

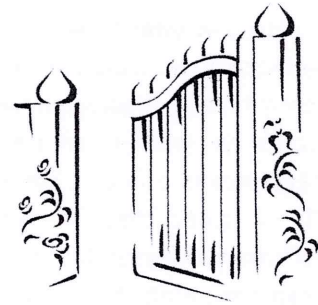
TRUSTEES OF CEMETERIES

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Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, November 1, 2023 – 7pm

Gilmanton Academy

503 Province Road, Gilmanton, NH

Present: Trustees Candace Daigle, Leonard (JR) Stockwell, Jr., John Dickey, Adam Mini, Alt., and Daniel Redin, Alt; Vinnie Baiocchetti.

Approval of Minutes – August 24, 2023

MOTION: On a motion by J. Dickey, seconded by JR Stockwell, it was voted unanimously to accept the minutes of August 24, 2023, as written. (3-0)

Alternate Trustees - The Board welcomed Dan Redin, the second Alternate to be appointed to the Board. Alternate members will be an important part of a successful future for the cemeteries.

Staff - Sexton Paul Lines was injured at his home recently. He is home recuperating and Karen Stockwell is completing the final season work as the weather permits. The Board signed a card wishing Paul a speedy recovery. The Board also recognized and expressed their appreciation to Karen for assuming the remaining fall work needed prior to season end. John commented on how great Tibbetts looked for the recent workshop. The Board is very fortunate to have their dedicated staff.

Ayers Crypt - We informed the Arbor Tech crew of the completion of this project as we had promised to do. They were very interested in the site when they originally cleared access for us in 2022. There has been no transfer of the abutting lot over which we have an easement to Ayers.

Beech Grove

- A. George Philibotte, Jr. was interred (cremains) into grave F54C-1 on September 10, 2023.
- B. Vinnie Baiocchetti continues to recruit interested individuals, training them in the approved method of stone cleaning. They have been working in Beech Grove but are done for the current season.

Gravestone Cleaning Project - See attached 2023 report. Vinnie updated the Board on the volunteer stone cleaning project which he has led for the Trustees since being trained by NHOGA earlier this year. He noted that the volunteers, including himself, Dan, Adam, Evan Collins, Meredith Kelley, and Mark Persson have cleaned approximately 40 stones over 100 man-hours in Beech Grove Cemetery. They have refined the cleaning method to be both effective and efficient in the use of supplies. They wet with water; scrape loose lichen and other materials, wash with Orvus soap and brushes one or more times, apply D/2 and brush one or more times, and leave the stone with coat of D/2 after the final rinse. Applying water, Orvus and D/2 from larger sprayers allows them better control and coverage. The use of Orvus also keeps the stone

wet longer which helps in easy removal of debris. Adam noted that it also keeps the debris wet, reducing the airborne particles during the cleaning process. They work on several stones at the same time, allowing them to apply the D/2, leave it to work and then return to it in the same workday. Stones are revisited as necessary with additional D/2 after the passage of some days/weeks. Since D/2 is intended to work on biological substances, it is most effective over time. Vinnie noted that they've found that individual stones in the same cemetery are impacted by pollution differently and that they also react differently to cleaning. He noted an extreme example being the Lizzie Folsom stone which immediately turned bright bronze when D/2 was applied. It shocked the workers, but in later discussions with John Lord it is not unheard of. They discussed the progress on several stone groups (Mooney, McClary, Mudgett, Folsom) that have been more extreme examples of how the cleaning works. John asked that they check stones for the carver's name. He was especially interested in the Lizzie stone.

Volunteer Projects - Members discussed the new volunteer program with Vinnie Baiocchetti. He has been successfully soliciting volunteers and running weekly stone cleaning exercises at Beech Grove Cemetery. They also discussed the new repair training and how that would be inserted into the program. Vinnie will be providing a 2024 project proposal for the Trustees review prior to spring. He suggested that they will be using Beech Grove as a training site and will also branch out into some other initial sites they've located by using a triage process as to need (Parsons-two broken, straighten and clean, Copp-straighten and clean, Wilson Hill-clean, Sleeper-straighten and clean).

