



THE OHIO ARCHAEOLOGICAL COUNCIL  
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**Testimony of the Ohio Archaeological Council to the Ohio Cemetery Law Task Force**

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**February 21, 2014**

The Ohio Archaeological Council is a private, non-profit, charitable, scientific, and educational membership organization incorporated with the state of Ohio in 1975. Our mission is to promote the advancement of archaeology in Ohio through research, conservation, education, and consultation with government agencies and the public. Our more than 100 members include professional archaeologists in Ohio working in private businesses, in museums, in state and federal government agencies, and in academia.

We have long supported revising Ohio law to better protect unmarked and abandoned cemeteries regardless of their age because these places are important to many people for many reasons. The recent history of this issue begins in the 1980s and 1990s, when the Ohio Historic Preservation Office (OHPO) made significant efforts to find agreement among archaeologists, Native Americans, and other stakeholders in Ohio concerning the treatment of buried human remains. These efforts resulted in 37 points of agreement, some of which were incorporated into a comprehensive historic preservation bill introduced in the General Assembly in 1989. However, the portion of the bill protecting human burial places was strongly objected to by some Native Americans and removed from the bill, which did not pass. This led to further discussions between Native Americans, the Ohio Historic Preservation Office, and archaeologists. Although these discussions were helpful, they did not result in a separate bill better protecting human burial places. In 1988, a law was enacted prohibiting intentional disturbance to human remains found in caves and rockshelters on private land without the written permission of the landowner or lessee. This bill had the support of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

In 2002, an Ohio House Select Committee Studying the Effectiveness of Ohio's Historical Program and Partnerships produced a report recommending examining Ohio's

cemetery laws. This recommendation was initiated by the Ohio Archaeological Council. Subsequently, the Ohio Historical Society held a stakeholders meeting and issued a report concerning this matter. The report made a number of recommendations. Several underlying themes emerged from the discussions on abandoned cemeteries, including an overhaul of Ohio's cemetery laws clearly establishing lines of authority and protocols for cemetery maintenance and preservation, as well as discovery, disturbance, and removal; education of stakeholders; establishing a centralized clearinghouse of information on Ohio's abandoned cemeteries and their preservation; financial incentives to protect abandoned cemeteries on private property; and a dedicated source of funds to implement any new legislative initiatives. The report concluded that a state agency should undertake efforts to revise Ohio's cemetery laws, not the Ohio Historical Society, which is a private, non-profit corporation carrying out the state's history-related mission pursuant to a contract with the state.

Ohio is one of a few states that do not effectively protect abandoned and unmarked cemeteries. There are thousands of known abandoned and unmarked cemeteries in Ohio, many of which are threatened by neglect and public and private development projects. Thousands more have yet to be identified, but subject to the same threats.

Some of the issues outlined in your initial meeting are important matters to Ohio's archaeological community. We are particularly concerned with better defining the term "abandoned" as it pertains to all human burial places, the definition of a cemetery for human burials, and the identification and protection of human burial places, including establishing a process for reporting human burial places, creating a central register of human burial places, creating incentives to report and preserve human burial places, and establishing standards for the excavation and removal of human burials when they cannot be preserved in place. Increasing criminal penalties for non-compliance with the law should also be examined.

In doing so, reviewing how other states treat human burial places will be very helpful. Indiana's is one that is sometimes seen as a model. In 2002, the Ohio Historical Society produced a couple of summaries of state laws concerning these matters that we urge you to examine. Examining Federal regulations will also be of use, but we generally do not consider the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) a model to follow. While it addresses some of the issues you may seek to address, we do not believe it translates well to Ohio. We also urge you to become familiar with current statutes and relevant court cases,

especially *State of Ohio v. Glass*, a case sometimes cited in national discussions of abandoned and unmarked cemeteries, and referred to below.

The term "human remains" is not defined in Ohio law. Therefore, although the term is used quite freely, it is important to understand that some Ohio laws that appear to protect human remains do not provide much protection. The concept that human remains means any part of the body of a deceased person in any stage of decomposition does not appear to be widely applicable under Ohio law.

