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## Association for Gravestone Studies e-Newsletter

Issue #64

August 2008

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### **AGS Annual Meeting and Conference-2009**

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The 2009 AGS Conference at Union College in Schenectady, NY will begin Wednesday, June 24 and end after breakfast Sunday, June 28, 2009. Registration will be open from Tuesday, June 23 at 1:00 PM until Saturday, June 27 at 4 PM.

"Union College is easily accessible. Parking is available throughout campus. Taxi and rental car services are available from Albany International Airport, about a 25-minute drive from campus. The Amtrak station is on State Street in Schenectady, a 10-minute walk or short taxi ride from campus. The bus station is also located on State Street, a 15-minute walk or short taxi ride from campus," per Union College.

Our dorm at Union College, College Park Hall, is a former Ramada Inn. Each room has a private bathroom with tub and shower and heat/air control. Both single and double rooms will be offered. There is a 24/7 security guard at the door and plenty of parking adjacent to the front door. Entry after the front door is locked at 11 PM will be possible with conference ID.

All conference activities will be under one roof, except, of course, the workshops and bus tours. Two elevators are available for anyone not wanting to use the stairs. The dorm rooms are all on one floor, one level above the registration area, cafeteria, and banquet room. The classrooms and Late Night area are on the same level as the dorm rooms. There is also a lounge with a large flat screen TV.

Vale Cemetery is about a mile from Union College. Vale has offered to host all of our workshops. We're planning 2 days of conservation workshops and 2 half days of foil impression workshops. Both workshops will include basic and advanced sessions. We will also offer a new "point and shoot" photography workshop. We'll even have a daytime "Late Night," for those who don't stay up late.

Bus tours are planned for Albany Rural, Oakwood and St. Agnes cemeteries plus several museums. We'll offer a challenging 2 hour hiking tour to see burials in the glacial ravines of Albany Rural as well as a less physically challenging 2 hour driving tour.

2009 is the Albany Quadcentennial. A replica of Henry Hudson's ship, the Half Moon, will be docked at Albany. Albany, Schenectady & Troy will be jumping with many exciting family-oriented activities throughout the summer of 2009. Be there not square.

Links:

<http://www.union.edu/>

<http://www.valecemetery.com/>

of interest:

<http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/dead.html>

<http://www.nysm.nysed.gov/calendar/>

<http://www.albany.org/Services/meetingServices.aspx>

### **Slideshows: AGS 2008 Conference**

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AGS Trustee Melvin Mason sent in these slideshows of photos he took at the 2008 AGS

Conference in Amherst, Massachusetts. Enjoy!

Albany Road Cemetery, Deerfield Mass.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/melvis/sets/72157605836950807/show/>

Old Bernardston Cemetery, Bernardston, Mass.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/melvis/sets/72157605851533821/show/>

Bridge Street Cemetery, Northampton, Mass.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/melvis/sets/72157605847089346/show/>

Elmwood Cemetery, Holyoke, Mass.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/melvis/sets/72157605852464717/show/>

Northfield Burying Ground, Northfield, Mass.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/melvis/sets/72157605848336500/show/>

Old Hadley Cemetery, Hadley, Mass.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/melvis/sets/72157605848555978/show/>

Park Street Cemetery, West Springfield, Mass.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/melvis/sets/72157605848732918/show/>

St. Mary's Cemetery, Northampton, Mass.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/melvis/sets/72157605848953510/show/>

West Cemetery, Amherst, Mass., (Tom Mason Photo).

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/melvis/sets/72157605853785641/show/>

### **AGS to be at Archaeological Institute of America Fair**

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Please join us at The Second Annual Archaeological Institute of America and the [Museum of Science Family Archaeology Fair](#) to be held on Saturday, October 11, 2008, from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM at the Boston Museum of Science.

We will be presenting a hands on program of designing and etching on slate, as well as, a rubbing class. Come celebrate Archaeology Month with us and bring the whole family.

The event is FREE with admission to the Museum.

### **Query: Porcelain Photo and Mosaic Tile, Tampa, Florida**

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AGS member Mike Mitchell sent in a query regarding a porcelain photo and mosaic tile in the Italian Club Cemetery in Tampa, Florida. To read the query, [please click here](#).

### **Exhibit about U.S. presidents who died in office**

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AGS member Sue Ridlen wrote in about an exhibit she initiated regarding presidents who have died in office, which ran from February through October, 2006. The exhibit was at the President Benjamin Harrison Museum in Indianapolis. To read about the exhibit, please visit [the museum's website](#).

The exhibit catalog is still available. To purchase a copy, please contact the museum, or Sue at sridlen@iuk.edu. Copies are \$8.00 each.

### **Event: Oakdale Cemetery, Wilmington, North Carolina**

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*Gossip, Graves and Grapes*, Sunday, September 28, 2008, 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Friends of Oakdale Cemetery will once again host *Gossip, Graves and Grapes* - a spirit filled afternoon lawn party with delicious delicacies and wine. Dish the dirt with your Friends at GGG while you take a memorable walking tour in North Carolina's oldest rural cemetery, visiting the graves of intriguing citizens associated with the creation and preservation of Thalian Hall.

