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## **Association for Gravestone Studies e-Newsletter**

**Issue #85  
May 2010**

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AGS Membership

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Please encourage others to join the AGS.

Membership benefits include:

- *The AGS Quarterly*: Bulletin of the Association for Gravestone Studies
- The next published issue of *Markers*
- The AGS monthly e-Newsletter
- Discounts on AGS publications
- Access to the AGS Research Clearing House and Lending Library
- Discounts on AGS conferences

To join, renew, or for more information, visit <http://gravestonestudies.org/join.htm>.

We invite everyone with an interest in gravestones and cemeteries to join the AGS. Are you attending a conference where others may be interested? Please contact the AGS office for brochures to distribute.

### **2010 AGS Conference and Annual Meeting**

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**2010 AGS Conference and Annual Meeting
June 22-27, 2010 in Granville, Ohio**

The deadline for registration is June 1.

Please [click here to download the registration form](#).

Self-Guided Tours are now [posted on the AGS website](#). Directions to nearby cemeteries of interest can be downloaded.



Our 2010 Conference Logo

from the gravestone of Mr. Byron Hayes who died March 6, 1836.
It is located in Granville's Old Colony Burying Ground, established in 1805.

We hope to see you there!

Note from the AGS Administrator

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Greetings from the AGS office. One of my duties is coordinating membership payments. You each get a reminder notice in the mail during the month your renewal is due. I appreciate all of you who return the form promptly and give us address, email or other corrections. When you get your renewal notice, you can renew online at <http://gravestonestudies.org/join.htm>. All you have to do is fill out the form and write "renewal" in the text box. Using the website can make renewing easier. Thanks, and see you at the conference!

--Chris Baronas

**AGS Trustee Featured on New York News Channel 10**

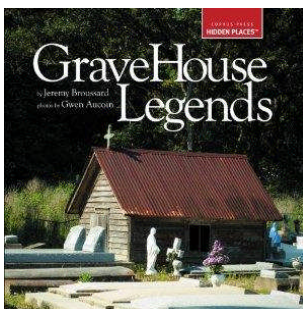
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AGS Trustee Joe Ferrannini was interviewed on Albany, New York's News 10 about his recent conservation workshop in Vale Cemetery, Schenectady, New York. The workshop was led by Joe and AGS member Bob Posson.

<http://bit.ly/dceEG4>

New Publication and DVD: *Grave House Legends*

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This information comes from Jeremy Broussard. He writes: "I'm writing to notify you of my work on a particular cemetery phenomenon that remains relatively unknown: Cajun Grave Houses."

The Acadia Parish, Louisiana grave houses were estimated to have once numbered in the hundreds. Today, only three remain and all who helped construct them are now deceased. The reasons they were built remain a mystery.

I've completed a documentary and, most recently, a book on the subject, in an effort to preserve the last houses through film and print. Information on both can be found at GraveHouseLegends.com, the book's website.

I have been presenting the book and documentary to a number of historical and genealogical organizations. I hope your group may also find it of interest."

A review will appear in an upcoming issue of the *AGS Quarterly*.

New Publication: *Houston's Silent Garden: Glenwood Cemetery, 1871-2009*

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*Houston's Silent Garden: Glenwood Cemetery, 1871-2009*, is a new book by Suzanne Turner and Joanne Seale Wilson, with photographs by Paul C. Hester.

Glenwood Cemetery has long offered a serene and pastoral final resting place for many of Houston's civic leaders and historic figures. In *Houston's Silent Garden*, Suzanne Turner and Joanne Seale Wilson reveal the story of this beautifully wooded and landscaped preserve's development--a story that is also very much entwined with the history of Houston.

In 1871, recovering from Reconstruction, a group of progressive citizens noticed that Houston needed a new cemetery at the edge of the central city. Embracing the picturesque aesthetic that had swept through the Eastern Seaboard, the founders of Glenwood selected land along Buffalo Bayou and developed Glenwood. Since then, the cemetery's monuments have memorialized the lives of many of the city's most interesting families (Allen, Baker, Brown, Clayton, Cooley, Cullinan, Farish, Hermann, Hobby, House, Hughes, Jones, Law, Rice, Staub, Sterling, Weiss, and Wortham, among many others). The monuments also showcase the artistry and craftsmanship of some of the region's finest sculptors and artisans.

