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Association for Gravestone Studies e-newsletter

Issue 36

April 2006

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Upcoming AGS Events

AGS Annual Meeting and Conference, Delaware Valley College, Doylestown, Pennsylvania, June 22-25, 2006

The early-bird registration deadline is May 19th. You can view the [schedule of events](#) and print the [registration form](#) in the conference section of the AGS website.

AGS Spring Cemetery 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](#)

AGS Membership Drive

We're getting ready to launch the Doylestown Campaign! Within the course of the two weeks we will be sending information to over 500 organizations and press representatives in the target states: New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware and the District of Columbia. We will do a second round of press releases when it gets closer to conference time.

The membership committee's recent activities include: an article in recent about AGS and our upcoming conference in *American Cemetery* magazine. It has already generated some new members. Also, last week letters were sent to 200 lapsed members, encouraging them back into the fold.

If you know of anyone that might be interested in learning about the AGS contact Susan Olsen, Membership Chair, at Friends@thewoodlawncemetery.org.

Two New Books for Sale in the AGS Bookstore

The AGS office recently acquired copies of *The Last Great Necessity*, by David Sloane. The book is out of print, and we are offering it for \$25.00 each, plus shipping and handling. Order now while supplies last--we have a limited quantity.

Also now available for sale is *What a Grave Undertaking: Quinette Cemetery, A Slave Burial Ground*, by Keith Rawlings. The book documents the history and renovation efforts at Kirkwood Missouri's Quinette Cemetery, a slave burial ground established in 1866.

For details and order information, please visit the [AGS Bookstore](#).

News from Allan Ludwig

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 Earlier this year, Marie Ferré, AGS Archivist, renewed acquaintance with her old friend and former colleague, Allan Ludwig. Some of you may remember him, many of us own a copy of his *magnum opus*, **Graven Images**. Allan (Dr. Ludwig) was a major force in the emerging field of gravestone studies and a founding member of AGS. He was the 1981 recipient of the Harriette Merrifield Forbes award. Thanks to Marie, he is once again a member of AGS.

Marie met Allan when he joined the Art History Department at Dickinson College in 1965. To him, she attributes much of her enthusiasm for early New England gravestone art. We asked Allan if we could share some of his reflections and insights with other AGS members. He said that we could. For excerpts from his recent email correspondence, click on the link, below.

[Excerpts from recent correspondence with Allan Ludwig](#)

### **Course on Zinc Markers: Mt. Hope Cemetery, Rochester, New York**

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 Donald Hall, trustee of the Friends of Mt. Hope Cemetery (America's **first** municipal cemetery--1838) will teach a one session course on zinc ("White Bronze") grave markers on Monday, May 22, 2006. The course will be held in the old, north gate house of the cemetery from 1:30 to 3 p.m.

Course Description: "Zinc grave markers were a Victorian phenomenon that found its way to American and Canadian cemeteries from 1874 to 1914. They were durable, lower cost and progressive, underscoring the Victorian notion that new technology is better than the old. The markers were sold as "white bronze." They are easy to recognize today because of their elaborate forms and blue-gray color. It was a good idea that never really caught on. Don will give a slide lecture, and then will take you out into Mt. Hope Cemetery to see zinc monuments up close."

If you are interested in participating, please visit the Oasis website at: www.oasisnet.org/rochester to register. There is a five dollar fee for the course.

Tour: Albany Rural Cemetery, Menands, New York

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**Albany Rural Cemetery Bike Tour**, Saturday, May 20, 2006, 1:00 p.m. Cost: \$5.00  
 The tour departs from the Chapel of Albany Rural Cemetery, Broadway entrance, Menands. This tour will be a guided bike tour exploring the history, architecture and natural landscape of Albany Rural Cemetery. The tour will stop by various gravesites, natural landscape features and monuments of historic interest. (Involves some moderate to steep terrain. Bring your own bike. Reservations requested.)

For more information, call (518) 434-0405, or visit [www.albany.org](http://www.albany.org).

