

City of Columbia Historic Preservation Commission
Application for Most Notable Property

Community Development Department, Planning Division
City of Columbia, 701 E. Broadway, Columbia, MO 65201
Planning@CoMo.Gov

Address Being Nominated John W. Alspaugh Park 4216 Mexico Gravel Road

Date Property Built (if known) _____

First Owner/Builder/Architect (if known) _____

Current Owner's Name City of Columbia, Parks and Recreation Department
*(properties may be nominated by non-owners but owners must give permission for photography/
videography of property- see page 2 for release)*

Address Columbia Parks Management Center 1507 W Business Loop 70

Phone Number 573-874-6398 E-mail gabe.huffington@comogov

Submitter's Name Bruce Alspaugh

Submitter's Phone number 573-474-1622 E-mail alspaughb@gmail.com

NOTE: The following information provides a starting point for historic research on the property. However, a lack of information should not be a deterrent for an application. All properties chosen for Most Notable will have a history of the property compiled by a historic preservation professional. This history will be provided to property owners for their own records.

Has anyone of local, regional, or national historic note ever occupied the property? If so, whom?

See attached notes

Does the property have any notable or unusual architectural qualities? If so, please identify.

See attached notes

The Hidden History of the John W. Alspaugh Park

By Dr. Bruce Alan Alspaugh
For Como Preservation

November 28, 2023



John and Carol Ann Alspaugh

Louisburg Farm



John Alspaugh



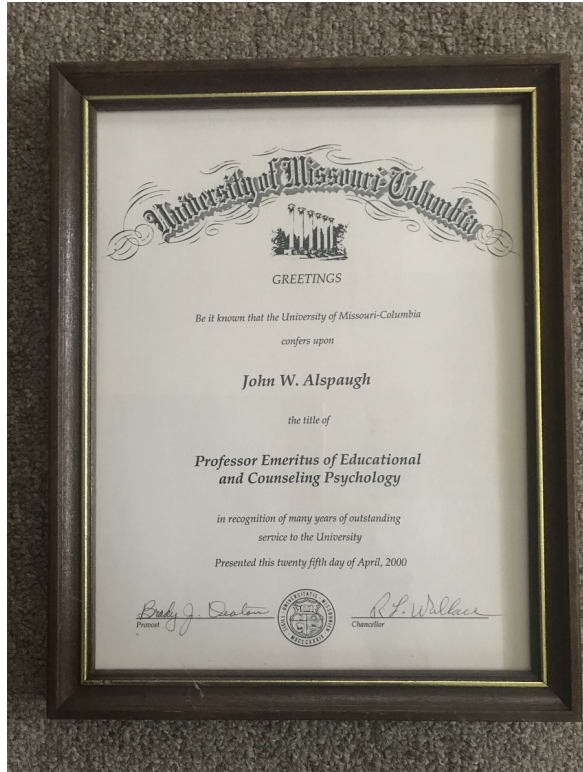
Alspaugh Family



Teaching Career

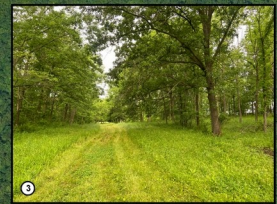
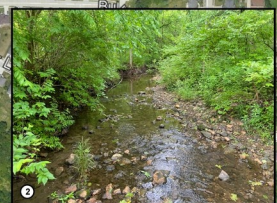


Teaching Awards



ALSPAUGH PROPERTY

DECEMBER 19, 2022





JEREMY JAROINE/Missourian

John Alspaugh, left, and his son, Bruce Alspaugh, wrap a freshly cut tree in netting for a customer at the Christmas tree farm on Mexico Gravel Road. Formerly an MU statistics professor, John Alspaugh runs the farm as a retirement activity rather than a business, and his son helps him with some of the labor.

The Christmas farm

COMMUNITY LIFE



John Alspaugh, right, pulls a tree he helped cut for Cara and Tony Hirner of Columbia at his Hinkson Creek Farm.

OUR TOWN

John Alspaugh, 71, sits on a hill overlooking his 200 acres bordering Hinkson Creek in northeast Columbia. He waits for his next customer while sipping tea and staring into the beaming winter sun on the horizon.

For the past 10 years, John has been selling Christmas trees to families looking to cut their own holiday centerpiece between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

"They tend to come in waves," he laughs.

As families climb out of their cars, John greets them with a saw and measuring stick.

"They usually ask me where the best trees are. I'm happy to point them in the right direction," he says.

Cara and Tony Hirner of Columbia are repeat customers looking to continue a tradition of buying their tree from the Hinkson Creek Farm.

"We've always been impressed with what we've

found," Cara says.

John, who retired from the University of Missouri in 2000 but continues to teach a class in the College of Education, admits tending to his trees is a yearlong commitment.

"I'm a hobbyist who likes to farm," says John, who has lived in Columbia since 1962.

His seven acres of Scotch pines have to be groomed and pruned to keep their tiered shape.

John says the trees that aren't sold one year are usually the best-sellers down the road.

As families finally decide on their perfect tree, John or his son, Bruce, will use a chain saw as needed to finish their cut. Once the trees are pulled up the hill, loose needles are shaken out. The trees are wrapped, measured and tied down for the ride home.

"Thank you, and Merry Christmas," John says as another family drives home with one of his trees. ■

Photo and story by PARKER ESHELMAN
of the Tribune's staff

This weekly photo column explores the people, places and relationships that make living in Columbia a unique and interesting experience. Our subjects' thoughts and backgrounds are included to shed light on their community impact and reveal something about their character. If you have a suggestion for Our Town, contact the Tribune's photo department at 815-1770 or photo@tribmail.com.

John George Keene



John G. Keene (Father): March 7, 1793 – October 8, 1869
Alfred Keene (Son): January 21, 1814 – August 15, 1888

Hinkson Cemetery Deed 7/6/1836

DEED RECORD 4 G

498

into all the right privileges and benefits thereunto belonging to him the said Charles he heirs and assigns forever and I do hereby give and pass to the said attorney as aforesaid of hereby being myself to morrow and defend all the title of the said land to said Charles for from any claim or claims of all and every person as witness my hand and seal this 10th day of November 1836

State of Missouri
County of Boone
Be it remembered that on this 10th day of August 1836 and thirty six before me a Justice of the Peace of Boone County Missouri and for the County of Boone aforesaid appeared Joseph Payne who personally known to me to be the person whose name is subscribed to the foregoing instrument of writing as being executed thereunto and acknowledged the said instrument to be his act and deed for the time mentioned Taken and Certified this day & year aforesaid James H. Gordon
Justice of the Peace of Boone County Missouri

This deed from Jacob L Payne to the attorney Moses L Payne to Joseph Finkelson granted before me the undersigned Recorder of Boone County on the twenty eighth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty six and having been duly acknowledged and certified the same unto such certificate is admitted to Record in my office and is duly Record in Book G page 497 & 498 Given under my hand as Recorder aforesaid
Roger M Todd R.M.C.