Graves that contain human skeletal remains, and presumably associated burial objects, in abandoned cemeteries, Native American burial mounds and other places of human burial on private land are not well protected by Ohio's vandalism and desecration statutes. Human remains and associated burial objects buried on state land are protected by various state regulations (e.g., ORC 149.54, 1517.24 [the "cave act"]), and the (final) disposition of human remains and associated burial objects removed from state land is determined by the Director of the Ohio Historical Society. Human remains buried on local government land are protected by various state regulations (especially ORC 2909.05 and 2927.11) and, possibly some local ordinances.

Ohio law protecting human remains buried on private, state, and local government land is generally directed at the "unprivileged" disturbance of the places where human remains are buried. If a person has "privilege" (ORC 2901.01(A)(12): "an immunity, license, or right conferred by law, or bestowed by express or implied grant, or arising out of status, position, office, or relationship, or growing out of necessity"), i.e., the person owns the land or has permission from the land owner, the person can basically do whatever they want to the burial places, the graves, and the contents of the graves (human remains and associated burial objects), be they in prehistoric mounds or cemeteries or abandoned historic era cemeteries.

Abandoned cemeteries from the historic era are also protected by these laws, but state law does not protect the graves or the remains of humans who have been buried in the ground for more than 125 years. Ohio courts, including the Ohio Supreme Court, have repeatedly found that corpses/dead bodies cease to be entities that can be protected under Ohio's vandalism, desecration and abuse of a corpse statutes because these laws only apply to corpses/dead bodies, defined as human remains that have been buried in the ground for less than 125 years, i.e., human remains with soft tissue attached. Once the human remains become skeletal, which the

courts somehow determined in the late 1800s to take no more than 125 years, the human remains are no longer considered corpses/dead bodies and are generally left unprotected by Ohio's vandalism, desecration, and abuse of corpse statutes. Even the grave is left unprotected ("an excavation ceases to be a grave when the remains originally placed therein have decomposed to such a degree that they no longer meet the definition of a corpse or dead body" [State of Ohio vs. Glass, 1971]).

Ohio's laws protecting places of human burial are not strong, especially when compared to that of other states. You have a big and complex challenge ahead of you. We know this will not be easy, but if there is anything the Ohio Archaeological Council can help you with, just ask.

**Report to The Select Committee to Study  
The Effectiveness of Ohio's Historical Programs and Partnerships**

***Developing an Abandoned Cemetery and Unmarked Human Burial Ground Preservation  
Program***

**Prepared by the Ohio Historic Preservation Office  
Ohio Historical Society**

**September 30, 2002**

Over the course of five months spanning late 2001 and early 2002 a Select Committee of the Ohio House of Representatives conducted 15 hearings, in part, to consider how "to further enhance the State's and the OHS' historical responsibilities." The Select Committee to Study the Effectiveness of Ohio's Historical Programs and Partnerships (Select Committee) issued a report in March of 2002. In its report, the committee recommended that the Ohio Historic Preservation Office (OHPO) address several issues raised during its hearings, including the preservation of abandoned cemeteries and unmarked human burial grounds.

**Abandoned Cemetery and Unmarked Human Burial Ground  
Preservation Program**

The Select Committee recommended that an abandoned cemetery and unmarked human burial ground preservation program be developed and implemented for the State of Ohio and that the State Historic Preservation Officer assemble a group of interested stakeholders to assist in the development of the program. The group of stakeholders consulted to date includes statewide organizations representing the archaeological, genealogical, historical, and Native American communities, law enforcement, and other interested parties (please refer to Appendix A for a complete list). Others to be consulted include representatives of local and state government, law enforcement officials, Ohio Historic Preservation Advisory Board, and relevant Federally recognized Indian Tribes.

In preparation for a meeting of stakeholders convened at the Ohio Historical Center on September 16, 2002, the OHPO prepared and distributed to invitees a report, *Unmarked Human Burial Grounds: An Overview of State Laws* (please refer to Appendix B). This was done, in part, as a result of testimony during the Select Committee's hearings that noted that Ohio was one of few states that does not have a specifically designed program to protect such places. A summary of other states' legislation provides a context for analyzing the situation in Ohio. The summary also provides a shared knowledge base for the stakeholders' discussions.

Prior to the September 16<sup>th</sup> stakeholders' meeting, correspondence was sent to a number of groups and organizations apprising them of the Select Committee's report and inquiring as to whether they wished to participate in an effort to address the issues identified therein. Several of these groups participated in a preliminary telephone survey to identify additional groups and organizations to be invited. This was followed up in August with an invitation to attend the

September meeting (refer to Appendix C, Meeting Agenda); a copy of the summary of other states' legislation was enclosed. The September meeting was designed to establish a working relationship among the stakeholders, to frame the issues, and to suggest some preliminary approaches for inclusion in this report. It is recognized that additional efforts are necessary to develop fully a preservation program, but this meeting was a critical step.

