

FRIENDS OF THE CEMETERY

Issue 25

Medina, Ohio

December 2011

Winter in Spring Grove Cemetery



Old Town Restoration Progress

The first phase of the restoration of Old Town Graveyard was completed this summer. The work consisted of stone straightening, repair and cleaning. The contractor, mason Joe Cutlip, placed colored flags by each stone indicating what type of restoration would be done. Eric Daiber photographed 54 of the stones before the work began. Cutlip found sections of broken stones buried under the

ground, which he then reattached, making the stones whole again. It appeared that, at some point in the history of the cemetery, excavated earth had been placed on and around stones in the rows nearest to the Episcopal Church. Often, cleaning made the inscriptions more readable.

Cynthia Szunyog has begun numbering the stones,

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Friends of the Cemetery

445 W. Liberty Street, Suite 219
Medina, Ohio 44256
www.FriendsOfMedinaCemetery.org

To reach us:

info@FriendsOfMedinaCemetery.org

Teresa Merkle
330.722.1706
Cynthia Szunyog
330.722.5020

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Teresa Merkle
Cynthia Szunyog

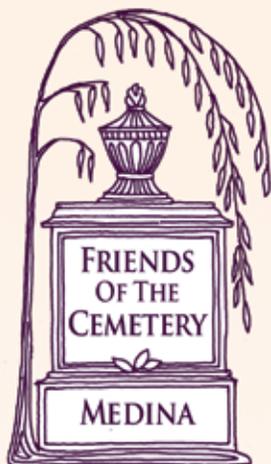
Photos

John Gill
Teresa Merkle
Cynthia Szunyog

Board Meetings

First Thursday at 7 pm
FOC office-Liberty Row
445 W. Liberty Street
Conference Room
Please call first.

Designed by Ron Bell/Advision



Continued from cover

starting at the southeast corner of the cemetery. The rows, which run north and south, already were identified by letters A through O as indicated on an old map of the cemetery owned by the Historical Society. We hope to build a database with before and after photographs, locations, complete inscriptions, and other information about those buried in Old Town.

Many of the tombstones bear the names of Medina's earliest settlers, Munson, Canfield, Clark, Barnes, Peak, Northrop, Scott, Badger, Harrington, Shepard, etc. Harmon Munson, the first burial, died in 1829, aged 91. Harriet Peak died at five years old in 1844. One of our trustees owns her doll, purchased in New York City by her father who had gone there to purchase supplies for his dry goods store. There are many similar stories. Although not many descendants may still live in the Medina area, this is a great opportunity for further research about these early residents of Medina. The Friends of the Cemetery are considering doing next year's cemetery walk in Old Town. We would be interested in hearing from anyone who has information about families buried in Old Town Graveyard or who would like to research them.



The Friends of the Cemetery recently approved another \$25,000 for development of Sections 19 and 20 in Spring Grove if, in exchange, the City will fund the next phase of the Old Town restoration. In addition, the Friends of the Cemetery are seeking more private donations for this project.

FOC Projects in 2011

The Friends of the Cemetery exist to further the beautification and preservation of Spring Grove Cemetery and Old Town Graveyard. We are proud of our record over the years of supporting and funding many projects in both cemeteries. As a review of our work in 2011, we provide the following look back at what we have taken on and the results.

Old Town Graveyard Stone Restoration – The Friends, in collaboration with the City of Medina, completed Phase I of this very significant project. In exchange for the City financing \$25,000 for this project, the Friends will fund \$25,000 for various projects in and around Spring Grove Cemetery.

Entry Gate Garden/Irrigation Project – The installation of the new entry gate garden complete with irrigation was finished in early fall of 2011. The project included new stone paver walkways from Spring Grove Street. Installation of irrigation lines on the Spring Grove chapel grounds was also a part of this project.

Tree Acquisition Program – This ongoing program is in partnership with the City of Medina. The Friends funded the purchase and planting of 11 trees this year.

Winter Tree Maintenance – The Friends fund annual tree maintenance such as pruning and cabling. We also purchase fertilizer for the City to use for their annual cemetery tree fertilization program.

