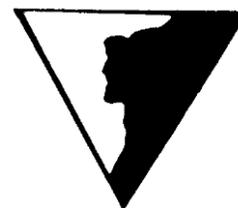


“CEMETERY CHRONICLES”

New Hampshire Cemetery Association (NHCA) Quarterly Newsletter

Issue 2

June 2011



“To promote the advancement of knowledge in the operation and maintenance of cemeteries, to facilitate the exchange of information, to create and maintain high ethical standards in the conduct of cemetery administration, both active and historical, and to secure the advantage to be obtained by mutual cooperation.”

The aim of the NHCA newsletter is to expand on the Association goal as stated in the bylaws (above), providing information of interest to the NHCA members, through shared experiences, photos, surveys, questions posed, opinions expressed, and material gathered from outside sources. Lynn Smith and Mike Horne will act as editors, but it is you, the members, who are the major contributors. Send your thoughts, articles, questions, and photos to nhcemetery@gmail.com and let's make this publication interesting and fun! The newsletter is a new method to interact and connect with fellow NH cemeterians on a regular basis.

Directors' Note: Would you like to be more involved in NHCA? There is a position available on the Board. Please contact Howard Frizzell frizzhome@comcast.net or Jeff Snow snowj@nashuanh.gov to indicate interest.

Concord Cemetery Updates:

Common Ground in Blossom Hill Cemetery

By Jill McDaniel

This burial ground appears to have been for poor people and/or people without family. There are 690 individual burial lots consisting of 482 infants and 208 adults. The first burial was in 1896 and the last burial in the 1950's.

In 2005, while placing grade stakes, 36 markers were discovered in the first row of this section that had disappeared into the ground. In the Spring of 2006 the markers were located and leveled within the row.

City of Concord records show a 1934 Trust set up in the amount of \$90 stipulating-- "Income to be used for care of inexpensive single graves and common ground". After many years of activity the principal in this Trust was \$78,501.40, with \$7,428.40 available to be used specifically for the care of this section. In 2007 the fact that interest earned on this Trust was to be used for care of the Common Ground was realized. During the Summer of 2010 a plan was made to probe the grounds in search of markers and monuments in this section. There were only 77 markers and monuments visible at the time.

The 145' by 78' section was probed and 3 additional markers and monuments were unearthed. All 80 markers and monuments were leveled and placed on the appropriate grave sites. From the limited documentation available in the Cemetery office

regarding names and locations of individuals buried in this section I was able to create a map showing the exact grave location for all buried in that section. Records have been updated and now reflect the proper grave locations.

Common Ground in Calvary Cemetery

The Roman Catholic Bishop of Manchester was the owner of Calvary Cemetery with the Cemetery being under the administration of St. John the Evangelist Church in Concord. The City of Concord took ownership of Calvary Cemetery in 1995, at which time the cemetery office received very limited physical records.

The first burial in this section was in 1857 and the last burial was in 1948. These burials were not recorded at the Cemetery office until approximately 1948, when it appears that someone went to the burial ground and compiled a list of individuals buried there from information inscribed on markers and monuments. There were 165 burial records created and placed on file at the Cemetery office.

In 2008 I went to this section with the list and was able to create a map and update the burial card records to reflect the proper grave locations.

My research, over the last few years, has brought to light the fact of many unrecorded burials in this section. I have been able to locate records for 42 additional burials, bringing the total number to 207 (62 Infants and 145 Adults). The search continues and I am certain that there are many more records to be found.

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Baby Section - “Potters Field” - “The Wall” in Calvary Cemetery

Burials in this section were not recorded at the Cemetery office until around 1961, when it appears someone went to this section and compiled a list from inscriptions on the markers and monuments of infants buried along the stone wall. As a result there were 37 burial records created and placed on file at the Cemetery office.

During my four years as Administrator for the Cemeteries, I have received nineteen inquiries from the Concord Community requesting information for specific babies known to be buried along the wall in Calvary Cemetery, Residents of our community have shared their memories of coming to Calvary Cemetery with their families and visiting the graves of their infant siblings. There were no records at the Cemetery office for those particular burials at the time of these inquiries.

After extensive research including exploring funeral records at Waters Funeral Home, obtaining information from Holding Tomb documents and referring to limited records from the Church, I have located the burial records for 360 babies that were buried in Calvary Cemetery in the section referred to as “Potters Field”, “The Wall” and “Unconsecrated Section. I feel comfortable in saying that this number will increase as I continue my search.

Gather, Pause and Honor Ceremony

After the above findings I thought it necessary to have some kind of Remembrance for the 1203 individuals whose deaths were not recorded or memorialized in such a way that they could be forever remembered. On May 1st over 125 people attended a dedication of two monuments, the Common Ground monument and the Infant Loss monument. It was a beautiful day for the Memorial Walk



Gilmanton Accepts Private Cemetery



By Candace Daigle,
www.gilmantonnh.org

In 1980, Geraldine Besse created a private burial ground on their property. The site had a beautiful view over that portion of the

community and overlooked a small grass landing strip that her husband, Col Harry W. Besse, a pilot, had used in his younger days. Upon her death in 2004, Geraldine was also interred in the site. In 2010, the descendants having relocated away from Gilmanton, the cemetery trustees were contacted with a request that the Town accept the cemetery.

The cemetery trustees do not encourage the creation of such private burial grounds due to the uncertainty that in private hands such important sites can be assured care and protection in perpetuity. However, such sites have been and probably will continue to be created and our primary concern is their long-term protection. The trustees drafted an Acceptance Policy which was adopted by the Board of Selectmen. The purpose of the Policy is to guide owners of such a site through the development of an acceptance proposal and to guide the Town during the evaluation of such a request. The evaluation is intended to establish a mechanism where an acceptance can be accomplished in a legal manner and without burden on the taxpayers.

In the case of the Besse proposal, the trustees worked with both LGC and our own Counsel to develop the appropriate acceptance process. Conditions placed on the acceptance included the creation of a separate lot which, along with a deeded access, would be transferred to the Town. There were also pre-transfer maintenance items related to stone wall repairs and tree removal. Lastly was the condition that a care fund be established with the Town, the income from which would cover the cost of site maintenance in the future.

The negotiations over the acceptance were finalized prior to the March Town Meeting, and the warrant article for acceptance received unanimous approval. In this instance we had engaged, cooperative descendants whose goal was also the long-term protection of the site, helping ensure the project's success.. Once the final conditions have been met, the Selectmen may act to accept the site which will fall under the management of the Cemetery Trustees bringing the total under our care to 2 active and 32 closed sites.