

Southern New Hampshire University

Historic Bridgetown Cemetery

A Reflection of a Changing Community

A Capstone Project Submitted to the College of Online and Continuing Education in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Master of Arts in History

By

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## **Abstract**

Bridgetown Cemetery, a small 22-acre cemetery located in the Bridgetown suburb of Cincinnati Ohio, is technically two cemeteries contained in one property. The first cemetery, named the First German Protestant Cemetery of Green Township, was established in 1864 in the Bridgetown community of Green Township, Hamilton County Ohio. It was established by German Protestant immigrants of the area, as a place to bury their loved ones in a rural area with a lack of burial options. As the population of Cincinnati, and subsequently Green Township and Bridgetown grew, so did the numbers of burials in the cemetery. Due to being laid out haphazardly in family lots, with no discernible rows, the cemetery found that its space for burials was quickly running out. In 1939, the trustees purchased 12.7 acres of adjacent land to expand the cemetery. After WWII, the cemetery developed the land to mimic the quickly suburbanizing area of Green Township and Bridgetown. Family lots and large 10 ft high headstones were left to the original sections, and the new sections saw straight rows, rigid height restrictions on headstones, and community monuments and gardens with landscaping, mimicking the changing tastes of the community surrounding the cemetery after WWII. This change in culture in both the cemetery and surrounding community will be shown using the archives of the cemetery and the construction of two walking tours, one showcasing the original cemetery and its unique features, and the other showing the new sections and how different the appearance is of the layout of the cemetery.

## **Dedication**

To my wife and children; thank you for your support throughout this process. Your love and encouragement allowed me to persevere through good times and bad.

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## Introduction

Bridgetown Cemetery is a unique piece of land situated in Green Township, Ohio. This township is located directly west of the current small city of Cheviot and shares a small portion of its border with the City of Cincinnati. This cemetery began as a small, rural cemetery focused on serving the mainly protestant German immigrant population of the area. Prior to the cemetery owning the land, the land was originally owned by John Cleves Symmes, a judge from New Jersey who bought 311,000 acres from the US Government in 1788.<sup>1</sup> Prior to early American settlers, the area which is now Green Township, Hamilton County Ohio was known as “kuliga” by the Shawnee Native American tribe, who considered this part of Ohio as their sacred hunting land. The term “kuliga” is a native term roughly translated as “pretty hand”, which was meant to describe the multiple creeks and streams that branched off of the nearby Great Miami River creating an open hand “look”.<sup>2</sup> As the cemetery grew in size, and stature, the focus began to shift to a more open and inclusive population. As Green Township began to grow and suburbanize, the cemetery had to grow and shift to reflect the changes in the surrounding community. The most significant acquisition of the cemetery, 12.7 acres of land in 1939, was developed into a lawn garden type of cemetery layout, which resulted in two halves of the same cemetery looking drastically different. The older sections look like a typical rural cemetery, with family lots of six graves mixed in with single graves, with all headstones laid out haphazardly.

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<sup>1</sup> Joe Flickinger, *A Bicentennial History of Green Township: Uncovering a Jewel in the Crown of the Queen City; 1809-2009* (Westminster, Maryland: Heritage Books, 2011), 4.

<sup>2</sup> Flickinger, 15.

The newer sections, opened in 1961, are all laid out in straight lines, with height restrictions on all headstones. Some sections are garden monument style, meaning all headstones are flush with the ground. Each section has trees and other landscaping planted throughout, as well as reflection monuments with benches built in the center of these sections where visitors can enjoy quiet moments of thought and reflection. These newer sections match the new subdivisions and housing with landscaping and trees planted and built in suburban Green Township post-WWII. The culture of the township had changed and with it the look and layout of the cemetery along with the surrounding area. The trends in cemetery layout and management had moved towards a more cohesive look and layout for cemeteries, while suburban communities established in much the same way after WWII, built with a more uniform and identical layout of housing, as well as the cultural change of tending to a landscaped and well cared for yard. This idea informs the cultural changes in the community, as well as in the ways that cultural institutions like cemeteries, schools, and churches functioned in the years after World War Two. This project is a walking tour, with both an online self-guided tour utilizing a tour app and a guided tour.

The first chapter of this project goes over the historiography of cemeteries, how they studied this topic over the years and any gaps that may be seen in the literature. Suburban research is analyzed in this chapter, as well as any gaps in this research that may have emerged. The second chapter lists the methodology and the historical lenses employed for the study of the cemetery and how it links to the surrounding area and how it shaped the development of the new sections. The third chapter discusses the target audience. The surrounding community is one that is diverse but is projected to change even more as the 21<sup>st</sup> century progresses forward. These changes dictate a particular target audience for the walking tour. The fourth chapter views the history of the cemetery, and the plan for the project itself, which includes both a self-guided

tour utilizing an app that can download on a phone and a guided tour. The fifth chapter lists the budget and the list of expenses that are incurred if the full project were to be implemented by the cemetery. The sixth chapter discusses the ethical issues that were uncovered during the research and writing of the project, as well as how to remedy them. A list of recommendations has also been flushed out for any future development of the project and the research located within.

Bridgetown Cemetery has changed and shifted in not only its burial population, but its physical layout over the last 150 years as burial practices have changed, and the surrounding community has shifted from a rural farming community to suburban bedroom community. This idea shows how the area has not only changed physically but culturally, both positively and negatively to being one of the largest populated suburban townships in the state of Ohio.

## **Chapter 1: Historiography**

The study of cemeteries is an often overlooked area when research is being done on local areas. The fabric of an entire community can be discovered just by reading a few headstones, or researching what symbols mean on gravestones. The different monuments can show different socioeconomic attitudes towards remembering the deceased. The idea of cemeteries reflecting the communities they serve is not new. What is new is that the culture of an area can change so quickly that it can bring changes to even the local cemetery. The changes that occur over time include the look, the layout, and the burial practices that often mirror the changes going on in the surrounding community. In the case of Bridgetown Cemetery, everything changed when the surrounding community began to transition to a suburban community. The formerly rural cemetery even changed its name, to reflect its inclusiveness of the population moving into the area. This study validates the secondary literature in suburban history/culture, as well as cemetery history by showing that no matter what changes are occurring in the surrounding community, a cemetery that is willing to adapt will adopt the changes in the culture of the area.

The conclusions of this project are based on interpretations made from the primary sources, focusing on the cemetery board minutes. These minutes have provided much detail about the concerns of the cemetery from the 1880's to the present day. Many of the interpretations made concerning several of the sources are different from the interpretations made about this project. The first is from the Zane Miller book about a suburb located about 11 miles north of Bridgetown and its development. Miller argues that this suburban area developed

despite the many attributes available in urban areas.<sup>3</sup> While this may be true for the area discussed in the book, the conclusions of most of the recent research indicate that there were many reasons for the development of suburban areas. The cemetery was no different. Many factors such as population change, burial customs, and expectations of the public affect the changes over time in a cemetery. A look at the history of the cemetery gives a good look at the change over time of an area, which usually does not happen when history is written of a cemetery, nor when studying the change over time of an area through a cemetery.

This study is unique to most of the research done on cemeteries and suburban culture because the cemetery began as a rural, religious specific cemetery. After the area began to change from a social and cultural perspective, the newer sections of the cemetery began to change as well. One of the many changes that took place in Green Township that caused considerable change in Bridgetown Cemetery is the increase in population in the township after WWII. Numerous subdivisions opened and created an influx of new residents to the area. These residents were a broad mix of citizens from the nearby city of Cincinnati. The area's population grew and with it a larger, more diverse population.

The cultural implications of the research include explaining how and why a cultural shift occurred in the Bridgetown area, and why the cemetery had to shift along with the geography of the area to stay relevant. There are some social implications in the study of the older sections, where the more prominent and more ornate monuments usually indicated wealth and power. The newer sections do not see this differentiation. Many of the sections are set up to be homogenous, and usually do not reflect wealth, power, or social status. This is significant because the

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<sup>3</sup> Zane L. Miller, *Suburb: Neighborhood and Community in Forest Park, Ohio, 1935-1976* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1981).

cemetery is now reflecting the surrounding community of suburban homes and subdivisions. These subdivisions are built to look very similar, which is reflected in the newest sections of the cemetery. The older sections reflect the rural cemetery, with crooked rows, uneven headstones, and a general mix of family lots in combination with single and double lots. No plan is followed for each section in the original cemetery. Therefore, each section in the newer part of the cemetery was planned with growth in mind, straight rows, and numerous walking paths to follow.

The archives used for this study are the archives of Bridgetown Cemetery.<sup>4</sup> This collection comprises several archival boxes of materials from the cemetery's history. This archival material begins in 1875 with handwritten burial records, in a hard to read German script. This material is the most fragile in the collection.<sup>5</sup> It is the only material that relates back to the beginning years of the cemetery in its original form. A couple of exemptions to this are digital copies of the county recorders book, which shows the sale of land from 1864 and 1865 when the purchase was recorded of the original acreage.<sup>6</sup> Another exemption to the original documents is the copy of the original incorporation of the cemetery association in 1897 with the Ohio Secretary of State.<sup>7</sup> Both of these documents, while copies, are indicative of the early years of the cemetery as a rural, yet official entity. The other parts of the archive include the cemetery board of trustees minutes, which begin in 1885. These were written in a German

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<sup>4</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, July 2000, Items from History of Bridgetown Cemetery, Formerly Known as The First German Protestant Cemetery of Green Township, Administration Building, Cincinnati.

<sup>5</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, Burial Records 1875-1914.

<sup>6</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, Recorders Deed Book Copy, 1865.

<sup>7</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, Incorporation Certificate, 1897.

script until 1929.<sup>8</sup> The names of trustees, officers, and other words and phrases are more natural to decipher, but significant areas have not yet been transcribed into English as of this time. The benefit of this material is that the minutes are written verbatim to what happened in the meetings, and convey different feelings during different time periods. The feeling of optimism after purchasing their significant addition of 12 acres in 1939 is quickly tempered in the early 1940's when WWII has entered into the historical record for the country. The optimism returns when meeting minutes begin to talk about taking bids for redeveloping their additional acreage in the 1950's, in the midst of the suburban boom that is taking place.

Another portion of the archives that add to the look and feel of the project is the photos located in the archive. Several of the older photos were donated to the cemetery by well-meaning families. The oldest photos date to the later 1920's and show newlyweds who lived close to the cemetery before its expansion. The photos were taken on the farm that was eventually bought by the cemetery, and the background shows the cemetery and several buildings neighboring the land that are no longer standing since the early 1960's.<sup>9</sup> This contributes to the idea of change over time and adds a sense of credibility to the archival materials. Without these photos, the sense of change would be more challenging to convey. The photos in the archive include several from the 1930's and then jump into the 1950's and 1960's. These photos also include trips they made to other cemeteries to view different types of layouts and monuments, as well as opening the newest sections in the 1960's and 1970's. Several brochures from the 1960's are the first for the cemetery in its history, as well as programs from the dedication ceremony which opened the new sections of the cemetery. The cemetery board

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<sup>8</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, Trustee Minute Book 1885-1919.

<sup>9</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, Photo Box 1, 1920's.

meeting minutes continue to show the trials and tribulations of the cemetery about sales, economy, and general history of the cemetery which includes hiring more seasonal help, as well as continued equipment purchases like a backhoe in 1995. These are strong components to the project and can compare the minutes to pre-expansion and suburbanization by showing the speed and ease of development of the cemetery, and the difference in burial and cemetery cultural practices.

The primary source base for the cemetery walking tour is unique to Bridgetown Cemetery. However, several other books that chronicle the history of a cemetery use similar documents to ground the narrative about the cemetery. The easiest one to see is the source used by another Cincinnati cemetery, Spring Grove. This source lays out the history of the cemetery by using similar cemetery board minutes and historic photos from their cemetery archives.<sup>10</sup> While the sources offer different materials, the formatting is mostly similar. The cemetery board minutes gives a brief historical sketch of the period when the meeting has occurred. The author of the Spring Grove book uses the same kind of source for the same purpose. This study is not using the same kind of source in a new way, because there are no other detailed records other than burial records to refer to for the study of the cemetery. Newspapers and other media mostly ignored cemeteries unless in an obituary. Even rarer are pictures that directly show the cemetery before the 1960's. Usually, unless a cemetery is of the stature of Spring Grove, which also serves as an arboretum and is the largest in the Greater Cincinnati area, there are no other photos that show the surrounding areas or the development of the cemetery. This makes the use of these photos relevant to the story of the cemetery and how it developed over the years and changed

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<sup>10</sup> Blanche M. G. Linden, *Spring Grove: Celebrating 150 Years* (Cincinnati, OH: Cincinnati Historical Society, 1995).



over time. This represents a significant gap in source materials for Bridgetown Cemetery regarding the look and feel of the cemetery through the years. Without these visual representations, the exact look and appearance of the cemetery are hard to show.