Accompanied by the breathtaking photography of Paul Hester, this book chronicles the cemetery's origins, from its inception in 1871, to the present day.

For more information and to order, visit <http://www.tamupress.com/product/Houstons-Silent-Garden,5442.aspx>

A review will appear in an upcoming *AGS Quarterly*.

**Two Philadelphia Cemeteries Open to the Public This Summer**

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The two oldest non-sectarian cemeteries in Philadelphia, the Hood Cemetery (Germantown Lower Burial Ground), 4901 Germantown Ave., and the Germantown Upper Burial Ground (Concord School Burial Ground), 6309 Germantown Ave., both established in 1692, will be open to the public on the second Sunday of each month from 2-4PM, from May through October, 2010. For more information, email hoodcemetery@yahoogroups.com.

Hood Cemetery's website: <http://hoodcemetery.org/>

International Cemetery, Cremation, and Funeral Association University

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**ICCFA University  
July 23-28, 2010  
Fogelman Conference Center, Memphis, TN**

ICCFA (International Cemetery, Cremation, and Funeral Association) University offers five days of intensive educational programming in six colleges and two graduate programs.

Their Cemetery Land Management and Grounds Operation classes include:

- Maintenance: Do You Really Get It?
- The Key Steps to OSHA Compliance
- OSHA and Gravesite Safety
- Cemetery Master Planning Strategies
- Cemetery Liability Issues

For more information and to register, please visit <http://www.iccfa.com/education-events/iccfa-university/iccfa-university>.

**Save the Date: Cemetery Preservation and Restoration Seminar, Herndon, VA**

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Fairfax County Cemetery Preservation and Restoration Seminar
Frying Pan Farm Park, 2709 West Ox Road, Herndon, Virginia
Saturday, October 23 & Sunday, October 24, 2010

Sponsored by Fairfax County Cemetery Preservation Association, Fairfax, Virginia and Frying Pan Farm Park.

Featuring:

Robert Mosko, Mosko Cemetery Monument Services, specializing in preserving, conserving, restoring and rehabilitating historical cemeteries and monuments.

Amiee Wells, Fairfax County Park Authority, Fairfax, Virginia, Archaeologist.

Visit www.honorfairfaxcemeteries.org for full seminar details.

There is NO FEE for this seminar. There is limited space, available on a first come, first served basis. For reservations, call (703) 437-9101

Schedule:

Saturday, 8:30am-4:00pm: Morning hospitality and lunch included. Presentations, networking, survey assessment and field work.

Sunday, 12:30pm-4:00pm Field work and demonstrations.

Save the Date: Annual Lantern Festival, Forest Hills Cemetery, Jamaica Plain, MA

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The Forest Hills Educational Trust has announced this year's date for their annual Lantern Festival: Thursday, July 15th (rain date: July 22). Please join them for a moving memorial ceremony inspired by Buddhist rituals. Inscribe a lantern with a personal message to friends or family and float it across Lake Hibiscus at sunset.

In this breathtaking ceremony of remembrance, visitors to this lush, Victorian landscape make paper lanterns and set them afloat on the peaceful waters of a small lake. This ritual is based on the traditional Japanese Bon Festival, a time when a door opens to the world of the ancestors, allowing us to send messages to the other side. People enjoy picnics on the grass and a multi-cultural program of music and dance. They decorate their lanterns with calligraphy and notes to those who have died. At sunset, a candle is lit in each lantern, and the glimmering lanterns are set afloat. Drifting and flickering with the wind, the lanterns symbolize the soul's journey when life ends.

<http://www.foresthillstrust.org/>

**Presentation: New England Gravestones, Dennis, MA**

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Friends of Cape Cod Art Museum

Understanding New England Gravestones and the Stories They Tell

Appreciation Reception and Presentation of Officers

Monday, June 7, 1 pm

Admission: \$15; free for Friends of CCMA additional membership

New England 's burying grounds are often called outdoor museums--full of history, art,

chronicles of religious beliefs, genealogy, sometimes tragedy, scandal, and even humor. This presentation by AGS Trustee Laurel Gabel will provide an explanation of the symbolism and special language of gravestones and further explore the attitudes about death and memorialization that these historic artifacts reflect. Focusing on early New England grave markers and their carvers, this well-illustrated program promises to be informative as well as entertaining and should make you look at area gravestones with new insight and appreciation.

