



A VERY SPECIAL PARK

Heritage

The Newsletter of Green Lawn Cemetery
Fall 2023

The Geography of Arthur Boke

Arthur Boke was the first black child born in Franklinton, and was adopted and raised by Sarah Sullivant. Virtually every fact we know about Arthur comes from a few short lines written by Sarah's youngest son, Joseph (born six years later), and the minimal records at Green Lawn Cemetery.

We know this: Arthur's mother was black and abandoned him with the Sullivants. His namesake and father was a black hunter and scout with Lucas Sullivant's survey crew. Sarah, who had just given birth to her eldest (William) adopted, nursed, and raised Arthur. Arthur later helped raise Joseph, then as an adult worked for the Sullivants in some capacity. He died at age 38 and was initially buried on the family lot in Franklinton Cemetery in 1841. In late 1849 Joseph started moving the family to a lot he and William had purchased at Green Lawn, where he was a trustee. Arthur was among the first three to be moved, the remainder being moved 1850-51. He was the first black person buried at Green Lawn, which at that time had no rules regarding the burial of black people (segregation was a common rule then).

Much of what else is said about Arthur is speculation, and as Arthur's final resting place Green Lawn is sometimes center mass for the discussion.

Was he abandoned or was his mother an escaping slave sheltered by the Sullivants forced by the fugitive slave laws to move after his birth? (*probably the later*) Was the father Arthur Boke or Lucas Sullivant? (*records indicate Boke*) Was Arthur educated, and did he work as a surveyor? (*apparently and possibly*) Was his father black or white? (*records indicate black*) What was his mother's name & where did she go? (*we don't know*)

One aspect of the speculation around Arthur specific to Green Lawn involves his placement on the Sullivant lot. Alone in a corner, he seems set apart from the family. A popular theory and assumption that I initially made as well, is that this was due to his

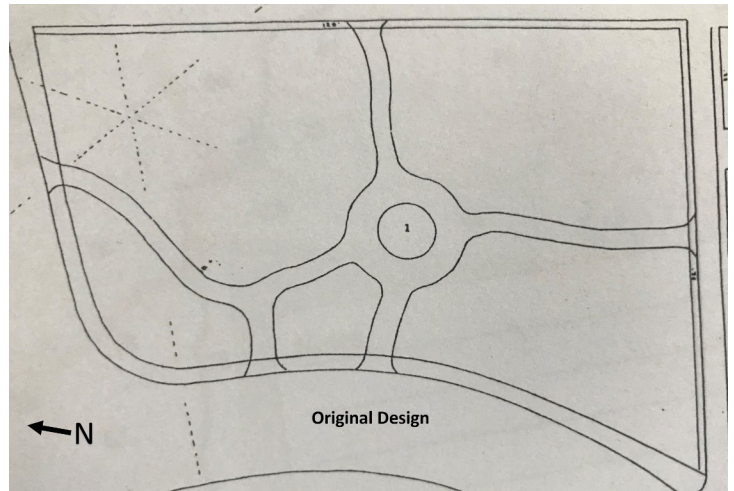


Figure 1 - Section P, Lot 1 as designed.

being the sole person of his race on the family lot. Segregation would have been normal in cemeteries in the 1840s, and visually it is easy to conclude this.

Prior to a recent event, I cleaned the 45 markers on the Sullivant lot, and in doing so found a certain geography that gives insight to the layout and perhaps even the position of Arthur Boke.

The Sullivant lot had always bothered me because on our maps there is a pattern of paths that are not

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President's Message



Kelly Casto, President GLCA

Summer has seen a lot of work completed at Green Lawn including the repair of two dozen of our oldest markers and a great effort by the lawn care team keeping the cemetery looking good during a summer where the grass never went dormant!

As this goes to press, we are pushing hard to complete the summer to-do list, working on storm and sanitary sewers, new features at the pond, and pot hole repair.

Some of the most exciting work being finished in August and September will be the surveying of two new gardens! One garden will be named "A Place for Us" and will serve the LGBTQ+ community, while the other will be our first Catholic garden. Both will feature a central art installation.

Another exciting bit of news is that last week we filmed an episode of "Columbus Neighborhoods" - the excellent program on WOSU featuring local news and history. This episode will air in late October, so watch your listings and set the DVR!

Cheers!

Wildlife Stories



The Ohio Wildlife Center rescued these baby opossums after their mother was killed on Brown Rd. Once they were old enough to survive on their own, they were returned to us to release in the cemetery. We let them out at the base of a tree with a large hole at its base and they immediately moved in!

Baby opossum are notoriously difficult to rescue. They must be carried around in a sling and be frequently hand fed with a syringe to survive, and so very young opossums are usually doomed if the mother is killed, and until fully weaned there is no guarantee of success.

