ABOUT THE UNION CEMETERY

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Union Cemetery Historical Society (UCHS) was organized in 1984 under the guidance of the Kansas City, Missouri Parks and Recreation Department. Its original mission was to collect data about historic Union Cemetery and to gather data about the people buried there. As a result of those efforts, the society published Tombstone Inscriptions in 1986. As stated in the title, the hardcover book lists names and statistics of many of those who rest in the cemetery, including birth and death dates and burial locations. This book has become a vital tool for those who are researching their genealogy.

The UCHS also published a series of ten pamphlets containing obituaries and biographical sketches collected from old newspapers. In many cases these obituaries and/or death notices are the only record of an individual buried in Union Cemetery.

In 2014 the UCHS published “Kansas City’s Historic Union Cemetery, Lessons for Future from the Garden of Time,” containing entertaining and historical information about Union Cemetery written by many of Kansas City’s notable citizens and beautiful images of the cemetery provided by Bruce Mathews. This welcome addition to any library or coffee table is available at Amazon.com.

The cemetery’s burial files, located at the Sexton’s cottage, provide a wealth of genealogical and biographical information collected over the years by UCHS members or donated by visitors to Union Cemetery.

Over the years the society’s mission has expanded. The UCHS has become a true partner with the Parks and Recreation Department, helping to preserve and protect Union Cemetery by collecting funds to help erect a wrought iron fence around the grounds, repair and re-set monuments and plant trees. The society has also hosted Eagle Scout projects in Union Cemetery which have resulted in a Memorial Garden with walkway being installed, small headstones in several sections of the cemetery being re-set, surveying much of the grounds and other projects.

The UCHS is a 501c3 membership organization. If you would like to help the society protect and preserve Union Cemetery for future generations please consider becoming a member and/or donating to the UCHS. You will find a membership application and donation button on our website, www.uchskc.org. The UCHS is also on Facebook. Search for Union Cemetery Historical Society Kansas City.

Thank you for visiting. And thank you for your interest in historic Union Cemetery.
A New Mexico historical group installed a marker in 1994.

6. ELIZABETH SEXTON FERGUSON was a very young woman when she was taken up arms against the Confederacy, he was paroled and returned to the Confederate soldiers captured during the Battle of Pea Ridge. He died as a prisoner of war.

10. JOHN CAMPBELL was born in Ireland and originally named James McCarroll. He came to Kansas City in 1829. A few years after he arrived, he married the daughter of William Miles Chick. They had six children. She died of cholera in 1849 on the trip to California. Their marriage was the first recorded marriage in Westport.

20. JAMES M. HUNTER came to Kansas City in 1829. A few years after he arrived, he married the daughter of the family. The Hunter family, with five children, eventually stayed for 80 years, taking care of the grandchildren of the family.

23. JOHN CALVIN MCCOY came to this area in 1830 with a friend of his father, Calvin McCoy. Born in 1844, he was a student at the Kansas Military Institute. He died at the Battle of Springfield in 1862.

27. JOHN CALVIN MCCOY came to Kansas City in 1830. He was a member of the 14 original purchasers of the 257-acre Prudhomme land grant. He died in 1838, at the age of 92. His second wife was Elizabeth Thomas.

30. GEORGE CALEB BINGHAM was a prominent artist, known for his genre paintings. He was a circuit rider at the Shawnee Indian Mission. He was one of the original trustees of Union Cemetery.

31. DR. JOHNSTON LYKINS was born in Virginia in 1800. He was a captain in the Union Army during the Civil War. He was a real estate developer and president of the Mechanics Bank. His first wife was Elizabeth S. McCarthy. She died of tuberculosis at a Pittsburg Indian Reservation in 1844. His second wife was Martha A. (Mattie) Livingston, a woman of General ‘Stonewall’ Jackson. She married General Caleb Bingham after she died (in 1876). A supporter of the Confederacy, she was buried in the Union Cemetery.

32. THOMAS J. GOFORTH was born in 1804 in Cincinnati. He moved to Kansas City in 1877 at the age of 92. He was a real estate developer and was a member of the 14 original purchasers of the 257-acre Prudhomme land grant. He died in 1892.

33. PATI DEWEISE MOORE was born in Hamburgh, Ky. in 1814. She married G.W. Moore, a merchant, in Louisville in 1835. They moved to this area in 1860. Mrs. Moore took an active role in the charitable and educational institutions of Kansas City. In 1891, she was one of the first women to be a Warden of the city at the World’s Fair in 1901.

34. Mina Grady was only 18 years old when she was killed during the big Kansas City fire of 1898. She was a sign painter and later practiced law. He was elected mayor of Kansas City in 1884 and again in 1898. After the fire, he was elected to four terms as mayor, serving during the 1890s. He died in 1912.

35. JACOB RAGAN was born in Kentucky in 1792 and served in both the War of 1812 and the Mexican War. Later, he served in the Texas Rangers and served in the Mexican War. In 1843, he established himself as a lawyer. Elected to the Missouri House in 1879, he was the first African American to serve in the House.

36. ALLAN B. H. MCGEE was born in Kentucky in 1815. He was a real estate developer and was a member of the 14 original purchasers of the 257-acre Prudhomme land grant. He died in 1857, at the age of 92. His second wife was Elizabeth Thomas.

37. MILTON J. PAYNE was a five-term mayor of Kansas City. He was a member of the 14 original purchasers of the 257-acre Prudhomme land grant. He died in 1857, at the age of 92. His second wife was Elizabeth Thomas.

38. CHINESE GRAVE SITE: A Chinese population has existed in Kansas City for many years and there are a number of Chinese burial sites in Union Cemetery. There are few places in Kansas City so rich in the city’s history. Approximately 55,000 lie buried here. Artists, statesmen, missionaries, traders, explorers, farmers, pioneer women and veterans from the Revolution to the Vietnam War are buried here. Children’s victims of the cholera are interred here as are many children who died long after birth.

39. JAMES and MARY KELLY were born in Ireland. Shortly after their marriage, they came to New York where James became a horse dealer. They traveled by wagon through the eastern half of the United States, becoming known as the “King of the Cypresses” although they were not the actual players. Mary died of “Influenza” in Florida in 1858, after breaking her back while hanging a garment for a pet monkey. James died of pneumonia one month later, while bringing Mary’s body to Kansas City to be buried with his family.

40. JOSEPH LOEFFLER was born in Germany and came to Kansas City in 1857. He secured Kansas City’s first $100,000 bond issue for public improvements. He was the first city official to do anything about street conditions. Payne was a member of the original Union Cemetery Association.

41. CHINESE GROWTH: A Chinese population has existed in Kansas City for many years and there are a number of Chinese burial sites in Union Cemetery. There are few places in Kansas City so rich in the city’s history. Approximately 55,000 lie buried here. Artists, statesmen, missionaries, traders, explorers, farmers, pioneer women and veterans from the Revolution to the Vietnam War are buried here. Children’s victims of the cholera are interred here as are many children who died long after birth.