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Association for Gravestone Studies e-newsletter

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AGS Conference & Annual Meeting, 2007

The Association for Gravestone Studies Thirtieth Anniversary Conference
Rivier College, Nashua, New Hampshire
June 21-24, 2007

Rivier College in Nashua, New Hampshire will offer a great setting for our Thirtieth Anniversary Conference. Nashua was incorporated in 1746 when New Hampshire separated from Massachusetts. It is now the second largest city in the state and is the only city to be twice named "The best place to live in America" by *Forbes Magazine*. The city is conveniently located close to two major airports, with Boston's Logan only a 50 minute drive and Manchester Airport, which is served by six major US airlines, only a thirty minute drive.

Rivier College is located in a residential section in the southern part of the city and it is just off US Route 3. It was established in 1933 as a Catholic college for the daughters of French mill workers. Today it is a coeducational institution with a School of Undergraduate Studies and a School of Graduate Studies, and it has an enrollment of about 2,300 students. The small, compact campus is ideally suited for our conference. All activities are scheduled in three adjacent, air-conditioned buildings and the meal service promises to be delightful. Also, for those of you who wish to extend your stay in southern New Hampshire, the campus is only an hour's drive to the seacoast and a ninety minute drive to the White Mountains. So come and join us for an informative and enjoyable summer getaway.

Tom Malloy,
President

PRE-CONFERENCE AND FRIDAY BUS TOURS

Detailed itineraries of the Wednesday pre-conference tour and Friday bus tours are posted on [the AGS website conference page](#). Also included are photos of some of the gravemarkers we'll be seeing on these tours.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Proposals are solicited for scholarly papers, twenty minutes in length, to be presented during the lecture sessions. We encourage papers on gravestone subjects from around the world as well as specific to the New England region. Presenters are encouraged to incorporate visual images in their paper, through the use of slides or power point, and the type of visual presentation should be stated.

CALL FOR PARTICIPATION SESSIONS

As part of the Association for Gravestone Studies Conference, we host fifty minute "Participation Sessions"--programs conducted in a workshop format where cemetery scholars, preservationists and educators can exchange ideas. These programs are ideal for panels and we recommend including others in your presentation. All Participation Sessions proposals should allow time for questions and audience discussion. We are encouraging Participation Sessions that focus on four themes:

- Cemeteries in the Digital Age
- New Resources for Cemetery Research
- Development and Promotion of Cemetery Tours
- Current Issues in Preserving Cemeteries

All proposals should include the paper or session title and a 250 word description of the topic which focuses on its value to the audience. A brief biography of the presenter should also be included. Presenters are required to register for the conference. All proposals must be received by the close of business on Friday, March 30, 2007. Please send proposals for papers or participation sessions via traditional mail or email to:

Association for Gravestone Studies 278 Main Street, Suite 207, Greenfield, MA 01301,
info@gravestonestudies.org.

A Letter from AGS Member Janet Taylor



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Janet Taylor is a Certified Memorialist in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. She writes:

"For a unique experience and a wonderful way to spend a Saturday, get out your *A Graveyard Preservation Primer* by Lynette Strangstad, corral a group of energetic young people and parents and you will regain your faith in the youth of today.

Enclosed are some photos from a wonderful restoration experience. The initiators were a group of Boy Scouts working for the Eagle Scout award. And work they did.

Young Sam Shelsy, the leader, assembled a team of scouts, cub scouts, mothers and fathers who listened to instructions and were able to comply with them in a careful and enthusiastic manner. (I had thought that the kids might do two monument resets but the team accomplished over two dozen). And they took exquisite care to prevent any damage to the stones. They moved, leveled, and lined up stones in the original row. They saved the sod and replaced it when each stone was reset and they went back later to place loam and seed around them. They incidentally developed an appreciation for the skill and thoughtfulness of their ancestors. One group even discovered the tricky ways the Victorians created a foundation of interlocking stones. With some encouragement, they recreated such a foundation and finally replaced the old stone upon it.

