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# Association for Gravestone Studies e-Newsletter

**Issue 26**  
**June 2005**

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Dedication Ceremony Held in Amherst, Mass.

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A dedication ceremony was held on June 16th, 2005 for the Amherst Community History Mural at West Cemetery (where Emily Dickinson is buried). The linked article below discusses the cemetery and the mural.

[West Cemetery Mural](#)

## **American Slave Burial Project**

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The following announcement was sent in by Sandra Arnold, Founder & Executive Director of the American Slave Burial Project.

The American Slave Burial Project is dedicated to the documentation and research of burial grounds, graveyards and cemeteries of enslaved African Americans of the African Diaspora. Though the project is currently independent, we are in discussions with Fordham University, where it will potential have a home later this year.

At the moment, we are collecting data on any slave burial grounds "of interest" in the United States, that would hold valuable information on slave or plantation life. We are also interested in sites that hold rare and uncommon facts, as well those established organizations that been pioneering in their own research on this important subject.

If you have any questions about our project, please contact me anytime. Sandra A. Arnold, (212) 252-6990, email: info@slaveburialproject.org.

[American Slave Burial Project](#)

News from The Gravestone Girls

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The Worcester, Massachusetts-based group, The Gravestone Girls create decorative artwork using the images carved on olde New England gravestones and teach rubbing classes. They sent in the following announcement.

The Gravestone Girls have created a new venture. We have an old hearse we use as a promotional vehicle when we are out and about. It became such a recognized trademark of GG and so popular, we spent the winter revamping it into a six-passenger limousine. The 20 foot silver car got all its body work done and a new paint job. It now carries

passengers vertically instead of horizontally in fine style with leather interior, plush carpet, DVD player, satellite radio, CD/radio and two wet bars. The service is called Voodoo Limousine. It is The Original Hearse Limousine serving the New England area. The website is [www.Voodoolimo.com](http://www.Voodoolimo.com). The car is available for any type of event such as proms, weddings, parties, a night on the town or (our favorite) divorce celebrations!  
[The Gravestone Girls](#)

### **Exhibit Opening: The Cemeteries of Staten Island, NY**

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"Realms of History: The Cemeteries of Staten Island" is a new exhibition at the Staten Island Institute of Arts & Sciences, 75 Stuyvesant Place, St. George, Staten Island, Just steps from the Staten Island Ferry.

There will be a celebratory opening on Thursday, July 28, 2005, 5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. RSVP at (718) 727- 1135.

This new exhibit examines the fascinating cemeteries of Staten Island. What historical secrets do they hold? Who is buried where? Tombstones as folk art, cemetery studies of the past, cemeteries as nature preserves, restoration of our abandoned cemeteries, as well as the group Friends of Abandoned Cemeteries of Staten Island will all be highlighted. There is much, much more, so save the date and join Curator of History Patricia M. Salmon for this analysis of Staten Island's unique cemetery culture. The book "Realms of History: The Cemeteries of Staten Island" will be available by late 2005. Details will be in a future e-news.

[Staten Island Museum](#)

Mystery Stone Marker, Augusta, GA

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The following announcement and photos were sent in by Larry Gleason, [gleasonl@bellsouth.net](mailto:gleasonl@bellsouth.net).

He writes: I have been asked to be the photographer of record for a recently discovered stone slab in an effort to digitally pull out obscure markings from concentric circles. The stone slab was recently discovered in a graveyard in an old colonial church located in Augusta, GA. It is even uncertain if this slab is really a cemetery item. Yesterday, ground radar indicated a shaft below the slab to be 15 feet deep with evidence of a vault going to the 20 foot mark. The slab was documented in 1914 as existing but labeled as "unknown". It was since forgotten until uncovered during a restoration project for the cemetery in general. Needless to say this mystery stone has everyone including the media puzzled. The stone is identified as local, 5 feet long, 2.5 feet wide, and about 8 inches thick.

I have created an on-line photo album for this stone (see link below) and will be adding to it as more photos are taken. Interested parties are welcomed to view the album. In February 2005, *The Augusta Chronicle* ran an article about the restoration of St. Paul's Episcopal Church Cemetery (where the marker is located) The article also mentions AGS member Eugene Hough. To read it, please [click here](#) (you need to register with the Chronicle to view it, but registration is free).