One primary historiographical debate that has taken place lies in the reasoning for the rise of suburbs. One of the sources, the Miller book which was mentioned before, cites that the rise of a suburb about ten miles north of Bridgetown happened despite everything the city of Cincinnati had to offer. This was one of the few sources that diverged from the prevalent idea about suburbs rising for a multitude of reasons, which resulted in a change of culture in the area.

Another historiographical debate is the further use of cemeteries in the future. Many of the latest sources cite the rising cost of business and the increase in cremations as barriers for cemeteries survival in the future.<sup>11</sup> Numerous sources from the 1990's backward do not address the future of cemeteries and their current use. These sources suggest a more substantial shift in cultural thinking towards the cemetery and its place in both urban and suburban culture.

The significant gap in the secondary literature is the lack of the study of cemeteries and how they mirror the communities that they serve. The cemetery sources, whether they are journaled articles or books, look at everything from the information that cemeteries give and can help, to why they developed out like they have been over time, to the funerary practices and what that informs us about society and culture during that period. The cultural sources give a broad overview of the rise of suburban society and culture in American History, which includes the boom of the suburban movement and the changes they incurred on the American landscape of society and culture. None of the sources even touches upon the idea that the cemeteries in the

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<sup>11</sup> Rachel Wolgemuth, *Cemetery Tours and Programming: A Guide* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 121.

United States are a mirror of the communities in which they live. This project will address this gap by becoming a voice that ties suburbs and culture together with cemeteries and how they helped guide the development and change in cemeteries as a result of the changes in society and culture. It is only by taking the two walking tours, and by pointing out notable names, headstones, monuments, and physical features in the older sections and the differences between the original cemetery and the newer laid out sections that this gap is indeed visualized.

The secondary sources to be used in this project are robust and give a general idea of the progression of thinking on cemeteries and their development, as well as suburbs and their development. Several sources also give useful information regarding the use of cemeteries in public history, such as in classroom outreach with school children. The sources used in this project will be discussed in two parts: Cemetery sources and Suburbs sources.

The first set of sources to be used is the cemeteries sources. Many of these sources serve as the backbone of scholarly research for the walking tour, including how to set up a tour and what and why to include various items from cemeteries. The first source to be used is *Archeology of American Cemeteries and Gravemarkers*.<sup>12</sup> This source focuses on both cultural and social backgrounds for practices in American cemeteries over the course of 200 years. This source provides a necessary background for early monuments and headstones in rural cemeteries, with striking examples to serve as models for the walking tour. The second cemetery source is "From Troubled Ground to Common Ground": The Locust Grove African-American Cemetery

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<sup>12</sup> Sherene Baugher and Richard F. Veit, *Archaeology of American Cemeteries and Gravemarkers* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2015).

Restoration Project: A Case Study of Service-Learning and Community History."<sup>13</sup> This source gives a much-needed refresher for how much is needed to complete a public history project like a walking tour. This makes this source a strong background example for the tour.

A significant source for one of the cemeteries that moved to Bridgetown Cemetery is based on headstone readings and meant for a genealogy audience. The Dickore article titled "The Cheviot, Ohio Cemetery" is one that provides necessary background material for the section of the project that will be devoted to an older cemetery that moved to Bridgetown Cemetery and its grounds.<sup>14</sup> The article's strength is in its ability to provide a much-needed source for a significant portion of the project. The article's information helps address a significant gap in the literature regarding this cemetery which was disinterred by the city of Cheviot in 1976 and moved to Bridgetown Cemetery. Only one picture is known to exist of the burial ground which dates to the early 1800's, which also contained in its grounds the remains of a Green Township resident killed in the Battle of Monterey Mexico in the Mexican War.<sup>15</sup> The Goffinet source, which is titled *Mapping and Documenting Cemeteries*, is a reliable source for the walking tour for helping with making sense of the older sections to create a map of various men and women who could be significant components of the tour itself.<sup>16</sup> The Hauscher source, titled *Talking Tombstones: History in the Cemetery*, is not the strongest of sources, but provides

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<sup>13</sup> Steven B. Burg, "'From Troubled Ground to Common Ground': The Locust Grove African-American Cemetery Restoration Project: A Case Study of Service-Learning and Community History," *The Public Historian* 30, no. 2 (2008).

<sup>14</sup> Marie Dickore, "The Cheviot, Ohio Cemetery," *Bulletin of the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio*, 1st ser., 14 (January 1956).

<sup>15</sup> "Cincinnati Daily Enquirer," *Cincinnati Daily Enquirer*, July 3, 1847.

<sup>16</sup> Pamela Goffinet, *Mapping & Documenting Cemeteries* (Lexington, Ky: CreateSpace, 2013).

the benefits of beginning walking tours and other programs for cemeteries, and could provide several reasons why some areas of a walking tour may not be very ethical.<sup>17</sup> The Keister source, titled *Stories in Stone: A Field Guide to Cemetery Symbolism and Iconography* provides the necessary background of all the symbols on headstones that could make a successful tour.<sup>18</sup> The book's information is the primary strength of the source. It gives multiple pictorial examples so that there is no mistaking what the author is referring to.

In the source *The Sacred Remains: American Attitudes Toward Death, 1799-1883*, the author makes an effort to explain not only the attitudes of 19<sup>th</sup>-century people towards death, but also the principal reasons why and how funerary traditions evolved the way they did, and how these affected cemeteries in rural and urban areas.<sup>19</sup> Both the Linden book covering Spring Grove and the Strangstad book titled *Graveyard Preservation Primer* provide the necessary materials for examples of rural and suburban cemeteries to potentially use in the tour.<sup>20 21</sup> These sources provide ways of setting up tours safely, as well as why more modern cemeteries were designed they way they were. The Suchan article titled *Memento Mori* gives solid reasons for

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<sup>17</sup> A. N. Hamscher, "Talking Tombstones: History in the Cemetery," *OAH Magazine of History* 17, no. 2 (January 01, 2003).

<sup>18</sup> Douglas Keister, *Stories in Stone a Field Guide to Cemetery Symbolism and Iconography* (Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith, Publisher, 2004).

<sup>19</sup> Gary Laderman, *The Sacred Remains: American Attitudes Toward Death, 1799-1883* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

<sup>20</sup> Blanche M. G. Linden, *Spring Grove: Celebrating 150 Years* (Cincinnati, OH: Cincinnati Historical Society, 1995).

<sup>21</sup> Lynette Strangstad, *Graveyard Preservation Primer* (AltaMira Press, 2013).

outreach into cemeteries, and why and how they can be used to build an audience for local history.<sup>22</sup>

The Wolgemuth book titled *Cemetery Tours and Programming: A Guide* is the strongest of all the sources dealing with tours. This source is written by a person who is a historian and a cemetery administrator.<sup>23</sup> It is the most complete of all the public history books regarding putting together a tour program. The final source by Yalom titled *The American Resting Place: Four Hundred Years of History Through Our Cemeteries and Burial Grounds* provides the necessary background for objects on tour like receiving vaults that have not been covered in other sources.<sup>24</sup>

The suburban sources are all pretty reliable, even though there are less of them. These are all books that are some of the leading books regarding the study and growth of suburban areas in the United States. Many of these authors cite one another's work as well.

The first two are the earliest titles that helped set the stage for the study of the American suburb and the culture that created them. The Jackson book titled *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of America* is considered to be the most reliable, most well-versed source on local culture.<sup>25</sup> It was also one of the earliest. It is listed as a source in many of the titles about

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<sup>22</sup> Laura Suchan, "Memento Mori," *The History Teacher*, 1st ser., 42 (2008).

<sup>23</sup> Rachel Wolgemuth, *Cemetery Tours and Programming: A Guide* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016).

<sup>24</sup> Marilyn Yalom, *The American Resting Place: Four Hundred Years of History Through Our Cemeteries and Burial Grounds* (Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin, 2008).

<sup>25</sup> Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

suburbanization in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Miller book, titled *Suburb: Neighborhood and Community in Forest Park, Ohio, 1935-1976* gives a suitable background for reasons that a nearby suburb grew and prospered.<sup>26</sup> Unfortunately, the findings are that the suburb grew despite itself and the nearby city of Cincinnati. This assumption regarding suburbs after WWII takes its strength down as a source. The final three sources by Duany, Fishman, and Hayden, all do an excellent job of setting the stage for suburban development and the changes that these bring. These are all twenty-first-century books which provide useful overviews of the changes in both politics, society, and culture that the suburban movement brought in the twentieth century. The Duany book “Suburban Nation”, focuses on the culture that has been created as a result of the rise of suburbs in the United States.<sup>27</sup> The Fishman source focuses on the social aspects of suburbs through the eyes of a urban historian.<sup>28</sup> Finally, the Hayden source focuses on the politics involved with building out metropolitan areas surrounding the urban populations.<sup>29</sup> Without these recent sources, many of the ideas about suburbs may not be flushed out fully.

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<sup>26</sup> Zane L. Miller, *Suburb: Neighborhood and Community in Forest Park, Ohio, 1935-1976* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1981).

<sup>27</sup> Andres Duany, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck, *Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream* (New York: North Point Press, 2010).

<sup>28</sup> Robert Fishman, *Bourgeois Utopias the Rise and Fall of Suburbia* (New York: Basic Books, 2008).

<sup>29</sup> Dolores Hayden, *Building Suburbia: Green Fields and Urban Growth, 1820-2000* (New York: Vintage Books, 2004).



**Figure 1: Green Township Cemetery. Only known image.<sup>30</sup>**

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<sup>30</sup> “*Archives of Green Township Historical Association*,” Cincinnati Ohio: Photo Box 1.

## **Chapter 2: Methodology**

Several research questions that have come up in initial gathering of both primary and secondary sources include: How have the changes in the surrounding community, which have shifted from 19<sup>th</sup> century rural farming, to 21<sup>st</sup> century booming suburb, resulted in a different look from the oldest sections of the cemetery to the newest sections of the cemetery? How is this reflection of the shifting culture from rural to suburban culture in 20<sup>th</sup> Century America a symbol of the shifting populations from urban to suburban? With regards to the first research question, the rural cemetery which the original section most replicates is very different from the manicured grass, and straight rows of the newer sections. The newer sections take little time to trim and mow compared to the older sections, where zero-turn mowers have to stop and avoid headstones and other 19th century monuments regularly.

The second question is answered in the layout of the cemetery as well. The shift in culture, which happened very fast after WWII, saw farm fields and animal pastures disappear in favor of housing developments organized in a way that maximizes efficiency for profit and land use was the norm. This was the case in the newer sections of the cemetery as well. The older sections were not laid out in symmetrical lines, meant to squeeze as many graves into a row as possible. These older sections were laid out in a way that families had whole family plots of six to eight graves at their disposal. They also had the option of buying single plots. There were no restrictions on the types, number, or heights of headstones and their placement. This change can be observed from the original entrance all the way to the beginning of the newer sections. The newer sections were laid out in the 1950's, as the surrounding community of Green Township was beginning to suburbanize rapidly.



The standard that historians use to judge their sources, as well as the judgment used to sort and judge their sources validity, surround the use of bias as well as objectivity. The bias that can become evident in the selection of sources could be all slanted towards one idea or does not give the reader or scholarly community other viewpoints. The use of other viewpoints can help flush out other ideas and interpretations. If this cannot be completed, then the historical research becomes more of a one-sided narrative. With regards to objectivity, the historian must remain professional and courteous towards other ideas, faiths, backgrounds, and political ideas. Without the objectivity a historian can bring, the project can alienate one group or multiple groups, rendering the research more of a controversial item, instead of a thoughtful, inclusive research project that includes multiple perspectives and allows for new interpretations. The sources historians choose are meant to be supportive of currently accepted ideas, or can be used to support newer interpretations.

The cultural history that is represented by Bridgetown Cemetery is immense. In more recent years, “cultural historians have called their analyses of popular images and uses of the past the study of memory.”<sup>31</sup> Cultural history has changed over time in Green Township, and Bridgetown Cemetery has shown this change over history. When looking at suburban areas, the change in culture in the areas that have changed brings much upheaval. The cultural standards that were once prevalent are now non-existent. Many of the sources chosen for the project present numerous theories and ideas for why rural areas were quick to suburbanize, especially after WWII. While there are no new ideas presented in this project, this project and its cultural

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<sup>31</sup> Karen Halttunen, ed., *A Companion to American Cultural History* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, 2008), 371.

history sources are meant to present the audience with relevant sources which explain why the area and the existing cemetery were quick to change their cultural practices.