[Albany Rural Cemetery](#)

### **Tour: West Lawn Cemetery, Canton, Ohio**

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 AGS member Kim Kenney, Curator of the William McKinley Presidential Library & Museum and author of *Canton's West Lawn Cemetery*, will be giving a free walking tour of West Lawn on Saturday, June 10, 2006 at 11:00 a.m.

The group will visit 10 graves of historical importance in Canton, including Rev. Ebenezer Buckingham, who married President and Mrs. McKinley; Frank T. Bow, a US Congressman who was chosen by President Nixon to be Ambassador to Panama; Zebulon Davis, a founding member of the Ohio Aero Club; and Bernetta Miller, one of the first women in history to receive her pilot's license. Space is limited and reservations are required. Please call (330) 455-7043 for more information. Participants will meet at the museum and walk over to the cemetery for the tour.

Call for Papers: Association for Significant Cemeteries Workshop in Verona, Italy

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The Association of Significant Cemeteries in Europe (ASCE), will have their Annual Meeting and a workshop on "The splendour of sculpture in the European cemeteries" in Verona, Italy, September 28th-30th, 2006. The workshop aims to examine the importance of European cemetery sculptures and sculptors.

Proposals for papers are welcome from representatives in this field. Abstracts (about 1 page) should be sent by May 15, 2006 to Association of Significant Cemeteries in Europe c/o Comune di Bologna - Progetto Nuove Istituzioni Museali-Via Oberdan, 24 - 40126 Bologna, attn. Mauro Felicori, e-mail: Mauro.Felicori@comune.bologna.it. For further information about the ASCE and the workshop, visit [ASCE's Website](#).

### **Cemetery Monument Conservation Workshop: Virginia City, Nevada**

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The National Center for Preservation Technology (NCPTT) and Training is sponsoring a cemetery monument conservation workshop, September 26-28, 2006 in Virginia City, Nevada. This three-day workshop will focus on hands-on conservation treatments crucial to the preservation of historic gravemarkers. The workshop is limited to 32 participants.

Details and registration information is available on [NCPTT's website](#).

May Tours: Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, Massachusetts

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- May 3, 6:00 p.m. "Preserving Our Past: Mount Auburn Cemetery and Historic New England" – a special event co-sponsored with Historic New England. Admission: FREE.
 - May 6, 2:00 p.m. "Marble Wings & Stone Roses – Some Monuments at Mount Auburn" – a walking tour with Janet Heywood, former Vice President of Interpretive Programs, Mount Auburn. Admission: \$10
 - May 12, 7:00 a.m. "Early Risers' Horticultural Club" – walking tours with Dennis Collins, Curator of Plant Collections, and Karla Erickson, Plant Records Manager, Mount Auburn. Admission: FREE.
 - May 14, 2:00 p.m. "Memories of Mothers" – a Mother's Day walking tour with Bree Harvey, Director of Public Programs. Admission: \$10
 - May 24, 5:30 p.m. PRESERVATION MONTH LECTURE: "Cambridge Maps and Mapmakers" – a slide lecture by Charles M. Sullivan, Executive Director, Cambridge Historical Commission. Admission: FREE.
 - May 26, 7:00 a.m. "Early Risers' Horticultural Club" – walking tours with Dennis Collins, Curator of Plant Collections, and Karla Erickson, Plant Records Manager, Mount Auburn. Admission: FREE.
 - May 27, 1:30 a.m. Service of Commemoration. Admission: FREE.

For more information call (617) 607-1981.

[Mount Auburn Cemetery](#)

Query and Follow-up to Question in the December 2005 e-newsletter



In the December 2005 e-newsletter we had a query from Janet Seapker about a cast iron, above-ground grave (see example to left) she saw in Lexington Cemetery in Lexington, Davidson County, North Carolina. She wrote in hoping that someone might have seen others and know what they are. Janet emailed the office recently to let us know that several people sent information about the locations of other such markers--all in the South. Here is a summary of what she learned:

Pat Colquette knew of one in Mobile, Louisiana. Michael Trinkley, Ph.D. has seen several in South Carolina, but has yet to find a cast name, or any period catalogs. Greg Jeane reported a U.S. patent that was obtained by an Alabamian in Greenville, Alabama. He noted that the pioneer cemetery in Greenville has more than a dozen, ranging from small for children to full-size ones for adults. He only has seen them in the South. Lyn Strangstad has seen the markers in at least a couple of Georgia cemeteries, including one in Madison, Georgia. She suggests calling them false sarcophagi. Linda Kennedy also saw one in Madison, Georgia. It marked the grave of Mrs. Tabitha Wilson 1809-1873. Leslie Wolfenden identified a marker in the Oakwood Cemetery in Austin, Texas for Mrs. Mary Murphy who died in 1891. It is the only one she recalls seeing in Austin.