Chapel Benches – The Friends commissioned Eastwood Furniture to custom make two oak benches that are replicas of the existing benches in the chapel. These provide much needed extra seating in the chapel.

Website Launched – The Friends’ website is up and running! Visit us at www.friendsofmedinacemetery.org

Lake & Perennial Garden Maintenance – We fund the care and maintenance of all lakes and gardens at Spring Grove Cemetery which include:

- Soldiers’ Mound Garden
- Pat Mears Memorial Garden
- Art Riedel Memorial Garden (at the chapel)
- Entry Gate Garden
- Columbarium Garden

Lunch for Cemetery Staff – As a goodwill gesture we provide lunch twice yearly – at the end of summer before the seasonal (college and high school) staff go back to school and just before the Christmas holidays.



Spring Grove Trees

The trees at Spring Grove are high on our list of priorities. This fall, in conjunction with the City of Medina, the Friends again funded the planting of eleven new trees at Spring Grove. Four Scarlet Oaks, four Nyssa Wild Fires (Blackgum) and three Frontier Elms were selected and planted on the south side of Section 16. The map depicts the Spring Grove trees with the trees that were just planted this year represented by blue dots, the trees planted last year (2010) by red dots, and all the

other trees at Spring Grove by green dots.

The Friends will also be funding \$3,500 for the annual winter tree work at Spring Grove. TreeMasters has been contracted again this year to do the work, which will be the fourth year of maintenance in our five-year plan. The fifth year of the plan (2012) will concentrate on the Old Town Graveyard trees.



2011 Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Cemetery was held at Spring Grove Chapel on September 18, 2011. The current slate of officers was re-elected to a one-year term and Trustees, Dennis Leach, Vickie Fleming, Teresa Merkle, Cynthia Szunyog and Janis Zachman, were re-elected to serve another three-year term.

Friends Receive Grant

The Friends were pleased to receive a \$250 general operating grant from the Richland County Foundation from the Wilbur G. and Esther L. Beer Donor Advised Fund. We appreciate the generosity that prompted this grant.

Spring Grove

STONE

Straightening

The City of Medina hired Joe Cutlip to straighten eleven gravestones that were leaning at Spring Grove Cemetery this past fall. We are pleased with the City's commitment to this annual project.

New members of The Friends of the Cemetery since May 2011

We welcome the following new members:

Peggy Abraham Andrea Martin Boyer Robert Dague Mary McDowell John & Pat Van Hoose
 Harry Barn Mary Jane Brewer Scott Hofstetter Pat McIntire Arline Westfahl

MEMBERSHIP LISTING

- | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Peggy Abraham* | Beth Streett Cassella | Irwin (Bud) Herrle | Medina County District Library | Jeanne Smith |
| Cynthia Allman | Ted Chandler | Gary M. Hetrick | Charles & Teresa Merkle | Dean & Margaret Snider |
| Charles & Margaret Anderson | Alice Chester | Tom Hillberg | Sarah Meyer | Nancy Spowls |
| Steve & Jane Anderson | John & Kathleen Clark | Jack & Patricia Hofstetter | Annette Miller | Linda Stekelenburg |
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| Ken & Kathleen Barco | Mike & Judy Davanzo | Sarah Jane Ingraham | Sally Otterbacher | Ray & Alberta Taylor |
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| Blackburn Family | Bob & Linda Fenn | Mary Kay Klein | Jane Riegger | Jerry & Marsha Whitnable |
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| Andrea Martin Boyer* | Audrey Filous | Richard & Joyce Komjati | Anita Robertson-Szucs | Don Wilder |
| Ruth Brenner | Vickie Fleming | Robert D. Law | Robert & JoAnn Robson | Rob & Chris Wilder |
| Mary Jane Brewer* | Fred Fri | Dennis & Bonnie Leach | George & Ruth Rodgers ** | Joyce Woolsteen |
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| David & Bea Bryenton | Raymond & Maryellen Furse | Ann McClaning | Jan Rusak | Gloria Yeager |
| Sue Bryenton | John Gill ** | Mary McDowell* | Gary Sabo | Ross & Dolly Yowler |
| Reg Campbell | Jim & Nancy Gowe | Thomas W. & Kay McFadden ** | Beckie Seeley | Jay & Janis Zachman |
| Edy Campbell | Charles C. Griesinger ** | Pat McIntire* | Lucy Sekerka | Betty Zarney |
| Don & Marilyn Canfield | Jerry & Sally Gunner | Susan McKiernan | Jim Shields | |
| Ron & Catherine Carmany | Barbara M. Harrington | Lyle McQueeney | Clay & Judy Smith | |