While many of the sources chosen for the project display some inherent bias, the bias used by the source authors is useful to help flush out reasons for the different groups who moved to suburbs, and why some suburban areas are in various stages of development even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This applies to the cemetery as well, with changes occurring which predicate the need for a cremation-only section. This is in response to the needs of the community, which are changing even still today. While several suburban history sources predict the eventual downfall of suburban areas, one only needs to look at the bias of the author. Since these are urban historians or planners, their interest or occupation deals with cities. Suburban areas develop differently than urban areas. They are much more fluid with change than urban areas. This is good to show outside perspectives regarding suburban areas. Not all sources should be supportive of the development that has occurred, and these sources serve as a necessary counter-balance to the supportive works on suburbanization. The cemetery board meeting minutes show that the board has had to deal with various issues surrounding redevelopment and other outside instances of change. Some of these changes like increased population necessitated enlarging the cemetery, then having to develop the new property in a new and different way. These older sections were laid out in a way that was typical in rural cemeteries. The new population was expecting that their surroundings will be manicured, and orderly, the same as their new subdivisions. These changes in culture show that the studies of culture “primarily seek to understand the interrelationships between different versions of the past in public.”<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Halttunen, 372.

The sources chosen are from two research areas. The first area is the cemetery history/cultural lens research. The second is the suburban growth/cultural lens area. The cemetery history secondary sources fit in well with the development of Bridgetown Cemetery. The management, layout, and cultural and social symbols related to a funerary object like receiving vaults and headstones will be explained quite extensively. The primary sources from the cemetery fit very nicely as well. The cemetery board minutes reflect the change from rural to suburban quite effectively, yet allow the reader to interpret the changes through their own bias, and allow for objective interpretations to be made.<sup>33</sup> Cultural historians can employ their “new approaches...and emphasize the many different meanings that could be derived from the same historical representation.”<sup>34</sup> The secondary sources allow for explanations of the primary sources objectively. Without this, symbols on headstones may be misinterpreted, or different sections in the cemetery could be misinterpreted as well. The suburban growth/cultural history lens gives credibility to the reasons for the growth. This growth is reflected in the primary sources. Once again, the cemetery board minutes reflect optimism during the post-WWII period. This optimism wavers at times through the various economic changes and issues, as some meetings reflect the need for more equipment to keep up with grass cutting, while some reflect the economic issues businesses faced during the significant recession of the mid-2000’s, resulting in major cutbacks. All of these events tie into the surrounding community, which saw significant accomplishments with building new subdivisions, and major setbacks with the foreclosure on homes in the mid-2000’s. This is seen as Halttunen said: “the study of collective

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<sup>33</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, July 2000, Trustee Minutes Book, 1919-1939  
Formerly Known as The First German Protestant Cemetery of Green Township, Administration Building,  
Cincinnati, Ohio.

<sup>34</sup> Halttunen, 372.

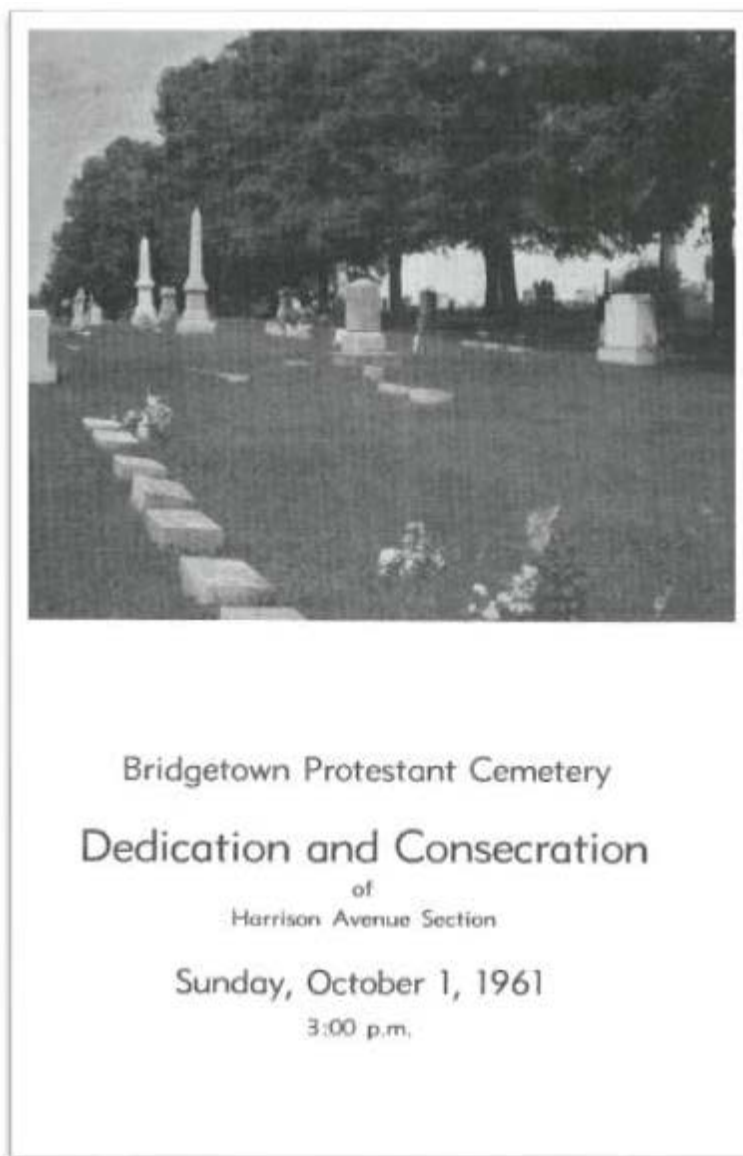
memory has been inextricably intertwined with the study of collective identity.”<sup>35</sup> In other words, even though the identity of the area was changing, their memories of the area and cemetery could be seen and validated through the primary and secondary sources related to the cemeteries change over time. Just by the number of years that the cemetery has existed and changed, it is seen how the cemetery has persevered over the last 150 years by as Loulanski said a “culture and landscape cared for by the community...passed on to the future to serve peoples need for a sense of identity and belonging.”<sup>36</sup> Without a sense of belonging or relationship with the cemetery and the surrounding community, the possibility of being forgotten is immense. These memories of the cemetery and its relationship to the surrounding community have been hidden in the cemetery archives, tucked away in the trustee meeting books, only opened by cemetery employees when a question about policy or procedures arises. The culture that is addressed through the years by the primary and secondary sources is the idea that “memory takes root in the concrete, in spaces, gestures, images, and objects.”<sup>37</sup> Burial grounds like Bridgetown Cemetery often are overlooked because very little documentation is left behind to explain how and why the property evolved as it has alongside the community. These memories often are the foundation for explaining why the area so fondly remembers its past.

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<sup>35</sup> Halttunen, 373.

<sup>36</sup> Tolina Loulanski, "Revising the Concept for Cultural Heritage: The Argument for a Functional Approach," *International Journal of Cultural Property* 13, no. 2 (May 2006), 209.

<sup>37</sup> John Tosh, *Historians on History*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2013), 334.



**Figure 2: Program from Opening of New Sections, 1961<sup>38</sup>**

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<sup>38</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, Photo Box 1.

### Chapter 3: Target Audience

When looking for the audience for a topic like cemeteries, twenty-first-century ideas need to be taken into consideration. A tour at Bridgetown Cemetery needs to “understand the nature, motivations, and expectations and needs of existing audiences, and to build an enduring relationship with them, and to develop and then retain new audiences.”<sup>1</sup> Without knowing the basic who, where, and why your audience is coming from, problems and issues can arise with these tours, from not meeting the needs of the tour takers to not providing the necessary information, to not garnering repeated tours or the sought after word of mouth that renders many walking tours successful. These tours could be categorized as a “special interest” grouping or category, or “linking groups of people according to interest in or relationship with particular subjects/products.”<sup>2</sup>

The target audience for a project like this is based on the idea of allowing as many people interested in seeing and experiencing this walking tour as possible. Green Township, Hamilton County Ohio is a suburban bedroom community located just outside of the Midwestern city named Cincinnati. According to the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, which has compiled demographic data for the area, Hamilton County’s population is aging in place and getting older. While the Cincinnati metropolitan region is experiencing population growth, on the whole, the central county, Hamilton County is losing population.<sup>3</sup> According to the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, a reversal in this decline is expected to begin

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<sup>1</sup> Graham Black, *The Engaging Museum : Developing Museums for Visitor Involvement* (Hoboken: Routledge, 2012), 6.

<sup>2</sup> Black, 11.

<sup>3</sup> Hamilton County Commissioners, Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission, Population: Community Compass Report 15-1 (Cincinnati, OH: Hamilton County Commissioners, 2004), 5.

after 2014.<sup>4</sup> The report goes into detail regarding the demographics of the area, as it states that “the wealthy and middle class move to suburbs, while poor and lower to middle-income groups remain in the central city.”<sup>5</sup> Green Township has seen sustained growth since the end of WWII, the most substantial growth in the 1970’s and 1980’s.<sup>6</sup> The core audience of the walking tour is middle to upper class, over the age of 35. While specific data relating to Green Township cultural events is difficult to find, several organizations can provide specific insight into the expectations for a walking tour, including how many visitors to expect, and who may attend.

The local history repository of record for Bridgetown Cemetery is the Green Township Historical Association. The mission of the Green Township Historical Association is “to preserve and spread an appreciation of the history of Green Township. We provide a central agency for collecting, collating, and disseminating historical data, information, and small artifacts relating to Green Township’s history.”<sup>7</sup> The Green Township Historical Association holds six meetings a year, which comprise of a featured speaker, and a general business meeting. The two meetings which featured a presentation covering the history of Bridgetown Cemetery drew crowds of 75 in 2000, and 55 in 2014. The participants included a mixture of both members and guests.<sup>8</sup> Green Township Historical Association’s membership averages around

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<sup>4</sup> Population: Community Compass Report 15-1, 6.

<sup>5</sup> Population: Community Compass Report 15-1, 13.

<sup>6</sup> Joe Flickinger, *A Bicentennial History of Green Township: Uncovering a Jewel in the Crown of the Queen City; 1809-2009* (Westminster, Maryland: Heritage Books, 2011), 57.

<sup>7</sup> "About Us," Green Township Historical Association, accessed October 27, 2018, <http://www.greentwphistory.org/p/about-us.html>.

<sup>8</sup> *Archives of Green Township Historical Association*, Officers Meeting Minutes, Green Township Historical Association Minute Book, Cincinnati Ohio.

135-150 every year, and skews heavily towards the middle to upper classes, as well as mostly retired. Average attendance for historical association meetings is 60.<sup>9</sup>

Bridgetown Cemetery Association is the current legal corporation that owns and operates the cemetery. The cemetery's board of trustees held a ceremony in June 2014 to celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the original acreage of the cemetery, and to officially rededicate the cemetery and the refurbished receiving vault.<sup>10</sup> The audience numbered 32, which included cemetery trustees, township trustees, the state senator for the area, several members of Pilgrim United Church of Christ, the Pastor of the Pilgrim United Church of Christ, several members of the Green Township Historical Association including its president, and several members of the neighboring Westwood Historical Society and its president. The cemetery invited all of the audience who gathered. The Green Township VFW participated by presenting flags and playing taps for the military veterans buried in the cemetery, and a local Boy Scout group assisted the VFW with carrying in flags for the ceremony.<sup>11</sup>

Another neighboring historical society, Coleraine Historical Society, regularly hosts a "historical cemetery tour" in Colerain Township, which is located directly north and shares a border with Green Township. The mission of the Coleraine Historical Society is to "help people connect with the township's past in order to understand the present and create a better future."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Archives of Green Township Historical Association, Green Township Historical Association Officers Minute Book.

<sup>10</sup> "Bridgetown Cemetery 150th Anniversary Rededication," Bridgetown Cemetery, accessed October 27, 2018, <http://www.bridgetowncemetery.com/>.

<sup>11</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*. Trustee Meeting Minutes, October 2014, Formerly Known as The First German Protestant Cemetery of Green Township, Administration Building, Cincinnati, Ohio.

<sup>12</sup> "About Us," The Coleraine Historical Society Inc. - About Us, accessed October 27, 2018, <http://www.colerainehistorical-oh.org/about-us/>.



This self-guided tour includes several maps of local cemeteries located in Colerain Township, Hamilton County Ohio. The tour averages around 25-30 participants per year. The average annual attendance at their regular meetings is 20-30 people, heavily leaning towards mostly members and few guests<sup>13</sup>

Based upon the demographics data from Hamilton County regarding the suburbs of Hamilton County surrounding the city of Cincinnati, and the data from Bridgetown Cemetery, Green Township Historical Association, and Coleraine Historical Society, a guided tour can expect an audience of on average 25 participants who are mostly middle to upper class, older than 35-40 years old, with interest in their communities. Proper advertising and notification should be made to the historical groups in the area to maximize the attendance at a guided tour. Proper notification and advertising would need to be done as well as signage in the cemetery in order for those interested to take the guided tour on the Pocketsights app. In addition, proper precautions would need to be taken in order to make aware any patrons of the guided tour or self-guided tour that proper shoes would need to be worn, as well as walking on ground that is not completely flat may occur. According to Black, tours and heritage sites like this “urgently need to sharpen up their external image and appearance to match the standards demanded by the modern consumer, and make themselves at least attractive to the potential visitor as shopping and afternoon coffee.”<sup>14</sup> Without appropriate preparation, beginning tours like this may not survive if all interests are not adequately vetted and listened to.

