



## TRUSTEES OF CEMETERIES

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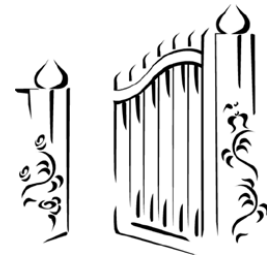
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### ANNUAL REPORT 2017

Although 2017 was a year of storms, power losses, and downed trees, our cemeteries survived with minimal damage. Staff has been able to deal with most of the downed trees although we have contracted for help with two very large trees at the Osgood and Sawyer Lake Cemeteries.

Thank you to Town Accountant Brenda Paquette who has worked with us to develop a more manageable method of accounting for expenses split between budget and care funds making end of year balancing much easier this year.

The project to repair, upright and straighten gravestones continued through 2017. In 2016 repairs were completed at the Guinea Ridge and Page cemeteries. During 2017 Beede Cemetery Lettering was able to complete stone work at the Beech Grove, Buzzell, Mudgett, Hillside and Sleeper cemeteries. We have contracted with Beede for the Tibbetts cemetery and to install granite posts along the internal driveway at the Buzzell Cemetery. We are thrilled with the results of this important project to protect stones from further damage and visitors from injury. We hope to continue with this project as time and funding may permit.

As we contracted to have stone repair work commence in the Wilson Hill cemetery during the upcoming year, we have an offer of financial assistance from a descendant to assist in that project. Our recommendation will be that the assistance be in the form of a deposit into the general care fund for the site. Although taxpayers have been ever-generous in maintaining these sites through our annual budget; it becomes more difficult each year for them to address competing financial needs of the community. General Care funds are an alternative funding method of financing maintenance. These are interest bearing funds, held by the Town, for the perpetual maintenance of individual cemeteries. Some care funds do exist, and currently help to defray costs each year; but they are woefully underfunded and taxpayer money is necessary for the most basic of services. Please remember that donations of any amount to the Town in the name of your preferred cemetery or for general town-wide cemetery use, either at present, or during consideration of your estate planning will help protect these sites in perpetuity and lessen the long-term burden on taxpayers. Donations to the Town for the care of Cemeteries are deductible under IRS Codes section 170(a)(1) and 170(c)(1). We thank you for your consideration of this option.

The Guinea Ridge Cemetery fence project continues, and Trustees met with Mr. Sykes of Superior Fence to obtain input and cost estimate to replace the existing fence as closely as possible. The Trustees also obtained an estimate from Kevin Fife to replace the fence with a stone wall which would be a more permanent solution. Meeting again with descendants, it was their recommendation that a stone wall be installed in place of the fence with reuse of the fencing fabric on replacement gates. The Trustees will confirm project details for a stone wall along the frontage.

The Trustees met with Mr. Wilson of Meadow Pond Road whose survey of his backland showed the location of a possible burial ground in the general location of the former Town Poor Farm. Although a (long) walk into the site did not result in any definitive answer as to whether a burial site exists, Trustees continue to work with the surveyor to determine if other information may be available. They will also provide Mr. Wilson with background information on the site.

**During 2017 Trustees and Staff Also:**

- Laid out graves for one interment at Buzzell, one at Beech Grove and two headstone installations at Beech Grove.
- Completed the sale of six graves at Beech Grove Cemetery.
- Continued support for the American Legion Auxiliary, Gilmanton Ellis-Geddes-Levitt Unit #102 on their "**Veterans at Rest in Gilmanton**". This project attempts to locate and inventory the site of every Veteran buried in Gilmanton. The Auxiliary continues to request the help of residents to provide the name and location of any era Veteran buried in Gilmanton. See more at [www.alanh102.org/page8.html](http://www.alanh102.org/page8.html) or contact the Auxiliary at P.O. Box 119, Gilmanton, NH 03237-0119, or [ALA102@metrocast.net](mailto:ALA102@metrocast.net)
- Attended the NH Cemetery Association workshop

**Upcoming Projects:**

- Post information/regulation signs at cemetery sites
- Draft Trustee Handbook
- Work with Probate Court to simplify lot ownership process

**The Trustees Wish to Thank:**

- Our wonderful maintenance staff, Carl Moorehead and Paul Lines. It is truly only their efforts that keep our sites in an appropriate condition.
- The Selectmen and Voters of the Town of Gilmanton for their continued support for the protection of these important sites
- Neighbors to many of the sites who remove brush and limbs, allow us access over their property and keep a watchful eye on these important community sites

Please remember that over time the Town has assumed maintenance duties for these sites, but in most cases, absolutely no records or plans of the burial grounds were provided to the Town. If you have information about any of the burials, lot ownership, copies of lot deeds or other details, please, please, please, consider sharing with us! Contact any of the Trustees below or e-mail directly to us at [cemeteries@metrocast.net](mailto:cemeteries@metrocast.net). Please visit the Town's website at [www.gilmantonnh.org/index.php?pg=org&oc=ct](http://www.gilmantonnh.org/index.php?pg=org&oc=ct) for additional information on sites, including available lots. Please feel free to contact us at any time with your information, questions or comments.

Very Respectfully Submitted,

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