

Heritage Etched in Stone

the project (updated)

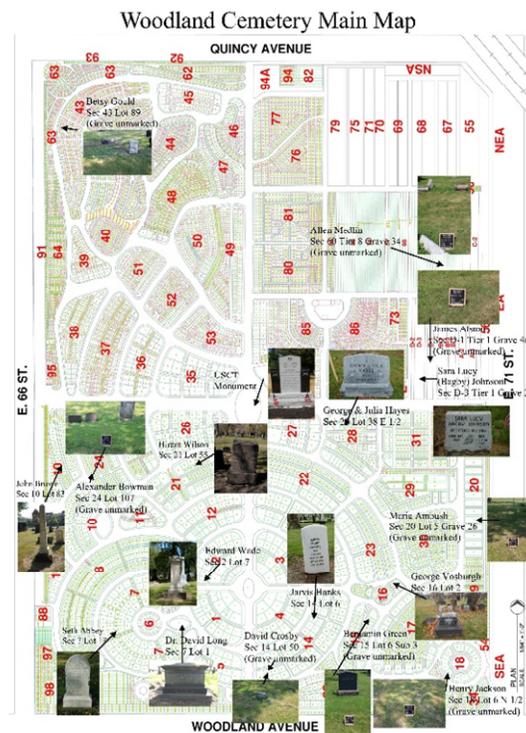
Woodland Cemetery located at 6901 Woodland Avenue, Cleveland, Ohio was the first site in the City of Cleveland to become a member of the National Park Service Underground Railroad Network to Freedom by nominating Sara Lucy Bagby Johnson, Hiram Wilson, John Brown and Edward Wade. This has inspired us to do additional research of those residing in the cemetery who were part of the history of the Underground Railroad (UGRR). We have learned, while creating a cemetery tour guide of the Underground Railroad residents in Woodland Cemetery, that eight nine are in undocumented graves and the Vosburgh monument has toppled over and needs to be fixed.

Absence of evidence is NOT evidence of absence. As with much of Black History being left out of textbooks, lack of headstones for LEADERS of the Underground Railroad means that people doing self-guided tours will never find these people, who sacrificed life and property to help Freedom Seekers. We want to correct this absence of headstones so graves can be documented and their stories will be told with our UGRR cemetery tour guides. We also seek donations to restore the George Vosburgh monument (he is one of only two (2) Black leaders of the Underground Railroad with a memorial).

It is important to provide a physical remembrance to tell their stories to educate current and future visitors and tourists to this historic cemetery. Once their resting place can be found, the educational possibilities are limitless. History is in your own backyard Clevelanders.

the steps

Once funding is received, we will purchase the eight nine headstones for those who are buried in unmarked graves (James T Alston, Maria A Ambush, Alexander Bowman, David Hazzard Crosby, Betsy Gould, Benjamin S Green, Henry Jackson, Allen Meddlin, and Harriet and Milo Hickox) and have the Vosburgh monument restored in time for us to plan Underground Railroad Tours to the public and organizations. It is disappointing to talk about the history of the UGRR and there is only a patch of grass. Lack of a physical presence of headstones can lead to absence of attention to their significance and sacrifices.



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We also plan to add the information on the additional people we have discovered in our research to the data base at the National Park Service Underground Railroad Network to Freedom.

why we're doing it

Woodland Cemetery was the first site in the City of Cleveland to become a member of the National Park Service Underground Railroad Network to Freedom by nominating Sara Lucy Bagby Johnson, Hiram Wilson, John Brown and Edward Wade. These biographies inspired us to do additional research of those residing in the cemetery. Now we have 21 related to the history of the Underground Railroad and we know we will find more in our research. We want all of these people recognized by a headstone and included in our constantly updated cemetery tour guide of the Underground Railroad. Currently ~~eight~~ nine are in undocumented graves (all African Americans except one) and the Vosburgh monument has toppled over and needs to be repaired.

Woodland Cemetery's location in the Central neighborhood leads to our role as community educators. We document and preserve history in stone so others can share the history that exists in our own back yard. Over 85,000 residents of Woodland Cemetery are part of this city's past. Our focus at this time is the UGRR activists, who have no physical presence to document the past.

amount we need

Due to rising costs because of fluctuating inflation, this is an estimate at this time. With estimates, we are averaging approximately \$750 for each headstone, total is \$6,750 plus restoration of the George Vosburgh monument of \$850. Currently we have raised \$4,750 and need to raise the additional \$3,000. Would you please help us preserve the history of the Underground Railroad at Woodland Cemetery? We are partnering with IOBY who will match up to \$500 per donor for a total of \$3,000. You can donate through their website <https://ioby.org/project/heritage-etched-stone>

If you prefer to write a check, mail a check made out to: IOBY, PO Box 4668 #74253, New York, NY, 10163-4668 and in the memo write: Heritage Etched in Stone. You can also find the guidelines at: <https://support.ioby.org/a/1220776-can-i-donate-to-an-ioby-campaign-by-check-or-cash>

contact information

If you should have any questions, please contact Dr. Dorothy Salem (216) 337-9217 dorothysalem@yahoo.com or Michelle A Day (216) 319-2091 wcfcle@wcfcle.org

Thank you for helping Woodland Cemetery preserve history.