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Association for Gravestone Studies e-newsletter

Issue 35

March 2006

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AGS Annual Meeting and Conference, Delaware Valley College, Doylestown, Pennsylvania, June 22-25, 2006. The conference registration form and a schedule of events are posted in the [conference section](#) of the AGS website.

The registration deadline is June 9, but an "early-bird" discount is available to those whose materials are postmarked by May 19.

If you wish to submit a proposal for either a paper or participation session, there's still time! The calls for the both are also available on the conference website. The submission deadline is now April 30.

Update on AGS Membership Drive: Spring brings more than flowers to the Mid Atlantic states as the membership drive for the Doylestown Conference is in full swing. *American Cemetery* magazine's April issue has an article about the AGS and the upcoming conference. Look for other articles about the organization in newspapers, newsletters and magazines. By sharing information about us we hope to be "discovered" by cemeterians, historians, genealogists and other interested individuals. If you have any suggestions of publications or know of anyone that might be interested in learning about the AGS contact Susan Olsen, Membership Chair at Friends@thewoodlawncemetery.org.

Update on the Winter AGS Quarterly: We've made some changes in the way we produce the Quarterly which has resulted in its delay for which we apologize. It will be on its way to you very soon!

AGS Spring Cemetery Tour

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**AGS Spring Tour: Deerfield and Greenfield, Massachusetts**, Saturday, May 13, 2006; rain or shine.

10:30 a.m. to noon -- Kevin Sweeney will lead us on a tour of the Old Burying Ground on Albany Road in Deerfield. Kevin is a professor of History and American Studies at Amherst College. His study of Connecticut Valley gravestones and stonecutters appeared in *MARKERS III*.

1:30 to 3:00 p.m. -- Peter Miller, Greenfield's recently appointed town historian, will accompany us on a tour of Green River Cemetery, a small rural cemetery established in 1851. We may also visit the Old Calvary Cemetery, located next to Green River, where many of the area's first Irish-American settlers are buried.

For directions and more details, call or email the AGS office. This event is free and open to the public.

[Association for Gravestone Studies](#)

### Query: Missing Gravestone Search

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 The Vermont Old Cemetery Association has in its possession a gravestone that was seized as evidence in Brattleboro, Vermont. It was no longer needed by law enforcement and it was turned over to Charlie Marchant. The problem is that law enforcement has no idea where it belongs.

The following inscription is on the stone: "Delia, died June 6, 1875, age 1 year, Mary Ellen, died July 15, 1879, 1 year, 11 months, Children of William and Bridget Murphy." There is a cross on the stone that might indicate a Catholic family. Anyone with information about where this stone might have come from can contact VOCA Secretary Charlie Marchant at: PO Box 132, Townshend, VT 05353.

Query: Location of a Monument



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This query comes from George Glastris. He writes: "Can anyone tell me what and where this stone is? It is a carte de visite photograph by Augustine Folsom of Boston and Roxbury. As you can see the stone has a horse on the top. The only words I can make out may say "Grey's Pet."

George's email address is:  
[glastris@rcn.com](mailto:glastris@rcn.com).

**Query: Location of a Gravemarker**



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Robert Murray recently sent a letter and a photo to the AGS office. He writes: "Enclosed is a picture of a monument I am trying to locate. I don't know where it is or who is buried under it. The picture was taken in 1961 by my late cousin who was working on the family tree. She thoughtfully did not describe the picture which presents me with the problem of finding it. The stone appears to have a brass or bronze plate attached to its face, and there appears to be a lamb (circled) resting on top of the monument. Also, there is a statue of a man (circled) behind the stone. Has

anyone seen it?"

Robert said he realizes that the chances of anyone recognizing it are slim due to the blurriness of the photo, but appreciates any help AGS members can provide. The copy we have in the office is an 8 x 10 if anyone wants a larger image. Robert can be reached at (401) 941-3822, or you can email Andrea at the AGS office (info@gravestonestudies.org).

Update on cemeteries in New Orleans; Save Our Cemeteries

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Save Our Cemeteries is a non-profit organization devoted to preserving and protecting New Orleans' historic cemeteries. The organization was just about to move into a new office when the hurricanes hit.

