



Association for Gravestone Studies e-Newsletter

Issue #68
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2009 AGS Annual Meeting and Conference



Registration is open!

The registration form is posted on [the conference page of the AGS website.](#)

2009 Conference Logo
The Veeder Monument
Vale Cemetery, Schenectady, NY

**2009 AGS Annual Meeting and Conference
CALL FOR PAPERS
June 24-28, 2009
Union College
Schenectady, New York**

Proposals are solicited for scholarly papers, 20 minutes in length, to be presented during the evening and daytime lecture sessions. Please send your proposal and 250-word abstract by February 1, 2009 to: Program Chair: Dr. Ian Brown,

ibrown@bama.ua.edu.

Proposals are solicited for Participation Sessions, classes of 50 minutes in length, to be presented Wednesday morning and afternoon, June 24. Please send your proposal and a 250-word abstract by February 1, 2009 to: Participation Sessions Chair: Frank Calidonna, frankc@twcny.rr.com.

Attention Students-2009 Conference Scholarship Announcement

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Any student who submits an article to the *AGS Quarterly*, which is accepted and published, will receive a \$100 scholarship to attend the AGS conference.

Article-length manuscripts can be submitted to the AGS office at any time. In the event that it is published and you decide to go to the conference, simply attach a photocopy of your student ID to the registration package when you send it in. And be sure to subtract \$100 from the total fees.

You can't beat the deal - A published article and scholarship aid for the conference!

To submit a manuscript or for more information, please contact the AGS office at [info@gravestonestudies.org](mailto:info@gravestonestudies.org).

**From the Office: Book Reviewers**

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We have a pool of AGS members who review books and we'd like to expand the list. We periodically receive copies of cemetery-related books. When we do, we contact our reviewers who write reviews for the *AGS Quarterly* or *e-Newsletter*.

If you'd like to be added to our list of reviewers, e-mail info@gravestonestudies.org. Please indicate your areas of interest.

If you have already indicated that you are willing to write reviews, we have your name on file, but please let us know if you are still interested in being a reviewer.

If you have a new title in your library that you'd like other AGS members to know about, we encourage you to write a review and send it to the AGS office. Also, if you hear of any new gravestone or cemetery related publications, please let us know. We'll try to obtain a copy and have it reviewed in the *AGS Quarterly* or *e-Newsletter*.

Query: Animal Sculpture

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This query comes from Holly Manders. She writes:

"I am wondering if anyone can tell me what the animal at the foot of this gravemarker is. The grave is in Vineland, New Jersey. The baby was the child of the town founder, Charles Kline Landis. The marker is made of white marble, apparently very soft due to the level of erosion.

The headstone is broken off and currently in the cemetery shop for repairs (I am attaching photographs). It seems to be a typical headstone: baby's name, birth date and place, death date and place, crucifix with lilies, short psalm quote. However, the animal at the foot of the cradle is still a puzzle to me. I wonder if it could actually be a badly eroded lamb or small dog? It's so hard to tell without the head.

I really appreciate any insight AGS members may have into what the animal might be.

Holly Manders, [hmanders@mandersmerighi.com](mailto:hmanders@mandersmerighi.com)."





### Query: Federal Agencies and Laws Regarding Cemeteries

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This query comes from Debbie Day. She writes:

"I am taking a course entitled 'Archives Ethics, Access and Advocacy.' We are to examine a case study on an ethical issue involving archives and write a paper. My topic will relate to cemeteries as I research ethical issues involved with cemetery records. With genealogists making an effort to make cemetery and tombstone information available online, I want to see what ethical and privacy issues there are with releasing this information and making it available online. This is particularly interesting to me personally as I have spent the last 7 years documenting a large cemetery in Washington Co., Pennsylvania and creating a website with tombstone photos and scanned images of the cemetery records.

My question - is there a federal agency that oversees the cemetery industry? Are there federal laws regarding what types of records cemeteries must keep and what can be released publicly? I have been able to find many state agencies that seem to lay out rules and regulations for cemeteries but so far I have not found anything nationwide. If another AGS member could point me in the right direction, I would really appreciate it. Also, if anyone knows of a well documented instance where ethical issues arose from something to do with cemetery records that might make for an interesting case study, I would love to hear about that as well.

