



Heritage

The Newsletter of Green Lawn Cemetery
Spring 2016

The Sessions Legacy

By Doreen Uhas Sauer,
Columbus Landmarks Foundation



Photo of Francis Sessions, Columbus Library

Francis Sessions had impeccable lineage, credentials, and a life worthy of a Charles Dickens character or an early Hollywood movie based on a historic novel.

He was a native of Massachusetts whose grandfather took part in the Boston Tea Party and whose uncle served as governor of Rhode Island. However, his father died when Francis was a toddler, and his mother, Sophronia, who, by all accounts, was plucky and vigorous, soldiered on alone for the next 50 years, teaching her son the value of hard work and saving. As a child, Francis worked on his uncle's farm, earning 12 dollars for four months in the summer and going to "common schools" in the winter, a schedule repeated endlessly. Common schools were replaced by academies, until it was time for him to enter college, but Session's ill health prevented him from doing so. Like many other Easterners looking for their own opportunities, he travelled to Ohio in 1840, accepting a position as a clerk in Columbus.

Within three years, he was in a dry goods partnership, Ellis, Sessions & Co., and within the next dozen years or so, Sessions prospered in the wool trade business, parleying his business talents into solid investment and society. In 1847, he married Mary Johnson, the daughter of Orange Johnson, the famed pioneer proprietor of Worthington. She was the only child of Orange and Achsa (Maynard) Johnson who had survived into adulthood.

However, the Civil War – with the bloody battle of Shiloh, the Battle of Stone Run, and Braggs' retreat – and years later, association with Henry Bergh of New York, his deep religious beliefs, and his world travels changed him into a civic minded philanthropist. These were just four threads in the lives of Mary and Frances Sessions, but the resulting tapestry of their interests and wealth would enrich and affect Columbus citizens for generations. (continued on page 4)

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President's Message



Spring is the most beautiful time of the year at Green Lawn, and our volunteers and staff have been preparing to welcome more than 2,000 friends and family members over Memorial Day weekend.

The Grounds and Historic Preservation Committee has championed a Native Tree Project, and moved forward through the winter with the removal of 60 damaged trees, including many ash trees. Last fall, committee members and Green Lawn volunteers joined forces with a local troop of energetic Boy Scouts to replace 25 trees, a giant step toward the ambitious goal of planting 100 native trees throughout the cemetery each year.

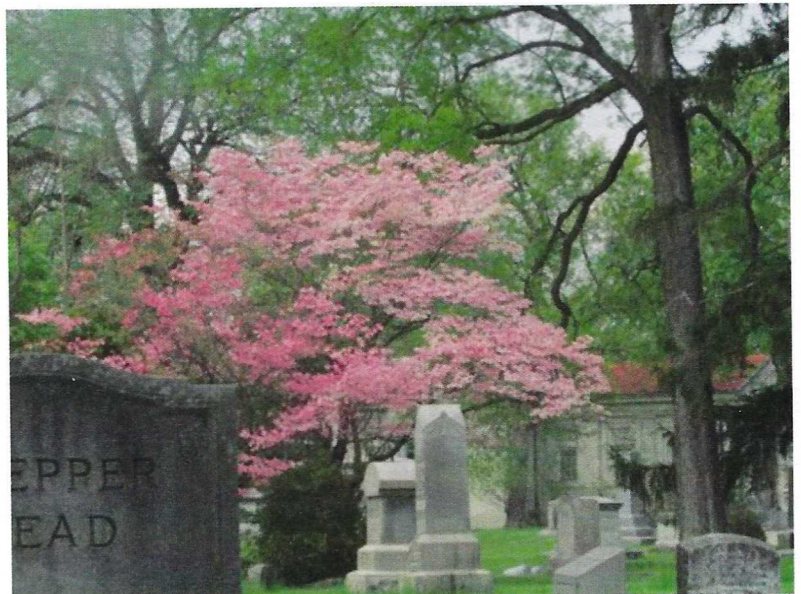
And as I write, craftsmen from Franklin Art Glass in German Village are beginning work to preserve the Tiffany glass and stained glass windows in the Huntington Chapel. Without your generous annual contributions, the Huntington Chapel restoration would be an expensive dream, not an ongoing priority project.