In addition to the presentation, there will be a display of rubbings created with foil and on paper by AGS Trustee Judith Trainor, who captures the imagery found on gravestones. Rubbings of skulls, skeletons, hourglasses, winged cherubs, birds and flowers, done with light-weight foil, show the depth of carving and design detail. Through her work, Trainor strives to interest others in the exploration of, and most especially in the preservation of local burying grounds.

For more information: <http://www.ccmoa.org/Special-Events.asp>.

Query: Repairing Ceiling Slabs

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This query comes from Sue Lorraine in Utica, NY. She writes: "I am hoping an AGS member can help answer this question (please see photo below). The ceiling slabs, which were thought to be marble, as is the rest of this mausoleum, are bowing. What are they made from, does anyone know? They are about 1 inch thick, and to me the damaged surface looks like cracked linoleum. It has hairline cracks, dents around circular holders that hold it up, and a considerable sag. The mausoleum is in Forest Hills, Utica, NY. It is the mausoleum of Taft's Vice-President, James Sherman. The family still lives in the area and there is a good chance of getting money to repair it. I am thinking the ceiling material must be some sort of architectural substitute for marble, but I have not found any information about it. The cemetery records indicate it has been a concern since the 1950s but provide no other details.

--Sue Lorraine, [slorraine1@roadrunner.com](mailto:slorraine1@roadrunner.com)."



**Query: Help with a Master Plan, Portland, Maine**

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This query comes from Barbara Hager. She writes: "Eastern Cemetery was declared a public burial ground in 1668, but we believe there were burials starting in the 1630s, when Europeans first settled here.

This was the only burial ground until 1829 and there are approximately 4,000 stones on 7 acres. The oldest death date found is 1717 and about half the stones are slate, the rest are marble or limestone. It is a valuable Colonial burial ground and our group, "Spirits Alive," is dedicated to its preservation. We engage in various activities to raise awareness about the cemetery and are raising funds to hire a professional firm to create a Master Plan (MP). The City of Portland owns the Cemetery and requires that any public parks and open spaces have a Master Plan before any significant funds can be spent on them. Rather than opting for a traditional MP which generally treats landscape, access, signage (the physical elements found in any park), our group feels we need an MP that also would guide future activities with regard to the stones--many are broken, leaning, eroded, buried or delaminating.

The State's historic preservation officer, Earle Shettleworth, believes there must be one or more coastal New England cemeteries that have a Master Plan that discusses and guides stone related activities, and our interest is in finding other groups who have already engaged in this exercise so that we could benefit from their experience. Our group is already engaged in a stone-by-stone inventory that is digitized for easy sorting and data retrieval, and we expect this will be a huge help for anyone who is ultimately hired to develop a plan.

Can any AGS members help us?

Thanks,
Barbara Hager and Martha Zimicki,
Spirits Alive, Portland, Maine,
bohbhagr@maine.rr.com."

Query: Footstones

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This query comes from Donna Walcovy. She writes:

"I have a question for everybody, but first, the story. . .

Last winter a car backed into Rev. Metcalf's Marble gravestone and it was broken and lying on the ground when I discovered the problem. The Good Rev. died in the early 1720s and I know marble would not have been used as his gravestone. I always thought his congregation placed the marble stone much later as an honor to the first Minister in Falmouth, MA.

We moved the upper portion of the marble gravestone, and the break afforded me the

opportunity to re-set in a new base. Hoping there might be an old base, I asked my volunteers to start digging, with plastic, garden tools, looking for a base. The volunteers found the bottom of the marble gravestone, about 26" in length, and pulled it out. What mystery made these three young men continue to dig, I have no idea. They discovered, in three pieces, a slate footstone. Mr. Metcalf was the only carving on it. They wanted to dig down further hoping to find a slate headstone, but since they were down about 3 feet and I didn't want to meet Rev. Metcalf's remains, the digging stopped.

Somewhere I remember reading that prominate persons in a community had a footstone carved, with their name, and placed this footstone at the head of the grave to mark that grave site as theirs. Did I really read this information or did I dream this information?

Any and all comments and responses are welcome. If there is enough material for a short article in the *AGS Quarterly* I'd be pleased to write up our collective research, with all our names.

Please send your information and/or comment to Donna E. Walcovy at [falcem@hotmail.com](mailto:falcem@hotmail.com). Thank You!"