Debbie Day, [dday@sis.pitt.edu](mailto:dday@sis.pitt.edu)."

### Information about Spirit Houses

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AGS Member Mike Bieling sent in this information and photo:

"I am forwarding a copy of a photograph taken by Guenther Wagner, on a trip to the family's summer camp in the Yukon Territory last summer. It was interesting to receive this picture, just at a time when I had been re-reading Dr. Donald Gregory Jeane's article, available on-line, on 'Southern Graveselters and English Lych-gates: The Search for Culture Trait Origins,' ([www.samford.edu/~dgjeane/lych\\_gates.html#](http://www.samford.edu/~dgjeane/lych_gates.html#)) in which he rejects the theory that Southern grave shelters or grave sheds are Native American in origin. While I have no doubt that Dr. Jeane is correct in attributing their origins to sources within the Anglo-Saxon churchyard tradition, one cannot overlook the fact that, all over northwestern North America, the First Nations peoples have long and independent traditions as skillful builders of wood-frame structures, including large residential buildings and small grave shelters of various kinds.

This is a photo of a grave shelter that Guenther informs me is known locally as a 'Spirit House,' located at Mendenhall Landing, on the Alaska Highway about 40 km west of Whitehorse in Canada's Yukon Territory. This is the only structure in a group of about six graves of the Aishihik Nation, a people of the Southern Tutchone part of the Athabaskan linguistic family, in a burial place that overlooks the Takhini River. These types of burials consist of a full interment, with the structure built over the grave. Guenther tells me that the windows are an important feature, allowing the spirit of the deceased to come and go. It's unclear how old this Spirit House is. Unfortunately peel and stick letters appear to have been used for the inscription on the stylized cross attached to it and only the word 'died' is now legible. The European influence on the style of construction used here is obvious, so it would be interesting to know whether any early visitors or anthropologists described local burial customs or Spirit House building techniques at the time of first contact.

Mike Bieling, [oldcemeteryian@shaw.ca](mailto:oldcemeteryian@shaw.ca)."



**AGS Member in the News: David Watters**

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David Watters was interviewed in *New Hampshire Magazine*. To read the interview, please visit nhmagazine.com.

AGS Member in the News: Mike Mitchell

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Mike Mitchell was interviewed for an article in Miamiherald.com. To read the article, please visit [Miami Herald Neighbors](http://MiamiHerald.com/Neighbors).

**Upcoming Publication: *Quoting Death in Early Modern England***

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Quoting Death in Early Modern England: The Poetics of Epitaphs Beyond the Tomb is a new publication by Scott Newstok. It will be available January 20, 2009.

Book Description: An innovative study of the Renaissance practice of making epitaphic gestures within other English genres. A poetics of quotation uncovers the ways in which writers, including Shakespeare, Marlowe, Holinshed, Sidney, Jonson, Donne, and Elizabeth I, have recited these texts within new contexts.

For more information or to pre-order, visit the publisher's website at:

<http://www.palgrave.com/products/title.aspx?PID=290604>

Article: *A Journey Through Time at Souther*

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This article is by Kenton Lee Sena and is about Souther Cemetery in Boone County, Kentucky. To read the article, [please click here](#).

To view more photos of Souther Cemetery and for more information on cemeteries in Boone County, please visit [the Boone County Cemeteries website](#).

**Article: *Spain city sets up solar cemetery***

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This article, posted on BBC World News America, is about the City of Santa Coloma de Gramanet's installing solar panels in a cemetery to generate renewable energy.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/7745673.stm>

Article: *World's 10 best places of final rest*

This article is posted on www.reuters.com.

Article: Atlanta woman challenges cemetery relocation

This article, posted on [the Atlanta Journal-Constitution website](http://theatlantajournal-constitution.com), is about an Atlanta woman who is challenging a proposal to dig up her ancestors' remains and bury them in another graveyard about a mile away. She believes the move is motivated by racism and greed.

Article: Preserving Cemetery Maps--Topsfield, Massachusetts

The town of Topsfield, Massachusetts is planning to have their historic cemetery plot maps copied and properly preserved. The article is posted on wickedlocal.com/topsfield.