Prior to starting as a volunteer, individuals complete a liability release for the Town and a short questionnaire for the Trustees. The Trustees have requested that the Town allow minors to participate when a guardian has signed and is present since we have had church groups and scouts assist in the past. The Trustees' form also provides different opportunities for volunteering such as photographing, documenting and GPS locating stones, and monitoring sites, etc. Vinnie also noted there is work available by individuals needing to complete community service time and Adam noted that high school seniors need to participate in community service activities.

The Trustees agreed that the volunteer projects are proving to be extremely valuable to maintaining and preserving the managed sites. They expressed thanks to Vinnie and with his approval, appointed him as Volunteer Projects Coordinator. Trustee Dan Redin agreed to assume the duty of Volunteer Program oversight.

Vinnie noted that NHOGA has a grant program to assist communities to fund the purchase of cleaning and repair supplies. He will follow up with them.

Gilmanton Gravestone Cleaners Group Facebook Page - As part of this project, Gilmanton Gravestone Cleaners, the Facebook page created by Adam and Vinnie, has been very successful in keeping the townspeople abreast of this new activity and in addition to the current volunteers, several more individuals have expressed an interest in being trained and participating in this project. As the work has ended for this season, Vinnie is gathering their names to contact in the spring. Adam noted the page is growing with approximately 100 members. John thanked the cleaning crew, noting the work at Beech Grove looks fantastic.

Buzzell

- A. JR and Karen have also been cleaning stones in Buzzell.
- B. JR reported that due to a good regrowth of grass, no reseeding of open areas in the cemetery is necessary at this time.
- C. John explained that the entrance to the parking lot has become too rough to pass in a low car. Candace noted that the parking lot, although owned by the Town, is part of the adjacent Ella Stroud Forest managed by the Conservation Commission. It is not a part of the lot that Mr. Stroud transferred to the Town as an expansion of the cemetery, although we do have an easement to also use the parking lot for access to the cemetery. John is following up with Patrick Hackley of the Commission for their authority to allow us to repair the entrance. John will report at the next meeting and JR will have Will Sanville look at what work might be needed.
- D. John noted that next year's Historical Society Cemetery Walk will highlight Buzzell and asked that everyone share their knowledge of the site with him to assist in developing the presentation.

Copp

- A. The stones still to be returned/set in Copp will be incorporated into a future stone repair project since we are now training for that work.
- B. The DAR has offered to assist in cleaning the Butler/Eastman stones. John remembered a woman who came from Wisconsin to search Copp. John assisted and was able to immediately locate the stone. The woman was overjoyed as she needed this connection for her DAR application.

Friends

- A. The Board noted that the stones in Friends will not need to be repaired by Laconia Monument now that we have individuals trained for the work. Candace will contact Laconia Monument.
- B. The abutting lot (Levesque) sold to Keith & Misty Ewell. We've sent a letter of welcome, explained our activity in the cemetery, given them our contact information, and referred to our shared driveway. JR also met Mr. Ewell recently and gave him some additional information on the shared access. Mr. Ewell will minimize debris on the lawn adjacent to the cemetery during snow removal. He also noted that in the future they may relocate their access to the originally planned location west of the cemetery.

Parsons - A letter was received from the abutting property owner, Dr. Tonnesen. Candace requested that Vinnie view the site as a volunteer project. While there, he met with Dr. Tonnesen who is greatly interested in the site and offered us better access. There is one stone down and one down and broken. Vinnie feels they can be repaired by the trained volunteer project crew. He explained our work to Dr. Tonnesen, who was unaware of the number of sites maintained and the necessary work and assured him we will put it at the top of our volunteer sites for 2024. Dr. Tonnesen was very appreciative of our work.

