Union Victorian Cemetery

Established in 1862
The oldest Monument Cemetery in Northeast Oregon

770 E. Fulton St.

P.O. Box 707

Union, Oregon 97883

541-562-5212

UnionCemetery1@frontier.com

Office Hours 9:00-11:00

The Chapel

This building is reported to have been constructed in 1893 as a tool shed for the cemetery. In 1997 the Veterans took timber from the old Union Four Mill and siding from an historic house and refurbished the shed into a Chapel.



Outbreaks

We find published in the papers stories from 1909 stating that Union had an outbreak of Diphtheria and also Scarlet Fever. The railroad was closed as well as churches and schools. a curfew was set up so that no one under the age of 19 could be on the streets. Many families lost their children, You will find many graves for children and some are marked by sheep.

National Cemetery History

(information missing) You will find several stones of this original design marking the graves of many brave Veterans in our cemetery. The stone has a rounded top with a shield emblem. It

gives the soldiers Name, Rank and Company served. You can learn more about their service by looking up their company online. There are many veterans buried here from various wars.

Fredrick Nodine

OS2160-4

Fred, who was the judge in the case of Conrad Miller and Jabaz Hinckley, settled here in the valley in 1862. He built one of the largest cattle ranches and became one the wealthiest men in this area for over 20 years. He was known throughout the state because of his large cattle drives. Fred donated the land for the cemetery to be built upon, he also donated the land for the public school. In the end however, through some bad investments, Fred and his wife Eliza died here in Union among the impoverished, (Buried north of the gate to the walkway leading to the chapel).

https://cite.case.law/or/48/527/

Joseph and Catherine Upton

OS2-146-5

Joseph was the first caretaker of this cemetery. They are buried in our only crypt.

Moses Lore

OS2-157-8

Just to the north side of the Chapel lies Moses Lore, one of the first french Canadians to come to Union. He came to the Oregon territory in 1830's. In 1839 he was working for Henry Spalding (a missionary working with the Nez Perce). He lived with the Indians for many years. He worked in the Rocky Mountains as a hunter and trapper of beaver and buffalo. He fought with Indians and robbers. he was a miner who but found no gold only fever, ague and scurvy. he peddled merchandise until he finally made his way to Union in 1862. He married Mary Sanders (a Chinook) and together that had 6 children, only one survived. Joseph Lore, Moses' son is buried her beside his father OS2-157-06.

Biography of Moses Lore https://accessgenealogy.com/california/biography-of-moses-lore.htm

The Evening Stateman (Walla Walla, Wa) 13 jul 1904 https://www.newspapers.com/clip/9589844/the-evening-statesman-walla-walla-wal



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He located a claim in Preach Prairie in 1839, married a halfbreed woman, from whom he was separated 20 years ago, and who lives in Union county with a great granddaughter today, in the 1850 Mountains. He went to California in search of gold, but returned to Oregon 42 years ago, and has since lived in castern Oregon. He was the first Prenchman to settle on Catherine creek, a zettlement of Prench people.

Albert J. Goodbrod

OS2-138-5

Albert was born in Germany and as a young boy came with his family to America. Later he joined up with Company B Scott's 900, 1* United States Calvary. A.J. Goodbrod is a veteran of the Civil War. He was wounded 9 times during his enlistment. He was shot down near Fairfax

Courthouse and after lying on the field for 7 days and being passed over many times for dead, he was found by soldiers detailed to do the burying and taken to Washington D.C. Hospital where he remained for 5 months, He was a farmer, served as Marshall and councilman and owned the Centennial Hotel.

James Pyle

OS2-151-2

James was the first Senator from Union County. with each family working hard in doing their part to build this area, James did his part by developing the road through Pyle's Canyon. Much rock needed to be cleared away fro the road. We also have buried here Keller Bartholemew OS2-225-8 and several others who are noted in our books as having been "killed in blasts while working in Pyle's Canyon".

James Myers

OS2-225-3

Located just north of the office is the marker of James Myers and Thomas Smith. James Myers had a ranch on Balm Creek. He was preparing to retire form his freighting business and go into stock raising. On July 12, 1978 he was heading to Umatilla on his last run when James, Thomas and other freighters were attacked by Indians. This most likely happened while they were still sleeping. they were killed at a point previously called Crawford's Hill but became known as "Dead Man's Pass".

