



## **BICENTENNIAL BULLETIN No. 43** **—Sheffield Celebrates 200th Birthday**

The Sheffield Bicentennial Commission will issue a *Bicentennial Bulletin* each Monday throughout 2015 that illustrates the rich heritage of our communities. **View them at — [www.sheffieldbicentennial.org](http://www.sheffieldbicentennial.org) or [sheffieldvillage.com](http://sheffieldvillage.com)**

### **SAINT TERESA CEMETERY** (established 1853—a repository of a parish history) *Colorado Avenue, Sheffield Village, Ohio*

Cemeteries are marvelous places to take historic walks. They are truly the repositories of a community's history. Saint Teresa Cemetery, at the corner of Abbe Road and Colorado Avenue in Sheffield Village is just such a place. Founded circa 1853, this cemetery records the emigration of settlers from Germany to found a hamlet in Sheffield Township scarcely three decades after the first New England pioneers arrived.

Saint Teresa Cemetery is divided into two main components—Old Section and New Section—with approximately 650 burial sites in each. The Old Section, situated adjacent to the church, is believed to have been initiated with the burial of 4-year-old Georg Friedmann who died on January 14, 1853. On September 14, 1853, Emmie Eiden—15-year-old daughter of William and Anna [Thymes] Eiden, died and is thought to be the second burial in the cemetery. However, parish cemetery records show the first burial entry as 3-month-old Joseph Kihm, the son of Georg and Margaretha [Heider] Kihm, who died on May 25, 1854. To confuse the origin of the cemetery even further, there is some information that Georg Sebastian Klingshirn, husband of Theresia Klingshirn, may have been buried in the churchyard in August 1849 and later moved to an undisclosed location in the Old Section. In any event, by the end of 1854, a total of 16 burials are documented for the cemetery.

The New Section, western half of the cemetery, was established in 1941 with the interment of Rev. Adam Senger, pastor of Saint Teresa Church from 1901 to 1941. However, additional burials in the New Section did not take place until the 1950s. During the 160 years that the cemetery has been in existence, some 815 parishioners have been interred in Saint Teresa Cemetery for which a burial location was recorded, about 440 in the Old Section and 375 in the New Section. Parish records indicate an addition 135 burials have taken place in the cemetery for which no location is known, presumably in the Old Section. Thus, some 350 gravesites are currently available, about 20 of which have been reserved.

Of the 950 individuals buried in the cemetery, the gender of 890 has been determined from examination of records or assumptions based on given names. These data indicate that 477 (54%) are male and 413 (46%) female. The average age of males was 50.5 years, while the average female lived to 57.2 years. The oldest males in the cemetery, Anton Jungbluth (1849-1947) and Frank Jambor

*Aerial view of Saint Teresa parish property (2007)*



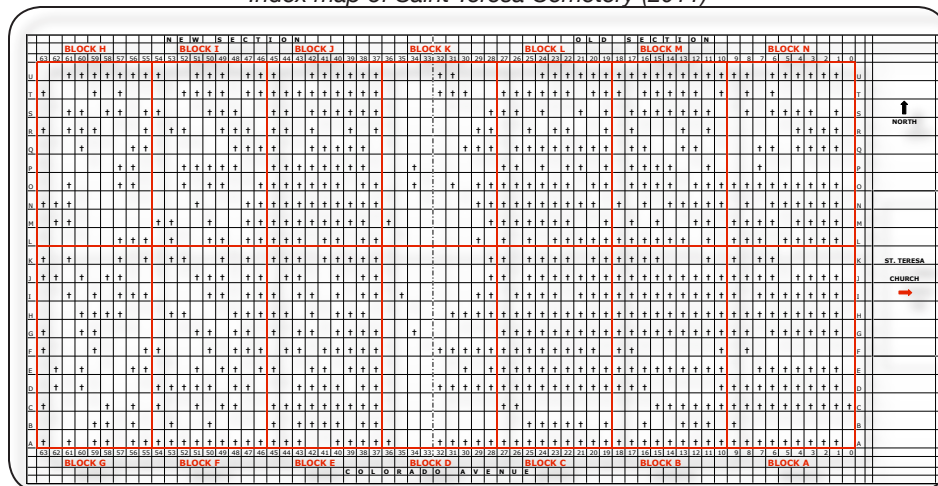
*Saint Teresa Cemetery*



(1901-1999), lived to an age of 97 years. The two oldest females, Jennie Rose Schmidt (1894-1999) and Maud F. Cunningham (1898-2000) lived more than a century, 105 and 102 years respectively. Maud has the unique distinction of having lived in three successive centuries. The earliest born decedent is Ann Marie Rothgery (1783-1866). In terms of birth centuries, 10 decedents were born in the 1700s, 549 in the 1800s, 350 in the 1900s, and only one since 2000.

The age at death was found for some 900 individuals in the cemetery. Based on 10-year increments, the highest incident of deaths occurred in children under the age of 10 (18.5%) and for those in their seventies (19.2%). The lowest death rate was of individuals between 10 and 20 years old (2.7 %). Unfortunately, 105 infants died before reaching the age of one—11.6%.

Index map of Saint Teresa Cemetery (2011)



A variety of grave markers have been used over the years at Saint Teresa Cemetery. These monuments are primarily composed of stone, but some metals have been used. Some 780 graves are marked with 540 monuments. Granite (73%) and marble (24%) are the most common monument materials. Most of the early gravestones are composed of marble, but this material is not as durable as granite and many of the inscriptions are now illegible. White marble and gray marble stone are nearly equal in number, while gray and black granite stones outnumber pink granite by a ratio of 2 to 1. Sandstone and metal account for only about 3% of the materials used for burial monuments.

German migration into Sheffield began in 1840. John Forster of Bayern [Bavaria], Germany arrived and purchased 50 acres of land from Captain Aaron Root, on which he built a log cabin. Other Germans immigrants soon arrived. In 1842 German Catholic settlers in Sheffield petitioned the Diocese of Cincinnati for the services of a priest. In response to this request, a mission was established in Sheffield with services in the home of Johan Müller. Father McLaughlin from Holy Trinity Church in Avon provided the services, but unfortunately he did not speak the German language. In 1844, Father Francis de Sales Brunner established a seminary in Peru, Ohio (near Norwalk) for German-speaking young men from northwestern Europe [*Order of the Precious Blood*]. Father Brunner agreed to hold church services in Sheffield and French Creek every 6 to 8 weeks.

By 1845 the number of German families in who had settled in Sheffield numbered 22. They decided to build a church and received help and encouragement from Father Brunner. Each member of the church paid \$1 toward the purchase of an acre of land from Captain Aaron Root with the understanding that when he sold his farm he would donate another acre to the church. On this 1-acre plot the parishioners built a log church, naming it in honor of a Spanish saint. On June 2, 1846, Father McLaughlin performed the first mass in Saint Teresa of Avila Catholic Church in conjunction with its dedication. In 1849, Captain Root sold the western portion of his farm to the Kelling family. Keeping his word, he donated an extra acre of land for Saint Teresa Cemetery.