* designates new member

**designates Life-Time member

If you have not yet joined the Friends of the Cemetery, please do so today. For your convenience, we have provided a self-addressed envelope in this newsletter. Our membership schedule is included on the envelope flap. If you have been a member in the past, but have not sent in your membership in a while, please take time today to do so by using the enclosed envelope. If you are not sure if your membership is current, please call or email us.

Spring Grove's Four-Legged Bandit



Photo taken at Spring Grove Cemetery

Fortunately, through the years there have been very few incidences of theft or vandalism at Spring Grove Cemetery. Once in awhile though, folks do complain to cemetery staff that a silk flower arrangement placed on a loved one's grave has gone missing. It is usually assumed that if the wind hasn't blown the arrangement away, it's been swiped by some uncaring individual or mean-spirited juvenile. However, no one ever imagined a culprit such as the fat, furry fellow pictured in this article, but, that's just who - or what - was responsible for a slew of pilfering in Section 15 a few years back!

Mike Wright, former Spring Grove Sexton, and current Sexton, James Hjort, tell the tale of a time a few years ago when an unusually high number of complaints were lodged from folks about silk flowers and decorations missing from graves in Section 15 at Spring Grove. After investigation, no explanation could be made for this wave of disappearances until

a foundation order was received at the cemetery office for a grave located in Section 15.

Mike and James went out to Section 15 to dig the hole for the new foundation. As they started shoveling, grave decorations and silk flower arrangements began to surface

in and around the foundation hole. As the foundation hole got deeper, so did the number of silk flowers and decorations being unearthed. What started out as an ordinary foundation dig turned into a breakthrough into the mystery of the missing grave décor. It seems Mike and James were digging into a groundhog's tunnel that led to its underground home. It became obvious that the groundhog had been busy decorating his lair for quite some time with all kinds of cemetery furnishings. Both men were shocked by the size of the groundhog's cache, which mounded the back of their Cushman tractor! Since then, whenever things come up missing at Spring Grove, the four-legged bandit is always suspect.



Thoughts on a Summer's Day

Dolly Yowler

On one of the most beautiful, picture perfect summer days, I was running errands and got to thinking about my mom who passed away in 1969. Since I was driving close to Spring Grove Cemetery, I decided I would stop and make sure the flowers that were planted at her grave and the artificial flowers placed there were still intact. As I entered the cemetery gate, I noticed a newly planted entry garden. I've always known that Spring Grove Cemetery has special meaning to many people in Medina but every time I drive through the cemetery, I always notice that more and more updates are added to make it an even more beautiful and peaceful resting place.

Someone once asked me if I knew of any prominent people

buried in Spring Grove Cemetery and, as I was driving through on this beautiful July day, I was reminded that everyone buried in the cemetery is a very important person to someone; so I would say that every single person buried there is a "prominent person." Everyone is someone's loved one, spouse, parent, child, sibling, grandparent, aunt or uncle, cousin, friend, etc.

I think most people would agree that most cemeteries take on a special appearance on special occasions such as Memorial Day, Veteran's Day, etc. but this beautiful and random day was not any special occasion or any time in which anyone would be specifically coming to view the upkeep of the cemetery. It is well kept on a continual basis as if it were a special holiday. Another great thing about Spring Grove Cemetery is that it is

Continued on page 6

looked upon as one of Medina's city parks. Even though most would say that when one thinks of a cemetery, first thoughts are of a place to mourn or visit those who are no longer physically with us, Spring Grove Cemetery is more than that to Medina. It is a park in which the roadways attract people to walk while feeling safe and peaceful. Some may even take a little picnic lunch and sit by the lake on the benches to relax. I would assume many people who are there to walk also pay attention to the names on the tombstones and think about how many people they may actually have known who are buried in the cemetery. Many, I am sure, are names that are recognizable as long-time Medina natives.