Jones Family

OS2-232-1,2,3,4

There are several articles in the La Grande Evening Observer from 12/1906 that tell the story of this family of 8. Apparently they are some home canned beans for supper on night. After which they became sick. Within a few days the mother and 3 of the children had perished from Ptomains poisoning.

Anna Ratz

OS2-236-3

There is a mystery behind Anna's death. In the East Oregonian it tells the story of Mrs. Ratz leaving her home sometime in the early morning. Her husband awoke to find her gone. he

roused the neighbors around 4:00 a.m. to help in the search. Her clothes were found near the creek, Her body was not found until some hours later. She was discovered with her hands tied behind her back but in such as way that she could not have done it herself. The inquest found no motive for suicide and yet it was not evident how anyone could entire her to leaver he home. No more of this story is found in the paper.

William Conklin Cusick

OS1-43-18

In 1964 William joined the Union Army as a volunteer. He was sent to the 1st OR Infantry where it was their duty to keep an eye on the Nez Perce Indians. However the native people remained quiet so William, with some time on his hands, sent for a book on botany. Sometime after being discharged he and his brother settled in the Powder Valley doing some ranching. For 4 decades Cusick undertook pioneering botanical explorations of the remote Wallowa and Blue Mountain ranges until blindness and deafness overcame him. At on time he had nearly 40 taxa (species) bearing the Cusick name and Cusick in Wallowa County is named for him.



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William Conklin Cusick

Charles C. Coffinberry

OS1-34-9

Charles left home, Ohio, at age 18 to become a peddler and sold goods throughout the country. In 1957 he went to Seneca Kansas and helped to lay out that city. He continued on his travels until he came to Union in about 1866 where he started up a carpenter trade school.

While in Kansas he was elected for the State Legislature and in addition he held many other offices in their government. When the war broke out he raised two companies of soldiers who became part of the 7th & 10th Kansas Calvary. He help pass the prohibition bill in 1873.

http://www.usgennet.org/usa/or/county/union1/coffinberrybiosunion.htm

The Saari Family

OS1-83-4,5,6

In the old cemetery nooks we have one notation beside this family which reads, "Death seemingly rather mysterious" The family of 3 died within a week of each other.

The Swackhammer Family

OS1-27 graves 2-10

Father Sammuel migrated to Union around 1862-63. he had a freighting business that took him to the Dalles, where he met his wife, Clara. He served several terms as the Sheriff of Union.

It was while he was sheriff that tragedy struck his family. This is from an article in the July 5, 1879 Grant County Newspaper "Union Sentinel: An affliction that has befallen our respected citizen, Sheriff Swackhammer, cast a gloom over the entire community. On last Sunday his youngest child was buried beside the fresh graves of his brother and three little sisters. But one child, the oldest of a family of six, remains; in the silent home of the dead, the victims of fell destroyer diphtheria".

He continues to serve in Union government in several different areas. **Conrad Swackhammer** is Samuel's Father and **Hiram Dodge** is his wife Clara's Father, OS2-161-5 Just south of the Chapel walkway.

https://sites.google.com/site/oregonpioneerobituaries/union-county/samuel-o-swackhammer

William T. Phy

had the acclaim of being the proprietor of the Hot Lake Sanitorium, building it up to a prominence in the northwest. He was also a leading surgeon in the west. Hazel is his second wife. His son Mark was also a physician.



https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/24292635/william-thomas-phy

John A. Phy

only lived to the age of 10. He was killed when a brother was moving a gun to put it away safely and it went off for an unknown reason hitting John in the head.

John F. Phy

was the sheriff of Union at the time of Kelsey Porter murder case. John reported as the one to fix the rope around the neck of Porter

Kelsey Porter

OS1-103-2

The only man legally hung in Union County. Porter was tried and found guilty for the shooting of the Mache family, Benjamin, Mary and their son 17-year old Joseph on 1/1/1896. The hanging occurred 11/19/1997 at the old courthouse. This is now Union High School and you can still see the barred windows in the back. You can find more information about this case by looking it up online.