I greatly appreciate the education I received over the years from Fred Oakley, *et al*, at AGS restoration seminars (i.e., conservation workshops) and the added training I received at the National Park Service restoration program. Both led to my participation in a delightful and fruitful day. Try it."



### Gravestone Used to Advertise Business



#### Business as usual!

John Martine sent in this photo of a tombstone recently erected in a Chicago area cemetery, belonging to the owner of a local carpet company.

Have you seen any other gravestones with

advertisements? If so, please send a photo to [info@gravestonestudies.org](mailto:info@gravestonestudies.org) and we'll try to include it in a future e-newsletter.

### **Queries: Depiction of Textiles and Upholstery on 19th-century Gravestones**

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These two queries come from Elise Ciregna. She writes: "For a study on the depiction of textiles and upholstery on 19th-century gravestones, I am seeking images or leads on these. I have plenty of shrouds and draped urns; I am seeking, rather, examples of domestic textiles such as tufted cushions, curtains, tassels, trim, and fringed table covers.

For a related study I am seeking images of 'furnished' 19th-century cemetery lots, i.e., lots that contain seating, planted urns and pedestals— essentially lots that look like they were used by family members and visitors." You can contact Elise at: eciregna@udel.edu.

Query: "Green" Burials

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This query comes from Rex Jones. He writes: "A couple of years ago I had a query in an AGS e-newsletter, and I had heard from a guy in England who was into green burials. I think he owned some land or something and ran a business. Does anyone know who he is? I thought I had his contact info but am unable to put my hands on it. Also, if anyone has any other contacts or information about green (i.e., eco-friendly) burials that they can share with me I would appreciate it. I'm considering making a documentary about green burials. Rex Jones, [rex\\_allan\\_jones@hotmail.com](mailto:rex_allan_jones@hotmail.com)."

### **Query: Reselling Unused Cemetery Plots**

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This query comes from Cliff Collins. He writes: "I have family members buried in five graves of a ten grave plot, starting in 1917. Another family purchased the other five graves, also in 1917. Only one grave has been occupied by the other family since then (there is no headstone).

The other graves are vacant and will remain so until a family member comes forward and claims them. We are talking 89 years with no word from them. I am interested in the four vacant graves, but the cemetery tells me they can't be resold.

I am sure this is not an isolated case, and wonder if AGS members know of similar experiences, or have any advice to share." Cliff's email address is bee24gun@sbcglobal.net.

New Publication: *Retracing Footsteps: Lakeside Cemetery, Bay Village, Ohio*

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**New Publication Available for Purchase**

The Bay Village Historical Society is releasing its first book in 32 years--*Retracing Footsteps: Lakeside Cemetery, Bay Village, Cuyahoga County, Ohio, A Genealogical Study of Those Buried in or Associated With Lakeside Cemetery and Their Families*.

This book of close to 400 pages, containing more than 350 photographs, is a fascinating compilation of family notes, newspaper articles, letters, historical sketches, recipes, vital records, two autobiographies and so much more. Ten years of research went into uncovering information about more than 270 individuals who are associated with the cemetery.

Established in 1814, the cemetery was the first burial ground in "Dover Township" which now encompasses Bay Village, Westlake and the northern section of North Olmsted. Most burials occurred from 1814 into the mid 1900's. The individuals buried in the cemetery lived in areas from Cleveland to Lorain. Even those unfamiliar with the cemetery will find this unparalleled resource an interesting and educational portrayal of life over the last two centuries in northern Ohio.

The book retails for \$25.60 For ordering information, please contact Cathy Burke Flament, (440) 835- 4472, cbflament@sbcglobal.net.

