

CALVARY CEMETERY WALKING TOUR - BIKE WALK WICHITA

By Mike Maxton & Jim Mason

History:

The Wichita Eagle, on May 17, 1883, printed a one line comment. "Mr. Healey has donated a piece of ground southeast of the city, on the hill-side, for a Catholic Cemetery."

The Wichita Daily Times, on June 29, 1883, wrote, "Surveyor Bayley laid out and surveyed a Catholic cemetery east of the city the other day."

Calvary Cemetery, Wichita's oldest Catholic Cemetery, is also perhaps the city's most visible cemetery, with its location along Kellogg, just east of Hillside. Downtown Wichita is easily viewed from the center of the cemetery.

Calvary Cemetery was consecrated in 1882, five years prior to the establishment of the Diocese of Wichita, and is the resting place for an estimated 10,000 Catholics. According to cemetery records, the first official interment was made in 1876.

Construction of the Mausoleum began in June 1983, and was completed and blessed in October 1984.

Strolling the 12-acre grounds of Calvary Cemetery is a walk through Wichita's past. Members of the Catholic community buried at Calvary include several bishops and priests of the diocese of Wichita. There are many notable individuals of Wichita's history, along with the countless ordinary men and women who worked and lived their lives in and around Wichita.

(1) Bishop John Joseph Hennessy (Inside Maus)

- In the mausoleum
- 1847 – 1920 (age 72)
- Born in County Cork, Ireland
- Immigrated to the US in 1852 at the age of five, with his parents.
- He attended college and seminary in Illinois, Wisconsin and Michigan.
- Father Hennessy was appointed as Bishop of Wichita in 1887, the city's first.
- Lived at 3800 E. Douglas at his death, now location of Blessed Sacrament Church
- He was originally buried in the clergy's plot, near the old entrance to Calvary Cemetery.
- His remains were moved to the Mausoleum in 1983, when it was finished.



(2) Bishop Augustus John Schwertner

- In the Mausoleum
- Shares a crypt cover with Bishop Hennessy
- 1870 – 1939 (age 68)
- Born in Canton, Ohio
- He attended St. Mary's seminary, in Cleveland, and was ordained into the priesthood in 1897.
- In 1921, he was installed as the Bishop of the Wichita Diocese, succeeding Bishop Hennessy.
- When Schwertner was appointed Bishop of Wichita, the Toledo Record newspaper wrote, "... he has the qualities that make for a splendid manhood, and as the new candidate for Bishop has a great future before him. Monsignor Schwertner is a man of the day, Progressive, thoroughly American, imbued with the highest American ideals and hopes, he will fit well into the wonderfully progressive state of Kansas, which has been called the 'wonder state' of the union."
- Accomplishments during his administration included the building of 44 new parish schools, 40 new churches, 35 rectories, and 16 sister's residences.
- He served as Bishop for 18 years, until his death.
- He was originally buried in the clergy's plot, near the old entrance to Calvary Cemetery, next to Bishop Hennessy, his predecessor.
- His remains were moved to the Mausoleum in 1983, when it was finished.

(3) Rev Christian Herman Winkelmann

- In the Mausoleum
- 3rd Bishop of Wichita
- 1883 – 1946 (age 63)
- He came to Wichita in 1940.
- He was a Priest for 40 years, a Bishop for 13 years, with 6 of those years in Wichita.
- Responsible for the establishment of St. Joseph's Hospital (where he died.)
- Established Parishes in African-American and Hispanic neighborhoods.
- He opened the St. Peter Claver Church and school.



- He established the St. Vincent de Paul Society to aid the poor.

(4) Adrian & Mary Jane Montgomery (S9 R12 G21)



- My favorite headstone at Calvary!
- 1926 – 2010 (Age 84) and 1929 – 2006 (Age 77)
- "It is Spring" College Hill Stone
- Long Time College Hill Residents
- Adrian was a Scout Leader
- Wrote a Poem to his



Wife, titled, "It is Spring"

- College Hill Park is about 6 blocks to our NE

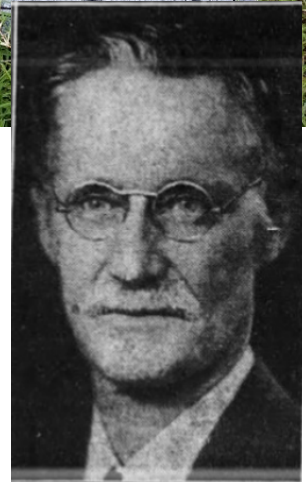
(5) Frank Grant (S5 R7 G40)

- Frank was a Scissors Grinder
- He was born in Italy.
- Walked the streets of Wichita with his grinding stone on his back.
- He was hit by a train in 1917, and almost died, but he pulled through.
- How old was he ... ? Well
- His obituary stated that he was 106 years old when he died in Wichita in 1947. (He was probably closer to 90.) Every census, every 10 years showed a different birth year. They varied greatly.
- I assume the birth year was unknown, since it is not on his headstone.



