



Are you thinking about purchasing space at Ferncliff?

Perhaps near a loved one?
Call about availability of property throughout our grounds.

Director's Insights
Commemorating Our Nation's 250th Birthday

This year, our nation will mark its 250th birthday, commemorating the ideals of freedom, courage, and community that took root in 1776. While Ferncliff Cemetery and Arboretum was established later, in 1863, our grounds tell another powerful American story, one shaped by sacrifice, service, and generations of families who helped build the country we know today.

As always, we are grateful to be part of this community's story... past, present, and future.

Warm regards,



Shelley J Baker
Executive Director

Ferncliff was founded during the Civil War, a defining moment when the future of the United States was uncertain and deeply contested. Since that time, Ferncliff has become the final resting place for veterans of nearly every American conflict that followed, as well as countless civic leaders, workers, educators, parents, and neighbors who quietly strengthened our community through their lives. Their stories remind us that patriotism is not only found on battlefields, but also in daily acts of service, resilience, and care for one another.

As we look ahead to this milestone anniversary, we are proud that Ferncliff continues to serve as both a place of remembrance and a gathering space for the living, a place where history, nature, and community meet.

That sense of shared heritage will be on full display again this summer as Ferncliff partners with National Trail Parks & Recreation District for the 5th Annual Buck Creek Boom Fireworks, scheduled for July 3rd. This beloved community tradition brings thousands of families together to celebrate Independence Day, as the fireworks will once again be launched from Ferncliff property and visible throughout the surrounding community.

As the fireworks light up the night sky, they serve as a reminder that celebration and remembrance can exist side by side while honoring the freedoms we enjoy today and reflecting on the generations who came before us. Ferncliff is proud to play a quiet but meaningful role in helping sustain traditions that unite our community.



Our Mission: Ferncliff serves its community with supportive, affordable, and inclusive end of life services in a beautiful, historic environment in perpetuity.

"Death ends a life, not a relationship. All the love you created is still there. All the memories are still there. You live on - in the hearts of everyone you have touched and nurtured while you were here"
- Morrie Schwartz,
American professor of Sociology @ Brandeis University



The Ferncliff Foundation, established in 2023, is dedicated to preserving and enhancing the beauty of Ferncliff's historic grounds and architectural landmarks. Through thoughtful stewardship, we ensure that this sacred space remains a place of peaceful beauty for generations to come. In addition to our preservation efforts, Ferncliff Foundation supports educational opportunities and events, bringing the community together to learn, reflect, and celebrate the history and the natural beauty of Ferncliff. Contributions to Ferncliff Foundation support these efforts, and we welcome donations from those who wish to help sustain Ferncliff's legacy.

We are deeply grateful for the generosity of those who have contributed to the Ferncliff Foundation. Your support helps us preserve, develop and enhance the beauty, history, and educational value of Ferncliff Cemetery and Arboretum.

We wish to thank the following donors for their generous support.

List of 2025 Donors & Sponsors

Grand (\$2,500-\$4,999)

Park National Bank

Partnership (\$1,000-\$2,499)

Chet & Judy Walthall
Shout It Out Design

Champion (\$500-\$999)

Dianne Storer
Jenny Deer Rollins
Tree Care Inc.

Friends of Ferncliff (up to \$499)

Darnell Carter
Wyandot Council on Aging
Barbara Merritt
Andrea LaMar
Katie Carey
Marilyn & Dale Kissell
Martin, Browne, Hull & Harper PLL

Amount Anonymous

Linda Nolton
Paul Schanher III

We apologize if we've overlooked your name, please call the office so we can include you in the future.

Consider Supporting The Ferncliff Foundation

If you enjoy our events, educational programs, and the beauty of our historic arboretum, please consider supporting the Ferncliff Foundation. Your donation helps preserve and enhance the grounds for generations to come. Please go to www.ferncliffcemetery.org or scan the QR code below and click the donate button to make a tax-deductible gift. We are deeply grateful for your support.



Getting to Know our Board Members:

Sharon Evans: Trustee

Trustee Sharon Evans brings a lifetime of leadership, service, and community commitment to the Springfield Cemetery Association and Ferncliff Cemetery and Arboretum.

Originally born in New Jersey, Sharon grew up in South Charleston, Ohio. She is a proud graduate of Southeastern High School and went on to earn a Bachelor's degree in Business Management from Central State University. Her dedication to lifelong learning continued with a Master's degree from Central Michigan University, and she later graduated from the United States Air War College, a distinguished achievement reflecting her leadership at the highest levels.

