

# **TRUSTEES OF CEMETERIES TOWN OF GILMANTON NEW HAMPSHIRE**

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## **ANNUAL REPORT - 1996**

During 1996, our Town cemeteries were cared for by dedicated workers and volunteers who share an interest in maintaining Gilmanton's heritage.

A 1995 project that was rescheduled for 1996 was to begin restoration work on the Foss Cemetery on Pine Hill Road. A group of volunteers gathered during the fall and hiked into the site carrying assorted tools and equipment. A good start was made on brushing out the cemetery and clearing it of downed trees and years of leaves and limbs.

This year gates were installed at the Crystal Lake, Old Stage Road, Hatch Road and Merrill cemeteries.

Tree limbing in both the Friends and Guinea Ridge cemeteries has been scheduled. By trimming or removing diseased or weak trees in the cemeteries, damage to gravestones by falling limbs during wind or ice & snow conditions is minimized. Many of the antique stones simply can not be adequately repaired once broken. Preventative maintenance will keep many stones from being lost in this manner as well as keeping our stone repair cost down.

This year's gravestone repair efforts focused on the Kelley cemetery in Lower Gilmanton. Over twenty stones were repaired to complete that proposed project. Stones were also repaired in the Merrill cemetery. Stone repair is a project begun some years ago. Each year some number of stones, broken over decades in some cases, are repaired. Once a cemetery is initially restored, it is inspected each year and any necessary repairs are completed. In this manner we are making progress each year towards completing stone repairs in all of our Town cemeteries, without allowing them to fall back into disrepair.

Based on the work completed this year, the Hatch Road and Merrill cemeteries are complete. Our scheduled volunteer project for 1997 is to continue work on the Foss cemetery. All it takes is one afternoon of your time to join us for this or any of the cemetery projects. Several of your neighbors have undertaken to "adopt" a cemetery. Their assistance in the upkeep of the Town cemeteries is invaluable. From letting us know when there might be a tree down or stone toppled to actually keeping the grass cut, these volunteers are showing a pride in their Town that not only keeps your annual budget down, but is really what

Gilmanton has always been about.

We look forward to the 1997 season and hope to hear from you with any comments, recommendations or assistance in regards to your Town cemeteries.

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