



Association for Gravestone Studies e-Newsletter

Issue 34

February 2006

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New Book For Sale: *The Secret Cemetery* by Doris Francis, Leonie Kellaher, and Georgina Neophytou is now available for sale in [the AGS Bookstore](#). *The Secret Cemetery* takes a behind-the-gates look at what cemeteries mean to the people who visit them. Topics include: "The Dynamics of Cemetery Landscapes," "The Grave as Home and Garden," "Negotiating Memory: Remembering the Dead for the Long Term," and "Change and Renewal in Historic Cemeteries." The book is \$23.95 for AGS members, plus shipping and handling.

Update on AGS Membership Drive: The membership committee's mailing to 75 cemeteries has resulted in great success! Four cemeteries and two individuals have joined AGS in the past month. Over the course of the next two months we're really hoping to invite preservationists, historians, genealogists and cemetery enthusiasts from the mid-atlantic region to become members and join us at the Doylestown Conference. If you know of any researchers or cemetery enthusiasts that might welcome

an invitation to become an AGS member, or if you're interested in helping the committee please contact Susan Olsen at Friends@thewoodlawncemetery.org.

AGS CONFERENCE 2006

Our annual conference will be held June 22-25, 2006, at Delaware Valley College, Doylestown, Pennsylvania, about thirty miles north of Philadelphia. We'll also be having the usual pre-conference tour on June 21.

The keynote address will be delivered by Dennis Montagna, Ph.D., who directs the National Park Service's Monument Research and Preservation Program out of its Philadelphia offices.

A section of the AGS website has been devoted to the conference. To view, [click here](#).

The Call for Papers and the Call for Participation Sessions are now available for download in Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format. Registration Forms will be available in mid-March, and Self-Guided Tours in mid-April. Other information is also on the website.

Presentation: Pelham, Massachusetts

Forgotten Art, Forgotten Artists: Early Gravestones and Stonecutters in Pelham and Vicinity, A Slide Presentation by AGS President Bob Drinkwater. April 17, 2006, 7:30 p.m., at the Pelham Town Library. Sponsored by the Pelham Historical Society.

The headstones and footstones which commemorate the lives of many of Pelham's first settlers are among the products of Pelham's long-forgotten stone-working industry. From about 1770, through the early 1790s, one or more local shops cut a variety of gravestones from locally quarried stone. Today, though we cannot identify them by name, we can recognize these folk craftsmen by the distinctive qualities of their work. Use of local stone for gravestones declined during the 1790s, as local stonecutters began using slate and marble from more distant sources.

March Tours: Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, Massachusetts

Friday, March 3, 12:00 p.m., "Marble Wings and Stone Roses: Emblems of Solace"--a "brown-bag" lunch conversation with Janet Heywood, Vice President of Interpretive Programs, Mount Auburn. Admission: FREE. The art of 19th-century monument makers provided families with a myriad of choices to express their grief publicly. Often the forms chosen used the vocabulary of visual paradox. The delicate feathers of angels ascending were rendered in marble and brownstone; the ephemeral moment of a blossom, embodied in granite. Philosophical complexities were simplified and carved into shapes that could be read without language. This session illustrates some of the patterns of images used to provide solace and comfort. Please bring your lunch, coffee and tea will be provided. Meet at Story Chapel.

Saturday, March 11, 2:00 p.m. "Builders of Dreams: Some Remarkable Women at Mount Auburn" – a walking tour with Bree Harvey, Director of Public Programs, Mount Auburn. Admission: \$10 Please join us for this walk to celebrate Women's History Month. While strolling the grounds of the Cemetery, we will make visits to the memorials of women who created hope in the face of adversity and inspired the dreams of future generations of women. Civil rights activist Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin, writer Margaret Fuller Ossili and peace activist Julia Ward Howe are some of those we plan to visit. In case of severe weather, alternative date is Saturday, March 25. Call (617) 607-1983 to check.