Sharon retired from the United States Air Force after a long and accomplished career, serving at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Retirement has only expanded her impact. She currently serves as Chair of the Clark State Board of Trustees, a role she has held for more than 18 years. In addition, Sharon is the Director of Christian Counseling at Greater Grace Temple, and in addition to The Springfield Cemetery Association, serves on several community boards, including Vice President of Ferncliff Foundation, Springfield Foundation, Bass Smith Connection, and Sheltered Inc.

Sharon joined the Springfield Cemetery Association and became a Trustee two years ago, drawn by a deep belief in community service. She values Ferncliff not only for its natural beauty and historic designation, but for the people

who steward it. *"The board consists of a group of community-minded people," she says. "It's a joy to be part of the group doing what's necessary to keep Ferncliff a premier final resting place for so many."*

Outside of her many professional and volunteer roles, Sharon enjoys spending time with friends and family, and she firmly believes in the power of joy.

"Laughter is really good for the soul," she shares. "There's nothing like being around good people and having fun."



We are grateful for Sharon Evans's leadership, wisdom, and joyful spirit. We are proud to have her serving our community through Ferncliff.



Ferncliff Welcomes

Kendra Hickman: new Event Coordinator and Record Keeper



Ferncliff is pleased to welcome Kendra Hickman, who joined our team in September as our new Event Coordinator and Record Keeper. A lifelong Springfield resident, Kendra is a graduate of Springfield South High School and went on to earn her associate degree from Clark State University.

Kendra brings with her a strong background in customer service, having spent 17 years with Assurant Specialty Property. Her experience, attention to detail, and people-first approach make her a wonderful addition to the Ferncliff team. She especially enjoys working alongside colleagues who share her appreciation for community connection and service.

Outside of work, Kendra enjoys crafting, experimenting with new recipes, and spending quality time with her family, including her two adult children and her six-year-old niece. We are excited to have Kendra as part of Ferncliff and look forward to the care, organization, and enthusiasm she brings to her role.

Did You Know?

That former city councilman John H. Thomas's monument is the tallest monument in Ferncliff Cemetery @ 32 feet high and is made from 88 tons of Barre Vermont granite.

Granite monuments offer a timeless way to honor your loved ones with dignity and beauty.

To learn more, visit us at Ferncliff or call 937-322-3491.

The Governing Body of Ferncliff Cemetery

Ferncliff Cemetery is governed by The Springfield Cemetery Association, a non-profit, volunteer organization established in 1863. The membership is comprised of 23-27 Association Members and nine Trustees. (* indicates Trustees)

Currently, these members include:

- Pamela Bennett
- Bill Brougher*, Secretary
- Jim Campbell
- Darnell Carter
- John Detrick*
- Sharon Evans*
- Wendy Ford
- Harold Goodrich
- Mark Grimes
- Daniel Harkins
- Dale Henry
- Sheila Henry*
- Deborah Hill*
- Darrell Kitchen*, Vice President
- John Landess
- Ed Leventhal
- Maureen Sheehan Massaro
- Julie McGregor
- Dan McGregor
- Dale Miller
- Peter Noonan
- John Ritter
- Reed Robertson
- Eric Samuelson
- Dr. Paul "Ski" Schanher*, President
- Steve Schumaker*
- Laurel Shouplin
- Jon Sterling
- Dr. Richard Umbaugh*, Treasurer
- Chester Walthall
- Patty Young

Welcoming Our New Association Members

We are pleased to welcome six new Association Members to the Springfield Cemetery Association and extend our sincere thanks for their willingness to serve. Please join us in welcoming **MARK GRIMES, JOHN LANDESS, MAUREEN SHEEHAN MASSARO, PETER NOONAN, JOHN RITTER, AND PATTY YOUNG.** Each brings valuable perspective and experience, and we are grateful for their commitment to Ferncliff's mission.

Their appointment comes at an important time for the organization. One of the initiatives identified in Ferncliff's Master Plan was the review and update of our Code of Regulations, the governing document that had not been revised since 1946. While the Code has guided Ferncliff faithfully for generations, modernization was needed to reflect current best practices, clarify governance roles, and position the organization for the future.

Over the past year, a committee of Trustees and Association Members, and guidance from our attorney, worked diligently to thoughtfully revise the Code. The revisions focused on modernizing language, recognizing the new and emerging digital tools, improving clarity, and ensuring the document accurately reflects how Ferncliff operates today.

One of the most significant updates involves our membership structure. Under the revised Code, the Springfield Cemetery Association is now formally organized into two distinct groups:

- 23 to 27 Association Members, and
- 9 Trustees, who serve as a separate governing body.

To be eligible to serve, each member must either own burial rights at Ferncliff or have a contract for future services. In addition, they must reside or conduct business in Springfield/Clark County, Ohio.

