

Glendale Cemetery's Historic Bell Tower

The Akron Rural Cemetery, now known as Glendale Cemetery, was founded in 1839. It is the resting place of veterans of every American war, as well as the area's founders, leaders, luminaries and residents. Four cemetery buildings are on the National Register of Historic Places--the caretaker's house built in 1869; the Gothic-style Civil War Memorial Chapel (with European rolled cathedral glass windows imported from Scotland) erected in 1876; the Bell Tower built in 1883; and the business office built in 1903.

Following the construction of the Civil War Memorial Chapel, in 1883, the Akron Rural Cemetery Association decided to build a bell tower to complement the chapel. The Ladies Cemetery Association donated \$1,000 (roughly \$27,000 today) for its construction, after purchasing a 700-pound bell. Akron architect Frank O. Weary designed the chapel and caretaker's house, and he was chosen to also design the Bell Tower. He envisioned the tower, which stands 60 feet tall and is 15 feet in diameter, to be symbolic of immortality and truth, and a beacon for those seeking refuge. It displays Craftsman influences with rusticated, hand-cut Peninsula stone and exposed timber framing that supports its flared pyramid roof.



Once constructed, the Bell Tower's magnificent peals became a familiar sound throughout the community, marking the daily closing of the cemetery's iron gates at 6 p.m. and signifying every funeral procession at the cemetery in the late 1800s. The bell also tolled with joy for special commemorations such as the end of World War I and World War II.

The vagaries of time and weather have taken their toll on the Bell Tower. At some point, vandals stole the clapper from the bell and the tower has remained silent ever since.



The Board of Trustees of Friends of Historic Glendale Cemetery has launched a campaign to clean, repair and restore the Bell Tower. If you would like to help restore this historic Bell Tower to its former beauty and once again hear its magnificent peal, please fill out the donation form below. Thank you.

Photo credits:

Top photo: Bell Tower ca1900, The Summit County Historical Society of Akron, OH; housed at Akron-Summit County Public Library

Left photo: Close-up of holes in Bell Tower roof today, Braun & Steidl Architects

Yes, I want to help restore Glendale Cemetery's historic bell tower!

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution:

\_\_\_\_\_ \$25                      \_\_\_\_\_ Check (payable to Friends of Historic Glendale Cemetery)

\_\_\_\_\_ \$50                      \_\_\_\_\_ Credit Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Visa       MasterCard       Discover

\_\_\_\_\_ \$100                      Expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_ Security code: \_\_\_\_\_

  Name as it appears on card: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Other                      Billing address for card: \_\_\_\_\_

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Mail to: Friends of Historic Glendale Cemetery · 150 Glendale Avenue · Akron, OH 44302-1914  
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