

The Friends of the Page-Walker Walking Tour Hillcrest Cemetery

CARY, NORTH CAROLINA

Welcome to Hillcrest Cemetery, one of Cary's oldest cemeteries. This guide will take you for a walk through the history of Cary as told through the resting places of contributors to the social, religious and economic development of the town. You will see mayors, diplomats and some graves marked by only a roughhewn stone. There are very young residents and some who are very old.

The 4.9-acre cemetery is maintained by the Town of Cary and has more than 2,400 burial sites. The cemetery was established in 1840 and the first burial was of Nathaniel Jones in August of that same year. Hillcrest was designated as a Cary Historic Landmark in 2014.

Your walk can take from 20 minutes to several hours depending on your interest. As you stroll look for special features of the graves. Many are decorated with art that reflects the people who rest there. You will see sculpture, you will see flowers, and special symbols that represent the culture of the residents of Cary.

Many famous Caryites are here at Hillcrest. Have you seen the names Dunham, Dry, Bond, Maynard or Harrison around town? Their graves are part of the heavenly host here at Hillcrest.

Enjoy your walk, and join us on the Page-Walker website for more information about the people and stories of Cary's history.

www.friendsofpagewalker.org



1. **J. C. Matthews*** (Dec. 17, 1857-July 14, 1937) was a lumberman and master carpenter who operated a sawmill. He and his wife Sarah built a Greek revival mansion using some of his best lumber. The Matthews House at 317 W. Chatham St. was the largest house in original Cary.



4. **Robert W. Mayton** (Mar. 20, 1893-Sep. 12, 1972) helped to expand the Meredith College campus, was superintendent of the NCSU physical plant and served as Cary's mayor from 1937-1947. He lived in the Mayton house on Academy St. that was moved and preserved on the grounds of the Mayton Inn, named for the family.



2. **William H. Atkins** (Dec. 16, 1866-Oct. 15, 1936) was a businessman who manufactured wagons and ran a blacksmith shop, gristmill and farm equipment dealership. He served as Cary's mayor from 1921-1925.



5. **Russell O. Heater** (Jan. 20, 1895-Jan. 10, 1971) was one of Cary's earliest and most prolific developers, building Sunset Hills, Veteran Hills and Russell Hills. Known as "Mr. Cary", he also started Heater Drilling Company, the Cary Recreation Corporation (now the Cary Swim Club) and served on the Cary Town Council and Wake County Commission. He was a leader in the Methodist Church, Boy Scouts and the Masonic Lodge. He tended Hillcrest cemetery for 25 years.



3. **Henry Reavis Adams** (Mar. 21, 1899-Aug. 30, 1968) had two businesses at the intersection of Chatham St. & Academy St., Adams Drug Store (currently Ashworth Drugs) and Adams Appliance Store. He was also a school board member who spearheaded the plan to integrate Cary's schools. Adams Elementary School is named for him.



6. **Marcus Baxter Dry** (Oct. 23, 1871-Jan. 27, 1946) was a graduate of Wake Forest College and Principal of Wingate High School (now Wingate University), then served as Principal of Cary High School for 34 years, from 1908-1942. Under his leadership, Cary High School became a model of innovative education. Dry Avenue and a room in the Cary Arts Center are named for him.



Ethel Copeland Adams (Feb. 14, 1903-Feb. 22, 1998) married Henry R. Adams. A graduate of Cary High School, she taught at the school for many years and ran the lunch counter at Adams Drug Store, preparing deviled eggs and tuna, chicken and pimento cheese salads.

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7. **Brothers F. R. Gray**, shown left, (Aug. 6, 1858-June 4, 1935) and **P. D. Gray** (Nov. 13, 1866-Dec. 2, 1933) owned much of Cary's downtown business district and hundreds of acres of rural land outside Cary. They ran the F. R. Gray & Bro General Store. P. D. was one of the founders of the original Cary High School in 1896.



Pat Gray (July 13, 1907-July 8, 1986) was Cary's postmaster from 1934-1964. He and his sister Mary Alice donated the family's land to Davidson College in exchange for a modest lifetime income supplement. Davidson College later sold the land which became the Lochmere subdivision, and netted more than \$1 million.