As the Friends of Green Lawn, it is our privilege and responsibility to honor those we love by taking good care of this Very Special Park for future generations. With your support, we will maintain treasured historical monuments and preserve the arboreal, horticultural and birding significance of Green Lawn Cemetery. Each of you has my personal gratitude for your continued investment.

Whether you visit the Huntington Chapel this spring or circle the Pond with its monuments to our founders, the migrating birds and flowering trees will be too lovely to miss! Please visit us soon.

Sincerely,

Yoci Vorys
President



2016 Memorial Day Weekend Schedule of Events



Friday, May 27, 2016

Memorial Weekend at Green Lawn Cemetery will kick off on Friday, May 27, 2016 with the placement of flags on veterans' graves.

Saturday, May 28, 2016

On Saturday, May 28 at 11 a.m., there will be a ceremony with a march to commemorate those lost in our wars.



Monday, May 30, 2016

Green Lawn Cemetery will conclude the events with a Memorial Day Service Ceremony at 11 a.m. on Monday, May 30.

(The Sessions Legacy continued)

Sessions is usually described by early historians as a dry goods merchant, an investor in railroads, an entrepreneur in the wool trade, and as president of the Commercial Bank – perhaps because these activities accounted for his wealth and were held in high esteem by 19th century society. However, as his world widened through his experiences, his work seemed to center more on regard for others.

During the Civil War, Sessions was called upon by the governor to head the Columbus branch of the United States Sanitary Commission, an organization that attempted to bring together charitable groups to respond to the needs of Union soldiers. Sessions promoted the welfare of the soldiers on battlefields and in hospitals, supervising activities that raised money, and actively overseeing and even rescuing the wounded. From 1864 to 1866 he was responsible for feeding, lodging, nursing, and seeing the safe return of 25,649 Union wounded to Ohio. He went onto battlefields as an “emissary of mercy.” Many wounded were brought back to Columbus to a make-do hospital on East Broad Street, the former Esther Institute Ladies Seminary (now the site of the Athletic Club).

Sessions was always a religious man, and originally, a member of the Second Presbyterian Church. He became part of a “small colony” of Presbyterians who pushed to build a small frame church at Third and Gay Streets, the Third Presbyterian Church, where they felt their outreach was sorely needed. It was a location that caused the esteemed Presbyterian leader, Rev. James Hoge, to gravely shake his head. He felt they were locating too far north at the edge of the city. Perhaps it was the need to make his deeds more accountable to his interpretation of Christianity, but eventually Sessions led 42 members to change the direction of religion in Columbus.

A number of Presbyterians were in a theological quandary over the doctrine of salvation. Despite a personal visit to Columbus by the famous preacher Lyman Beecher (author Harriet Beecher Stowe’s own father), he failed to convince many Presbyterians not to give in to the “new” interpretation of the doctrine



(Mary Sessions, Worthington Memory)

of free will, Sessions and others formed the First Congregational church. Sessions bought land on East Broad for the building. Rev. Washington Gladden, a charismatic figure nationally known for his Social Gospel beliefs (a Christian should not just believe but “act like a Christian”) came to Columbus to lead the church. He and Sessions were kindred spirits, and as Gladden would later say, no one in the church did more for the people of Columbus, the poor, or the needy, or did it more quietly than Sessions did.

In 1873, impressed by a visit from Henry Bergh of New York, an American aristocrat, Sessions took up Bergh’s passion, the protection of animals. While in Russia where he served as an American diplomat, Bergh witnessed beatings and unspeakable cruelty to horses, and, inspired by efforts in England to create a humane society, Bergh organized the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and Children. Sessions served as president in the early years to a Columbus humane society. Laws were passed to protect neglected and abused children and animals, water troughs marked “Humane Society” were installed for horses and to promote this new civic initiative (one still exists in Merion Village), and school children were organized into “bands of mercy,” pledging to be kind to all creatures.

Finally, the Sessions, who had no children of their own and had the means to travel widely, accumulated numerous paintings and sculptures for their own East Broad Street home. Their interest in art also extended to a growing number of young artists.



