
FRIENDS OF THE CEMETERY

MEDINA, OHIO

Issue 4

May 2001

2001 Accomplishments and Commitments

Tree Maintenance – Approximately 60 mature trees in Spring Grove Cemetery were pruned this past January. At the same time, three trees were cable reinforced. In April, these same trees then received hydraulic deep root fertilization. Davey Tree Expert Company performed the work and did an excellent job. Friends of the Cemetery thank the Letha E. House Foundation for funding this project. In the past few years many older trees have been removed due to their poor condition. With the proper maintenance of our stately mature trees, we can keep the “grove” in Spring Grove.

Litter Receptacles – The two new litter receptacles were delivered to Spring Grove during the winter months. One has been placed in Section 3 and the other in Section 17. They present a great improvement over our other dented and rusty models. Hopefully we can find funding to replace more of these receptacles. The Willard Stephenson Foundation funded the purchase of these two litter receptacles.

Articles of Incorporation & Code of Regulations – Articles of Incorporation were filed with the Secretary of State on behalf of Friends of the Cemetery this April. Our Code of Regulations was also updated at that time. The adoption of the new Code of Regulations was voted on and passed at our Annual Meeting that took place on April 22, 2001. Both documents were drafted with the assistance of the law firm of Critchfield, Critchfield and Johnson Ltd. of Medina.

Perennial Garden Maintenance – JTS Landscaping has been hired by F.O.C. to maintain the perennial garden from April through November 2001. Grants from the Willard Stephenson Foundation and the Feckley Charitable Foundation will be used to cover the bulk of the maintenance contract. Friends of the Cemetery will pay the balance not covered by these grants.

The Hardy Pampas Grass has been removed from the perennial garden to a location near the east boundary of the cemetery where it will serve as a screen. This grass had proved so healthy that it encroached on adjacent plants in the garden. It will be replaced with Maiden Grass. Perennials,

including lupines and delphiniums, will be planted in the garden before Memorial Day.

Restoration Architect Fees – At the time of publication, the City of Medina had just re-bid the mausoleum roof project. The Letha E. House Foundation granted funds for the specifications for the roof and related architectural fees. Because of all the delays and red tape involved over the past year and a half, the restoration architect fees provided for in the original roof specifications grant are almost depleted. It is necessary for the architects to be involved in the re-bidding process and to provide inspection/field services during construction. Friends of the Cemetery have committed to paying for additional architectural services not included in the original grant. We are cautiously optimistic that the long awaited and much needed copper roof will be installed this year!

Historical Pictures Donated – Friends of the Cemetery recently acquired several enlarged copies of historic picture postcards of Spring Grove Cemetery. These 8x10 pictures were matted and framed by Creative Framers of Medina. Friends of the Cemetery will present these to the City of Medina and they will be hung in the newly remodeled Sexton’s office at Spring Grove Cemetery.

Opportunities To Support

As evidenced from the preceding article, the Friends of the Cemetery are moving forward and are obligated financially to a number of significant projects. This, of course, takes a considerable amount of money. We have the support of many in the community and, to date, we have been successful in obtaining generous funding from three local charitable foundations and a local service organization (see article below). We will continue to seek benefactions from these sources, but it is not practical to rely on grant money to fund everything. Many people care but may not realize that their contribution will help us to continue our goals of beautification and maintenance of the improvements we have made. You can help us strengthen the Friends of the Cemetery by telling others about us and encouraging them to become “friends” of the cemetery. We would appreciate

names to add to our mailing list as well. We are also seeking help from people who may have an interest or background in fund raising, endowment creation, financial management and/or public relations and would be willing to lend us their expertise.