(6) Nicholas Lester Dondlinger (S6 R15 G14)

- 1874 - 1946 (age 72)
- Born in Belgium, Wisconsin
- Came to Kansas in 1898, and settled in Clafin.
- Nick was a great Carpenter. His obituary mentions that he had probably built half the barns in Barton County.



N. L. Dondlinger

- He moved to Wichita, in 1925.
- He was the founder of Dondlinger and **Sons** Construction Company.
- Nick died in his home at 402 S. Oliver
- His obituary names his four sons.
- All four of them have passed, and are buried here at Calvary.

(7) Charles Driscoll

(S6 R22 G6)

- 1885 – 1951 (Age 65)
- Became a Reporter for the Wichita Eagle in 1912.
- Columnist for the Omaha Daily News
- Editorial writer for the St. Paul Daily News
- Columnist and Editor of The Wichita Eagle in 1919
- Wrote the daily column, New York Day by Day column, syndicated to 100 newspapers.
- Wrote a trilogy of books;
 - Kansas Irish in 1943
 - Country Jake in 1946
 - East and West of Wichita



(unpublished)



- Collected books and artifacts about Pirates. Donated much to the City Library. A research room in the basement of the old City Library was named for him.

(8) Carol Kay Parks Hahn

(S4 R1 G14)

- 1940 – 2023 (age 83)
- Born in Winfield, Kansas
- Daughter of Herbert & Vivian Parks
- Carol received her Bachelor & Masters Degrees from Wichita State University
- In July, 1958, Carol Parks and Ronald William Walters led a group of 30 students from the local NAACP into Dockum's Drug Store in downtown Wichita, at the corner of Douglas and Broadway, where they could get food to go, but not eat at the counter. The sit-in ended three weeks later when the owner relented and agreed to serve black patrons at the lunch counters of the city. Wichita's sit-in preceded the better-known lunch counter sit-ins of the Civil Rights era.
- Carol had a long career in City government as an Employment Specialist.



(9) Mary L. Hartman Werner (S4 R3 G1)

- 1879 – 1941 (age 61)
- Married to Emil Werner, 40 years her senior. He died in 1914.
- They married in 1898. She was 19, he was 59.
- Emil's first business was a brewery at 116 N. Water, which he started in 1873.
- Emil moved to hardware and did well at his Wichita Hardware Company at 221 E. Douglas.
- But he did even better buying and selling buildings and property.
- Emil's obituary stated the he owned The Planters Hotel, and the Werner Block at Douglas and Washington, along with a number of other buildings and residences in Wichita.
- Mary's obituary stated that she owned considerable real estate including business properties and several farms.
- Mary recognized great investments on her own.
- She was one of the first buyers of an apartment at the Hillcrest Homes.
- Her will and probate papers stated the she was leaving \$1000 (in 1941 money) for the upkeep of her headstone and grave, at Calvary.



(10) Baby Rows (S1 R40 G31)

- **Mark Allen Burrus**
- 1960 – 1960 (age 19 days)
- Mark's short life left few traces, so let me talk about his parents for a bit.
- Mark was the Son of Dave and Ginny Burrus.
- Dave served in the Army during World War 2, in Europe and the Pacific.
- Dave was the Treasurer and served on the Board of Directors of Rounds & Porter Lumber Company.
- Ginny graduated from Webster College in St. Louis. While she was a student she worked summers as a legal secretary at the Department of Agriculture during World War II, in St. Louis. At that time, the Federal Government offices were decentralized for protection against bombings.
- After graduation, she moved to Washington, DC, and worked again in the legal department of the Department of Agriculture.



- She married Dave Burrus in 1949, while living in Washington, DC., and then moved to Wichita, Dave's hometown.
- This is just one of four baby sections at Calvary Cemetery.
- Three of those sections are where roads were once located.
- (Point out the other three.)