FOC Trustee Teresa Merkle

Even though Saturday, September 24 had a rainy start, the sun prevailed by 1:00 p.m. and we enjoyed another lovely annual historical walk through Spring Grove Cemetery. Gathering first in our 1884 Spring Grove Chapel, Cynthia Szunyog welcomed the 30 folks in attendance and recounted the history of Spring Grove and its structures. The first stop along the walk was the large Celtic cross gravestone of Carrie Eva Hawthorne. Teresa Merkle shared her long-time interest in the Celtic cross gravestone and the lady buried at its base. She was surprised at the amount of information about Carrie Eva that she garnered from the Medina County District Library's Genealogy Room. Carrie Eva was born in Montville Township in 1866 to Charles and Elizabeth Kimball and moved to East Washington Street with her family when she was just one year old. A young woman ahead of her time, she graduated from Medina High School in 1884 and worked as a postmistress for eleven years. She was an active member of the Temperance Union and Ladies' Aid Society, and, in 1893, was elected to the Executive Committee of the Medina Library Association. She married William J. Hawthorne, the new St. Paul's Episcopal minister, at the age of 31. After her marriage, despite moves to distant places, Carrie visited her girlhood home yearly and it was on one of those visits in July of 1911 that she fell ill and died at the age of 45.

The Hawthorne Celtic cross is just

I have already chosen my plot at Spring Grove and the tombstone is in place. Some say it is morbid to think of things so early in life but I know, with close family members already buried there, how well kept the cemetery is and how much people on the Cemetery Commission as well as the Friends of the Cemetery care about the lifelong existence of the cemetery. It is always going to be a peaceful and serene place to call home when my days on this earth are over.

Thank you to all who take such good care of Spring Grove Cemetery!

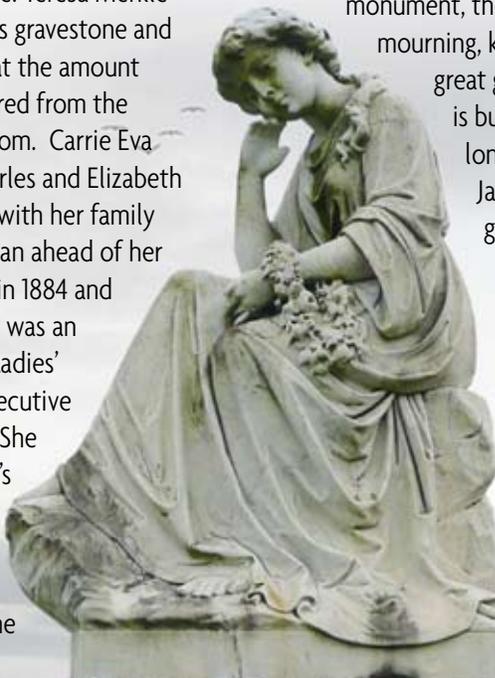


2011 Historical Walk

one example of the many unique and historic monuments at Spring Grove. Each one represents the memory of a person and/or family who played a role in the history of Medina. Strolling through Spring Grove is like being in an outdoor museum. Each of the monuments was designed and chosen with care to leave a legacy for future generations. It is so important that we work together to ensure that these monuments, along with the grounds in which they are set, are preserved and protected.

On the next stop of the walk, Jane Effinger Corbus, accompanied by Alice Chester, spoke first at the Anderson monument, the elegant marble statue of a woman mourning, known as "Prudence" after Alice's great grandmother, Prudence Anderson who is buried there. Jane spoke about the longtime friendship between Alice and Jane's mother, Velma Kelsner-Effinger, who grew up on adjoining farms on Route 57 in Montville Township and how this friendship between the families links the two statues in Spring Grove. Cemetery lore says that "Prudence" is forever admired by the statue of the pioneer, which marks the grave of Fairfax Smith—one of Jane's ancestors.