As reported in their newsletter, they lost all furniture, all membership brochures, tour guides, all sales inventory and all fund-raising supplies. Every historic cemetery in the city received either flood or wind damage. Historic tombs sat in water for weeks on end. We will likely not see the full extent of damage for a few years to come. On All Saints day SOC provided volunteers at 3 cemeteries hoping that this small effort encouraged storm-ravaged families to visit their tombs and focus on the needs of the cemeteries. All Saints Day also brought out volunteers with chain saws, rakes and garbage bags.

"We press forward in the efforts to REBUILD, REPAIR AND RENEW the spirit of our great city."

[Save Our Cemeteries](#)

### **Information from AGS Member Samuel Werth**

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Samuel Werth of Norfolk, Virginia recently wrote the AGS office to let us know about his research. He writes: "I have been researching Hebrew cemeteries in the state of Virginia for the past 30 years. My records include the burials in 22 cities and 35 different cemeteries with the locations of 15,000 Jewish graves. I have made 110 pages of location maps of the same. My records are available at the Virginia Historical Society. Also, I am willing to do individual lookups, and will send a copy of the map with the information.

You can contact Samuel at: PO Box 12655, Norfolk, VA 23541, phone: (757) 857-1504.

AGS Member News-John Spaulding

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AGS Research Clearinghouse Coordinator John Spaulding gave a presentation on February 21st, sponsored by the Cragin Memorial Library, Colchester, Connecticut. This was an expanded and updated version of the program he presented at the AGS Conference at Poultney, Vermont in June 2003.

The program highlighted many of the historic gravemarkers in Colchester's old burying ground, as well as new replacement stones installed in the last five years. The Gershom

Bulkeley tomb in the cemetery contained coffin lids that serve as gravemarkers for several generations of the Bulkeley Family. The tomb had been covered with a mound of dirt in 1933 to hide it following vandalism inside the tomb and had been long forgotten. The techniques used to identify those entombed were described. The installation of a new marker outside the tomb now gives the Bulkeley Family members a permanent visible gravemaker. His presentation concluded with a condensed program about the archaeological excavation of the Bulkeley tomb including many of the 1,000 photographs of the site that he took in 2002 and 2003.

### **Follow up to Query in February e-newsletter**

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In the February e-newsletter, we had a query from David McCullough: he came across a newspaper article from 1948 about Florence Groff (daughter of archaeologist William T. Groff) and \$50,000 that she left in her will to have a pyramid mausoleum built for her family in Hamilton County, Ohio. He asked if any AGS members know if the mausoleum was ever built, and if so, where it is located.

We received an answer from Donald Hall who contacted Phillip J. Nuxhall, Historian and Tour Coordinator for the Heritage Foundation of Spring Grove Cemetery & Arboretum (Cincinnati). He said: "Professor William Groff and his daughter, Florence Groff, were both archeologists. Florence requested that her father and brother's bodies be brought back from Athens, Greece (where they all died) and that her mother be brought back from Cairo, Egypt to be buried under a 425 square foot pyramid but Spring Grove directors denied the request. In 1952, at White Plains, New York, a compromise with the relatives was reached contesting the will which authorized the Public Administrator to spend \$10,000 of Miss Groff's \$40,000 estate for the pyramid and to bring the rest of the family members' bodies back to Spring Grove. The pyramid was finally erected in 1957 at a cost of \$7,000 by Beck and Beck Inc. of Barre, Vermont for Goodall Monument Works, Inc. The names on the pyramid are in English, Greek, and Egyptian. The pyramid is about 1/4 of the originally planned size."

[Spring Grove Cemetery & Arboretum](#)

Event: Laurel Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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Tour, lecture, and dinner: R.M.S. Titanic: 94 Years Later, guided by AGS Trustee J. Joseph Edgette. Saturday April 8, 3:00 p.m. Eleven Titanic passengers have final resting places at Laurel Hill and West Laurel Hill Cemeteries. Join us on a tour as we visit their gravesites and learn about their lives. The tour will be followed by a lecture. Then, enjoy a sumptuous dinner that replicates the one served aboard Titanic that fateful night.

\$25 for the Tour Only, \$75 for Tour/Lecture/Dinner. For information and reservations, contact us at (215) 228-8200, or write to [tours@thelaurehillcemetery.org](mailto:tours@thelaurehillcemetery.org).

