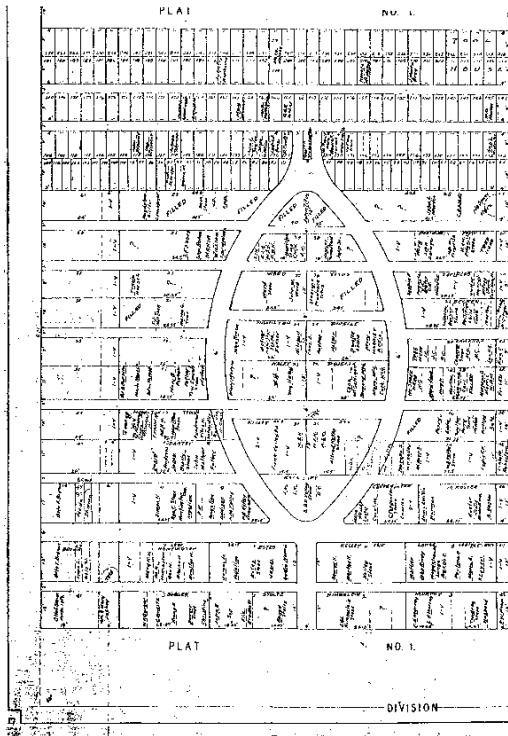


OUR CEMETERY – PART 1 - IT'S 1854 AND OUR ISLAND CEMETERY IS ESTABLISHED

This is the history of our Island cemetery, which is quite old. It is a source of meditation, interest, research and an occasional lawsuit. In fact, Ned Williams and a couple of others, are combing through old newspapers to locate and add obituaries for of our Islanders who have passed on. These can be found FindaGrave.com; a great place to find interesting items about Island family members.



The Island Cemetery was officially established in 1854 with this deed.

“Know all men by these presents; that I Elizabeth K. Webb of the County of Erie and State of Ohio in consideration of the sum of \$18.00 in hand paid by J. E. Woodford, E. Ward, Chas. Carpenter, as Trustees of the Kelleys Island Cemetery Association...do hereby grant, bargain, sell and convey unto the said Woodford, Ward and Carpenter and their successors in office forever, the following Premises, situate in the county of Erie, in the State of Ohio and in the Tp. of Kelleys Island...”

This is the first and oldest section of the cemetery, which is located on Division Street. It is possible that the lot was used as a burial site much earlier. There are monuments for Eliza and Samuel Titus and Steven and Prudence Titus dated 1851, and were probably memorial headstones, and there are several references to a cemetery in 1853.

The original cemetery layout was much more ornate than what we see today. Many plots remain unidentified as their headstones, some made of wood, are now gone. At one point, even the original layout vanished and in 1894, the Cemetery Trustees were

instructed to find the original chart of the cemetery “if it could be found.”

Officially, the cemetery contained just 2/3 of an acre. It was expanded in 1881 by 1/2 an acre purchased from Fredric Meyer for \$450 and a burial lot.

Officials considered another location for the cemetery instead of increasing its current location. In 1894, the Cemetery Trustees reported to Council on a new cemetery plan. “We think to take up land in another location and start a new cemetery, the right course to take, and aside from being a much drier and more beautiful spot and one that can be kept up in better shape. The difficulties now existing in the old cemetery can be more easily and satisfactorily settled.” Their concern was that the cemetery was located adjacent to the North Pond and had recurring drainage problems. The lot they considered purchasing was located on the southeast side of the island. That purchase was not successful and after much debate, in 1895 another 1.33 acres was purchased from Fred and Matilda Meyer. The boundary of this last expansion was marked by a



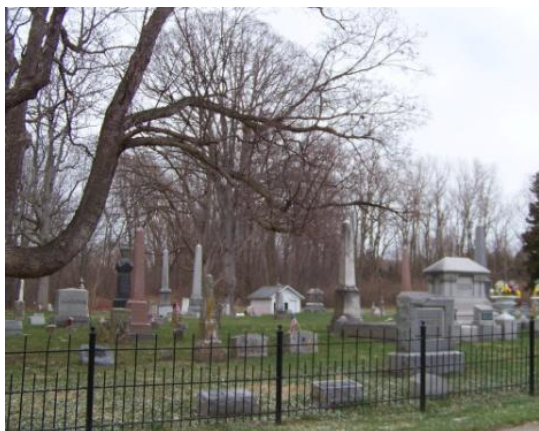
Maple Tree one foot in diameter, the stake being on the North side of said tree

The cemetery sits adjacent to a stream that runs into North Pond. The pond used to drain, but recently, its access to the lake has been blocked by a high sand barrier and the swamp water often threatens to flood Division St.

As the cemetery expanded, roads were laid out, marble tombstones were added to the family plots and a fence was installed. The old fence is still stored on the cemetery lot.

