



WALNUT GROVE & FLINT

CEMETERIES • WORTHINGTON, OHIO

# VOLUNTEER PROGRAM HANDBOOK

## **INTRODUCTION**

We extend our warmest welcome to you as a Walnut Grove and Flint Cemetery volunteer. By becoming a volunteer you also become a part of the Walnut Grove and Flint Cemetery family. By volunteering, you will enhance the cemeteries' ability to foster understanding and enjoyment of the natural and historic heritage of the central Ohio area. Thank you for taking the time to volunteer.

This handbook is designed to familiarize volunteers with the cemeteries and to provide information about key policies and procedures affecting volunteer opportunities at the cemeteries.

This is a reference guide, not a legal contract, expressed or implied. The content of this guide or any other statement or policy, whether oral or written, does not constitute or intend to create nor should be construed as a contract or enforceable promise of volunteers of any duration between the cemeteries and any of its volunteers.

If after review of the Handbook you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

### **Mission and Statement of Purpose**

Walnut Grove and Flint Cemeteries will provide quality volunteer experiences to educate and inspire citizens, and to encourage an appreciation of the history and landscape of the cemeteries.

Volunteering provides a public service that fosters stewardship of the natural and historic heritage of the cemeteries.

## **VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

A volunteer of the cemeteries is a person who offers his or her services in a non-paying and non-benefits position and supports and promotes the cemeteries, its goals, philosophies and mission to the public.

### **Volunteer Program Responsibilities to Volunteers**

The volunteer program will define and assign tasks and will provide the essential supplies and equipment when appropriate. Volunteers contribution will make them part of the cemetery team.

## **VOLUNTEER POLICIES**

### **Volunteer Background Check**

A limited local background check will be conducted on all individuals who will be volunteering for the cemeteries.

## **Safety**

Every volunteer plays a significant role in creating and maintaining a safe environment. Each volunteer is asked to report any accident or observed unsafe condition immediately to the Volunteer Coordinator or cemetery office.

## **Volunteer Requiring Medical Attention**

All accidents/incidents must be reported to the Volunteer Coordinator or other staff person immediately, or as soon as possible. Please complete the Accident/Incident Report Form and return to the Volunteer Coordinator or the cemetery office as soon as feasible. The cemeteries do not provide Worker's Compensation or health, accident, life, or property insurance for volunteers and their personal belongings. Volunteers are provided with liability coverage to the same extent as an employee while carrying out sanctioned and scheduled volunteer actions on behalf of the cemeteries. Coverage does not extend to gross negligence and/or willful intent to injure. In addition, effective September 16, 1997, the Volunteer Protection Act became law to protect volunteers from liability lawsuits.

## **STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

### **Customer Service and Family Questions**

All volunteers are expected to be courteous, respectful, and sensitive towards both visitors and staff. All volunteers are asked to respect each family's privacy to visit their loved ones. If a volunteer is asked about specific individuals please direct them to call the cemetery office for any help they may need.

### **Attendance**

All volunteers are asked to sign in on the sheet provided. If you are going to be unable to fulfill the task assigned, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator.

### **Ethical Standards**

The cemeteries insist on the highest ethical standards in conducting its business. Doing the right thing and acting with integrity with our patrons and with fellow volunteers are essential to our success. When faced with ethical issues, volunteers are expected to make the right professional decision.

### **Solicitations and Distributions**

Solicitation for any cause and distribution of non-cemetery literature during volunteer hours is not permitted.

### **Complaint Procedure**

Even in the best of situations, conflicts can arise and a volunteer may feel he/she has been treated unfairly. The Trustees and staff believe in harmonious and cooperative volunteer relations. Volunteers who have a question or complaint should first put forth reasonable effort to resolve the conflict. If the issue cannot be resolved please contact the Volunteer Coordinator or the cemetery office.

## **Ending Volunteer Service**

If it becomes necessary for you to end your volunteer service for any reason, please notify the Volunteer Coordinator. It is important for us to know that you are no longer an active volunteer. Occasionally it becomes necessary for the Volunteer Coordinator to ask a volunteer to leave because a placement is not working out. Usually, an attempt is first made to find a satisfactory alternative placement if desired and feasible. Volunteers leaving service will be required to return identification tags and any other cemetery property in their possession.

## **Suggestions**

The cemeteries Volunteer Program encourages all volunteers to share their suggestions and good ideas to improve the program and enhance the service to our community. Any volunteer who sees an opportunity for improvement is encouraged to communicate their ideas with the Volunteer Coordinator. All suggestions are valued.

