

Preservation and Local History

“From Troubled Ground to Common Ground”: The Locust Grove African- American Cemetery Restoration Project: A Case Study of Service-Learning and Community History

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Abstract: This article chronicles a movement to restore Shippensburg, Pennsylvania’s Locust Grove Cemetery, a historic African-American burial ground. The cemetery faced persistent troubles exacerbated by changing demographics in the surrounding neighborhood, its caretakers’ limited resources, and the community’s history of racial discrimination. Beginning in 2003, Shippensburg University applied history students assisted with research, grant writing, and interpretative materials. By 2005, a community coalition formed that built on the students’ efforts, ultimately mobilizing the resources needed to finish the restoration. This case study illustrates the complex dynamics of a community preservation campaign and ways Public History programs can support such efforts.

Keywords: cemetery preservation, public history, African American, service learning, Shippensburg Pennsylvania

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BEGINNING IN THE SPRING OF 2003, I became part of a movement dedicated to preserving a historic African-American cemetery located in Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, the community where I live and direct Shippensburg University’s Applied History Program. As I gradually became familiar with Locust Grove Cemetery, I discovered a two-hundred-year-old African-American burial ground with a rich history, but one that faced a multitude of troubles. The cemetery experienced abuse by vandals who gratuitously knocked over tombstones, dumped trash on the grounds, and broke into the cemetery’s storage sheds. In the mid-1990s, the owner of an adjoining property installed a new driveway that included a wide concrete curb-cut that encroached on the burial ground and paved over several unmarked graves. Decades of weathering and erosion had also taken a heavy toll on the site’s grave markers, causing many to sink into the earth, lean precariously, or topple over. Speeding cars careened along a narrow alley that bisected the cemetery, and at least one driver lost control on a winter’s day and slid from the lane into a row of tombstones.¹

In addition to these physical threats to the site, regular newspaper coverage of incidents at the cemetery painted a bleak and sinister picture of the Locust Grove Cemetery. Reporters commonly used language that characterized the cemetery as a dark, secluded, and dangerous place on the edge of town.² Outside of the African-American community, most people who knew of the Locust Grove Cemetery perceived it as troubled ground—a historic cemetery where vandals lurked and Civil War soldiers’ graves were desecrated. In general, the public viewed the cemetery with a mixture of concern, dismay, and resignation. The local government, individuals, and community groups offered some assistance, but the problems continued and seemed to defy all remedies.

The site’s caretakers, the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee, worked tirelessly to confront the many challenges facing the site. The committee consisted of a small group of older African-American volunteers, all of whom had relatives buried in the Locust Grove Cemetery. They trimmed the grass each week, propped up fallen tombstones, organized funerals, attended public meetings when threats to the cemetery emerged, and tried to raise funds to

1. For information on vandalism and the automobile accident, see Dale Heberlig, “Councilman sees no easy solution for cemetery board,” *Shippensburg Sentinel*, March 12, 2003, and Dale Heberlig, “Vandalism reports continue to plague historic cemetery,” *Shippensburg Sentinel*, April 13, 2005; For the conservation needs of the cemetery, see Robert Mosko, *Cemetery Survey and Assessment Report: Locust Grove Cemetery, Shippensburg, Pennsylvania*, conducted May 11, 2006, report prepared July 5, 2006, unpublished report in possession of author; for details on the driveway, see Tracy Panzer, “LGCA appeals to borough for removal of driveway,” *Shippensburg News-Chronicle*, June 24, 1999.

2. A particularly striking example of such language can be found in Dale Heberlig’s “Councilman sees no easy solution for cemetery board.” Heberlig wrote, “The cemetery is in a dark, secluded location at the border of the borough and Shippensburg Township, near Britton Road and Brookside and Kenneth Avenues. Trash, broken bottles and break-ins at a storage shed on the property are commonplace.” In fact, the cemetery was along a regularly traversed street only two blocks from downtown Shippensburg’s main street, King Street.

erect a fence and mend the broken tombstones. Each May, they also organized a well-attended memorial service at the cemetery honoring the community's deceased African-American veterans. For decades, the same group of men and women gave generously of their time and money, but when I first became acquainted with them in the spring of 2003, they were stretched thin and growing discouraged at their inability to counteract the varied threats to their beloved cemetery. They remained hopeful, but the prospects for the future appeared grim.

After almost five years of work, a coalition led by the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee, the Shippensburg Historical Society, and the Shippensburg University Applied History Program has repaired and cleaned the cemetery's gravestones, erected a protective fence around most of the cemetery grounds,³ dedicated an official Pennsylvania Historical Marker at the site, and recovered much of the lost history of both the Locust Grove Cemetery and Shippensburg's African-American community. Equally important, the campaign rehabilitated the cemetery's reputation and brought to the public's attention the extraordinary history reflected in the cemetery itself and in the men and women buried there. Working together, the Locust Grove Cemetery Restoration Campaign transformed a site that had become widely viewed as an intractable community problem into a source of community pride.

From the outset, the Locust Grove Restoration Campaign faced a series of formidable obstacles we needed to overcome in order to restore and preserve the cemetery. First and foremost, we had to confront the town's long history of segregation and racial discrimination, to understand the ways that history continued to influence the community's social relations, and to find ways to change entrenched attitudes and habits of social interaction. Second, little was known about the cemetery's history or its significance, information that would be vital for securing grants, preparing historical register and historical marker nominations, and interpreting the site to the public. Existing local histories provided scant information, and the records of the cemetery committee had been lost in a fire. Ultimately, we discovered that the cemetery's story was inextricably intertwined with the larger history of African Americans in Central Pennsylvania, but piecing together that story required extraordinary amounts of time and creativity in order to assemble the scattered fragments of evidence.

Last but not least, the campaign brought together three organizations—a volunteer cemetery association, a nonprofit historical society, and a history department at a state university—three different organizations with three different institutional cultures, three different constituencies, three different missions, and even three different perspectives on the cemetery's signifi-

3. As of December 2007, the controversy over the cemetery's northwest boundary, the location where the neighbors installed their driveway, remains unresolved. That corner of the cemetery remains unfenced, though funds are available to install the fence once negotiations are concluded.



A view of the oldest section of the Locust Grove Cemetery taken on March 25, 2007. (Photo courtesy of David Maher and the author)

icance. Although such a union could have been volatile, and differences did occur, a shared commitment to the common objective of seeing the cemetery preserved—and a great deal of behind-the-scenes diplomacy—allowed the organizations to work together to achieve our goals.

This article offers a case study of the campaign that restored Shippensburg's Locust Grove Cemetery, and in particular, the role that Shippensburg University's Applied History Program played in assisting that effort. In part, this is an account of my own experiences as a public historian at a state-owned university in Central Pennsylvania seeking ways to engage my students in the community and build their public history skills through community-based service-learning projects.⁴ Together, my students and I uncovered the rich history of the community's African-American burial ground and took steps to document, preserve, and interpret the site. More importantly, our work helped a small, local organization to organize a community campaign capable of mustering the

4. For the purposes of this article, I use the definition of "service learning" provided by the National Service Learning Clearinghouse: "Service-learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities." It is important to note that service learning is not merely experiential learning (i.e., internships), but service integrated into content courses to reinforce the skills and theories presented in such classes. *National Service Learning Clearinghouse Home Page*, at http://www.servicelearning.org/welcome_to_service-learning/service-learning_is/index.php (accessed August 6, 2007).

resources needed to preserve its sacred ground. We assisted in building bridges among individuals and organizations, and provided opportunities for the community to rediscover its rich African-American history and to appreciate more fully the historical value of the Locust Grove Cemetery.

In order to highlight the ways that our efforts developed over time, I have organized this story chronologically. I begin with a brief historical overview of the Locust Grove Cemetery, its historical significance, and the challenges the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee officers faced when I first contacted them in the spring of 2003. Next I discuss my efforts to integrate the preservation of the Locust Grove Cemetery into my Applied History classes. I then examine the creation of the Locust Grove Cemetery Restoration Campaign and the steps we took to enlist a coalition of community partners, particularly the Shippensburg Historical Society, to provide the resources needed to restore the cemetery. While on the surface this is a study about fixing up an old cemetery, it is also the story of a community that recovered a piece of its lost history, joined together to save an endangered historic site, and gained a richer understanding of its own diverse past.

Shippensburg's Locust Grove Cemetery and the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee

The Locust Grove Cemetery is located along North Queen Street in the borough of Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, a community of about 5,500 people located in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, 40 miles southwest of Harrisburg, and 30 miles north of the Mason-Dixon Line. Located just two blocks off Shippensburg's main thoroughfare, King Street, and three blocks from the Shippensburg University campus, the cemetery encompasses approximately 1.5 acres on the south and west slopes of a small rocky hill. The oldest portion of the cemetery, known as the North Queen Street section, dates from the late eighteenth century and ceased active use in 1922. The newer Locust Grove section opened in 1922 and continues to be used for burials—the most recent having occurred in August 2007.

