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# Association for Gravestone Studies e-newsletter

**Issue 30**  
**October 2005**

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Folk Art in Southwest Virginia Cemeteries Anyone interested in the Wytheville, Virginia, gravestones discussed in Ian Brown's column in the Summer 2005 *Quarterly* will find more information and photos in Klaus Wust's monograph, *Folk Art in Stone: Southwest Virginia* (Edinburg, VA: Shenandoah History, 1970). --Gary Collison

Update on New Orleans Cemeteries

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Since Hurricane Katrina, the AGS office has received many queries about New Orleans cemeteries. *Save Our Cemeteries* has information and updates about individual cemeteries in New Orleans (see website link below). The cemeteries suffered major flooding and some wind damage. Clean-up efforts will be extensive.

*Save Our Cemeteries'* current contact information is: Attention Louise F. Saenz, Director, 2128 Glendale Ave., Baton Rouge, AL 70808.

[Save Our Cemeteries](#)

## **Cemetery Walk, Sheffield, Massachusetts**

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Sheffield Historical Society's Cemetery Walk. Sunday, November 6, 4 to 6 pm. If you enjoy biographies, especially those relating to the lives of ordinary individuals from the Berkshires, then the Sheffield Historical Society's SPIRITS OF SHEFFIELD CEMETERY STROLL is the activity for you. The walk will take place at the Hewins Cemetery (from Route 7 in Sheffield, take Maple Avenue, turn right onto Hewins Street and drive 2.5 miles). In case of rain or cold temperatures (less than 40 degrees), the event will be held on the Society's grounds, beginning at the Old Stone Store, which is located on Route 7 in the center of Sheffield.

"You will encounter personal stories often left untold, tales of daily life from both the male and female perspectives. There will be members of the Hewins family present, and you will hear how this family reacted to the struggles of the Civil War. Listen to the story of patriotism as told by Lieutenant Theophilus Spaulding of Revolutionary fame. A contemporary of Spaulding was Jabez Keep, whose story is one of fame and yet deep

personal sorrow. Rebecca Burrell Huggins also endured these tumultuous days, and she will share her story of life on the home front."

Get to know Sheffield's ancestors at this historically entertaining event. Please dress for the weather and wear comfortable shoes; the terrain is uneven. Refreshments will be provided. Free to members, \$4 non-members.

Tours: Woodlawn Cemetery, Bronx, New York

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- November 5, 2 pm. "A Walk Through Woodlawn– General Overview." Meet at Jerome Gate.
- November 6, 2 pm. "Woodlawn in the Victorian Age." Meet at the Webster Ave. Gate. A walk through the oldest section of the cemetery
- November 12, 2 pm. "A Walk Through Woodlawn– General Overview." Meet at Jerome Gate.
- November 13, 2 pm. "Veterans At Rest." Meet at Webster Ave. Gate. Visit the graves of Woodlawn’s 11 Medal of Honor Winners, Confederate Generals and others who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Walking Tour Admission: Adults \$10, Seniors (65 and over) \$7, Students \$5, children six and under are free. Children under 18 must be with an adult. Friends of the Woodlawn Cemetery are admitted free. Reservations are recommended (call 718-920-1470) as tours are limited to 30 participants. Tours are 2 hours long and about 1.5 miles in length.

[The Woodlawn Cemetery](#)

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

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- November 13, 2 pm. "Union League & Laurel Hill: Minor Names/Major Figures"

[Laurel Hill Cemetery](#)

News From Johnson County, Kansas

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Linda Lewis recently wrote the AGS office about her transcription project in Kansas. She writes: "I am currently working on a project to document and transcribe all 41 cemeteries in Johnson County, Kansas. I have 20 of them transcribed thus far. I am publishing them on [interment.net](#) for searching, and on the Johnson County, [Kansas Genweb site](#). The old stones here, mostly limestone, are in poor condition (eroded, blackened, broken, etc.). Here on the prairie the stones really got blasted by the wind, dust storms, tornadoes, extreme heat, extreme cold, and deep ice and snow. --Linda Lewis, [webmaster@cottonhills.com](mailto:webmaster@cottonhills.com).

She also has a question for AGS members: "I found an undiscovered/undocumented cemetery. Well, I didn't physically find it. I was talking to a land owner about an overgrown cemetery on their land– asking permission to visit it and cut down some of the bramble and read the cemetery and she told me they found an old Indian cemetery on another piece of their land. They made a fence around it–it's dead center in another field.

I need help-I don't know who to tell or what to do. I'm betting there are more than the couple of stones they found. It's not on any books anywhere and if it doesn't get on some books somewhere it can be destroyed by the next owner. It's in unincorporated land. The mailing address is for a town in the next county, but it is physically in my county. Can anyone advise?"

**Query: Creating a Website with Cemetery Information**

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This query comes from Donna Walcovy. She writes: "My website www.falgen.org/cem only has 2 Falmouth cemeteries online at this date. I am ready to up-load a third cemetery with lots of graphic images by the end of October. I will go way over our allotted 50MB so I'll have to pay additional charges, each month. There are 16 cemeteries in Falmouth, Massachusetts, with gravestones. I hope to have a total of four cemeteries on-line by the end of the year and two more cemeteries before Summer 2006. I really need advice and suggestions where to put all this graphic-intensive cemetery information at a reasonable price with a reliable webserver. I hope for more visitors to the Falmouth Genealogical Society ~ Cemetery Transcription Project website as I add more cemeteries.