8. **Herbert Young, Jr.** (July 5, 1928-July 20, 2012) chaired Cary's Recreation Commission and served on the Cary Town Council. He was a high school and college athlete and officiated baseball, basketball and football for decades, earning a charter membership in the Cary High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame. His family owned/operated the Cary Swim Club for 30 years and he volunteered with Cary Parks and Recreation for more than 50 years. The Herbert C. Young Community Center near Town Hall is named for him.



9. **R. Sheldon Dunham, Sr.** (Jan. 16, 1905-Nov. 19, 1987) was known as "Dad". He taught agriculture for 40 years at Cary High School, from 1929-1969. "Dad" Dunham Park on Walnut St. is named for him.



Rachel Eaton Dunham** (Apr. 25, 1904-Sept. 19, 2001) was married to R. S. "Dad" Dunham. She was instrumental in starting Cary's Gourd Village Garden Club and the inspiration for preserving Cary's history which led to the formation of the Cary Historical Society and Friends of the Page-Walker. She and her husband sold their land at Kildaire Farm and West Cornwall Roads so that Glenaire Retirement Community could be developed.



10. **Fred Gaines Bond** (Jan. 1, 1929-June 1, 1997) was mayor of Cary from 1971-1983 and ushered in an era of high quality planning and development during a period of rapid growth. He succeeded in paving every street in Cary and was known for responding in person when citizens called with problems. Fred G. Bond Metro Park on High House Rd. is named for him.



11. **Luther Maynard** (Aug. 1, 1895-Nov. 15, 1971) farmed tobacco, corn and wheat on the family homestead on Walnut St. (near the current SECU branch). He later sold the land for Cary High School and the Cary Towne Center. Maynard Road is named for him.

12. **Rev. A. D. Hunter**, shown top left, (July 15, 1856-Nov. 23, 1908) and **Mary Irene Walker Hunter**, shown left, (Mar. 13, 1865-Feb. 26, 1905) were the parents of Dr.



John Hunter and ran a large poultry farm. A. D. was a Baptist minister and one of the founders of the original Cary High School in 1896. Mary was the daughter of J. R. and Helen Walker.



Dr. John Pullen Hunter, shown left in glasses, (Mar. 25, 1896-Dec. 1, 1951) was the son of Rev. A. D. and Mary Irene Walker Hunter. He was a doctor and served as mayor from 1933-1935 and on the Wake County School Board. He provided the first band uniforms for Cary High School Band. His home stands at 118 S. Academy St. and is a Cary Historic Landmark.



J. R. Walker (Nov. 16, 1834-Mar. 15, 1915) and **Helen Yates Walker**, shown bottom left, (Aug. 5, 1843-Mar. 17, 1922) were among Cary's earliest citizens. J. R. was a railroad "section master". In 1884, J. R. and Helen purchased land and a hotel (now the Page-Walker Arts & History Center) from Cary's founder, Frank Page. They operated the Walker Hotel until 1915, with Helen managing the dining room. After J. R.'s death in 1915, Helen turned the hotel into a boarding house.



13. **Robert J. Harrison** (Feb. 3, 1846-Feb. 8, 1933) served in the Confederate army, then moved to Cary where he obtained five patents for farm implements and started Harrison Wagon Works, a manufacturer of wagons and buggies. He also invented, but did not patent, wireless radio (perfected by Guglielmo Marconi). He later ran "Uncle Bob's Corner", a cafe where Ashworth Drugs now stands. He served as Cary mayor from 1887-1897. Harrison Avenue is named for him.



14. **Nathaniel Graham Yarborough** (June 26, 1862-Apr. 28, 1917) and his wife Sarah owned the historic Guess-Ogle house at 215 S. Academy St., a Cary Historic Landmark. He attended Trinity College (now part of Duke University) and served as steward for the State Blind School for eight years.



15. **Dr. Frank Ray Yarborough** (Apr. 17, 1895-Nov. 5, 1957), son of Nathaniel and Sarah Judd Yarborough, was one of Cary's doctors. His office, which had separate entrances for Black and White patients, still stands at 219 S. Academy St. He served as Cary mayor from 1927-1928.