Thankfully the volunteers at the Wildlife Center put in the effort to allow this litter to survive and be released!

The Geography of Arthur Boke *(Continued from page 1)*

apparent today (*figure 1*) that dates to 1849 likely designed by landscape architect Howard Daniels.

While cleaning I noticed the family seemed divided by these paths. The parents on a central circle, large lots in the NE, SE, and SW represent the families of each son, the front corners hold members of the Starling (Sarah's) family on the NW and Arthur Boke on the extreme SW. An irregular and off center space in the front (west side) center is left open, perhaps as lawn area. Viewed this way, the paths do exist obscured by the lot's uniform cover of grass and a few descendants intruding into the center circle. (*figures 2 & 3*)

This places Arthur on the front corner of the lot, a space of equal standing to family luminaries Lyne Starling and Judge John A. McDowell on the other front corner. Segregated single spaces were more often put at the back or sides of a cemetery, and even on family lots placement is often significant in terms of the strength of your ties to the primary family members (see the placement of John M. Starling, a more distant relative, in the back row). Arthur is also on a subsection of the area reserved for the family of Joseph, which I believe is especially significant.

We know that Joseph had a special relationship with Arthur, whom he credited for helping to care for and raise him. It is from Joseph we have most of what we know about Arthur because he included a few lines about him in the comprehensive family history that he compiled, and it appears that Joseph authored the adoring epitaph on Arthur's marker. In addition to being co-owner of the lot, Joseph was also a Green Lawn trustee, and likely the guiding hand in the dividing the lot and moving the family from Franklinton Cemetery.

The first group moved to Green Lawn were John M. Starling (Sarah's nephew), Willis Sullivant (a son of Michael that died in infancy), and Arthur Boke. Next came Lucinda Merrill (an in-law placed in the back corner of Joseph's area), Lyne Starling (Sarah's brother), Jane Sullivant (first wife to William), and two of Williams children with second wife Eliza. Finally parents Lucas and Sarah, Michael's first wife and four of their infant children, and Joseph's first wife completed the removals from Franklinton. After 1851 the spaces were used as needed starting with Francis, another of Michael's children, in 1860. (*figure 3*)

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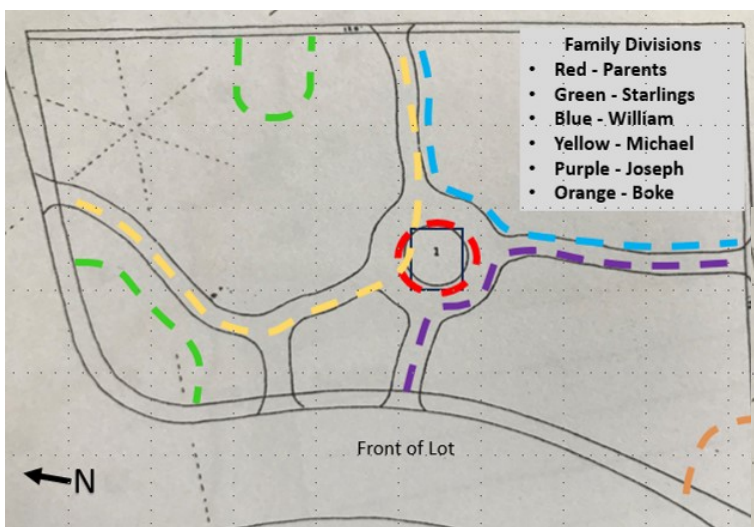


Figure 2 (above) - Family Division of Sullivant Lot. Although the paths are not visually defined, an analysis of the burials reveals that they do exist, at least on paper, and distinguish the various branches of the family. This aspect is not obvious until you examine the individual placements.

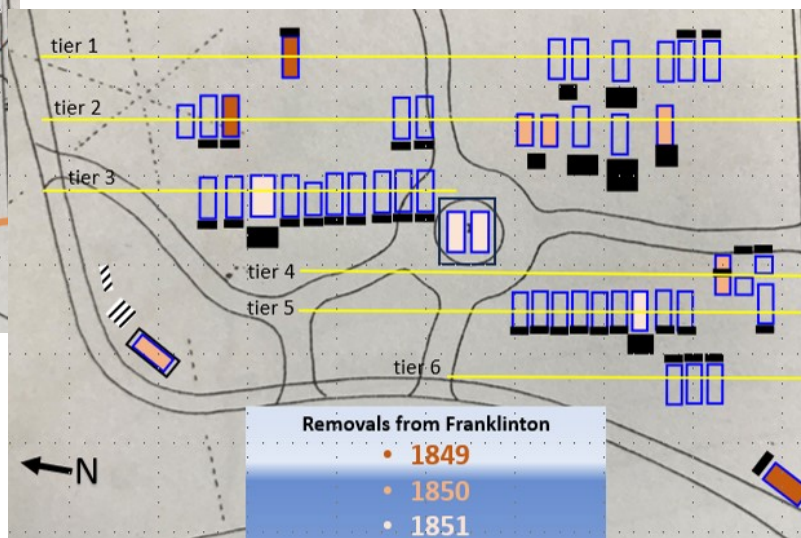


Figure 3 (below) - Removals from Franklinton Cemetery. Displayed by year and the current layout of all spaces and memorials.