How can I find a home for the cemetery project that can keep pace with future demands, tons of images, more cemeteries, as the project grows?" Please contact Donna at d.quenzel@comcast.net.

Query: Circular Cemeteries

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This query comes from Cheryl Patten. She writes: "In Wayne, Maine there is a cemetery that was laid out in 1867. It was constructed in a circular configuration. Known locally as the "Wing Ring", it has a focal point of an elevated circular mound of earth 14 feet in diameter, on which stands a 12 foot high granite obelisk. Surrounding this is a three foot deep dry moat. On the monument's base are the names of the seven Wing brothers who were much involved with founding Wayne, Maine in 1780. Circling this impressive center are concentric rings of stone and grass containing the graves of succeeding generations. Each ring is separated by graveled walks and curbed with cut granite which serves as a base for the headstones thus assuring they are arranged in a perfect orbit. The Wayne Historical Society has contacted MOCA to see if this is the only one of this design in Maine or elsewhere.

Do any AGS members know of any others?" You can reach Cheryl at [cpatten@tdstelme.net](mailto:cpatten@tdstelme.net).

**PBS Cemetery Special**

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PBS is running a special program about cemeteries-- *A Cemetery Special* by documentary filmmaker Rick Sebak. Gary Collision, *Markers* Editor told the office that he's seen it and highly recommends it. He says: It uses a nice range of cemetery examples (Key West Cemetery; Hope Cemetery, Barre, VT; Cypress Lawn Cemetery, Colma, CA; Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, MA [featuring Janet Heywood]; Lake View Cemetery, Cleveland, OH; St. Mary's and Maple Grove Cemeteries, Waterloo, NY; Allegheny Cemetery in Pittsburgh, PA; Oakland Cemetery, Atlanta, GA; Birch Hill Cemetery, Fairbanks, Alaska). The focus is on "living" cemeteries, and the film shows what cemeteries mean today to the people who visit them and how cemeteries are used. There is a description of the program on the [WQED website](#).

You can check the schedule to see if it is running in your area or purchase a DVD by visiting [the PBS website](#). The San Jose Mercury News also ran a story about Sebak and *A Cemetery Special* on October 24. The story is linked below. You have to register with the Mercury-Times to read it, but registration is free.

[San Jose Mercury News](#)

New Book by AGS Member

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Now available: *Cemetery Walk* by Minda Powers-Douglas. "Journey into the cemetery and beyond in this fascinating new book." For more information, or to order a copy, visit the publisher's website (link provided below).

*The Quad-City Times* of Davenport, Iowa recently had an article about Minda. You can read the story by clicking on this [link](#).

[AuthorHouse Publishing](#)

**Items for Sale from the Albany Rural Cemetery**

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Now available for sale from The Albany Rural Cemetery Office: The book "The Civil War and the Albany Rural Cemetery" explains Albany's enormous efforts to support and preseve the Union during the war. The lives and heroic accomplishments of fourteen Albanians, all buried at Albany Rural Cemetery, are retold. A listing of over 700 Civil War Veterans, including 22 generals and 6 Medal of Honor awardees buried at Albany Rural is included with an explanation of their accomplishments. The book is \$19.95

Two new Civil War posters are also available for purchase. To commemorate the redication of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Plot on the 140th anniversary of the end of the Civil War, two new pen and ink drawings of the Civil War Plot have been executed. One shows just the Soldier's Monument while the other shows the Soldier's Monument plus several beautiful individual monuments from around the cemetery. The posters are \$9.95 each.

To order the book or posters, or for more information, please contact the Albany Rural Cemetery Office, Cemetery Avenue, Albany, NY, 12204. (518) 463- 7017.

[Albany Rural Cemetery](#)

Article: Recent Cemetery Vandalism in Danbury, Connecticut

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Below is a link to the The Danbury, Connecticut *News-Times*. They recently published an article about vandalism in Danbury's Wooster Cemetery. The conservation workshop at the AGS 2004 Conference was held in Wooster.

[Danbury News-Times](#)

**Article: Poker Game in a Cemetery**

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The article linked below is to the San Francisco Chronicle and is about a group of people who got together to play poker amongst the tombstones in Colma.

[San Francisco Chronicle](#)

Editorial: Cemetery Maintenance

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The link below is to a recent editorial in *The Decatur Daily*, Decatur, Alabama. The editor writes about our responsibility to maintain cemeteries.

[The Decatur Daily](#)

**Websites to Check Out**

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Please take a moment to check out the three websites in the "Quick Links" section at the bottom of this newsletter. First is the website for the Wisconsin State Genealogical Society. They offer Wisconsin cemetery inscription lists. The website has an availability list and copying fees. Second is the new website for the Wisconsin State Old Cemetery Society. It tells about the society and how to order information from their archives. The last website link is to the Decatur Preservation Alliance. Their "Projects" section discusses their roll in restoring Decatur Cemetery in Georgia. The Friends of Decatur Cemetery and Wisconsin State Old Cemetery Association are both AGS members.

Quick Links

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- [Wisconsin State Genealogical Society](#)
- [Wisconsin State Old Cemetery Society](#)
- [Decatur Preservation Alliance](#)

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