Twenty persons representing 16 organizations plus OHPO support staff attended the September 16<sup>th</sup> meeting (please see Appendix A). The meeting was organized around a series of questions posed to the stakeholders, first on the issue of abandoned cemeteries, and second on the issue of unmarked human burial grounds. The list of questions is included in Appendix D. The participants were also invited to introduce other questions for the group's consideration. Finally, participants offered the names of additional organizations that they felt should be asked to participate or which were likely to have an interest in the issues we discussed.

### **Abandoned Cemeteries**

In order to augment the background information provided for unmarked burials, Ms. Lolita Guthrie, Ohio Genealogical Society, and Ms. Katie Karrick, Ohio Cemetery Preservation Society, provided a brief overview of issues surrounding abandoned or neglected cemeteries in Ohio. Ms. Guthrie noted the efforts of the Ohio Genealogical Society (OGS) to record Ohio cemeteries through the publication of a book, which lists 13,000. Since its publication in 1978, more than 2,000 cemeteries have been added to this database maintained by the OGS, bringing the total to over 15,000 of which 6,000 have locations plotted on USGS maps. The OGS continues recording cemeteries on Lost & Forgotten Cemetery Forms, a copy of which is appended. Very few of the cemeteries in this database are Native American in origin and many have no visible markers. Since 1995, all active cemeteries must register with the Division of Real Estate annually. A Cemetery Dispute Resolution Committee, appointed by the Governor, oversees this requirement. All but 300 of the 3,300 registered cemeteries are owned by political subdivisions.

Ms. Karrick indicated that most of the correspondence received by the Ohio Cemetery Preservation Society (OCPS) is from people who want to report that a cemetery is neglected, abandoned, or endangered by encroaching development. The OCPS' mission is to locate, preserve, and bring cemeteries back so that people can enter them to conduct research and learn more about the history of Ohio.

In addition to the database maintain by the OGS, the Ohio Historic Preservation Office also maintains several databases that contain cemeteries. These include the Ohio Archaeological Inventory, the Ohio Historic Inventory, and the National Register of Historic Places. Cemeteries are just one type of resource entered into these databases, and their numbers are rather small relative to the size of these databases. Of the 123,956 properties recorded in the archaeological and historic inventories, only 1,280 or approximately 1%, are cemeteries or sites with burials or human remains. Of Ohio's 3,600 National Register listings only 44, or 1.2%, are cemeteries. This may be explained, in part, by the fact that cemeteries (along with birthplaces and primarily commemorative properties) ordinarily are not considered eligible for listing on the National

Register of Historic Places. Cemeteries may qualify for listing if they are integral parts of historic districts that do meet the criteria or if they derive their primary significance from distinctive design features, from age, from graves of persons of transcendent importance, or from association with significant historic events.

Observations made by the participants include:

- There is a lack of understanding of who has responsibility for the care of cemeteries.
- There is no centralized source of information on abandoned cemeteries available to developers (note that the OHPO does distribute a fact sheet on cemetery preservation, see Appendix D).
- Family cemeteries are often deliberately destroyed.
- Several cases of cemeteries lost to development pressures were noted as well as examples of cemeteries that were saved or moved.
- In some cases township trustees do not assume responsibility for abandoned cemeteries under their jurisdiction.
- The expense of caring for cemeteries is a significant concern for townships and municipalities.
- A lack of respect was noted for human burials whether or not located in cemeteries.
- Adverse possession threatens abandoned cemeteries within or adjacent to private property.
- Changing funerary practices include increasing numbers of requests for individuals to be buried on private property raising issues of care and long term preservation of the site.
- Concern was expressed over the proliferation of large funerary corporations and the long term care of cemeteries owned by them.
- Concern was expressed that we focus not merely on markers and headstones but on the preservation of human remains at these sites.
- Ohio falls short of other states in programs for abandoned cemeteries. Ohio has many pioneer and native burials.
- It is critical to know where the abandoned cemeteries are and to have a procedure dealing with accidental or intentional discovery and disturbance.
- Other states' laws might provide some direction on how to proceed.
- Several efforts over the course of many years to modify existing Ohio law have had little success.