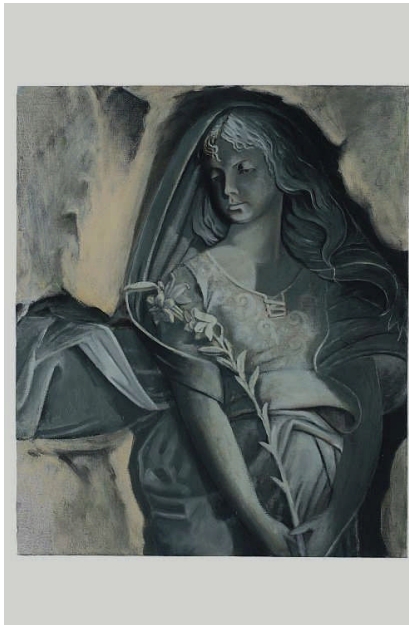
### **Midwest Monument Paintings**

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Cara Jankovich sent in the photo, below, of one of her paintings of monuments in the Chicago, Michigan, Ohio and Kentucky areas. Here is her artist's statement:

"I have always found cemeteries to be peaceful places of refuge, to me, even beautiful in many ways. While cruising through some of the Chicagoland cemeteries, I began to take notice of the monuments that were actually intended to immortalize, in a way, the departed. Some of these monuments were sculptures of men and/or women who were extremely important and prominent in their day. These were people, I thought, who actually built the big cities of our country, which made America the industrial capital of the world, back in the late 1800s and early 1900s. There was a lot of great wealth created in those days; thus, the era was known as the "Gilded Age". It was the families of these great industrialists who had sculptures and monuments built in remembrance of the greatness of their dearly departed; sometimes sculptures and monuments built of the wives and children of the industrialists who met their demise prematurely. These monuments were made of stone, marble, and bronze; some materials, of course, held up better than others. I suppose the families who commissioned artists to create likenesses of their loved ones assumed those materials would stand the test of time and give a sort of immortality to the deceased. The ones that did not stand the test of time were the ones I became most interested in and decided to create artwork of."

For information, please email docargo@gmail.com.



EarthTrek Gravestone Project

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Gary Lewis, Director of EarthTrek, sent in the following information:

"I am the Director of a new global citizen science program called EarthTrek which is administered by the Geological Society of America (GSA). EarthTrek aims to have people of all walks of life involved in real scientific research, and has a number of current projects in which we hope people around the world will participate. One project is the global Gravestone Project in which members of the community are asked to take some measurements of marble gravestones so that we can produce a world map of weathering rates. The project is being led by Dr Deirdre Dragovich from Sydney University who has been involved in this research for decades, and myself, the Education Director for GSA. There is more information about EarthTrek at [www.goearthtrek.com](http://www.goearthtrek.com) and you can follow the links to the Gravestone Project."

In the December issue of the *e-Newsletter*, we included a link to an article on [sciencedaily.com](http://sciencedaily.com) about EarthTrek. For those who missed it, [we are linking it again](#) in this issue.

### **Restoration of The Old Jewish Cemetery of Gallipoli, Turkey**

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[The Jewish Cemetery page](#) of the Gallipoli Jewry Heritage Site discusses the restoration of the The Old Jewish Cemetery of Gallipoli, Turkey. The Organization for Conservation of the Heritage of the Gallipoli Jewry is leading this effort.

Photos of gravestones in the cemetery are posted [on this page of their site](#).

Featured Website: Cumberland (Maryland) Historic Cemetery Organization

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Please take a moment to check out the Cumberland Historic Cemetery Organization's website. The organization is dedicated to preserving the area's rich historic heritage by erecting and restoring monuments, and also by providing tours and promoting cemetery history to the general public.

The site features links to their most recent newsletter, articles about the organization, and local issues.

<http://www.chco-online.org/>

**Article: Court Finds Cleveland (Tennessee) Cemetery Owner Negligent**

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This article, posted on newschannel9.com, is about a chancellor in Cleveland, Tennessee, who has ruled in favor of a woman who sued over the dilapidated condition of Fort Hill Cemetery.

Article: Lost Graves Found in Daphne, Alabama

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This article, posted on [al.com](http://al.com), is about the use of ground penetrating radar to find lost graves at the Old Daphne Methodist Church Museum.

**Article: 'Hartford's (Connecticut) Arlington' In Need Of Care**

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This article is posted [on wfsb.com](http://on.wfsb.com).

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Contact Information

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phone: 413-772-0836

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