Previously, Trustees were included within a total membership cap of 25. Under the new structure, Trustees serve separately, resulting in 32 to 36 individuals collectively engaged in the governance and stewardship of Ferncliff. This expanded structure allows for broader participation, stronger continuity, and enhanced leadership as we move forward. Another important change was the introduction of term limits that will ultimately provide more opportunities for more leadership.

We are delighted to welcome our new members at this pivotal moment and look forward to working together as we continue to honor Ferncliff's history while planning responsibly for its future.



Spring Clean-Up is Coming



Monday, March 9, 2026

To welcome Spring and prepare for mowing season, Ferncliff's bi-annual cleanup will be held on Monday, March 9th, 2026. In order to keep our grounds serene and beautiful for all to enjoy, only the following items are allowed:

- Flowers in either an approved in-ground vase, in monument vases, or a monument saddle
- U.S. & military flags in a flag holder

We ask that all other decorations be removed by Sunday, March 8, 2026. Any remaining decorations will be disposed of.

Please see our Lot Decoration Policy on our website <https://www.ferncliffcemetery.org/lot-decoration-policy/> or call our office if you have any questions.

Historical Series with Dr. Schanher

Dr. Paul W. "Ski" Schanher III has been a devoted member of the Springfield Cemetery Association and serves as the President of the Board of Trustees. "Ski" is a retired, local dentist and is an active and respected member of the historical community in Springfield and Clark County.

The article below is next in the series written by Dr. Schanher.

Springfield's Heritage

In the late 1970s, an epic, primetime Emmy Award-winning series for outstanding limited series, based on author Alex Haley's family history that began with the African slave trade. "Roots" told the story of Kunta Kinte who was abducted from his village, sold into the slave trade, and taken to the United States to be sold on the auction block. The heartbreaking story left an indelible footprint into the hearts and minds of many who became mesmerized with man's inhumanity to man.

Whereas Springfield's heritage does not rival that history-making series, our early beginnings is a story that must be told. This session of our story begins in 1827 when Springfield was incorporated as a town. Dividing the growing community into nearly two equal sections was the Mill Run, then a beautiful rivulet that glided smoothly through the village of Springfield following a small valley."

A section west of the Run had several brick houses, stone houses, frame houses, and even some rustic cabins. As one might expect, two taverns, located in strategic areas, became the male residents' favorite hangout. This part of the village was called "Old Virginia" by those from the other side of the Mill Run. Northeastern Clark County was part of the Virginia Military District, an area extending to southwest and south-central Ohio to the Ohio River, designated for American Revolutionary War veterans who valiantly served our country. Most likely, some of those veterans from the Old Dominion state went further west and settled west of the Mill Run.

East of the Mill Run was affectionately called "Sleepy Hollow" by the residents on the west side. This section was located in the area around James Demint's public square. Apparently, there was very little enterprise there.

Both the east and west banks of the Mill Run were nearly unfordable due to steep grades as well as deep mud and mire. With no drainage the low ground presented even more problems. So that the townspeople could reach the foot-log bridge-like structure, they had to wade through even more mud and low swamp land. South of the Mill Run, the land from Center Street to Spring Street and south to the railroad depot was a continuous quagmire. The only way that Limestone Street was fordable was the corduroy bridge that the people constructed with brush underneath logs and dirt with gravel placed over that. Eventually, two enterprising Irishmen contracted with owners of the swamy land to ditch and drain the land, allowing for the area to become passable.

With the problem solved, more houses were built in "Sleepy Hollow" far surpassing houses in the "Old Virginia." The two public houses became the most popular destinations. A boarding house, several dry goods stores, a mechanic's shop and the printing office comprised most of the major businesses.

Follow Springfield's remarkable story in the next quarterly issue of Ferncliff's newsletter.

Honor a Life ~ Create a Lasting Tribute.

At Ferncliff Cemetery and Arboretum, we understand the importance of remembrance. Our quality granite monuments offer a timeless way to honor your loved one with dignity and beauty. Thoughtfully designed and crafted, each monument reflects the uniqueness of a life well lived.

To learn more, visit us at Ferncliff or call 937.322.3491

*Ferncliff Cemetery and Arboretum ~
Preserving memories for generations.*



Improving Access *With Dignity and Care*

At Ferncliff Cemetery and Arboretum, our mission has always been centered on service. Service to families, service to our community, and service to the generations who will come after us. This winter, we are taking an important step forward in that commitment with an upcoming renovation to our administration building, set to begin in February.

As part of this project, the former chapel space will be thoughtfully renovated and reimagined as an ADA-compliant meeting and gathering space for families. This updated area will provide a welcoming, comfortable environment for families to meet with staff, plan services, and gather during moments that are often both meaningful and emotional.