[Lakeside Cemetery Website](#)

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New Publication: *Two Historic Cemeteries in Crawford County, Arkansas*

Ian Brown recently wrote the AGS office to let us know about a new publication, *Two Historic Cemeteries in Crawford County, Arkansas*. This volume sets new standards of reporting for historic cemeteries. The authors present detailed descriptions of burials, mortuary hardware, and personal items from two late nineteenth century cemeteries—Becky Wright and Eddy—excavated in 2001 prior to inundation caused by expansion of Lake Fort Smith in Crawford County, Arkansas. Variability within and between the two cemeteries is explored from a socioeconomic perspective. The cost of each individual burial is calculated, revealing a number of striking contrasts between the two cemeteries. Results of geophysical surveys and bioarcheological analysis are integrated. *Two Historic Cemeteries* should prove of value to historical archeologists and all those concerned with historic cemetery preservation.

Ian writes: "It really is a magnificent achievement and I intend to draw from it quite heavily for my upcoming cemeteries course. In addition to wonderful detailed descriptions of coffin types (and their history), vaulted graves, burial furniture, clothing, etc., the authors show that one cemetery by no means can be used to represent what is normal for any given locale, something that prehistorians often tend to forget. Although the Eddy and Becky Wright cemeteries featured in the book are located just a hoot and a holler away from each other, and date to almost the exact same period in the late 19th century, they really are totally different representations of Frog Bayou community denizens. What is worrisome to the likes of me, who does far more survey than digging in historic and modern cemeteries, is that despite the fact that the above ground representations of the two cemeteries are similar, the real differences lie below. The authors show, quite dramatically, that only detailed archaeological investigations could have revealed these differences. Bravo to a masterful work, the best I have seen since Jerry Rose's Cedar Grove work, and another feather in the cap of the Arkansas Archeological Survey' Research Series."

Two Historic Cemeteries retails for \$30.00, and is available from the publisher, [Arkansas Archeological Survey](#).

New Publication: *Enfield, Connecticut: Stories Carved in Stone*

New Publication Available for Purchase

Enfield, Connecticut: Stories Carved in Stone by Bob Clark, the fourth book in the *Stories Carved in Stone* series extends the scope beyond West Springfield, Massachusetts, which was the genesis of this project. Together these books present a full picture of the gravestone carvers, the mourning practices, and the families who lived and died here. Gravestone fans and genealogists alike will find much to explore in these old cemeteries.

Enfield, Connecticut: Stories Carved in Stone retails for \$17.95 Order information is available on the [publisher's website, Dog Pond Press](#).

Information From Moravian Cemetery, Staten Island, New York

The Moravian Cemetery at Staten Island, New York is now accepting genealogy requests by mail. Depending on the information requested, a fee may be required.

Information one can write for might include:

- Interment records - name of deceased, survivors, address, date of death, cause of death, location of death, church affiliation, attending funeral home, date and time of funeral;
- Birth/death/marriage certificates;
- Correspondence from families;
- Service records - Civil War/SAW/WWI/WWII, etc.;
- Death notice from newspaper - survivors, addresses, funeral home, date and time of funeral;
- Genealogy charts - compiled by family;
- Copy of cemetery deed - purchaser, address, amount paid, size of plot, adjoining plot owners;
- Diagram of plot - shows who's buried where;
- Photograph of cemetery plot;
- Information as to where you might be able to find further information.

Please send queries to:

Moravian Cemetery, Attention: Historian
2205 Richmond Road, Staten Island, NY 10306

[Moravian Cemetery Website](#)

Article: Vermont and New Hampshire Gravestones Returned

The article, linked below, is to the BostonHerald.com. It is about a pair of 18th-century tombstones that disappeared 35 years ago. They are being returned to their original locations in Norwich, Vermont and Lebanon, New Hampshire. The Vermont Old Cemetery Association was instrumental in discovering where the stones belonged. Thanks to the New England Anomaly Listserv for this article.

BostonHerald.com

Meeting: Cranston, Rhode Island

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 The Rhode Island Advisory Commission on Historical Cemeteries is hosting a discussion group with the goal of gathering individuals to work together and help each other preserve Historical Cemeteries.