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<sup>13</sup> *Archives of The Coleraine Historical Society*, 2017 Coleraine Historical Society Yearly Report. Report. Cincinnati, OH: Coleraine Historical Society Museum & Archive, 2018.

<sup>14</sup> Black, 38.



**Figure 3: One of the Oldest Photos of the original sections, estimated late 1940's.<sup>15</sup>**

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<sup>15</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association, Photo Box 1.*

## Chapter 4: Historical Topic Research and Project Plan

Bridgetown Cemetery was established on December 1st, 1864 by a group of Protestant landowners in Green Township, Hamilton County Ohio as the First German Protestant Cemetery. This land was part of the George Torrence Estate, which was located in section 15 in township two, second fractional range in the Miami Purchase.<sup>1</sup> The deed book of the Hamilton County Recorders Office shows the names of the first trustees of the cemetery as George H. Ahring, Martin Barwick, Gasset Stammel, G.W.H Musekamp, Philip Steinman, and Philip Bayer.<sup>2</sup> The original purchase acreage of the cemetery is located at 4428 Cincinnati-Cleves Turnpike, which is currently named Bridgetown Road.<sup>3</sup> In 1871, the cemetery trustees donated a half acre of land to the First German Protestant church for the construction of their first church.<sup>4</sup> The original church has been torn down, rebuilt and renamed as the Pilgrim United Church of Christ in 1961.<sup>5</sup> In 1876, money was raised by cemetery trustees for the construction of a limestone brick receiving vault, for the storing of caskets and bodies on a temporary basis.<sup>6</sup> This limestone building, which looked like a small chapel with two steel doors, and a mantle above the doors with 1877 inscribed, was used for the storing of bodies if the weather was too harsh to

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<sup>1</sup> Hamilton County Recorder's Office, Deed Book Document Images, Hamilton County Recorder's Office, Cincinnati., Book 309, 342.

<sup>2</sup> Recorders Deed Book, Book 309, 342.

<sup>3</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, July 2000. Brochure, Formerly Known as The First German Protestant Cemetery of Green Township, Administration Building, Cincinnati.

<sup>4</sup> Hamilton County Recorder's Office, Deed Book Document Images, Hamilton County Recorder's Office, Cincinnati, Book 389, 242.

<sup>5</sup> Jeffrey Leuders, *Pilgrim United Church of Christ, 1870-1990* (Cincinnati, OH: Church Printing, 1990).

<sup>6</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, Constitution and Bylaws, 1910.

dig or if the funeral had to be delayed. This building was used for this purpose until the 1920's when local funeral homes were equipped with refrigeration. A total of six bodies with caskets were stored in this building for at least several days, from its opening in 1877, to its conversion to a storage building for tools and cemetery supplies in the late 1920's.<sup>7</sup> The Receiving Vault was built by local stone mason and cemetery trustee Phillip Steinman.<sup>8</sup> The Receiving Vault was only to be used from October 1<sup>st</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup>, with a \$5.00 Deposit that was to be kept by the cemetery if storage of a body was to be over two days. If bodies for other cemeteries were to be stored in the building, the cemetery trustees could double the price for the use of the building.<sup>9</sup> In 1880, a bell was commissioned from the Buckeye Bell Company in Cincinnati Ohio for a bronze bell to be cast for the bell tower of the cemetery receiving vault.<sup>10</sup> This bell is still housed in the receiving vault, and it is still able to be rung.

In April 1897, the trustees of the cemetery filed Articles of Incorporation with the Secretary of State of the State of Ohio, Charles Kinney. These articles were renewed until the cemetery expanded and renamed itself in 1961.<sup>11</sup> Streetcars were extended to the Cincinnati neighborhood of Westwood in 1898, which is located on the eastern border of the Green Township village of Cheviot.<sup>12</sup> This brought an increase in population to Green Township,

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<sup>7</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, Cemetery Burial Records, 1875-1932.

<sup>8</sup> Phillip Steinman, *Beechwood Flats* (New York: Vantage Press, 1960), 11.

<sup>9</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, Constitution and Bylaws of the First German Protestant Cemetery Association, 1910.

<sup>10</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*. Trustee Meeting minutes, 1938-1961.

<sup>11</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*. Article of Incorporation, 1897.

<sup>12</sup> Joe Flickinger, *A Bicentennial History of Green Township: Uncovering a Jewel in the Crown of the Queen City; 1809-2009* (Westminster, Maryland: Heritage Books, 2011), 56.

which increased the number of burials in the cemetery. The cemetery board of trustees began investigating how to increase the size of the cemetery. In 1932, the board of trustees began negotiating with two property owners adjoining the cemetery to the north. The Schaperklaus family farm directly to the north was interested in selling their 12.7-acre farm to the cemetery. In 1939, the cemetery bought the property from the Schaeperklaus family for the expansion of the cemetery due to the rising number of burials.<sup>13</sup> In 1960, the cemetery board of trustees hired a full-time cemetery superintendent. This position was also referred to as a cemeterian in the board of trustee minutes. This job had the responsibility of hiring employees when needed for grounds work, ordering supplies, performing maintenance on the cemetery equipment, and being on call for grave sales, funeral planning, and for burials. This position would answer directly to the cemetery board.<sup>14</sup>

In 1961, with development almost complete, the cemetery board held an opening ceremony on Sunday, October 1, 1961 at the nearly completed administration building. The ceremony included speeches from a cemetery trustee, several ministers from local churches, and the Syrian Shrine Chanters. It was at this ceremony that the name was changed to Bridgetown Cemetery.<sup>15</sup> In 1962, the cemetery board opened their administration building and moved all trustee meetings to the cemetery administration building. The board also authorized an addition to be made in the next five years to the brand new building when it was found to be too small for the equipment owned by the cemetery.<sup>16</sup> The 1970's and 1980's saw increased sales and burials

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<sup>13</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, Board of Trustees Minute Book, 1938-1961.

<sup>14</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, Board of Trustees Minute Book, 1938-1961.

<sup>15</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, Cemetery Dedication and Consecration Program.

<sup>16</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, Board of Trustees Minute Book, 1961-1995.

in Bridgetown Cemetery as the surrounding areas began to transition from farm fields to subdivisions. After several decades of burials numbering between fifty and sixty interments, 1973 saw the most significant jump in burials, from fifty two burials in 1972 to eighty one burials in 1973.<sup>17</sup> This trend would continue for the rest of the decade into the early 2000's.

In 1985, several part time employees were hired by the cemetery for twelve month periods. Their weekly hours were to be forty plus hours from March to October and less than ten hours weekly from November to February. These employees would help with burials during the winter months, and any other maintenance needs the cemetery had.<sup>18</sup> The cemetery purchased a John Deere backhoe in January 1995, to allow for cemetery employees to dig graves so that an outside contractor did not need to be hired. The cemetery also invested in zero-turn mowers to allow for quicker mowing to be completed by cemetery employees.<sup>19</sup> In 2017, a new section was laid out in response to a growing number of burials of cremated remains. This new section features smaller lots which can accommodate two cremated remains in a concrete vault.<sup>20</sup>

#### Project Plan:

This project will be a two part walking tour of Bridgetown Cemetery. The first part of the walking tour will be comprised of 14 “stops” along the older sections of the cemetery. Numerous examples of graves of prominent individuals in the cemetery and surrounding community will be highlighted. The primary stop on this section of the tour will be the cemetery

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<sup>17</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, Cemetery Burial Records, 1965-1978.

<sup>18</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, Board of Trustees Minute Book, 1961-1995.

<sup>19</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, Board of Trustees Minute Book, 1961-1995.

<sup>20</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, Board of Trustees Minute Book, 1998-present.

receiving vault. This building was built in 1876-1877 and was built for the sole reason for holding bodies and caskets of the deceased when a grave could not be dug during harsh or cold weather. This building still houses a bell, which has a date stamped on the bell from 1880, which still can be rung in its steeple. The doors are steel, and the walls are brick. This building is located close to the back of what would have been the original cemetery. The tour also features several headstones which are unique in funerary art. One such example is the large obelisks that are present in the cemetery. Another is the use of symbols on headstones, with willow trees, a police badge, and a headstone shaped like a tree stump. Some of these had basic meanings like showing the occupation of the deceased, others symbolized everlasting life, while others symbolized a life cut short. A church located next door will be highlighted as well since many of the original members of this church are buried in the original sections of the cemetery. It will also be pointed out that the half acre of land that the original building of the church was built on was donated by the cemetery to the church.

The second tour will be focused on the newer sections of the cemetery which were bought in 1939 due to increased growth in Green Township and opened in 1961. The opening of these sections brought increased growth to the cemetery, as well as several smaller graveyards to be reinterred there. The stops include the cemetery administration building, two smaller, older cemeteries that were moved to the cemetery in 1976 and 1989, several landscaped areas, and several areas designated for individual burials. These stops are less focused on people, and more focused on the growth and infrastructure that the cemetery experienced after WWII and the cemetery opened the newly acquired sections.

The stops on both tours have been chosen to both highlight the history of the original sections of the cemetery to the area, as well as maintain the privacy of those who have recently

passed and their families in the newer sections of the cemetery. The stops in the original sections of the cemetery highlight both achievements of the cemetery in regards to development, as well as highlighting significant figures from the late 1800's to the early 1900's who are buried in the original sections. The stops in the newer sections opened in 1962 reflect the landscaping, common monuments, and the specially designated sections. The tours will be both self-guided tours and guided tours. The script for both will be the same so that equal access can be maintained. The self-guided tour will be utilizing the Pocketsights website, which requires the downloading of their free app which uses the GPS function on a user's phone.<sup>21</sup> The guided tours would utilize a handout flyer with abbreviated information compared to the online app, so that attendees in person could look back at a later date if they wished. The following information highlights the stops on each tour and will serve as the script for the guided walking tour. The links for the guided tours are as follows:

Tour #1-- <https://pocketsights.com/tours/tour/Cincinnati-Bridgetown-Cemetery-Tour-1-2301>

Tour #2-- <https://pocketsights.com/tours/tour/-Bridgetown-Cemetery-Tour-2-2465>

Tour #1: Part One of the Walking Tours of Bridgetown Cemetery. This tour focuses on the original, rural cemetery initially named "The First German Protestant Cemetery of Green Township," which was established in June, 1864.

Stop #1: Original Entrance to the Cemetery

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<sup>21</sup> "Tour Builder | Build Mobile Walking Tours | PocketSights," PocketSights Tour Builder, accessed October 27, 2018, <https://pocketsights.com/>.



The original entrance to the Cemetery. Purchased in the summer of 1864 by a group of local Protestant landowners, the cemetery was named “The First German Protestant Cemetery of Green Township.” The land originally was part of an estate owned by Cincinnati Judge George Torrence, who purchased the land from the Finley, Harrison, and Burnett Land Company, who had acquired most of the land in Green Township from John Cleves Symmes. Symmes purchased much of the land of Green Township from the Federal Government in what later became known as "Symmes Purchase."

#### Stop #2: Original Iron Fence

The cemetery board installed this fence in the late 1930's as traffic was beginning to increase on the newly renamed Bridgetown Road. It was an upgrade from an old wooden fence meant to keep livestock from nearby Cleves-Louisville Pike from wandering into the cemetery grounds.

#### Stop #3: Musekamp Family Lot

Muskamp Family Lot. George Muskamp was one of the original trustees of the cemetery. He was a well-known Doctor in the area. He was also involved in local politics, having served as an elected official in both Hamilton County and Green Township. He lived in the small township village of Cheviot and also helped establish the nearby First German Protestant Church in 1871.

#### Stop #4: Pilgrim United Church of Christ(aka First German Protestant Church of Green Township

The First German Protestant Church of Green Township was established in 1871 on 1/2 acre of land donated by the cemetery. Many of the original cemetery trustees were also founding members of the church. The original church was constructed with volunteer labor, and the original foundation was made from rocks from nearby creeks. The church was torn down and rebuilt in 1961 and renamed Pilgrim United Church of Christ.

#### Stop #5: Ahring Family Plot

This family plot holds the remains of George Ahring, one of the original trustees of the cemetery. This section of the cemetery is the original section laid out as a typical rural cemetery. There are no discernible rows, and the family plots usually have a main stone with the family name.

#### Stop #6: Musecamp/Musekamp Lots

This stop is the last resting place of more members of the Musecamp family. The largest headstone of Johanna is unique to the cemetery and stands out as different from many of the other headstones from the 1800's. This features a large willow tree, which is a symbol meant to represent everlasting life. Notice the date of death is several years before the cemetery was established? Her husband, who is right next to her, passed in the 1870's. It was more common for spouses to be moved to another cemetery if the family desired the two to be together, especially if the other cemetery was further away.