In 1836 in this deed the words "and" and "and" in Payne by "Jacob L Payne" is interlined "and" and the words "all" and "of the" for "said" in Payne "said" and "of" are interlined "and" and "of" R. M. Todd R.M.C.

This deed made and executed this 10th day of July in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty six between John Kennan and Elizabeth Kennan his wife John Kennan and Fanny Kennan his wife of the County of Boone in the State of Missouri of the one part and Levi Park of the County of Boone

DEED RECORD 4 G

499

and Isaac Ford of the County of Callaway in the State aforesaid of the other part Witness that for and in consideration of the sum of one dollar to us here paid the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged have granted bargained and sold and do by these presents grant bargain sell and convey unto the said Levi Park and Isaac Ford Trustees for the Baptist Church of which called Kingston and their successors a certain lot of ground described as follows to wit Beginning at a stone six chains North of the half mile corner the South side of section thirty three Township forty nine Range twelve from which a stone a white oak sixteen inches diameter bears South 80° West 219 links thence North four chains to a stone from which white oak twenty four inches diameter bears N 78 E 72 links thence North two chains and fifty links to a stone two links East of a white oak thirty six inches diameter thence East eight chains to a stone a white oak eight inches diameter bears N 98 W 14 links thence South two chains and fifty links to a stone and white oak twenty eight inches diameter bears North 67° W 217 links thence four chains to the beginning containing two acres more or less together with all and singular the appurtenances thereunto belonging to have and to hold the above described lot of ground hereby conveyed unto the said Levi Park and Isaac Ford and their successors for a meeting house and burying ground Subject to the Control of the Baptist Church and its Trustees at said meeting house and the said John Kennan and Elizabeth Kennan his wife and the said John Kennan and Fanny Kennan his wife do by these presents warrant and defend the right and title of the above described lot of ground unto the said Levi Park and Isaac Ford and their successors forever against the claim or claims of all and every person or persons whatsoever My testimony whereof I have hereunto set our hands and seals this day and year first above written
John Kennan (Seal) Elizabeth Kennan (Seal) John Kennan (Seal) Fanny Kennan (Seal)
State of Missouri County of Boone S.E.C.

Be it remembered that on this 10th day of July 1836 before me a Justice of the Peace of Boone County in the State of Missouri appeared John Kennan and Elizabeth Kennan his wife John Kennan and Fanny Kennan his wife each personally

DEED RECORD 4 G

500

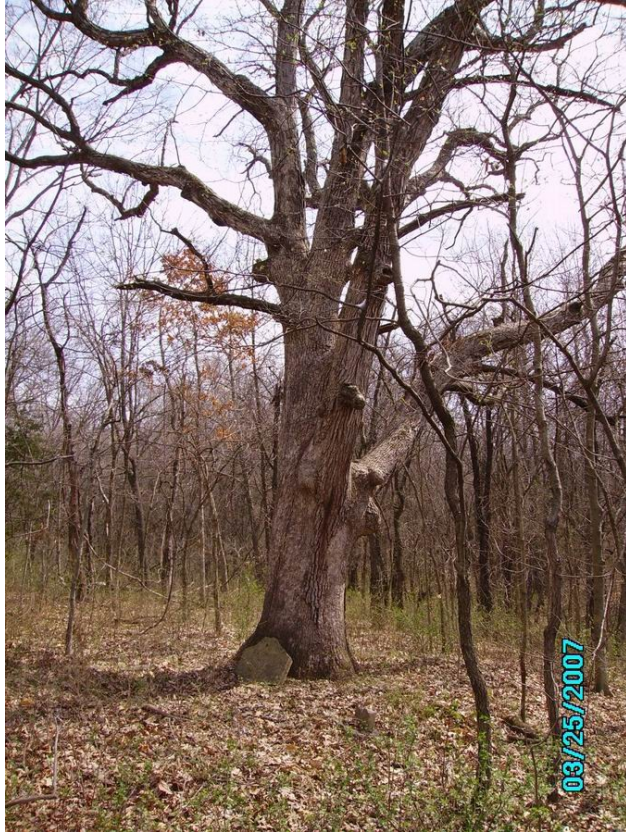
known to me to be the persons whose names are subscribed to the foregoing instrument of writing as having executed the same and severally acknowledged the same to be their act and deed for the purpose therein mentioned the said Elizabeth Kennan and Fanny Kennan being by me first made acquainted with the contents thereof and examined separately and apart from their husbands whether they executed the same and acknowledged their delivery in the lands and tenements therein mentioned voluntarily freely and without compulsion or undue influence of their said husbands Acknowledged and declared that they executed the said acts and relinquish their interest in the lands and tenements therein mentioned voluntarily freely and without compulsion or undue influence of their said husbands taken and Certified this day and year aforesaid
State of Missouri of the County of Boone S.E.C.

This deed from John Kennan and his wife John Kennan and his wife Levi Park and Isaac Ford Trustees of the Baptist Church was procured before me the undersigned Recorder of Boone County on the twenty eighth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty six and having been duly acknowledged and certified the same unto such certificate is admitted to Record in my office and is duly Record in Book G page 499 & 500 Given under my hand as Recorder aforesaid
Roger M Todd R.M.C.

In 1836 in this deed the word "bargain" is crossed out but legible
R. M. Todd R.M.C.

For the consideration of Fifty dollars to me in hand paid the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged have sold and do hereby convey to Charles Laughlin a certain lot or tract of land containing nine and a half acres off the South West Corner of the East half of the North East quarter of Section nine Range thirteen and Township forty eight being a fractional parcel from the a fractional half quarter section by the creek known as Hendersons spring branch and bounded on the South by Charles Laughlins tract of land all in the County of Boone and State of Missouri and on the Water Rock Brook creek

