



A VERY SPECIAL PARK

Heritage

The Newsletter of Green Lawn Cemetery
Summer 2025

Howard Daniels: Founder of Green Lawn and “Founding Father” of Rural Cemeteries

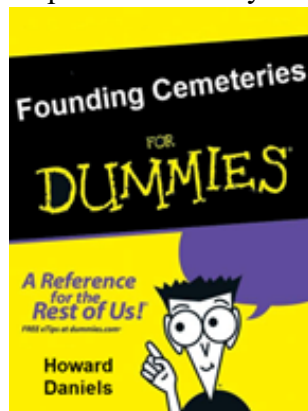
Article by Jeffrey Smith

It’s a bit hard for us in the twenty-first century to see the founding of a cemetery as a big, newsworthy event, but when Green Lawn opened it was a very big deal. Cemeteries were civic assets, part of the vision of a “great American city.” That was the case when Green Lawn’s landscape architect Howard Daniels rose to become one of the most prolific cemetery designers of the 1850s. His first notable achievement was dedicated 176 years ago this July at Green Lawn Cemetery.

Over the next decade, Daniels designed some fifteen cemeteries in Ohio, New York, and Connecticut, ranking him among the most prolific cemetery architects. His work makes him one of the “founding fathers” of the modern cemetery business.

Daniels understood that cemeteries had to be places people wanted to visit and bury both themselves and their ancestors—and be willing to pay for the privilege. That was one central idea of the Rural Cemetery Movement. Daniels was a central figure in creating those spaces.

Starting with Green Lawn, Daniels learned a great deal about cemeteries, adapting accepted ideas from landscape architecture to the unique uses of cemeteries and the business practices to run them. He had become enough of an expert on cemetery management by 1859 that the board of trustees at Oakwood Cemetery in Syracuse asked him for a primer on setting up the business—a sort of “Founding Cemeteries for Dummies.” In February 1860, he wrote them six pages of small, neat handwriting compiling all he had learned about



This image from an 1889 stereoview card provides some insight into the dense natural foliage envisioned by Daniels

cemetery day-to-day operations: how to create interment books, deed books, accounts, and daily logs, along with a suggestion that account books should be kept “in pencil at first” to ensure accuracy.

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President's Message Summertime in the Cemetery



*Kelly Casto, President
Green Lawn Cemetery Association*

Summer is always a busy time at Green Lawn as it is a prime time to work on the grounds with repairs and restoration projects.

This year is certainly no exception as the massive restoration of the dome and other portions of the 1903 Huntington Chapel are well underway, and I must report some excellent and also some disappointing news in this regard.

The restoration is going extremely well and uncovering a lot of information about the building that had not been well documented. It appears that when finished the results will be truly awe inspiring. The disappointment is that it will not be completed by September as previously expected, impacting some of our fall and early winter programs. Nonetheless, it is expected to be completed by Christmas, and what we are seeing to this point will make the extra patience well worthwhile.

Our event with Kelton House in June was well attended and created a wonderful template on using our new gazebo as an intimate event space.

With that in mind, note the August event planned in partnership with Thurber House!

Enjoy your summer, and as always thank you for supporting Green Lawn!

Green Lawn Flashbacks



Left: We found this fox photo in some files from 2003, meaning this could be the great, great, great, great, great grandfather of one of the foxes in the cemetery today!



Middle: Recently uncovered Tiffany tile floor in one room of the chapel, covered with carpet since 1960 and fully restorable



Right: Early photo of the Soldiers and Sailors Monument installed in 1891.

News from Memorial Properties *Operating Green Lawn since 2019!*

Walking the Walk...of Memories!

A small but prominent corner of Green Lawn is the Walk of Memories - along the sidewalk that leads to the Prairie View Garden Mausoleum buildings across the street from the office. It was installed to offer a relaxing and serene space for cremation placement.

There are many options along the walkway, including packages of niches, lawn, and a bench (suitable for up to eight individuals), single spaces for cremation markers (which look like normal headstones but have been cored to contain cremated remains), and other options as well.

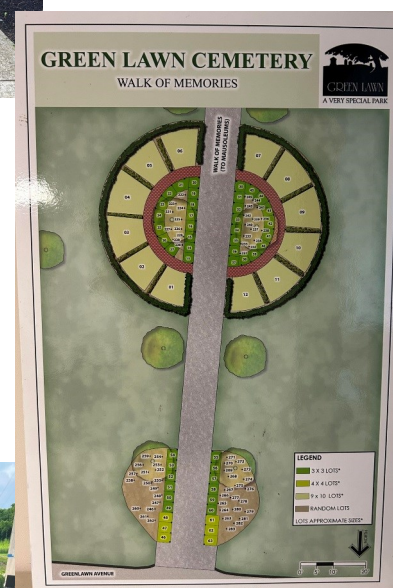
These options cover a wide array of price points - including options that are budget friendly and some mid-range options that are very good values for everything included in the packages.