Tibbetts

- A. JR noted that there are some trees that need to be trimmed/removed which the Trustees viewed at the recent workshop. He will meet with Arbor Tech on Friday to review the work.
- B. The Board reviewed the work completed on the front wall and areas immediately adjacent. It was determined that no further work need be done in those areas that had been damaged by summer storms.
- C. Dan Adel will be redoing the site sign with correct spelling.

Other Project Reports

- A. **Stone Repair Workshop** - See attached 2023 report. On October 28th, volunteers met with John Lord at the Tibbetts Cemetery for a 4-hour workshop to learn approved methods of stone repair. In attendance were Trustees JR Stockwell, John Dickey, Candace Daigle, Adam Mini and Dan Redin, Karen Stockwell groundskeeper, Vinnie Baiocchetti, Gordon Jones, Mickey Daigle, Sharon Ciampi Belmont Selectman and Chairman of their Cemetery Trustees, Lewis "Chip" Grant of Rochester, and Marty Cornelissen (NHOGA) historian of Alton. Attendees participated in uprighting and straightening stones as well as using mortar and epoxy to repair broken stones. JR reported that he had found the epoxied stone well set yesterday and removed the clamps also the plastic on the mortared stone. He said he was impressed with using the epoxy recommended by John Lord as it allowed for some additional worktime before it set up. Candace noted that John recommended using ledge-pack instead of pea stone for bedding material as it contained more fines. She noted that ledge-pack will be available for future repair work as well as the mortar materials from Gilbert Block.

During the day, there was an inspection of two slate stones that had split vertically and much discussion on attempting a repair. Vinnie reported that he had spoken with Bill Smethurst of Sheldon Slate who felt it might be difficult to successfully epoxy the two sheets and suggested we might try drilling and bolting the two sheets in four locations. The members discussed this method and felt it too aggressive at this point. The first rule is "do not harm", but that is more difficult when attempting to "avoid" harm that may occur if no action is taken. After much discussion they decided to first epoxy the two sheets. They will investigate whether the two are split entirely in two pieces or if the split stops at the turf line. If it's split entirely, they may remove to get better access to fully epoxy. If not, they are concerned that there may be debris that has fallen into the split over the years. If that's the case, it's going to be difficult to successfully epoxy more than just the area immediately adjacent to the edges because the two sheets can't be clamped tightly together without breaking. This will all be further researched on site, and a decision made upon further examination, but only the epoxy method will be used at this time. Members also thought it might be possible to color the epoxy by using existing slivers/dust from the stone.

MOTION: On a motion by J. Dickey, seconded by JR Stockwell, it was voted unanimously to donate \$100 to NHOGA for the recent training session on stone repair and use of their supplies. (3-0)

- B. **Removing for Repair** - Vinnie has located two GAR flag holders that need repair (Moses Dustin-Beech Grove and Leander W Sawyer-Tibbetts). The Trustees approved removal to clean/Cerakote. Return by spring.
- C. **Site Signs** - Six on order from Dan Adel (Besse, Emerson, Sanborn, Mudgett, Parsons and the Town Pound) in addition to Wilson Hill-cost being donated and the Tibbetts replacement sign. Signs will be finished late in 2023.
- D. **Equipment Purchase** - The Board decided not to pursue purchasing a chipper/mulcher based on staff comments.
- E. **Succession Planning** - During 2023, the Trustees were successful in the appointment of two Alternate Members who will learn the duties of Trustee and assist in broadening our work towards the protection of these sites. Candace will be providing both with background info on the positions. A second goal for the future was to better protect the processes and records of the cemeteries. All hard copy records have been digitized and stored in the Town vault. Electronic records are scheduled to be transferred to the Town's server in November and two members will be given electronic access to continue the necessary administrative work. With his approval, the Board appointed Adam Mini to be provided with that second access to share administrative duties.

To also fund costs fairly for successive trustees, additional supply and training money has been requested in the 2024 budget to cover stonework supplies and some items currently paid for out of pocket by the Trustees.

