

# Our Family News Letter

Issue 89

Greendale, Wisconsin

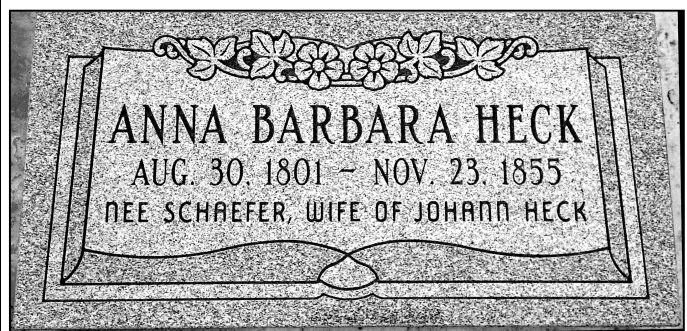
June 2015



## Anna Barbara Schaefer Heck Tombstone Project Completed

Thanks to the contributions from our many readers we were finally able to complete the tombstone project that we started in 2013. It all began when we discovered the burial place of Peter McNulty at the Saint Mary's Church cemetery in Dover, Racine County, Wisconsin. In August 2013, I had asked the Sextant responsible for the cemetery if he could help us locate the exact burial place of Peter McNulty. From the church records we knew that he was buried in an unmarked lot identified as lot four of the Thomas Morrow lot. My brother, Gary Heck, was actually the first person to find the burial location documented in the church sacramental records. Gary was a member of the parish and had access to the records.

On Saturday, September 14, 2013, I took my first cousin, Robert Jerome Heck, his wife Lorraine, and their daughter, Cheryl Ann on a cemetery tour of Racine and Kenosha Counties.



When we got to the cemetery at Dover, we were surprised to find that the burial place for Peter McNulty was marked with four little orange marker flags similar to those used by utilities to mark the location of buried power lines. The four of us talked about how sad it was that there

was no grave tombstone for either Peter McNulty or for Anna Barbara Heck. We thought that maybe we could start a project to mark their final resting places.

I had no idea of how much a tombstone cost so I started shopping around in Burlington, Racine, Milwaukee and on the internet. I soon found out that there were a bunch of regulations at each cemetery pertaining to the depth and size of footings as well as to the style and size of tombstones. For example I found that one cemetery required a footing 36 inches deep and eight inches longer and wider than the actual tombstone. Most cemeteries required a footing of 18 inches.

The prices of the tombstone were as high as \$2,000 for a stone 24 inch by 12 inch by 4 inches thick. The lowest price that I found was \$700. My cousin, Cheryl Ann Heck even suggested that we could dig and pour the 18-inch deep footing ourselves and save some money.

While searching the Internet I found a company in Union Grove, Racine County, Wisconsin owned by Gene Fox. I went out to Union Grove and talked with Gene about our project. Gene Fox was the former Sextant for the Saint Francis Xavier church cemetery at Brighton in Kenosha County, and he was also a local historian. Gene was so impressed with our project that he said that he would make and install the tombstones and do so at a price that was affordable. We put together sketches and agreed on the type of granite. He came up with a final price of \$464 each.

The first project was to put a tombstone on the grave of Peter McNulty at Dover. We presented our proposal to the Sextant and he gave us permission to proceed with the project. We had a lot more work to do to get approval to put a tombstone on the grave of Anna Barbara Heck's grave. The reason being that we had no idea of where she was buried. The church records from Saint Francis Xavier Church stated that she was buried in the church cemetery but the location was not indicated.

Gene Fox was a big help when he provided me with a detailed map of the Saint Francis Xavier Church cemetery. The map was especially helpful because it contained the location of all of the graves and the name of the person buried in each lot. It also marked the locations of those lots where the occupant was unknown.

The next step was to go through the church sacramental records and determine all of the people who died in 1854, 1855, and 1856. Anna Barbara Heck died in 1855. Armed with that list I was able to plot the location of each named person's burial lot on the map. The locations formed a tight circle in one area of the cemetery. One of the unknown spots was right next to my great-great-grandmother, Patience McNulty's grave.

It all made common sense. Anna Barbara Heck, who died in 1855, was the mother of Henry Heck. Patience McNulty, who died in 1894, was the mother of Henry's wife, Mary Ann McNulty. When Anna Barbara Heck died her husband, Johann Heck purchased two burial lots, one for his wife and one for himself. However Johann Heck remarried in 1856 and migrated to Minnesota in 1857. He is buried in Minnesota.

When Patience McNulty died in 1894, Henry Heck and his wife Mary Ann McNulty would have been responsible for her burial. Since the family owned the unused lot next to Anna Barbara Heck, they decided that would be a good burial spot for Patience.

