



Development of Hillcrest Cemetery

On March 11, 1878 Edward and Olive Nelson sold the property, now known as our Hillcrest Cemetery, to the township for the handsome sum of \$15.00. It was agreed that the land, located on Temple and west of Old State Road, was to be used only as a burial site...and nothing else. Four years later, Board of Health members A.E. Doty, Thomas Budd, J.S. Lambertson and William Smith resolved to rid the area of excess trees, put up fencing to surround the parcel and to plot the cemetery.

On the east side of what is now known as Division B, a Potters' Field was established. It continues today as an area respectfully set aside for the interment of the poor, or unidentified remains. From the Township Board's minutes in 1968, Matt McClump was hired to also plot the cemetery. It was mapped out and referenced as Division A, B or C.

Division A has 80, 4-person plots; Division B has 144, 4-person plots; Division C has 225, 2-person plots and Division D (a section that was added later) has 51 single-person plots located on the east fence line.

In May, 2011 the Greenwood Township Board (Miles House, Dave Lawrence, Linda Bailow, Lester Vida and James Korman) decided that further research was needed, and hired Great Lakes Subsurface. Known as a company that performs archaeological and forensic investigation, this company was hired to x-ray Divisions A and B. While there were many areas that looked flat and vacant, it was determined that there were approximately 281 unmarked graves within those Divisions.

Township records also contained 43 burial certificates, but with unknown burial sites. The Great Lakes Subsurface company president, Mr. Park Gilmore, ran the equipment and found those grave sites. Township Supervisor House and Cemetery Sextons, Jim and Linda Korman, did the extensive field work to measure every site from the north fence line going south, and mark them accordingly.

In Division A, the rows are measured from the first line of graves going east, and labeled A1, A2, etc., and are also labeled alphabetically, with the number representing the distance from the north fence. In Division B, the graves are measured from the center going west, with the center row being labeled Z, and the numerals representing the distance from the north fence (example: Z019').

The grave sites in both Division A and Division B are listed as unknown in the current records. As there were eighteen unmarked graves below a roadway going through the middle of the cemetery, that roadway was roped off and grass was planted, out of respect for those buried there.

If you have any further information or details that you would like to see incorporated into this piece, contact: Township Trustee / Sexton Barb Ferrett
989-539-2365 (home) or 989-539-6881 (office).