Several underlying themes emerged from the discussions on abandoned cemeteries:

- Ohio cemetery laws and the responsibility for maintaining cemeteries are not well understood, even by the political jurisdictions with the relevant authority and responsibility.
- Based upon a review of other states' legislation, it was felt that an overhaul of Ohio's cemetery laws outlining clear lines of authority and protocols for cemetery maintenance and preservation as well as discovery and disturbance is needed.
- Education was also cited as a necessary element, including the desirability of having a centralized clearinghouse of information on Ohio's abandoned cemeteries and their

preservation. The Ohio Genealogical Society has led the way in developing a database for Ohio's 15,000 cemeteries.

- It was recognized that financial resources are needed for the maintenance of cemeteries, a burden shared by 1,300 townships and over 600 municipalities. Financial incentives for those who protect abandoned cemeteries on private property and a dedicated source of funds to implement new legislation were considered important to the group.
- Existing legislation is not enforced consistently across political subdivisions, leading to the observation that a centralized enforcement authority may be appropriate.

### **Unmarked Human Burial Grounds**

The group next turned its attention to the preservation of unmarked human burials, fully realizing that there are many areas of overlap with the issue of abandoned cemeteries. The questions listed in Appendix D served as the basis for discussion.

The discussion began with a brief review of Ohio's legislation related to unmarked human burials, which includes a prohibition against desecrating a place of burial or burial marker, Indian mounds or earthworks, and sites of great historical or archaeological interest, among others. This prohibition applies to persons, "without privilege to do so." The Ohio Revised Code also grants the director of the Ohio Historical Society the authority to determine the disposition of artifacts and skeletal remains discovered on state lands.

In addition to Ohio law, there is a nexus of Federal legislation that pertains to unmarked human burials albeit in a broader context. The National Historic Preservation Act directs Federal agencies to take into consideration the effects of their undertakings on historic properties, which can and do include historic and archaeological sites containing human burials. A set of procedures codified at 36 CFR 800 outlines the process followed by agencies in considering historic properties, the hallmarks of which are identification, evaluation, determination of effects, and where there are adverse effects, a good faith effort to mitigate those effects. A key element throughout this process is active public participation.

Another federal law that has a direct bearing on this topic is the Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act, commonly referred to as NAGPRA. NAGPRA is a complex piece of legislation with full implementing regulations yet to be completed ten years after becoming law. Two salient elements are of note here. The law requires Federal agencies to consult with relevant Federally recognized tribes prior to the disturbance of Indian burials on *Federal land*. Second, museums and other educational institutions that receive Federal funds and have possession of, or control over, human remains, funerary objects, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony must consult with *Federally recognized tribes* culturally affiliated with the subject remains regarding their disposition. It should be noted that Ohio has very little *federal land* (a participant noted that 95% of Ohio is private property) and that there are no *Federally recognized tribes* resident in Ohio.

Finally, Ohio, unlike some other states, does not have a review process whereby the effects of state undertakings on historic properties are taken into account and whereby the public is afforded an opportunity to participate in the review process.

Observations made by the participants on this topic include:

- There are major problems with development effecting unmarked burial sites as most of it in Ohio is not federally assisted, hence not subject to review.
- NAGPRA has limitations, as it does not apply to State and private land.
- The disposition of Native American, but culturally unidentifiable, human remains is unclear under NAGPRA
- Each of Ohio's coroners receives 1 or 2 calls every couple of years for assistance in dealing with unmarked skeletal material, some of which is human.
- The process Ohio coroners follow varies on a case by case basis.
- Education was identified as a key element in addressing this issue.
- Others felt that new legislation is the only solution, and enforcement is critical.
- The issue of private property ownership and rights was noted as a related issue.
- Urban sprawl is a root cause of the disturbance of unmarked human remains.
- Indiana was cited as having a good law that addresses accidental discovery of human remains and that applies to all archaeological sites, including those on private property. Education is necessary to pass such legislation.
- Some states, such as Indiana, re-cover and avoid human remains accidentally discovered where possible.
- A register or listing of unmarked human burials was suggested.
- Incentives are needed for private property owners that preserve human burial grounds. Some incentives currently exist but are underutilized.
- An Ohio based committee (separate from NAGPRA) is needed.
- Ohio should consult with other states that have good programs. Indiana, Wisconsin, Maryland, West Virginia, and North Carolina were mentioned.
- A dedicated source of funds is needed for a preservation program.
- Several participants noted the need to consult with additional interest groups, including the Farm Bureau, federally recognized tribes, state agencies, the Ohio Home Builders Association, cemetery associations, African American associations particularly in regards to Underground Railroad sites, and amateur archaeologists.
- Concern was expressed that our efforts should continue and not start over with the inclusion of additional stakeholders.
- Several participants noted that it is important to know who might oppose legislation on this topic.
- Prior, and unsuccessful, attempts to enact legislation on this topic in Ohio are instructive.