#### Stop #7: First Opened Section

This section of the cemetery is the first that was opened and contains some of the oldest burials. This section, labeled “Section 1”, contains all family lots. Many inscriptions are written in German, highlighting the majority of the early burials in the cemetery.

#### Stop #8: New Single Lot Section

This section was laid out in the early 1900's to handle a continued influx of newer residents in the early 20th century as roads improved and newer transportation options like streetcars and early automobiles began to be available to residents of the area. This section was laid out next to two houses on Nicholas Ave, which was a small dead-end street which also was home to the nuns house across the street at St. Aloysius Gonzaga Roman Catholic Church. Nicholas Ave was later joined together with Weirman Ave and Nicholas Ave took the name Weirman Ave. Weirman Ave is named after the Weirman Family, from which several members of their family acted as Marshals for the village of Cheviot. The two houses adjoining this section were used by several sextons of the cemetery, as well as several ministers of the First German Protestant Church. These houses were torn down in the 1960's for the parking lot and fellowship hall for Pilgrim United Church of Christ.

#### Stop #9: Menz Family Plot

The Menz Family served on the cemetery board for many years from the early 1900's until 1985. Many family members helped shape the physical layout of the cemetery through negotiations with the Schaeperklaus family to purchase the farm just north of the original property in 1939. This family lot includes the grave of Jacob Menz, a Civil War Veteran, and former cemetery board member.

### Stop #10: Cemetery Receiving Vault

The cemetery receiving vault was built in 1876 when a need was presented to the board of trustees for a place to store bodies when the weather did not allow for graves to be dug by hand by the cemetery sexton in a timely manner. This receiving vault held the caskets and bodies of six individuals. There were also two individuals whose bodies were stored here overnight when the bodies were in transit to another cemetery. In 1880, the cemetery trustees purchased a bell from the Buckeye Bell Company in downtown Cincinnati for the steeple of the building. This bell was rung when a funeral procession entered the original cemetery grounds until the early 1930's when the practice was discontinued. The vault building has been used as a storage building and a historical point of interest for the original sections of the cemetery. In 2008, the remnants of Hurricane Isaac moved through the Cincinnati area, and the sustained winds from this storm caused significant damage to this building. From 2010-2012, the cemetery raised funds to rehab and replaced the roof, complete necessary brickwork, and repaint the entire structure. A sign was affixed to the front of the building honoring the businesses and groups that donated to the rehabilitation of the building.

### Stop #11. John Grinstead Headstone

John Grinstead was a former Chief of Police for the nearby city of Cheviot. His headstone prominently features the Chief of Police badge for the city of Cheviot. Bridgetown Cemetery was the cemetery of choice for many prominent public officials in the local area. Grinstead served Cheviot as its village marshal. In 1932, he was named as the first Chief of Police when the village council created a police district.

### Stop #12: Headstone Shaped like a tree without Limbs

This interesting monument is the headstone of Helena and Phillip Knierim. These "tree stones" are meant to symbolize lives cut short, in this case, Helena died around the age of 45. These stones were often sold out of a Sears/Roebuck Catalog.

#### Stop #13: Menz-Morretta Family Plot

This family plot contains the graves of more members of the Menz family, which helped shape the cemetery from its time as a rural cemetery to the opening of the newer sections after WWII. Harold and Edward Menz both were longtime trustees, Carmen Menz-Moretta was a long-serving secretary-treasurer of the board, and Herman "Bud" Morretta was the grounds superintendant for over 30 years, overseeing the opening of the new sections, and modernizing and updating equipment, landscaping, and the rest of the grounds until his death in 1985.

#### Stop #14: Ruebel Family Plot

The Ruebel Family has a significant place in local history. They owned large plots of land in Green Township, from which quarries were operated for stones for the foundations of many buildings of the period. They also operated what many today remember as the Wagon Wheel Saloon. When the family operated it, the business was known as the Bridgetown Hotel. Other members of the family later entered the concrete/asphalt business, working on among other roads in the county, Bridgetown Road, which passes directly in front of the original cemetery.

Tour #2: Part Two of the Walking Tour of Bridgetown Cemetery. This tour covers the second half of a walking tour of Bridgetown Cemetery. This tour covers the newer sections of the

cemetery, purchased in 1939, developed in the 1950's, and officially opened in 1962. This cemetery is laid out in even rows, with height and other restrictions placed on decorations and headstones.

#### Stop #1: Administration Building

This building houses the cemetery archives, administration offices, and equipment storage. This building was built in 1961 with volunteer labor from a bricklayers union. An addition was built onto the back in 1963 to accommodate additional equipment.

#### Stop #2: Green Township Cemetery

This slightly rounded section of ground represents the remains of the Green Township Cemetery, sometimes referred to as the "Township Cemetery." This cemetery was located on the south side of Harrison Ave about 80 feet west of Glenmore Ave. This cemetery was a small community cemetery serving the Green Township hamlet known as Cheviot. This cemetery was established in 1822. In 1955, after several decades of neglect, the headstones were removed, and the area was made into a grass parking lot. In 1975, the Bethel Church, then known as Westwood Baptist Church, which owned the land, sold the property to the City of Cheviot. The city removed the bodies from the cemetery and any headstones that were left and reinterred the remains and stones here in 1976. A single marker was placed here by the city of Cheviot out of respect to the many pioneers of Green Township and Cheviot who are buried here.

#### Stop #3: Frondorf Family Cemetery

This cemetery was owned by the Frondorf Family in a deed that dated back to 1854. In 1988 the property was sold to a developer, who petitioned the Ohio Probate Court to move the

burials and any headstones to Bridgetown Cemetery. In April 1989, seven graves and three headstones were re-interred in Bridgetown Cemetery.

#### Stop #4: Location of Tributary Creek

This tributary creek ran from the border of Cheviot, and Westwood close to Wagon Wheel Saloon followed Glenway Ave and Westbourne Drive and flowed into Schaible Creek. Schaible Creek empties into Muddy Creek, which flows into the Ohio River. This natural barrier prevented the two properties from being properly connected until 1963 when Metropolitan Sewer District enclosed the creek in a large sewer pipe, and fill dirt from the widening of Glenway Ave created the gently rolling grassy knoll you see in this picture.

#### Stop #5: Materials Pits

This area is for materials for the cemetery grounds crew to store topsoil, mulch, sand, and gravel for use on the cemetery grounds. Built in 1964, the walls are three feet high and are made from basic cinderblock.

#### Stop #6: Contemplation Garden

This is the newest garden created in the cemetery. At the center of the garden is a stone bench, backed by a 4-foot angel. Framed by two large trees, this is a favorite spot for cemetery visitors to stop and enjoy a quiet place to remember their loved ones or have their lunch on a nice day. This garden was created in 1998, and the angel was added in 2003.

#### Stop #7: Garden Section Monument

This monument was modeled after a monument cemetery trustees viewed at a funerary trade show in the late 1950's. On one side, the monument reads "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." The other side reads "In my father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." This is a popular spot for visitors to the Garden Section, which features all markers flush with the ground, and limitations to the number of flowers and decorations placed on graves.

#### Stop #8: Angel Land

This section is the infant and child section. Marked by a small monument in the center of the section, the monument features a small statue of a baby being cradled in Angel Wings.

#### Stop #9: Flag Pole Monument

This Flag pole was installed in 1987 after a generous donation by Guardian Savings Bank. Previously a grove of bushes, this acts as a centerpiece of the cemetery entrance off of Harrison Ave, and is the first significant object viewed upon entering the cemetery grounds from Harrison Ave.

#### Stop #10: Original Stone Pillars with Iron Gates

These original stone pillars were built in the early 1950's to act as a stylish entrance to the newer sections of the cemetery off of Harrison Ave. The iron gates which were hung from these pillars were originally the gates placed at the entrance to the cemetery off of Bridgetown Road.

#### Stop #11: Lords Prayer Monument



This monument was installed in the early 1950's and is inscribed with the Lords Prayer. It acts as a central focal point for the sections which back up the housing built on adjacent Raceview Road in the 1950's.

#### Stop #12: In-Ground Cremation Section

This section, laid out in November 2017, is dedicated to in-ground cremation burials. This section was created in response to the growing number of cremations occurring after the start of the 21st century in the United States. All lots are smaller than traditional burial lots and can fit two cremation containers with concrete urns.

#### Stop #13: Newer Areas to be developed

This land represents the next sections to be developed. If current projections are correct, when fully laid out, this section of land will take over 50 years before newer land will need to be developed.

#### Stop #14: Service Entrance

This land represents a lower elevation that is slowly being filled in by excavated fill dirt from other areas of the cemetery. Organic materials like grass clippings, tree and bush trimmings, and fallen leaves from cemetery trees are also placed here. If projections are correct, this area will not need to be developed for another 50 years.

#### Stop #15: Funeral Entrance/Tour End

This represents the last stop on tour. This small piece of property was purchased in 1964 and is currently used as the entrance for funeral processions into the cemetery. This entrance is

closed to through traffic at all other times. Traffic on Weirman Ave is lower and provides processions the opportunity to enter the cemetery without worry for traffic incidents on busier roads.

The focus of the first tour is the history, symbols, and locally important people and families buried in the cemetery. This contrasts with the second tour, which focuses on sections, common monuments, future growth, and older cemeteries that were reburied there. It is very apparent that through these two tours that the focus, layout, and monuments and buildings in both sections of the cemetery are significantly different. The culture had changed from the 1800's rural cemetery to post-WWII suburban sprawl sections. This change will show on the two tours. Appendix A shows the handout in a front and back format from the guided tour of the first tour of the original rural cemetery, while the second images show the handout from the guided tour of the second tour of the newer sections opened during the suburban boom after WWII. The size and shape of the guided tour handouts are selected in such a way that it makes for ease of use and carrying while on tour in a cemetery.

Links for Online Tour Website:

Tour #1-- <https://pocketsights.com/tours/tour/Cincinnati-Bridgetown-Cemetery-Tour-1-2301>

Tour #2-- <https://pocketsights.com/tours/tour/-Bridgetown-Cemetery-Tour-2-2465>

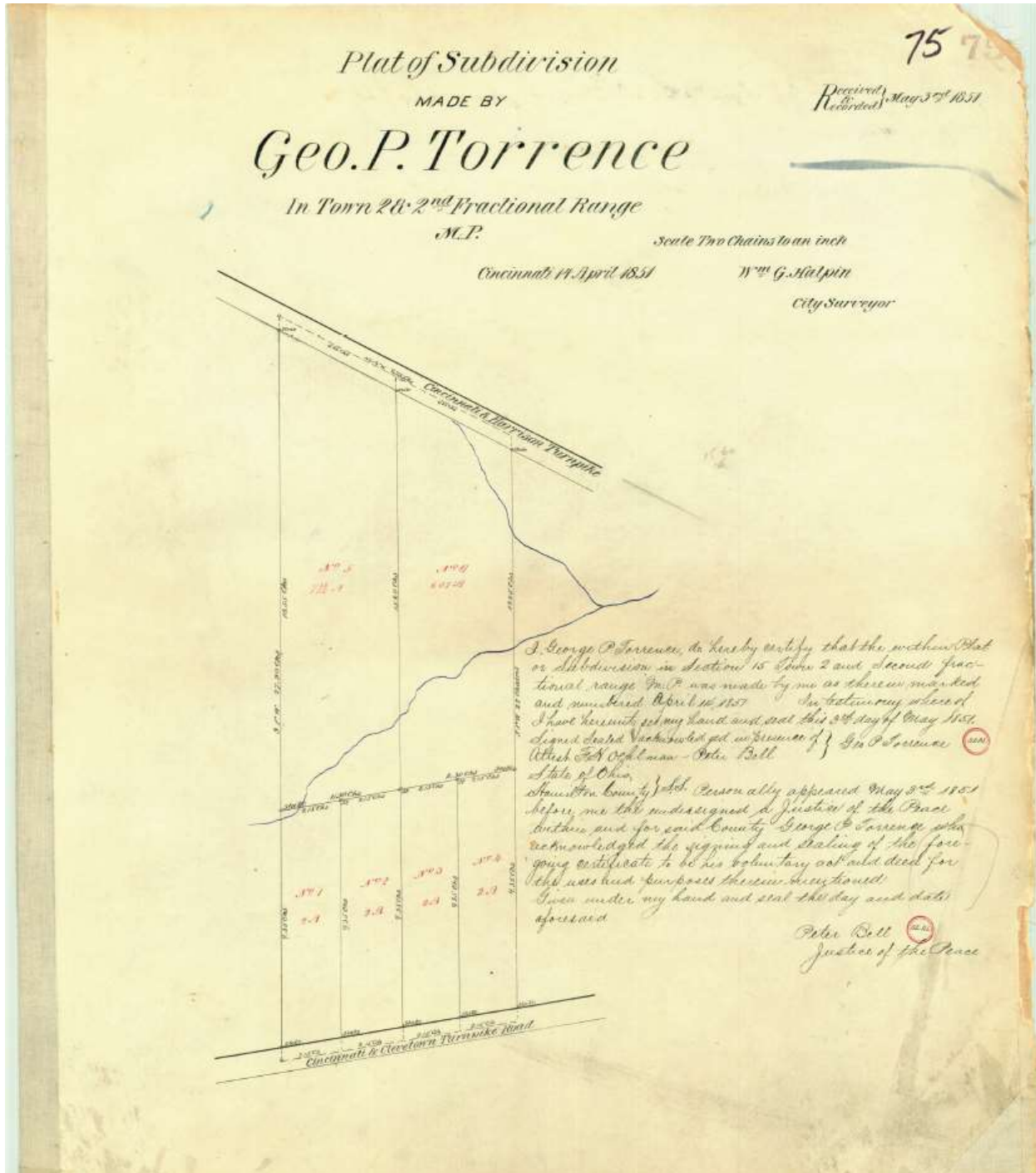


Figure 4: George P Torrence Estate, Plat of Subdivision<sup>22</sup>

<sup>22</sup> Hamilton County Recorder's Office, *Book of Plat Maps of County Subdivisions*, Map 75.