The cemetery is a remarkable site for discovering the community's long, rich African-American history—a story that is largely absent from most local history books and unfamiliar even to long-time residents. The community's African-American history began in the mid-eighteenth century with the arrival of slaves to Cumberland County. By 1780, forty-seven enslaved men and women lived in the Shippensburg area, owned by fourteen slaveholders.⁵ By

5. For a study of the early history of slavery in Pennsylvania and Cumberland County, see John Alosi, *Shadow of Freedom: Slavery in Post-Revolutionary Cumberland County, 1780–1810* (Shippensburg, PA: Shippensburg University Press, 2001). Appendix C of that work provides a list of all slaves registered with Cumberland County in 1780. See also Steven Burg, ed., *Black History of Shippensburg, 1860–1936* (Shippensburg, PA: Shippensburg University Press, 2005), 4.

the 1790s, the slaves had their own “Negro Graveyard” on land owned by the town's proprietors, the Shippen-Burd family.⁶ As Pennsylvania's Gradual Abolition Act of 1780 freed the area's slaves, a free black community developed that continued to use the cemetery to bury their dead. By 1800, the United States Census registered that free blacks numbered more than twice the population of slaves in Shippensburg, thirty-seven free blacks to seventeen slaves.⁷ By 1820, the African-American population of Shippensburg Borough and Township had grown to eighty-five, with eighty-two free people and only three slaves out of a total population of 1,417.⁸ In 1830, the free black community expanded to 103 individuals, while only a single slave lived in Shippensburg. The United States Census of 1840 was the last to document slaves (it listed two) in the town.⁹

Land adjoining the cemetery became the site of Shippensburg's first black church, an African Methodist Episcopal congregation that formed by 1817, and that erected its first church building sometime before 1835. The church, renamed the Richard Baker A.M.E. Church in 1886, operated on that site until the early twentieth century.¹⁰ In 1842, Shippensburg proprietor Edward Shippen Burd recognized the significance of the site to the African-American community by granting the land forever to “the black people of Shippensburg

6. The first official document mentioning the cemetery is a deed, Edward Simpson, esq. to Dr. William A. Simpson, Cumberland County Deed I-OO-205 (1829), Cumberland County Register of Deeds, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. The cemetery also appears on a trace map of the Shippen-Burd family holdings owned by the Shippensburg Historical Society from around 1800. Trace map of Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, Map Drawer, Archives Room, Shippensburg Historical Society. The Historical Society also produced a copy of the map drawn by Joel Frelin, Early Plot Plan of Shippensburg (1972). Map Collections, Ezra Lehman Memorial Library, Shippensburg University, Shippensburg, Pennsylvania. The cemetery also appears on a map of the Shippen family quit-rent properties in the personal collection of Edward Rosenberry of Carlisle, Pennsylvania, that has been dated to the 1790s.

7. Figures for African-American population in 1800 are taken from Paul Barner, “Shippensburg Township in 1800: A Portrait,” 9.

8. Secretary of State, *United States Census for 1820* (Washington: Gales and Eaton, 1821).

9. Cumberland County Septennial Census of 1800 and Cumberland County Septennial Census of 1807, *Afrolumen Project*, <http://www.afrolumens.org/slavery/> (accessed February 16, 2005); David Poletto, “Introduction: The Historical Development of Shippensburg's African-American Community, 1730–1860” (unpublished paper in possession of author, 2004).

10. According to Daniel Alexander Payne, Shippensburg was named at the first Annual Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Church, held in Baltimore in 1817 as one of the “preaching places” in the Harrisburg area that had been visited by Reverend Daniel Coker that had been assembled into the Harrisburg circuit. See Daniel Alexander Payne, *History of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* (Nashville, TN: Publishing House of the A. M. E. Sunday School Union, 1891), 42. Though it is not known when the church building had been erected, a summary of Joseph Burd's assets at the time of his death in 1834 compiled by the Cumberland County tax assessor described the income from the two lots “at Negro Church.” Entry for Joseph Burd, Esqr.'s heirs, Shippensburg, Cumberland County Tax Rates, volume 1835, Cumberland County Historical Society, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. See also William H. Burkhardt, *Cumberland Valley Chronicles* (Shippensburg, PA: News Chronicle Company, 1976), 148–49. The final years of the church's operation can be estimated from Sanborn maps; it was shown as still operating in 1904. The 1910 map indicated that the building was old and vacant. The church building no longer appeared on the 1921 map. *Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867–1970*, Maps for Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, 1904, 1910 and 1921, <http://sanborn.umi.com/> (accessed February 1, 2007).

for the purpose of erecting a place of worship and Burying the Dead of the black people of Shippensburg and for no other purpose whatever.”¹¹ The cemetery and church thus became the community’s first public space owned and controlled by African Americans.

During and after the Civil War, Shippensburg’s African-American population grew rapidly, strengthened by the relocation of former slaves from the upper South. African Americans comprised almost 10 percent of the community’s population by 1870, a significantly higher percentage than either Cumberland County (4.5 percent) or Pennsylvania (1.8 percent) at that time, and two-and-a-half times the population of Shippensburg today (3.8 percent).¹² At its height, the burgeoning African-American community supported several independent institutions, such as four black churches, a Prince Hall Masonic lodge, an Odd Fellows lodge, and an American Legion Post, as well as several successful African-American barbershops. The Locust Grove Cemetery offers a natural venue for exploring this migration and the powerful attraction nineteenth-century Shippensburg held for emancipated men and women seeking to start their new lives of freedom.¹³

The Locust Grove Cemetery also contains an unusual concentration of African-American Civil War veterans relative to the community’s size. The North Queen Street section of the cemetery contains the graves of twenty-three Civil War veterans, accounting for 41 percent of all marked graves in the oldest part of the cemetery.¹⁴ Three additional Civil War veterans are buried in the cemetery’s newer section. Together, those veterans include three men who served with the 54th and 55th Massachusetts regiments (the units featured in the film *Glory*), twenty-two veterans of the United States Colored Troops, and one United States Marine. Additionally, there are nineteen other veterans buried in the cemetery who saw service in every major American

11. Manuscript copy of the Original Deed of Edward Burd to People of Color of Shippensburg, June 17, 1842, sworn before Cumberland County Justice George McGinnis. Shippensburg Historical Society, Shippensburg, PA. Additional adjoining property that would become the Locust Grove Cemetery was purchased on February 22, 1922.

12. The exact percentage in 1870 was 9.8 percent, or 241 African Americans in a total combined Shippensburg Borough (population 2065) and Shippensburg Township (population 381) population of 2446. See the Ninth Census of the United States (1870), “The Statistics of the Population of the United States,” vol. 1, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872), 248. In 2000, Shippensburg Borough had 192 African Americans and Shippensburg Township had 168 for a total of 360 out of a total population of 10,090 or 3.6 percent. For 2000 statistics, see United States Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, Fact Sheet for Shippensburg Borough and Shippensburg Township, Pennsylvania, 2000. <http://factfinder.census.gov/> (accessed August 6, 2007).

13. In Carol Appenzeller’s study, “Shifting Occupations and Economic Opportunities,” in Steven B. Burg, ed., *Black History of Shippensburg*, 207–236, she demonstrates that between the periods of 1860–1880 and 1920–1930, African American men (and to a lesser extent women) living in Shippensburg experienced economic opportunity. For example, the number of African-American men working as skilled craftsmen (including barbers and clerks) rose from 10.3 percent to 20.7 percent, and homeownership increased 11.6 percent.

14. In part, the high proportion of Civil War veteran grave markers can be attributed to the fact that both the county government and federal government offered to provide tombstones for veterans’ families who could not afford to provide one themselves.

conflict from the Spanish American War through Vietnam. The cemetery offers a space to recognize the military service of four generations of the community’s African-American men who risked their lives for their country while often being denied the full rights of citizenship. Additionally, it provides a place to consider the broader role of African-American soldiers in American history—whether it is the “Buffalo Soldier” Walter Massey who served with the 9th Cavalry in the West and at the Battle of San Juan Hill; the African-American “doughboys” Richard Hinton and Alexander Coleman who fought with the 368th Regiment in the Meuse-Argonne; or Robert Robinson of the 24th “Victory” Division—the first racially integrated unit to see combat in Korea.¹⁵

Finally, the cemetery provides a tangible legacy of the racial segregation that existed in Shippensburg from the mid-nineteenth century through the late twentieth century. When Shippensburg established a new public cemetery in 1861, the Spring Hill Cemetery, the by-laws explicitly barred the burial of people who were not white. As a result, the Locust Grove Cemetery was transformed from a place of voluntary racial separation into part of a system of racial segregation for almost one hundred years. The operators of the Spring Hill Cemetery ceased excluding African Americans in the 1960s, though the first African-American burial did not occur there until 1993—132 years after the cemetery opened.¹⁶

The separate black and white cemeteries were part of a larger system of segregation that developed in Central Pennsylvania in the late nineteenth century. Unlike segregation in the Jim Crow South, racial boundaries in Central Pennsylvania were more fluid and situational.¹⁷ For example, the Shippensburg Borough had a “colored” elementary school until 1936 (in spite of an 1881 state law forbidding segregated schools), but its high school and Ship-

15. For information on the Civil War veterans, see William H. Burkhardt et al., *Shippensburg in the Civil War* (Shippensburg, PA: Shippensburg Historical Society, 1964, reprint Shippensburg, PA: Burd Street Press, 2003), 207–49, also John C. Nicholas’s *Comrades in Life and Death: The Veterans of the Locust Grove Cemetery* (unpublished brochure in possession of the author, 2006).