The meeting will be held January 11 at 6:30 pm at the Sprague Mansion, 1351 Cranston St, Cranston. For more information, please contact Evelyn Wheeler, Chairman, RI Advisory Commission on Historical Cemeteries, [eviewhee@verizon.net](mailto:eviewhee@verizon.net).

[Rhode Island Advisory Commission on Historical Cemeteries Website](#)

### **Conservation Training Course, Rome, Italy**

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 The International Organization for Conservation of Cultural Heritage (ICCROM) is sponsoring a training course on Architectural Records, Inventories and Information Systems for Conservation - ARIS07 will be held in Rome from September 12 - October 12, 2007.

The ARIS07 Course aims to improve architectural conservation practice through the use of methods and tools of recording, documentation, inventories and information management.

They invite applications from conservators, architects, planners, engineers, archaeologists, historians, topographers, photogrammetrists, surveyors, cartographers, restorers, documentalists, and other conservation professionals.

For more information and an application, please visit the [ICCROM website](#).

2007 New England Regional Genealogical Conference, Hartford, Connecticut

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 The Ninth New England Regional Genealogical Conference will be held at the Connecticut Convention Center and Hartford Marriott Downtown April 26-29, 2007.

AGS member Elissa Scalise Powell will be presenting "Managing a Cemetery Reading Project Effectively" on April 28. Sabrina's Graveyard, the Connecticut Gravestone Network, and the Maine Old Cemetery Association will be among the exhibitors at the conference. Information about the conference is on [the NERGC website](#).

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

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 In honor of the 175th Anniversary of Mount Auburn Cemetery, the nation's first garden cemetery, there will be a lecture celebrating some of the wonderful classical pieces written by the composers buried at Mount Auburn. Steven Ledbetter, former Musicologist and Program Annotator for the Boston Symphony Orchestra, will present a free lecture about Boston's music life from 1875-1925, titled, "Boston's 19th Century Music Life" on Wednesday, January 24, 2007 at 6 p.m. at the Boston Public Library.

This lecture is part of Mount Auburn Cemetery's seven part lecture series "Facets of Mount Auburn: Celebrating 175 Years of a Boston Jewel". This is a fitting event for Mount Auburn Cemetery, which is the final resting place of composers such as John Knowles Paine, George Chadwick and Arthur Foote.

Please visit [Mount Auburn's website](#) for further information.

Tours: Historic Cemeteries in Phoenix, Arizona

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The public is invited to the fall series of "open cemetery" tours at the historic cemeteries in downtown Phoenix, Arizona, on Jefferson St. at 14th Ave. The "posse," made up of members of the Pioneers' Cemetery Association, will be on hand to guide you. They will tell of some of Arizona's Founding Fathers, early pioneers, and of their families, who now lie in these seven cemeteries at Pioneer & Military Memorial Park. On the grounds is the 1897 Smurthwaite House, a shingle style residence which will also be open for your pleasure.

The open houses will be from 11 AM to 3 PM on January 28. Call (602) 534-1262 or email [pioneercem@yahoo.com](mailto:pioneercem@yahoo.com) for further details. Visit our website at [www.azHistCemeteries.org](http://www.azHistCemeteries.org).

**Tour: Old City Cemetery, Sacramento, California**

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Wednesday, January 10th, at 8 AM. "Birding in the Cemetery," with Maureen Geiger.

For information: (916) 448-0811, tours@oldcitycemetery.com.

[Old City Cemetery](#)

Website: Wreaths Across America

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Please take a moment to check out [The Wreaths Across America website](#). It is about the Worcester Wreath Company of Harrington, Maine which donates wreaths to the Arlington National Cemetery every year.

**Contact Information**

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email: info@gravestonestudies.org
phone: 413-772-0836
web: <http://www.gravestonestudies.org>
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