

2025 West Cemetery Lantern Tour

Cast of Characters

Hugh Rockwell (1890-1957): Hugh Rockwell is the son of New Departure founder Albert Rockwell. A prolific inventor in his own right, Hugh Rockwell holds 46 patents, including one as the co-inventor of the Rockwell Hardness Tester, still in use today. *(played by Ty Mellon and Jay Messier)*

Nettie Williams Rockwell (1860-1938): Nettie Williams Rockwell is the second wife Albert Rockwell, well known for her commitment to Rockwell Park, especially the playground. She is also alleged to have picked out the color—yellow—for the taxi cabs her husband produced. *(played by Nicki LaPorte)*

Samuel Large (1864-1929): Samuel Large was the head of the American Silver Company, a member of the city council, and the person who designed Bristol's city seal. *(played by James Donovan)*

Essie Abell (1852-1939): Essie Abell is a former teacher and wife of shoe merchant Charles Benton Abell. *(played by Lisa Doyle-Bell)*

Ida C. Sessions (1854-1939): Ida Sessions was a teacher, Sunday School teacher, author of a book about the history of Sunday Schools, and the daughter of the original founder of the company that became J.H. Sessions and Son. *(played by Jackie McCauley)*

Augustus Fun(c)k (1836-1911): Augustus Fun(c)k is the son of Christian Funck, who founded a furniture store and funeral home in the Maple End neighborhood of Bristol. Augustus would take over that concern, which he grew into a significant business in town, after his service in the Civil War. He is also the person that changed the family and business from Funck to Funk. *(played by Chris Ravlin)*

Solomon C. Spring (1826-1906): Solomon Spring was a clockmaker who learned the trade from S. B. Terry before opening his own firm in Bristol. He both made clocks under his own label and supplied mechanisms and cases to other makers. *(played by Mel Bee)*

Lewis G. B. Parsons (1891-1975): Lewis Parsons was the son of a bicycle-repair shop owner. As the automotive age dawned, that shop became an automobile repair shop, leading Parsons experimental work in the auto industry. He would work for Marlin Rockwell perfecting the timing of aircraft machine guns to propellers. *(played by Joe Pinette)*

Benjamin Bennett Lewis (1818-1890): Benjamin Lewis went to sea at an early age, working his way up to Commander. He later opened a shop in Ohio. He invented the perpetual calendar mechanism for clocks, coming to Bristol to begin his successful clockmaking career. *(played by Robert Adamczyk)*