16. Charter and By-Laws of the Spring Hill Cemetery, January 18, 1861, Shippensburg Historical Society. My information on African-American burials at Spring Hill Cemetery is based on a conversation with local historian Edward Sheaffer, author of the series *Records in Stone*, published by the Shippensburg Historical Society, that listed every known burial in every Shippensburg area cemetery at its time of publication. The first African-American burial in the Spring Hill cemetery was Edna Bradberry, an elderly African-American woman who froze to death in her home when her furnace ran out of oil. She was buried in the Spring Hill Cemetery on February 13, 1996. See “Woman Dies of Hypothermia” and “Edna C. Bradberry” in *Shippensburg News-Chronicle*, February 12, 1996.

17. For a description of segregation in another Central Pennsylvania community, see Gerald G. Eggert’s description of segregation in nineteenth-century Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, “Two Steps Forward, One Step Back: Harrisburg’s African American Community in the Nineteenth Century,” in Joseph William Trotter and Eric Ledell Smith, eds., *African Americans in Pennsylvania: Shifting Historical Perspectives* (Harrisburg and University Park: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission and Pennsylvania State Press, 1997), 243–44.

Shippensburg State Teachers College enrolled both whites and African-American students.¹⁸ African Americans could attend movies with their white friends, but the African Americans could only sit in the theater's balcony. Shippensburg also had a segregated community baseball league with separate white and African-American teams. Those teams played against one another during the regular season, but only the white teams could compete in the league's championship game. The difference between Jim Crow and Central Pennsylvania segregation was perhaps most evident during journeys on the Cumberland Valley Railroad that ran through Shippensburg. African Americans traveling south on the Cumberland Valley Railroad would begin their journey in the integrated passenger cars, but they moved to the segregated "colored" cars at the Mason-Dixon Line. On their return journey north, they would ride in the "colored" cars until the train reached the Pennsylvania state line, when they would leave for seats in the integrated passenger cars.¹⁹ This history of racial discrimination is largely forgotten in contemporary Shippensburg, but the Locust Grove Cemetery provided a valuable, visible reminder that the community once embraced the practice of segregation.

The Locust Grove Cemetery thus offers visitors a place where they can access and appreciate many facets of the African-American experience in South-Central Pennsylvania. Unfortunately, when I first learned about the cemetery in 2003, the site had suffered from decades of deterioration and abuse that made it both unsafe and unwelcoming to potential visitors. Moreover, it had gained a reputation in the community as a site plagued by crumbling tombstones, trash, and criminal activity. The cemetery's problems resulted from larger changes in the neighborhood and the community that had been unfolding over several decades.

Since at least the mid-nineteenth century, the cemetery had been surrounded by a multiracial neighborhood that included a significant African-American population, a place known fondly by its residents as Pumpkin Center.²⁰ A concentration of African Americans had settled along Queen Street by the mid-nineteenth century, probably wishing to be close to their church and cemetery. After the First World War, the community's African-American veterans also established their own American Legion Post, the Robert Green

18. See Erin Overholtzer, "Shippensburg's Segregation and Education," in Steven B. Burg, ed., *Black History of Shippensburg: 1860–1936* (Shippensburg, PA: Shippensburg University Press, 2005), 95–120.

19. For studies of segregation in Shippensburg, see John Bland's "Select Brotherhood" and Erin Overholtzer's "Shippensburg's Segregation and Education" in Steven Burg, ed., *Black History of Shippensburg*. Also, John Rideout interview with Steven Burg, May 21, 2005, transcript in possession of the author. The Black Parade was discussed in conversations between Steven Burg and Carl Bell and Nancy Hodges several times in 2006 and 2007. See also *Shippensburg News*, June 3, 1920 and *Shippensburg News*, June 2, 1931.

20. The ethnic composition of the neighborhood is derived both from research on the owners and occupants of nearby properties as well as an analysis of the manuscript United States Census from 1850 through 1930.

Post #729, on the lot next to the cemetery. However, the twentieth century saw the neighborhood change dramatically. The A.M.E. Church ceased operation by 1910, the American Legion Post closed in 1964, and many African-American residents of the neighborhood died or moved away.²¹ Between 1920 and 1940, Shippensburg Borough's African-American population dropped precipitously from 194 people down to 84. Many of the African-American families and organizations that had surrounded the cemetery and helped to watch over it were gone.

Students and renters largely filled the void. In the years after World War II, nearby Shippensburg State Teachers College grew and expanded into Shippensburg State College and then into Shippensburg University, increasing from 1,260 students in 1958 to over 7,500 in 2005. An intense demand for cheap housing and services close to campus—combined with an inadequate supply of campus housing—encouraged the transformation of single-family homes into multi-unit rental properties and the construction of high-density apartment buildings. Nearby Sunbeam Court became Shippensburg's unofficial Fraternity Row, and a Second Empire mansion half a block from the cemetery became the home to the underground sorority Theta Kappa.²² The Shippensburg Borough Council facilitated the change from a residential neighborhood to one dominated by renters by zoning the entire neighborhood surrounding the cemetery R-4, or high-density residential housing. When newspapers advertised single family homes for sale in the neighborhood, they commonly marketed them as investment opportunities for entrepreneurs interested in converting the structures to commercial rentals.²³

The changes to the neighborhood meant that most of the men and women who cared most about the cemetery no longer lived near it, and that some of its new neighbors did not fully appreciate the significance or fragile nature of the historic grounds in their midst. A narrow public alley running through the center of the cemetery provided a quick route from the fraternities on Sunbeam Court to Shippensburg's main street, King Street, increasing the amount of automobile traffic through the cemetery. Improperly bagged garbage and careless littering resulted in a steady accumulation of papers, plastic bags, soda bottles, and fast-food wrappers on the cemetery grounds. And occasionally trespassers would topple tombstones or break into the cemetery's storage sheds.²⁴

21. The Robert Green Post no. 729 was founded in 1943 with World War I veteran John H. Rideout as its first commander. Its last commander before the organization ceased operation in 1964 was Belvin Banks. See Bill Burkhart, *Cumberland Valley Chronicles*, 135.

22. Theta Kappa had been suspended by Shippensburg University in 2002 for hazing and alcohol violations but continues to operate without official university recognition. See <http://thetakappa1966.tripod.com/index.html> (accessed September 4, 2007).

23. See Bill Burkhart, *Cumberland Valley Chronicles*, 130; for current zoning see Shippensburg Borough Zoning Ordinance, Section 3.4, Residential High Density Use (R-4) and Zoning Map, available on the Shippensburg Borough home page, <http://www.borough.shippensburg.pa.us/> (accessed July 18, 2007).

24. Based on discussion with members of the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee, 2003–2007. Also, see Dale Heberlig, "Councilman sees no easy solution for cemetery board," Ship-



Shippensburg University student David Maher resets a tombstone that became unstable due to erosion. He and Applied History graduate student Charles Evans stabilized more than two dozen grave markers. (Photo courtesy of the author)

While vandalism caused some damage to the cemetery, far greater damage had been done by the combined forces of time and nature in the form of weathering, erosion, and lichen growth on the tombstones. Over time, the foundations of tombstones shifted due to erosion and frost, causing the markers to lean precariously or fall over. Iron pins used to secure the stones oxidized, expanded, and broke apart the stones from within. The pins and mortars holding gravestones in place failed, allowing the stones to topple from their bases when disturbed. Other stones sank into the earth, some descending several inches, others vanishing entirely from view. Stones broken by vandals or the forces of nature lay in the grass, no longer able to stand on their own. Robert Mosko, a professional tombstone conservator from Hanover, Pennsylvania, evaluated the cemetery in May 2004 and discovered that fully

pensburg *Sentinel*, March 12, 2003. A recent advertisement for a single-family home at 329 East Burd Street—one block from the cemetery, is typical: “Newly renovated 4br/3ba 2 story home in Shippensburg borough. Close to down town and Shippensburg University. Recent upgrades include; Central AC, Electric heat pump and new paint throughout. Replacement windows as well. Perfect first home or investment property opportunity. Great size and condition for the asking price of \$151,600. Call Steve for more information at 717-477-9326.” Shippensburg *Sentinel*, September 2, 2007.

eighty-eight of the cemetery’s 167 headstones (53%) required significant conservation work, and forty-four of those required work so extensive that it required the skills of a professional tombstone conservator. Mosko also highlighted the potential danger posed to visitors by toppling tombstones and collapsing unvaulted graves. Additionally, most of the tombstones required cleaning to remove destructive lichen growth.²⁵

It was rather easy to identify methods to address the problems facing the cemetery, namely closing off the alley to traffic, erecting a protective fence, hiring a tombstone conservator, and displaying interpretative signage that could make the public more aware of the cemetery’s significance. However, implementing those steps proved challenging for the site’s stewards, the officers of the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee.

The Locust Grove Cemetery Committee was an unincorporated organization consisting of four volunteer officers: President Carl Bell Jr.; his sisters Nancy Hodge and Carole Smith, who served as assistant treasurer and secretary; and their cousin and treasurer, Mai Baltimore. The committee periodically met around one of their kitchen tables to discuss cemetery business and to make arrangements for new burials at the cemetery, as well as to plan the community’s African-American Memorial Day program and their family reunion. A small group of men who called themselves “the real regulars” took turns cutting the grass each week. John Rideout, Jr., a stone mason in his eighties, would reset toppled tombstones in concrete.²⁶ He also built an impressive limestone gate at the cemetery’s entrance. All of these individuals had relatives in the cemetery, and all donated their time and energy to maintaining its grounds.