Hinkson Creek Cemetery



Hinkson Creek Baptist Church Cemetery

Name	Born	Died Notes
John George Keene	03/07/1793	10/08/1869 Moved from Kentucky in 1826
Francis "Fannie" (Snell) Keene	09/02/1801	09/23/1852 Wife of John G. Keene
Louden Snell	4/1774	02/20/1839 Father of Francis "Fannie" Snell
Judith "Judy" (Dicken) Snell	1778	10/03/1841 Consort of Loudon Snell
Alfred Keene	01/21/1814	08/15/1888 Son of John G. Keene
Elizabeth (Hannah) Keene	02/04/1825	08/01/1858 Wife of Alfred Keene
Robert Keene	05/13/1863	02/23/1860 Son of Alfred and Elizabeth Keene
Hopewell Keene	1798	05/18/1874 Brother of John G. Keene
Richard Keene Sr.	1794	06/30/1871 Brother of John G. Keene
Alexander Keene	06/01/1825	02/04/1899 Son of John G. Keene
Rebecca (Cave) Haden	1772	10/26/1849 Wife of Turner Richardson Haden Sr.. Daughter of John Cave & Mildred Bell
John E. Northcutt	11/04/1820	02/21/1854 Son of Eli Northcutt and Eleanor Ellis Northcutt
William H. Carson	1811	05/12/1876
Mary E. (Galloway) Carson	1820	Could be wife of William H. Carson
Elizabeth Ann Jones	12/24/1852	03/11/1854
Samuel Johnson	1793	7/1870
Margaret Elizabeth (Hanna) Johnson	1808	1835 First wife of Samuel Johnson, Daughter of Andrew Hanna
Mary (Williams) Johnson	1810	1842 Second wife of Samuel Johnson

Antioch Christian Church Cemetery

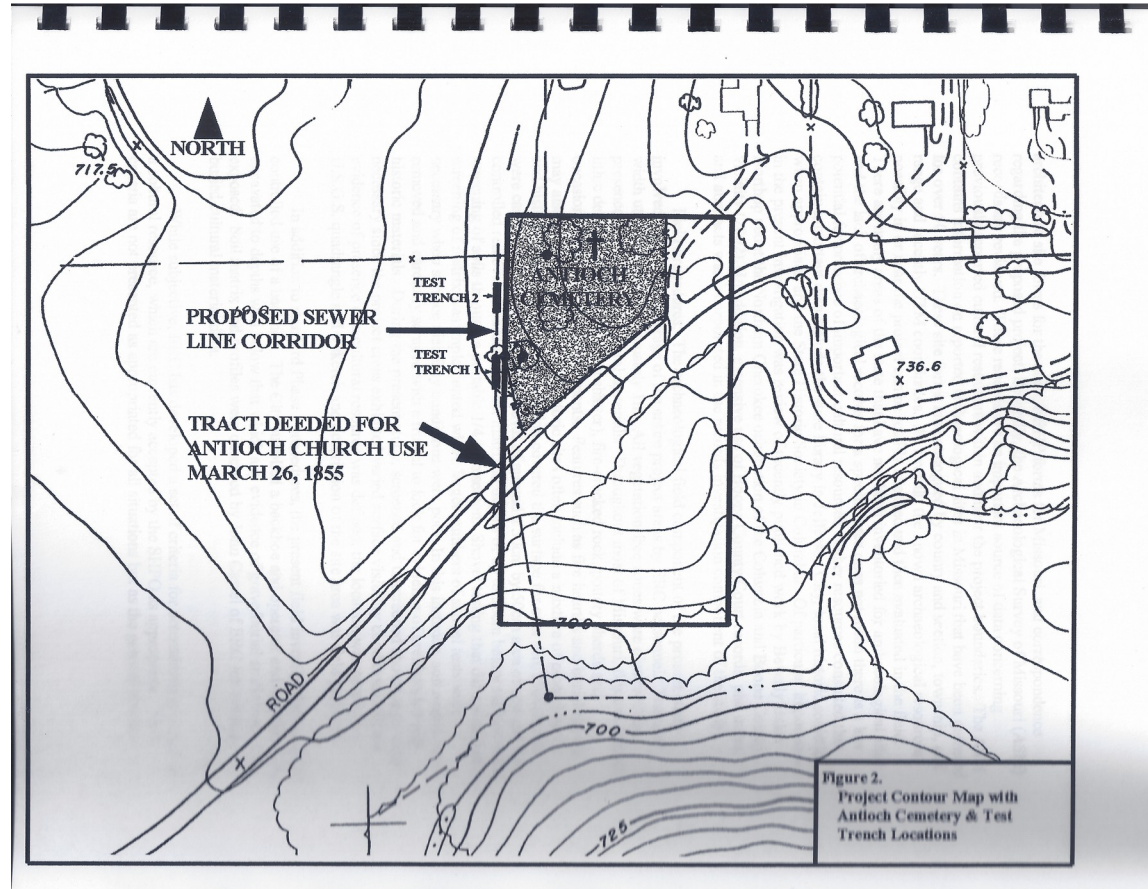
ANTIOCH CHRISTIAN CHURCH CEMETERY

LOCATION: North on Route B, then East on Mexico Gravel Road. Cemetery is just past the creek on the North side of the road next to Joe Edmondson's Driveway. Densely overgrown, the graves are mostly on the west side of the fenced cemetery. S3,T49N, R12W. Visited September 1988.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Born</u>	<u>Died</u>	<u>Aged</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Austin, Dabney		Mar 9, 1869	54 Yrs.	
Benefield, John	Sep 8, 1845	Dec 8, 1890		
Brady, Joshua H.		Oct 7, 1889	52 Yrs, 2 Mos.	
Cave, Benjamin	1811	Feb 14, 1884		
Cave, Margaret		Dec 13, 1886	65 Yrs.	Wife of Benjamin Cave.
Collier, Maggie U.		Mar 9, 1881	3 Yrs, 29 Dys.	Daughter of M. M. and G. L. Collier.
Cunningham, Angeline		Dec 6, 1889	79 Yrs, 11 Mos, 1 Dy.	Daughter of W. J. Oliver.
Haden, Sally Ann Turner	Nov 26, 1822	Dec 12, 1895		Wife of Turner R. Haden.
Haden, Turner R.	Aug 13, 1808	Dec 16, 1878		
James, John C.		Oct 10, 1873	21 Yrs.	Son of J. and P. James.
Johnson, Amelia B	Feb 3, 1879	Mar 22, 1932		
Johnson, Maggie	Jun 10, 1886	Apr 7, 1893		
Johnson, Susan E.	Jul 26, 1832	Jan 14, 1859		Wife of Francis M. Johnson.
Johnson, Walter S.		Oct 8, 1878	20 Yrs, 4 Mos, 12 Dys.	
Jones, Margaret	Sep 23, 1819	Jun 25, 1888	68 Yrs, 4 Mos, 2 Dys.	Wife of H. R. Jones.
Jones, Nancy C.		Aug 1900	64 Yrs.	
Myers, Freddie		Feb 11, 1883	4 Yrs, 1 Mo.	Son of J. C. and M. U. Myers.
Northcutt, Frank Leslie	Apr 15, 1864	May 4, 1938		
Northcutt, Ida G.	Apr 15, 1858	Sep 23, 1917		
Northcutt, Mary Jane	Jul 14, 1828	Sep 26, 1916		Wife of T. M. Northcutt.
Northcutt, Mattick	Aug 27, 1868	Dec 2, 1930		
Northcutt, T. M.	Nov 12, 1812	Jul 12, 1892		
Peacher, Anne		Jun 27, 1871	19 Yrs, 5 Mos, 20 Dys.	Wife of Col. Quinton Peacher.
Peacher, Col. Quinton	Jun 30, 1808	Jun 30, 1862	54 Yrs, 1 Mo, 3 Dys.	
Rees, George W.		Jun 29, 1882	2 Yrs, 6 Dys.	Son of G. T. and S. Rees.
Rees, James E.		Jan 23, 1874	33 Yrs.	
Rees, Thomas	Dec 25, 1810	Jan 16, 1884		Born in Newport, Mouthshire, England.
Riggs, George F.		Jul 24, 1870	3 Mos, 10 Dys.	Son of W. G. and E. Riggs.
Rollins, Almon	May 16, 1816	Apr 13, 1876		Born in Cumberland, Me.
Rollins, Margaret M.	Sep 19, 1821	Mar 11, 1882		Wife of Almon Rollins. Born in Albermarle Co, Va.
Thompson, Tootsie		May 3, 1874	2 Yrs 8 Mos, 7 Dys.	



