

Cemetery Trustees Annual Report

Our Annual Report got lost in transit last year, so you'll have to go to the town website to read it, but basically, the cemeteries in town are still there this year, as they were last year and we continue to operate without any complaints from the occupants. Again this year, we invite you to visit our cemeteries, to see our town's history and heritage. To read the markers, see the names carved on those markers, plain and ornate, dating back to the earliest days of our civilization. Familiar names, families that you know, many that you don't know but may have read about or seen on buildings in town. Your ancestors, perhaps. All, each and every one of them, contributed something to our heritage. At the last meeting of the NH Cemetery Association, we were treated to an excellent presentation by the Hopkinton Historical Society Executive Director, showing us the results of their efforts with a Cemetery Walk in one of their cemeteries. The Walk was a historical drama about some of their more notable occupants, brought back to life by the efforts of historians, actors, writers, costume makers and a professional director, all drawn from a cadre of talented volunteer residents. They documented the Walk with a professionally produced DVD, done again by volunteers. The presentation also included information about the process and procedures necessary to successfully pull off a feat of this magnitude. I was suitably impressed and acquired enough copies of the DVD to bring back to Candia and distribute to encourage our cadre of talented volunteers to consider doing something like this in Candia, perhaps as a part of our 250th. Keep your eyes and ears open, there will be a showing soon.

Robert Pike, Ellsworth Williams and Jerry Becker continued their exemplary efforts and activities maintaining the physical infrastructure. Unfortunately, Ellsworth left us at the end of the year to seek other employment. His efforts over the past years are appreciated and he'll be sorely missed. Bill Cooper helped us out again this year with tree work, trimming and removing trees that were encroaching on the stone wall along the Village Cemetery entrance road. Labor expenditures, just for the normal work necessary to keep the cemeteries looking good and minimal restoration activities, again exceeded the appropriation line, offset by lower than budgeted expenditures in most other lines as the result of prudent use of available funds. A restoration project to rebuild the stone wall running from the Congregational Church building to the Old School House in the Hill Cemetery was deferred until 2012. The wooden fence on the other side of the church building also needs work.

The cemetery trustees continued our efforts on the project to formally document the status of our cemeteries, public and private. The goal continues to be to clearly define what physical real estate has been and is being used for burial sites. Two years ago, only Holbrook Cemetery had an actual surveyed plot plan, clearly defining its boundaries, derived from deed research. With the help of Jim Franklin, we've been able to get deed research and a boundary survey of Bean Island, East Candia, the Hill and both the Village and the Old Village Cemeteries done, at a bargain price. The result of the deed research begs the question for several cemeteries of who actually owns them. More research is needed. We also started surveys of the individual plots in Holbrook, using the corner markers, where they exist. Additionally, with the research assistance of Jim Lindsey, a dedicated and industrious volunteer, we continued our review of all of the currently available deeds from the sale of cemetery plots. This information is essential to being able to clearly define what parts of the cemeteries have been sold, to whom they've been sold, what portion of each plot has been used for gravesites, which plots do (and don't) have paid perpetual care and who currently has the right to inter in each lot. If you have a deed for a cemetery lot in Candia, we'd love to hear from you, to help update our records. Our door is always open and volunteer help is always welcome and appreciated.

Richard H. Snow, Cemetery Trustee