



Association for Gravestone Studies e-Newsletter

Issue #73
May 2009

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AGS Membership

We invite everyone with an interest in gravestones and cemeteries to join the AGS.

Membership benefits include:

- The AGS *Quarterly*: Bulletin of the Association for Gravestone Studies
- The next published issue of *Markers* (June)
- 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, or for more information, visit www.gravestonestudies.org/join.htm.

AGS 2009 Annual Meeting and Conference

AGS 2009 Annual Meeting and Conference

June 24-28, 2009
Union College
Schenectady, New York



2009 Conference Logo
The Veeder Monument
Vale Cemetery, Schenectady, NY

THE DEADLINE TO REGISTER IS JUNE 5, 2009

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

BE SURE TO MAIL YOUR REGISTRATION TO OUR NEW ADDRESS:

**GREENFIELD CORPORATE CENTER
101 MUNSON ST SUITE 108
GREENFIELD MA 01301**

We'll be featuring:

- Basic and Advanced (new this year!) gravestone conservation workshops
- Lectures
- A choice of three guided cemetery tours
- Slide presentations
- Exhibits
- Hands-on rubbing, foil impressions, photography and stone carving workshops

And much more! To see what workshops will be offered and what lectures will be presented [please click here](#).

**Join fellow gravestone enthusiasts for five enjoyable and
informative days of learning and camaraderie.**

Attention Students-2009 Conference Scholarship Announcement

Any student who submits an article to the *AGS Quarterly*, which is accepted and published, will receive a \$100 scholarship to attend the AGS conference.

Article-length manuscripts (approximately 2,500 words) can be submitted to the AGS office at any time. The *Quarterly* Editorial Board will inform you if your article is accepted. Then if you decide to go to the conference, simply attach a photocopy of your student ID to the registration package when you send it in. And be sure to subtract \$100 from the total fees.

You can't beat the deal - A published article and scholarship aid for the conference.

Earn a Free Membership!

Any member of the AGS who brings in five new members at the Senior level or above within a 12-month period will be given a free membership renewal at the Individual level for one year (free year begins with your next renewal date). New members that you recruit must record your name in brackets after theirs on the membership application form.

Query: Cemetery Databases

From the AGS office: We are preparing to update our information on databases for recording and cataloging cemeteries. If you know of any such databases and could send us some information about them, we would greatly appreciate it. We plan to make this information available to the AGS membership.

Please email info@gravestonestudies.org.

Follow up to query in April e-Newsletter

Jane Townes had a query in our April 2009 e-News about iron gravemarkers:

"I'm finding some gravemarkers which are odd for this area of Middle Tennessee. Any information will be appreciated regarding the gravemarkers shown in the photos below, including: parallels, dates, origin, information on what would have been in the inset on the front, sources regarding this type gravemarker, anything lost at the bottom of the gravemarker stuck into concrete."



Jane sent in this follow-up:

"Thank you for your response to my AGS e-Newsletter query on an odd iron gravemarker in Bedford County Tennessee. There were several helpful responses. Taken together, they get to a small body of information on this type gravemarker and to their geographic spread.

Because several people expressed curiosity about these, I've put together, for everyone, the information I received.

Thanks to everybody for your helpful replies.

Jane Townes
Shelbyville, TN"

To read the responses, [please click here](#).

Query: Saving Holy Cross Cemetery

This query comes from new AGS member Louise Gaffney. She writes: "I am writing because I am very much in need of guidance and support on how to care for Holy Cross Cemetery in Menlo Park, California.

For details on Holy Cross I have included the following link to their web site: www.holycrosscemeteries.com/locations/menlopark.htm.

About six weeks ago I went to the cemetery (my first time) to gather information for some genealogy research I am working on. I actually broke down into tears as I walked around and saw the total lack of care and respect for the burial plots. The old part of the cemetery is in ruins.