(11) Jesse M. Cornejo (S1 R30 G1)



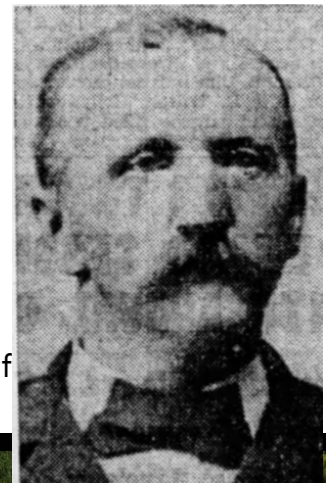
- 1927 – 1994 (Aged 66)
- Founder of Cornejo & Sons Construction Company
- 42 year old company
- Jesse was the Son of Mexican Immigrants
- He came to Wichita at age 16 from Wellington
- Worked Construction and then went to Boeing
- Started his Company focused on Demolition & Hauling
- In 1984, named Contractor of the Year, for the Small Business Administration's 7-County Wichita Region.

- He accepted the award from President Ronald Reagan in the Rose Garden at the White House.
- One of Tallest Monument Gravestones at Calvary



(12) Joseph J. Ackerman (S2 R2 G11)

- 1840 – 1934 (age 94)
- Born in Switzerland
- J.J. was the namesake of Ackerman Island, in the Arkansas River, at the Douglas Street bridge. From 1906-1918, Wonderland Park operated on this island, with a roller coaster, and other rides, a theater, a ball park, a pool, a dance pavilion, and more! But before all that
- In 1888, Joseph Ackerman's pork packing house on the west bank of the Arkansas River caught fire and was totally destroyed.
- In 1890, Ackerman bought a sand boat, and began a dredging operation on the river to dredge, process and sell sand.
- In 1898, Bridget Lorigan Ackerman, born in Ireland, wife of Joseph, passed away on their island home. She was 57.
- In 1903, before Wonderland Park, J.J. Ackerman ran into a little trouble with the law. He was charged with consistently selling liquor and carousing on the island. The County stated that this had been ongoing for months, and that Ackerman was doing so without any permits. The County complained that the nuisance was greatest on Sundays, when the saloons of the city were closed, but liquor was readily available on Ackerman's Island.



- Another lawsuit during this same time period was filed by J.J. to keep Ackerman Island out of the city, where city laws would apply.
- In January 1905, Joseph Ackerman sold his island to the Wichita Sand and Material Co. They, in turn, sold the north part to the Wichita Amusement Park Co., which began installing the features that would constitute Wonderland Park.

(13) Florence “Big Flurry” Driscoll (S2 R3 G21)

- 1837 – 1918 (Age 80)
- Immigrant from Ireland to Wichita
- Farmed on the west bank of the Arkansas River near MacArthur & Hydraulic
- He was the subject of the book, *Kansas Irish*, by his son, Charles.
- “Big Flurry was 47 years old when, in the hot, dry summer of 1883, he cleared the spot where he was to make his second attempt to establish a Kansas farm home. He was six feet, three inches tall, broad of shoulder, heavily muscled, big-boned, a giant who had known hard labor all his life and loved it.” (*Kansas Irish*)
- His nickname; Florence became Florry early in life, but the Irish pronounced it Flurry. Big Flurry, to distinguish him from Red Flurry, Black Flurry, Little Flurry and Mad Flurry! Big Flurry he remained all his life to his Irish friends.



(14) Mary (Unknown) (S2 R9 G30)

- 1841 – 1882 (Age 40)
- Broken headstone, missing last name
- Identified by Ground Crew as the “Oldest” Stone at the Cemetery.
- As noted earlier, the cemetery officially opened in 1883, but six headstones are dated 1882.



(15) Edward Michael Kelly (S2 R16 G12)

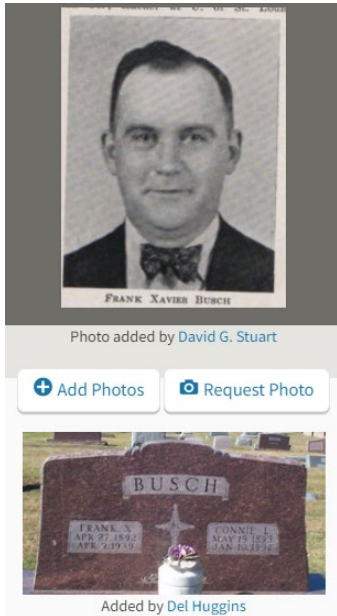


- 1871 – 1949 (age 77)
- Born in Joliet, Illinois
- Early Pioneer of Wichita as a Grain Dealer.
- Owned Commerce Mills and the City Coal Company
- President and General Manager of the Imperial Flour Mill Corporation, once located at 300 South Commerce (now the location of the east parking lots for the Intrust Bank Arena.)
- Sold Imperial Flour in 15 states, with 30 employees in Wichita.

