



City of Redmond
WASHINGTON

Walking Tour

Redmond Pioneer Cemetery

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References:
The Cemetery As An Evolving Cultural Landscape.
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Redmond's history
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Redmond Pioneer Cemetery

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The Redmond Pioneer Cemetery is an evolving community cemetery that was initially established at the turn of the 20th century. It is situated one-half mile northeast of the historic commercial center of Redmond, in an area that was historically slightly removed from town but adjacent to a well-established road, called both Ed. Botzford Road No. 180, established in 1886, and later B. J. Blomskog Road No. 447, established in 1898 and just a few hundred feet from the rail line. It is the burial place of many early area families, including the Adair, Breckberg, Elduen, Hutcheson, Isackson, Olsen, Perrigo, Sikes and Weiss families. The cemetery continues to accept burials.

Historic Landmark

Redmond Pioneer Cemetery



A resting place for Redmond's pioneers that features upright monumentation

Funerary Design

Fundamentally, a cemetery holds an important place in a community, as a place where those living can connect in many ways with those of the past. With the migration from the American east to the west, the eastern American traditions for cemeteries also migrated thus creating a western blend of several regional beliefs, representations and practices.

Once provided on individual homesteads as a backyard family plot, older cemeteries reflected the layout of the American city. Differentiation played a significant role in life as it did in death. Often, the cemetery was established on a hill or mountain top. Considering the agrarian nature of villages and towns, this land was not deemed fertile though typically offered pastoral views and a park-like setting.

Pioneer cemeteries were simple in design and most common from 1850 to 1879. Thereafter, design took the form of the Victorian period, the conservative period and then the modern period. Many pioneer cemeteries were established on an eastward perspective. Bodies were laid to rest so that the individual could face the rising sun.

Larger plots reflected wealth as did placement in more scenic portions of the cemetery. Lesser quality sections such as the perimeter were reserved for individuals and

families of what was deemed lower-classes. Landscaping also emphasized the differentiation in these straight-lined settings and offered the more desirable portions of the cemetery.

What was once thought as inefficient land, often a distance from the town's center has now become some of the most desired settings for residential development. In places such as Chicago, cemeteries have been relocated to allow for new land uses. The cemetery competes with high-value uses such as residential and commercial.

In contrast to the grid design, current cemeteries take on a curvilinear pattern. A cemetery typically expands from its core in all directions or in one, two, or three directions based on geographic or geologic restrictions.

The cemetery has been and continues to be an extension of life.

Thank you to Tom Hitzroth for his dedication to Redmond's history. Mr. Hitzroth serves as the Chair of the Redmond Landmark Commission, addressing the integrity and preservation of the City's historic landmarks. He also provides great service to the Redmond community by sharing stories of people and places during his narrated tours of Downtown's historic district. To learn more, visit www.redmond.gov/government/historicpreservation.

From 1870 to roughly 1950, upright and raised monuments took the form of uprights. The lawn-type emerged in the 1920's and in combination with the raised-top inscription, became the most common in the 1950's through today. Graves of fallen soldiers and veterans featured a unique representation which also evolved during the last century. Following WWI, the Under Secretary of War approved the "General" slab design—a slightly rounded top made in American white marble. Either the Latin Cross or the Star of David could represent religion. Due to cost, the grave marker was replaced with a flat granite marker in 1947.

Fraternal organizations such as the Odd Fellows played a supportive role to communities over time. As an example, since the 17th century, this organization has provided assistance including burial service particularly during periods of epidemics. The Redmond Pioneer Cemetery features several Odd Fellows (three interlocking rings) as well as other fraternal insignia for its members.

Architecture and Style

A cemetery may appear to be a random mixture of styles and preferences. However, the monuments and symbols contained therein reflect many traditions, values, and time period. Materials also vary based on preference, climate and time period and include stone, marble, cement, and metal.

The gothic or pointed monument has held ecclesiastical significance during the past 900 years. The obelisk harkens to ancient Egypt, displaying aspects of the pyramid shape.

The tablet is Romanesque while also resembling the tablets of the Ten Commandments.

The pulpit, representative of such, can include an open book along with inscriptions.

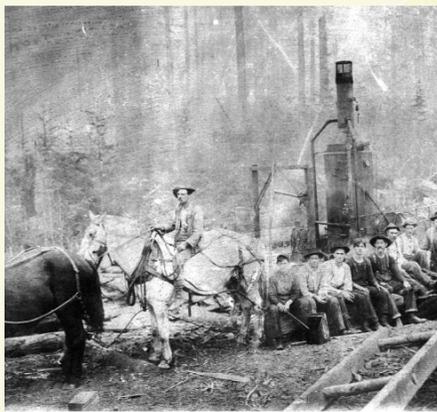
The scroll can include the effect of unrolled portions and can also be inscribed in this portion.

The Redmond Pioneer Cemetery includes intact examples of these monuments as well as the more recent lawn-type. To the east, the modern portion of the cemetery includes this type of monument and offers a more pastoral setting in comparison.



Redmond Pioneer Cemetery Monuments

A Settlement ... A Logging Town ...



Impacts on the Redmond Community

Though predating the Redmond Pioneer Cemetery, early European explorers and settlers had a significant impact on the local Native American community. In the 1770s, European diseases may have contributed to the loss of more than 11,000 Western Washington Indians due to smallpox. Subsequent epidemics included smallpox (1800-1801), influenza (1836-1837), measles (1847-1848), smallpox (1862), and diphtheria (1875).

On October 3, 1918 through January 1919, the Seattle area was stricken by the worldwide Spanish Influenza epidemic. During this time, gauze masks were mandatory and funeral services were restricted to close relatives to help prevent further transmission. Burials in the Redmond Pioneer Cemetery during 1918 occurred at roughly three times the Cemetery's average for the decade.

Industry and working conditions played a role in shaping and affecting the Redmond community. Logging and lumber milling activities were attributed to common loss of life. Work was heavy and challenging, equipment was dangerous, and fires were prevalent. Redmond featured eight sawmills between 1890 and 1930 with each employing up to 500 men.

Mining played an additional role, affecting community health. Though mines were not active within Redmond's city limits, men traveled to Issaquah, Newcastle, and other nearby mines to dig for coal. Air quality, collapses, explosions, and fires took their toll as well.



Prior to its incorporation in 1912 and without a water system, Redmond's wooden buildings were at risk by fire. The most notable loss was the original Hotel Walther. Historic records do not substantiate significant losses of life due to residential fires though the impact to Redmond may have been felt on a block-by-block basis with a perceived risk of wooden structures burning and fires possibly engulfing surrounding structures. The frequency and risk of this impact led to the use of brick as seen in the Brad Best and Bill Brown buildings in Redmond's downtown core.

Thank you to the Redmond Historical Society. The Society provides a significant service to the Redmond community by archiving, recognizing and celebrating the City's history. This organization helps inform people regarding Redmond history by presenting monthly speakers and by presenting Redmond artifacts at their office in the Old Redmond Schoolhouse Community Center. More at www.redmondhistoricalsociety.org.