I immediately called the number listed on the gate to speak to those in charge of the cemetery. I was told that there are no funds available to care for the old part of the cemetery, that they scrape the barrel just to do tree trimming every year or two and to rake leaves. I offered to volunteer, to find others who would also volunteer to help clean up and care for these forgotten graves. I was stone walled, told that it would be a liability and that the plots are private property, but that he could not stop me from going to do a

little work if I wanted.

I have been back several times sweeping, picking up garbage and cleaning as best I can. I love spending time there. It is relaxing and peaceful and I feel so calm, but I also feel furious. How dare they have such disregard, such lack of respect. The people buried there are the ones that built our city, through blood sweat and tears.

I called the company in charge of the cemetery again about what can be done. I was asked: why I do I care? "You don't know anyone buried there." I started to get choked up approached with that question, and he wanted to know what my real agenda was. He couldn't understand that I didn't want anything from him, that I was willing to organize and fundraise to care for Holy Cross Cemetery myself. I was told sternly, again, about private property, liability, and so forth. The company in charge of Holy Cross, I believe, is hired by the Catholic Church to care for the Cemetery and is responsible for the cemetery's administration.

Do any AGS members have suggestions as to where to go from here?"

louisegaffney@mac.com

Query: Covering Monuments

This query comes from Meg Winslow, Curator of Historical Collections at Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She writes: "We would like to speak with any staff of cemeteries that are covering their monuments for preservation reasons. We do know quite a few historic monuments that have glass covers but are wondering if anyone has placed a permanent or seasonal cover over any memorials to help protect them from weather and from further deterioration.

I would very much like to speak with anyone who is doing this. My email is mwinslow@mountauburn.org and phone between 8:00 and 2:00PM: (617) 607-1942.

Many thanks,
Meg Winslow"

AGS Member Blog

Tina Bierhalter's blog is entitled "History's Forgotten Treasures: Saving the Past, One Building, One Cemetery, One Treasure, AT A TIME."

<http://www.historysforgottentreasures.blogspot.com/>

Cemetery Trips for 1889, Peekskill, New York

Below is the text of a handbill donated to the AGS Archives (transcribed by Bob Drinkwater).

**CEMETERY TRIPS
FOR 1889**

Tell me not in doleful numbers
Life is but an empty dream,
Or that mules indulge in slumbers
Deep enough to spoil a team.

If old Sol pours out his radiance
On the Sunday fifth of May,
It will take you to the "graveyard"
To return e'er close of day.

Life's no dream I fain would tell you
And the TEN CENT STAGE is real
Cheap and well to serve the public,
Is the acme of its zeal.

Fifteen cents will be the "damage"
For a single ride each way,
Cheaper is the "return-ticket"
For a "quarter"; only good one day;

My experiment last year having proved that many were accommodated by the Sunday cemetery trips of the Ten-cent Stage I propose to run three (3) trips each Sunday, when it is not stormy, beginning with

**SUNDAY, MAY 5th, 1889,
(SO LONG AS IT IS PROFITABLE)**

I shall leave my stable, next door to the Field Library, at 12:15 p.m.; the Post Office at 12:30, 2:00 and 3:30 p.m. The Cemetery at 1:15, 2:45, and 4:30 p.m., returning to the stables on the last trip only.

The fare each way will be 15 cents, and return tickets good only on the date of issue, will be sold at 25 cents each.

Trips on the same terms, at convenient hours, will be made on

DECORATION DAY, May 30th

A.F. SHERWOOD

The Highland Democrat Power Print, Central Avenue, Peekskill, N.Y.

Conservation Course, Rome, Italy

Course on Conservation of Built Heritage 2010

Dates: March 5 - April 30, 2010
Rome, Italy

The course aims at serving a wide range of conservation practitioners and decision makers by placing technical issues within the broader conservation context in order to link them to planning and management concerns. The first part of the course will consist of an overview of the current practices of defining heritage, evolution of different concepts and key approaches currently used in built heritage conservation. The second part of the course will focus on the planning and management issues pertaining to the conservation decision making process. The third part of the course will focus more closely on technical issues including documentation, conditions assessments and various treatments, plus interpretation and public access.