Baby Section Renovation

The Friends of the Cemetery are pleased to announce that the Oddfellows service organization is funding the refurbishment of the Baby Section and the maintenance of this section over the summer months. Members of the Oddfellows started the work on April 28, 2001. The organization has also engaged the services of Sterling Landscaping to help with this restoration which includes replacing the existing border hedge, major re-edging of all the gravestones and replacing the grass with sod. We thank the Oddfellows for their financial and physical commitment to the renewal of this very special section of Spring Grove Cemetery and commend them on the liberality of their gift. Please make a point of stopping by the Baby Section soon to see the wonderful job that the Oddfellows have done. The Baby Section is located just east of Section 14 near Route 3.

Park Benches Donated

F.O.C. member, Mr. Mike Rose of Washington Properties, has most generously donated eight wrought iron and wood park benches to the Friends of the Cemetery. These will be placed in and around the Spring Grove Cemetery before Memorial Day. We are looking for a place to store these benches during the winter months. If you have or know of a location suitable, please contact Dennis Leach at (330) 725-8851.

Buntings

The City of Medina ordered new patriotic buntings to replace the original ones that have been missing since last year. These have been custom made by a company in North Carolina to the measurements of the ones that were misplaced. They are due to arrive before Memorial Day and plans are to hang them the weekend before. What happened to the original buntings remains a mystery.

Memorial Trees

The final grading adjustments, seeding and finishing touches to the entry drive that was realigned last fall have been completed. Four new trees (Red Sunset Maples) have been planted along the right swoop of the circle drive. F.O.C. member, David Kellogg, has purchased these four trees in memory of loved ones. We thank Mr. Kellogg for his

generosity and his support of the beautification of Spring Grove Cemetery.

We invite and encourage anyone who is interested in purchasing a tree in memory of a loved one to contact our Cemetery Advocate, Mr. Art Riedel, at (330) 722-2706. A plaque dedicated to your loved one is included in the cost of a memorial tree.

Computer Database

John Gill reports that the database for the cemetery records has been written. Roberts Communication submitted a proposal to develop the database using Microsoft Access. This proposal was reviewed and approved by the Medina City Board of Control on April 23, 2001. Roberts Communication estimates it will take approximately two months to have the database operational and then data entry will begin.

Memorial Day Weekend

The Friends of the Cemetery will be staffing the Spring Grove chapel the weekend before Memorial Day (5/26, 5/27) and will also be there on Memorial Day. We staff the chapel in order to assist visitors in locating graves and/or to provide information. Please feel free to stop in and say hello or if you'd like to volunteer to help staff the chapel for an hour or so (no experience required!), please call Bonnie Leach at (330) 725-8851.

A Note from the City Forester

By: Tim Swanson

I joined the City of Medina in August 1995 as the City Forester/Naturalist. Prior to joining the City, I worked for The Davey Tree Expert Company as a municipal forestry consultant. As a consultant with the Davey Tree Expert Company, I traveled across the United States conducting computerized street tree inventories for municipalities and park districts. My close involvement with other municipal foresters and tree commissions made me eager to be involved with a community on a permanent basis. As it turned out, Medina was in the process of hiring their first full time arborist. I promptly applied for the position and was selected as Medina's first Forester. I have a Bachelor of Science degree in conservation and am a certified arborist through the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) and a member of the Society of Municipal Arborists (SMA).

As the manager of the Urban Forest for the City of Medina, my responsibilities include developing and implementing tree management strategies directly with contractors for most of the City's tree care needs. This includes tree planting,

pruning, removal and replacement. I direct in-house crews for daily activities including small tree pruning (training prune), small tree removals, storm damage and citizen requests. I work closely with the City's Shade Tree Commission and act as a resource to the Planning Commission, Cemetery Commission and the Uptown Park Committee. In 1996, I enacted legislation to collect money from developers to pay for all street trees in the City right of way for all new home construction. This enabled the City to plant (to date) nearly 3,000 trees in the Urban Forest at no cost to the taxpayers.