Saturday, March 18, 2:00 p.m. "Mount Auburn Cemetery – A National Historic

Landmark" – a walking tour with Bree Harvey, Director of Public Programs, Mount Auburn. Admission: \$10 Mount Auburn, designated a National Historic Landmark, is one of the country's most significant landscapes. Here the arts of horticulture, architecture and sculpture combine with the beauty of nature to create a place of comfort and inspiration. This 1.5 mile walking tour will focus on the stories of history, monuments and the lives of those buried here. We will be walking at a gentle pace on roads and paths through Mount Auburn's spectacular grounds.

Tuesday, March 21, 2:00 p.m. "Winter Tree and Shrub Identification and Signs of Spring" – a walking tour with Dave Barnett, Vice President of Operations and Horticulture, Mount Auburn. Admission: \$10 Join us for this program as winter turns to spring. Bud, twig and bark characteristics of some of the most interesting trees and shrubs at Mount Auburn will be discussed. See the earliest spring flowers and the swelling of the red maple buds and search for other signs of spring's arrival. Hot refreshments and an indoor quiz will bring the walk to a warm conclusion.

Please call (617) 607-1981 for more information on the above tours.

[Mount Auburn Cemetery](#)

Obituary: Sandra Devlin

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Members who attended the 2005 conference in Halifax will be saddened to hear of the death this week of Sandra Devlin of Moncton, New Brunswick. Sandra attended the conference, and her weekly column in community newspapers across eastern Canada helped promote AGS and the conference last spring.

The link below is to the edition of *Eastman's online Genealogy Newsletter* that has an obituary for Sandra.

[Sandra Devlin Obituary](#)

**Query: Looking for an Article**

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This query comes from AGS member Debra Richardson: "I'm writing in regards to an article published in a 1971 issue of the *Journal of Geological Education*. It was authored by T. Rahn [Rahn's Index of Gravestone Weathering] and titled, "The Weathering of Tombstones and its Relation to the Topography of New England." Issue 19, pages 112-118. I've tried unsuccessfully here in the Midwest to obtain a copy of this article. Might anyone suggest how I could come by a copy of it?"

Debra's email address is: richardson.debra@mchsi.com.

Query: Looking for Photos of Depression-era Markers

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This request comes from AGS member Mary Reilly-McNellan. "I am researching unusual grave markers that were placed during the Great Depression. I have found that many folk markers were used during this era of hard times, and that (inexpensive) concrete was particularly common as a medium--often with marbles and other items spelling out names and dates. If you have seen or taken photos of any unusual Depression markers of any medium, I'd love to hear about them. Please contact me at m.mcnellan@prodigy.net. Thanks!"

**Restoration of the Jewish Cemetery, Falmouth, Jamaica**

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The AGS office recently received a letter from Chris Enlow, Director of Development of the Falmouth (Jamaica) Heritage Renewal. He described the organization and their

efforts to restore the Jewish Cemetery in Falmouth, Jamaica. [Please click here](#) to read a letter written by Ainsley Cohen Henriques, of the United Congregation of Israelites, Shaare Shalom Synagogue in Kingston, Jamaica. He describes the history of the cemetery and the restoration work that needs to be done. (The letter is in PDF format).

So far, they have cleared away the brush, and repaired 80 gravesites. They are in the process of putting together a multi-phase project in conjunction with several universities in the US and Jamaica. It is roughly based on the following: Phase 1: Stabilization and Site Documentation; Phase 2: Grave Conservation; Phase 3: Reconstruction of the Missing Structures.

[Falmouth Heritage Renewal](#)

Information about San Francisco Cemeteries

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Tim Reeves, an Anthropology major at San Francisco State University sent in the following information and links.

"I helped excavate one of the hundreds of bodies beneath the patio of the San Francisco Legion of Honor art museum, which is located in the middle of Lincoln Park, a municipal golf course near the ocean in San Francisco. The whole area still has thousands of graves beneath the golf course. As you may know, in the early 1900s, the city outlawed burials within city limits. All cemeteries (including the municipal 'Golden Gate Cemetery,' now Lincoln Park) were ordered to be moved to Colma, the cemetery city south of San Francisco. Families or benevolent associations were given a few years to remove their beloveds' bodies; after that, bodies were moved en masse to group graves in cemeteries in Colma. The bodies of the poorest, buried in the Golden Gate cemetery, it turned out, were never moved.