The Locust Grove Cemetery Committee worked hard to preserve the cemetery by righting toppled tombstones, calling the police to report acts of vandalism, maintaining the grounds, and speaking out at public hearings to oppose additional high-density development on neighboring properties. However, despite their desire to address the problems facing the cemetery, the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee could not raise the funds they needed for their top priority: erecting a protective fence around the cemetery grounds which would cost approximately \$15,000 to install. The services of a professional conservator would require several thousand additional dollars.

The financial condition of the Cemetery Committee made the prospects for addressing the cemetery’s needs seem particularly bleak. First and foremost, the cemetery had run out of plots to sell, meaning that it had exhausted its main revenue source. Second, as an unincorporated organization lacking

25. Robert Mosko, Chief Conservator, Mosko Cemetery Monument Services, Cemetery Survey and Assessment Report: Locust Grove Cemetery, Shippensburg Pennsylvania, conducted May 11, 2006, report prepared July 5, 2006, unpublished report in possession of author.

26. Resetting tombstones by setting them in a pool of concrete is not recommended because salts from the concrete can wick up into porous stone and cause deterioration and discoloration. Also, the rigid nature of concrete can exacerbate breaking and weathering. See Lynette Strangstad, *A Graveyard Preservation Primer* (Walnut Creek: Altamira Press, 1995), 71.

501(c) 3 nonprofit status, the organization could not apply for most government or foundation grants. Likewise, the lack of nonprofit status meant that donors could not deduct donations from their taxes as charitable gifts. The Cemetery Committee considered applying to the Internal Revenue Service for nonprofit status, but found the legal fees, accounting requirements, and application process daunting. Third, many of the local African-American organizations that had supported the cemetery in the past, including the Prince Hall Mason, the African-American churches, and the Richard Green American Legion Post #729 had either become inactive or were struggling financially. Fourth, while the officers of the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee gladly accepted contributions offered voluntarily by individuals and community groups, they were uncomfortable asking people for money. Their vision of fundraising had been informed by their involvement with countless church dinners, bake sales, and yard sales. Through such events and unsolicited donations, they had raised over \$3,000—an impressive amount, but still only a tiny fraction of what they needed.

It is also important to note that the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee members welcomed assistance from the public, but they strongly believed that the ultimate responsibility for the cemetery's care should rest with the African-American community. Locust Grove Cemetery Committee member Gerald "Jake" Burke gave voice to that sentiment during a newspaper interview from 1993 in which he described how he and others became involved with the cemetery in the 1960s. He explained: "A bunch of black youth from Shippensburg—we were youth then—got together. Our parents were getting older and couldn't take care of the place. We decided that these are our people up here. It's not the responsibility of anyone else."²⁷ Mike Nocho, also a "real regular," agreed, "It was something that had to be done. . . . We figured we're the ones to do it."²⁸

One factor motivating the young African American men and women to assume responsibility for the Locust Grove Cemetery was an essay on the Locust Grove Cemetery's Civil War veterans published by the Shippensburg Historical Society that questioned the African-American community's commitment to its history and institutions. Surprisingly, the comments were penned by William H. Burkhart, a white local newspaper editor, World War II veteran, and active member of the Shippensburg Historical Society who had devoted hundreds of hours to researching and restoring the Locust Grove Cemetery. In the 1950s and 1960s, Burkhart had led an effort to restore the North Queen Street section of the Locust Grove Cemetery that had closed in 1922. He worked together with World War II veterans Belvin Banks Sr. and Homer Jackson in the 1950s, removing trash from the cemetery grounds, repairing broken tombstones, and building a fence along the cemetery's north bound-

27. Marjion Shearer, "Care of Locust Grove Cemetery is Labor of Love," *Shippensburg News-Chronicle*, June 10, 1993.

28. *Ibid.*

ary. He also gathered oral histories with aged African Americans and wrote brief histories of Shippensburg's African-American churches. Over the next thirty years, he would continue to support efforts to maintain the cemetery, including serving as the contact person for a fundraising effort launched in 1995 to raise \$1,500 to make repairs to the tombstones.²⁹

As part of his work, Burkhart researched the history of the African-American Civil War veterans buried in the cemetery and compiled his information into the chapter "Shippensburg's Colored Veterans of the Civil War" for the book *Shippensburg in the Civil War* published by the Shippensburg Historical Society in 1964.³⁰ Unfortunately, what was meant as a tribute to the town's African-American Civil War veterans instead insulted Shippensburg's African-American community. Burkhart began his chapter by taking issue with the African-American community's upkeep of the cemetery when he first encountered it in 1949, noting, "there was something disgusting about the way civilized 20th century citizens were abusing this burial ground. To abandon a graveyard to old mother nature was one thing . . . but to maltreat a grave site is another thing."³¹ Additionally, when Burkhart discussed his difficulty finding information on the African-American veterans, he claimed it was because "the average colored man does not place a high value on his background or heritage and tends to lose even important papers such as discharges and deeds to property."³²

Those words galvanized Shippensburg's young African Americans to take control of the cemetery's upkeep and to show the world their commitment to their heritage. More than forty years later, the sting of those words persisted. On May 28, 2007, Gerald "Jake" Burke was serving as the master of ceremonies at the cemetery's annual Memorial Day Observances. As part of his remarks, he read the offensive passages from *Shippensburg in the Civil War*, publicly refuted Burkhart, and boldly reaffirmed the African-American community's commitment to preserving both its cemetery and its history.³³

For more than thirty years, the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee worked hard on its own to address the ongoing deterioration and vandalism, and to keep the cemetery grounds neat and well maintained. But as the character of the neighborhood changed, and the cemetery's problems grew, the

29. For a description of his efforts, see William Burkhart et al., *Shippensburg in the Civil War* (Shippensburg, PA: Shippensburg Historical Society and the Burd Street Press, 1964), reprint edition (Shippensburg, PA: Burd Street Press, 2003), 207–10; and William H. Burkhart Notebooks, "Black Civil War Veterans," in the Shippensburg Historical Society Library, Shippensburg, PA. Shippensburg Borough Council Minutes, 1994–1995, pp. 95–61, Shippensburg Borough Municipal Building, Shippensburg, Pennsylvania.

30. See William H. Burkhart, "Shippensburg's Colored Veterans of the Civil War," in William H. Burkhart et al., *Shippensburg in the Civil War* (Shippensburg, PA: Shippensburg Historical Society, 1964), 201–32.

31. *Ibid.*, 204.

32. *Ibid.* Both passages were removed when the Shippensburg Historical Society reprinted the book in 2003.

33. Locust Grove Cemetery Memorial Observance, May 28, 2007, Shippensburg, PA.

group lacked the organizational infrastructure, financial resources, or manpower needed to restore and preserve the cemetery. They also were not yet entirely prepared to look outside the African-American community for assistance. The aging men and women saw the fate of the Locust Grove Cemetery as their own special responsibility, one that they embraced as an act of love, faith, and as a way to show their commitment to their African-American heritage.

Shippensburg University's Applied History Program & the Locust Grove Cemetery

I began teaching Public History at Shippensburg University in 1999, and it was almost four years later that I first learned about the situation at the Locust Grove Cemetery. For my first two years in town, I had lived only three blocks away from the cemetery and passed it hundreds of times driving to campus—all without noticing it. In the fall of 2002, a retired History Department colleague invited me to a meeting with the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee officers, but I could not attend. It was only in March 2003 when I was reading a local newspaper, the *Shippensburg Sentinel*, that I fully understood the cemetery's plight. The piece entitled, "Councilman sees no easy solution for cemetery board" began:

Recurring destruction at Locust Grove Cemetery makes Shippensburg Borough Councilman Joe Hockersmith grit his teeth.

He says his wife is equally agitated by the disrespect shown the historic North Queen Street burial ground, the resting place of black veterans of the Spanish-American and Civil wars.

"I'm a little disgusted with the whole situation there," Hockersmith said at Tuesday's borough council meeting, after a recent incident was brought to light by Councilman Earl Parshall. "And I hear it from my wife. She tells me 'do something, you can't just let that continue to happen.'"

A headstone at the Locust Grove Cemetery was broken off when a car got stuck in the snow there last month. Police Chief Fred Scott said the driver of the car was guilty of no crime because there is no gate to bar entry to the narrow track that traverses the rear of the cemetery. The property is not posted with "no trespassing" notices.

Members of the Locust Grove Cemetery Association, an informal group of about six people who look after the cemetery, say they have erected posts and chains to block traffic in the past, but the chains have been broken and the posts uprooted despite concrete anchors at the bases.³⁴

The next day, I called Locust Grove Cemetery Committee member Nancy Hodge and asked if I might be able to help the cemetery. We spoke for al-

34. Dale Heberlig, "Councilman sees no easy solution for cemetery board," *Shippensburg Sentinel*, March 12, 2003.

most a half hour about the cemetery, its history, their past fundraising efforts, and their goal of erecting a fence around the cemetery grounds. As the conversation began to wind up, I again asked Nancy Hodge how I might help. She encouraged me and my students to research the history of the cemetery, remarking that having that history "would be a blessing," since all the official records of the cemetery had been destroyed. I agreed to focus on uncovering the cemetery's history, and I told her I would be in touch when I had some information to share.

