

# DAVID'S CEMETERY

*"Generations of Care"*

4600 Mad River Road

Kettering, OH 45429

Phone: 937-434-2255

Fax: 937-433-9752

email: [info@davidscemetery.com](mailto:info@davidscemetery.com)

[www.davidscemetery.com](http://www.davidscemetery.com)

## Superintendent Stephen Hopkins: 50 Years and Counting in 2024

Our cemetery was established in 1826, incorporated in 1891 and hired it's first superintendent in 1891. This year we celebrate our superintendent Stephen (Steve) Hopkins 50th year of service. Steve is only the eighth superintendent to serve our cemetery in nearly 200 years. Steve began his career as a part time employee in 1967, became employed full time in 1973 and then was promoted to Superintendent and Secretary of the Board of Trustees in 1974. At the January 22, 1974 board meeting, Vic Greimann moved to nominate Steve to the unexpired term of James Stewart which was seconded by Milo Herr and then Jim Widman moved to nominate Steve as Secretary which was seconded by Jack Dill. The motions carried and so it began. Although 50 years of service and counting in any career is not unprecedented, it is rare and no less impressive.

It is in his 50th year that we thank Steve for all he has done!

These are the names and service dates of the superintendents that have all left their mark on the beauty, sustainability, growth and stability of our cemetery that will stand for generations to come because of their contributions.

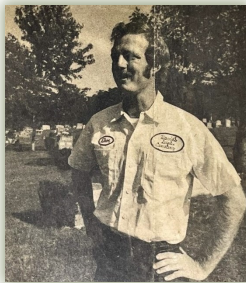


Photo courtesy of KO Times

1891-1894

1894-1915

1915-1924

1924-1926

1926-1944

1945-1947

1947-1974

1974-present

E. F. Freeman

S. Orion Protzman

William H. Kress

William Tracey

George Decker

William Bausman

James Stewart

Stephen D. Hopkins



Steve (Digger) in 2004

## Looking Ahead to 2025 Anniversaries

### Remembrance Circle-Scattering Garden 1990-2025 35th Anniversary

The Remembrance Circle consists of an obelisk monument covered with the names of the loved ones scattered there. Services for cremains that are to be scattered may be held just like any other service or it can be held in the Remembrance Circle itself. The cremains may be scattered by a family member or by our staff. It can truly be a touching and memorable event.



*The Remembrance Circle is always accessible and truly has year-round beauty.*

### Old Glory Plaza 2015-2025 10th Anniversary

Old Glory Plaza was built to memorialize members of our community, our public servants and our beloved military. The niches surround a ring of five 8' granite tablets. Each tablet pays tribute to one of the five branches of our military. At the core of Old Glory Plaza flies a majestic flag that measures 30' X 60' atop a glorious 120' tall flagpole.



*Anyone may purchase a niche in Old Glory Plaza-you **DO NOT** have to be military.*

*The U.S. cremation rate is expected to increase in the United States from 60.5% in 2023 to 81.4% by 2045, according to the National Funeral Directors Association's (NFDA) 2023 Cremation and Burial Report.*

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Cremation Scattering Garden/Indoor-Outdoor Niches/Indoor Crypts/Vaults  
Monuments/Pre-Planning Services/Chapel/Gathering Room/Many Spaces Available

On March 23, 2024, David's Cemetery played host to the Montgomery County Chapter of the Ohio Genealogical Society (MCC-OGS) for the first of four local cemetery tours to help celebrate their 50th Anniversary. It was a cold and blustery day but the turnout was terrific in spite of the weather. The tour was designed for the purpose of telling the stories of the people who built and contributed to Dayton and Montgomery County. David's Cemetery is the oldest cemetery they visited this year. The tour took visitors around the cemetery and stopped at specific gravesites to highlight that person and/or family to tell the story of what they did during their lifetime that contributed to making Dayton and Montgomery County the great place that it is today.



## First Headstone Cleaning Class a Success!

The ongoing maintenance of your family cemetery monument is the responsibility of your family. To assist our families, David's Cemetery partnered with gravestone restoration expert, Misti Spillman, the owner of Reviving Cemeteries, LLC. on Saturday, May 4, 2024 for a monument cleaning class. There was a demonstration of safe monument cleaning steps, and the recommended detergents and techniques. Attendees then chose a preselected monument in the proximity of the class session and cleaned that monument under Misti's guidance to practice the techniques. Each participant received a headstone cleaning starter kit (included in the class fee of \$40) that included all tools and materials needed for the day. Everyone in attendance gained the skills and confidence to independently and safely clean their family legacy monuments. Anyone interested in attending a class in the future can contact our office and be placed on a call list for the next scheduled class.