The walk leads to the courtyard of the mausoleums, where additional options are available (along with niches in the buildings themselves- especially the new building scheduled to be completed in early 2026).

Memorial Properties is currently giving the walkway and the courtyard a facelift - pre-installing some of the features for the packages, replacing some of the trees in the courtyard that we removed last year, and preparing it to be a more prominent feature.

Currently there is availability among all of the options offered in this area. If you are want cremation for yourself or if you have family remains that you are ready to provide a permanent resting place, ask the office about the options on the Walk of Memories and the new Prairie View Mausoleum!

(614) 444-1123



Corrections

In our Spring edition we thanked the donors who so generously support the Friends of Green Lawn, but need to make a few corrections with apologies...

*Carol Larimar, who was a Maple Level donor, was listed as "anonymous" - thank you Carol!

*Sally O'Neil should have been recognized as Sally Jeffrey O'Neil

*Our appreciation for Tom Balderston should have included Betsy and read Tom and Betsy Jeffrey Balderston

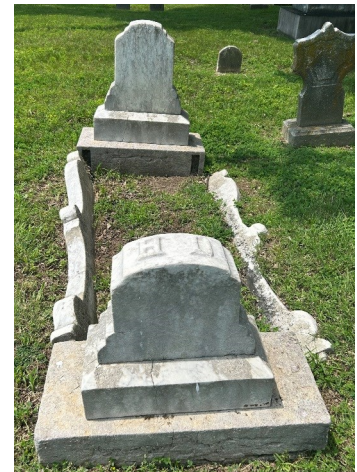
Please let me know anytime we need to update our information or make a mistake in recognition - we want to accurately express our true appreciation for your support!

Howard Daniels... (cont.)

Daniels quickly developed his own views that can be seen originating at Green Lawn. He wanted a less manicured version of nature framing gravestones, placing the natural world in conversation with the manmade markers. Daniels noted in 1855 that landscape was the place where “nature may be viewed in her loveliest garb; the most obdurate heart may be softened, and the mind gently led to pursuits which refine, purify, and alleviate the humblest of the toil-worn.” He decried efforts to create an artificial version of nature that ran counter to the environment. Echoing gardeners today, he called for planting native species: “A great desideratum . . . is to grow only or chiefly such sorts of plants as will maintain a healthy appearance, and successfully struggle against the atmospheric disadvantages of the locality.”

NEW CEMETERY—Persons wishing to purchase lots in the New Cemetery, can select such locations as they choose by applying to the undersigned, or **Mr. H. DANIELS, Engineer, on the Grounds.** Clubs of from four to eight persons may unite and purchase lots together, and they will be immediately graded and the avenues and paths round them opened. by applying to the Engineer any person may purchase a lot of such size, shape and location as may be desired. Buffalo, July 9. 1850.
jy9t **CHARLES E. CLARKE.**

TO CIVIL ENGINEERS and SURVEYORS.—Wanted a young Man who can make a correct trigonometrical survey and map of a cemetery, and who can furnish his own Transit, &c. One who would like to learn the art of laying out Cemeteries, preferred.
HOWARD DANIELS, No. 25; Broadway.

