

The Harley O. Beckley farm

by

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In our Township historical flyer that was passed out for Memorial Day 2014, there was a picture of a farm that was known to ship cheese to the Horr Warner Creamery in Wellington. Many farms in Huntington shipped cheese, but this is the only known photo. Our museum has many slides taken in the '40s and '50s by Rev. Dale Clark.

I was determined to locate this farm, so I looked at the old maps in the museum and found that there were many parcels with the name "Beckley." I drove up and down Huntington roads trying to pin-point the exact location. As I traveled, I stopped at a garage sale at Bruce Hagar's house on Rt. 162. Frustrated in my search, I casually asked Bruce if he knew where the picture was taken. It didn't take him long – he said, sure, he had played in that barn when he was a kid. It was the H. O. Beckley farm on North side of New London Eastern Rd. just west of Baker Road.

Bruce and I took a ride in that direction, and when we got to the old Beckley Cemetery (on the south side) he said the farm was on the north side. The property now belongs to Charlemont Metro Parks and the buildings are gone. The amazing thing, though – the spruce tree in the original picture is still standing! *My search was over!* Nothing else looked the same, but there is no doubt, because of that tree, that this is the location shown in that old picture.



I still wanted to know more, so I contacted the Metro Parks office and asked for any information they could give me. There had been a drive that circled around the house, which was torn down in 1993. They thought about



restoring the "carriage house," but said the cost was too great and it came down also. They couldn't preserve the barn, either, so it was razed in 1999. There is still a large pond on the property, and repairs were made to the dam in 2010.

Harley O. Beckley and his wife, Mary, are buried in the Universalist or Evergreen Cemetery along with their daughter Chloe Laughery and her husband, Henry. The beautiful Laughery home was located just east of the parent's.

Our museum has many great items and articles from the past for the public to view, but our motto is "Today's Events are Tomorrow's History." Let's keep it going.