



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

PRESIDENT'S REPORT ***Summer 2014***

Vermont's short summer has finally arrived, and I have not yet heard anyone complaining about the recent heat after the long winter we just endured. Garden season is here and my family and I have been enjoying the first green beans and cukes from my garden; also looking forward to eating the first ripe tomato from my 30+ plants. For the 3rd year in a row, the Rutland Middle School, Social Studies Class "Yes Program" provided the city with two days of work in Rutland's Cemeteries. The program has evolved into some monument repair, as well as the general maintenance of the historic Rutland burial grounds. I once again volunteered with Floodbrook Middle School at the Dellwood Cemetery in Manchester in conjunction with the Hildene Museum staff. I have reported on this event many times in the newsletter, but suffice to say, it continues to be a wonderful program and Floodbrook Teacher and VOCA member, Jennifer Repinski, deserves a standing ovation for continuing with this program every year with her students. I continue to mention these two yearly projects in the hopes that other communities (with the help of VOCA members) would work with their local schools to do similar cemetery projects. VOCA's "Stones and Bones" unit would be an excellent place to start with ideas.

I have received many emails and calls from individuals that are doing cemetery projects. Please send the before and after pictures to our editor for future publication. It is exciting to see such resurgence in interest from so many people from around the state on our old burial grounds.

We had an outstanding response to our VOCA Fund Campaign. Thanks to everyone who donated! I do not have the total amount, but it will be reported in a future newsletter. It is only through membership support that the organization can continue in its mission on the restoration of Vermont's old burial grounds.

Our web site is looking great thanks to Barry Trutor and Tom Ledoux. VOCA is very fortunate to have them maintaining our site. VOCA is also on Facebook and many members post some great pictures and other articles of interest. If you have pictures or articles, I know our webmaster and editor would appreciate you sending them along.

I have enjoyed the evolution of VOCA in the technology field. It was not that long ago that VOCA ventured into having a website, and I recall that it was quite controversial at the time. One of my favorite stories regarding the launching of our website was at the first meeting that I chaired as VOCA

President. I suggested we put other historical links on the website, and, after a rather heated discussion; my motion was soundly defeated by a voice vote. One member actually stood up and eloquently stated, "We do not want links as people will know where we are." We have certainly come a long way, and the membership should be proud of what has been accomplished.

Thanks to everyone for recruiting new members. We always need new blood and new ideas to keep VOCA fresh and moving forward. VOCA's fall meeting will be in Townsend, VT at the Townshend Town Hall, and lunch is catered. The meeting is always the first Saturday of October. Details are included at the end of this report, on our website, and Facebook page. If anyone has ideas or concerns for the agenda, please send me an email and/or phone call. Hope that you enjoyed your summer!

Tom Giffin
VOCA President



The Fall meeting of the VT Old Cemetery Association will be on Saturday, Oct 4th at the Townsend Town Hall on Route 30 in Townsend, VT. Coffee hour will be from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. with the meeting beginning at 10:00. Lunch will consist of soup, salad, wraps, pies and hot/cold beverages for \$13.00. Please make out checks to Charlie Marchant and mail checks to Charlie at PO Box 132, Townsend, VT 05353. The presentation will be "READING AND PHOTOGRAPHING GRAVE STONES" by Robert LeBond of the Brattleboro Camera Club.

From the December 1936 issue of THE VERMONTER

Found by Grace Frizzell of West Charleston, Vt; submitted to the newsletter by Richard A. Colburn, Sr. of West Charelston, Vt.

The Old Morgan Cemetery

By Jane S. Butler

A mile up the brook road that turns just south of Elm Valley Creamery in the town of Cavendish is an old cemetery—replete with historical interest to our town; for buried there lie many Revolutionary soldiers.

Though the place is well known about here, a stranger would never find it, as the approach turns abruptly to the north along the road—a grass grown, tree and bush crowded road leading up a steep hill. The road is town property; but never worked. It is rarely used save by the caretaker of the cemetery and those who go to cut the hay in the mowing adjacent.

This was the first cemetery in the town, started in Colonial times as a burial spot for those soldiers of the Revolutionary War who died while camping on the land of Capt. John Coffeen, the town's first settler. Capt. Coffeen and his wife Susannah kept a tavern on the farm now occupied by B. J. Hoxie.