*Gossip, Graves and Grapes* has a limited capacity; advance paid reservations are required. The fee is \$35.00; \$25.00 for members of Friends of Oakdale Cemetery. To make an advance reservation, please phone the Oakdale Office at (910) 762-5682. The event will be held rain or shine.

[www.oakdalecemetery.org](http://www.oakdalecemetery.org)

### **Exhibit: Historic Burying Grounds of Boston, Massachusetts**

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 "Stories in Stone: The Historic Burying Grounds of Boston" at the Adams Gallery, Suffolk University.

Preachers, patriots and artists lie alongside pirates and slaves in Boston's early graveyards, and their lives provide inspiration for the exhibit "Stories in Stone: The Historic Burying Grounds of Boston," at the Adams Gallery, Suffolk University, from Aug. 1 through Oct. 20, 2008.

"Stories in Stone" draws on artworks, archival records and photography to paint a picture of life and culture in Boston from the colony's first settlement to today. The exhibit also looks at the stonemason's art, gravestone iconography and preservation efforts.

The exhibit is presented by Suffolk University in partnership with the Boston Parks and Recreation Department's Historic Burying Grounds Initiative.

<http://www.suffolk.edu/offices/23831.html>

### **National Preservation Institute Cemetery Preservation Seminars**

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 The National Preservation Institute, a nonprofit organization founded in 1980, educates those involved in the management, preservation, and stewardship of our cultural heritage. The 2008 National Preservation Institute seminar schedule is now available online at [www.npi.org](http://www.npi.org).

*Cemetery Preservation*, September 15-16, 2008, Jacksonville, Florida.  
 Learn how to begin a cemetery preservation or restoration project and how to help ensure that sound choices are made to avoid harming what you seek to protect. Discussions focus on current issues in cemetery preservation, such as recording and documenting cemeteries and graveyards, undertaking preservation efforts, and exploring conservation techniques and issues. This seminar is being held in cooperation with Cemetery Recovery & Preservation Trust of Jacksonville, Inc. and

Chicora Foundation, Inc.

This seminar is being held in conjunction with:

*Cemetery Landscapes: A Practical Guide to Care and Maintenance*, September 17, Jacksonville, Florida.

Learn how to protect historic cemetery landscapes, preserve integrity of design, and safeguard tombstones and monuments while pursuing a practical outlook on maintenance and budget concerns. Explore approaches to caring for softscapes, or plantings, and hardscapes, including roads, pathways, and benches.

Discuss effective pruning and cutting techniques, and when chemicals and heavy equipment can be safely and productively used. Review the basics of short- and long-term preservation plans.

Agendas for these seminars, registration forms, and details are available at [www.npi.org](http://www.npi.org).

### **Gravedigger's Ball, Laurel Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

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**Save the Date: 4th Annual Laurel Hill Cemetery Gravedigger's Ball,  
October 10, 2008, 7:00 PM**

This unique fundraising event will include dinner and dancing, as well as silent and live auctions. Musical entertainment will be provided by The Quake, a dynamic 11-piece dance band. Open bar will be available prior to dinner, and cash bar afterwards. Black tie or costume is requested.

Seats are \$150 per person, or \$1,200 for a table of ten. Tickets can be purchased through the cemetery office by contacting (215) 228-8200, or e-mail, [GDB@thelaurehillcemetery.org](mailto:GDB@thelaurehillcemetery.org), or via their website at [www.thelaurehillcemetery.org](http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org).

### **Gravestone Rubbing Classes, Davenport, Iowa**

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Fall Gravestone Rubbing Classes Offered at Oakdale Memorial Gardens

Gravestone rubbing classes are being offered once again at Oakdale Memorial Gardens in Davenport, Iowa. The classes will be taught by local author and cemetery aficionado (and AGS member) Minda Powers-Douglas. Ms. Powers-Douglas has been teaching classes on cemetery art and instructing people on how to properly perform gravestone rubbings in a safe and effective way for the past two years. She is the author of the books *Cemetery Walk*, *Life in Parts: An Interpretation from the Cemetery* and the forthcoming cemetery symbolism book *Translating Tombstones*. She is the founder and editor of *Epitaphs Magazine* and [www.TheCemeteryClub.com](http://www.TheCemeteryClub.com).

Current class dates are:

- Saturday, Sept. 20, from 9-11 a.m.
- Saturday, Oct. 18, from 9-11 a.m.

To register, call Deb Williams at Oakdale Memorial Gardens at (563) 324-5121. Registration deadlines are one week prior to the class date. Minimum of five people per class; 15 maximum. If you have any questions, e-mail Ms. Powers-Douglas at [minda.epitaphsmag@gmail.com](mailto:minda.epitaphsmag@gmail.com).

Each class costs \$30 per person (which includes a full gravestone rubbing kit).