## Chapter 5: Budget

This project is meant to be completed using as little funding as possible to begin the tours. As the guided tours gain in popularity, funding could be requested from business partners of the cemetery and historical association. As stated in the plan for the tours, Pocketsights.com will be utilized using their free option. This allows for unlimited access to all of their functions but offers limited support and limited functions. In the future, as more funding may become available, it is recommended that the tours purchase the next tier of services, which is their “Enterprise Plus”, which allows for advanced analytics, commercial use, donation support buttons linking to PayPal or other customized site, virtual beacons, priority tour approval, and phone and email support. This tour option would cost \$199 a month or \$2,388 for a year.<sup>1</sup> This option allows for recordings to be added, which would allow for the potential for professionals from TV or Radio who reside in the area to record the text on the guided tour. Several Radio and TV personalities who live in the Green Township area may be willing to either donate their voices to the digital tour, or may work for a reduced rate. For budgeting purposes, a rate of \$50 per hour for professional voice talent would be proposed, not to exceed 5 hours, for a total of \$250.

In order to keep the images, designs, and scripts the same, a basic laptop with enough processing power will need to be dedicated to the project. A Dell Laptop with 500 GB hard drive, as well as a CD/DVD rewritable drive for saving discs of the work and images and completed any email will be necessary to add to the budgeted items. This laptop, purchased

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<sup>1</sup> PocketSights, "PocketSights Is Priced Right! Any Tour. Any Time," Our Goal Is to Provide Mobile Users an Authentic Experience That Gives Them the Confidence and Direction to Explore and Discover the Places around Them, While Learning about Your History and Culture., January 21, 2016, , accessed October 28, 2018, <https://pocketsights.wordpress.com/2015/12/11/pocketsights-is-priced-right-any-tour-any-time/>.

online through Dell, is well suited for the work that will need to be completed, as well as maintenance for the tours in the future. This laptop will cost \$300.<sup>2</sup>

A set of yard signs will need to be purchased for advertising for the self-guided tours. Since these would be double sided, and would be 12"x18" corrugated plastic, at \$15.29 each for ten signs; \$152.90 would need to be budgeted for the purchase of signs from Staples Sign Service for ease of purchase, which includes the metal stakes.<sup>3</sup> These could be placed in the grass close to the roadways throughout the cemetery.

For the Guided Tour, the handouts would be sent to Staples for ease of use and cheap color copies. Since the plan would be to offer the tour yearly, and for volume and cost, 100 copies would be ordered at .53 cents a page, for a total of \$53.<sup>4</sup>

While volunteer labor would be used for the tours, a cemetery representative would need to be on hand for safety and accessibility purposes during the guided tours. While guided tours would be offered once a summer to begin, the cemetery employee would be paid \$15 an hour, which is in line with minimum pay for the area, for five hours. Total pay for a cemetery employee is \$75 for one day. The last aspect of the budget is research, which is being conducted on an unpaid basis for the creation of the thesis project.

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<sup>2</sup> "New Inspiron 15 3000," Inspiron 15 Inch 3000 Laptop | Dell United States, accessed October 28, 2018, <https://www.dell.com/en-us/shop/laptops-2-in-1s/inspiron-15-3573-laptop/spd/inspiron-15-3573-laptop?~ck=bt>.

<sup>3</sup> "Custom Yard Signs," Staples, accessed October 28, 2018, <https://www.staples.com/sbd/content/copyandprint/lawn-signs.html>.

<sup>4</sup> "Copies and Documents," Staples, accessed October 28, 2018, <https://www.staples.com/sbd/content/copyandprint/copiesanddocuments.html>.

Item	Cost	Running Total
1. Technology		\$2,688.00
-PocketSites.com per year	\$2,388.00	
-Dell Laptop	\$300.00	
2. Labor		\$325.00
-Voice Talent @ \$50/hr	\$250.00	
-Cemetery Representative \$15/hr	\$75.00	
-Research (Pro Bono)	\$0.00	
3. Tour Materials		\$205.90
-Plastic Yard signs \$15.29/ea	\$152.90	
-Guided Tour Pamphlets .53/ea	\$53.00	
Total		\$3,218.90

**Figure 5: Proposed Budget**



**Figure 6: Receiving Vault located in the original cemetery.<sup>5</sup>**

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<sup>5</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, July 2000, Photo Box 1, Formerly Known as The First German Protestant Cemetery of Green Township, Administration Building, Cincinnati Ohio.

## Chapter 6: Recommendations and Ethical Considerations

Several potential ethical issues have surfaced through research on this project. These have led to several recommendations for the cemetery walking tour. One potential issue is the appearance of the walking tours to those in the community who may not see cemeteries as learning institutions. Wolgemuth states that “starting with safe programming can help build a base of support and gauge the community’s reaction to using the cemetery in a multidimensional way.”<sup>1</sup> If enough support is found by going to historical groups and the general community, then it may warrant more tours, such as a Halloween tour, a candlelight or nighttime tour, or perhaps an infamous person tour. Wolgemuth also recommends building upon the existing events, and gradually introducing new ideas.<sup>2</sup> This way the community is more accepting of programming in the cemetery.

Another ethical consideration is the touting of deeds of those buried in the cemetery that may not be the most politically correct. One person who was rumored to have been buried in the cemetery for several years during the late 1800’s was alleged to have been a murderer. Bringing to light the misdeeds of those who lived over one hundred years ago will not hurt those of today, but could bring unwanted attention to the cemetery, which Wolgemuth states “human emotions are unpredictable, and you can never really assume what will or will not upset a visitor.”<sup>3</sup>

Another ethical consideration is respecting the privacy of those who have been recently buried. The newer sections have several local celebrities whose families may not appreciate the increased traffic to their loved ones graves. Wolgemuth makes the point to “promote the history.

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<sup>1</sup> Rachel Wolgemuth, *Cemetery Tours and Programming: A Guide*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016, 113-114.

<sup>2</sup> Wolgemuth, 114.

<sup>3</sup> Wolgemuth, 116.



Successful marketing should begin with an emphasis on the idea of cemeteries as a permanent repository of a community's history.”<sup>4</sup>

Yet another ethical consideration is the inclusion of other ethnic groups and underrepresented minority cultures which may have resided in Green Township prior to settlers. The area known as Green Township had very little pioneer settlement due to the Shawnee, which lived in Southwest Ohio, declaring the area known as Green Township as its sacred hunting ground.<sup>5</sup> An episode in neighboring Colerain Township which involved an attack on a pioneer fort, named Fort Dunlap, saw pioneer settlement outside of Cincinnati after the attack slow to a small trickle, until the Treaty of Greenville in 1795.<sup>6</sup> Were there any Native American burial areas in or near the cemetery? Could there have been Native American burial mounds or other burial practices followed in the area? This information has yet to be fully flushed out by research. The answers to these questions may bring more inclusiveness about other cultures to not only Green Township's history, but the cemetery's history as well.

Several recommendations have been brought about by both the research and the cemetery board themselves. These are mostly common sense and allow for a robust tour that explores the history of not only the original portion of the cemetery, but of the changes that occurred culturally to the newer expansion property. While cemeteries can be places of history from which today's citizens can learn about the past, they are also places of grief and loss. Being mindful of the families who have lost their family members would go a long way to welcoming

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<sup>4</sup> Wolgemuth, 116.

<sup>5</sup> Joe Flickinger, *A Bicentennial History of Green Township: Uncovering a Jewel in the Crown of the Queen City; 1809-2009* (Westminster, Maryland: Heritage Books, 2011), 2.

<sup>6</sup> Joe Flickinger, *A History of Colerain Township: From Frontier Wilderness to Suburban Sprawl* (Berwyn Heights, MD: Heritage Books, 2018), 7-8.

new visitors to the cemetery for the history and culture, and not visiting a grave of a lost family or friends.

The first recommendation came from the cemetery board of trustees. They have asked that if guided tours were to be conducted, that the hours be limited to between 5 pm and 8 pm, exclusively during June or July. While this may seem somewhat constricting, their point of view is that without proper lighting in all parts of the cemetery, a patron could trip over an unseen item or low spot in the ground and hurt themselves. Their view is that during these times, the lighting is still good, and it is summer, so the ground will not be soft or pliable so the worry for accidents will be smaller. They are also of the opinion that these times experience fewer visitors so the need to be vigilant against auto traffic will be less pressing.

The second recommendation comes from Wolgemuth when she states that “once you start to attract audiences to your cemetery, collect contact information.”<sup>7</sup> Creating simple survey cards or contact sheets for attendees to fill out can help to build a database of supporters for further tours or programming. This allows for the targeting of particular segments of the population or continuing offering general style programming.

The third recommendation comes from Wolgemuth as well when she states to “be aware of word choice.”<sup>8</sup> Using words that may offend some of the attendees is not a good way to build a good audience. Addressing items that are controversial to some in the neighboring community may keep some attendees away. Wolgemuth makes the point when addressing the Civil War to “remember the profound loss of life and sacrifice on both sides.”<sup>9</sup> This allows a common ground

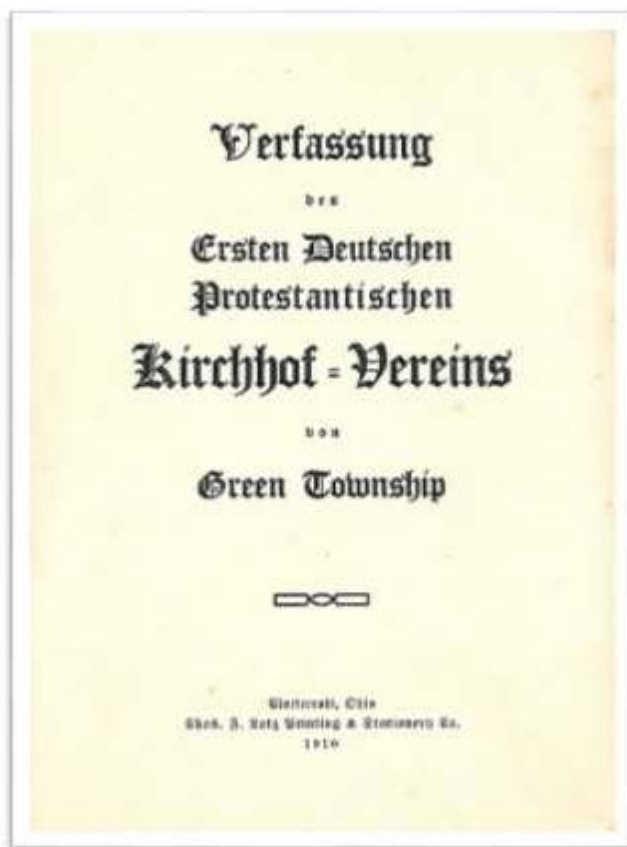
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<sup>7</sup> Wolgemuth, 118.

<sup>8</sup> Wolgemuth, 118.

<sup>9</sup> Wolgemuth, 118.

to be struck, so people leave with a good impression of the cemetery, instead of wondering whether they have been lectured about morality issues instead of introduced to local history.



**Figure 7: Rules and Regulations Title Page from 1910.<sup>10</sup>**

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<sup>10</sup> *Archives of Bridgetown Cemetery Association*, July 2000, Photo Box 1, Formerly Known as The First German Protestant Cemetery of Green Township, Administration Building, Cincinnati Ohio.

## Conclusion

Local history is a topic within history that has been described as “nearby history”, that is the “change over time...of past generations.”<sup>1</sup> By exploring the history of a local cemetery, the change over time of a local area can be flushed out and brought to the front of the current resident’s thoughts. It is only through the careful study of the past culture of an area that one can ascertain where the local area is, and where it may be going in the future. Bridgetown Cemetery began as a slow-growing rural graveyard, which began to change and morph into a suburban cemetery focused on landscaping and straight rows as the area surrounding area began to suburbanize. The cemetery itself began small, just like the community, and began to grow larger as the population of the surrounding area did.