Sometimes as many as 300 soldiers of the Continental army were encamped upon his farm. A lineal descendant of a soldier of the Revolution tells that this cemetery was chosen when all about was wilderness—for its situations upon a hill, between two brooks—the brooks being guides to the spot.

Many soldiers who died of fever (as tradition states) are buried here with no marker save field stones, and no order of lots, as in later cemeteries. Some graves run north and south, and some in other directions. If the D.A. R. chose to erect a monument to an unknown soldier of the Revolution, here would be a fitting location.

An open mowing slopes easterly. Around it is built a very finely constructed stone wall. To west and south are tall forest trees with many pines, hemlocks, spruces; to the north a pasture where tall, rose lined spikes of steeple brush adorn the place; to the east are seen upland mowings, sugar woods, farm homes. Beyond them Hawks Mt., of historic fame,, named for Gen Hawks, who was one of those who built the Old Crown Point Road, also of romantic fame, for at the base of Hawk's Mt., in Cavendish, were laid scenes from "The Tory's Daughter."

There is no record of a burial here for over a hundred years. With but few exceptions all the headstones are of slate, some as perfectly preserved as to look like new. Among such in the far corner near the woods is a stone which bears the information that Danzel Downe is buried there, that he died in 1817 in the 14th year of his age. Near by is a much smaller slate stone which bears the name of M. Downe, Danzel's father. One wonders where Mother Downe was buried. One headstone huddled in a spot by itself—no lot about it—states that Peter Connery is buried there.

A legend, folklore, or what you will, handed down for many a year, is that one summer night Peter met his own apparition in the woods, who told him "One year from today you will die." One year from that day—so tradition runs, Peter was working on a barn roof. At the close of his day's labor, as he was ready to go down, he slipped, fell to the ground, and was killed. All the proof of the truth of this tale is that one reads on Peter's headstone "He died from a fall from a barn."

Many of the old slate stones are lichen covered, making it necessary to dig away the growth to read the inscriptions. Peter's headstone was one.

Another story went the rounds, told first by someone who "heard it was so," that the words "She Lost Her Virtue" were cut in the headstones of a young lady who was buried here. We all said "It can't be!" One summer's day a party visited the old cemetery. A persistent member finally said "*I've found it!*"

Among other lines of poetry occur these words:

Mourn, the loss of virtue and of worth
That lies beneath this mossy turf.

All were pleased that the scandal had been chased to its source—and like many others proved groundless.

Of the known soldiers of the Revolution buried here are four captains, a lieutenant and one private. Another captain's remains were removed a short distance when Mt. Union Cemetery was started. Mt. Union (now known as the Center Cemetery) was once a privately owned place, but now for many years the property of the town. I asked the Lineal Descendant why this was called Morgan Cemetery. He told me that the small house, which is situated half a mile down to where the two brooks join, used to be called the Chaplain's house and there the chaplain lived. One chaplain was named Morgan.

Brook song and bird note, in summer, whispering winds among the evergreens decked out with winter snows, a plot kept mowed but with no modern adornment, the daisies, buttercups, mosses, grass and ferns, mounds of wintergreen leaves laden with jeweled red berries—all that Nature can

bestow for such a spot is here. It is a place where the poet and the romancer may sit and dream of the loves and lives of these old patriots and their families.

The town sees that the grass is cut, and the place will never go to utter ruin.

New VOCA Survey of Cemeteries Begins in Grand Isle County

By Barry Trutor, VOCA Webmaster and Clayton Trutor, Grand Isle County Representative

We are in the beginning stages of the Vermont Old Cemetery Association's new survey of the state's two thousand cemeteries. In 1991, VOCA published *Burial Grounds of Vermont*, recording each cemetery's period of use, the number of burials, the condition of the cemetery, whether the cemetery has a fence and a sign, and any other interesting information. We are in desperate need of volunteers from around the state to conduct new surveys of the cemeteries in your hometowns.

