

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**



*The following story was researched and written by Jim Vichich. It originally appeared on our Facebook page. We thought since many of our readers/members may not follow along on Facebook, we would repeat the story in Trail Tales.*

### **Old Village Cemetery — Crypt**

The crypt remnants at the Old Village Cemetery goes back to the 1800s and had a specific purpose when built but seemingly a different purpose in the 1940s and 50s.

The northern climates presented a challenge to burials during the winter freeze. The ground would be frozen from January through mid-March and made it almost impossible to bury the dead during this interval.

Some cemetery locations would use an option of piling lumber/ logs in the area of the burial plot and setting them on fire. This fire would be continuously fed with logs for multiple days until the earth was thawed for hand digging for the burial. Not sure if this practice was done in Brighton but it would seem like a viable alternative.

The crypt was used initially as a holding room where caskets with bodies were stored when the frost was too deep into the ground for burial. As the ground started to thaw in mid-March and early April then these stored caskets with bodies would be buried. Power equipment for digging through the frozen ground did not become readily available until the 1940s. It was at this time that the crypt in the Old Village Cemetery seemed to shift its use from temporary winter storage to permanent year round storage. This information was obtained from several senior individuals who described gaining access into the crypt through the locked iron front door. Caskets were visible and apparently

younger kids were taken into the crypt at night by older friends or brothers to frighten the younger sibs.

There use to be two crypts that were adjacent to each other. Several feet to the north of the existing crypt facade was an older crypt. The older crypt was just a small rubble pile of cut fieldstones around 2006. The existing crypt facade of cut fieldstones was repaired in 2010 when the new parking lot was built along the existing east property line. The roof and knee wall lower section of the crypt where caskets were stored has been gone for decades.

*(Thank you to Jim Vichich for this article.)*



OVC Crypt c 2009



OVC Crypt c 2010

*Do you have a memory of Brighton to share with our readers? We are always looking for stories to share about Brighton. If you do, please send your story to our editor, Jerry Damon at [runningbuds@aol.com](mailto:runningbuds@aol.com). We would be happy to share your memories.*