Both of these statues were originally placed at farm graveyards on their family land—Fairfax Smith at the Crofoot Hill Cemetery, and Prudence Anderson at



the Case-Anderson Cemetery. The “Prudence” statue is similar to the “Greek Muse” at Mound Hill Cemetery in Seville and may have been a catalog order. The “Fairfax” statue resembles photos of his children and grand-children and may have been a portrait.

Jane also talked about her great-uncle Fred Kelser (1895-1951), a World War I veteran, who is remembered fondly by former students in Medina. A musician, innovator and principal of Garfield School, he composed the Medina High School Alma Mater and taught Spanish to elementary school children. Cynthia Szunyog, Bob Fenn and David Kellogg were among his students. He also invented a word building course using a vocabulary wheel which showed the Greek and Roman origin of English words.

At the last stop on our walk, Bob Fenn spoke about the Wightman and Fenn families. His grandparents, Charlie Merriman Fenn and Lucy Wightman Fenn are buried near the chapel along with Lucy’s brother, Charlie Dexter Wightman. Nearby is the Fenn monument where Bob’s uncle, Percy Charlie Fenn, aunt, Clara Elizabeth Fenn, and father Sidney Morgan Fenn are buried with other members of his family. Charlie Fenn owned three liveries within one block of the Square. One was attached to the American House Hotel and another was attached to the Union House, which he owned. He also served as Councilman, Street Commissioner and County Commissioner.



On the right, Bob Fenn speaking about the Wightmans and Fenns

Charlie Dexter Wightman was a Medina attorney who served as head of the Republican Party, Medina County Prosecutor, Ohio State Senator, Medina Postmaster, and Chairman of the Medina County Red Cross.

Many kids growing up in Medina remember, as Bob does, delivering newspapers for his uncle Percy and Aunt Fern who

owned Fenn’s News Agency on the Square. They would sit and read the comic books until the newspapers arrived. Aunt Clara taught at Garfield Elementary School for many years. Many of us who were born in Medina remember Miss Fenn. Bob’s father, Sidney, was first a biology teacher (Bob remembers his father telling him to always start the day with two glasses of water.) and then principal and superintendent of schools, as was Bob. For over twenty years, Sidney Fenn served as Chairman of the Medina Service Unit of the Salvation Army and was known for his efforts to help people in need, who would often appear at his house requesting assistance. Bob’s mother, Doris, a second grade teacher at Garfield Elementary, died when Bob was 11 so his dad, Sidney, took on the role of both parents. Fondly remembered are the times Bob and his brother Raymond would arrive home discovering their dad in his apron fixing a warm meal for their supper. The Fenn family is a very old one and has given much to Medina.



Section 19/20 Development Progress

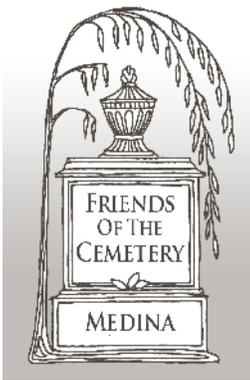
News will be forthcoming regarding the development of two new burial sections designated as Sections 19 & 20 and located on the east end of Spring Grove! The City has developed a

scope of work from which a design and construction proposal can be prepared. Stay tuned for an update in our May 2012 newsletter.



Dates for Removing Fall and Winter Grave Decorations:

We would like to remind those who decorate graves in Spring Grove Cemetery that Fall decorations must be removed by December 15 and Winter decorations by March 15.



FRIENDS OF THE CEMETERY

445 W. Liberty Street,
Suite 219
Medina, Ohio 44256

Don't forget to check us out on the web at: www.friendsofmedinacemetery.org

Become a Friend of the Cemetery

*"Show me the manner in which a nation or community
cares for its dead and I will measure with mathematical exactness
the tender mercies of its people, their respect for the law
of the land, and their loyalty to high ideals."*

William Gladstone



Memberships are available as follows:

Senior _____	\$10.00	Supporting _____	\$100.00
Individual _____	\$15.00	Heritage _____	\$250.00
Family _____	\$25.00	Lifetime _____	\$500.00
Contributing _____	\$50.00	Corporate _____	\$1,000.00

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Membership enclosed _____

Please return to:

Friends of the Cemetery • 445 W. Liberty Street • Suite 219 • Medina, OH 44256