We initiated the survey this summer in Grand Isle County. The five towns of Grand Isle County are believed to have 27 cemeteries. Most have been located this summer with stones counted, photographs taken and notes recorded. The news is mostly good. Many of the older cemeteries have stewards, whether the town cemetery commissioners, the local historical society, descendants, or unknown caring individuals. Jerusalem and North End Cemetery in North Hero have benefited from the Martha Hutchins Cemetery Trust Fund, as indicated by new granite signs. Quaker and Macomber Cemeteries, which sit side by side, were reported in 1991 as "*Abandoned-most stones down...*". This summer's survey now reports: "*Very good; surrounded by beautiful white picket fence with separate gates to each cemetery. Quaker Cemetery has 100 upright stones with most inscriptions illegible; Macomber Cemetery has 18 upright stones with most inscriptions legible; no obvious damage to stones; grounds well maintained.*" The Grand Isle cemeteries abound with medallions from the Revolution, War of 1812, and Civil War. Symbolism runs the gamut from weeping willows and cinerary urns to Freemasons, Eastern Star, and Knights of Columbus to doves, morning glories and treestones.

The news is not all good. Reynolds McGregor, first used in 1806, lies at the spit of land that crosses into Isle LaMotte. Twenty years ago, according to the Isle LaMotte Historical Society, it was rehabilitated but has again fallen into disrepair. More disturbing is Graveyard Point in North Hero. Several large beautiful stones are in evidence, all lying on the ground and havocked by trees. The jewel and the heartbreak is East Alburg Cemetery of Alburg Springs Road. One hundred plus gravestones, dating from the early 1800's are in dense tree growth. Most stones are down. Parts of the cemetery are being foraged by cows. Efforts will begin shortly to recover these three treasures.

Volunteers are needed all over the state. Do your town's cemeteries. Do your neighboring towns. Do a county. The journey is amazing. Join us at <http://www.voca58.org/cemeteries/index.php>.



Footstones

2011	Vacant	Are you the one we are looking for?	
2012	Ruth Barton	P O Box 309, Putney, Vt, 05301	802-254-1128
2013	Wesley Mowry	P O Box 297, Hartland, VT, 05048	802-436-3383
2013	Richard Howrigan	P O Box 16, Fairfield Vt, 05455	802-827-6513
2014	Robert Hooper	hooper9999@aol.com	802-862-0708
2014	Chris Book	44 N Main, Rutland, VT, 05701	802-773-6252

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 802-525-3550

CHITTENDEN	Robert Hooper 802-862-0708	RUTLAND	Cliff Giffin 802-773-3743
ESSEX	Richard Colburn 802-723-4833	WASHINGTON	David Phillips 802-763-3924
FRANKLIN	Edmund Wilcox 802-524-3318	WINDHAM	Charles Marchant 802-365-7937
GRAND ISLE	Clayton Trutor 802-658-3273 ctrutor@gmail.com	WINDSOR	Ken Barrett 802-875-2941

No Vermonters in Heaven"

**I dreamed that I went to the City of Gold,
To Heaven resplendent and fair,
and after I entered that beautiful fold,
by one in authority then I was told
That not a Vermonter was there."**

**Impossible, sir, for from my own town
Many sought this delectable place,
and each must be there with a harp or a crown,
And a conqueror's palm and a clean linen gown,
Received thru a merited grace."**

**'The Angel replied: All Vermonters come here
When first they depart from the earth,
But after a day, or a month, or a year,
They restless and lonesome and homesick appear,
And sigh for the land of their birth."**

**They tell of ravines, wild, secluded and deep
And of flower-decked landscapes serene,
Of towering mountains, imposing and steep,
A-down which, the torrents exultingly leap,
thru forests perennially green."**

**They tell of the many and beautiful hills,
Their forests majestic appear,
They tell of its rivers, its lakes, streams and rills,
Where nature, the purest of water distills,
And they soon get dissatisfied here."**

**We give them the best the Kingdom provides;
They have everything here that they want,
But not a Vermonter in heaven abides:
A very brief period here he resides,
Then hikes his way back to Vermont."**

**by
Dr. Ernest Fenwick Johnstone
From an old Postcard**

Robert Hooper
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Burlington, VT 05408

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Rutland, VT 05701

P O Box 297
Hartland VT 05048

PO Box 132
Townshend, VT 05353

4996 Georgia Shore Rd.
St. Albans, VT 05478

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