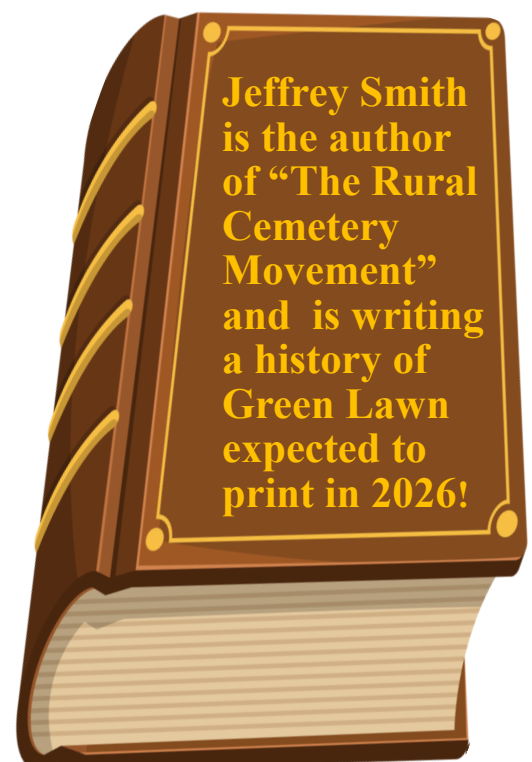


Above: Howard Daniels' grave in Section G

Left: Newspaper adverts related to Howard Daniels as a cemetery designer

When Daniels moved to Buffalo in 1850 to design Forest Lawn Cemetery, he became its secretary, as he had at Green Lawn. He ran ads in the Buffalo Commercial soliciting family lot sales. People could apply to either founder Charles Clarke or “Mr. H. Daniels, Engineer, on the Grounds.” Daniels didn’t stay long, though. The trustees at the new cemetery in Erie, Pennsylvania, hired him in December. He worked fast; Erie Cemetery opened the following May. By April 1852 he had moved to New York and had enough business to advertise for “a young Man who can make a correct trigonometrical survey and map of a cemetery, and who can furnish his own Transit, &c. One who would like to learn the art of laying out Cemeteries, preferred.”

By age forty-three in 1859, Daniels was something of an old pro at the cemetery business—resulting in the trustees at Oakwood Cemetery in Syracuse asking him to provide the primer for setting up its business. Daniels moved to Baltimore in 1861 to become the Head Gardener for the City where he designed the Sheppard Asylum and played a role in the grounds at Druid Hill Park. He died there in late 1863. He apparently held a soft spot for Green Lawn in Columbus and a friendship with the Kimball family; his remains were shipped there for burial on H.H. Kimball’s family lot, where his name appears on the family obelisk just a few feet from his own gravestone.



Upcoming Green Lawn Events

Saturday, July 12, 10:00am-6:00pm, Tierra y Vida Festival. Inspired by the wisdom of the Mayan calendar this free festival encourages self-reflection, spiritual growth, and mindful actions for true freedom. Enjoy music, art, meditation, yoga, acupuncture, sound healing, Reiki, spirituality, permaculture and nourishing food. Centered around the Gazebo on the main road. Brought to you by *Latino Arts for Humanity*.

Sunday, July 13, 2:00pm-4:00pm, Green Lawn Cemetery Bike Tour: A bicycle is a great way to traverse this iconic American cemetery and learn about the rich history contained within its borders. Our expansive grounds, unique statuary, and magnificent old growth trees will be explored. We stop often at notable graves, monuments, and share fascinating stories of those who reside here permanently! Bring your own bike or reserve one when you register. \$40/rider. This fundraiser supports Green Lawn Cemetery Assn. & Outdoor Pursuits—two local nonprofits. Register at: <https://app.dvforms.net/api/dv/dw79p8>

Sunday, July 27, 2:00pm-4:00pm, Landscapes, Landmarks, & Legacies Walking Tour. Join us for a guided walking tour of the cemetery as we uncover some of the best kept secrets of Green Lawn. The tour begins at the Grand Gazebo. We then stroll deep into the cemetery to visit unique monuments, hear fascinating history, and our enjoy our growing arboretum. Also hear an update on the ongoing restoration of the historic Huntington Chapel. \$25/person. Proceeds directly support preservation projects in the cemetery. Register at: <https://app.dvforms.net/api/dv/dwwvz9>

Saturday, August 9, 2025. 6:00pm-7:30pm, Thurber House Picnic & Fundraiser. Join us at the Grand Gazebo in Green Lawn Cemetery for this family-friendly event to celebrate the work of one of America's most beloved humorists, James Thurber! Enjoy a delicious picnic dinner from our friends at City Barbeque. Live music, followed by dramatic readings of some of Thurber's most famous stories. His timeless tales will be told by special guest readers, bringing his wit and charm to life under the open sky. Green Lawn staff will also lead walking tours to the Thurber family gravesite where our namesake humorist is buried. Tickets at: <https://www.thurberhouse.org/summer-events-2025/green-lawn-picnic>

More Events and Updates

Website: <https://www.greenlawncemetery.org/events/>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GreenLawnCemeteryColumbus>



Scenes from our Kelton House event - Left: Kelton descendent Dr. Kim Kelton (center) joins the actors after the performance. Dr. Kelton preserved the family letters; Center: "Ferdinand Kelton" reads a letter to his son; Right: the audience gathers while our carillon plays Civil War period songs.

1000 Greenlawn Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43223

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Summer - Starts March 15th:

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Winter - Starts October 20th:

7:00 AM - 5:00 PM



OFFICE

Monday - Friday

9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Saturday

9:30 AM - 2:00 PM

Sunday

By appointment



CHAPEL

visit office for access



Phone: (614) 444-1123

Email: greenlawncemeteryassoc@gmail.com

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Green Lawn Heritage Newsletter

Matthew Wolf, *Community Outreach & Events*

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