### [Laurel Hill Cemetery](#)

#### **Talk and Slideshow: Meredith, New York**

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AGS Trustee Marianne Greenfield will be giving a presentation for the Town of Meredith Historical Society at 7 PM April 6. Her program is entitled "A Historic Look at Death and Dying through Cemetery Art." The centerpiece of her program is a multi-media slide show of gravestone art in Delaware County and other areas. In addition, she will address such topics as photographing gravestones, cleaning gravestones, rescuing abandoned cemeteries, identifying white bronze monuments, gravestone rubbing and

documentation, and aids in reading worn inscriptions on marble gravestones. The public is cordially invited. Admission is free and refreshments will be served. For more information please call (607) 433-2161.

April Events: Elmwood Cemetery, Memphis, Tennessee

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 "Customs and Celebrations" a lecture by AGS member Mary Ann Bodayla. The lecture is part of Elmwood Cemetery's Lunch and Lecture Series, April 25th at noon. Admission to the luncheon is \$18, \$10 for seniors and students. Advance registration is required.

Costume Walking Tour, April 29th from 2-4 p.m. \$10 per person.

#### [Elmwood Cemetery](#)

#### **Tour: Forest Hills Cemetery, Boston, Massachusetts**

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 "Stories Behind the Stones" a walking tour with Al Maze. Sunday April 30, 2 p.m. Admission: \$8 Meet at Main Gate. For more information, please call (617) 524-0128 or visit www.foresthillstrust.org.

April Events: Old City Cemetery, Sacramento, California

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- **Free History Tour**, Saturday, April 1 at 10 a.m.
 - **Wildflower Weekend**, Saturday & Sunday April 8 & 9, 10-11a.m. and 1-2 p.m.
Cost: \$15.00.
 - **Open Garden**, Saturday, April 15, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

[Old City Cemetery](#)

Annual Meeting: Coalition to Protect Maryland Burial Sites

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 The 15th Annual Meeting of the Coalition to Protect Maryland Burial Sites will be held April 22, starting at 9 a.m. at the Holiday Inn in Ocean City. There will be speakers, a group discussion and field trip to Captain William Carhart's grave in Ocean City.

Fee: \$20.00 per person includes morning refreshments, lunch and all programs. Pre-registration is required. Visit [www.cpmbs.org](http://www.cpmbs.org) or call Jim Trader at (410) 860-2364.

#### **Event: North American Jewish Cemetery and Chevra Kadisha Conference**

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 The first-ever North American Jewish Cemetery Conference in conjunction with the fourth annual North American Chevra Kadisha (Burial Society) Conference will be held June 11-13, in Portland, Oregon.

Designed for professionals and lay leaders, the cemetery conference will address cemetery issues such as ownership and management, starting a new cemetery, perpetual care, setting and enforcing cemetery rules, book burial, green burial, funeral logistics, computerizing monument pictures and burial records to facilitate genealogy research, disaster management and a host of other topics.

For more conference information, please contact Michelle Caplan at Congregation Neveh Shalom 503- 246-8831 x114, mcaplan@nevehshalom.org or David Zinner at Kavod

v'Nichum – (410) 733-3700, info@Jewish-funerals.org or go to www.jewish-funerals.org.

Event: "Heroes of the SS Titanic"

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**Heroes of the SS Titanic Tour**, April 23. A tour of Woodlawn Cemetery, Bronx, New York and Green-Wood Cemetery in Brooklyn. The program begins at 9 a.m. at Woodlawn. The lecture and tours of the two cemeteries will be led by Dr. J. Joseph Edgette.

Tickets are \$35 per person; includes transportation between the cemeteries and lunch. To register, please call the Green-Wood Cemetery office at (718) 788-7850.

### **Query: Information About Horse-Drawn Hearses**

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 This query comes from Donna Dunn in Dunbarton, New Hampshire.

"Does your organization know of a horse-drawn hearse in our area? If so, we would greatly appreciate the name of the manufacturer or maker as soon as possible. We are restoring a horse-drawn hearse purchased by our town in 1871 (Go to [town of Dunbarton's website](#) for a photo). Our records show a Selectman from our town 'went to Nashua NH to see about a hearse in 1870.' Another entry shows a purchase in 1871 - but cannot confirm who it was purchased from or if it was new or used. We have been in touch with the Nashua Historical Society but they cannot find any proof of transaction.

