

IMAGES

...THEN AND NOW

From the Indian Hill Historical Society



**Buckingham Lodge
1861**

Evergreen Cemetery

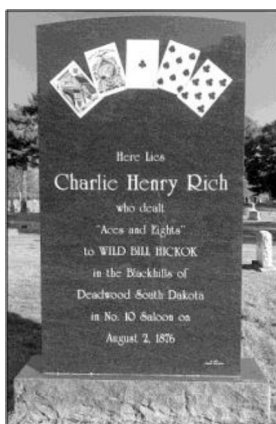
Just north of Indian Hill is the hamlet of Miamiville, so named because the Little Miami River is one of its boundaries. At 234 Center Street (State Route 126) Evergreen Cemetery is located. It is a tangible link with the past, a place both significant and sacred. It contains approximately 4300 gravesites, including those of some long ago residents of Indian Hill and several colorful historic individuals.

The cemetery has been in existence for more than 200 years. It is considered a rural cemetery, as it is picturesque and in the suburbs. Containing both family and individual lots, most tombstones can be viewed from an automobile, or visited by walking a short distance from the car. Prior to its establishment, early pioneers buried their dead in unorganized isolated frontier graves, family graveyards, or churchyards. Here in Miamiville, the deceased were laid to rest in a pastoral landscape, one full of light, air, and peace. Even its name “Evergreen” reflects an idyllic place – a place where the departed can pass to the next world surrounded by nature.

In the older section, the Buckingham graves are visible. This family owned large tracts (over 1000 acres) of land on current day Camargo, Given, Buckingham, Cunningham, and Kugler Mill Roads. Their descendants were notable in local history. Dr. Alfred Buckingham was the physician at Dennison General Hospital during the Civil War, and cared for thousands in the hospital barracks there. And Lola Bonnell (great granddaughter of Hannah Buckingham) donated her home and 13 acres to Indian Hill Village in her will. The land became Bonnell Park, and her home serves as the office of the Historical Society and is called Buckingham Lodge.



Bonnell Family Bench



**Charlie Henry Rich
Tombstone**

Another historic marker is that of Charlie Henry Rich. Charlie like many fortune seekers of the Wild West in the 1800s, liked to gamble and play card games. He dealt what became known as the “Dead Man’s Hand” to Wild Bill Hickok on August 2, 1876, the day Hickok was murdered in Deadwood, South Dakota. The poker hand consisted of the ace of clubs, ace of spades, two black eights, and the kicker (allegedly the queen of hearts of spades). It was two pairs, aces and eights. Charlie was a pallbearer at Hickok’s funeral. Hickok, a folk hero, was famous as a gunfighter, a scout, a deputy U.S. marshal, and a city marshal. Known as the “Prince of Pistoleers”, he was one of the icons of the Old West. The front of Charlie Rich’s gravestone displays the “Dead Man’s Hand” and describes Charlie’s actions, and the back depicts the aftermath of the poker game, with Hickok lying dead on the floor of the bar.

Other burial markers in Evergreen Cemetery bear the names of people who had an impact on early area history. These include the Paxton, Apgar, Poe, Knicely, Rude, Humphrey, Turner, and Todd ancestors. The earliest document regarding the cemetery is a March 1867 deed, wherein the Miami Cemetery Association purchased 10 acres from A.N. and Mary Robinson. Yet 136 headstones are known to have existed before March 1876. This indicates that the property had already been used as a graveyard prior to its purchase by the Miami Cemetery Association. The oldest gravestone is dated 1814 – that of Helen Kerr and her son (perhaps death of both during childbirth?). Many of the older marker’s surfaces are thick with lichen, decayed, or their inscriptions are illegible or indistinct. In 1898 the cemetery was surveyed by George Robinson, and the layout was designed by W.P. Price. Curved lanes wind through the serene landscape with its hillocks and native trees.

In 1970 Miami Township in Clermont County became the caretaker of Evergreen Cemetery. Adjacent land was procured. Currently the site encompasses 20 acres. From 2012-2014 a local DAR member compiled an inventory of the cemetery, recording and photographing markers made of sandstone, granite, marble, and bronze. Some had deteriorated due to acid rain, time, or vandalism. Some had sunk into the ground. Some were not found, and some deceased were likely buried without headstones. This inventory preserved valuable historical data.

A visit to Evergreen Cemetery commemorates the dead interred there and offers the living both a glimpse of history and some quiet repose in an arcadian setting. It is open to the public from sunrise until sunset.



Evergreen Cemetery