

Cultural Resource Survey Form

Clackamas County

I.D. Number _____

Study Area: Milwaukie
Legal: T: 1 R: 1E Sec.: 26AD
Tax (lots): 700
Zone: M Lot Size: 77,683 sf

IDENTIFICATION

Common/Historical Name: Pioneer Cemetery
Address: SE 17th Ave., North of Waverly Drive Area: Milwaukie
Current Owner: Cemetery Trustees Use: Cemetery
Original Owner: Cemetery Trustees Original Use: Cemetery
Area of Significance: Town: x County: _____ City: _____ Nation: _____

HISTORIC INTEREST

Theme: Milwaukie's Early Development Date: 1850-1950s
Description: Pioneer cemetery laid out in a grid pattern. Large established conifers (mainly cedars and Douglas firs) are the primary landscaping. Wide variety of headstones, representing the stylistic changes during the hundred years that the cemetery was in use.

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST

Style: _____
Date of First Internment: 1850 Name: Mary Lewelling Meek
Date of Establishment as a Cemetery: 1869
Noteworthy Graves: Seth Lewelling, his 1st wife Clarissa, and 3 of their children: Alice, Ella, and William; George & Sarah Wills and Jacob & Lorena Wills whose Donation Land Claim became Ardenwald; Alfred Luelling and his wife Mary Campbell; Hector P. Campbell, a Donation Land Claimant and the first school teacher in Milwaukie.

Notes: Photo below is a view facing west. Mary Meek's monument is a tall obelisk near the center of the photo. Fenced plots in foreground are Luellings.



Date: February 2007
Recorder: Martha Richards

CITY OF MILWAUKIE
CULTURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY
Statement of Significance

ADDRESS: West side of SE 17th Avenue

Significant for its association with Milwaukie's early period of settlement, the Milwaukie Pioneer Cemetery contains the graves of many of the founders and early residents of Milwaukie. The first grave is that of Mary Meek, eldest daughter of agricultural pioneers Henderson and Elizabeth Lewelling. Mary passed away at age 18 in January of 1850, only three years after having married William Meek, the owner of the Donation Land Claim adjacent to the Lewelling's.

As was common at that time, William Meek buried Mary in an unused corner of land. It is likely that the second internment in the cemetery was Captain Frederick Morse, who was killed by the explosion of a cannon while celebrating the launching of the 'Lot Whitcomb,' the first steamer on the Willamette. Other internments followed, including Mary's Mother Elizabeth in 1851 and Mary's infant son Andrew in 1852.

In 1869, William and his new wife Fidelia, along with Mary's sister Jane and her husband Henry Eddy, deeded the cemetery to the public. They appointed trustees to oversee the cemetery; the Lewelling and Meek families had, until that point, supervised internments. By the 1940s or 1950s, all of the plots in the cemetery were either filled or reserved and burials tapered off.

Graves are arranged in a rough grid pattern. The entrance is in the middle of the eastern side (off 17th Avenue) and a main east-west path leading from this entrance bisects the cemetery. The grounds are covered with grass and landscaped with large, established trees which are predominantly evergreens. The only structure is a masonry maintenance shed near the entrance. Because the cemetery was in use for over a century, there is a wide variety of headstones, representing the changing styles from 1850-1950.

Over the last half-century, the cemetery has seen periods of neglect and vandalism, as well as periods of active maintenance. Although there are some damaged or missing headstones, the cemetery is in fairly good condition for one of its age.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Olson, Charles Oluf. History of Milwaukie, OR. (1965, Milwaukie Historical Society, OR)
Swanson, Mike. Memo to Mayor and City Council re: Milwaukie Pioneer Cemetery Maintenance dated November 5, 2003.

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