Antioch Christian Church Cemetery



**ARCHAEOLOGY MONITORING & RECORDS
REVIEW - ANTIOCH CEMETERY
BOONE COUNTY, MISSOURI**

Prepared for:
The City of Columbia
Public Works Department

Prepared by:
Environmental Research Center of Missouri, Inc.
Jefferson City, Missouri

DECEMBER 2003



Photograph 1.
Trench 1



Photograph 2.
Bedrock Followed by Clay

William Curtis Sutton Husband: 3/5/1865 - 3/18/1944
Roy M. Keene Sutton Wife: 2/4/1867 - 11/2/1938



RESIDENCE OF W. C. SUTTON,
R. F. D. No. 7,
COLUMBIA, MO.

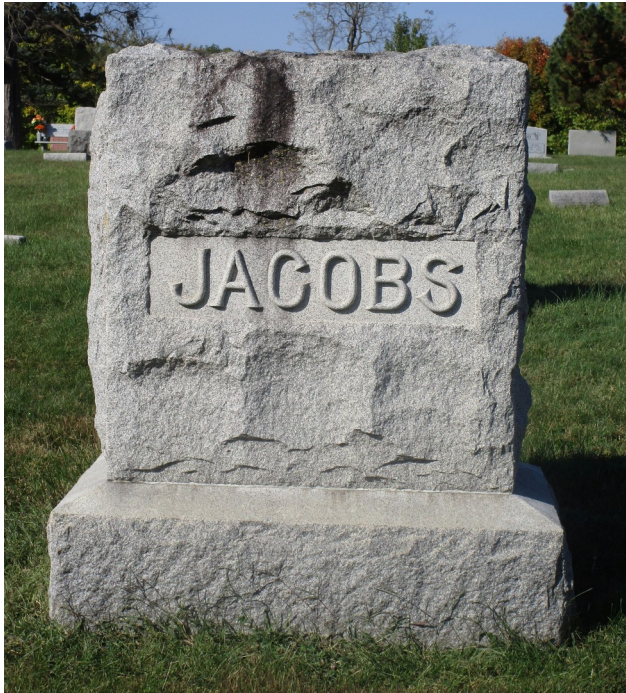


Former Residence of W.C. Sutton 2013



Berry Watson Jacobs

Aug. 19, 1879 – Feb. 13, 1963



John and Carol Ann Alspaugh Land Purchases

Note: All parcels were once owned by Berry W. Jacobs

Description	Purchased From	Date	Acres Recorded
Bottom Fields South of Mexico Gravel Road	Jacobs Estate	09/19/1979	51.38 Book 468 Page 356
Hill Ground East of the South Bottom Fields	Jacobs Estate	05/25/1989	101.38 Book 267 Page 567
Portion of Antioch Cemetery	Jacobs Estate	05/25/1989	0.8 Book 279 Page 213
Bottom Fields North of Mexico Gravel Road	Wilson C. Turner	12/23/1980	27 Book 289 Page 468
Fields surrounding the Irby House	John Irby	05/15/2001	15.4 Book 297 Page 13
Irby House and Garage	John Irby	04/09/2002	4.6 Book 289 Page 470
Park Land Donation	Carol Ann Alspaugh	02/01/2023	202.17 Book 5673 Page 74

Donation Agreement

Donor desires to suggest some restricted uses of the property and City accepts the property subject to Donor's wishes:

- (a) The land will be used as a City park in perpetuity.
- (b) The park will be named the John W. Alspaugh Park.
- (c) The park will be maintained as a greenspace, as opposed to being developed into athletic fields or courts, and wildlife shall be protected as much as possible.
- (d) No new hard surface traffic roads can be constructed within the park but nature walking trails may be established.
- (e) There are two (2) known cemetery areas located on the property, including Antioch Cemetery and Hinkson Creek Cemetery. The Hinkson Creek Cemetery exact location is unknown other than reflected by headstones piled around a large oak tree in a wooded area on the south side of Mexico Gravel Road. The City agrees to mow and generally maintain the area around the two (2) cemeteries. The City will erect a marker designating the general area of the Hinkson Creek Cemetery and will create a nature trail that would provide access to the area designated as the cemetery. The City shall not however, be obligated to restore, relocate or otherwise repair or maintain specific burial sites, human remains, or monuments.
- (f) No motor vehicles or bicycles will be allowed beyond the designated parking area.