As I began planning for my fall Introduction to Applied History class, I decided to integrate cemetery research into my class through a variety of student projects that would contribute to the cemetery's needs while reinforcing the concepts and skills we were addressing in class.³⁵ To supplement the primary sources available for research, I obtained the pension files of the Civil War veterans buried in the Locust Grove Cemetery from the National Archives. A Teaching Enhancement Grant from Shippensburg University's Center for Teaching and Learning provided the funds to order all of the available files. By the fall term's beginning, I had received twenty-one files measuring over a linear foot that provided detailed information on the veterans' backgrounds, military service, family life, and postmilitary experiences in Shippensburg—much of it in their own words. After worrying about the paucity of sources, I now had a treasure trove of evidence documenting not only the Civil War veterans, but the larger experience of Shippensburg's African-American community in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

While my Introduction to Applied History course retained many of the readings and projects that I had used when I taught it in the past, the Locust Grove Cemetery became an integral part of the course. To alert students to the approach we would be taking, I placed the following statement on my syllabus:

Locust Grove/North Queen Street Cemetery Project

Because this course is dedicated to the practical application of historical practices, many of the projects you will do this semester will be assisting a community effort to preserve the North Queen Street/Locust Grove Cemetery located in downtown Shippensburg. We will engage in projects to raise public awareness of the cemetery, to provide additional information about the men and women buried there, and to aid efforts to preserve this important local historical site.³⁶

35. In order to design the service-learning projects, I drew heavily on Ira Harkavy and Bill M. Donovan, eds., *Connecting Past and Present: Concepts and Models for Service-Learning in History* (Washington, D.C.: American Association for Higher Education, 2000). I also found useful the case studies provided by Marjorie McLellan's "Case Studies in Oral History and Community Learning," *Oral History Review* 25, no. 1-2 (1998): 81-112, and Douglas Dodd's "History in the Community: Public History Team Research Seminar at UCSB," *Perspectives: American Historical Association Newsletter* 36, no. 7 (October 1998): 38-40.

36. Syllabus for Steven Burg's History 418: Introduction to Public History, Shippensburg University Department of History, Fall 2003.

Over the course of the semester, students learned about editing historical documents by transcribing and annotating testimony from veterans' pension files. To reinforce the techniques of researching historic structures, students explored the history of buildings associated with African-American owners or organizations. Students further honed their historical research and persuasive writing skills by preparing a Pennsylvania Historical Marker nomination for the site.

For their final assignments, I asked students to develop a project that documented, preserved, or interpreted the Locust Grove Cemetery. While I offered the students some suggestions, they amazed me with their dogged research and their creativity. Several students created interpretative walking tours based in the cemetery, including tours that explored Shippensburg's African-American women's lives, the material culture of the grave markers, and the history of African-American military service. Three students designed Web sites, including one that placed the cemetery within a larger virtual tour of eighteenth-century Shippensburg.³⁷ A high school teacher in the class developed a lesson plan that used the cemetery as a way to educate students about the African-American experience in the Civil War. A dual history/geography major created a GIS map of the cemetery, including the location of each individual headstone. Another student transcribed the tombstones and created a database charting the family connections of individuals buried in the cemetery. Other students chose to write biographies of individual Civil War veterans. Finally, one nontraditional student who had a background in public relations drew up a comprehensive media and fundraising plan for the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee, providing step-by-step instructions on how to organize and execute a fundraising campaign.³⁸

The students presented their research at a final in-class symposium on the last day of class. During those presentations, I realized how powerful the connection with the Locust Grove Cemetery campaign had been by the enthusiasm the students showed for their work and the way they peppered each other with questions about their sources and findings. Over the course of the semester, the students had spent many hours at the cemetery studying and recording its features. Driven by their connection to the physical site and its obvious need for attention, they strove to create top-quality work that would advance the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee's preservation efforts. I also knew that the work on the Locust Grove Cemetery had been successful when a group of students approached me after the final class meeting to ask if they could continue their research in my spring Research in Local and Regional History class.

A few days later, I ran into Locust Grove Cemetery Committee officer Nancy Hodge after a Shippensburg Borough Zoning Committee meeting, and I described to her my students' research and the new information they had

37. See Shaun Kirkpatrick, *Queen Street Virtual Tour*, 2003, at http://home.comcast.net/~mmlynch2/qsvt_home.html

38. Examples of these projects are in the possession of the author.

uncovered about the cemetery.³⁹ As I spoke, Nancy Hodge half-jokingly remarked, "You and your students should write a book." Given the interest of the students to continue their work, I began seriously exploring the possibility of having the students expand their research into a full-length work.

When my Research in Local and Regional History class convened in January 2004, I offered the students the option of writing articles on Shippensburg's African-American history for their final projects with the goal of compiling the articles together into a book. Most of the students agreed to take the challenge, and by the end of the term the class had produced a collection of essays exploring topics such as the development of Shippensburg's African-American churches, the experience of local African-American veterans seeking pensions, the desegregation of Shippensburg's public schools system, the relationship between the community's African-American and white Masonic lodges, a comparison of the economic mobility of African-Americans between 1870 and 1920, and the story of a public lynching that almost occurred in neighboring Chambersburg in 1869. Again, the students worked hard searching the local archives, historical societies, newspapers, schools, and county office buildings for sources—many of which had never been used before by historians. At the last class, I agreed to pursue a publisher for the work, and over the next eight months my former students and I revised the text and developed it into a manuscript. Additionally, one student had his paper published in the county historical society's journal.⁴⁰

In the summer of 2004, I met for lunch with Richard Gibbs, a communication-journalism professor at Shippensburg University and president of the Shippensburg University Press, who also taught the university's Book and Magazine Publishing course. I explained to him what my class had done, and asked him if he thought it might be a suitable publication for the university press. Gibbs thought it might be a viable project, and he was particularly enthused because he could integrate the project into his class to allow his students to get real-life experience shepherding a full-length book manuscript through the entire production and marketing process. However, he worried about the cost of producing such a book, particularly considering that it might have a very limited audience. He suggested that we pursue funding to help underwrite some of the production costs. After brainstorming possible sources of money, we decided to co-author a university Human Understanding Grant through our Social Equity Office, noting the project's potential to expose both students and the local community to a greater understanding of the region's African-American history. We received \$800, which Gibbs estimated would cover the cost of a two-hundred-volume print run for a two-hundred-page book.

39. As our conversation began, I immediately realized that I had made a terrible blunder in not inviting the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee members to our final class meeting.

40. John Bland, "Select Brotherhoods: Shippensburg African American and White Freemasons," *Cumberland County History* 21 (Winter 2004): 29–47.

On May 1, 2004, Gibbs's students held a book signing to celebrate the publication of *Black History of Shippensburg, Pennsylvania, 1860–1936*. The students also mounted a public relations campaign that yielded positive press coverage for both the book and the Locust Grove Cemetery.⁴¹ Nearly one hundred people attended the book signing. In attendance were dozens of African-American residents of Shippensburg and many of their family members and friends from out of town. The applied history students presented their research to the crowd, and by the time the event had ended, all of the books Richard Gibbs had brought to the event were sold out, with some families purchasing six or eight copies to share with their relatives. Even more startling, many of the African-American families had brought photographs, artifacts, and military documents that they assembled into a spontaneous exhibit on Shippensburg's African-American history. The book's popularity and the excitement evident at the book signing suggested an untapped wellspring of enthusiasm and goodwill for preserving and promoting Shippensburg's African-American history.

The Locust Grove Cemetery Restoration Campaign

When the book was published in May 2005, it had been more than two years since I first contacted Nancy Hodge to offer assistance to the Locust Grove Cemetery. Those two years proved extremely important for fostering an effective working relationship between the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee and the Shippensburg University Applied History program, and also for laying the groundwork for moving the cemetery preservation effort forward. First, working together to uncover the history of the cemetery and Shippensburg's African-American community had opened channels of communication and established a degree of friendship and trust between me, the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee officers, and my applied history students. In particular, the *Black History of Shippensburg* had demonstrated both the capacity of the students to deliver work of substance and the serious commitment of the Applied History Program and Shippensburg University to providing the financial and institutional resources needed to support our work. Second, the two years of research had yielded rich new information about the cemetery that would allow us to document its history more fully and to make a case for its significance with greater authority. Whether writing grants or approaching prospective donors, we had the specifics we needed to explain the historical development and meaning of the site. The book project had also helped

41. See Elizabeth Haist, "Students Plan Book on Local African-American Community," *Carlisle Sentinel* and *Shippensburg Sentinel*, March 9, 2005; Dustin Coover, "Records in Stone Become Records in Print," *Shippensburg News-Chronicle*, February 25, 2005; Lisa Deaderick, "Shippensburg Students Preserve Black History of Boro in Book," *Chambersburg Public Opinion*, April 29, 2005; Willa Jesse, "Telling Their Story: SU Students Publish History of Shippensburg's Black," *Shippensburg Sentinel*, May 7, 2005.

to generate favorable press coverage of Shippensburg's African-American history and the Locust Grove Cemetery. The way the community viewed the cemetery began to change, and though many still knew of its problems, more people began to inquire how they might help to address them.