Recently, I was selected as the department head to oversee Spring Grove Cemetery. I will be replacing Kenn Kaminski, who was previously overseeing this department. I have considerable knowledge to provide overall lawn; tree and shrub care to the cemeteries and address any questions or concerns regarding cemetery issues. My office is now located at the cemetery where I will continue to administer to forestry duties as well as these additional responsibilities.

I live in Medina and am enthusiastic to assist the Cemetery Commission to bring the Master Plan for Spring Grove Cemetery to success.

Thoughts From Our Cemetery Advocate

By: Art Riedel

Progress with amenities and the maintenance at Spring Grove Cemetery is becoming more evident. A three-point landscape-remodeling plan of the Baby Section, with an emphasis on a better system for maintenance conducive to the aesthetic beautification of a relatively small area within the cemetery, has been implemented. First consideration was given to replacing an anemic and struggling Ilex border hedge for a new hardy and more prolific Northern Bayberry hedge. The old Ilex plants have been replanted on the north side of the chapel. Next, overcoming an irregular grade situation of the lawn infested with wild grasses was considered. The old turf was stripped, re-grading done and new sod installed. The prime objective was to even elevations and also straighten the line-up of headstone markers and install a two-foot wide gravel maintenance bed that will neatly contain grave decorations.

The City has installed a new electrical outlet on the center mound to accommodate the P.A. system for the Memorial Day ceremony. No more tripping over 175' of cord drawn from the chapel's inside outlet. Now 25' of cord should do it.

The location of the Hardy Pampas Grass from the perennial garden to the far side of the back lake may attract the geese

with their considerable new brood of goslings to "camp out back" with the more natural (newly created) environment! As you can see, we are trying to clean up "their act" as well as utilize a screening effect.

Please come in to check out the new amenities. Other preparations and plantings are being done for Memorial weekend. Your comments are most welcomed and will be considered.

Spring Grove Lore

By: Marie Beck

I remember that when I was quite young, a tall Boxwood hedge ran around the perimeter of the cemetery. It started on both sides from the entry gate. At the corner of Liberty Street and Spring Grove Street, there was a small opening in the hedge that allowed you to enter the cemetery that way. The hedge continued down Rte. 3 and down Rte. 18 on the other side. It seemed that the hedge was very, very tall, but then I was a very little girl at the time.

My most vivid memory is the entryway gates. They were not held back by chains at that time and a kid would stand on the lower horizontal bar of one of the gates while the others pushed him to have a ride back and forth. One day when I was being pushed, we didn't notice a large rock in the way. The gate was stopped promptly by the rock, but I wasn't...that is how I got my first black eye.

The chapel was used as a work shed when I was young. I have to think twice now when someone refers to the chapel because I always think of it as the work shed. My dad used to say that the front west lawns were to always be used as a park, not for burials.

We kids spent hours riding bikes and playing around the cemetery. The Koi fish in the ponds were a favorite too. Spring Grove, at that time, was a place to relax and to enjoy.

Why Become A Friend Of The Cemetery?

By: Joann King

Friends of the cemetery - what does that mean? To me it means three things - people, place and preservation. Spring Grove Cemetery is more than a grassy area with various sizes of carved stones. The people honored there are the people who built this community. They were the merchants, mothers, professionals, laborers, builders, children and teachers on whose shoulders we now stand. Second, Spring Grove is a place that merges the past to the present. Historically, it is a part of the post-Civil War Cemetery Movement that created parks for both the dead and the living. Its original design included ponds, lanes and plantings - an idealic setting for strolling and remembering. Spring Grove is also a testament to the Medina women who organized the Cemetery

Association, raised the money and opened the new burial site in 1884. Finally, Spring Grove is about preservation - preservation of past monuments for present enjoyment and education. You cannot honor the people or the place without preserving its major elements of landscape, buildings and monuments. To be a Friend of the Cemetery is to carry on the tradition started by the ladies in the 1880's. To be a Friend of the Cemetery means to remember the people and the place as it was meant to be and to preserve it for future generations.