[Photo Album](#)

### **New Cemetery Magazine**

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AGS member Minda Powers-Douglas has launched a new magazine, *Epitaphs*, and subscriptions are now available. *Epitaphs* is "for cemetery lovers by cemetery lovers" and will feature essays, original poetry, photographs, book reviews, and more. For details and subscription information visit the magazine's website below.

[Epitaphs](#)

Cemetery Tour: Laurel Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia, PA

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Cemetery tour: "1876: The Centennial & Laurel Hill." Sunday, July 10, 2 p.m.

[Laurel Hill Cemetery](#)

**Cemetery Tour: Green-Wood Cemetery, Brooklyn, NY**

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Saturday, July 16, at 8:15 p.m. "Saturday Night by Moonlight, Flashlight, and Footlights." Bring a flashlight, sign a waiver of liability, and you're all set. This special walk, which for the first time will feature site-specific performances by Brooklyn artists who will be directed by Martha Bowers of Dance/Theatre/Etcetera, is \$15 for the public, \$10 for Historic Fund members.

All tours are led by Jeff Richman, Green-Wood Cemetery's Historian. For questions, comments, to arrange organizational or group tours, or to get on the mailing list, please e-mail or call Jeff at jeffrichman@green-wood.com, (631) 549-4891.

[Green-Wood Cemetery](#)

Cemetery Tour: Oakwood Cemetery, Troy, NY

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Sunday, July 24 at 2:00 p.m. "Oakwood Lore and Legends." A cemetery usually offers surprising accounts of people buried there. Oakwood cemetery is no exception. A life-long resident of Syracuse, Jamieson R. Steele, tells about some interesting individuals and the legends associated with them.

Tours begin at the 1879 chapel located on the west side of the cemetery. For more information, call Letty Murray at (518) 445-9388. The tour is free.

[Oakwood Cemetery](#)

**Cemetery Tours: Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, MA**

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Saturday, July 2, 2:00 p.m. "Memorable Cantabrigians at Cambridge Cemetery" - a walking tour with Janet Heywood, Vice President of Interpretive Programs, Mount Auburn. In conjunction with Cambridge Discovery Walks, we offer a tour of the City of Cambridge Cemetery, founded in the 1850s. We will remember the remarkable lives of some of those who called Cambridge home - such as architect Henry Van Brunt and authors William Dean Howells and the James family. Meet at the entrance to Cambridge Cemetery on Coolidge Avenue. For recorded information, call 617-607-1981. Admission: Free.

Saturday, July 9, 2:00 p.m. "Mount Auburn Cemetery--a National Historic Landmark" - a walking tour. Also in conjunction with Cambridge Discovery Walks, join us for a discovery tour of Mount Auburn's treasures. The Cemetery, 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. We'll visit the graves of some of well-known Bostonians, including reformers, politicians, artists and writers who changed the world around them. We will be walking at a gentle pace on roads and grassy paths through Mount Auburn's hills and dells surrounded by the beauty of summer. Admission: Free.

Tuesday, July 12, 5:00 PM "Mount Auburn's Ecological Approach in the 21st Century" - a walking tour with Dennis Collins, Curator of Plant Collections, Mount Auburn. Today's horticultural problems are becoming increasingly complex. In rising to the challenge posed by these problems, Mount Auburn's horticulture staff members are thinking creatively and embracing environmentally sensitive practices more than ever before. Come see some of the ways the Cemetery is responding to new threats and challenges in the landscape and planning for the future. Admission: \$3, members; \$8, non-members.

[Mount Auburn Cemetery](#)

Cemetery Tours: Forest Hills Cemetery, Boston, MA

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Sunday, July 31 at 2 p.m. "Women of Forest Hills" led by Al Maze. Admission: \$8.00  
Sunday July, 17 at 5 p.m. Victorian Sculpture Tours with Elise Ciregna. Admission: \$8.00

Sunday, July 24 at 5 p.m. Contemporary Art Tours with selected artists. Admission: Free.

[Forest Hills Cemetery](#)

**Contact Information**

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