Huge amounts of headstones were left behind--especially in the more wealthy cemeteries near the center of the city. In the depression, a WPA project removed the gravestones and used them to construct breakwaters by the ocean and the bay--where they can still be seen--and (see link below) to construct the gutters by the road that leads to the top of the hill inside a Buena Vista Park in the center of the city (the Haight district).

[These are photos of the pieces of tombstones](#), some of them left facing upward by the WPA workers who constructed the gutters to the road that goes to the top of the hill in Buena Vista Park. They came from the Lone Mountain (University of San Francisco area now) cemeteries and were presumably unclaimed by the deadline the City gave people to move everything out.

[Here's a map of all the cemeteries](#) that were in San Francisco (click on any individual entry to see a map of where the original cemetery was). There also was a film made, entitled *A Second Final Rest: The History of San Francisco's Lost Cemeteries*, by Trina Lopez ([see bio here](#)). She's shown her movie at several local festivals." --Tim Reeves, friarslantern@yahoo.com.

Tim's Father, Bruce Reeves is an AGS member. He sent in [this related link](#), a list of articles about Golden Gate Cemetery.

### **AGS Member Website**

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Jim Blachowicz's website (linked below) provides samples from his forthcoming book: *FROM SLATE TO MARBLE: Gravestone Carving Traditions in Eastern Massachusetts: 1770-1870*. While the focus of this study is the resident carving traditions of Plymouth, Kingston, and Cape Cod, about a quarter of the book examines Boston and other

Plymouth, Norfolk, and Essex County carvers, between 1800 & 1830.

The website offers other details, including ordering information. A review of Jim's book will be in an upcoming *Quarterly*.

graverpress.com

Website: GIS-Based Project for Junior High School Students in Lewiston, Idaho

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This website (linked below) is devoted to the necrogeographical study of two cemeteries in Lewiston, Idaho. The project marries current GIS, GPS and surveying technologies with traditional historical research and fieldwork. The purpose of the project was initially to introduce selected junior high school students to the use of global positioning system (GPS) and geographic information systems (GIS) management to plot and analyze patterns at Normal Hill Cemetery in Lewiston.

[The 5th Street Cemetery Necrogeographical Study](#)

**Events: Friends of Oakdale Cemetery, Wilmington, North Carolina**

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On Tuesday, March 7th at Noon, Friends of Oakdale Cemetery will conduct the first Annual Meeting for members and friends. The meeting will take place in the Masonboro Room on the third floor of the Main New Hanover County Library at 3rd and Chestnut. The highlight will be the presentation of a Historic Wilmington Foundation plaque to be placed at the entrance of the cemetery. For more information, contact Eric Kozen, Superintendent, Oakdale Cemetery, (910) 762-5682.

Oakdale Cemetery Lecture and Walking Tour: *Oakdale: Wilmington's Picturesque Cemetery: A Short Course*--Lecture and Tour by Janet Seapker, Architectural Historian. **The lecture** will be held March 29th, 2006, at New Hanover County Public Main Library, from 5:30-7:00 p.m. Janet will discuss the evolution of the rural cemetery, the establishment of Oakdale Cemetery and reveal the secrets of funerary art. **The walking tour** will be on April 1st, 2006 and will begin at 10 a.m. at Oakdale Cemetery, 520 N. 15th Street. A fee of \$25 will be charged for both the lecture and tour; Friends of Oakdale members \$20 Space is limited and reservations are required. Please call the Oakdale office, (910) 762-5682, to make a reservation.

Articles: Slave Burials in Portsmouth, New Hampshire

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The two articles, linked below, are from seacoastonline.com, and are about an archaeological report that revealed slave burials in the African burial ground in Portsmouth.

[Article 1 \(January 17, 2006\)](#) and [Article 2 \(January 22, 2006\)](#).

**Article: Potter's field being protected in Athens, Georgia**

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The article, linked below, is from the *Athens Banner-Herald*, and is about an abandoned cemetery that is being encroached by development. You have to register to read the article, but registration is free.

