



Madison County Genealogical Society

Madison County Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 1031, Norfolk, NE 68702-1031
mcgs@telebeep.com

www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nemcgs/ www.nesgs.org/~mcgs

Barnes Reserve Cemetery

This cemetery is located in south Madison on a hilltop just north of the swimming pool. It has had several names – Hill Cemetery, Founders Field, Prospect Hill and today is known as Barnes Reserve Cemetery. The land was donated by Henry Mitchell Barnes, the founder of Madison. It replaced Madison's first cemetery located in a small lot behind the Presbyterian church. (Location today---3rd and Main) There had been 7 to 10 burials there. The bodies were removed to the new cemetery. The year was 1874. It is ironic that the first burials in the new cemetery were twin grandsons of Mr. Barnes in July of that year. Mr. Barnes died on November 3, 1876. He had just returned from a visit to his native New York where friends and relatives had donated a bell for his church. The bell tolled for the first time at his burial service. He was buried on his windswept "prettiest" hill.

In 1910 a new cemetery was established called Crown Hill. Barnes cemetery was little used, and there were many removals to the new cemetery. By 1930, vandals had broken stones and cattle were grazing therein. Mary Bickley Robinson, a pioneer, and Alice Hall, County Superintendent, called on the townspeople for help. An effective restoration was done.

Years later, and again forgotten, the cemetery was offered for sale. It wasn't until the spring of 1979 when the area was proposed for a swimming pool that concerned citizens became alarmed at the possibility of desecrating sacred ground. Percy Upton and Stuart Trine proved to be master craftsmen as they repaired, cleaned, polished various sizes of stones, mostly broken and difficult to move. An unusual monument was designed---a 5' by 28' concrete cross as the base for 53 tombstones which were incorporated into wet concrete. All the workers involved donated their labor from start to finish.

Note: Identification on almost 100 burials in the cemetery is on file due to research by a Madison County Genealogical Society member, Marge Fuhrmann of Norfolk.

Source: [Images of Yesterday...Visions of Tomorrow: 125 Years, Madison, Nebraska, 1867-1992.](#)