



GREATER CLEVELAND PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL SOCIETY

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Grave Marker Project to Honor Our Fallen Law Enforcement Officers

Wishing to further their promise to never forget their fallen comrades, the Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial Society (GCPOMS) has embarked on a campaign to mark the graves of the 180 officers from Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain, Medina and northern Summit counties who have died in the line of duty.

A survey of surviving family members was conducted and it was learned that the overwhelming majority of them favored the idea of having markers placed on their loved one's grave each May during National Police Week, and National Police Memorial Day (May 15th).

On March 26, 2011, a committee of volunteers met and was joined by surviving family members to initiate the grave marker project (GMP). A drawing of the marker was approved and they are currently in the design and manufacturing phase. The concept is similar to those that are placed on the graves of our honored military veterans each Memorial Day, and will include a U.S. and police memorial flag.

Designing the marker was the easy part. The cemeteries and grave location of 180 officers who are inscribed on the Greater Cleveland Peace Officers Memorial had to be located. Dating back to December 1, 1853 when Watchman John Osborne of the Cleveland City Marshal's Office was the first officer to fall. Osborne died of injuries sustained on Sunday night, November 20, 1853 when, while on patrol on Superior Hill in Cleveland, a vagrant stabbed him in the neck in an unprovoked attack. He is buried in St. Joseph's Cemetery, 7906 Woodland Ave., Cleveland, OH. 44104.

Volunteers joined in and as of October 12, 2011, 160 of the 180 cemeteries have been identified. Research of the cemetery records has resulted in identifying the location of many of the graves, with approximately 50 graves yet to be located. Site visits to the graves are now underway in order to ascertain if the officer's graves have a legible headstone, and to chart the location for the eventual placement of the marker.

Michelle Day of the Woodland Cemetery Foundation lent her expertise to the project, and with her guidance, the research is making considerable progress. Michelle also informed us that three Cleveland Police officers, who were killed in the line of duty and are buried in Woodland cemetery, don't have headstones. The GCPOMS and Woodland Cemetery Foundation plan to petition the City of Cleveland in order to provide headstones for these fallen heroes.

Beginning on May 10, 2012, GCPOMS volunteers will place a marker on the graves of our fallen officers to honor their memories and sacrifice. The markers will remain through the conclusion of the GCPOMS' 27th Annual Police Memorial Commemoration, May 17-20, 2012.

To contribute to this project or for further information, please visit our website at www.policememorialsociety.com. Anyone wishing to volunteer for this project or other related events, can contact us at gcpoms1985@yahoo.com, or by calling 216-630-0044.

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