Photo of Sessions House on the left and Monypeny House on the right in the 1920s(Columbus Library)

Sessions made a generous donation of space “free from all expense” to the Columbus Art Association in 1879. As described by a 1979 centennial history of Columbus College of Art and Design, “On a cold Monday morning in January, 1879, the art school opened with a few models, casts, and copies. The smell of brewing coffee beans from the coffee shop below wafted up through two flights of shaky looking stairs....the large room overlooking High Street was neither well lighted nor well ventilated, but to the three students and their teachers, it was a start.”

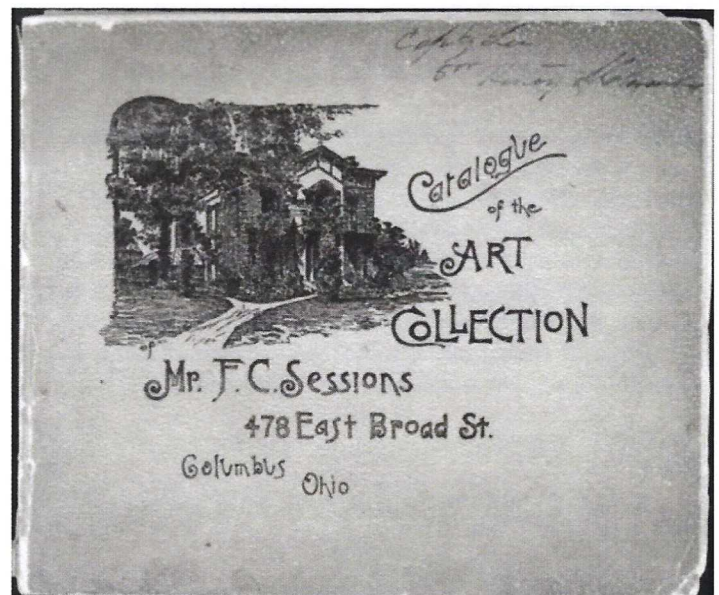
By the end of the school year, attendance on the top floor of the Sessions Building, 15 East Long Street, was 118. This first art school and Sessions’ own collection would give birth to the Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts, then the Columbus Museum of Art and the Columbus College of Art and Design. Sessions opened his home and extensive art collection each month to students.

Sessions died unexpectedly in 1892 on a trip to Hot Springs, North Carolina. It was said that when the news reached Columbus, the whispered phrase, “Mr. Sessions is dead, “ was heard from everyone’s lips as citizens passed the news in shock and surprise.

Mary Johnson Sessions lived until 1919, and when her will was probated, it was discovered the Sessions left almost two million dollars, including a sum which Mary had inherited from her father, Orange Johnson. Generous gifts were left to the YMCA, the YWCA, institutions in Columbus for the blind and the deaf, the Columbus Gallery, the Columbus Art School, missionary societies, and Southern educational institutions that had been established for emancipated slaves. The Sessions house at 478 East Broad became an art gallery for Columbus, as he had wished.

A stately obelisk near the Brown Road gate at Green Lawn marks the resting place of Francis and Mary Sessions, and her parents, the Johnsons. The Sessions home and its neighbor, the Monypeny mansion were torn down in 1929 to build the first new building of the art school, Beaton Hall. However, a portion of the Sessions front porch remains, affixed to the front of Beaton Hall to the northwest of the Columbus Museum of Art.

(Catalogue of the Art Collection of the Sessions cover, Worthington Memory)





Titanic Connections by Maggie Bailey

Before I shared a program about my unique Titanic experiences at Green Lawn's monthly program in February 2016, I knew there was a pertinent question that needed to be both answered and relayed...

Were there any connections between the Titanic passengers and Columbus or Green Lawn Cemetery? Though there could be more, I was able to find two family connections.

The first is a passenger named Jessie William Trout. She was born Jessie Laird Bruce in 1884 in Scotland. Jessie was one of 11 children living with their parents on a cattle farm, and they would eventually emigrate to the U.S. in 1904.

