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## Association for Gravestone Studies e-Newsletter

**Issue #60**  
**April 2008**

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**2008 AGS Conference and Annual Meeting**



**The deadline for conference registration is May 25!**

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

2008 Conference Logo-  
 Detail from headstone of  
 Jonathan Ingram,  
 Amherst, Massachusetts

In just a few weeks, we will be meeting at Hampshire College, in the Pioneer Valley region of Western Massachusetts -- an area where one can view a considerable variety of gravestone styles and materials within a short drive of the conference site. For an historical overview of the area and a preview of the conference schedule, please go to [www.gravestonestudies.org](http://www.gravestonestudies.org) and click on AGS Conferences.

For a virtual tour of the Hampshire College campus and environs, please click on [www.hampshire.edu](http://www.hampshire.edu).

As usual, AGS will offer on-campus lodging and meals, lecture sessions and other events at college facilities. For a guide to other local attractions, and a list of off-campus lodging options, click on [www.amherstarea.com](http://www.amherstarea.com). Note: if you plan to lodge off-campus, PLEASE MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS EARLY--the Amherst area is a very popular destination!

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Dr. Alan Swedlund, Professor emeritus of Anthropology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst--author of the forthcoming book, *Shadow in the Valley: A Cultural History of Illness, Death and Loss in New England, 1840-1916*, to be published by the University of Massachusetts Press.

### **New Lodging Option for Conference!**

Part-time conferees now have the option of staying in the dorm at Hampshire College for one or more nights. Please indicate on the registration form the nights you would like to stay (Tuesday-Saturday nights only). Lodging per night is \$45.

### **2008 AGS Conference--Suggested Reading**

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 Getting ready to attend the 2008 AGS Annual Conference? Prepare for your trip with the following books. They are all available in [the AGS Bookstore](#).

***Holyoke, Massachusetts: Stories Carved in Stone*** and ***West Springfield, Massachusetts: Stories Carved in Stone***, By Rusty Clark.

***Captors and Captives: The 1704 French and Indian Raid on Deerfield***  
 By Evan Haefeli and Kevin Sweeney.

### **Workshop: Preservation of Gravestones and Cemetery Monuments, Mount Carroll, Illinois**

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 May 19-21, Mount Carroll, Illinois. This workshop is sponsored by the Campbell Center for Historic Preservation Studies. AGS Trustee Jon Appell is the instructor.

This course will focus on the various aspects of gravestone and cemetery monument preservation. Topics will include; condition assessment and documentation; explanation

of proper tools and materials; resetting of stones; various repair techniques; positive and negative effects of cleaning, and appropriate cleaning methods; stone in-fill, consolidation, and color matching; and sources for restoration materials.

For more information visit <http://www.campbellcenter.org/pages/schedule.html>.

### **Cemetery Basics Workshop, Morris, Illinois**

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On May 17, 2008 the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT) is partnering with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency to hold a Cemetery Basics Workshop.

This workshop will be held in Morris, Illinois. The lectures begin at 9 AM at the Morris Area Public Library and will proceed to the Evergreen Cemetery for hands-on demonstrations. Topics to be covered include documentation, condition assessments, material identification, preservation of grave surrounds, and proper cleaning techniques (including hands-on, at the cemetery). Registration is \$20 per person and lunch is provided. This three hour workshop is restricted to 40 participants, so early registration is important. To register contact Dawn Cobb, Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, (217) 558-8973. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Event: Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, Massachusetts**

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To celebrate the opening of the new Visitors Center and the spring-time beauty of Mount Auburn, guided walking tours, demonstrations and self-guided activities will be held throughout the day on both Saturday, May 3 and Sunday, May 4.

More information is available by visiting [www.mountauburn.org](http://www.mountauburn.org) or calling (617) 547-7105.

