

# The Legacy

East Cleveland Township Cemetery Foundation

April, 2007

Volume 1, Issue 3

## Thank You To Our Supporters and Volunteers

In the last newsletter we asked for your support in order to continue our work on restoring and renovating the cemetery, general support and/or for the garden project.

We thank all who stepped forward and provided financial support of our efforts. We also thank all who continue to help us reach our goals by donating time, effort and expertise to the project.

We honored our volunteers again this year at a dinner hosted by ECTCF President Bill Garrison on Friday, December 8, 2006. There were 81 individuals invited to attend the dinner and 34 attended. Each attendee was presented with the a Certificate of Appreciation for their contributions to East Cleveland Township Cemetery Foundation.

A special thank you is extended to all of you who support our efforts.

### Special points of interest:

- Cemetery Renovations
- ECTCF Welcomes New Board Member
- Community Sculpture Garden Update
- 2007 Calendar of Events



# Railroad: We Take Responsibility

By: Lee Batdorff



The article below appeared on [www.clevelandcircle.org](http://www.clevelandcircle.org) on February 8, 2007:

“The East Cleveland Township Cemetery, on E. 118th Street between Euclid Ave. and Wade Park Ave., is an under appreciated gem in University Circle. It is making a comeback!

The newly formed East Cleveland Township Cemetery Foundation took over the deteriorating cemetery in 2003. Prior, most of the cemetery fell into disrepair. Next door neighbor Marlin Wiley mowed the lawn visible from E. 118th Street and paid to have a damaged tree taken down.

While the 12 acre cemetery is amidst a several hundred thousand dollar renovation by the new owners, there has been one glaring problem that seemed out of control. Many spots on the outer cement layer of the long railroad embankment wall that defines one side of the graveyard were crumbling due to water seepage.

Piles of rubble lay at the bottom of the wall just about on top of several gravestones. Many observers were fearful that pieces of cement crumbling from high on the wall might hit the grave markers including that of a cousin or aunt of the 1936 gold medal Olympian Jesse Owens, Eunice C. Lester. Her family visited the cemetery, saw the rubble from the wall piling up close to their marker and requested the wall be repaired be-

fore the tomb stone is damaged.

In October 2004, Nancy West, the Foundation vice president and assistant secretary, wrote a letter to Norfolk Southern railroad. Not much came of this effort and other concerns took precedence until autumn 2006 when the Norfolk Southern corporate office in Philadelphia was contacted. First a message came back: ‘that wall is structurally sound.’ A couple days later the railroad also wrote, ‘we don’t own the wall and we don’t know who owns the wall.’

In 1999, after the north-eastern U.S. railroads were brought out of bankruptcy through the federally-backed Conrail, the railroad property was split up. Ms. West dug up two public documents that made the ownership of the wall look unclear. Once the holidays had passed, the new evidence was taken to CSX Transportation, the other railroad that came out of Conrail in 1999. First she was told to look for a numbered thoroughfare crossing sign.

The cemetery volunteers were considering sending a band of explorers to look for the marker amidst the vast spread of railroad tracks on the embankment behind the wall when the matter was sent to CSX’s Strongsville office.

‘I apologized for her running into a lot of run around to find a responsible party,’ said Marty Ludwig a staff engineer. ‘The outer cement shell on the wall is spalling. Otherwise, the

wall is sound,’ he said. Within a day of receiving the complaint at the Strongsville office, a bridge supervisor was sent to the cemetery and documented the problem. ‘As weather improves and workload allows, we’ll repair the wall,’ he said. Appearances are that this is likely to be in time for the planned completion of the cemetery renovation in 2008.”



After two years, a railroad claimed this wall. Wyane and son Jeffrey Rhine, of the East Cleveland Township Cemetery Foundation, with crumbling railroad embankment wall near gravestones.

## ECTCF Welcomes New Board Member

Kathleen H. Lambacher joined the Board of East Cleveland Township Cemetery Foundation in December, 2006 as a representative of the National Society of The Colonial Dames of America (NSCDA), Cleveland Chapter. The NSCDA is dedicated to furthering an appreciation of our national heritage through historic preservation, patriotic service and educational projects. The NSCDA is the 2nd largest owner of historical buildings in the United States.

The local chapter of NSCDA has chosen East Cleveland Township Cemetery as its local project. A commitment has been extended of \$10,000 to support the ECTC Foundation in building the endowment fund to continue to support the cemetery.

We look forward to the knowledge, experience and dedication the National Society of The Colonial Dames brings to ECTCF.

## Community Sculpture Garden Project Update

The garden will begin to take form this summer and fall. The electrical and plumbing infrastructure has been completed. ECTCF was honored with a second \$5,000 grant from Neighborhood Connections, a small grant program through the Cleveland Foundation to continue the garden project.

Trustee Michelle A. Day who spearheaded the garden project was unable to continue in this capacity. However, David Scharfeld from Lake View Cemetery has volunteered to continue the garden project effort as the project manager. The Foundation thanks Michelle for all her hard work in getting this project off the ground.