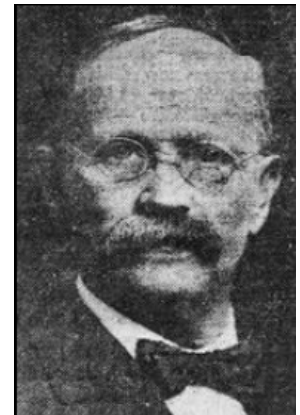
- President of the Board of Trade.



(16) Frank Xavier Busch (S2 R14 G10)

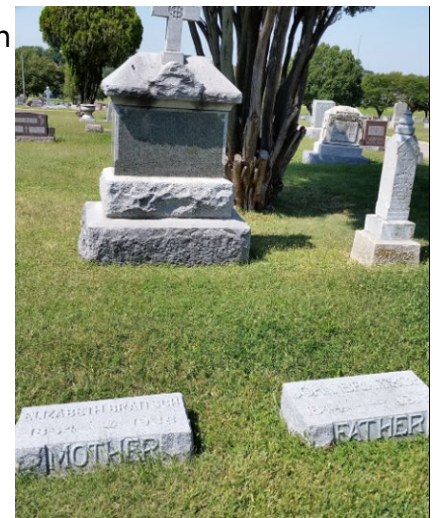


- 1892 – 1939 (age 46)
- Born in Wichita, Kansas
- Frank owned Shoe Stores
- Without a doubt, the best advertising Frank Xavier Busch ever did was when he customized a Model-T Ford into the shape of a shoe. Who could forget a fire-engine red shoe-car that traveled Wichita's streets on behalf of Busch's Shoe Repair Company, 120 S. Topeka.
- After World War I, Busch developed the Rock Motor Court and the Rock Castle Country Club, later known as the Coyote Club, on North Broadway.



(17) John Braitsch (S3 R9 G6)

- 1844 – 1913 (age 68)
- Born in Germany
- Immigrated to the United States in 1865
- Lived in Philadelphia, where he learned to make shoes.
- Early Pioneer of Wichita
- Opened the first Boot and Shoe store in Wichita in 1872
- Early customers were cattle drovers arriving from Texas, fresh with cash, needing new boots.
- His last store front was at 120 East Douglas
- John had a land claim of 160 acres on the Cowskin Creek
- John was the father of eight children.



(18) Martin & Bridget Gleeson (S3 R7 G37)

- 1856 – 1927 (age 72) 1853 – 1923 (age 69)
- My family, like every family, can be complicated.
- These are my Great-Grandparents, Mom's side.
- Martin came from Illinois to Wichita in 1887.
- Martin was 31, Bridget, his wife, was 34.
- He bought 160 acres at 47th and Rock Road.
- Martin was a Successful Farmer. He was popular among his Irish neighbors.
- His son Michael died young, at age 38, on Christmas Day, 1922, at St. Francis Hospital, here in Wichita. He had been living on a farm he bought in Oklahoma.
- Bridget, his mother, moved to the Oklahoma farm to close it up, sell off most of his belongings, and settle the estate. She was 67. A year later, she died on Michael's farm. Her remains were brought here.
- Martin Sr. and Bridget's youngest child was Martin Gleeson, Jr., my Grandfather. I don't remember him, I was three when he died in 1958.
- My Grandfather Martin was 34 years old when he married my Grandmother, Irene Blasdel, who was only 15 years old. She had 13 of Martin's kids, one of which was my mother. I'm thankful for that, and my many aunt and uncles that Martin and Irene produced.
- Martin seldom worked, so the family of 15 frequently moved because they could not pay the rent.
- One of my aunts, Babe, died at five years old. Her dress caught on fire on a cookstove. There were no photos ever taken of Babe, as the family never had any money for a camera.
- Two of Babe's brother, Martin and Gerald are buried here at Calvary, along with her sister, Britchie.
- There are lots of stories to tell about a family this large, including why Martin Jr.'s wife Irene is buried way over there, with a different Gleeson, but time is limited, and you have probably heard enough about my Gleeson family.

