin words that roughly translate to "Gone but not forgotten". Can you read the Latin words?

Walk west along the large spruce until you are three rows away from the west Cemetery Road. Look for a plain, ground level grave marked "Klein".

19. George Klein: This family story is interesting since the Kleins migrated east (not west like most pioneer families) to Brecksville (from Denver Colorado). They arrived in East Cleveland in 1926 and finally found property on Brecksville Road across from the Sleepy Hollow Golf Course. Mr. Klein was active in church and community affairs and was instrumental in developing several residential areas in Brecksville. Who was George Klein's wife and what is interesting about her year of death? _____

Re-trace your steps back to the east Cemetery Road to find the headstone of William Vigor.

20. William Vigor: William Vigor is a World War II veteran. He served in the South Pacific and actually rode out a hurricane on an anchored ship in Fiji. He returned home after the war to resume his career until his death in 1979. What was his profession? _____

Walk south 4 graves (near the *Arbovitae* shrub).

21. Everett Keister: Everett Keister is also a World War II soldier, but he did not return home. He participated in the D-Day invasion. His body was not returned until 1947. Everett planted a crabapple tree on his farm and his mother then transplanted it here at his grave. The tree has since died, but perhaps you can see the remains of the trunk. How long did Everett's mother have to wait for his return? _____

Walk west to a grave that looks like a tree trunk on stone logs. Turn left (south) and continue toward the large black walnut tree to find the Rust Family memorial.

22. Dennis Rust: The Dennis Rust military story is similar to Everett Keister's. Dennis was in the Korean conflict as a forward observer. He was listed as missing in action in 1950. His remains were not returned home for 5 years. Both men were the same age when they were killed in military actions. How old were they? _____

Walk south to the last row before Highland Drive. Turn left and look for a black granite stone on the end row.

23. Frederick Nickel. According to this headstone Frederick Nickel was a colonel in the U.S. Air Force. He is also a World War II veteran as was his wife Marion (WAVE). The most interesting part of this headstone is the epitaph on the reverse side. The poem is *High Flight* and can be found on many headstones in Arlington National Cemetery. The author is John Gillespie Magee, Jr., who wrote it in 1941 a few months before he died in an aviation accident. What two professions do you think would consider this poem a favorite? _____

Walk north toward the *Taxus* shrubs to the memorial for Jack Hruby.

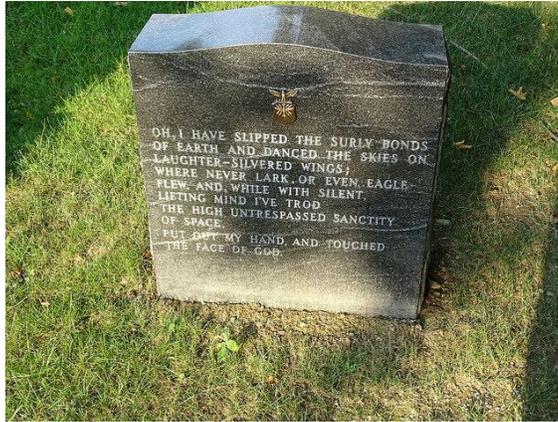
24. Jack Hruby: Jack Hruby was the Mayor of the City of Brecksville from 1970 to 1986.

He was very young at the time of his election. He is believed to be the youngest mayor ever in Cuyahoga County, possibly in all Ohio. How old was he when he became Mayor? _____.

Mayor Hruby's epitaph is a reflection his passion for the theatre. What is the theme of the epitaph?
_____.

25. Conclusion: You're at the end of the Walk...how many family names that are street names in the Brecksville area did you find? _____

A Reflection on Epitaphs



An epitaph is an inscription on a gravestone that tells us something about the person buried there. An epitaph is like an ending of a book, and this is how we chose to end our Cemetery Walk....with a reflection on epitaphs.

1. What was your favorite epitaph from today's walk?
2. Have you thought about what your epitaph might be?
3. What might others say about you in an epitaph?
4. Would you choose a favorite poem or saying? What would it be?
5. Do you think you could write an original epitaph for yourself?

The Answers

1. Pine cone or pineapple
2. 1878
3. Harriet
4. Dorcas
 Jessie Snow Wilcox (Frank's Mother)
5. They are buried in the Riverview Cemetery!
6. Northampton Massachusetts
 Dr. Theodore Breck (died in 1934)
- 7.. *At Rest*
8. Lily/Lily-of-the-Valley
9. Fever
10. *Rest in Peace*
11. Prevailing Fever
12. The Continental Line
13. Built third home in Brecksville
 . Lemuel Bourn's young son, also named Lemuel
14. Year of Death: 1819 at 55 years old
15. Jane died in 1882 at age 74.
16. 141years
17. Mayor Harris died a dozen years after leaving office.
18. Dum Tacet Clamet (literally translated as "Though silent he speaks")
19. Virginia. She died the same year as her husband, George.
20. Doctor – general practitioner
21. It was 3 years before there was grave.
22. Nineteen
23. Aviators and astronauts
24. He was 25 when he became mayor.
 Music
25. Street Names: Avery, Barr, Breck, Chaffee, Edgerton, Faulhaber, Fitzwater, Harris, Hollis, McCreery, Miller, Oakes, Snow, Wiese, Wyatt.....

(Did you find more??)



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