Mark your holiday calendar...

## Christmas Eve Luminaries

Tuesday, December 24, 2024

Beginning @ Dusk

## 10% APPRECIATION DISCOUNT

**FOR ACTIVE MILITARY PERSONNEL, VETERANS AND ACTIVE OR FORMER FIRST RESPONDERS ON THEIR PRE-NEED BURIAL SPACE PURCHASE**

In appreciation of the service and sacrifice of those who have served or are currently serving, the following are qualified: Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marines, Navy, National Guard, Military Reserves, Space Force, Police, Firefighters and EMT's.

**Please call our office for more details.**

*As we look forward to celebrating our 200th Anniversary in 2026 we are making many changes and updates to our cemetery grounds. You may see some of them in progress over the next year or so. If you would like information on the plans and progress of the improvements, please contact our office to make sure that we have your current email address and contact information on file.*



Be on the lookout...A new sign is being constructed at our Mad River Road entrance-changes are coming!

***David's Cemetery-where peace and beauty provide rest and solitude.***

# Superintendent's Message

## LUMINARIES: The Birth of a 35-Year-Old Tradition 1989-2024

William W. Deck was born November 24, 1915, in Greene County, Ohio to David Forest and Eva Pearl Townsley Deck. William grew up in Dayton, Ohio, and Van Buren Township (Kettering, Ohio). After graduating from high school, he served as a Staff Sargent in the Army during World War II. After the war he worked at Dayton Power and Light in the financial department where he met John R. Dill who also worked in the same department where they became friends.

John R. Dill was born September 3, 1925, in South Lebanon, Ohio to Kenneth W. and Gladys L. Dill. John grew up in Van Buren Township (Kettering, Ohio) graduated from Fairmont High School in 1943, the U.S. Navy Midshipman School during World War II and graduated from Denison College. He then went to work at Dayton Power and Light in the financial department where he met William W Deck. After John Dill became the Treasurer of David's Cemetery he convinced Mr. Deck to purchase two burial spaces at David's Cemetery.



John R. Dill

Mr. Deck, late in November early December 1989, told John Dill about a small hilly cemetery in Western Pennsylvania that placed luminaires around the cemetery each Christmas Eve. The luminaries were placed around the cemetery so the families of the deceased knew that their loved ones had not been forgotten. It would help brighten the spirits of the people who came to the cemetery that evening as well as the cemetery itself.

Mr. Dill told Mr. Deck he thought that was an innovative idea and he would present the idea at the next David's Cemetery Board Meeting. The following is an excerpt from the David's Cemetery Board Meeting Minutes dated December 5, 1989:

"S. Hopkins and J. Dill presented a plan to place luminaires around the cemetery roads. After much discussion, the Board approved on a trial basis the placement of luminaires along Young Drive, and Groby Drive to Young Drive on Christmas Eve."

### In 1989 we placed 600 luminaires at the following costs:

Borden Dairy: 600 new one-gallon milk jugs @ \$.25 each = \$150.00  
Pickrel Plumbing: 600 plumbers' candles @ \$.25 each = \$193.50  
Hilltop Sand Resources: 5.7 tons of sand + hauling fee = \$133.75  
2-utility knives and blades = \$8.48



The rest is now history thanks to William W. Deck and John R. Dill. We assemble approximately 4600 luminaries beginning the day after Thanksgiving. We begin to place the luminaries before sunrise every Christmas Eve morning and a second wave of helping hands arrive to light the luminaries as dusk approaches (weather permitting). This beautiful display would be impossible without the hard work and dedication of our community volunteers, staff, and Board of Trustee members. Every family that drives the candlelit roads deeply appreciates the dedication of everyone involved.

We hope you enjoy the 35<sup>th</sup> year of this beautiful tradition!

*Stephen D. Hopkins*

Please remember that the cemetery grounds and all three mausoleums will be cleaned off starting at 7:30 a.m. Friday, November 29, 2024 (the day after Thanksgiving).

**IF YOU HAVE ITEMS YOU WISH TO KEEP, PLEASE REMOVE THEM BEFORE THAT DAY.**

You may place decorations back into the cemetery and mausoleums on Sunday, December 8, 2024.