My work with the Locust Grove Cemetery also allowed me to build connections to other individuals in the community who could lend their advice and assistance to our preservation effort. For example, Dr. Walter Powell, Gettysburg's former Director of Planning and Development, shared his experience assisting the restoration of Gettysburg's African-American burial ground, the Lincoln Cemetery. He also recommended Robert Mosko of Mosko Cemetery Monument Services, a well-regarded tombstone conservator from Hanover, Pennsylvania, who had completed the Lincoln Cemetery's restoration work. Mosko produced a survey report of the Locust Grove Cemetery that included a wealth of practical information about cemetery maintenance and conservation that guided our efforts and proved an effective tool for quantifying the conservation needs of the cemetery for funders. My Applied History class in the spring of 2005 also helped the Shippensburg Historic District celebrate its twentieth anniversary, a project that built a relationship with Jan Rose, the Chair of Shippensburg's Historic Architecture Review Board. Rose would become instrumental in the cemetery's fundraising efforts.

However, despite the valuable research and positive publicity we had created, little tangible work had been done in the intervening two years to improve the conditions at the Locust Grove Cemetery.⁴² It took a major act of vandalism at the cemetery in the spring of 2005 to trigger a community-wide effort to help the Locust Grove Cemetery. In mid-April 2005, someone knocked over a Civil War veterans' grave marker, shattering the marble tombstone into several pieces. The incident drew particular attention because it violated the grave of a Civil War veteran in a region where the Civil War is sacrosanct (Shippensburg is only forty-five minutes from Gettysburg). Furthermore, the Civil War veteran Joseph Lane was an ancestor of the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee officers. In response to a story in the *Shippensburg Sentinel*, Matthew and Ellen Whitsel of Shirleysburg, Pennsylvania, contacted Mai Baltimore and offered to apply for a new tombstone for Joseph Lane through the Veterans Administration. Ellen Whitsel did the genealogical research necessary to complete the application, and Matthew picked up the stone from a government warehouse in Williamsport, Maryland. On August 6, 2005, a work party composed of members of the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee, Matthew Whitsel, and a Shippensburg Borough public works employee removed the fragments of the broken stone and installed a

42. Following the car accident that occurred in 2003, the Locust Grove Cemetery had received donations totaling over \$3,000 towards the \$15,000 estimated price for a fence. The Borough of Shippensburg also officially closed the cemetery alley and erected a barrier to prevent through traffic.

new marker over Joseph Lane's grave.⁴³ The Lane tombstone would represent the beginning of the new movement to reverse the damage to the Locust Grove Cemetery.

During the fall of 2005, I spoke regularly with Nancy Hodge and Mai Baltimore about the possibility of launching a wider community campaign to raise the money needed to erect a fence and restore the cemetery, and I shared with them information about the restoration of Gettysburg's Lincoln Cemetery. In the fall of 2005 I met with the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee at Nancy Hodge's kitchen table, and sketched out the goals for the campaign. We used the Lincoln Cemetery campaign as our blueprint—adopting its goals as our own: a protective fence, conservation work on the tombstones, a new flagpole, interpretative signage, and a permanent rostrum for Memorial Day observances.⁴⁴ We even set our sights on winning a Pennsylvania Historical Marker for the cemetery, just as the Lincoln Cemetery had done. When we finished our plan, we totaled up the cost of the signage, the fence, the rostrum, and the conservation work, and nervous laughter filled the kitchen as we estimated a total cost of \$25–30,000—an enormous sum considering that the committee's earlier fundraising drive had netted \$3,000. We joked that meeting that goal would be like eating an elephant—we would simply have to bear down and do it “one bite at a time.” We parted that night enthusiastic about what we called the “Locust Grove Cemetery Restoration Campaign,” but certainly anxious about the challenge that lay before us.

That fall, I again integrated the Locust Grove Cemetery Restoration Campaign into my Introduction to Applied History course. At the beginning of the semester, I shared the campaign planning documents with the students and then allowed them to design projects that would fulfill the campaign's objectives. One group of students focused their efforts on grant writing, completing a Keystone Historic Preservation Grant, a Pennsylvania Department of Economic and Community Development grant, and a Wal-Mart Good Works Community grant. After the course ended, I submitted two of the three applications, which yielded grants totaling \$8,500. Another group of students prepared the materials needed to nominate the cemetery for the National Register of Historic Places in order to make the cemetery eligible for a Pennsylvania Keystone Historic Preservation Grant. Two teachers worked on a lesson plan that could be used in the Shippensburg Middle School to educate area students and teachers about African Americans in the Civil War and lo-

43. “Dale Herberlig, “Civil War Vet's Damaged Marker Replaced,” *Shippensburg Sentinel*, August 6, 2005.

44. See brochure, Lincoln Cemetery Project Association, “Segregation in Death”: Gettysburg's Lincoln Cemetery, Burial Site of United States Colored Troops, American Civil War Veterans (Gettysburg, PA: undated, c. 2000). We eventually abandoned plans for the rostrum after we learned that the Lincoln Cemetery installed a rostrum based on accounts of a rostrum in historical accounts of the cemetery. We had no documentation of a comparable rostrum ever existing at the Locust Grove Cemetery.

cal African-American history. Another group prepared a successful application for a Pennsylvania Historical Marker that was approved in March 2006 and unveiled on May 28, 2007. The final group focused on developing fundraising letters and a three-fold brochure that could be used for soliciting donations. With only slight modifications, the brochure developed by the students would be the one published and distributed widely to potential donors by the Locust Grove Cemetery Restoration campaign. The students even coined the campaign's slogan, “Heroes in Life, Honored in Death,” an effective twist on the “Segregated in Life, Segregated in Death” slogan used by Gettysburg's Lincoln Cemetery's restoration campaign.

While Shippensburg University's Applied History students gave substance to the campaign that the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee officers and I had sketched out, the campaign still remained largely an abstraction without the participation of a 501(c)3 organization that could act as sponsor for the grants and the historical marker nomination. Again the organization considered applying for its own nonprofit status, but we realized that the application process could delay our work by several years. There were multiple organizations that we might approach, but the Shippensburg Historical Society stood out as the most logical partner. I served on the Society's board, and I offered to help facilitate the process. Nevertheless, it was with some trepidation that we approached the Historical Society. While I was aware of the history that existed between the Locust Grove Cemetery and the Shippensburg Historical Society dating back to *Shippensburg in the Civil War*, I also knew there were internal dynamics that made it unclear whether the Shippensburg Historical Society leadership would be willing to assist the Locust Grove Cemetery.

The Shippensburg Historical Society had been founded in 1945 as a nonprofit organization dedicated to researching the history of the Shippensburg area. Originally, the organization had been highly exclusive, only allowing invited members to attend its meetings and card parties. Though it had become more democratic and open in the 1960s, the organization remained quite traditional in its approach to history and in its organizational culture. All of the officers and the overwhelming majority of members were white. At its dinner meetings, men and women regularly wore their Sunday best. Part of this reflected the age of the membership, most of whom were in their sixties, seventies, and eighties. But more importantly, it reflected a conservative local culture that cherished tradition and consistency. Whether it was a suggestion to rearrange the furniture in the Society's parlor (a move that led to a board member's angry resignation), or to connect the Historical Society to the Internet (which only occurred in 2007), the organization's leadership rarely broke with precedent—and usually then only after hours of intense discussion.⁴⁵ As

45. This is based on my work with the Shippensburg Historical Society over the last several years. I became a member in 1999, and then from November 2002 through November 2006 I served as a member of the Board of Directors. In November 2006, I was elected to a two-year term as 2nd Vice President for Planning.

for supporting local historic preservation efforts, the president and board of the Historical Society had flatly rejected earlier pleas for assistance from a community group seeking to preserve one of the community's iconic stone buildings, the Dykeman Hatch House, fearing that co-sponsoring grants for such a project would be tantamount to money-laundering.⁴⁶

Between 2003 and January 2006, the Shippensburg Historical Society underwent a dramatic transformation that made it more open to considering cooperation with the Locust Grove Cemetery Association. In November 2004, the Shippensburg Historical Society elected two new leaders. The new president, Paul Gill, was a retired Shippensburg University history professor who had lived in Shippensburg since the 1960s and who proved open to exploring new directions for the Historical Society. The new vice-president, John McCorrison, had attended Shippensburg University, worked as a police officer in Philadelphia, then returned to Shippensburg to retire. He had served on the board of the Historical Society for two years and volunteered long hours trying to make the organization's collections more accessible to the public. As vice president, he also sought to manage the Society's board more effectively and to bring new members to the leadership who would be more open to change and committed to modernizing the organization, improving its finances, and making it more engaged with the local community. I had begun serving as a member of the Board of Directors in 2002, and I noticed a dramatic shift in the organization's dynamics by the summer of 2005.⁴⁷ While it would have been unlikely that the organization would have helped the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee back in 2003, by 2006 it appeared to be a possibility.

In January 2006, at the invitation of Shippensburg Historical Society President Paul Gill, Nancy Hodge and Mai Baltimore approached the Shippensburg Historical Society to present their plan and to request the organization's assistance in restoring the cemetery. Prior to the meeting, I had made a few calls to key members of the board, particularly President Gill and Treasurer Bob Ferguson, explaining the situation at the Locust Grove Cemetery and the role the Historical Society could play. I also printed up two dozen copies of the brochure the Shippensburg University Applied History students had designed and gave them to Nancy Hodge and Mai Baltimore to distribute at the meeting.