I presented this theory to the Sextant and he agreed with my logic. He presented the theory to the Cemetery Board and they also agreed. The Cemetery Board presented it to the Parish Priest and he also agreed. The Sextant then gave us permission to have the footing and tombstone installed.

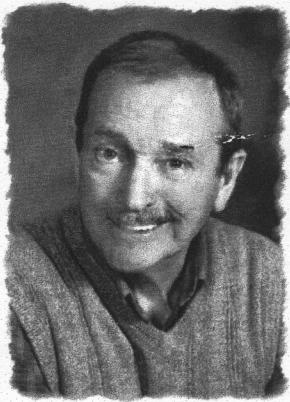
It gives me a warm feeling when I stand in front of the graves of my two great-great-grandmothers who probably never knew each other.


Epilog: On April 19, 2015, my wife Gloria and I drove to Brighton to see the finished project. We

were taking a few pictures for this newsletter. A bird had pooped on Anna Barbara Heck's tombstone. Gloria cleaned it up and was looking for a trash container. We saw one at the edge of the cemetery near the tombstone that Gene Fox had engraved for his family. When we got to the Fox family lot we were shocked to see a large mound of dirt indicating a fresh burial. There were wilted flowers with a banner on top of the mound. The banner stated "Husband and Father." We did a quick search on the Internet and found that Gene Fox, age 62 years, died unexpectedly and was buried at the Saint Francis Xavier Church cemetery a week earlier.

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*In Loving Memory of*  
**Robert W. Merritt**  
*"Bob"*



<i>Born to Life</i>		<i>Born into Eternal Life</i>
September 12 1939		March 4 2015

We were saddened to learn that Bob Merritt passed away on March 4, 2015 in Minnesota. Bob had been in ill health for several years. We will miss his smiling face at the family picnics.

His obituary follows.

**LIFESTORY: Robert W. Merritt 1939-2015**

"Robert (Bob) Wesley Merritt, Age 75, of White Bear Lake, Minnesota and formerly of Racine, Wisconsin. Devoted and loving husband of Patricia (Pat) nee Heck, Merritt. Passed away peacefully, in St Paul, Minnesota at Our Lady of Peace Hospice. Preceded in death by his parents (Howard and Helen Merritt), his brothers (Howard Jr., and James) and daughter (Denise). Bob is survived by his loving wife Patricia of 55 years, brothers Claude and Ronald and sister Florence, children Bill (Sharon), Susan (Jim Speidel) and Kathy (Kevin Starr), 10 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren."

"Bob was a long time parent member of the Racine Kilties and Kiltie Kadet Drum Corps and worked at Service International Business Forms in Racine for over 25 years. In his later years he had great joy from seeing and playing with his grandchildren and great grandchildren. One of his greatest passions was being a Green Bay Packers fan, attending Super Bowl I and II. He will always bleed green and gold."

"A viewing is scheduled at Maresh-Meredith and Acklam Funeral Home at 803 Main St. Racine, Wisconsin on March 11th from 5PM to 7PM. It will be followed by a private burial at Graceland Cemetery on March 12th. In lieu of flowers, do-



nations are requested for Our Lady of Peace Hospice Care at 2076 St. Anthony Blvd. Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104, Courage Center in Stillwater, MN or Regions Hospital of St. Paul Cancer Center."

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## Reminder: Heck Family Picnic Date Changed to July 12, 2015

The annual Heck Family picnic date has been changed to July 12, 2015. In the past the picnic was held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in July but after years of fighting the Triathlon held in the Racine and Wind Point areas, it was decided to move the date of the picnic to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of July.

The picnic will be held at the same place: The Leisure Center. As usual there is a breakfast and golf outing planned for the morning. Contact Don Heck at (262) 639-2124 for details about breakfast and golf outing. Everyone is invited to participate. The picnic starts at noon at the Leisure Center.

Enjoy swimming in the Leisure Center pool, or a friendly game of bocce ball or maybe a friendly game of cribbage with your cousins.

There is always a lot to eat at the picnic where each family brings an item to share. The best part of the picnic is visiting with all of your cousins.

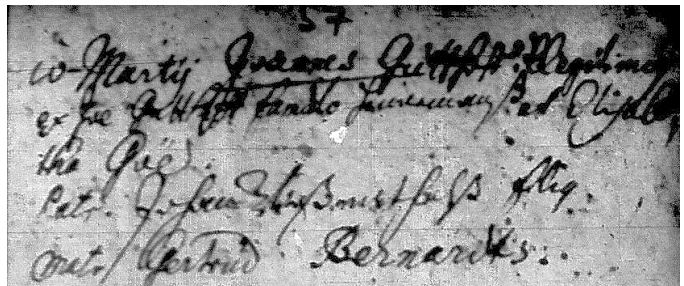


Bocce Ball is played on a field of grass and is usually played with teams. If you have never played the game, why not give it a try?