New Carillon Installed, Music Returns to Green Lawn

Music has returned to the Huntington Chapel!

Our summer edition announced the imminent installation of a new electronic carillon in the chapel, and happily that system is now operational.

When the chapel was dedicated in 1902 songs including “Mighty Fortress” and “Laus Matutina” were played on the original organ.

This organ was removed for the 1961 addition of the west room, and replaced by an electric organ donated in memory of Herbert P. Cook.

In 1980 the organ was augmented with the donation of an electronic carillon in memory of the Frevert family, and it played for nearly two decades.

Donations from Friends of Green Lawn’s annual campaign provided \$15,500 for a new, state-of-the-art system. In addition to its included catalog of over 7,000 songs on bells, chimes, and harp, it will also reproduce bugle calls, bagpipes, organ music, and play custom playlists.

Currently the system plays a schedule of morning chimes, and on Sunday plays “Flow Gently Sweet Afton” (played at our dedication in 1849) at 10:00 am. Each day ends with a “Retreat” bugle call 15 minutes prior to closing and “To The Colors” at closing. At 5:00 pm each day (4 in winter), it plays from a rotation of standards, including “Lili Marlene”, “Darling Nellie Gray”, and “Alice Blue Gown”. Other selections are played in conjunction with tours and events, and the carillon is now an exciting option for events and services!



This is the best photo we have of the original chapel organ, a pump organ decorated with false pipes by Tiffany & Co. to look like a church organ.

Lucas Sullivant Remembered

On August 8th we remembered Lucas Sullivant on the 200th anniversary of his death. Executive Director Randy Rogers delivered an oration titled “Franklinton on the 100th Anniversary of the Death of Lucas Sullivant” and the Sullivant grave was decorated by our partners for the event, Mr. Larry Zapp of the Franklinton Historical Society, and Mrs. Joanna Smith representing the Franklinton Board of Trade. The oration was originally given by Andrew Denny Rodgers III, great-grandson of Lucas Sullivant, at the dedication to the obelisk at the Franklinton Cemetery on the 100th anniversary of Sullivant’s passing. The oration painted a historical montage of Franklinton from its founding to 1923



interspersed with imagery from the evening Sullivant was laid to rest. The two dozen attendees also enjoyed Randy’s own recipe of “Haymaker Punch” and a 30-minute concert from the new carillon. August 8, 2123 has been reserved for a repeat performance, although Randy is not sure he will be available to recite...

News from Memorial Properties

Operating Green Lawn Since 2019!

Greener Options at Green Lawn

The one constant in life is change. Green Lawn was founded precisely because society's attitudes towards death and burial had changed and a new style of burial ground was needed to meet those expectations.

Today we continue to see changes in what our families want for burial and cremation disposition, and an advantage at Green Lawn is that we are large enough to offer many more options than most cemeteries.

Recently we have written about scattering options at our pond and prairie, glass fronted niches in Huntington Chapel, mausoleums, cremation niches, and tree burials. We have also written about our planned new public mausoleum, and of course we have traditional burial spaces in both the historic and newer gardens, and room for private mausoleums as well.

Green Lawn's newest offering is for those desiring a more environmentally friendly traditional burial.

Green Lawn is the first cemetery in the Columbus area to offer a Green Burial. Our Green Burial option allows an individual to be buried directly on the earth whether in a natural casket* or wrapped in a burial shroud*. A specially designed dome is used to maintain the integrity of the grave while promoting the natural return of the body to Earth. This option has the least environmental impact a cemetery can offer while maintaining a traditional lawn.

Interested in finding out more about our green burial option? Call our office at 614-444-1123 and schedule an appointment—we will be happy to help you plan a low-impact burial!



** Did you know that Green Lawn Cemetery sells caskets, including natural caskets and shrouds? We often think of funeral homes for some needs and cemeteries for others, but Green Lawn works with partners to provide a full service, one-stop experience, if that is desired.*



The Geography of Arthur Boke

(Continued from page 3)

Arthur was moved without note, Joseph was a guiding hand in his placement, and he was among the first moved. His space might be described as status level 3 of 4. The parents have the center island, then the sons and their immediate families front and center in their respective areas, then significant others on the front corners, and finally more distant kin and later generations at the ends of rows and in the back of family areas.

It is my conclusion that the “geography” of Arthur Boke is less about his race, and more about his relationship with Joseph and inclusion as a cherished member of the family.