Article: *FDLE begins investigation into reform-school cemetery*

This article, posted on tallahassee.com, is about the Florida Department of Law Enforcement's investigation of the cemetery on what used to be part of the Florida Industrial School for Boys campus to determine whether any crimes of abuse were committed.

Article: *Mumbai cemetery won't bury gunmen*

This article is posted on boston.com.

Cemetery Tourism in India

The link below is to the "In Transit" column from the November 30, 2008, on-line edition of the *Times of South Africa*. The fourth item is about an Indian city's new campaign to attract the descendants of India's British rulers to their ancestors' burial sites.

<http://www.thetimes.co.za/PrintEdition/Lifestyle/Article.aspx?id=877686>

Several related articles can be called up by Googling "cemetery tourism India," including articles about a previous promotional campaign aimed at bringing "cemetery tourists" from the UK and elsewhere to honor the memories of those who perished during the 1857 Mutiny.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/322854.cms>.

Old City Cemetery (Sacramento, California) newsletters online

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Back issues of *the Epitaph*, the newsletter of the Old City Cemetery in Sacramento, California, are now posted on their website,

[www.oldcitycemetery.com/epitaph.htm](http://www.oldcitycemetery.com/epitaph.htm)

Issues from 2005 through the present are available.

**New Website--Ancient Burying Ground, Hartford, Connecticut**

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The Ancient Burying Ground in Hartford, Connecticut has a new website: www.theancientburyingground.org. While many parts of the site are still under construction, you will find extensive information about the Ancient Burying Ground's history and about headstones and carvers, along with an archive of old newsletters.

New Website--Brompton Cemetery, London, England

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The Friends of Brompton Cemetery has a new website, [www.brompton-cemetery.org](http://www.brompton-cemetery.org). Brompton Cemetery, consecrated by the Bishop of London in June 1840, is one of the Britain's oldest and most distinguished garden cemeteries.

The website contains history, tours, and information about the Friends of Brompton Cemetery.

**Hillside Memorial Park and Mortuary Adds "Garden of Solomon"**

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HILLSIDE MEMORIAL PARK AND MORTUARY ANNOUNCES
NEW "GARDEN OF SOLOMON" DEVELOPMENT
Prestigious L.A. Cemetery Expands Grounds to Meet
the Needs of Generations to Come

Hillside Memorial Park and Mortuary, the most prestigious Jewish cemetery and mortuary in Southern California, announces the addition of a new development.

To read more about the Garden of Solomon and Hillside Memorial Park and Mortuary

[please click here.](#)

Announcement: VA Moves Historic Bloedner Monument

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**Media Advisory from the Department of Veteran's Affairs**

VA to Move Historic Bloedner Monument  
Nation's oldest Civil War monument to be preserved

To read this announcement, [please click here.](#)

**Oakdale Cemetery, Wilmington North Carolina: Winter-Spring Events**

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Oakdale Cemetery, Wilmington North Carolina
Winter-Spring Calendar of Events

Saturday, February 21, 8:00 AM Bird Watching Tour: Go birding throughout Oakdale Cemetery with noted ornithologist, Dr James Parnell.

Sunday, March 8, 2:00 PM Camellia Tour: Ed Powers and Bill Wilcox, both members of Wilmington's Tidewater Camellia Club and certified judges of the American Camellia Society, will guide participants on a two hour tour of the camellias blooming in Oakdale.

Sunday, March 29, 2:00-4:00 PM Spring Floral Tour: See what's blooming at Oakdale with horticulturist/superintendent Eric Kozen.

Saturday, April 18, 10 AM-Noon Oakdale Historical Tour: Architectural historian Janet K. Seapker gives a tour focusing on the history of Oakdale Cemetery and reveals the meaning of symbols used in Victorian funerary art.