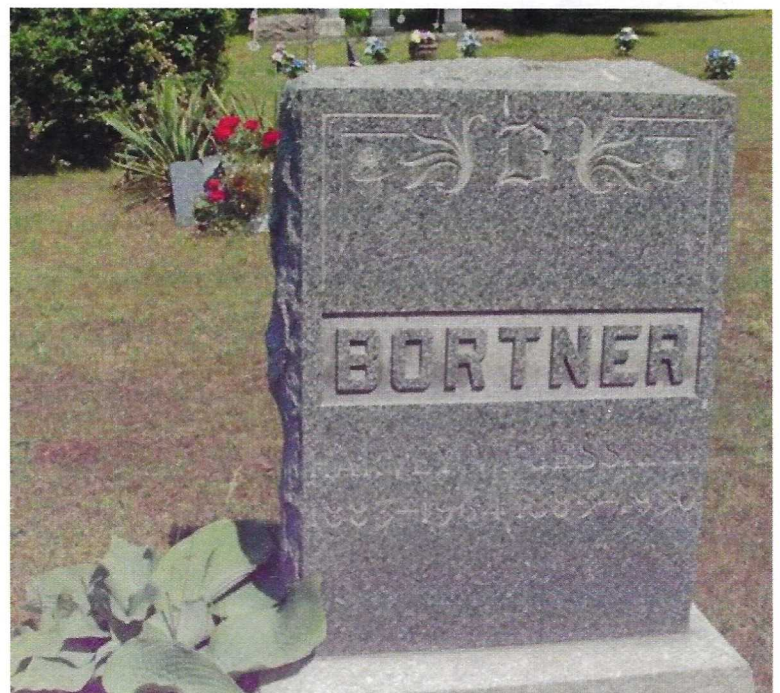
Jessie married William Henry Trout (a brakeman for the Hocking Valley Railway) in Franklin, Ohio on March 28, 1911. They settled in Columbus, but within 6 months, on September 22, 1911, William was crushed to death in a work-related railway accident. In mourning, Jessie returned to Scotland to grieve at the home of her grandparents.

In the spring of 1912 and ready to return to the U.S., Jessie boarded the ship Titanic in Southampton as a 2nd class passenger. (Her cabin # is unknown, and the fare was 12 British pounds, 13 shillings.) Among the fortunate 705 survivors, Jessie boarded starboard side Lifeboat #9 at 1:30 AM on April 15th, commanded by Boatswain's Mate, Albert Haines. She was successfully transferred to the rescue ship, Carpathia. (Titanic sank at 2:20 AM. Lifeboat #9 had a capacity for 65, but launched with 45-48 people.)

Upon returning, Jessie moved in with her married sister at 184 N. Princeton Ave. on Columbus' west side to decide on a new direction for her life. And within a year, when her parents moved on to Minnesota, Jessie followed them. She soon met Harvey Walter Bortner. They married, settling on a farm in Michigan, and would have a son and 2 daughters. The oldest, Bruce, was born on the 3rd anniversary of the sinking of Titanic.

Jessie's happy life would unfortunately end prematurely. On December 30, 1930, traveling with her family a short distance from home, their car slid on black ice. In a panic, Jessie jumped out just as the car veered into a ditch, rolling over and crushing her. Her husband and children escaped with minor physical injuries.

At the early age of 46, Jessie Bruce Trout Bortner was buried in Pine Grove Cemetery near Millington, Michigan on January 2, 1931. Her widower husband never remarried and died in 1964 at the age of 80.



The other Titanic connection is through the daughter (and granddaughter) of a leading Columbus family. William Monypeny emigrated from Ireland to Ohio in 1848, married Marie Brunson in 1854, and settled in Columbus, over time having 5 children. (Known prominently in Columbus, two streets would be named for the family which are today across from Franklin Park Conservatory...Monypeny and Brunson Streets.) It was their only daughter, Sallie (born in 1865), as well as her family, who would board Titanic.

Sallie Monypeny married Logan C. Newsom in 1885 in Columbus. They lived at the large Monypeny mansion at 460 E. Broad St. (Both the Monypeny and the art enthusiast, F.C. Sessions' homes were located at the current site of the Columbus Art Museum.) Logan and Sallie would have a son, William in 1887, and daughter, Helen in 1892. Unfortunately, being ill for several years, Logan died surrounded by his family at their summer cottage on Middle Bass Island in 1901. He is buried with many of the Monypeny family members at Green Lawn Cemetery.