Janet also asked about this photo. She writes: "This photo I took is of a not uncommon gravemarker, but one for which I know no identification term. Does anyone know what it is called?" Janet's email address is: jseapker@ec.rr.com.

Query: Looking for an Article

This query comes from AGS member Kim Sawtelle. She writes: "I'm attempting to access a rare book entitled, *Designs for Christian Grave Stones* by William Sharp Ogden. Do any AGS members have a copy of this publication or know how I could obtain a photocopy? Stanford University Library, the New Haven Free Public Library, and the Yale University Library all have non-circulating copies, and apparently none of the institutions is willing to provide a photocopy of the full book, even for a fee."

The complete information for the book is as follows: *Designs for Christian grave stones*,

by Ogden, William Sharp. Publication: Manchester ; London : John Heywood Edition: 2nd issue, improved and enl. Year: 1888. Description: iv p., [50] leaves of plates (1 folded) : 50 ill. ; 21 cm.

Kim's email address is: Kimberly_Sawtelle@umit.maine.edu.

Query: Identifying a Gravestone



The Pioneers' Cemetery Association in Phoenix, AZ is searching for the identity of the person for whom this gravestone was made. The stone, unlike any others seen in this area, is a pinkish granite boulder on a base of the same stone. The boulder is about 2 feet in diameter. The inscription reads only "In Adoring Memory of Jay" and lies in the historical Knights of Pythias Cemetery in downtown Phoenix. That part of the cemetery was used around 1895, and there is a Jay Miller who died in 1896 whose mother lived in Sacramento or Oakland, CA.

Has anyone seen other similar gravestones? Please email Diane Sumrall at pioneercem@yahoo.com.

[Pioneers' Cemetery Association](#)

Query: Practice Stones



New AGS member Brian Sullivan wrote in with this question: "Years ago, while helping my father pull lilac stumps that surrounded an old well in need of restoration in Colrain, Massachusetts, we found what appears to be a stonemason's practice stone (see photo to left). I've long wondered if these are rare. Has anyone seen examples of them?"

Adjacent to the well and the practice stone, we found the gravestones (one in fragments) of two Goodnow children. We saw no evidence of burials on the property-which would have been a surprise, given the number of burying grounds in the area. Brian's email address is bashistoricalediting@yahoo.com.

AGS Member in the News

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 Donna Walcovy, Chair of the Falmouth (Massachusetts) Genealogy Society's Cemetery Transcription Project received an Honorable Mention for her work in the cemeteries of Falmouth in *Cape Cod Life* magazine's "3rd Annual People Issue; 400 of our Finest."

[Cemetery Transcription Project of the FGS](#)

### **News From the Texas Historical Commission**

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 AGS member Gerron Hite, Cemetery Preservation Coordinator of the Texas Historical Commission, wrote in with the following news: We finally secured funding for our Adopt-a-Cemetery program and are calling it the 'RIP Guardian Program,' part of the RIP (record-investigate-protect) state-wide cemetery survey project. It's the protect part of RIP.

RIP is commonly found carved on gravestones, bidding the deceased an earthly wish for eternal rest in peace. RIP is also the Texas Historical Commission's cemetery survey initiative: Record, Investigate, Protect. The THC's RIP Guardian program is the newest initiative to help local volunteer groups take charge of neglected historic cemeteries across Texas by providing education, consultation and assistance to preserve these important cultural resources. The RIP Guardian program offers these volunteers the opportunity to participate and help preserve Texas history in a unique way by enhancing the power of historic preservation in their communities.

