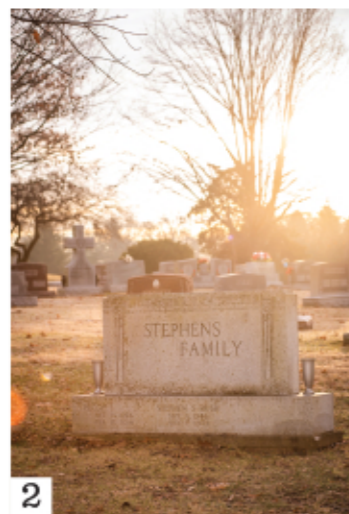A bird's-eye view of Rose Hill Cemetery.

Rose Hill Cemetery
Bicentennial
A Brief History and Curious Facts

By Craig Coley • Photography by Rodney Margison

(below, this page and opposite page) 1. Grave marker for Andrew Wylie (1789–1850), first president of Indiana University, and his wife, Margaret. 2. Stephens family headstone with room for more. 3. Some older headstones have been damaged over the years. 4. The scroll on a headstone is a symbol of life and time. 5. Brothers George and John East, who died 15 days apart in 1873, share this unique headstone. 6. World War I monument, erected in 1923. 7. A tree without branches symbolizes a life left unfinished when cut off by death; a vine, the relationship between God and man; and the dove, purity. 8. Some grave markers incorporate many different symbols into their design.

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Monument to Dr. David Maxwell (1786–1854), Bloomington's first physician and founder of the Indiana State Seminary, predecessor of Indiana University.

CARMICHAEL

HOWARD HOAGLAND CARMICHALL 1899 — 1981

Legendary musician Howard "Hoagy" Carmichael (1899–1981).

PATRIOT

ANDREW FERGUSON CAPT HARRIS' VA MILITIA REVOLUTIONARY WAR 1755 1855

Headstone of Andrew Ferguson (1765–1858), a free African American who fought in the Revolutionary War. The local chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution put up this headstone in 1984.

GEORGE "ANNER" SHIVELY

George "Anner" Shively (1893–1962) played baseball professionally in the Negro Leagues, was MVP twice and seven times an all-star. He was inducted into the Monroe County Sports Hall of Fame in 2015.

Alfred C. Kinsey (1894–1956) established the Institute for Sex Research at IU and gained international fame through the Kinsey Reports.

KINSEY

ALFRED C. KINSEY JUNE 23 1894 AUG 25 1956

The tree stump indicates a life cut short while the lamb symbolizes innocence, usually used on the graves of children.

Like many memorial parks built in the 1800s, Bloomington's Rose Hill Cemetery is a meditative space with meandering paths and open vistas. This year marks the park's bicentennial, and Cory Hawkins, natural resource education specialist with the Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department, hopes more residents make a visit to Rose Hill.

"This is an underutilized park," Hawkins says. "It's big, it's beautiful, it's wide open, and it should be used by Bloomingtonians as much as possible. Cemeteries were the original parks. They were the original open space where people would hang out and see friends and neighbors, eat food, and listen to music."

In 1819, the location of the Monroe County graveyard was designated with a "G.Y." carved into an oak tree at what was then the outskirts of Bloomington. Two hundred years later, Rose Hill Cemetery remains an active burial ground and a 28-acre space east of Adams Street between West Kirkwood and West 3rd Street that is open to the public from dawn to dusk.

The condition of the cemetery has waxed and waned over its history. As Hawkins points out, cemeteries are not good businesses—people make a one-time payment, but the work of maintaining the grounds never ends. The county transferred management of the cemetery to the city in 1868, but the graveyard suffered vandalism and fell into disrepair until 1892. That's when eight women formed the Ladies Cemetery Association and began to turn things around. They planted roses, creating a more park-like setting, and renamed the cemetery Rose Hill. Over the next several years, the ladies' association raised money, built a cottage for a sexton to keep an eye on the grounds, and installed a fountain, which was later moved to Third Street Park.

A walk through local history

Walking tour maps are available at the cemetery office, 930 W. 4th St., and visitors will find headstones with many familiar names. "There's a lot of Bloomington history in here," says Jennifer Barber, office assistant at Rose Hill. "Indiana University founders, people whose signatures are on the first Indiana constitution, musicians, baseball players."