Sallie then married Richard Leonard Beckwith in 1903. They moved to NYC with Helen. William was now living and working on his own. Through a friend, Helen met Karl Howell Behr who had been educated in Germany and Switzerland, and was an avid tennis player, eventually winning the Davis Cup and championships at Wimbledon. Seeing her daughter become more and more enamored with Karl, Sallie determined that Helen would not marry a tennis player. She arranged for the family to go abroad.



(Photo of Helen Newsom, Titanic Passengers)



(Photo of Helen and Karl Behr, Titanic Passengers)

Creating the need to also go abroad (on family business), Karl would follow the Beckwiths. He booked the same ship heading to Europe, attempted good impressions with Sallie, and kept his distance while on the continent. When Sallie decided it was time to return to NY, Helen relayed to Karl they would return on Titanic, April 10th. Karl made arrangements to return on Titanic as well.

The Beckwiths' boarded Titanic at Southampton, while Karl, in Cherbourg. All traveling 1st class, Sallie and Richard were assigned to starboard Cabin D-35 and Helen to Cabin D-47. (Each ticket was 52 British pounds, 11 shillings.) Karl booked a respectable distance away on the port side, Cabin C-148. (His cabin was 30 British pounds.) On the fateful night, Karl accompanied the family to the lifeboats, assisting with life jackets for everyone. When Bruce Ismay (head of the White Star Co.) appeared on the starboard deck, he answered in the affirmative when Karl asked if they could all board a lifeboat. They launched in Lifeboat #5 at 12:55 AM, April 15th, commanded by 3rd Officer Pitman, successfully boarding the Cunard rescue ship, Carpathia. (Lifeboat #5 had a capacity for 65 persons, and launched with 35 or 36.)

As often happens, love would win out. Helen married her Karl in NYC at the Church of the Transfiguration on March 1, 1916, afterwards honeymooning abroad for 6 months. They would have 3 sons and a daughter.

Richard Leonard Beckwith died in 1933 and is buried in Hartford, Connecticut.

Sallie Monypeny Newsom Beckwith died in 1955 and is buried in New York.

Karl Howell Behr died of cancer in 1949 and is buried in New Jersey.

Helen Newsom Behr remarried a close tennis friend of Karl's, a widower, Dean Mathey.

*He and Helen moved into his farm, Pretty Brook, in Princeton, New Jersey.

Helen Newsom Behr Mathey died in 1965 and is buried in New Jersey.

Dean Mathey died in 1972 and is buried in New Jersey.

February 6, 2016 - First Saturday Program "Titanic: A Unique Perspective" with Maggie Bailey

Bailey, a retired middle school librarian of 32 years and a member of the Titanic International Society, shared her experiences on an expedition where she spent a week at the site of the disaster in the mid-Atlantic while George Tulloch's international team recovered artifacts from the downed ship 2.5 miles below the surface.

Bailey has traveled to Titanic conferences in Rhode Island; New York City; Belfast, Northern Ireland; Southampton, England; and Halifax, Nova Scotia meeting the descendants of Titanic's passengers and visiting grave sites of many of the ship's victims.



March 5, 2016 - First Saturday Program "Pioneer Women Interred at Green Lawn" with Leslie Blankenship

On Saturday, March 5, Historian Leslie Blankenship provided a First Person interpretation of Jane Woods Hoge, the First Lady of First Church.

The Hoges advocated for free public education, starting schools for the deaf and blind and a hospital for the insane and helping found the Columbus Female Benevolent Society to care for survivors of the cholera epidemic in 1835.

Columbus Landmarks Winter Tour

Doreen Uhas Sauer and Randel Rogers lead a tour of Green Lawn Cemetery in January that focused on the history and nature of our Very Special Park. The next Columbus Landmarks Tour will be on Sunday, April 24, 2016 at 2 p.m. Contact Columbus Landmarks at 614-221-0227 for more information.