See you at the July 12<sup>th</sup> Heck Family Picnic.

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## Cheryl Ann Heck discovers her 7<sup>th</sup> Great-Grandfather's christening record in a 1690 Catholic Church Record from Rhynern, Westfalen, Prussia, Germany.



Cheryl's Great-great-great-great-great-great-great-grandfather was Joannes Gutthoff and his christening record, written on 10 March 1690, just 324 years ago, is shown above. The record shows the parents' names and the names of the godparents.

Cheryl has become quite the expert in reading old German script, picking up where her dad,

Robert Jerome Heck, left off. Her dad had studied Latin while in the seminary and spent many hours researching our family history.

In the early church records the surname was spelled Gutthoff. In later years it was recorded as Guthoff and even Guthof. The most common spelling was Guthoff.

Here is Cheryl's direct line of descent from her 8<sup>th</sup> great-grandfather.:

Joe Gutthoff (born about 1668 )  
Joannes Gutthoff (born 1690)  
Angela Margaretha Guthoff (born 1720)  
Joannem Christian Guthoff (born 1755)  
Theodor Johann Heinrich Guthoff (born 1783)  
**Anna Maria Elisabeth Guthoff (born 1819)**  
**Clara Stratman (born 1847)**  
**Margaret F. Henningfeld (born 1880)**  
**Clarence Henry Heck (born 1905)**  
**Robert Jerome Heck (born 1932)**  
**Cheryl Ann Heck (born 1956)**

Note that those in bold text all resided in Wisconsin.

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Thanks to all of you who have contributed to the Peter McNulty tombstone project, the Anna Barbara Schaefer Heck tombstone project or to this newsletter.

**Lorraine and the late Robert Jerome Heck**  
**Bill and Michelle Heck**  
**Cheryl Ann Heck**  
**Bob and Gloria Heck (Your Editor)**  
**Rebecca and Brian Wright**  
**Joanne Pfeiffer**  
**Dick and Cel Heck**  
**Shirley Heck**  
**Dan and Pattie Pfeiffer**  
**Delores and Bernard Kunka**  
**Gary and Carol Heck**  
**Don Johnson**  
**Sue and Jeff Miller**  
**Ellen and Bill Stiner**  
**Frank and Andrea Lamping**  
**Don and Sharon Heck**  
**Alvin and Carolyn Heck**  
**Howard and Anne Heck**

## Meet Your Cousins...



Sitting on top of a mountain is Sarah and Matthew Miller, children of Sue (nee Bark) and Jeff Miller from North Oaks, Minnesota. Sue's parents were Bernice Heck and Edward Bark from Racine, Wisconsin.



The photo above shows the First Communion celebration of Bernice Heck in 1926. Bernice was the mother of Sue Bark. The picture was taken at 1335 North Main Street in Racine. Some of those recognized are front L-R: Carl Heinrichs, Alvin Heck, Robert G. Heck, directly behind Bernice is Lizzie Plucker, Margaret Henningfeld Heck, Mary Grostuck, and Eva Heck. The young boy on the porch is Edward Heck.

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## DNA Test Results...

I had my DNA tested in 2013 through the firm FamilyTreeDNA.com. Most of my family came from Central Europe, Germany and the Czech Republic but the DNA results indicated that there were a few that originated in Poland, Finland, Turkey, and Afghanistan. Since my mother was born in Moravia, Czech Republic, and the Heck and Henningfeld families originated in Germany it is not surprising to see Poland highlighted. Turkey and Afghanistan were

more of a surprise. Groups from Afghanistan, Iran and Turkey invaded Eastern, Central, and Western Europe many times over the past centuries. Russia defeated some of these invaders in the area of Finland.

My 1<sup>st</sup> cousin, Dan Mikel also had his DNA tested and his results were similar. His father, Bohumel Mikel, was the only brother of my mother. Dan does not have German ancestors so that means that the Turkey and Afghanistan connections were through our Czech ancestors.

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**Cheryl Ann Heck and Bob Heck** looking over the finished tombstone project at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church Cemetery at Brighton, Wisconsin. Cheryl and Bob worked on this project for nearly three years. Anna Barbara Schaefer Heck and Patience Burgess McNulty are Cheryl's great-great-grandmothers and Bob's great-great-grandmothers.