Looking at the history of Bridgetown Cemetery, the change over time of Green Township Hamilton County Ohio can be observed. Pre WWII, the area was a rural, slow-moving area located just outside of Cincinnati Ohio, made up of predominantly German immigrants and their families. Prior to the rural aspect of the area, the land known to the Native American Shawnee as “kuliga”, or open land, was also considered the sacred hunting ground of these Native Americans.<sup>2</sup> Shortly after WWII, the area known as Green Township and the cemetery began to change, with suburban culture permeating not only the township but the cemetery as well. As new sections opened, landscaped flower beds, sitting areas, and straight rows with rules and regulations replaced haphazardly laid out family lots. Newer sections further reflected a move

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<sup>1</sup> David E. Kyvig and Myron A. Marty, *Nearby History: Exploring the Past Around You* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010), 5.

<sup>2</sup> Joe Flickinger, *A Bicentennial History of Green Township: Uncovering a Jewel in the Crown of the Queen City; 1809-2009* (Westminster, Maryland: Heritage Books, 2011), 14.

from accepted burial practices with the opening of a cremation section. Looking at over one hundred fifty years gives a broad look at a changing community that continues to change today.

The cultural and suburban history lenses have been used to document the changes in the cemetery, and the local area. These changes include burial practices, building practices, and design ideas. The cemetery mimicked the area in not only growth, but in culture and collective memory. Inclusiveness also became a theme, as the cemetery changed from catering to the German Protestant segments of Green Township to the entire population regardless of race, nationality, or religion when the name changed from the First German Protestant Cemetery to Bridgetown Cemetery. In the future, more research can be done with burial records to show how much the area mimicked national trends, like the Spanish Flu Epidemic and its effect on the area near the end of WWI, or the effect modern technology had on causes of death in the rapidly industrializing United States in the late nineteenth century. Further research could also be done into the ethnic and racial changes in those buried in the cemetery in the later twentieth and early twenty first centuries compared to the majority Protestant, German immigrant population that made up those buried in the cemetery in the nineteenth and early twentieth century's. No matter the changes that have occurred over the last 150 years, the cemetery has quietly adapted to the surrounding population it serves, acting as a reminder of the lives of the people who lived in the area.

## Appendix 1: Guided Tour Handouts

A Walking Tour of Bridgetown Cemetery

**Tour #1**

**THE ORIGINAL CEMETERY**

Established in December 1864 as The First German Protestant Cemetery of Green Township, the property originally encompassed 7 acres.

**Stops**

- 1 ORIGINAL ENTRANCE**  
This is the original entrance opened in 1864 for the "First German Protestant Cemetery of Green Township."
- 2 ORIGINAL IRON FENCE**  
Installed in 1930's as the area and cemetery was growing.
- 3 MUSEKAMP FAMILY LOT**  
Family Lot of prominent Cheviot Family and original cemetery trustee.
- 4 PILGRIM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
Established in 1871 as First German Protestant Church on 1/2 acre land donated by Cemetery.
- 5 AHRING FAMILY LOT**  
Prominent Green Township Family and original cemetery trustee.
- 6 MUSECAMP/MUSEKAMP FAMILY LOTS**  
Unique headstone using a willow tree as a design.
- 7 FIRST OPENED SECTION**  
First laid out and opened section of the cemetery in 1865.
- 8 NEW SINGLE LOT SECTION**  
Single lot section offered with an influx of new residents in early 1900's.
- 9 MENZ FAMILY PLOT**  
Prominent Green Township family which included a Civil War Veteran.
- 10 CEMETERY RECEIVING VAULT**  
Built in 1876, opened in 1877, this building was built to house bodies in caskets until graves could be dug.

Continued on other side

1<sup>st</sup> Tour Handout—Front Side

## A Walking Tour of Bridgetown Cemetery



### THE ORIGINAL CEMETERY

Established in December 1864 as The First German Protestant Cemetery of Green Township, the property originally encompassed 7 acres.

#### Stops

- 11 GRINSTEAD HEADSTONE**  
 Headstone for first Chief of Police of Village of Chevyot, prominently features Chief's Badge on headstone
- 12 HEADSTONE SHAPED LIKE A TREE**  
 Meant to symbolize life cut short, could be bought from Sears/Roebuck Catalogs.
- 13 MENZ-MORRETTA LOT**  
 Family Lot of longtime cemetery trustees and grounds superintendant.
- 14 RUEBEL FAMILY PLOT**  
 Owners of Bridgetown Saloon, as well as rock quarries in the township.

#### Tour Stops



1<sup>st</sup> Tour Handout—Back Side



2nd Tour Handout—Front Side



## A Walking Tour of Bridgetown Cemetery

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**Tour**  
**#2**

### THE EXPANSION

Purchased in 1939 from the Schaerperklaus Family, developed in the 1960's and opened in 1962. Cemetery name changed to Bridgetown Cemetery

### Stops

11

**LORDS PRAYER MONUMENT**  
Built in 1950's as focal point of sections which back up to subdivision next to the cemetery.

12

**IN-GROUND CREMATION SECTION**  
Opened in November 2017 in response to rising demand for in-ground cremation burial

13

**FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**  
The spot of future sections to be laid out in the cemetery.

14

**SERVICE ENTRANCE**  
Last section of the cemetery which will not need to be laid out for at least another 50 years. Currently being filled in with fill dirt.

15

**FUNERAL ENTRANCE**  
Entrance to the cemetery which is only opened to funeral processions.

### Tour Stops



2nd Tour Handout—Back Side

## **Appendix 2: Online Tour Links**

Tour #1-- <https://pocketsights.com/tours/tour/Cincinnati-Bridgetown-Cemetery-Tour-1-2301>

Tour #2-- <https://pocketsights.com/tours/tour/-Bridgetown-Cemetery-Tour-2-2465>

### Appendix 3: Online Tour Screen Shots



Online Tour Main Page


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## Begin tour- Original Entrance of Cemetery

### Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1

*I. George P. Torrence, de Locby 1864*

Home • United States • Ohio • Cincinnati • Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1 • **Begin tour- Original Entrance of Cemetery**

## Begin tour- Original Entrance of Cemetery

Cincinnati, Ohio 45202, United States

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery


### Point of Interest Details

The original entrance to the Cemetery. Purchased in the summer of 1864 by a group of local Protestant landowners, the cemetery was named "The First German Protestant Cemetery of Green Township". The land originally was part of an estate owned by Cincinnati Judge George Torrence, who purchased the land from the Finley, Harrison, and Burnett Land Company, who had acquired most of the land in Green Township from John Cleves Symmes. Symmes purchased much of the land of Green Township from the Federal Government in what later became known as "Symmes Purchase".

This point of interest is part of the tour: Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1



Tour 1 Stop 1


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# Original Iron Fence

## Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1

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### Original Iron Fence


Cincinnati, Ohio 45202, United States

Created By: [Bridgetown Cemetery](#)

#### Point of Interest Details


The cemetery board installed this fence in the late 1930's as traffic was beginning to increase on the newly renamed Bridgetown Road. It was an upgrade from an old wooden fence meant to keep livestock from nearby Cleves-Louisville Pike from wandering into the cemetery grounds.

This point of interest is part of the tour: [Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1](#)



Original Iron Fence

## Tour 1 Stop 2


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## Musekamp Family Lot

### Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1

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## Musekamp Family Lot


Cincinnati, Ohio 45202, United States

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

### Point of Interest Details

Musekamp Family Lot. George Musekamp was one of the original trustees of the cemetery. He was a well known Doctor in the area. He was also involved in local politics, having served as an elected official in both Hamilton County and Green Township. He lived in the small township village of Cheviot, and also helped establish the nearby First German Protestant Church in 1871.

This point of interest is part of the tour: [Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1](#)



Musekamp Family Lot

### Tour 1 Stop 3

## Pilgrim United Church of Christ(aka First German Protestant Church of Green Township)

Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1

[Home](#) » [United States](#) » [Ohio](#) » [Cincinnati](#) » [Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1](#) »

Pilgrim United Church of Christ(aka First German Protestant Church of Green Township)

### Pilgrim United Church of Christ(aka First German Protestant Church of Green Township)

Cincinnati, Ohio 45202, United States

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

#### Point of Interest Details

The First German Protestant Church of Green Township was established in 1871 on 1/2 acre of land donated by the cemetery. Many of the original cemetery trustees were also founding members of the church. The original church was constructed with volunteer labor, and the original foundation was made from rocks from nearby creeks. The church was torn down and rebuilt in 1961 and renamed Pilgrim United Church of Christ.

This point of interest is part of the tour: [Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1](#)



Pilgrim United Church of Christ(aka First German Protestant Church of Green Township)

Photo by: Photo Courtesy Green Township Historical Association

#### Tour 1 Stop 4




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# Ahring Family Plot

## Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1

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[Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1](#)
[Ahring Family Plot](#)

### Ahring Family Plot

Cincinnati, Ohio 45202, United States

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

#### Point of Interest Details

This family plot holds the remains of George Ahring, one of the original trustees of the cemetery. This section of the cemetery is the original section laid out as a typical rural cemetery. There are no discernible rows, and the family plots usually have a main stone with the family name.

This point of interest is part of the tour: Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1



Ahring Family Plot

Photo by: Photo Courtesy Joe Flickinger

## Tour 1 Stop 5




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## Musecamp/Muesekamp lots

### Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1

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## Musecamp/Muesekamp lots

Cincinnati, Ohio 45202, United States

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

### Point of Interest Details

This stop is the last resting place of more members of the Musecamp family. The largest headstone of Johanna is very unique to the cemetery and stands out as different from many of the other headstones from the 1800's. This features a large willow tree, which is a symbol meant to represent everlasting life. Notice the date of death is several years before the cemetery was established? Her husband, who is right next to her, passed in the 1870's. It was more common for spouses to be moved to another cemetery if the family desired the two to be together, especially if the other cemetery was further away.

This point of interest is part of the tour: [Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1](#)



Musecamp/Muesekamp lots

Photo by: Photo Courtesy Joe Rickinger

### Tour 1 Stop 6

## New single lot section

### Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1

Home » United States » Ohio » Cincinnati » Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1 » New single lot section

## New single lot section

Cincinnati, Ohio 45202, United States

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

### Point of Interest Details

This section was laid out in the early 1900's to handle a continued influx of newer residents in the early 20th century as roads improved and newer transportation options like streetcars and early automobiles began to be available to residents of the area. This section was laid out next to two houses on Nicholas Ave, which was a small dead-end street which also was home to the nurse house across the street at St. Aloysius-Gonzaga Roman Catholic Church. Nicholas Ave was later joined together with Weirman Ave and Nicholas Ave took the name Weirman Ave. Weirman Ave is named after the Weirman Family, from which several members of their family acted as Marshals for the village of Cheviot. The two houses adjoining this section were used by several sextons of the cemetery, as well as several ministers of the First German Protestant Church. These houses were torn down in the 1960's for the parking lot and fellowship hall for Pilgrim United Church of Christ.




New single lot section

Photo by: Photo Courtesy Joe Flölinger

Location \_\_\_\_\_

### Tour 1 Stop 7


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## First opened section.

### Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1

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## First opened section.


Cincinnati, Ohio 45202, United States

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

### Point of Interest Details


This section of the cemetery is the first that was opened, and contains some of the oldest burials. This section, labeled "Section 1", contains all family lots. Many inscriptions are written in German, highlighting the majority of the early burials in the cemetery.

This point of interest is part of the tour: Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1



First opened section.

Photo by: Photo Courtesy Joe Rickinger


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# Menz Family Lot

## Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1

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# Menz Family Lot


Cincinnati, Ohio 45202, United States

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

## Point of Interest Details

The Menz Family served on the cemetery board for many years from the early 1900's until 1985. Many family members helped shape the physical layout of the cemetery through negotiations with the Schaeperklaus family to purchase the farm just north of the original property in 1939. This family lot includes the grave of Jacob Menz, a Civil War Veteran and former cemetery board member.

This point of interest is part of the tour: [Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1](#)



Menz Family Lot

### Tour 1 Stop

# Cemetery Receiving Vault

## Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1

Home > United States > Ohio > Cincinnati > Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1 > Cemetery Receiving Vault

## Cemetery Receiving Vault

Cincinnati, Ohio 45202, United States

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

### Point of Interest Details

The cemetery receiving vault was built in 1876 when a need was presented to the board of trustees for a place to store bodies when the weather did not allow for graves to be dug by hand by the cemetery sexton in a timely manner. This receiving vault held the caskets and bodies of six individuals. There were also two individuals whose bodies were stored here overnight when the bodies were in transit to another cemetery. In 1885, the cemetery trustees purchased a bell from the Buckeye Bell Company in downtown Cincinnati for the steeple of the building. This bell was rung when a funeral procession entered the original cemetery grounds until the early 1930's when the practice was discontinued. The vault building has been used as a storage building and a historical point of interest for the original sections of the cemetery. In 2008, the remnants of Hurricane Isaac moved through the Cincinnati area, and the sustained winds from this storm caused significant damage to this building. From 2010-2012, the cemetery raised the funds to rehab and replace the roof, complete necessary brickwork, and repaint the entire structure. A sign was affixed to the front of the building honoring the businesses and groups that assisted in the rehabilitation of the building.