All events are \$8.00 for non-members; free for members of the Friends of Oakdale Cemetery.

http://www.oakdalecemetery.org/friends_oakdale.asp

New Years & January Events at Laurel Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia, PA

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**Wednesday, December 31st at 12:00 Noon** The annual General Meade Birthday

Celebration will mark the 193rd anniversary of the birth of General George G. Meade, commander of the Union Army at the Battle of Gettysburg. A parade of Civil War re-enactors, civilians in period attire, special dignitaries, heritage groups and participants will advance to Meade's final resting place and memorialize his services to his nation. A 21-gun salute and champagne toast will cap off the program at graveside, and will be followed by a reception in the Cemetery Gatehouse. A tour of historic Laurel Hill will be offered following the festivities (weather permitting).

**Sunday, January 11th at 2:00 PM** Rumbblings of Freedom: The 150th Anniversary of John Brown's Raid. Join tour guide Dr. Andy Waskie, of Temple University's Civil War & Emancipation Studies (CWEST) for a program marking the 150th Anniversary of John Brown's Raid at Harpers Ferry, Virginia. John Brown remains a controversial figure in American History. It is a fact that his actions, oft times violent and bloody, set the stage for abolition of slavery and helped to precipitate the Civil War. There were a number of supporters of Abolition and admirers of John Brown in Philadelphia. Some assisted Brown in his work, while others opposed his ideals, or were spectators to the stirring events that led to his Raid. A number of these historical witnesses now rest peacefully in Laurel Hill Cemetery.

**Saturday, January 24th at 2:00 PM** Unearthing Laurel Hill: A History Written in Stone. An informative overview of Laurel Hill's long and colorful history, this tour will include all of the highlights, hot spots and notable stories that afford the cemetery its WOW factor. This is the ultimate tour for first-time visitors to Laurel Hill, and anyone else who likes beautiful art, stimulating history, and just enjoying life...even amongst the dead.

For more information, please visit [www.thelaurelhillcemetery.org](http://www.thelaurelhillcemetery.org).

### **January Events: Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, Massachusetts**

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Saturday, January 3, 2:00 PM "Discover Mount Auburn" Mount Auburn, designated a National Historic Landmark, is one of the country's most significant designed landscapes. Here the arts of horticulture, architecture and sculpture combine with the beauty of nature to create a place of comfort and inspiration. This 1.5-mile walking tour will focus on stories of history, monuments and the lives of those buried here. Admission: \$10.

Thursday, January 8, 10:00 AM "Mount Auburn Book Club" Admission: Free. This month, the group will discuss *The Frozen-Water Trade* by Gavin Weightman (2003). During the 19th-century Frederic Tudor harvested ice in New England to be shipped as far away as Calcutta, Bombay and Martinique. Tudor endured years of hardship and ridicule before he made his fortune as Boston's "Ice King." He is now buried in his family tomb at Mount Auburn.

Wednesday, January 21, 12:30 PM "Beautiful, Timeless and Still Available" - a presentation and driving tour. Admission: Free. A warm virtual tour of Mount Auburn will begin in Story Chapel and then proceed by van to explore the winter beauty of this historic landscape. Experience how contemporary landscape design and architecture are shaping the burial spaces for the 21st-century. The driving tour will end at Bigelow

Chapel for a brief tour of the Cemetery's oldest chapel. Space is limited, preregistration is required.

Thursday, January 22, 2:00 PM "Behind the Scenes: Preservation at Mount Auburn" - a presentation by David Gallagher, Chief of Conservation, Mount Auburn, and Natalie Wampler, Preservation and Facilities Planner, Mount Auburn. Admission: \$10. To be held in Mount Auburn's Preservation Department workshop, this behind-the-scenes tour will highlight recent work with before and after photographs and demonstrate the different materials and techniques used to preserve Mount Auburn's structures. Space is limited; preregistration is required.

Thursday, January 29, 2:00 PM "Conifers: Surviving our Harsh Winters with Grace" - a walking tour with Dennis Collins, Horticultural Curator, Mount Auburn. Admission: \$10. The "flowering plants" that dominate the stage during the growing season, have finally cleared the stage. It's now time to see another group of plants shine. Mount Auburn's conifer collection is notable for its diversity (nearly 80 different types) and depth (more than 1,500 plants). Dress for the weather!

View their complete calendar and register for any upcoming programs online by visiting www.mountauburn.org.

Contact Information

phone: 413-772-0836

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