Many of those who shaped the early history of Bloomington, IU, and the state of Indiana are buried at Rose Hill. For example, Dr. David Maxwell (1786–1854), Bloomington's first physician, is buried here. Maxwell co-founded Indiana Seminary—which later became IU—and drafted Indiana's first constitution. Andrew Wylie (1789–1851) was the seminary's first presi-

dent. Other IU pioneers whose names still resound include mathematics professor Daniel Kirkwood (1814–95) and Elisha Ballantine (1809–86), professor of Greek. Paris Dunning (1806–84) served as Indiana's governor from 1848–49. A medical doctor and lawyer, Dunning collapsed during a courtroom speech and died in May 1884.

Decedents of wider renown include Alfred Kinsey (1894–1956), the IU professor whose book *Sexual Behavior and the Human Male* (1948) became a controversial best-seller. Songwriter Howard Hoagland "Hoagy" Carmichael (1899–1981) is also buried in Rose Hill. His flat monument still draws pilgrims who stand coins on end in the etched letters of his name.

Weather has washed the lettering from the earliest markers, which are made of limestone. Written records weren't kept until 1897, and Barber says there are people buried at Rose Hill who either couldn't afford headstones or whose stones haven't survived. In the cemetery's southeast section, which is the oldest, there are grassy areas of unmarked graves. The oldest legible marker is that of Kittura Hardesty (1780–1821).

The headstone of Revolutionary War veteran Andrew Ferguson (1765–1855) was one of those lost to time, but he has since been given a new monument bearing the emblem of the Sons of the American Revolution. Ferguson was African American, and

Barber says nothing in cemetery records suggests there were ever separate sections for different races. There is, however, one section too narrow for adult graves that is known as Infants Row, where some of the stones have but a single date.

Combining burials and cremations, 14,700 people are known to be interred at Rose Hill, and that number will grow. The last plot sold almost 20 years ago, but burials continue to be held regularly. Cremation plots are still available. Because all of the burial plots are sold, occasionally a body will be disinterred and moved to another gravesite to be with family. That plot will be resold, which can result in people who died a hundred years apart being buried side by side.

A variety of curious monuments

This being stone-cutting country, there are many unique, ornate monuments, some of them signed by their carvers. There are also examples of mass-produced monuments, such as those shaped like trees. The Sears catalog offered a selection of treestones, with various symbolic designs. A stump-shaped monument, for example, signified a life cut short.

Wandering among the graves at Rose Hill, visitors can find an abundance of curiosities. For example, Rose Hill is the second burial place for some: Laurens Strain was killed in World War I on June 7, 1918, in

Marker for John Waldron (1827–99), one of Bloomington's pioneers and a successful businessman. His son, John B. Waldron, after whom the Ivy Tech John Waldron Arts Center is named, is also buried in this family plot.

Various methods are used to indicate the perimeter of family plots, like this one for the Bode family.

J.B. Crafton (1853–1912) is memorialized with this monument, although he isn't buried here. Crafton died aboard the Titanic.

Paris Dunning (1806–84) was a physician, an attorney, and governor of Indiana from 1848–49.

J.D. Showers (1841–1939) was co-founder of Showers Brothers Company and a banker. He and his family's headstones are small and simple, surrounding a larger family marker.

The Soldier's Monument honoring Civil War veterans, erected in 1900 by the local Women's Relief Corps.

France, where he was initially buried. John B. Crafton, on the other hand, is not buried at Rose Hill at all; he drowned aboard the Titanic in 1912. Another headstone is notable for identifying the cause of death: Alfred Patton was killed by lightning in 1853.

Some family plots are set apart with rows of buried stones—looking a bit like small fences—locally known as "pens." There are also three family crypts. In addition, Rose Hill has two mausoleums. One is an outdoor mausoleum deep enough to hold two crypts end-to-end. The other, an enclosed mausoleum, was built in the early 1900s and features art nouveau, stained-glass windows. This one is kept locked; families with crypts have keys to the door. The earliest placement was 1915, and many of the crypts inside bear the Masonic emblem on their face.

Hawkins says people should feel comfortable walking among the headstones. "These people want to be visited," Hawkins says. "They want to be seen. They want to be remembered."

For more information, visit magbloom.com/rosehillcemetery. ✳