### **2008 Oregon Heritage Conference**

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May 4-6, 2008, Eugene, Oregon. Co-sponsored by the Oregon Historic Cemeteries Association (OHCA). Topics include:

- Sustaining Memorials: Cemetery Maintenance and Repair 101 & 102
- Going Green (Green Burials and Green Landscaping)
- Stretching and Maintaining Foundation Connections
- Heritage Tourism
- Exhibit Development for Parks, Museums, Heritage Areas, etc.

For more information and to register, visit <http://www.oregonheritage.org/>.

OHCA will have their annual meeting on May 3rd in Eugene. For more information, visit [www.oregoncemeteries.org](http://www.oregoncemeteries.org).

### **Cedar Hill Cemetery (Hartford, Connecticut) Memorial Day Ceremony**

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Cedar Hill Cemetery's 8th Annual Memorial Day Remembrance Ceremony, Monday, May 26: all are welcome to this event. The reception tent will begin serving refreshments at 10 AM. The Remembrance Ceremony will begin at 11 AM with a flagraising and wreath-laying ceremony. Following the ceremony, Cemetery directors and staff will speak the name of each person laid to rest at Cedar Hill Cemetery since last Memorial Day. No

reservations are necessary. If you have additional questions, please contact Irene McHugh at (860) 956-3311 or by email at [imchugh@cedarhillcemetery.org](mailto:imchugh@cedarhillcemetery.org).

*Other Cedar Hill Cemetery Events in May:*

- Tour: "Cedar Hill's Landscape: Hartford's Rural Cemetery," Saturday, May 10, at 10 AM
- Bird Walk and Talk, Saturday, May 17, 6:30 AM
- 3rd Tuesday Notables Tour, Tuesday, May 20, 10 AM
- "Cedar Hill's Notable Trees," Saturday, May 31, 10 AM

For rates and more information, visit [www.cedarhillcemetery.org](http://www.cedarhillcemetery.org).

### **New Publication: *Ghosts in the Cemetery***

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*Ghosts In The Cemetery* is a new book by AGS member Stuart Schneider. The book has 135 pages, 70 large high quality photos on glossy paper.

This is a personal travel guide and pictorial review of haunted cemeteries, including those in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Maine, and Canada. Ghost stories accompany accounts of each cemetery visited.

If you would like to buy a signed copy, you can order one from the author for \$19.99 plus \$3.50 shipping (check, money order, Paypal).

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If you want more information or would like to purchase copies for resale, contact the publisher at [Schifferbks@aol.com](mailto:Schifferbks@aol.com) or go to their website at <http://www.schifferbooks.com> for wholesale prices.

### **Query: Dates on a headstone**

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This query comes from Linda Lewis. She writes: "I've seen a stone here that I'm stumped on and hoping someone can help. The stone (see photo below) uses a year notation I have never seen before. The stone reads:

John J. Bartlett

Born Feb 9 E. M. 344

Died May 18 E. M. 409

The cemetery was established in the late 1860s however this stone is in a much later addition. The surrounding stones all have death dates around 1901-1907. It might be that 344 = 1844 and 409 = 1909 but that's just a guess.



### **Rhode Island Advisory Commission on Historical Cemeteries Meeting**

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The Rhode Island Advisory Commission on Historical Cemeteries will be meeting at the Glocester Town Hall, on April 30, 2008 at 6:30 PM. The meeting will include an open forum. For more information contact Evelyn Wheeler, Chair, at (401) 789-3503.

<http://www.historicalcemeteries.ri.gov/>.

### **Forest Hills Cemetery Blog now Online**

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Forest Hills Cemetery in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts has a new blog.

It is designed to be a a forum for people who explore, study, and care for Forest Hills, to share their stories, discoveries, and photos.

Visit [www.foresthillstrust.blogspot.com](http://www.foresthillstrust.blogspot.com).

### **Blog: "Blogging a Dead Horse"**

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The blog, entitled "Blogging a Dead Horse: An occasional ramble through the cemeteries" includes topics on Jewish Cemeteries, porcelain photos, and a list of movies with cemetery scenes in them.