[Athens Banner-Herald](#)

Article: Lincoln Family Graves found in Illinois

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The article, linked below, is from the *Chicago Tribune* and is about a volunteer caretaker who discovered Lincoln family graves in a La Harpe, Illinois graveyard. You have to

register to read the article, but registration is free. Note the use of Comet (oh no!) to clean the stones.

[Chicago Tribune](#)

**Article: Group is close to taking custody of Linwood Cemetery, Macon, Georgia**

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The article, linked below, is from macon.com and is about the creation of a nonprofit group to provide upkeep at Linwood Cemetery.

[macon.com](#)

Connecticut Gravestone Network Symposium

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The Connecticut Gravestone Network Symposium will be Saturday, March 25th, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the South Senior Center, 70 Canterbury St., East Hartford, Connecticut. Admission is \$5.00 for CGN members, \$10.00 for non-members. If you're interested in a table display for your cemetery group email shapbrown@cox.net.

The speakers will be:

- Welcome and "Introduction to Old Burial Ground Basics" - Ruth Shapleigh-Brown
- "The Portland Quarry" - Alison Guinness
- "The 'Empty' Pitkin Tomb in East Hartford's Center" - John Spaulding
- Special add-on: "9-11 memorial photo journal" - a preview of some homemade artwork from a New York neighborhood.

Displays:

- Association for Gravestone Studies
- Connecticut Gravestone Network
- Friends of Center Cemetery, East Hartford
- Connecticut Society of Genealogists
- Old South Burying Ground in Hartford
- Ancient Burial Ground in Hartford
- Old North Burying Ground in Middlefield
- Grove Street Cemetery in New Haven
- Vendors with cemetery related Books, jewelry, T- shirts, soaps, cast pieces and more!

[Connecticut Gravestone Network](#)

**Query: African-American Reconstruction-era politicians' burial sites**

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This query comes from AGS member Janet Obenshain: "I am currently researching Randolph Cemetery which is an African-American cemetery located in Columbia, South Carolina and is the final resting place of at least nine Reconstruction-era legislators. I'm writing to find out if anyone knows of any other cemeteries in the United States that contain the remains of a large number of African- American Reconstruction-era politicians of state or national importance. Currently, Randolph Cemetery is listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its significance within the state, however, the Downtown Columbia Cemetery Task Force is trying to nominate the cemetery for national landmark status. Any information on comparable sites within the US would be beneficial to this nomination."

Janet's email address is: c-Jobenshain@att.net.

Query: Location of a Pyramid Mausoleum in Hamilton County, Ohio

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AGS Member David McCullough called the AGS office with the following question. He volunteers for the historical society in Hastings-on-Hudson, New York, where he ran across a newspaper article from 1948. The article is about Florence Goff (daughter of archaeologist William T. Goff) and \$50,000 that she left in her will to have a pyramid mausoleum built for her family in Hamilton County, Ohio.

David asks if any AGS members know if the mausoleum was ever built, and if so, where it is located. He can be reached at (914) 478-4208.

### **Websites to Check Out**

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We have five websites featured in the Quick Links section below. The first link is to the Mattatuck Museum in Waterbury, Connecticut. There is a page about the history of Grand Street Cemetery in Waterbury, Connecticut.

The second link is to the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, where there is a page with FAQ's about cemeteries.

The third link is to the Netherlands cemetery project page of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies.

The fourth link is to cemeteries in Howard County, Indiana. There are links to searchable databases for many cemeteries in and around Howard County.

The final link is also to Sunset Memory Gardens Cemetery, also in Howard County, Indiana. The searchable database on the site is updated weekly by Ed Beheler as he scans and adds obituaries.

Quick Links...

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- [Grand Street Cemetery, Waterbury, CT](#)
 - [Virginia Department of Historic Resources](#)
 - [Netherlands Jewish Cemetery Project](#)
 - [Howard County, Indiana Cemeteries](#)
 - [Sunset Memory Gardens Cemetery](#)

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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