Lastly, the Trustees discussed expanding the number of elected Trustees from three to five. Although there are currently two alternate trustees, the statute provides only one-year terms. Although they are eligible for reappointment, learning the duties of Trustees takes much more time. In the case of Boards that have some paid staff, that staff usually holds much of the historic and operational details necessary to be a board member and can help to guide and instruct new members. However, the cemetery trustees do not have administrative staff and do not see the need based on a low amount of administrative work. The result is that new board members must depend on other members or gained experience to learn. Having five members would provide a cushion of "experience" when turnovers occur. The members decided to ask the Selectmen to place an article on the warrant requesting the voters to expand the number of elected trustees to five.

- F. **Additional items** to be addressed in the future:
 - 1. Repeat abandonment process for six sites.
 - 2. Regulation amendments.
 - 3. Green burials discussion.
 - 4. Street addresses and tax map updates.

Budget

A. Current Year

- 1. Town Budget – all items within expected parameters. Prior to yearend there will be some additional wage/stipend costs, final sign payment to Adel, and transfers

from care funds and the Expendable Trust Fund to zero out the temporary account.

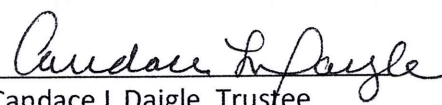
MOTION: On a motion by J. Dickey, seconded by JR Stockwell, it was voted to refund Candace Daigle for listed purchases of supplies, training, and office expenses in the amount of \$651.71 (2-0 Candace abstained).

2. General/Perpetual Care Funds-anticipated yearend transfer to zero out stipend portion of temporary account.
 3. Expendable Trust Fund-anticipated yearend transfer to zero out temporary account.
 4. McIntyre Fund – no activity anticipated through yearend.
- B. **2024 Appropriation Request** - Selectmen are recommending a 4% wage increase for part-time staff. That along with the Trustees original request results in a total budget appropriation increase request over 2023 of \$1,164.00 (7%).

Adjournment

MOTION: On a motion by J. Dickey, seconded by C. Daigle, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:35pm. (3-0)

Respectfully Submitted,


Candace L Daigle, Trustee

Gravestone Cleaning & Repair Workshops Report 2023

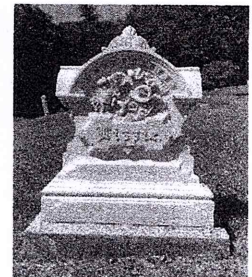


On July 1st (rescheduled due to rain on June 24th) we hosted a gravestone cleaning workshop led by John Lord of NH Old Graveyard Association (NHOGA). Prior to the workshop, the Trustees posted the required public notice that work to repair/restore/clean stones would be occurring in the 38 sites managed by the Town during 2023.

The workshop was attended by JR Stockwell, John Dickey, Candace Daigle, Paul Lines, Karen Stockwell, Vinnie Baiocchetti and Adam Mini. It was held at the Friends Cemetery and all the stones were treated, at least initially, during the morning. Attendees were very excited to see the difference that occurred from the initial cleaning of these stones. The Trustees acknowledged that this opens a whole new level of care and preservation for our sites and sent a donation to NHOGA to acknowledge their great work in instructing the proper methods of stone cleaning.

The Trustees approved purchasing additional D/2 and other cleaning supplies for our staff or anyone else trained by NHOGA or their students wishing to continue cleaning stones in our sites. Before working in the cemeteries, the Town has a volunteer application form, and we have a form which gives us a little more info on the volunteer's interest and a way to give them additional information for working in our sites.