Henry Family Cemetery Moniker Front



Henry Family Cemetery Moniker Back



Dr. Thomas Henry Keene

October 1, 1831 – August 29, 1876



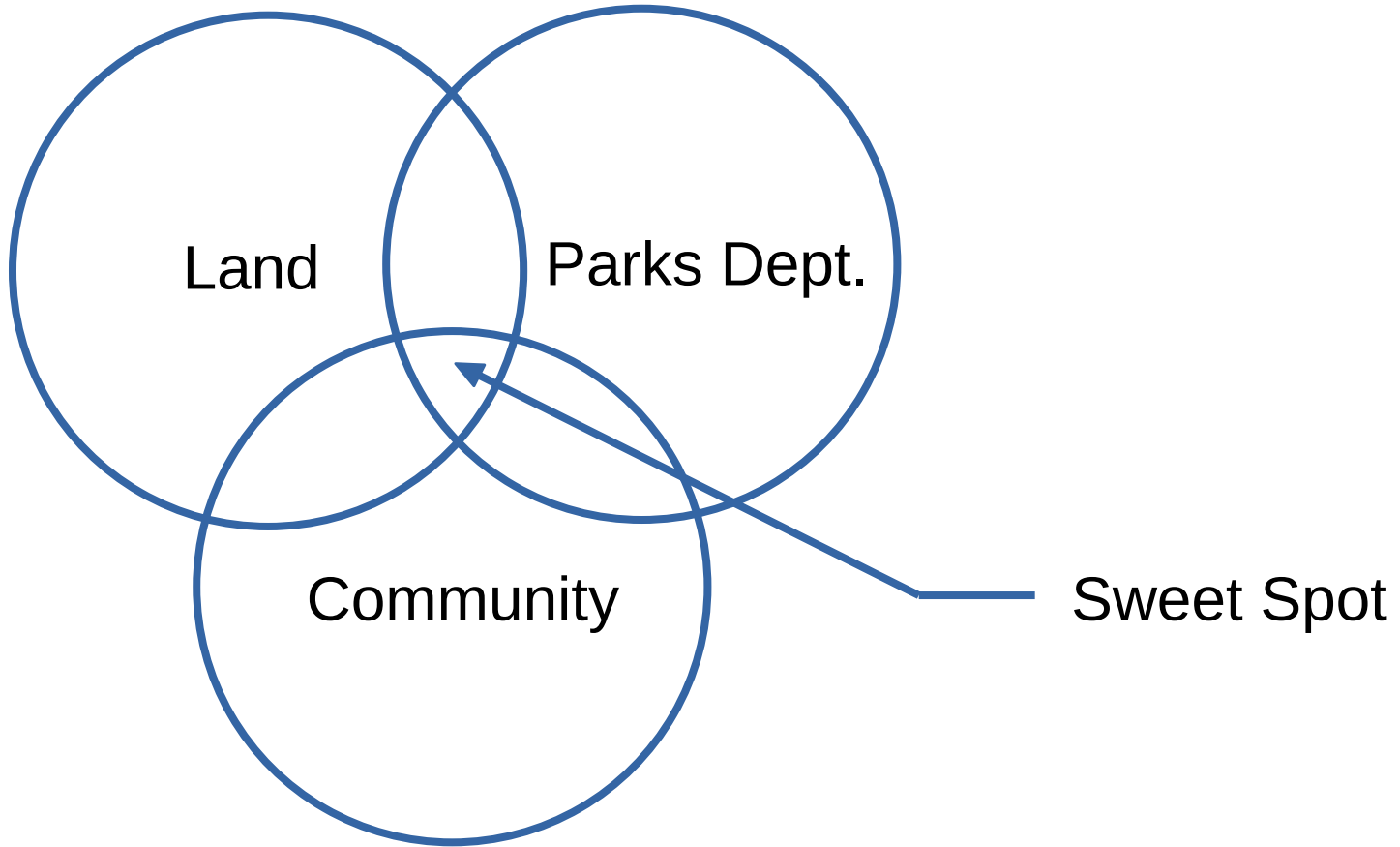
Dr. John William Alspaugh

October 6, 1937 – March 29, 2022





John W. Alspaugh Park Ingredients



Introduction

(Title Slide)

Good evening everyone. I am Dr. Bruce Alspaugh, son of John and Carol Ann Alspaugh. As many of you know, our family has donated over 200 acres of land in northeast Columbia to become a City park named after my father. According to the City Council staff report of December 19, 2022, it is the largest land donation ever given to the City of Columbia for park purposes. I would like to thank Como Preservation for the opportunity to tell you about my father who the park will be named after, the geography of the property, the people who settled the area, the people who are buried in the two cemeteries there, the restrictions the City of Columbia agreed to in the donation agreement, and hopefully make the case for the park to be designated a Most Notable Property.

Who was John William Alspaugh

(Mom and Dad picture)

This is a picture of Mom and Dad. My father is Dr. John William Alspaugh, and my mother is Dr. Carol Ann Alspaugh. My father grew up on a small farm near Louisburg Missouri with his two younger sisters Ruth and Mary Ann, and an older brother David Alspaugh. Louisburg Missouri is a small town in southwest Missouri with a population of 134.

(Louisburg farm pictures)

Money was hard to come by and life was not easy on that farm, so he decided at a young age that more education would lead to a better future for himself. He majored in math and science at what is now called Missouri State University in Springfield Missouri. There was a military draft at that time, so he also attended the ROTC program so he could go in as an officer. He graduated in 1958 with majors in both math and science. He taught math, physics and chemistry for a year at Skyline High School in Urbana Missouri, not far away.

(John Alspaugh military picture)

When it was time for his military service, Dad started off as a Second Lt. in the seventh army signal corps near Stuttgart West Germany during the cold war. When he had free time while he was in the Army he would travel around West Europe, and had a chance to observe and compare the farming practices in Europe as compared to what he experienced in the United States. He would later seek to imitate some of those farming practices on his play farm that he would later own, which I will get back to later. He received his honorable discharge from the Army reserves as a first Lt. in January 1966.

(Alspaugh family photo)

Dad met my mother in 1961 and they married in August of 1962. I was born shortly after Dad received his Ed. D. in Math Education from Mizzou in 1965. I was born at Boone Hospital here in Columbia in 1965. My mother also has a doctorate in Math Education and taught in the Math Department at Stephens College until 1988. With two professors as parents, it was pretty obvious I would be going to college, so I completed my undergraduate and masters in Electrical Engineering at Mizzou, and my Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from Iowa State University.

(Teaching Career slide)

My father joined the faculty of the Mizzou College of Education in 1965. He was a Professor of Educational Statistics and Research Methods. Growing up, I remember riding in the car with Mom and Dad when we pulled up to the stop light and asking, “Why is everyone in the car next to us honking and waving at us?” Evidently, they were some of the many students that my father had in his classes. I had no idea that my father was something of a celebrity in this town.

(Teaching Awards slide)

Over the ensuing years Dad was promoted to Full Professor and would receive numerous awards for outstanding teaching and many publications in prestigious peer-reviewed journals. In the year 2000, he retired as a Professor Emeritus from Mizzou, but continued teaching part-time for another 10 years after that.

Geography of the property

(Slide showing overall area – Use laser pointer)

After all those years working to get an education so he could get away from the farm, what did my father do? He farmed! This is a map of his 202 acre play farm that is now the Alspaugh park. He was seeking to duplicate the farming practices he saw when he was stationed as an Army lieutenant in West Germany during the Cold War, where people would raise high-value crops like tomatoes, sweet corn, strawberries, etc. on small tracts of land. It is located on the east side of Hinkson Creek, not far from Bass Pro and Menards. Mexico Gravel Road goes through the park. In my opinion, the City needs to slow down the traffic on Mexico Gravel Road before a park visitor gets run over.