Local RIP Guardian programs will have broad based local support for a united group effort and will coordinate a minimum of two cleaning projects or more based on need. Successful programs will encourage protection of historic cemeteries and heighten awareness of their significance through preservation education. For more information please call (512) 463-5853. Thank you to Anne Shelton, also of the Texas Historical Commission, for additional information about the program.

[Texas Historical Commission](#)

Update on Missing Fencing in Oakwood Cemetery, Austin, Texas

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 In the July 2005 e-newsletter, we printed a notice from Leslie Wolfenden of Save Austin's Cemeteries about a suspect who had been apprehended in connection with fencing stolen from Oakwood Cemetery in Austin.

Leslie recently sent the following update: "Brendan Cantwell Ryan was sentenced to two years in prison Thursday after pleading guilty to 11 counts of criminal mischief and two counts of theft. Ryan had been charged with stealing more than \$105,000 worth of antique fencing from Oakwood Cemetery.

He was arrested after he was identified by an antiques dealer who bought much of the centuries-old fencing that Ryan stole from at least 15 family plots. A cemetery volunteer documenting the thefts also aided in the apprehension by photographing Ryan, who claimed to be a descendent of a buried family, at the cemetery.

We did get quite a bit of the fencing back and we are in the process of tracking down descendants to get the fencing put back on the appropriate sites. We did not recover some fencing and may never get it back."

For more info about Oakwood Cemetery and Save Austin's Cemeteries, please see the article below from the Austin Chronicle.com.

[Save Austin's Cemeteries](#)

**AGS Member Website and Information**

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AGS member Peggy Perazzo wrote in with the following information: "I have developed an non-profit web page (linked below) regarding stone quarries and stone workers. The site presents material from the late 1800s and early 1900s, interesting present-day quarries and stone workers, and related subjects. The site is a work in progress--there are many sections, and as of now I have only completed some of the state sections. So far, I've completed (alphabetically) Alabama through Maine and the state of Vermont. It's slow going, but some day all of the states will be done and I will start working on the country sections. In a few months, the section on California stone carvers and monument companies will go online, and that section will include the photographs of the California cemetery stones that I've taken in the last 7 years and research information contributed by Leeanna Rossi on some of the Gold Rush/Sacramento stone carvers and companies.

I recently obtained some copies of the publication, *Stone* magazine from the 1920s. While going through them, I noticed an article entitled, 'Restoring Old Tombstones in New York,' which describes the restoration of the old tombstones located at the First Presbyterian Church, at Fifth and Twelfth Streets. I thought it might be of interest to the association members."

The AGS office has a copy of the article. If you'd like a copy emailed to you, please contact Andrea Carlin at info@gravestonestudies.org.

[Stone Quarries and Beyond Website](#)

Events: Staten Island Institute of Arts & Sciences, Staten Island, New York

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"Six Feet Under Staten Island: Our Local Cemeteries" Tuesday, June 6th, 7 p.m.  
Beanie's Coffee Shop, 1190 Forest Avenue at Jewett Avenue. Free. A "lively" discussion of local cemetery culture from a historical perspective. Native American Burial Grounds, Homestead Graveyards, a Slave Cemetery on Staten Island, headstones as folk art, the Friends of Abandoned Cemeteries, and the "secret" burial locations of famous local residents will be featured! RSVP to (718) 727-1135 x123 or [salmonf@aol.com](mailto:salmonf@aol.com)

Celebratory Book Signing--"Realms of History: The Cemeteries of Staten Island."  
Tuesday, June 20, 2006, 5:30 p.m.-8 p.m. Staten Island Institute of Arts & Sciences, 75 Stuyvesant Place. Free. Two years in the making this massive publication examines the fascinating cemeteries of Staten Island. More than 75 have existed at one time or another on the island! What historical secrets do they hold? Who is buried where? Find out during a book signing with author Patricia M. Salmon. Copies will be for sale, and refreshments and hors d'oeuvres will be served. RSVP to (718) 727-1135 x123 or [salmonf@aol.com](mailto:salmonf@aol.com)

"Realms of History: The Cemeteries of Staten Island"-- A Book Talk and Signing with author Patricia M. Salmon. Wednesday, June 28, 5:30 p.m. Free. The New York Genealogical & Biographical Society, 122 East 58th Street, New York. Discover the 75+ burial grounds that have existed on Staten Island! Cemetery culture will be examined

from a historical perspective during a discussion of local Native American, Slave, homestead, and immigrant graveyards. In addition, tombstones as folk art, cemeteries as nature preserves, and historical cemeteries studies will be highlighted. RSVP to Lauren Maehrlein at (212) 755-8532, x36 or lmaehrlein@nygbs.org.