“....nursed, nourished by Sarah Sullivant with her children among whom he lived respected...the integrity of his character...gratefully remembering his devoted services and commitment...to his memory” -from the epitaph of Arthur Boke

Welcome to Our Neighborhood!



Be sure to tune in to WOSU television the week of Halloween and catch “Columbus Neighborhoods” which will feature our own very special neighborhood!

WOSU, Green Lawn, The Columbus Trolley Co., and Columbus Ghost Tours recently teamed up to film a trolley tour where we visited the final resting places of some of Columbus’ best known haunts.

Twenty-five guests, many in costume, enjoyed a scenic trolley ride and stories of old C-bus told by Bucky Cutright, Randy Rogers, Doreen Uhas-Sauer, and Matt Wolf.

See local listings for time & channel!



Upcoming Green Lawn Cemetery Events

Sunday, September 10, 10:00am-12:00pm, A Morning Walk Through Green Lawn with Author Dr. Jeffrey Smith. Join us and the Columbus Metropolitan Library for a free walking tour with an expert on rural cemeteries. When Green Lawn Cemetery opened in 1849 it provided necessary services to Columbus that went far beyond burying our dearly departed. Its unique landscape design provided urban green space and respite from city life and established a place where people could mourn in a natural and tranquil setting. Dr. Smith is author of *The Rural Cemetery Movement: Places in Paradox in Nineteenth-Century America*.

Saturday, September 16, 9:00am-11:30am, Grave Marker Cleaning Class. Green Lawn Cemetery Association will provide free in-person instruction on how to clean grave markers safely and effectively with no danger of harm. All supplies and tools provided, dress for the weather, bring drinking water and safety glasses or gloves if desired (nitrile gloves provided).

Sunday, September 17, 1:00pm-3:00pm, Veterans of Green Lawn Bike Tour. Join us on a special bicycle tour of our Veterans from The Revolutionary War through the Global War on Terror. You will hear stories about their inspiring lives, accomplishments, and the historic units they represent. Guided by MAJ (Ret.) Randel Rogers. Bring your own bicycle and helmet, or we can provide them. Please indicate when you register at <https://app.donorview.com/w35Xk>. Proceeds support restoration projects in the cemetery. \$30 per rider.

Saturday, October 7, 10:00am-6:00pm, El Dia de los Muertos / Day of the Dead Festival. A free family-friendly cultural festival to remember loved ones that are no longer with us. Ofrendas, authentic Mexican food, live music, Aztec dancers, educational presentations, art exhibition, and activities for the kids. Presented by *Latino Arts for Humanity*.

Friday, October 27, 5:00pm, Columbus Rotary 5K & 1-Mile Walk/Run with the Dead. Take part in a Halloween season run or walk! You can be cool or a ghoul and experience Central Ohio's most spine-chilling fun run & walk through the sprawling grounds of Green Lawn Cemetery. Register through Columbus Rotary. **This year all are encouraged to bring a GHOST COSTUME to attempt to set a Guinness World Record!**

Saturday, December 2, 1:00pm, Elk's Rest Rededication. Join BPOE #37 in rededicating Elk's Rest (Section 64) with our new, life-size, bronze elk! Free and open to the public - dress for the weather!

Saturday, December 9, 5:00pm-7:00pm, Holiday Remembrance Service. Held in the historic Huntington Chapel, this annual service provides an opportunity to remember recently departed loved ones. Please join us for an evening of reflection, music, and fellowship. Light refreshments will be served.

Saturday, December 16, 11:00am, Wreaths Across America. Remember the Fallen. Honor those who Serve. Teach our children the value of Freedom. Wreaths Across America will be at Green Lawn Cemetery to remember and honor our veterans through the laying of Remembrance wreaths on the graves of our country's fallen heroes. Green Lawn Cemetery is the final resting place over 6000 veterans in 7 military sections, including 5 Medal of Honor recipients. This event proceeds rain, sleet, or snow.

Latest Events and Updates

Website: <https://www.greenlawncemetery.org/events/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GreenLawnCemeteryColumbus>





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7:00 AM - 7:00 PM

Starting October 20th:

7:00 AM - 5:00 PM



OFFICE

Monday - Friday

9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Saturday

9:30 AM - 2:30 PM

Sunday

By Appointment



CHAPEL

Visit Office for access



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Matthew Wolf, *Community Outreach & Events*

**Special Thanks to our Green Lawn Trustees and
Volunteers**

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All rights reserved. Send editorial correspondence to
Green Lawn Heritage, 1000 Greenlawn Avenue,
Columbus, Ohio 43223

Phone: (614) 444-1123

Fax: (614) 444-9815

Email: greenlawncemeteryassoc@gmail.com

website: greenlawncemetery.org

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