Vinnie Baiocchetti stepped forward as a volunteer and has continued to clean stones, starting in the Beech Grove Cemetery, with an ever-increasing number of trained volunteers including Alternate Trustee Dan Redin, Selectman Evan Collins, Meredith Kelley, and Mark Persson. On October 14th the volunteers finished their work for this year having worked some 100 man-hours spread over more than 11 days in Beech Grove. They have initialized and/or finalized cleaning more than 40 stones. Vinnie will provide a more detailed report on their 2024 proposal, including which sites will be prioritized. JR and Karen have spent additional time cleaning stones in Buzzell. The most impressive stone in Beech Grove was the Lizzie Folsom stone. We sent before and after pictures of this one to John Lord who called it one of the "treasure" stones he has seen. An additional 5 people have recently volunteered to be trained and start work in the spring. This year we also authorized descendants (Metivier/Bordeau) to clean Cogswell and Edgerly stones in the Edgerly1 (aka Samuel Edgerly), Edgerly2 (aka David Edgerly) and Wilson Hill cemeteries. They received their training from the Belmont Cemetery Trustees who were trained by NHOAG.



A total of \$553.78 was spent during the year from town funds for the D/2 and cleaning supplies for the workshop and D/2 for continued cleaning. Approximately \$200 was also spent by Trustees and volunteers who supplied some of their own cleaning equipment and D/2. The Trustees have proposed to increase their 2024 supplies budget with the goal of eventually cleaning all stones and initiating a follow-up schedule to keep the stones protected in the future. We have 4+ gallons and almost a full container of Orvus cleaner to begin the 2024 season.

As part of the cleaning process, volunteers also inspected and evaluated stones and have created a list of those needing to be repaired, secured to their foundation, straightened, etc. The volunteers were excited to expand their stonework, and the Trustees scheduled a gravestone repair workshop for October 28th (rescheduled from October 21st due to rain), again led by John Lord, so staff and the volunteers may commence repairing stones. In addition to the volunteers noted above, Bud Young has expressed an interest by himself and some additional workers who wish to begin assisting with repairs and they were also invited to attend this workshop although the reschedule conflicted with the start of hunting season. Attendees at the Tibbetts cemetery included Trustees JR Stockwell, John Dickey, Candace Daigle, Adam Mini and Dan Redin, Karen Stockwell groundskeeper, Vinnie Baiocchetti, Gordon Jones of Chichester, Mickey Daigle, Sharon Ciampi Belmont Selectman and Chairman of their

Cemetery Trustees, Lewis "Chip" Grant of Rochester, and Marty Cornelissen (NHOGA) historian of Alton who explained that a church had earlier existing in front of the Tibbetts Cemetery before the road went through. The workshop was determined to be a success by all, and John Lord commended Gilmanton for having one of the two best groups to attend his workshops across the state. He said their energy, excitement, commitment, accomplishments, and varying areas of expertise make them a great town to work with. He offered to return whenever asked. A second donation to NHOGA was made to cover some of their costs for this work and to acknowledge the resulting overall cost savings for the town.

The Trustees have struggled since 2019 to find a contractor to replace Charlie Beede who did gravestone repair work in many of our sites for years but is unable to continue. Having the opportunity for volunteers to step up to do this work is a great asset for the community. In 2024, there will be expanded opportunities for volunteers in this and other areas of site care and maintenance.

Finally, is our ongoing effort to educate and involve the most important "partners" we have in the work being done in our 38 cemeteries: Gilmanton residents, property owners, and taxpayers. Without their ongoing support this work would not be possible. They have been incredibly supportive and generous since 1988 when the Board of Cemetery Trustees was first elected, and tax money raised for this work.



To that end, and with the approval of the Trustees, Adam and Vinnie created the Gilmanton Gravestone Cleaners Facebook page. This is the first effective effort to bring the ongoing story of these sites to the public. To date it has been extremely successful, reaching over 2,500 individual viewers and getting over 1,500 individual reactions (comments, shares, clicks), only one person commenting that sites should not be maintained, but allowed to return to their natural state. This is a necessary method of connecting with the public for our work. It is important to keep it neutral and positive, which Vinnie is doing. Adam and Candace also have access to the site, but Vinnie has taken the lead. He and Adam made it clear in the opening comments that there is a required process and a required method to be used whenever working in these sites which are under the management of the cemetery trustees.

This has been an exciting and fruitful year for the Trustees in their continued goal of maintaining and protecting the cemeteries and historic sites under our care.