### [Staten Island Institute of Arts & Sciences](#)

#### **AGS Member Website**

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New AGS member Gregory Vogel has a website, linked below, devoted to Evergreen Cemetery in Fayetteville, Arkansas. There's news, photos, information about the recording project and a preliminary map and database. The site will soon host fully searchable and geographically-linked database of the cemetery features.

[Evergreen Cemetery](#)

News About The African Burial Ground, New York, New York

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A report on archaeology at The African Burial Ground National Historic Landmark in Manhattan has recently been completed, and can be read online at [www.africanburialground.com](http://www.africanburialground.com). It consists of three technical reports, one emphasizing the historical context of the cemetery, one analyzing the bioanthropology of the African Burial Ground and the individuals interred therein, and one discussing the archaeology of the site.

An article about the African Burial Ground by Roberta Halporn appeared in the Winter 2004 AGS *Quarterly* (28: 1).

#### **Online Forum for Cemetery Buffs**

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The Club For Cemetery Buffs is an online group made up of mainly history, genealogy, and cemetery buffs. It was created as a place for people to share their experiences exploring cemeteries and their photos. Please click the link below to read more about the forum, view previous discussions, and join the group.

[The Club For Cemetery Buffs](#)

Article: Cemetery Vandalism Suspect Apprehended, Pensacola, Florida

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The article, linked below, is to the Pensacola News Journal.com and is about a suspect has been apprehended for vandalism that occurred in St. Michael's Cemetery in Pensacola.

### [Pensacola News Journal.com](#)

#### **Article: New Friends Group Founded in Augusta, Georgia**

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The article, linked below, is to the Augusta Chronicle.com. It is about the newly-formed Friends of Coleman-Leigh-Warren Cemetery and their recent activities.

You have to register to read the article, but registration is free.

[Augusta Chronicle.com](#)

Article: Oakwood Cemetery and Save Austin's Cemeteries, Austin, Texas

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The article, linked below, is to the Austin Chronicle.com and is about Austin's Oakwood Cemetery and the group Save Austin's Cemeteries.

[Austin Chronicle.com](#)

**Tour: Laurel Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

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"Ben Franklin & the Revolutionary Generation at historic Laurel Hill Cemetery" Saturday, May 6th, at 2 p.m. For reservations and information: (215) 228-8200 or tours@thelaurelhillcemetery.org.

[Laurel Hill Cemetery Spring Events](#)

Websites to Check Out

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

The first link is to the New England Cemetery Association. The organization's purpose is to inspire continued effort toward the improvement of American cemeteries.

The second link is to Everlife Memorials in Corpus Christi, Texas. The learning center of their site is devoted to different aspects of memorialization such as: types of markers, cleaning, purchasing, manufacturing and installing.

The third link is to a site about white bronze gravemarkers in LaPorte County, Indiana. The site is a joint effort of LaPorte County Public Library, and LaPort County's historian Fern Eddy Schultz. Included is a list of where to find white bronze markers in the county.

The fourth link is to the Town of Winchester, Massachusetts' website. There is a page about the history of Wildwood Cemetery in Winchester.

**Quick Links...**

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- [New England Cemetery Association](#)
- [Everlife Memorials](#)
- [White Bronze Gravemarkers, LaPorte County, Indiana](#)
- [Wildwood Cemetery, Winchester, Mass.](#)

Contact Information

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email: [info@gravestonestudies.org](mailto:info@gravestonestudies.org)  
phone: 413-772-0836  
web: <http://www.gravestonestudies.org>

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