The Locust Grove Cemetery Committee officers made a short presentation and asked for the Society's assistance with their campaign. After a short discussion, the Shippensburg Historical Society Board of Directors voted to

46. Based on conversations between the author and Paul Gill, January 2006, and conversations with Mick Martin of the Friends of Dykeman Hatch House, April 2006. Dykeman Springs was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1999, including a deteriorating nineteenth-century hatch house that required extensive restoration work. The National Register application for Dykeman Springs is available online at http://www.arch.state.pa.us/pdfs/H079101_01B.pdf (accessed August 5, 2007).

47. For example, the Society removed the furniture from its parlor to create a public exhibit space, and also installed a computer terminal in its research room so that patrons could search the Society's library holdings electronically. For the Shippensburg Historical Society, such changes were revolutionary.

join the campaign.⁴⁸ They also passed a resolution appointing me as the Historical Society's liaison to the Locust Grove Cemetery Restoration Campaign.

Within a week, the Shippensburg Historical Society's publicity committee issued a press release to the local media announcing its support for the Locust Grove Restoration Campaign—a piece that was widely carried by the area's local newspapers.⁴⁹ Unintentionally, the timing had proven fortuitous because the Historical Society's press release coincided with Black History Month, drawing unusually strong interest from local media. In addition to its external publicity, the Historical Society also appealed to its own membership through its monthly newsletter. In response to a one-paragraph article in the newsletter, the Historical Society raised over \$4,000 in donations in a single month—more than the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee had raised in the preceding three years.⁵⁰ Particularly generous was local philanthropist Elmer Naugle, who donated \$2,500 dollars. The Historical Society also became the official sponsor for the Pennsylvania Historical Marker application, as well as the \$7,500 Pennsylvania Department of Economic and Community Development Grant and the \$1,000 Wal-Mart Good Work grant authored by my students.⁵¹

With the backing of the Shippensburg Historical Society, a wide range of new sources of funds became available. I began making presentations to community groups with Locust Grove Cemetery Committee officers Mai Baltimore and Nancy Hodge where we explained the project and asked for their support. The first large donation came from the Shippensburg Corn Festival Committee, which donated \$10,000 after hearing our presentation.⁵² Two months later, the Shippensburg United Way also pledged \$3,500. In response to the new campaign, individuals and organizations throughout the community stepped up to assist the Locust Grove Cemetery, including community organizations such as the Civil War Roundtable, the Lions Club, the Civics Club, the Garden Club, the Boy Scouts, and even the Shippensburg High School student government. Jan Rose, chair of the Shippensburg Historic Architecture Review Board, approached local businesses, individuals, and government officials for donations. A local bank, the Orrstown Bank, pledged \$7,500 over three years, and the Shippensburg Borough Historic Architec-

48. While the Shippensburg Historical Society board considered several aspects of the issue, the deciding factor proved to be the threat to the graves of the Civil War veterans. One board member declared, "If there are Civil War veterans there, we should do this." The board agreed unanimously.

49. See "Historical Society Supports Efforts to Preserve Cemetery," *Shippensburg Sentinel*, February 1, 2006; "Historical Society to Aid African-American Cemetery," *Chambersburg Public Opinion*, February 8, 2006.

50. See newsletter of the Shippensburg Historical Society, Volume 50, Number 1 (March 1, 2006) and Volume 50, Number 2 (April 1, 2006).

51. See newsletter of the Shippensburg Historical Society, Volume 50, Number 1 (March 1, 2006) and Volume 50, Number 2 (April 1, 2006), also "Historical Society Supports Efforts to Preserve Cemetery," *Shippensburg Sentinel*, February 1, 2006; "Historical Society to Aid African-American Cemetery," *Chambersburg Public Opinion*, February 8, 2006.

52. Lauren Reilly, "\$10,000 Gift Gives New Life to Cemetery Fix-Up Effort," *Shippensburg News-Chronicle*, June 2, 2006.



Michael Smith and Earl Parshall, president and treasurer of the Shippensburg Corn Festival, presented a \$10,000 check to Locust Grove Cemetery Committee officers Carl Bell Jr., Carol Smith, and Mai Baltimore at the Locust Grove Cemetery Memorial Day Ceremony, May 29, 2006. (Photo courtesy of the author)

ture Review Board contributed \$5,000. All together, over a hundred individuals, organizations, businesses, and government bodies contributed over \$35,000 for the cemetery's restoration.

In the spring of 2006, I also received a State System of Higher Education Faculty Professional Development Grant to support the Locust Grove Community Service Project—a student-faculty research project I designed to enhance my knowledge of historic preservation fieldwork. The grant provided funds for equipment and salaries for two part-time student researchers, undergraduate David Maher and graduate student Charles Evans. We began the project by doing extensive reading on preservation and by attending the Association for Gravestone Studies annual meeting in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, where we participated in a two-day workshop on tombstone conservation methods. Over the course of the summer, we conducted additional archival research on the cemetery, mapped its grounds, transcribed and photographed all the tombstones, and performed conservation work on twenty-five worn or damaged markers in the oldest section of the cemetery.⁵³

53. Burg, Evans, and Maher all received intensive training in cemetery preservation and tombstone conservation by attending the Association for Gravestone Studies 29th Annual Con-

A faculty member from the Shippensburg University Geography Department, Christopher Woltemade, volunteered to help us survey the cemetery using a total station, enabling student researcher David Maher to create a high-precision GIS map of the cemetery. Together we spent over six hundred hours in the cemetery, enduring blistering heat, hefting tombstones weighing upwards of three hundred pounds, and always on the lookout for snakes resting beneath the fallen stones. On October 14, our last day of fieldwork, we were joined by “real regular” Gerald “Jake” Burke, who helped to clean and reset the tombstone of his great-grandfather, Samuel Wright, a Civil War veteran who served as a sergeant with the 127th United States Colored Troops.⁵⁴

Two weeks later, on October 24, 2006, local high school and college students with the “Ship to Ship” mentoring program arrived to help clean the lichen and grime off the cemetery's tombstones. On a bitterly cold, blustery day, more than two dozen teachers, students, and administrators spent the afternoon scrubbing markers and picking up trash from the cemetery grounds. A year later, on October 26, 2007, Shippensburg Boy Scout Dane Jessen completed his Eagle Scout project by organizing a work party to clean over seventy tombstones and to perform the last bits of outstanding tombstone conservation work in the newer section of the cemetery. At long last, every tombstone had been gently cleaned, and almost every leaning, sunken, or broken tombstone condition had been addressed.⁵⁵

As the state of the cemetery grounds improved, so did the public's perception of the cemetery. By 2005 and 2006, the sinister image of a shadowy burial ground on the edge of town harboring criminals and vandals gave way to a new public perception of the cemetery as an important community historic site. An early sign that views were changing came on October 1, 2005, when the local downtown business group, Downtown Organizations Investing Together (DO-IT), announced the winner of its contest to design a new Shippensburg flag.⁵⁶ Designed by Mary Hickman, the winning flag selected from thirty entries contained a streetscape meant to “illustrate daily life in Shippensburg” that contained notable local landmarks—including the Locust Grove Cemetery.⁵⁷ Clearly, the cemetery was becoming a symbol of the community's history to be celebrated rather than a problem to be hidden from view.

Even more remarkable, interest began to grow in promoting the cemetery as a tourist attraction. In the summer of 2005, the Commonwealth of Penn-

ference, held in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, June 21–22, 2006. Charles Evans and David Maher both received generous scholarships from the AGS that paid for the cost of their attendance at the meeting.

54. See “Caring for a Cemetery: Shippensburg University Professor Heads a Restoration Project,” *Carlisle Sentinel*, August 2, 2006; “Preserving the Past: SU Prof, Students Restoring Locust Grove Cemetery,” *Shippensburg Sentinel*, August 5, 2006; “Grant Pays for Cemetery Work” *Chambersburg Public Opinion*, August 7, 2006.

55. See “Ship to Ship” *Shippensburg University Magazine*, 4, no. 2 (Spring 2007): 8.

56. Dale Heberlig, “DOIT launches contest for town flag,” *Shippensburg Sentinel*, July 27, 2005.

57. “Winning flag features streetscape,” *Shippensburg Sentinel*, October 12, 2005.



Shippensburg University and Shippensburg High School students, staff, and faculty volunteered to clean the tombstones in the oldest section of the Locust Grove Cemetery, October 2006. (Photo courtesy of the author)

sylvania began an effort to develop its own Civil War Trail program in anticipation of the Civil War sesquicentennial in 2011. To jumpstart that effort, the State Department of Economic and Community Development encouraged counties around Pennsylvania to begin identifying their own Civil War sites for the trail around four specific themes, one of which was “African-Americans’ contributions in defense of the Commonwealth.”⁵⁸ Cumberland County’s Civil War Trail committee selected the Locust Grove Cemetery to be included as one of the county’s eight official sites.⁵⁹ The site would receive an official Civil War Trail wayside marker and be advertised on the Commonwealth’s tourism Web site, VisitPA.com. Local promotional literature published by the Cumberland Valley Tourism and Visitors Bureau also began including the cemetery as a historic attraction.⁶⁰ Furthermore, the Locust Grove Cemetery re-

58. See “Pennsylvania Unveils Civil War Heritage Trail,” *Cultural Heritage Tourism News* (Summer 2006), <http://www.culturalheritagetourism.org/newsletter/states.html> (accessed September 5, 2007).