16. **Thaddeus Ivey** (June 27, 1855-April 6, 1933) was a farmer, teacher and civil servant. He married Mary Downer while teaching at his father's school in Georgia. After moving to Cary, he became bookkeeper and cashier for the North Carolina Farmers' State Alliance Business Agency and the Chief Deputy U.S. Marshal in Raleigh. He and Mary were the first known residents of the Ivey-Ellington house at 115 W. Chatham St., which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



16. M. Esther Ivey (Apr. 19, 1890-Feb. 9, 1989), the daughter of Thaddeus and Mary Ivey, was a long time Cary resident. She graduated from Cary High School in 1906, majored in biology at Guilford College in Greensboro and taught school in Roanoke Rapids and Holly Springs. Returning to Cary, she served as bookkeeper for the Baptist State Convention for 36 years. She is the namesake of the Esther Ivey House at 302 S. Academy St.



17. Dr. S. P. Waldo (Mar. 15, 1845-Aug. 21, 1891) was one of Cary's first doctors. He built Cary's first drug store and planted vacant lots around town with cotton. He built the Waldo house that was moved and preserved on the grounds of the Mayton Inn on S. Academy St. Waldo Street is named for him.



18. Alfred Jones (July 3, 1857-Dec. 9, 1893), known as "Buck", provided land and a building for the first Cary school for Black children. President Grover Cleveland appointed him as the American Consul General to Shanghai, China, where he contracted malaria. He died on his journey home to Cary. Thousands attended his funeral. Buck Jones Road is named for him.



19. Elva Muriel Templeton (May 3, 1898-Apr. 23, 1993), daughter of Dr. J. M. Templeton, attended Cary High School, then majored in home economics at Salem College in Winston-Salem. She taught school in Pamlico County, started a girls basketball team and was a long time Sunday school teacher.



Dr. J. M. Templeton (Oct. 4, 1855-May 1, 1932) was one of the first doctors in Cary. He made house calls with horse and buggy. He served as Cary mayor from 1912-1916 and was an advocate for prohibition, economic justice for farmers, public education and good roads. At age 62, he joined the Army as a doctor when the U.S. entered WWI.



20. Harrison P. Guess (Aug. 27, 1827-June 25, 1919) was Cary's first railroad "roadmaster". He and his wife Aurelia purchased 18 acres from the town's founder, Frank Page, and built the original structure that is now the Guess-Ogle house at 215 S. Academy St., a Cary Historic Landmark.



21. Rufus Henry Jones (Dec. 31, 1819-Aug. 8, 1903) was one of Cary's first citizens. He was an educator, county commissioner and member of the NC General Assembly. He co-founded the Cary Masonic Lodge in 1857. He and his daughters, Sarah and Loulie, purchased Cary Academy (later Cary High School) from Cary's founder, Frank Page. He donated land for Hillcrest Cemetery.



22. J. P. H. Adams (Oct. 2, 1845-May 11, 1916), with his wife Cora, subdivided land in the area of N. Harrison Ave. & Adams St. and sold it to African-American families, thus beginning one of Cary's first subdivisions. He served as mayor from 1884-1887.



23. Henry B. Jordan (Feb. 17, 1834-Feb. 25, 1914) was a farmer, storekeeper and railroad station agent. He was one of Cary's original commissioners when the town was founded by Frank Page and served as mayor from 1904-1910.

Finding Hillcrest Cemetery

Hillcrest's main entrance is at 608 Page Street, near downtown Cary. Starting from the Cary Arts Center, go west on Dry Avenue, crossing South Harrison, to Page Street. Turn left and the rest is really simple— Page Street ends at the cemetery gate. The cemetery opens daily at 8 a.m. and closes during the winter months at 6 p.m.; during the summer, it's open until 8 p.m.

About the Friends of the Page-Walker

The Friends is a passionate group of citizens who advocate for historic preservation, facilitate history education, and promote the cultural arts. Our non-profit, all volunteer organization formed in 1985 as a grassroots effort to save the historic Page-Walker Hotel in downtown Cary. Since then we have created the Cary Heritage Museum on the third floor of what is now the Page-Walker Arts & History Center and created and maintain an educational herb garden on the grounds. As a partner of Town of Cary, the Friends also maintain another valuable cemetery — the White Plains Cemetery. History is an ongoing narrative, and we invite you to become a part of it. Learn more about us online or email us at info@friendsofpagewalker.org.

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Sources

- *Just A Horse Stopping Place*, Peggy Van Scoyoc
- *Around and About Cary*, Tom Byrd & Jerry Miller
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* J.C. Matthews photo courtesy of J. Paul Matthews

** Rachel Dunham photo courtesy of *The News & Observer*