<http://bloggingadeadhorse-dmt.blogspot.com/>

### Article: Biodegradable Caskets

AGS Member Mike Bieling sent in the attached article. He writes: "This article is from the Thursday, April 17, 2008 issue of the *Victoria Times-Colonist*, and is about line of biodegradable cardboard caskets, covered with wood veneer, manufactured in China. Apparently these have already become established on the European market and have recently been introduced to Canada. One of the burial parks near Victoria, British Columbia, is setting aside an area for 'natural burials.' I thought e-newsletter readers might find this story of interest."

[Victoria Times-Colonist](#)

Note: For more information on green burials, check out <http://www.greenburials.org/>.

### Article: Hidden Burial Sites Discovered in Bibb County, Alabama

This article appears on [al.com](#). It is about a hunter who discovered several previously unknown burial sites and two lost towns.

### Article: "Judge blocks attempt to move graves for airport development"

This article appears on [the Southeast Missourian website](#).

### Book Review: *Stones and Bones of New England*

*Stones and Bones of New England - A Guide to Unusual, Historic, and Otherwise Notable Cemeteries*

by Lisa Rogak

Published 2004 by the Globe Pequot Press, PO Box 480, Guilford, CT 06437

ISBN: 0-7627-3000-5

225 Pages, 53 Black and White Photographs

Review by Oliver J. Ogden

The book has a very eye-catching cover and is a highly readable book. It starts with a thirteen page Introduction with three subtitles, including one called "How to Use This Book." Ms. Rogak starts the Introduction off with the word "Taphophilia." She says it means "one who loves cemeteries." The book is divided into sections, by state: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Each section starts off with a map of the state and has a number to match the area where the cemetery is located. An example in Connecticut would be Number Fourteen, Pomfret, Bara-Hack Cemetery. Each cemetery is like a mini-chapter and each mini-chapter begins with a linedrawing of a gravestone with the name of the Cemetery, the Town, whether it is private or public, and directions to the Cemetery. In some cases, there is also a photograph of the stone of the person she describes. If there is a cemetery office, she gives the hours and the phone number.

In Connecticut, under Bridgeport, Mountain Grove Cemetery, she talks about P. T. Barnum and Tom Thumb. She explains a little about the cemetery and has a photograph of Tom Thumb's life size statue on top of a forty-foot obelisk.

For each state, Ms. Rogak lists between fifteen and seventeen cemeteries with a story of someone buried in each cemetery she describes. She also expounds on some of their epitaphs.

In the back of the book are two Appendices: Appendix A: Common Symbols on Gravestones, consists of four pages of symbols; Appendix B: Common Abbreviations on Gravestones, consists of seven pages (She had a couple I disagreed with. For example, she has CSA--Confederate States Army instead of Confederate States of America). Also included is a Bibliography, Resources, and an Index.

I did enjoy the book very much.

*Stones and Bones of New England* is available through the publisher, <http://www.globepequot.com/globepequot/index.cfm> or [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).

### **Book Review: *Celebrity Death Certificates 2***

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*Celebrity Death Certificates 2*

By M.F. Steen

Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc. 2005

Softcover, 200 pages, ISBN 0-7864-2346-3

Review by Sybil F. Crawford

This is the second in a series of books made up of copies of the original death certificates for celebrities (mostly entertainment types). Steen's years as a Hollywood mortician earned him the title of "Mortician to the Stars." As with the author's 2003 effort, reviewed in the *AGS Quarterly*, 30:2, this is a book for name-watchers and will indicate where the subjects are buried or where their ashes may have been deposited. You're on your own in seeking out their gravemarkers-exact locations of their graves within the cemetery are not given.

*Celebrity Death Certificates 2* is available through the publisher, <http://www.mcfarlandpub.com/> or [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).

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