## **History of Walnut Grove Cemetery**

Until the middle of the 1800's, cemeteries were usually graveyards next to churches. In the 1850s, St. John's Episcopal Church cemetery in Worthington was filling up, and a new cemetery was needed.

George Taylor, Horatio Wright, and James Fuson met in 1858 to make plans for a new cemetery. Months later, a second cemetery committee consisting of G.H. Griswold, C.E. Burr, and A.S. Chapman located the site for a new cemetery (Walnut Grove) and arranged the purchase of nearly 50 acres. N.H. Hoyt was paid \$2,150 for the land and Walnut Grove Cemetery was born. It was their original intention to sell all but ten acres, using the proceeds to fund the development and maintenance of the cemetery.

On January 29, 1859, James Taylor became the first burial at Walnut Grove. In February, 1859, the first trustees of Walnut Grove were elected: Richard Sevis, George Taylor, and G.G. Wilcox. The first clerk was G.H. Griswold, and the first treasurer was Horatio Wright.

In June of 1860, the Town Council of the Village of Worthington voted to join with the trustees of Sharon Township in operating and maintaining the cemetery. A cemetery operated by more than one municipality is thus called a union cemetery.

In 1879, a public vault, (then referred to as the "dead house") was built where bodies awaiting burial—especially in hard-frozen wintertime--could be kept (for a fee). About 50 years later, it was taken down as an undertaking of the federal government's WPA (the Works Progress Administration, 1930).

In 1916, a mausoleum was erected. In 1932, an additional 10 acres east of the original tract were purchased from A.L. Davis.

A columbarium wall (cremation niches) with 120 units was constructed in 1997.

In the past two centuries, the longtime tradition of graveyards right next to churches began to fade away. Church graveyards were filling up, and concerns about infectious diseases and public hygiene—as well as simply too many headstones crowding the graveyards—led to the development of garden or

forest park cemeteries, away from church graveyards. Walnut Grove and Flint Cemeteries include the graves of veterans from every American war but the American Revolution.

Today's cemeteries, as did church graveyards of the past, serve as a link to our past and a way to remember loved ones and all of those who helped build our communities and our country.

### **History of Flint Cemetery**

For the many centuries before written history, Native Americans hunted and lived their lives on the land we know today as Flint Cemetery. In the early 1700's, the first European traders entered the area and found people they named the Shawnee and Mingo hunting, fishing and farming this region, with principal towns near the confluence of the Olentangy and Scioto rivers.

The written history of this plot of land begins in 1800. President John Adams conferred 4,000 acres of land, including all of Flint Cemetery and Worthington, to the Reverend John Dunlap. In 1803, Dunlap sold the land to the Scioto Company, New England settlers who came west to make their homes in Ohio.

The following year, the Scioto Company divided the land among its shareholders. The Flint property's first owner was Glass Cochran, who owned 100 acres as well as several town lots in the new town of Worthington. Glass and his wife Mehetibel lived for several years in a house on the southwest corner of the Village Green.

In 1810, Cochran sold the Flint property to John Conine, who in 1821 sold it to Ozem Gardener. Gardner founded Flint Cemetery as a family burial ground. He was active in the abolitionist movement and helped nearly 200 enslaved individuals escape to freedom via the Underground Railroad. The remains of the shed used to conceal escapees is still partially standing just across the east border of Flint Cemetery. Gardner is buried on the south side of the cemetery.

Two additional parcels were acquired by the Sharon Township Trustees to bring the cemetery to its current size of a little more than 11 acres. In 1969, the Flint Cemetery became partnered with the Walnut Grove Cemetery and is owned and operated jointly by the City of Worthington and Sharon Township.

The first phase of the expansion at Flint was completed in 2006. Since that time the Trustees have been endeavoring to develop Flint into a cemetery of which the community can be proud. The Veterans Garden, Meditation Garden, and Children's Memorial Garden projects have been phased in over the past several years.

### **Closing Statement**

Successful volunteer relationships depend upon successful communication. Thank you for serving the cemeteries with your time and talent.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Walnut Grove and Flint Cemeteries Volunteer Handbook, and I do commit to read and follow these guidelines.

I am aware that if, at any time, I have questions regarding the Volunteer Program policies I should direct them to the Volunteer Coordinator.

I know that the cemeteries Volunteer Program policies and other related documents do not create a contract. Nevertheless, the provisions of the Volunteer Program policies are incorporated into the acknowledgement, and I agree that I shall abide by its provisions.

I also am aware that Walnut Grove and Flint Cemeteries, at any time, may on reasonable notice, change, add to, or delete from the provisions of the Volunteer Program policies. These changes will be communicated to me as soon as feasible.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer's Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Volunteer's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date