

S0577 Greenwood Cemetery Records, 1904-1996

9 Folders, 3 Audiocassettes, 1 Roll Microfilm

MICROFILM

This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri. If you would like more information, please contact us at shsresearch@umsystem.edu.

Greenwood Cemetery, the St. Louis area's oldest nonsectarian commercial cemetery for African-American burials, was founded by Herman Krueger in 1874. An estimated 50,000 individuals were buried in the cemetery, including many notables in the community. The National Register of Historic Places listed the site in 2004.

Krueger's son-in-law and his family owned and maintained the property until the 1980s when they sold it to a local politician, Solomon Rooks. Unable to operate it profitably, Rooks allowed the cemetery's condition to deteriorate. A not-for-profit group, Friends of Greenwood Cemetery, organized cleanup efforts and led a successful attempt to have ownership transferred first to St. Louis County and then to the Friends organization itself.

Researcher and author Kevin Belford recovered the historic cemetery records in Mr. Rooks' possession and lent them to WHMC for photocopying in 1997. This collection contains copies of existing burial records and minutes of the board of directors, newspaper clippings and legal documents discussing the property transfer, and research materials added by individuals who participated in the efforts to preserve the property. Collection includes two oral histories with individuals who observed burials at Greenwood.

FOLDER LIST

1. Map copies of Public Grounds, Family Lots, Cremains Gardens and Monuments, 1893-1976 and Deed, 1996
2. Newsclippings and court records regarding Solomon Rooks' ownership of Greenwood Cemetery
3. Printouts from microfilm: Volume 2, Financial Ledger, 1951-1961
4. Printouts from microfilm: Volume 3, Greenwood Cemetery Record Book, 1940-1966
5. Printouts from microfilm: Volume 4, Greenwood Cemetery Record Book, 1967-1992
6. Printouts from microfilm: Volume 5, Burials Book, 1971
7. Printouts from microfilm: Volume 6, Funeral Records Book, 1986-1989
8. "Greenwood Cemetery - An Uneasy Resting Place" - research paper by Ray Nichols, 2000
9. Greenwood Notes from Margaret Archambault

AUDIOCASSETTES:

Oral histories conducted by Ann Morris of WHMC with individuals who grew up in homes adjacent to the cemetery

T-577.1a & T577.1b - Margaret Archambault

5-577.2 - Barbara Prater

MICROFILM:

Cemetery records in Folders 2 through 6, plus one additional folder (Volume 1, Record Book of Greenwood Cemetery Association Board of Directors, 1904-1942) are contained on a single reel of microfilm.

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Rooks, Solomon