The renovation will include an accessible entrance, an ADA-compliant restroom, and an improved conference and meeting room, all designed to ensure that every visitor, regardless of mobility, can access our facilities with dignity and ease. These improvements reflect our belief that accessibility is not simply about compliance, but about compassion and inclusion.

We are especially grateful to **Springfield Foundation** for its generous grant support, which is making accessible parking spaces possible as part of this project. These parking improvements are a

critical component of creating a seamless and welcoming experience, ensuring that families can arrive, enter, and move through our facilities safely and comfortably. This partnership allows Ferncliff to enhance access for the community while remaining responsible stewards of our long-term resources.

This renovation represents more than a physical improvement; it reflects Ferncliff's ongoing evolution to better meet the needs of those we serve. By preserving the character of our historic spaces while adapting them for modern use, we are honoring our past while building a more inclusive future.

We look forward to sharing updates as construction progresses and are excited about the positive impact this project will have on the families and community members who rely on Ferncliff during some of life's most important moments.



Did You Know?

Ferncliff offers flexible pre-planning appointment options, including evenings and Saturdays, to better accommodate busy schedules. If weekday appointments are difficult, Marilyn from our Family Service team is happy to meet with you at a time that works best.

To schedule a pre-planning appointment, please call 937.322.3491 and ask for Marilyn.



Spring Forward: Extended Gate Hours Begin March 8

Daylight Saving Time begins Sunday, March 8th, 2026. We will be extending our gate hours so our visitors can enjoy more time here at beautiful Ferncliff Cemetery.

Starting that Sunday, the main entrance at McCreight Avenue will remain open until 7:00 pm. Both gates along Plum Street will still close at 4:30 pm.

Employee Spotlight Mark Goheen

We'd like to acknowledge one of the people who truly make Ferncliff Cemetery and Arboretum beautiful. Mark Goheen is a career arborist and valuable member of the Ferncliff family. Five years ago, Mark brought his expertise to Ferncliff after working at Wittenberg University.

A lifelong citizen of Springfield, Ohio, Mark attended JVS for Horticulture and mentored at Reid Golf Course, intending to work in Golf Course Management. However, after graduating from Clark Tech Community College, Mark became the Superintendent of Grounds at Wittenberg University at the tender age of 23. After marrying his beautiful wife Sheri in September 1988, they built a wonderful life together that includes their daughter Siara and her two sons Kai and Kel.

In the last five years, Mark has been responsible for the introduction of new tree species and maintaining the health of all the trees in our Arboretum. He even hosted a short YouTube series called 'Ask the Arborist', but perhaps the best insight on how dedicated Mark has been to Ferncliff and everything he does, is to hear the declaration of pride from his wife, Sheri-

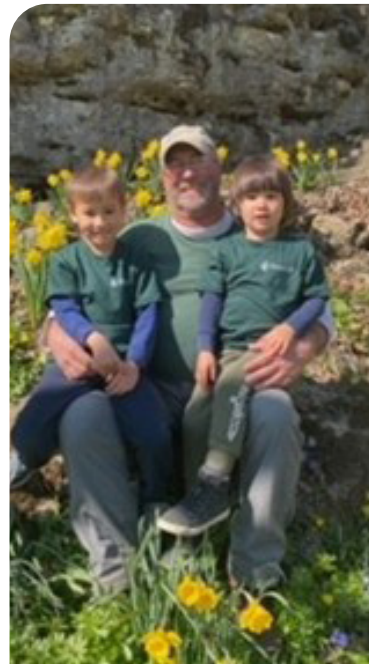
"My husband has always been the kind of man who gives 110 percent to everything he cares about — his work, his faith, and especially our family. He's genuinely one of the most dependable people I've ever known, and he

takes his responsibilities seriously, showing his love through the way he consistently shows up for us. One of his core values is 'When you tell someone you're going to do something, you do it.'

He makes sure that he does what he says he's going to do and has taught his family the same value. He loves hunting, fishing, and being outdoors, and now he's looking forward to retirement so we can slow down a bit and spend more time together. After all the years he's poured into providing for us, I'm grateful he finally gets to enjoy the life he's worked so hard to build."



We want to take this moment to extend our heartfelt gratitude to Mark for his commitment and dedication to maintaining the beauty of Ferncliff. His continued hard work has had an incredible impact on Ferncliff and the community.



Honoring Beloved Companions

Ferncliff Cemetery's Whispering Memories Pet Haven provides a serene resting place for cherished pets.

Pre-planning and memorial design options are available. Please contact our office to learn more. 937.322.3491

Coming Soon!

Natural Green Burial Options | Available Summer 2026