(Jane Woods Hoge, Columbus Library)



2016 Calendars for Sale

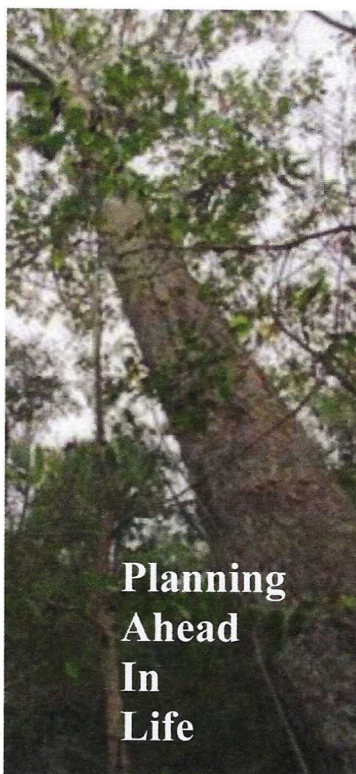
Don't forget to purchase the 2016 Green Lawn calendar that features outstanding photos from the annual photo contest. The calendars are available at the Green Lawn office for \$10. If you wish to order a calendar through the mail, the cost is \$12, which includes postage to mail it to you. Please contact Green Lawn at contactus@greenlawncemetery.org to order your calendar.

Photographers Wanted!!

Don't forget to keep your camera handy for upcoming events at Green Lawn Cemetery and submit your photos by August 31, 2016 for the next calendar photo contest!

Do You Have Family or Friends Interred at Green Lawn?

Opening for business in 1848 and being home to more than 152,000 interments, Green Lawn Cemetery, A Very Special Park, is proud to remain an active cemetery to this day and for the foreseeable future. In 2015, Green Lawn Cemetery became home to 434 interments, providing a place of rest near loved ones and prominent figures of central Ohio's rich heritage alike. With 80 of 360 acres still awaiting development and spaces available in many existing sections throughout the park, the Green Lawn Cemetery stands ready to accommodate family needs for 2016 and years to come. Check us out on Facebook at Green Lawn Family Advisor Team. For more information contact Green Lawn at 614-444-1123 for additional details.



Planning
Ahead
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Life

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2016 Calendar of Events

First Saturday Programs at Green Lawn, held the first Saturday of every month at 11 a.m. in the Huntington Chapel, take a look at the lives of people interred here. First Saturday Programs are free and open to the public.

April 2 – First Saturday “*Earth Day Work Day*” with Randel Rogers. Bring your work gloves and come prepared to do some “dirty work” at 9 a.m.

April 24 – Columbus Landmarks Spring Tour at 2 p.m.

May 7 – First Saturday “From the Graveyard of the Atlantic, the Story of the U-85” World War II stories with Marty Bailey

May 27 -30 -- Memorial Day Weekend Events (see page 3)

June 4 – First Saturday “Bird Walk” with Doreen Whitley of the National Audubon Society

July 2 – Holiday – 4th of July No First Saturday Program

July 31 – Columbus Landmarks Summer Tour at 2 p.m.

August 6 – First Saturday “Underground Railroad History” with Cathy Nelson

September 3 – First Saturday Program “Latin Dances with Juan Carlos Rubio” in honor of National Hispanic Heritage Month

October 1 – First Saturday “German Village: Stories Behind the Bricks” with John Clark

October 30 – Columbus Landmarks Fall Tour at 2 p.m.

November 5 – Veterans Day Program with the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

December 3 – First Saturday “Up on the Housetop...Life at the Hanby House – the Underground Railroad Stories” with Pam Allen

For Group or Individual Tours, please contact Green Lawn Cemetery at 614-444-1123 or contactus@greenlawncemetery.org



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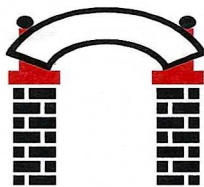
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OFFICE

Monday - Friday
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Saturday
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Sunday
Noon to 4:00 PM



CHAPEL

Monday - Friday
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Saturday
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM
Sunday
Noon to 4 PM
Closed Most Holidays



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