

Vermont Old Cemetery Association Founded by Prof Leon Dean (1899-1982) Oct 18th 1958

PRESIDENT'S REPORT ***Spring 2014***

As I am writing this spring newsletter, the snow finally seems to be receding from my backyard and I have flocks of robins in the few spots of bare ground available to them. However, Vermont's Green Mountains are still covered with several feet of snow and it will be a while yet before I believe spring has finally arrived despite what it says on the calendar. I was able to open my greenhouse door for the first time on April 5th as the snow had melted enough that I would not have to chip the ice away to gain access. March of 2014 was the coldest recorded in Rutland since the late 1800s. I am sure many VOCA members who currently reside in the warmer parts of the country do not miss the recent harsh Vermont weather.

I hope many of you who are looking at your cemeteries are planning on having a cleanup day in them. Sometimes you can generate interest in a historic burial ground when you are able to have local citizens volunteer in such an event for the community. I would also involve your local schools and inquire if they would make this an annual part of the volunteer requirements for their students.

I did have an interesting phone call regarding an individual who wanted himself, wife, and two dogs buried in individual cemetery plots and I was asked if that was possible. Having no idea, I did contact VOCA Treasurer, Chris Book on the issue and apparently, there are no state rules regulating such burials. I was told by another cemetery commissioner, that there are 3 cemeteries in Vermont that will honor such a request in case anyone is interested.

If you are interested in the availability of a Department of Corrections work crew to help with the upkeep of your cemetery for the 2014 season, please contact DOC Field Office Director, Keith Tallon, at (802) 786-5099. It may be too late in the year, but it is worth a phone call if you have a need.

Please check the expiration date on your newsletter and address. If you do not believe it is correct, please contact Assistant Grants Administrator, Robert Hooper so he can correct your information. **PLEASE DO NOT SEND YOUR RENEWALS CHECKS OR DONATIONS TO ASSISTANT EDITOR HOOPER.** All renewals and donations go to VOCA Treasurer, Chris Book. His address is in the newsletter. Thank you for helping us keep our records timely and accurate.

VOCA's web site looks great and thanks to Barry Trutor for his exceptional efforts on it. If you have stories and/or pictures, please send them to Barry. If you have not had the opportunity to check out the web, the address is voca58.org. We also have a VOCA Facebook site that provides information and fun facts if anyone is interested in joining and participating.

Please continue to recruit new VOCA members. Our \$10 membership fee is very reasonable and with an all unpaid volunteer board, all monies go to our mission of the restoration of Vermont's old burial grounds. If you are aware of an organization that is looking for a presenter for its monthly meeting, please have someone give me a call.

I hope to see many of you at our spring meeting on May 3rd in Burlington. The directions are in the newsletter. If you have agenda items for our October 5th meeting, please give me a call at (802) 773-3253 or at tgifvt@msn.com.

Tom Giffin
VOCA President

The Spring VOCA meeting will be at St Michael's College in Colchester. The directions are below. Coffee hour is from 9:00 to 10:00 am with the meeting beginning at 10:00. Directions: Take 89 and take exit 15 to route 15E. Go approximately 1/2 mile to Lime Kiln Road. Turn right on to Lime Kiln Rd and take the first right onto Observatory Lane, approximately one tenth of a mile. The Pomerleau Alumni Center is the rear part of the building. Folks coming from the East need to take Route 15W and turn Left onto Lime Kiln. As of this writing, we are still looking for a speaker and lunch is \$12. Checks and be made out to VOCA and mailed to:

**Richard Howrigan
P.O. BOX 16
Fairfield, VT 05455
802-827-6513**

Local Cemeteries as Part of Living History

Wanda Golden Eubank, Andover VT

Like many families of the 40's and 50's, our Sunday-afternoons were usually devoted to a "ride" preferably on "dirt" roads. Other essential elements included 1) a stop or two at an abandoned house with a serious discussion of "how many dollars it would take to fix it up," 2) a lengthy visit at one of the cemeteries serving as burial site for some of our own "ancestors," and 3) an ice cream cone on the way home. With the possible exception of the latter, this was our family's way of participating in local history.



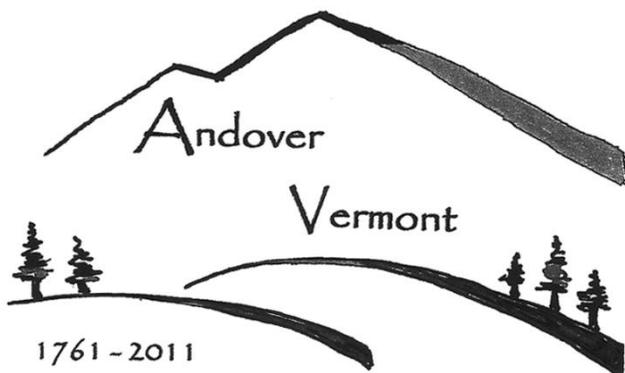
A few years ago, I relocated to Vermont and resumed some of those same interests. Since my parents are memorialized with a "stone" just up the road from me, I was pleased to see the attention paid to their final resting place. Andover has a caring and devoted slate of cemetery trustees. We also have the American Legion to place flags in honor of those who served to make and keep us free.





One of the trustee activities is placement of a framed legend at each of the major cemeteries in the town. This provides some cultural context for the site although the amount of information is necessarily limited by the available space.