Cemetery Receiving Vault

Photo by: Photo Courtesy Joe Pickinger

### Location

- > Cincinnati
- > Ohio

### Tour 1 Stop 10


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# John Grinstead Headstone

## Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1

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# John Grinstead Headstone

Cincinnati, Ohio 45202, United States

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

## Point of Interest Details

John Grinstead was a former Chief of Police for the nearby city of Cheviot. His headstone prominently features the Chief of Police badge for the city of Cheviot. Bridgetown Cemetery was the cemetery of choice for many prominent public officials in the local area. Grinstead served Cheviot as it's village marshal. In 1932, he was named as the first Chief of Police when the village council created a police district.


This point of interest is part of the tour: [Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1](#)



John Grinstead Headstone

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## Headstone shaped like a tree without limbs.

### Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1

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## Headstone shaped like a tree without limbs.


Cincinnati, Ohio 45202, United States

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

### Point of Interest Details

This interesting monument is the headstone of Helena and Phillip Krievim. These "tree stones" are meant to symbolize lives cut short, in this case, Helena died around the age of 45. These stones were often sold out of a Sears/Roebuck Catalog.

This point of interest is part of the tour: [Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1](#)



Headstone shaped like a tree without limbs.

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## Menz/Morretta Family Plot

Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1

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### Menz/Morretta Family Plot


Cincinnati, Ohio 45202, United States

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

#### Point of Interest Details

This family plot contains the graves of more members of the Menz family, which helped shape the cemetery from its time as a rural cemetery to the opening of the newer sections after WWII. Harold and Edward Menz both were longtime trustees, Carmen Menz-Morretta was a long serving secretary-treasurer of the board, and Herman "Bud" Morretta was the grounds superintendant for over 30 years, overseeing the opening of the new sections, and modernizing and updating equipment, landscaping, and the rest of the grounds until his death in 1985.

This point of interest is part of the tour: Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1



Menz/Morretta Family Plot

Photo by: Photo Courtesy Joe Flickinger

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# Ruebel Family Plot

## Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #1

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## Ruebel Family Plot

Cincinnati, Ohio 45202, United States

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

### Point of Interest Details


The Ruebel Family has a large place in local history. They owned large plots of land in Green Township, from which quarries were operated for stones for the foundations of many buildings of the time period. They also operated what many today remember as the Wagon Wheel Saloon. When the family operated it, the business was known as the Bridgetown Hotel. Other members of the family later entered the concrete/asphalt business, working on among other roads in the county, Bridgetown Road, which passes directly in front of the original cemetery.



**Ruebel Family Plot**

Photo: Ken Shuster / Cincinnati.com

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## Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2

This tour highlights the newer sections of Bridgetown Cemetery, which was purchased in 1939, developed in the 1950's, and opened in 1962.

[Home](#) > [Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2](#)

### Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

#### Tour Information

This tour covers the second half of a walking tour of Bridgetown Cemetery. This tour covers the newer sections of the cemetery, purchased in 1939, developed in the 1950s, and officially opened in 1962. This tour focuses on the development and change of the cemetery from rural, protestant cemetery to inclusive, non-denominational suburban cemetery, and ends looking ahead to the future development of the cemetery grounds. This portion of the cemetery is laid out in even rows, with height and other restrictions placed on decorations and headstones. For more information please see [www.bridgetowncemetery.com](http://www.bridgetowncemetery.com)



Administration Building

Photo by: Photo courtesy Joe Rickinger

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# Administration Building

## Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2

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### Administration Building

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

#### Point of Interest Details

This building houses the cemetery archives, administration offices, and equipment storage. This building was built in 1961 with volunteer labor from a bricklayers union. An addition was built onto the back in 1963 to accommodate additional equipment.

This point of interest is part of the tour: Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2



Administration Building

Photo by: Photo courtesy Joe Flickinger

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# Green Township Cemetery

## Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2


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### Green Township Cemetery

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

#### Point of Interest Details

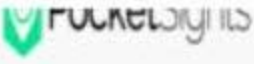
This slightly rounded section of ground represents the remains of the Green Township Cemetery, sometimes referred to as the "Township Cemetery". This cemetery was located on the south side of Harrison Ave about 80 feet west of Glenmore Ave. This cemetery was a small community cemetery serving the Green Township hamlet known as Cheviot. This cemetery was established in 1822. In 1955, after several decades of neglect, the headstones were removed and the area was made into a grass parking lot. In 1975, the Bethel Church, then known as Westwood Baptist Church, which owned the land, sold the property to the City of Cheviot. The city removed the bodies from the cemetery and any headstones that were left and reinterred the remains and stones here in 1976. A single marker was placed here by the city of Cheviot out of respect to the many pioneers of Green Township and Cheviot who are buried here.



Green Township Cemetery

Photo by: Photo Courtesy Joe Pickinger

### Tour 2 Stop 2



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# Frondorf Family Cemetery

## Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2

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### Frondorf Family Cemetery

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

#### Point of Interest Details

This cemetery was owned by the Frondorf Family in a deed that dated back to 1854. In 1988 the property was sold to a developer, who petitioned the Ohio Probate Court to move the burials and any headstones to Bridgetown Cemetery. In April 1989, seven graves and three headstones were re-interred in Bridgetown Cemetery.


This point of interest is part of the tour: [Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2](#)



Frondorf Family Cemetery

Photo by: Photo Courtesy: Joe Ridinger

### Tour 2 Stop 3


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## Location of tributary creek

### Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2

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## Location of tributary creek

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

### Point of Interest Details

This tributary creek ran from the border of Cheviot and Westwood close to Wagon Wheel Saloon, followed Glenway Ave and Westbourne Drive and flowed into Schaible Creek. Schaible Creek empties into Muddy Creek, which flows into the Ohio River. This natural barrier prevented the two properties from being properly connected until 1963 when Metropolitan Sewer District enclosed the creek in a large sewer pipe, and fill dirt from the widening of Glenway Ave created the gently rolling grassy knoll you see in this picture.

This point of interest is part of the tour: Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2



Location of tributary creek

## Tour 2 Stop 4



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# Materials Pits

## Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2

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### Materials Pits

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

#### Point of Interest Details

This area is for materials for the cemetery grounds crew to store top soil, mulch, sand, and gravel for use on the cemetery grounds. Built in 1964, the walls are three feet high and are made from basic cinderblock.

This point of interest is part of the tour: Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2



Materials Pits


Photo by: Photo Courtesy Joe Rikinger

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## Tour 2 Stop 5


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# Contemplation Garden

## Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2

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# Contemplation Garden

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

## Point of Interest Details

This is the newest garden created in the cemetery. At the center of the garden is a stone bench, backed by a 4 foot angel. Framed by two large trees, this is a popular spot for cemetery visitors to stop and enjoy a quiet place to remember their loved ones, or have their lunch on a nice day. This garden was created in 1996, and the angel was added in 2003.


This point of interest is part of the tour: [Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2](#).



Contemplation Garden

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# Garden Section Monument

## Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2

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### Garden Section Monument

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

#### Point of Interest Details


This monument was modeled after a monument cemetery trustees viewed at a funerary trade show in the late 1950's. On one side, the monument reads "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." The other side reads "In my fathers house are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." This is a popular spot for visitors to the Garden Section, which features all markers flush with the ground, and limitations to the number of flowers and decorations placed on graves.

This point of interest is part of the tour: Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2



Garden Section Monument

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# Angel Land

## Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2

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### Angel Land

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

### Point of Interest Details

This section is the infant and child section. Marked by a small monument in the center of the section, the monument features a small statue of a baby being cradled in Angel Wings.


This point of interest is part of the tour: Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2



Angel Land

Photo by: Photo Courtesy Bridgetown Cemetery

### Tour 2 Stop 8


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# Flag Pole Monument

## Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2

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### Flag Pole Monument

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

#### Point of Interest Details


This Flag pole was installed in 1987 after a generous donation by Guardian Savings Bank. Previously a grove of bushes, this acts as a centerpiece of the cemetery entrance off of Harrison Ave, and is the first major object viewed upon entering the cemetery grounds from Harrison Ave.

This point of interest is part of the tour: [Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2](#)



Flag Pole Monument

### Tour 2 Stop


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# Original Stone Pillars with Iron Gates

## Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2

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### Original Stone Pillars with Iron Gates

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

#### Point of Interest Details

These original stone pillars were built in the early 1950's to act as a stylish entrance to the newer sections of the cemetery off of Harrison Ave. The iron gates which were hung from these pillars were originally the gates placed at the entrance to the cemetery off of Bridgetown Road.


This point of interest is part of the tour: [Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2](#)



Original Stone Pillars with Iron Gates

Photo by: Photo Courtesy Bridgetown Cemetery

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# Lords Prayer monument

## Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2

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### Lords Prayer monument

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

#### Point of Interest Details


This monument was installed in the early 1950's and is inscribed with the Lords Prayer. It acts as a center focal point for the sections which back up the housing built on adjacent Raceview Road in the 1950's.

This point of interest is part of the tour: Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2



Lords Prayer monument

Tour 2 Stop 11


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## In-Ground Cremation Section

### Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2

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## In-Ground Cremation Section

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

### Point of Interest Details

This section, laid out in November 2017, is dedicated to in-ground cremation burials. This section was created in response to the growing number of cremations occurring after the start of the 21st century in the United States. All lots are smaller than traditional burial lots, and can fit two cremation containers with concrete urns.

This point of interest is part of the tour: [Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2](#)



In-Ground Cremation Section

Photo by: Photo Courtesy Joe Rickinger

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## Newer areas to be developed

### Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2

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## Newer areas to be developed

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery


### Point of Interest Details

This land represents the next sections to be developed. If current projections are correct, when fully laid out, this section of land will take over 50 years before newer land will need to be developed.

This point of interest is part of the tour: Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2

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Leave a Comment



Newer areas to be developed

Photo by: Photo Courtesy Joe Flickinger

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# Service Entrance

## Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2

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### Service Entrance

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

#### Point of Interest Details

This land represents a lower elevation that is slowly being filled in by excavated fill dirt from other areas of the cemetery. Organic materials like grass clippings, tree and bush trimmings, and fallen leaves from cemetery trees are also placed here. If projections are correct, this area will not need to be developed for another 50 years.


This point of interest is part of the tour: Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2



Service Entrance

Tour 2 Stop 14




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## Funeral Entrance/Tour End

### Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2

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## Funeral Entrance/Tour End

Created By: Bridgetown Cemetery

### Point of Interest Details

This represents the last stop on the tour. This small piece of property was purchased in 1964 and is currently used as the entrance for funeral processions into the cemetery. This entrance is closed to through traffic at all other times. Traffic on Wierman Ave is lower, and provides processions the opportunity to enter the cemetery without worry for traffic incidents on busier roads.

This point of interest is part of the tour: Bridgetown Cemetery Tour #2



Funeral Entrance/Tour End

Tour 2 Stop 15

## Appendix 4: Cemetery Board Permission Letter

**Bridgetown**  
Cemetery Association  
*(celebrating 150 Years! 1864-2014)*  
4337 Harrison Ave Cincinnati, Ohio 45211-3321  
513-574-0360 Main Office  
[www.bridgetowncemetery.com](http://www.bridgetowncemetery.com)

June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018

To Southern New Hampshire University,

Joe Flickinger has the permission of the Trustees of Bridgetown Cemetery to access and use all records located in our archives to write a Master's Thesis consisting of the history of the cemetery, use any pictures located in our archive for publication, and use any burial records located in the cemetery archives. We understand and approve that this project will be stored and available on ProQuest for view by the general public.

William Flickinger William Flickinger, President

Ronald Scheidt Ronald Scheidt, Vice President

Mary Scheidt Mary Scheidt, Secretary/Treasurer

\_\_\_\_ Joseph Flickinger, Trustee (Abstained)

Nikolas Gemmell Nikolas Gemmell, Trustee

Daniel Herzog Daniel Herzog, Trustee

*Bridgetown Cemetery Board Officers: William Flickinger, President; Ronald Scheidt, Vice-President  
Mary Scheidt, Secretary/Treasurer; Trustees, Joseph Flickinger, Nikolas Gemmell, Daniel Herzog*

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—Burial Records 1875-1914, Box 1

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—Cemetery Burial Records, 1965-1978, Box 1

—Cemetery Dedication and Consecration Program, Box 3

—Constitution and Bylaws of the First German Protestant Cemetery Association, 1910, Box 3

—Dedication Brochure, Box 2

—Incorporation Certificate, 1897, Box 2

—Photo #10, 1920's, Box 3

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—Trustee Minute Book, 1885-1919, Box 1

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—Photo Box 1

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