The application deadline is July 31, 2009.

http://www.iccrom.org/eng/01train_en/announce_en/2010_03BuiltHeritage_en.shtml

Marble Gravestone Conservation Workshop, Boston, MA

Forest Hills Cemetery Educational Trust
Marble Gravestone Conservation Workshop
Saturday, June 6, 8:30am - 4:00pm

Please join the Forest Hills Educational Trust for a one-day marble conservation workshop at historic Forest Hills Cemetery, Boston's famed rural cemetery. This workshop will focus on conservation techniques for nineteenth century marble gravestones. The morning session will cover assessment, documentation procedures, and preservation techniques; the afternoon session will consist of a demonstration on how to properly clean outdoor marbles, as well as hands-on cleaning, basic stone repair, and resetting techniques.

The workshop will be led by Ivan Myjer, a nationally known stone and masonry conservation expert. Elise Ciregna, Curator of Historic Collections, and Mary Bulso, masonry preservation expert, will also help lead the workshop.

Participants should be physically able to kneel and lift up to 30 lbs. Please wear comfortable clothing and shoes, and (optional) bring work gloves, hat, and sun block.

Participation is limited to 20. Pre-registration required; no refunds after June 3. Fees cover all costs, including: handouts, coffee and donuts, box lunch, and supplies.

Fees: Individual: \$75.00, AIC (The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works) members and students: \$60.00.

To register, please call our registration line at (617) 524-3354 and leave a message, or e-mail e_ciregna@foresthillstrust.org. Your message will be returned promptly.

Cemetery Preservation Workshop, Brookline, Massachusetts

The National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT) is holding a two-day workshop in Brookline, Massachusetts to introduce the basics of cemetery landscape preservation. The workshop will take place in partnership with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Town of Brookline Parks and Open Space Division at The Old Burying Ground in Brookline, Mass., July 29-30, 2009. Instruction will include both lecture and hands-on demonstrations.

To register, please visit [the NCPTT website](#).

Program: Introduction to Records at the Massachusetts State Archives

Looking for records regarding carvers, cemeteries, or other historical documents? The Massachusetts State Archives is presenting the following program:

Introduction to Records at the Massachusetts State Archives

Tuesday, June 9, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Richard Salter Storrs Library, 693 Longmeadow Street, Longmeadow, Massachusetts.
Presented by Autumn Haag, Reference Archivist, MSA

Cost: Free and open to the public

For more information, call (413) 565-4181.

News Video: Cemetery Restoration Underway In Bristol

This information come from AGS member Kai Nalenz. He writes: "I am submitting this article and accompanying news video covering Gravestone Services of New England's recent conservation work at the Old Fort Burying Ground in Colonial Pemaquid State Park, Maine."

<http://www.wcsh6.com/news/local/story.aspx?storyid=105115&catid=2&GID=Wwj/Rekh/fcdTcV5bhT7Bb65RXVIIdL6xgXS+kwdSIE%3D>

Article: Mapping will protect Whitfield's (Georgia) historic cemeteries

This article appears in [the Chattanooga Time Free Press](#).

Articles: Central State Hospital cemeteries, Milledgeville, Georgia

These two articles, linked below, are about the former Central State Hospital cemeteries in Milledgeville, Georgia. The cemeteries will be featured on NBC's Today show in June.

http://www.unionrecorder.com/archivesearch/local_story_128222921.html

http://www.unionrecorder.com/archivesearch/local_story_135212923.html

Obituary: Dr. Sara Strachan

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We are sorry to announce the March 1, 2009 passing of longtime AGS member Dr. Sara (or Beckie as she was known) Strachan of Summerville, South Carolina. AGS members may remember her and her husband Dick from when they attended conferences in the 1990s.

An obituary is posted on the [Summerville Journal-Scene's website.](#)