### **TheCemeteryClub.com Updates**

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[TheCemeteryClub.com](http://TheCemeteryClub.com) celebrates the art and history of cemeteries across the country and around the world. Recent updates to the site include information about the Summer 2008 issue of *Epitaphs* Magazine, links to recent radio interviews with TheCemeteryClub.com's founder, Minda Powers-Douglas, and information on her forthcoming book. She is seeking input from taphophiles (how you became a taphophile, what first drew you to cemeteries and what keeps you coming back for more) for the book.

### **Newsletter: Albany (New York) Diocesan Cemeteries**

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 Please take a moment to check out *Sacred Spaces*, a newsletter from Albany Diocesan Cemeteries. There are many articles, news and event listings.

<http://www.rcdacemeteries.org/newsletter>

### **New Publication: *White Bronze***

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 Lynn Johansen sent in this information about her new publication and website. She writes: "I have recently published *White Bronze*, a full color collection of original photographs of zinc markers in the Chicago area. It is available at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) or [lulu.com](http://lulu.com).

I also have a web site dedicated primarily to zinc markers. It is [www.zincmarkers.com](http://www.zincmarkers.com)."

### **Websites: Illinois Cemeteries**

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 The AGS office received this information from Fowie Hagerty. She writes:

I have a cemetery preservation website that has been online for a few years. I travel all over the state of Illinois to help people in their quests for preserving abandoned cemeteries in our area.

My page is: Illinois Saving Graves-  
<http://www.usgennet.org/usa/il/state2/index.htm>.

I also have Knox and Warren county webpages with many photos and cemetery listings online. Those links are:

<http://www.usgennet.org/usa/il/county/knox/>

<http://www.genealogytrails.com/ill/knox/>

<http://www.usgennet.org/usa/il/county/warren/>

<http://www.genealogytrails.com/ill/warren/index.html>

Hunter Cemetery Restoration Project  
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~ilhca/index.html>

**Illinois Saving Graves Mailing list:**  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ilsavinggraves/>.

### Website: Alabama "Story" Epitaphs

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 This page of the Alabama Heritage website is devoted to Alabama's "story" tombstones: epitaphs that tell a story-tragic, humorous, heroic-a few words that illuminate a life.

<http://www.alabamaheritage.com/88tombstones.htm>

### Free Software for Small Cemeteries

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[WebCemeteries.com](http://WebCemeteries.com) is offering the use of its program, American Legacy Initiative, free of charge to cemeteries with fewer than 2,000 interments.

The goal of the American Legacy Initiative is to preserve the legacies of Americans buried in community cemeteries. Often, these cemeteries do not have the finances, staff or technology to preserve their burial records in anything more than a locked up file card system. WebCemeteries.com is offering an online database where the public can search the cemetery records to find loved ones, and leave comments and memorials.

### Stolen Monument?

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 The AGS office recently received this note and weblink (link below). The sender discovered a monument for sale and wonders if it is a cemetery monument, and if there is a possibility it may have been stolen.

<http://www.urbanarchaeology.com/cutsheets/salvage/UA34SV.pdf>

Connecticut Gravestone Network Executive Director Ruth Shapleigh Brown noted:

"42 inches tall doesn't make it a very large monument piece. . . I wonder if was a display/showroom piece?"

If the seller is a salvage company then it may be the second or third (etc.) party to be selling this piece. The shabby chic and garden art fad of the 1990's was supplied by a large amount of items similar to this being taken from cemeteries around the country.

Last I knew there still were no Federal Laws to help address these situations. If it were in Connecticut we do have a state statute - but I would have to spend 'time' connecting all the concerned parties to stop the sale and recover the item. Once recovered - what is the next step? Who plans on taking responsibility for it?"

### AGS Member in the News

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 Two books by AGS member Keith Rawlings of Kirkwood, Missouri were reviewed in the August-September issue of *ICCF*A (International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association) *Magazine*. The review included information about and photos of the restoration work performed by Youth in Action, a non-profit organization founded by Rawlings.

### Article: "Churchgoers resurrect old cemetery"

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 This article, posted on [thestate.com](http://thestate.com), is about the cleanup of Purrysburg Cemetery in Hardeeville, South Carolina.

**Article: Cincinnati's Spring Grove Cemetery**

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There is an article about Cincinnati's Spring Grove Cemetery, "Museum Without Walls," in the National Park Service's Summer 2008 issue of *Common Ground*. You can subscribe to *Common Ground* at the National Park Service website. The issue will be available by download soon at: <http://www.nps.gov/history/publications.htm>.

You can also search for and download articles from back issues of National Park Service publications on this site.

**Article: Picnic in Fairbanks, Alaska Cemetery**

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This article, posted on [newsminer.com](http://newsminer.com), is about a July picnic held in Fairbanks' Northern Lights Memorial Park and Mortuary.

**Article: Restoring ironwork at the Catholic Cemetery, Savannah, Georgia**

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This article is reprinted with permission from *Southern Cross: The Official Newspaper of the Diocese of Savannah*. The photos were supplied by AGS member Joe Counihan.

To read the article [please click here](#).

**Contact Information**

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phone: 413-772-0836  
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[Forward email](#)



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Association for Gravestone Studies | 278 Main St. | Suite 207 | Greenfield | MA | 01301