We believe our hearse was made by a company out of Worcester, MA, known alternately as 'Tolman & Company', 'A Tolman & Company Carriage Makers' or 'Tolman, Russell & Co.' but there is no proof as a fire destroyed the small mfg plates on either side of the hearse. Tolman Russell sold hearses to many towns in New England circa 1871 (and prior) including Leominster, Orange, Salem, Portland Me, Bath Me, Auburn Me, Barre Vt. If a hearse was made by this manufacturer, we would like to know and possibly arrange a speedy road trip to look at it and gather information. A tenure member of our community would like to 'use' the hearse and he is now terminally ill. We have a mission of mercy deadline." Please contact Donna at dunncottage@aol.com.

Mt. Elliott Cemetery Association, Detroit, Michigan

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 Two new Arcadia Press publications on Mt. Elliott Cemetery (1841) and Mt. Olivet Cemetery (1888) in Detroit are in the works. The author is looking for photos of monuments and tombstones from the cemeteries. Please check out <http://mipolonia.net/mtelliott/> to read about the publications and more about the call for photos. Mt. Elliott Cemetery Association is a new institutional member of AGS.

They also have a request: "Can AGS members recommend guidelines for the content of the books? We would like advice on the key points to include when we evaluate and describe the cemeteries." Please contact Ceil Jensen at [cjensen@mipolonia.net](mailto:cjensen@mipolonia.net).

[Mt. Elliott Cemetery Association](#)

### **AGS Member Website-Valdosta Memorials**

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 Valdosta Memorials' website includes articles about all aspects of memorialization, photos from 25+ cemeteries, epitaphs, symbols, and terminology. They are in the process of adding thousands of new monument photos from around the world so check

back often.

[Valdosta Memorials](#)

AGS Member Website-Holly and Hope Labisky

AGS members Holly Hope Labisky and Hope Hayes Labisky have a website devoted to their book *Cemeterying With Hope*. The book, written by Holly, features history, biographies, original poetry, memorial expressions, and much more. The Labiskys visited over 500 cemeteries in seven years, and 126 Illinois cemeteries are represented within the 192 pages. There are nearly 300 color photographs of cemeteries and tombstones, taken by Hope.

A review of *Cemeterying With Hope* will appear in an upcoming *Quarterly*.

[Cemeterying With Hope](#)

AGS Member in the News-Mike Mitchell

An article about AGS Member Mike Mitchell and his cemetery preservation workshop in Biloxi, Mississippi was in WLOX-online. The article is linked below.

[WLOX Online](#)

Article: Civil War Gravestones to be cleaned in Santa Ana, California

The article, linked below, is from www.ocregister.com and is about plans to clean 200 Civil War headstones at the Santa Ana Cemetery, California. The article includes a link to the Orange County Cemetery District's website.

www.ocregister.com

Article: Tombstones Discovered in St. Charles County, Missouri

The article, linked below, is from the *St. Louis Today* website and is about approximately 100 tombstones that were discovered in a creek bed.

[St. Louis Today](#)

Article: Tennessee Cemeteries in Danger

The article, linked below, is from the washingtonpost.com and is about Tennessee cemeteries that are in trouble due to development. AGS member Ian Brown is quoted in the article.

washingtonpost.com

Websites to Check Out

We have four websites featured in the quicklinks section at the bottom of this newsletter.

The first is to the International Survey of Jewish Monuments. Their projects include: the

restoration of Ashkenazi Cemetery in Suriname, Jewish Cemetery Research in France, and the documentation of Kerepesi Jewish Cemetery in Budapest.

The second link is to the National Federation of Cemetery Friends (United Kingdom). The Federation acts as a link for Cemetery Friends in the U.K.

The third link is to the Crystal Lake Historical Society (Illinois) website. The site details their annual Cemetery Walks from 2002-2005.

The fourth is to Orcas Island (Washington) Library website. The burial records from Woodlawn Cemetery in Eastsound are now available on this site.

Quick Links...

- [International Survey of Jewish Monuments](#)
- [National Federation of Cemetery Friends](#)
- [Crystal Lake Historical Society](#)
- [Orcas Island Public Library](#)

Contact Information

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