

Cemetery History written by Maxine Longshore 1985

## **Sunbury Cemetery**

Early Records of the Sunbury Cemetery are sketchy and many of the ones who could tell the facts are themselves inhabitants of this city of the dead. According to records in the Delaware County Courthouse and to the writings of county historians to which local historians Carleton Burrer and Polly Brehm (Horn), and I have had access, the following information has been gleaned. It is as accurate and complete as can be obtained at this time, I believe.

In 1816, the brothers Lawrence and William Myers platted the Village of Sunbury. That same year, The Sunbury Burying Grounds, consisting of over one acre, was laid out in the northwest portion of the village. At that time the town was bounded on the east by Morning Street, on the west by Evening Street, and on the north by North Street. All the area north of Granville Street, which included the burying grounds, belonged to Lawrence Myers, and the region south of Granville Street was the realm of William Myers.

Due to the agitation of grave robbers, The Sunbury Cemetery Association was formed on June 24, 1879. In the fall of that year and in 1885 and during the years until 1946, more land was acquired from nearby owners such as George and Zeru Grist, John and Elizabeth McFarland, Sidney and Jane Culver, Kimball and Louise Sedgwick, V.R. and Sarah Giles, and Russell and Mary Ellen Miller. The 1971 Addition was derived from the latter land purchases. It contains four sections, of which one section has been developed. Because of insufficient funds in The Association, the Village of Sunbury took over the cemetery management in 1946. The directors of The Sunbury Cemetery Association at that time were Rudolph Burrer, James W. Furry, Charles Shicks, and Secretary Ann Smith.

The cemetery now encompasses about 13 acres, and to date has 5,500 burials. Robert Corwin, the present manager, reports an average of 30 to 40 burials per year. Sextons throughout the years have been Callie Piper, John Spangler, and Perry Spangler. Fawn Druggan many times related to Carleton Burrer that her father had often told her that his grandfather Burrer had planted the trees which border Sunset Avenue along Prairie Run. These same trees are now giant maples.

In 1975, through the estate of Fawn Ramsey Druggan, in honor of her parents, Nelson and Annabell Ramsey, and her brother, Harry Ramsey, a large endowment with an annual stipend was given to the cemetery. At this time the cemetery was renamed Sunbury Memorial Park.

This generous gift has made possible many beautifications. To enhance the entranceway: on the left is an Italian Marble wall extended by a hedge, and on the right of the entry a tall marble monument with a bronze peace symbol; a black wrought-iron gate, a large marble urn, and a marble copper-roofed building were erected. This added income, along with other gifts, enabled the paving of driveways, the planting of trees and shrubs, straightening of monuments, and constant improving and maintaining of the cemetery grounds.

The Village of Sunbury is proud of this peaceful haven along Prairie Run which greets travelers entering the town from the west.