The old fence, which had fallen in disrepair, is still

stacked along the edge of the pond. It was replaced in 2001, a joint gift from Edward Kuchar and Jerry West. O. Hugh Lange and James Palladino handled the installation. It really showcases this beautiful, interesting and historic area.



Prior to the establishment of the cemetery, the dead were buried where convenient. Bodies found in the lake, called floaters, were often buried near where they came ashore. There are occasional references to the Old Burying Ground located on the farm of Addison Kelley near the South Pond, but that was assumed to be an Indian burial area. A very few Indian skeletons were uncovered in the area over the years.

The cemetery in 1861 was described as nothing rich or extravagant with no grand roads to drive upon, no costly iron fences, and no desire to put up any better tombstones than what is there already. However, just a few years later residents lamented the overgrown condition of the grounds and the youth of the Island banded together to clean it up and cut back the overgrowth.

On June 16, 1885, the Township Trustees ordered the Clerk to compile a cemetery record and arrange names of persons buried in the cemetery in alphabetical order. That record begins



in 1854. The cemetery record does not, however, indicate which plot the deceased was buried in, which makes locating many of the graves impossible now. Since the old records of the Cemetery Board are so incomplete, those buried without benefit of a lasting headstone now lie in unmarked graves. In later years, an occasional report of plot sales would be given at Council meetings that identified which lots had been sold or paid for and by whom.

In November 2004, the cemetery book, which had been missing for several years, reappeared after being microfilmed at BGSU. It may have been the one identified above. The odd thing is that many names that appear on the cemetery list do not appear on the county death list and people who appear on the death list may be buried in the cemetery but do not appear on the cemetery list. In addition, several people who are on the cemetery list are not actually buried in this cemetery but elsewhere. To make matters even more confusing, some entries in the cemetery ledger are dated before the actual date of death, likely just a clerical error in transcription.

Many of the monuments or markers that were installed, are now gone and it is likely that many of the original graves were marked with wooden crosses or markers. In 1913, Lydia Ryall described the Island cemetery this way. "With its green sward and flowers, its shrubbery and drooping trees, its artistic and costly monumental designs, the spot is one of rare beauty and attraction to lovers of 'the quiet places.' Attention is soon diverted, however, to the more humble portions of 'God's acre,' where rows of black crosses mark corresponding low mounds. Here rest

the bones of Hun and Slav, of Portuguese, Italian, Sicilian, and other representatives of European peasantry.” Lydia had a poetic spirit. She wrote mainly about Put-in-Bay.

On March 1, 1886, for the purpose of keeping the Cemetery Record correctly, it was ordered by the Trustees that persons wishing to bury friends in the cemetery should procure from the Township Clerk a Burial Permit and before the permit was given, the permit had to show the name of the deceased, the age and cause of death.

Unfortunately, burials in the cemetery were not without controversy.

DISAGREEMENT OVER A CEMETERY MONUMENT

November 10 1893 – “A singular action was filed in the Common Pleas court on Thursday. The plaintiff is Alonzo B. Dwelle and he names as defendants Christina Schaedler, administratrix of the estate of the late August Schaedler, Christina Schaedler individually and the village of Kelley’s Island. In a lengthy petition filed by Messrs. King and Hall, the plaintiff says that he has been a resident of the village of Kelley’s Island for more than 42 years. On or about Sept. 8th, 1891, he bought a lot in the village cemetery, described as lot 12 in the addition. The defendant, as administratrix, claims some right, title or interest in the cemetery and in pursuance of the same has commenced the construction of and has nearly completed the foundation for a monument on the line which separates plaintiff’s lot and lot No. 11, one-half of the foundation being on plaintiff’s lot. The defendant has purchased a monument to put upon the foundation so constructed and threatens to erect the same in a very short time. Plaintiff prays that an injunction may be issued restraining Mrs. Schaedler from erecting the monument, that an order be made for the removal of the foundation so far as the same has been constructed



and the restoration of the lot to its former condition. A temporary injunction was granted by Judge Kelly, pending the trial of the action.”

Whatever the problem it appears that it was worked out as Schaedler’s monument is tall but not overly large. The name on Schaedler’s monument (the most common spelling) is spelled Scheadler, with the a and e reversed.

The tall monument is Schaedler’s as well as the smaller monuments. The Dwelle headstone is in the lower right of the

photo. The Schaedler monument is inscribed: August Scheadler, Died March 25th, 1893, 63 yrs, 7 mos. Albert, Died March 1st, 1891, age 24 years, 4 mos., 11 days. There are individual headstones for Andrew 1858-1927, Mother Christena, Albert, and Father.

The Dwelle headstones are smaller: George F. (1883-1907); Alonzo W. (Father) (1846-1909); Mina D. (Mother) (1859-1931); Norman A. (1882-1913); Rose F (1887-1971); Nelson P. (1880-1967).

From the book Kelleys Island – 1810-1861 – the courageous, poignant and often quirky lives of Island pioneers