Themes emerging from the discussion on unmarked human burials include:

- Education on this topic is extremely important and necessary for the successful passage of legislation.

- Existing state and Federal legislation does not adequately address the preservation of unmarked human burials in Ohio. Legislation is necessary to address this issue.
- Ohio should look at several states' legislation and seek legal assistance in drafting legislation.
- The list of stakeholders should be expanded to include those in favor and those that may be opposed to legislation.

### **Summary and Recommendations**

In conducting the meeting of stakeholders, the OHPO found the ensuing discussion to be thought provoking and insightful. A number of issues were raised and suggestions made which provide direction in continuing this effort. It would be premature at this stage to suggest a consensus has been reached on the development of a preservation program for abandoned cemeteries and unmarked burial grounds. It was clear from the stakeholders' discussion, however, that Ohio's current legislation does not provide adequate protection or guidance for the protection of these resources.

Key elements that should be considered for any proposed legislation include:

- An education program designed to make the general public aware of the importance of preserving places of human burials.
- The development and maintenance of a Geographic Information System- based listing of all known cemeteries and places of human burials in Ohio.
- Protocols and clear lines of responsibility for the discovery and accidental or intentional disturbance of abandoned cemeteries or places of human burials.
- The establishment of a consultation process to include interested parties regarding the disturbance and disposition of abandoned cemeteries and places of human burial.
- Incentives and/or financial assistance for the preservation of abandoned cemeteries and places of human burial.
- Appropriate penalties and enforcement.

As was clearly underscored by the stakeholders, the development of a preservation plan for abandoned cemeteries and unmarked human burial grounds involves dealing with many complex issues. Different cultural traditions regarding the treatment of the dead need to be considered. The question of how to accommodate scientific archaeological research needs to be resolved. Economic and legal issues regarding maintenance, land use, access, and private property rights must be addressed. In spite of these difficult issues, the stakeholders indicated that, as has been done in other states, they were prepared to make an effort to develop such a plan through their individual educational efforts and their common goal of seeing that legislation is enacted in Ohio to address the preservation of abandoned cemeteries and human burial grounds.

A key step in developing legislative language is direct consultation with several states identified by the stakeholders as having good programs. The participants in the September 16 meeting identified other stakeholders that need to be invited to participate in another meeting, or series of meetings, to continue this effort.

Another issue that needs to be addressed is the appropriate placement of responsibility for overseeing the implementation of an abandoned cemetery and unmarked human burial grounds preservation plan. While expertise in history or archaeology may be necessary to identify and evaluate the historic significance of places of burial, the vast majority of the state's 15,000 cemeteries are not historic. In point of fact, most are excluded from consideration for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Many of Ohio's prehistoric burial sites may have historic significance, but it was clear from some of the stakeholders that other cultural values were more important to them. It would be appropriate to explore the placement of responsibility for the oversight of such a program in a state agency with a broader mandate to consider the variety of social, economic, legal, cultural, scientific, and historic issues and values associated with abandoned cemeteries and unmarked human burial grounds. It would also be helpful if LBO/LSC would survey other states with regulator functions in this area to determine budget appropriations and expenditures.

## Testimony for the Ohio Cemetery Law Task Force Meeting

February 21, 2014

### Ohio Chapter of the Association for Gravestone Studies

Beth Santore, Chair

I would like to thank the Ohio Cemetery Law Task Force for inviting The Ohio Chapter of the Association for Gravestone Studies to give testimony at the February 21, 2014 meeting. The Association for Gravestone Studies is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization whose mission is to foster appreciation of the cultural significance of gravestones and burial grounds through their study and preservation. The organization was founded in 1977 for the purpose of furthering the study and preservation of gravestones. AGS is an International organization with an interest in gravemarkers of all periods and styles. Through its publications, conferences, workshops and exhibits, AGS promotes the study of gravestones from historical and artistic perspectives, expands public awareness of the significance of historic gravemarkers, and encourages individuals and groups to record and preserve gravestones. At every opportunity, AGS cooperates with groups that have similar interests.