There is a north bottom field north of Mexico Gravel Road, and larger south bottom field south of Mexico Gravel Road. Both fields have excellent soil for farming and growing vegetables, and is the main reason why my father started purchasing the property in pieces. The small field at the southern tip end especially, contains some of the best top soil in Boone County and is an excellent garden spot where our renter, Wendell Whitman, raised huge pumpkins, sweet corn, tomatoes, melons and cantaloupe to sell by the entrance to the south field. At one time, my father leased an area in the south bottom field next to Hinkson Creek as the grassy runway for the local radio-controlled model airplane club.

East of the valley and south of Mexico Gravel Road are approximately 100 acres of forested hill ground. This area is mostly wooded and suitable for hiking and nature trails. There is extensive wildlife throughout the property, including wild turkeys, quail, squirrels, raccoons, ground hogs, possums, coyotes, and plenty of deer. The preliminary park development plan envisions extensive hiking trails in the park suitable for bird watching and wildlife viewing. The Hinkson Creek Baptist Church Cemetery is located on the bluff overlooking the south bottom field (point it out). This is the older of the two cemeteries.

Near the entrance to the south bottom field along Mexico Gravel Road my father filled in old creek channels and put in fill dirt for a barn to raise it above the level of the flood plain (point it out). He also put in an irrigation well next to the barn fill. He envisioned building a monitor barn on the fill as a common area where garden equipment could be stored. The barn would be a classic red monitor barn with a gambrel roof, rooster weather vane, and hex symbol on the end. Inside would be mostly

open space, but it would also contain restrooms, a commercial kitchen and a walk-in cooler in one corner. He also envisioned separate greenhouses nearby. One of the last things my father talked about before he died was an October festival. It would feature you-pick pumpkins grown in the field, a corn maze, bobbing for apples, hot apple cider, barn dances, and hayrides. The possibilities would be endless.

(Christmas Tree Slide)

On the north side of Mexico Gravel Road east of the bottom field you will see a Christmas Tree farm (point it out) where my father and I raised and sold you-cut Christmas trees for many years. The faculty sponsor of the MU Forestry Club has expressed interest in reopening the Christmas Tree operation, but I believe it would require City Council approval to allow them to raise and sell trees on City property. At one point, my father spotted a mountain lion while he was mowing around the Christmas trees. We later spotted the tracks, and our neighbors reported hearing it. Not only did the mountain lion eat our neighbor's urban hens, it ate their pet dog. (Back to map slide)

We think there was a native American encampment in the Christmas tree area because we found arrowheads and pieces of them shortly after my parents purchased the property. The Northern Cherokee contacted my father as it is supposed to contain 19th century Cherokee sites. Almost all the artifacts have long since been collected by souvenir hunters, perhaps even the Cherokee. The location may have been selected because it overlooks the Hinkson Creek valley and the two nearby springs as a source of water. One spring was located on the west slope of the hill, and the other on the south slope. The road cut for Mexico Gravel Road cut through the vane of the south spring, and the water now flows through the stormwater drain on the north side of the road to Hinkson Creek.

In the corner north of the bend in Mexico Gravel Road, you will see the Antioch Christian Church Cemetery (point it out (6)). The cemetery is still there, but the church was no longer standing when my parents purchased the property. The Antioch Cemetery is the newer of the two cemeteries.

At 4216 Mexico Gravel Road there was an old house and separate garage sitting on 4.6 acres he purchased from Jim Irby (point it out on map(7)). The Irby house was in a state of disrepair and had no historical value, so the city tore it down. However, the separate garage is still standing. Marilyn Hannah used to rent the house from Wilson Turner before it was sold to Jim Irby. Marilyn Hanna was a music teacher at Stephens College, who used to give piano lessons in the living room. Surrounding that house there used to be underground coal mines up until the middle 1930's. The tunnels used to extend underneath Mexico Gravel Road to the land north of it. Those old tunnels are settling, causing cracks in the road and in the houses north of the road.

Near the end of Timber Lane, there was a 13 acre apple orchard in the 1920's (point it out (4)). In the 1950's, it was planted to wheat and later abandoned and returned to timber. Dad and I began clearing trees so the area could be replanted in apples, or potentially peaches. That's the narrow strip in the ariel photo. If the full 13 acres could be cleared, it would make a scenic entrance to the park off Timber Lane, and could also be used as a food plot for turkeys, native pollinators, and milkweed to help restore Monarch butterflies.

There is also a three acre creek bottom field that has already been cleared with good soil (point it out (1)), south of the Irby house along the stream that would make an excellent apple orchard and tree nursery. All it would need is an adequate fence to keep the deer out, an irrigation well, and a low water crossing for access. The nursery could be used to grow trees to be transplanted into other city parks.

There is an unnamed branch of Hinkson Creek that runs through the property (point it out (2)). It comes onto the property along the north side of the three acre creek bottom field. It runs along the base of the bluff paralleling the lane where Dad planted pecan trees (point it out(3)), and runs south again on the base of the bluff, below and to the west of the Hinkson Creek Cemetery, before turning southwest and flowing into Hinkson Creek. The branch tends to flash flood after a rain, so my father put in levees and filled in old creek channels to prevent flooding. There was even a beaver dam flooding the area shortly after my parents bought it.

History of the Property

In 1803, the land was included as part of the Louisiana Purchase. In the treaty of 1815, the native Americans relinquished all their claims to the portion of land in Missouri north of the Missouri River, thus including the park. From 1815 to 1818, the land in the Columbia area was surveyed by the federal government to be sold to private individuals. By serving in the U.S. military, you could get what is called a Land Patent. In 1820, Missouri became as state as part of the Missouri Compromise. In 1821, the City of Columbia was incorporated.

(John G. Keene Memory Stone Slide)

If you remember only one thing remember this: All roads lead to John G. Keene. John George Keene was born July 3, 1793 in Maryland in what is now Washington D. C. John was one of six siblings. From there his family moved to Georgetown Scott County Kentucky. He married Frances “Fanny” Snell in Kentucky. On October 26, 1826 John G. Keene, his wife, and five children moved to Boone County. He was a brick layer and farmer who worked on several of the early brick buildings in Columbia along with his son Alfred Keene. This is the memory stone for him and his son that was left in Hinkson Creek Cemetery.

(Slide of John G. Keene Deed)

On August 24th1835, John G. Keene purchased the southwest quarter of section 33 township 49 range 12 that includes the forested hill ground mentioned earlier. This is a copy of the deed that was recorded. Personally, I find the handwriting on these deeds difficult to read. John Kennan had a separate 1833 US land patent that included the bottom fields along Hinkson Creek.

(Hinkson Cemetery Deed Slide)

On July 6, 1836, John G. Keene and John Kennan deeded two acres of land to Levi Park and Isaak Ford, trustees for the Hinkson Creek Baptist Church and Cemetery I mentioned earlier.

