



Wesleyan Union Cemeteries Serving since 1785

WESLEYAN UNION
CEMETERY
EST. 1868

1331
COVERDALE
ROAD

Presentation to Riverview Town Council - May 27, 2024

Wesleyan Union Cemetery Ltd.

- ▶ First record of burials were in the late 1700's , before the construction of the first Wesleyan Union Methodist Church on the north side of Coverdale Road @ Turtle Creek Road in 1828.
- ▶ This Church was replaced by the current church building in 1865, which was closed in 2018 and sold as a private residence. This church became part of the United Church of Canada in 1928. It remains the oldest building in the current Town of Riverview
- ▶ The adjoining Cemetery was used from around 1785 until its last burial in 1936, of J. Hazen Gunning, for whom Gunningsville was named.



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- ▶ In 1868, the Chapman Family (Old Stone House on Coverdale just west of cemetery) donated land to be used as a cemetery, and it was named the Wesleyan Union Cemetery, which is currently located at 1331 Coverdale Road, just west of the Turtle Creek Bridge.
- ▶ It was designated as non-denominational; anyone from any background or religion could and is buried here.
- ▶ There are currently over 900 graves , containing the remains area residents , much of which now comprises the Town of Riverview. The Coverdale Church contains we believe less than 100 graves, but no accurate records remain.
- ▶ After the church ceased to exist in 2018, the United Church of Canada had no interest in operating a cemetery, on the lands that it owned. The Cemetery Board of Directors formed a Not For Profit Company, and increased its membership to 10 members to continue the maintenance, upkeep and continued final resting place of area residents.
- ▶ The Cemetery is current self sustaining with its investments, and we do not foresee having to require outside financial assistance.
- ▶ Major rehabilitation occurred in 2019, 2021 and 2023 to both cemeteries with Assistance from the Province of New Brunswick and Wesleyan Union Cemetery Funds.

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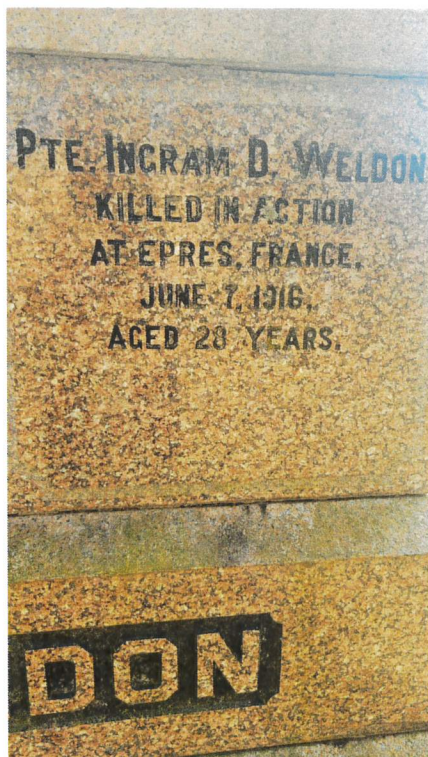
A Brief Walk-Through History



The O'Brien family lived on Coverdale Road just west of the Cemetery. In October 1869 the largest recorded storm struck eastern North American Coast and many lives were lost. The O'Brien family built a raft and attempted to get to the Westmorland side of the Petitcodiac River, as storm waters rose. The raft broke up, and everyone was thrown into the river.

The 4 O'Brien children drowned; the parents survived. The original gravestone deteriorated in the 1960's; the Cemetery installed a replacement stone to commemorate this event on the 100th Anniversary of that tragedy.

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► A Brief Walk-Through History

Like many cemeteries throughout Canada, monuments remember those young men who went overseas to serve in WW I and WW II.

This stone commemorates Pte. Ingram D. Weldon, Killed in Action at Epres France, June 1916 in WW I, at 20 years of age. His family home remains today at 1000 Coverdale Road, the large white farmhouse which later was the home of the Mitton family , including former Albert County and Riverview Councillor Edgar Mitton.

Numerous fallen heroes are buried or commemorated in both cemeteries.

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A Brief Walk-Through History



Two former members of the NB Legislative Assembly are buried in the Wesleyan Union Cemetery. Honourable James T. Ryan served as the MLA for Albert County from 1821 until 1892. Then Honourable Sanford Ryan served as MLA for Albert County from 1900-1908. Their home was the large imposing structure located where the current Homestead Restaurant is and burned in 1976. The Ryan Land Grant represented most of the land of the current Riverview Heights, which was the beginning of Byron Dobson's development of housing in post WWII Riverview.

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A Brief Walk-Through History

In the spring of 1986, a late storm caused a slippery Coverdale Road. A young mother, driving on her first day back to work after giving birth to her second daughter lost control on the icy road and collided with another vehicle.

The result of that accident was this young Mom died, leaving her husband and two young children.

This was one of many sad and tragic incidents over the past 200 years in the this area.



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- ▶ In 2006, a similar presentation was made to Town Council by the Late Edgar Mitton, former Chair of the Board of Directors.
- ▶ A resolution was passed by Riverview Town Council, offering services in kind, but NO financial aid was requested or granted.
- ▶ The Wesleyan Union Cemetery appreciates the occasional offerings of gravel, topsoil and fill to enhance the cemeteries.
- ▶ We look forward to continuing that relationship with the Town of Riverview and hope that occasionally we may solicit advice from Town Staff to assist us in continuing to provide this final resting place of our area residents.

Wesleyan Union Cemetery Ltd.

Board of Directors:

- ▶ Tom Jones, Chairman
- ▶ Doug Hamer, Treasurer
- ▶ Ted Nicholson, Secretary
 - ▶ Kevin Jones
 - ▶ Scott Hamer
 - ▶ Jamie Smith
- ▶ Raymond Jones
 - ▶ George Jones
 - ▶ James Ritchie
 - ▶ Grant Mitton

A photograph of a group of people, mostly seen from the back, gathered in a cemetery. They are standing on a grassy area, looking towards a gravestone. In the background, there are several other gravestones and large, leafy trees. The scene is outdoors during the day. The image is partially covered by a green geometric overlay on the right side.

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QUESTIONS ?