State and regional chapters is a fairly new concept for AGS. The first state chapter was formed in New Hampshire in late 2009. Ohio's state chapter was started by Beth Santore in September 2010, and was the third chapter to be established. There are currently eleven chapters across the country. AGS chapters expand public awareness and support for the research, preservation and conservation of grave markers and places of burial. The main purpose of state or regional chapters is to work as local extensions of the national AGS and to be able to offer meeting and workshop opportunities at the local level. State chapters operate, not as independent organizational entities, but as local (and, in certain cases, regional) bases from which members will work to expand interest and membership in the AGS.

The Ohio Chapter's members are very enthusiastic and optimistic about the Ohio Cemetery Law Task Force, and have followed all updates about the task force that have been shared with the public. Since many of our members work and talk with AGS members from various states across the country, we are well aware of stricter, more robust laws in other states, and would like to see similar laws, especially those around gravestone preservation, be implemented in our state. We would like to see our cemeteries have the same amount of protection that they do in several other states.

A polling of our chapter's members show that most are concerned primarily with cemetery preservation, including procedures and laws that enhance historic preservation of contents, grounds, and monuments. We would also like to see more laws around remedies, including prosecution, to deter vandalism in our cemeteries.

As previously mentioned, many states have laws that we could use as a guide for Ohio's cemetery laws. If the task force would like to be put in contact with representatives who work with the laws in these states, our chapter would be happy to help by providing names of people we have worked with or know through the national AGS organization. Some of the states and laws we would like to highlight are listed below:

#### Indiana

- Definition of "maintenance of a cemetery" includes resetting and straightening all monuments, leveling and seeding the ground, constructing fences where there are none and repairing existing fences, destroying and cleaning up detrimental plants, noxious weeds, and rank vegetation.
- Indiana Pioneer Cemeteries Restoration Project (<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~Inpcrp/>) holds a "Cemetery & Burial Registry" database under the DNR and is run by the Indiana Cemetery and Burial Ground Registry Coordinator.

Indiana's cemetery laws include...

- A person may not disturb the ground within 100 feet of a burial ground or cemetery for the purpose of erecting, altering or repairing any structure without have a developmental plan approved by the DHPA.
- Illegal to disturb the ground for the purpose of discovering or removing artifacts, burial objects, grave markers or human remains without a plan with DHPA.
- Allows for a person to be convicted under the criminal mischief law if they vandalize a cemetery
- Must have a permit to probe in a cemetery (in search of buried gravestones).

### **Pennsylvania**

- "Cemeteries and Graveyards Protected Act" – It is illegal to construct a street, lane, alley, or public road through a cemetery unless a future law specifically allows for it (this law dates to 1849!)
- The following actions are illegal: the removals of a fence, tomb, monument, gravestone, or fragment.

### **Vermont**

The Vermont Secretary of State's office published a document in 2010 that contains an easy to read breakdown of the state's cemetery laws.

In addition to preservation, many of our chapter's members expressed a desire for clearer laws around "abandoned" cemeteries and their maintenance. Often villages, cities, and townships get into disputes around who is responsible for maintaining abandoned cemeteries, and as a result, many of these abandoned cemeteries sit neglected. This can encourage more vandalism and theft at these locations. If the term "abandoned" could be better defined in our laws, perhaps we could avoid this all too common problem with cemeteries across the state. Also, a better definition of maintenance schedules and requirements would be beneficial.

To summarize, the main items that the Ohio Chapter of the Association for Gravestone Studies would like to see accomplished by the Ohio Cemetery Law Task Force are:

- Outreach and educational programming for groups interested in cemetery preservation.
- Definition of terminology related to cemeteries, such as "maintenance", "abandoned", etc.
- Ohio's equivalent to Indiana's "Cemetery & Burial Registry" database.
- Laws that requirement set care and maintenance in all cemeteries.
- Laws which provide consequences and punishments for vandalizing cemeteries.

Thank you for allowing us this opportunity to speak at your meeting, and please feel free to reach out to me at any time if you would like further input from our group at either the state or national level.