(Tree and gravestone pictures)

A large tree marks the location of the cemetery located at the top of the bluff overlooking the south bottom field. If a walking path could be established and the smaller trees cleared away, the scenic overlook could be restored. There was also a school near the cemetery. The school and church may have been the same building. At one time, there were several houses around the cemetery. The last house burned down in about 1950. If you look closely, you can see depressions in the ground where the roads used to be, in particular a flat rock where the road used to cross the unnamed branch of Hinkson Creek at the base of the bluff. After a snow, the depressions in the ground where the burials took place are more evident.

Unfortunately, a previous owner of the property, Berry W. Jacobs, vandalized his own cemetery to discourage visitors he considered trespassers from coming onto his property. He was selling trees for lumber in the cemetery, and the headstones were in the way so he piled them up next to the large oak tree. People would come onto the property and help themselves to the broken headstones to use for patios and foundations for houses. Before my father died, he led one of the Keene family relatives to the cemetery where she used a spray-bottle of water and a paintbrush to remove enough dirt to reveal a few names from the remaining broken gravestones. She left the memory stone shown in the photo by the famous oak tree that now marks the cemetery. I believe she may have been Bette Jeanne (Keene) Scavone on February 4, 2009. I would like to thank her for entering many cemetery records into findagrave.com.

(Hinkson Creek census slide)

The cemetery records from findagrave.com list 18 graves in the cemetery, but few headstones were found. At this point in time, I believe that John G. Keene, his wife Francis "Fannie" Snell, his father-in-law Loudon Snell, his mother-in-law Judith "Judy" (Dicken) Snell, his son Alfred Keene, his son's wife Elizabeth (Hannah) Keene, Alfred and Elizabeth's son Robert Keene, his son Alexander Keene, and John's younger brothers Hopewell and Richard Sr. are buried in Hinkson Creek Cemetery. I also believe it likely their slaves may have been buried there as well, but their graves--if they were marked at all--would have been marked with just a limestone rock with no name on it. So unfortunately, the names of those slaves may be lost to history. In the land donation agreement, we stipulated that the City Parks Department would mow around both cemeteries, establish a walking trail to the cemetery, and erect a moniker marking the area designated the Hinkson Creek Cemetery. The erection of the moniker should involve public input. Interested parties would likely include the relatives of those buried there, the African American community, genealogists, and historians.

In addition, I believe Rebecca Cave Haden is also buried in Hinkson Creek Cemetery. Her son, Turner Richardson Haden Jr. is buried in the Antioch Christian Church Cemetery which is also part of the Alspaugh park. It is my understanding his brother, Joel Harris Haden built Haden House in Columbia, as well as the Haden Opera House on Ninth Street and Broadway. Both buildings burnt down. A reconstruction of the original Haden House survives and has been used as a restaurant and night club. The Commerce Bank Building downtown at Ninth and Broadway currently sits on the site of the Haden Opera House

Mills

According to my father's notes, in 1844 a water powered mill known as Hannah's mill, was constructed on Hinkson Creek east of Bass Pro Shop and Menards. Robert Hudson Smith operated the mill until 1848. In 1855, Robert Hudson Smith constructed a steam powered mill near the coal mine by the driveway to the south field on Mexico Gravel Road. The mill was in operation until 1862.

Antioch Christian Church Cemetery

(Slide of Antioch Cemetery headstones and burial records)

In August 1852, John B. Finley and Wife Sarah Finley deeded four acres of land to the trustees of the Christian Church "now" worshipping at Bear Creek Meeting House. According to Wikipedia, Antioch Church was built during the summer and fall of 1853. Prior to that, the congregation was called Bear Creek Church and was located in a log cabin on the banks of Bear Creek. The Finley's

reserved the rights to mine coal under the land. The land includes Antioch Church and Cemetery. The church was no longer standing when my parents bought the property, but the cemetery remains to this day. We were contacted by relatives of Joshua H. Brady who is buried there—they were related to Brady's Paint and Glass. Turner Richardson Haden's Jr. and his wife Sally Ann are buried here. Mr. Haden's bother, Joel Harris Haden, built the original Haden House.

(Antioch Christian Church Cemetery map)

At one time Mexico Gravel Road ran up the little valley south of its current location and Antioch Church and Cemetery were both on the north side of the road. The road was moved to its current location leaving the cemetery north of the current road and the church on the south. We believe the reason was that the unnamed branch of Hinkson Creek kept flooding the road.

It is important to note that the cemetery overlaps property that is currently owned by John W. Holley on the east side, and the Rees sisters on the north side. My parents never owned the entire cemetery, and thus it was never donated to the City. We believe the three Rees graves are on the Rees property in the northwest corner. We were told that John Holley's wife was given the burial map of the entire cemetery by Joe Edmondson's wife when the Holleys bought the house from the Edmondson's. My mother told me that the slave graves in the Antioch Cemetery are in the southwest corner north of the road, but many graves do not have names or may be entirely unmarked.

(Slide of the Archeology Map cover and dig pictures)

In 2003 the City of Columbia Public Works department commissioned an Archaeology Monitoring and Records Review of the Antioch Cemetery that included the archaeological dig shown in the picture. The purpose was so the City could construct a sewer line that ran parallel just outside the west cemetery fence. To quote the study, "The records and literature review found conflicting ownership transfer regarding the property containing Antioch Cemetery In one instance, the cemetery area was sold by someone who did not even own it."

The archaeological review states that my father was contacted by the Northern Cherokee regarding the possibility of erecting a granite marker at Antioch Cemetery. My mother confirmed that. He was willing to allow it if some means of identifying Cherokee association with the area was presented to him, but none was forthcoming. The investigators attempted to contact Ms. Beverly Baker Northup, Chief of the Northern Cherokee in the Columbia area, several times in order to get input regarding the Cherokee association with the Antioch Cemetery. They were unable to do so by telephone or mail. Perhaps the native Americans who occupied the Christmas tree area were from a different tribe. The sewer line was ultimately approved and constructed.

Land ownership

(Farmhouse slide of W. C. Sutton and gravestones of W.C. Sutton, and Roy M. (Keene) Sutton)

From about 1896 to 1911, William Curtis Sutton accumulated all the area on the park map, including additional acres on the west side of Hinkson Creek where the original farmhouse once stood. He purchased it primarily from various descendants of John G. Keene who originally settled the area back in 1835. That makes sense, because William Curtis Sutton married Roy M. Keene. Her father was Richard Lake Keene, and Richard's father was none other than John G. Keene himself. He married John G. Keene's granddaughter. Remember: All roads lead to John G. Keene.