The Foundation thanks Dave for volunteering his vast experience and knowledge to lead this project to completion.



## Chapel Renovations



Chapel renovations continue and we are on track for completion. In the process we found another hidden fireplace in the office area. It was completely bricked in when we found it, and then rebuilt, you can see the work in progress in the picture to the right. The fireplace is in need of mantel and the foundation is looking for a generous donation of \$1,200 to have the mantel made to match the one donated in the chapel area.



We also got down and dirty in the basement with Dutch Harley taking leading the charge on shoring up the floor. Dutch then coordinated and supervised the refinishing of the hardwood floors in the chapel.



Baseboards are now being installed in the chapel area. The front side door that had been plastered over has been reinstalled and is now an access door to the office area again.

If you noticed the large pile of dirt behind the chapel area, the Foundation has been working with Don Gest, the developer building the townhomes on East 118th.

## Memorial Park Bench Project



You can provide a lasting memory of a loved one or honor a special person by purchasing a bench for the East Cleveland Township Cemetery Community Sculpture Garden.

This heavy duty park bench is constructed of solid plastic for durability, has 3 inch high computer carved letters of your personal message, up to 25 characters a line (including spaces). A corporate logo can be added to the bench. Call Wayne Rhine at 216.780.5530 for additional information or visit our website for a color brochure and picture at [www.rootsweb.com/~ohcuycem/](http://www.rootsweb.com/~ohcuycem/) (follow the link to Foundation information).



# 2007 Calendar of Events •

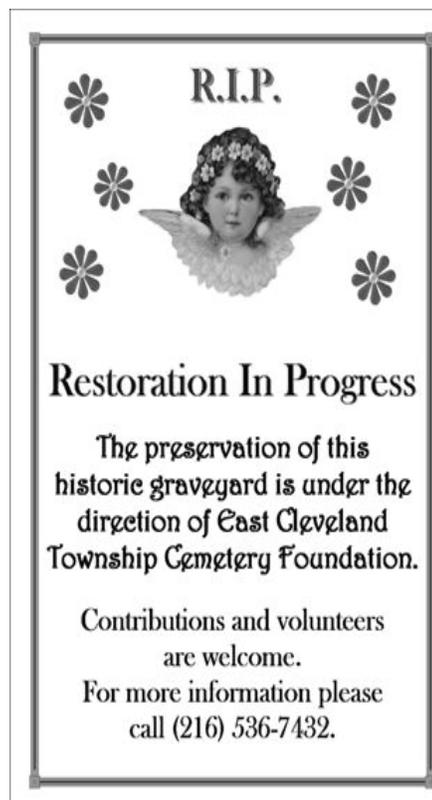
## Saturday, May 26 at 10:00 AM

ECTCF will continue our annual tradition of placing flags on the graves of the 431 veterans in the cemetery. The activity begins at 10:00 AM and takes only a couple hours to complete. We invite those assisting to join us for hamburgers and hot dogs after we complete the placement of the flags. This time is used to remember and honor our veterans. For those who have assisted in the past, we added one more veteran to the list this year.

## Saturday, July 14 from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

ECTCF will be hosting a grand re-opening of the chapel. The chapel renovations will be completed and we want to show off our handiwork. The day will be a family event that will include a historical walk through the cemetery telling the stories of some of our residents and a children's story time. ECTCF Trustee, Nancy West's book on the history of the cemetery, *To Dwell with Fellow Clay: The Story of East Cleveland Township Cemetery* will be available for purchase at this event. Nancy will also be in attendance for those who would like their copy signed. More information will follow as we finalize the details of this event.

Please join us for both the events above. If you have questions or want to participate, please do not hesitate to contact us at 216-536-7432.





**Trustees/Officers**

William L. Garrison  
President  
Allen H. Ford  
Vice President & Secretary  
Nancy L. West  
Vice President & Asst.  
Secretary  
Roy G. Harley  
Vice President & Treasurer  
Michelle A. Day  
Vice President & Asst.  
Treasurer  
William J. Culbertson  
Trustee  
Murray M. Davidson  
Trustee  
Bracy E. Lewis  
Trustee  
J. Wayne Rhine  
Trustee  
Kathleen M. Lambacher  
Trustee

*The mission of the East Cleveland Township Cemetery Foundation is to own and maintain the East Cleveland Township Cemetery as a historic landmark, to restore, preserve and share the cemetery's pioneer Victorian heritage and to build a solid financial foundation for the cemetery's future.*

*It's vision is to own, renovate and maintain an abandoned historic pioneer cemetery and to relieve the previous public owners of their need to use public resources critically needed for the general welfare of its people. The East Cleveland Township Cemetery Foundation will strive to set an exemplary example of community leadership and responsibility to turn a community blight into a community light.*

**East Cleveland  
Township Cemetery  
Foundation**

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**We're On the Web!**

**[www.rootsweb.com/  
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