Like many other Vermont communities, Andover also has a talented and diligent historian. Peter Farrar has spent many hours documenting material of interest and is a great resource on local history.



In 2011, Andover celebrated their 250th birthday. What better time to showcase our cemeteries—especially for local and visiting genealogists?! A committee emerged to fill this void. Peter served as the authority on historical information. My contribution was to organize and edit. A small group of volunteers emerged to do legwork and to fill in names and dates as needed. This included more than one cell phone call with a voice saying *“I’m standing here looking at this stone and here is what it says.”*

The result was the production of brochures featuring four local cemeteries. Each provided the exact location; historical background; a list of “pioneer families” buried there; and a list of

known military veterans interred there. The committee also manned a booth with exhibit featuring Andover's historic cemeteries.

Not only does this honor those persons and families, it also serves as a genealogical reference. This quote from the East Hill Cemetery brochure is almost a map for finding more information. It would seem that a road trip to Cheshire County NH would be the next step for anyone climbing those family trees!

“The location may have been chosen because of the magnificent view of Mount Monadnock to the southeast. Many of the first families to settle East Hill came from the Wilton and Jaffrey, New Hampshire region. Just being able to see Monadnock brought them closer in spirit to their old homes and may have provided some comfort as they gathered here to lay to rest a family member, friend or neighbor.”

VOCA does a magnificent job is drawing attention to burial grounds in sore need of physical repair and clean up. And targeted historical information--such as found in these brochures--can also play a role in creating interest in and ownership of local cemeteries.

Since the original cost of printing these brochures was by donation, there are no funds for reprint except through sale proceeds. The four brochures are available for 50 cents each from the Town Clerk's Office at 953 Weston Andover Road, Andover VT 05143. Order all or by name: *East Hill Cemetery, Simonsville Cemetery, Middletown Cemetery, and Heald Cemetery.*

[Editor's note: Go to the VOCA website (www.voca58.org) to see the four brochures Wanda talks about in her article.]



COINS LEFT ON TOMBSTONES

Stephen R. Day

Immigration Enforcement Agent

While visiting some cemeteries you may notice that headstones marking certain graves have coins on them, left by previous visitors to the grave.

These coins have distinct meanings when left on the headstones of those who gave their life while serving in America's military, and these meanings vary depending on the denomination of coin.

A coin left on a headstone or at the grave site is meant as a message to the deceased soldier's family that someone else has visited the grave to pay respect. Leaving a penny at the grave means simply that you visited.

A nickel indicates that you and the deceased trained at boot camp together, while a dime means you served with him in some capacity. By leaving a quarter at the grave, you are telling the family that you were with the soldier when he was killed.

According to tradition, the money left at graves in national cemeteries and state veterans cemeteries is eventually collected, and the funds are put toward maintaining the cemetery or paying burial costs for indigent veterans.

In the US, this practice became common during the Vietnam war, due to the political divide in the country over the war; leaving a coin was seen as a more practical way to communicate that you had visited the grave than contacting the soldier's family, which could devolve into an uncomfortable argument over politics relating to the war.

Some Vietnam veterans would leave coins as a "down payment" to buy their fallen comrades a beer or play a hand of cards when they would finally be reunited.

The tradition of leaving coins on the headstones of military men and women can be traced to as far back as the Roman Empire.



<http://johnjudyc.blogspot.com/2013/01/coins-left-on-tombstones.html>

VOCA County Representatives (These are people who will come help you with your VOCA grant application.)

ADDISON	Betty R. Bell 802-423-3947	LAMOILLE	Deanna French 802-522-2050
BENNINGTON	Jean Kosche 802-447-2241	ORANGE	Vacant
CALEDONIA	Vacant	ORLEANS	Wanda Webster 800-525-3550
CHITTENDEN	Robert Hooper 802-862-0708	RUTLAND	Cliff Giffin 802-773-3743
ESSEX	Richard Colburn 802-723-4833	WASHINGTON	Vacant
FRANKLIN	Edmund Wilcox 802-524-3318	WINDHAM	Charles Marchant 802-365-7937
GRAND ISLE	Vacant	WINDSOR	Ken Barrett 802-875-2941



Robert Hooper
3 Grey Meadow Drive
Burlington, VT 05408

Thomas Giffin, President

Dianne Leary, 1st VP & Grants Administrator

Robert Hooper, Asst. Grants Administrator, Membership
& Asst. Newsletter Editor
Chris Book, Treasurer

Whit Mowrey, Asst. Treasurer

Charles E. Marchant, Secretary

Edmund Wilson, Executive Board

Bill Wiles, Newsletter Editor

Barry Trutor

VOCA Website

2013-2014 Headstones

61 East Washington St.
Rutland VT, 05701

4670 Greenbush Rd.
Charlotte, VT 05445

3 Grey Meadow Drive
Burlington, VT 05408

44 North Main St.
Rutland, VT 05701

P O Box 297
Hartland VT 05048

PO Box 132
Townshend, VT 05353

4996 Georgia Shore Rd.
St. Albans, VT 05478

1231 Meadowlake Drive
Rutland, VT 05701

WEBMASTER

tgifvt@msn.com

802-773-3253

Dleary123@yahoo.com

802-881-2754

hooper9999@aol.com

802-862-0708

802-773-6252

whit05048@gmail.com

cemassoc@svcable.net

802-365-7937

802-524-3318

bwilesvt@gmail.com

802-558-6009

barry.trutor@lord.com

webmaster@voca58.org

www.voca58.org