(Google Street View Slide)

This is a Google street view photo taken in 2013 of the original farmhouse where Mr. Sutton once lived at approximately 3681 Mexico Gravel Road. He leased underground coal mines surrounding the Irby house that extended under Mexico Gravel Road. One mine was about 50 feet east of the Irby house and the coal piles were where the Irby house was before it was built. The mine shaft extending under Mexico Gravel Road was filled in. The primary mine was on the hill side south of the unnamed branch near the entrance to the south field. The location of the mine shaft is apparent from the depression in the ground. When the mines were closed around 1937, Mr. Sutton was unable to pay his debts. The land was sold for debts at the Boone County Courthouse. Discovery Church started meeting in that house, but tore it down when they constructed their new red church building at the left of the photo. The new Discovery Church building was sold and is now the Church of Jesus Christ Columbia Restoration Branch.

(Berry W. Jacobs headstone photo)

The buyer at the courthouse auction was Berry Watson Jacobs. It was Mr. Jacobs who vandalized the Hinkson Creek cemetery. The relatives of those buried in the Antioch Cemetery feared Mr. Jacobs would vandalize that cemetery too, and it led to many arguments and the erection of the fence surrounding the Antioch Cemetery to keep him out. May he rest in peace for the way he treated that cemetery.

Mr. Jacobs ended up in financial trouble himself. He began selling off parts of the property to various owners before he died in 1963. For example, to settle a debt to Wilson C. Turner, he gave him the approximately 27 acres on the north side of Mexico Gravel Road. My father bought that 27 acres from Wilson Turner in 1980. Wilson Turner also bought the 4.62 acres where he rented the house to Marilyn Hannah, the music teacher. Berry Jacobs then put up the 15.4 acres surrounding the house for sale, and Ms. Hannah purchased it to prevent it from becoming a trailer park. Wilson Turner and Marilyn Hannah agreed that the 20 acres together should all be sold to the same owner, so they sold their individual parcels to Jim Irby who lived in the house after Miss Hannah moved out. Marilyn Hannah never married. My parents bought the surrounding 15.4 acres from Jim Irby in 2001, and the 4.6 acres where the house was in 2002.

(Land Purchase Slide)

Along come my parents to purchase and put the various pieces of land back together again. At one time, all the land was owned by Berry Jacobs. However, some of it had been sold by Berry Jacobs to different owners to get himself out of financial trouble. Berry Jacobs owned additional land on the west side of Hinkson Creek where the Sutton farm house was, but it was already sold off and my parents never purchased that. Berry Jacobs had three wives and multiple grandchildren as heirs. By the time my parents came along, Berry Jacobs was long dead, with the remaining land in his estate managed by a local bank. The land had been abandoned and unmaintained for years, grown up in trees and bushes, and the unnamed branch of Hinkson Creek was meandering around all over the south bottom field making large areas unfarmable. My father and I worked to help clean up the mess Berry Jacobs left behind cleaning out old fence rows, thorny locust trees, etc. Our renter, Wendell Whitman, helped tremendously too. The slide shows the sequence in which my parents purchased the parcels that now make up the park.

Donation Agreement

(Slide of Donation Agreement)

If you read section e of the donation agreement, the City accepted the restriction that they agree to mow and generally maintain the area around the two cemeteries. City will erect a moniker designating the general area of the Hinkson Creek Cemetery and create a nature trail that would provide access to the area designated as the cemetery. City shall not however, be obligated to restore, relocate or otherwise repair or maintain specific burial sites, human remains, or monuments.

(Slide of the front of the Henry Family Cemetery moniker)

As an example of a moniker for a small cemetery that has seen better days, consider the one erected in 2008 for the Henry Family Cemetery at 4600 Waco Road in the Kraft-Heinz hot dog plant parking lot. Let's read the front, "Sarah Keene Henry was born in Maryland 7 October 1782. At the age of six she traveled with her family to Scott County, KY. She married John Todd Henry, Sr. in Kentucky. Following his death in 1822, Widow Henry came to Boone County, MO. 1826, with her 8 children and other Keene relatives. Sarah died in Boone County 23 February 1860." I believe that Sarah Keene Henry is the older sister of John G. Keene who is buried in Hinkson Creek Cemetery which is now part of the Alspaugh park. As I said before: all roads lead to John G. Keene.

(Slide of the back of the Henry Family Cemetery moniker)

Let's look at the back. We see a listing of people thought to be buried in the cemetery, primarily related to John T. Henry Sr. and John T. Henry Jr. Note the mention of Dr. Thomas Henry Keene 1831 - 1876 at the bottom right. That's the Kraft-Heinz hot dog plant parking lot in the background.

(Slide of the Dr. Thomas Henry Keene tombstone)

As an example of cemetery destruction, consider the tombstone of Dr. Thomas Henry Keene, a prominent physician in Columbia. Dr. Keene was shot and killed on August 29, 1876 in front of his stables in Hallsville when he was only 44. His tombstone was found in December 2013, where Battle High School was in the process of being constructed. With the cooperation of the Columbia Public Schools Superintendent, Dr. Keene's headstone was relocated to the Henry Family Cemetery in February 2014 where it rests today. Dr. Thomas Henry Keene was a son of Amanda Mary (Kenry) Keene who lived to be 99 years old. Amanda was one of the daughters of Sarah Keene Henry whose name was on that moniker. Once again, Sarah was the older sister of John G. Keene. All roads lead to John G. Keene. So if anyone out there has information about the people buried in the Alspaugh Park, please let me know.

(Father Grave Slide)

It was Parkinson's disease that put a premature stop to my father's vision of nature and sustainable agriculture before it could be fully realized. He could often be found at the farmer's market on Saturday mornings socializing with the vegetable growers as they were selling their produce. My father planted the pecan trees on that park, and he was buried in a pecan casket in Memorial Park Cemetery. I hope no one vandalizes his headstone.

(Father Picture Slide)

My father was a military veteran, a farmer, an educator, a devoted husband of over 59 years, but I remember him best as a wonderful father. There isn't a day that goes by that I don't miss spending time with him, especially at the farm. It is my hope that by donating the property for a City park, other people will be able to have the same level of enjoyment there that I did with my father.

(Park Ingredients Slide)

One of the main reasons we are donating the property is to preserve the green space in perpetuity as the city develops around the park. Another is to preserve the top soil which is a valuable resource, so it doesn't wash down Hinkson Creek, which is as an endangered waterway. And we want the rest of the community to enjoy the area as much as I did with my own father.

I see three ingredients that make a successful park: The land that we are donating, the Parks Department to build and maintain the capital improvements, and the community. Without the local community, there is no point in having a park. The sweet spot is where all three ingredients come together. I believe we have the sweet spot here.

Thank you for your time