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## St. Francis Xavier Cemetery and Faith Museum

The photo at right shows Cheryl and Bob Heck with Mary Ann Decatur and Marilyn Griffiths. Mary Ann was in charge of the 175<sup>th</sup> year celebration at St. Francis Xavier and Marilyn is the founder and Director of the parish Faith Museum. She is also the retired Principal of the school. We spent about an hour going through the Faith Museum and found quite a bit of information on the Heck and McNulty families. The museum is filled with church history, early



families in Brighton, and many artifacts from the early days of the parish. If you ever get a chance you should visit the museum. Call Marilyn Griffiths at (262) 857-2229.

# From the Newspapers...

Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 8 May 2015,  
Page 1 and page 7.

**In My Opinion**

## An honor for one honors all

Korean War veteran moved by thank-you note from student



Ralph Heck asked me not to make this story too much about him. So let me begin by saying that nearly 2 million American service members fought alongside him in Korea, and more than 95,000 didn't make it home alive. The way Ralph sees it, the touching thank-you note he received from a Hartland boy with a family connection to that war is for all of them.

Last month, Ralph joined 83 other veterans of Korea and World War II on the Stars and Stripes Honor Flight out of Milwaukee to visit the war memorials in Washington, D.C., the 26th such flight from here since 2008.

On the way home, letters from family, friends and others were passed out to the veterans. Ralph opened one that choked him up on what had already been an emotional day.

"Dear Mr. Heck," it began. "Thank you for your service!! Mr. Heck, your sacrifice has saved my grandpa's life. If you hadn't helped Korea then my dad would have never made it to USA and never met my mom. So I personally thank you for saving also my life."

It was signed, "Love, 6th grader Andrew Jiang Hong," who closed with, "You are my family's hero."

Ralph, who is 83, a retired electrician, husband to Ruth for 60 years and father of four, struggled to get through the short letter from this boy he didn't know. The next day he read it again over coffee at his Burlington home.

Please see STINGL 7A

MICHAEL SEARS / MILWAUKEE JOURNAL SENTINEL

**► WWII: War is more than just history to Milwaukee veteran. 3A**

Korean War veteran Ralph Heck received a special letter from Andrew Jiang Hong, 12, a sixth-grader at Swallow School in Hartland as part of the Stars and Stripes Honor Flight.

Congratulations and a big Thank You For Your Service, to Ralph Heck, age 83, from Burlington, Wisconsin. Ralph and his wife Ruth are readers of this newsletter and have been for many years.

Ralph recently participated in a Stars and Stripes Honor Flight to Washington DC in which World War II and Korean War veterans are honored for their service. The veterans leave Milwaukee very early in the morning and return late that same evening. Participants are generally tired but very proud.

One of the events is a mail call during the return flight home. Participants are given cards and letters from family and friends and they get to read them while on the way home. One of the cards that Ralph received was from a 12 year old. The card read, "Dear Mr. Heck, Thank you for your service!! Mr. Heck, your sacrifice has saved my grandpa's life. If you hadn't helped Korea then my dad would have never made it to USA and never met my mom. So I personally thank you for saving also my life." It was signed, "Love, 6<sup>th</sup>

grader Andrew Jiang Hong, You are my family's hero."

New Ulm Weekly Review, New Ulm, Minnesota, 24 June 1885.

"Mr. John Heck of Granby, aged 76 years, died very suddenly last Sunday night (21 June 1885) at the residence of Vincent Brunner, in West Newton where he had gone to attend the wedding of his grandchildren. A stroke of apoplexy was no doubt the cause of his sudden demise."

Editor's Note: John Heck was known as Johann Heck and arrived in America in 1853, settling first at Brighton, Kenosha County, Wisconsin and residing in Brighton, Nicollet County, Minnesota.

New Ulm Weekly Review, New Ulm, Minnesota, 15 October 1919.

Mrs. Vincent Brunner.

"Saturday morning shortly after 2 o'clock Mrs. Vincent Brunner passed away at her home on North State Street. She had been ailing the past three years and had been confined to her bed the past five months. Death was due to weakened nerves and other ailments common to old age. Mrs. Brunner, nee Clara Heck, was born in Ahlendorf, (sic) Rhinish Province, Germany on July 18, 1843 and thus was seventy six years old when the Grim Reaper claimed her. She came to America with her parents (Johann Heck and Anna Barbara Schaefer Heck) when she was twelve years old and they lived for several years in Wisconsin.

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This newsletter is written and published by **Robert J. Heck, 4910 Steeple Drive, Greendale, WI 53129.**

Our Family News Letter is published quarterly and is distributed without charge. Contributions to help cover the costs are greatly appreciated. If you would like to see some of your old photos in it, send them to me at my e-mail address: **bheck@execpc.com** along with a description.