59. Pennsylvania Civil War Trail, Civilwarpa.com, “North Queen Street Cemetery” <http://www.visitpa.com/visitpa/civilWarDetails.pa.jsessionid=187BC63D10A68B9323EE0BE72FD28A22?id=238230>. Site is also listed at Visitpa.com at <http://www.visitpa.com/visitpa/details.pa?id=238230> (accessed March 12, 2007).

60. *Visit Carlisle and the Cumberland Valley Pennsylvania: The Visitors Guide, 2006–2007* (Carlisle, PA: Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau, 2006), 5.

ceived prominent coverage in the official *Pennsylvania Civil War Trails* guidebook published by Stackpole Books and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.⁶¹

The culmination of the Locust Grove Restoration Campaign came with the dedication of a Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) Historical Marker at the cemetery on May 28, 2007, following the annual Memorial Day Observance. Because the marker would become the official public interpretation of the cemetery’s significance, great care was given to the wording that appeared on the sign.

The original text drafted by the Shippensburg University Applied History students in their nomination application submitted in December 2005 emphasized the cemetery as a site that embodied the history of the entire Shippensburg African-American community, with special attention drawn to the presence the community’s first Black church and the graves of slaves and military veterans:

The Locust Grove Cemetery is the final resting place of Shippensburg’s African-American residents who established the cemetery sometime before 1829. It is also the site of Shippensburg’s first Black church founded between 1842 and 1846. Burials in the cemetery include slaves and former slaves, 26 veterans of the United States Colored Troops, and Black veterans of every United States war from the Civil War to Vietnam.

After the marker application was approved, the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee drafted their own version of the marker text in late 2006, wording that placed special emphasis on the cemetery as a shrine for military veterans and the site of the local African-American community’s “mother church”:

Final resting place for twenty-six Civil War Veterans and two Spanish American War Veterans. Dedicated to the colored community in 1842 by Edward Shippensburg. Also, location of the first Black church in Shippensburg.

On April 2, 2007, approximately two months before the marker would be unveiled, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission’s staff drafted their version of the text. In contrast to the versions written by the students and the Locust Grove Committee officers, the PHMC stressed the site’s connections to slavery and segregation:

In use as a burial ground for both free blacks and slaves prohibited from burial in the Borough public cemetery from the 1820s to the late 20th century, this became the official cemetery of Shippensburg’s African American community in 1842. The site became home to the first independent black church in 1846. Burials include marked and unmarked graves of slaves and veterans from the Civil War to Vietnam, including 26 US Colored Troop veterans.

61. Tom Huntington, *Pennsylvania Civil War Trails: The Guide to Battle Sites, Monuments, Museums, and Towns* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books and Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 2007), 32–36.

During the first week of April, several drafts of the text traveled back and forth via e-mail between Harrisburg and Shippensburg until a final version emerged that fit on the sign and met the approval of the PHMC and the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee:

LOCUST GROVE CEMETERY

Burial ground for slaves and free blacks since the early 19th century and site of Shippensburg's first African American church, est. 1830s. Edward Shippen Burd granted the land to Shippensburg's African American community in 1842. It was the only public cemetery open to African Americans until the late 20th century. Among the burials are the graves of numerous veterans from the Civil War to Vietnam, notably 26 Civil War soldiers.

Undeniably, the text was a compromise that only hinted at the cemetery's rich history. The final marker text also advanced an interpretation of the cemetery that was less celebratory than what the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee proposed, or that the Historical Society members might have preferred. Yet given the limits of historical markers, it effectively conveyed the site's multiple meanings, it was factually accurate, it recognized the cemetery's numerous military veterans, and it offered a powerful, public reminder of Shippensburg's too-often overlooked history of slavery and segregation.

The ceremony unveiling the historical marker aptly reflected the partnership that had helped move the restoration effort forward: the marker nomination had been written and submitted by Shippensburg University applied history students while the Shippensburg Historical Society and the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee jointly sponsored the nomination and co-hosted the dedication ceremony. More than two hundred people attended the ceremony, including university students, faculty, and administrators—including the former president of Shippensburg University and the dean of students; Historical Society members; elementary and high school students who had studied about the cemetery in their classes; members of the Civil War Roundtable in nineteenth-century period dress; elected officials; and a large number of African Americans, including many who had driven several hours to attend the ceremony.⁶²

The ceremony was exciting and emotional for all who were involved. Master of ceremonies Gerald "Jake" Burke remarked that he had "been waiting for this day for a long, long time."⁶³ Paul Gill, past president of the Shippensburg Historical Society, declared, "This was a proud moment for the people of Shippensburg."⁶⁴ Charles "Ben" Hawley, an African-American Civil War re-enactor who wore a replica of a 54th Massachusetts infantry uniform, reminded the audience of the extraordinary sacrifices faced by African-

62. See Joya Ellertson, "Proud Moment for Shippensburg," *Shippensburg Sentinel*, May 30, 2007.

63. *Ibid.*

64. *Ibid.*



The Men's Choir of St. Peter's A.M.E. Church performed at the unveiling of the Locust Grove Cemetery's Pennsylvania Historical Marker. More than two hundred people attended the dedication ceremony. (Photo courtesy of the author)

American Civil War veterans. I used my time to thank my students for all their hard work, as well as all the various community groups and individuals who had contributed so generously to the restoration of the cemetery. I also used the opportunity to publicly acknowledge Locust Grove Cemetery Committee members Nancy Hodge and Mai Baltimore, who had chosen not to speak. Perhaps nothing more aptly captured the power of the day than when Nancy Hodge got down, kissed the ground, and thanked Jesus as the stunning blue and gold historical marker was finally unveiled.⁶⁵

Conclusion

Over the past four years, my students and I gained valuable hands-on public history experience while making meaningful contributions to the preservation of a historic site in the town where we live, work, and study. Our research brought to light the community's rich African-American history, a story that had been largely forgotten or overlooked by local historians. Because of our work, the Shippensburg community can now more fully appreciate the achievements of its African-American residents while also remembering the area's history of slavery, segregation, and racial discrimination.

65. Observed by author, May 28, 2007, Locust Grove Cemetery, Shippensburg, PA.

My students and I also discovered first-hand the special challenges associated with researching and interpreting the history of ordinary African Americans—particularly when we knew that the children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of the people we studied (both African Americans and the perpetrators of racial oppression) lived in the community and would be interested in our work. Additionally, the project offered valuable insights into the dynamics of community organizations and the mechanics of planning, organizing, and executing a grassroots preservation campaign. The project reinforced for my students that public history is not simply about mastering technical skills or working within historical organizations, but is also about connecting their work to all people interested in understanding or preserving the past. It also demonstrated the diverse roles that they would play when working with the public—sometimes leading, sometimes following, and often working side-by-side and sharing authority with other historians and community members. Theoretical discussion we had in class about communicating with audiences, the challenges of addressing issues of race and ethnicity in public history, and the concept of shared authority gained new relevance through the students' involvement in the Locust Grove Cemetery project.⁶⁶

Finally, I found that that the project broadened my own understanding of what it means to be an academic public historian engaged in my community. Assisting with the preservation of the Locust Grove Cemetery required me to play multiple roles beyond that of university professor—including those of salesman, diplomat, project manager, publicist, mediator, spokesperson, tour guide, therapist, laborer, gravestone conservator, and community booster. The project was never boring, and it required me to develop a range of skills far beyond those I learned in graduate school.

I also discovered that addressing the seemingly straightforward problem of deterioration and vandalism at the cemetery required me to negotiate many long-standing beliefs and suspicions held by both members of the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee and the Shippensburg Historical Society that initially thwarted cooperation. To preserve the cemetery, I first had to understand the community's complex racial past and the legacy of past efforts to preserve the cemetery. Only then could the preservation effort move forward. Significantly, I found that as a public historian in an academic institution I was in a unique position to foster partnerships and build bridges among diverse community organizations. However, such efforts were aided considerably by my long-standing involvement with local organizations, particularly

66. The practical challenges of the Locust Grove Cemetery connected well to readings I have used in my Introduction to Applied History course, particularly David Thelen and Roy Rosenzweig, *Presence of the Past: The Popular Uses of History in American Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998); James Oliver Horton, "Presenting Slavery: The Perils of Telling America's Racial Story," *The Public Historian* 21, no. 4 (Fall 1999): 19–38; Susan Porter Benson, Steve Briar, and Roy Rosenzweig, *Presenting the Past: Essays on History and the Public* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986); and Michael Frisch, *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft And Meaning of Oral and Public History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990).

the Shippensburg Historical Society. I consider it one of the project's greatest accomplishments that we brought together the Locust Grove Cemetery Committee and the Shippensburg Historical Society. The ongoing cooperation between these two groups likely holds the best prospect for ensuring the site's long-term preservation.

Overall, the process of helping the Locust Grove Cemetery has been enormously enriching for me and for my students. At times, I was thoroughly exasperated by the demands and unexpected challenges of the work. Nevertheless, I feel proud to have played a part in an effort that brought diverse groups of Shippensburg residents together to preserve an endangered place and to help the community where I live appreciate it more fully. In four years, the public perception of the cemetery shifted dramatically—what was once considered troubled ground is now seen as one of our community's treasured historic landmarks. The Locust Grove Cemetery became recognized as a special place that reflects the community's history and that also now embodies the community's commitment to preserving its rich cultural heritage.

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