Vigilante's Gunfight Left Three Neighbors Dead, Led to Gallows by Finn J.D. John- November 18,2017 http://offbeatoregon.com/1711c.kelsey-porter-vigilante-killings-470.html

Audio Story http://offbeatoregon.com/assets-2017/1711c.kelsay-porter-murder-of-maches-470/1711c.180126.kelsay-porter-vigilante-killings_01.mp3

https://www.lagrandeobserver.com/archive/behind-bars/article_09ed6cb3-1a80

Judge Robert Eakin

OS1-29-9

Judge Eakin has his roots in Ireland. In 1866 his family moved to Eugene where he attended college. By 1875 has had made his way to Union where he was appointed to the office of Judge. He was known for adhering to the line of justice and equity. He was highly respected by all and a champion for the principle of truth. He was also judge of the above care of Kelsey Porter.



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Eakin

William Roth

OS1-2-10

William was born in Germany where he learned to be a copper (barrel maker). He came to Union in 1864 learning more skills along the way. He built one of the buildings housing the Union Museum in 1881.

John T, Outhouse

OS1-85-5

When the territory of Oregon was first established many people worked hard to get schools for the children. Finally in 1851 the first free school system was established and John was asked to be the first teacher. He had over 20 students and was paid less than \$100 per year. this was the beginning of what we now have for a school system. His wife Lavina started teaching when

the first school was built in La Grande, called the "White School;. They spent many years teaching together.

W.T. and Belle Wright

OS1-14-1 &4

Isabel "Belle" Wright married W.T. Wright in 1870. Belle started teaching in schools when she was 16. They met while she was teaching here and attending college at EOU (at its beginning). Of the many things she did, Belle was instrumental in starting the "Union Cemetery Society" and the "Public Reading Room". W.T. or William organized the national Bank of Union. He was on the school board, Mayor and held many other offices as Union developed.

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/78615954/isabel-wright

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/78616075/william-thomas-wright

Katie Wright

OS1-13-6

Katie is buried next to her parents. They were an influential family and sent a likeness to Italy an had her stone carved to look like her. For over 100 years flowers have been placed on her marble hands by unknown persons.

Abel E. Eaton

OS1-13-6

Abel had little education but studied the dictionary. this qualified him to teach school which he did on several occasions. He made his way to what is now known as Baker City he purchased a scythe for 50 cents and went to work cutting wild hay to sell to freighters. He continued to build up businesses here in Union, one being the Woolen Mill. He is reported to have been the first Mayor of Union. He donated much to the Willamette University and Eaton Hall is named for him.

Nicholas Tarter

OS1-73-5

A pioneer emigrant, born in Prussia, Germany

Conrad Miller

OS2-151-8

Just behind the chapel to the north you will find the marker for Conrad Miller who was the first white man to settle in the area in 1861. He built a cabin to spend his first winter in. In the spring of 1862 he decided to go back to Vancouver to purchase some fruit trees. When he returned he discovered 3 men had taken over the cabin. These men wanted the place for their own. Fred Nodine was asked to judge in the case. Nodine discovered that Conrad had planted a garden before he left on his trip to Vancouver. Nodine felt that because of this Conrad had planned to return to his cabin so it was decided that the claim should belong to Miller.



https://www.oregongenealogy.com/union/union.htm

Jabaz Hinckley

OS-173-3

A group of miners were in Idaho discussing where to spend the upcoming winter when a man spoke up and said "Boys, I can tell you where to go for the land. go to Grande Ronde Valley, Oregon for it is the most beautiful valley I ever saw". A couple of days after that Jabaz Hinckly and Cutting Clark started off for that valley. These are two of the men Conrad Miller found in his Cabin when he returned from his trip. (South of the Chapel)

Harriet Chapman

OS2-140-10

Harriet and her husband J.A.J. Chapman are of the original settlers in the valley. We have no dates for her birth or death, just a note scrawled beside her name that says she is the first person buried in the Cemetery.

See the Historic Victorian Cemetery Flyer for more information



The Chape!
This building is reported to hisre been constituted in 1889 die a tool shed for file conneiling. In 1897 die Verenne bod brinders from the det Union Flour mill and being from an habric house and reflutished the shed into a Chape!
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James Myers (65)-525-5

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The Phy Family OS1.5-1-10 John M. Pey brought his family with him to Oregon. Although his is builted eldewhere, his sons John F., Macshell, William, John A. and designer Maggie are all buried have.



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