



Hurricane Irene = Devastation

It is quite possible that Hurricane Irene could be responsible for the worst natural disaster in Vermont since the huge storm of 1927. Some of the following items and photos are from the Burlington Free Press, thanks to Candace Page. This storm has been a major disaster to the state of Vermont. This was a very powerful storm, what it lacked in high winds it more than made up for in the huge rainfall.

Photo by Glenn Russell, Burlington Free Press



Photo by Lars Gange & Mansfield Heliflight



The above photo is a view of route 131 in Cavendish, many roadways and bridges suffered major damage along with the devastation that took place at the cemetery in Rochester Vermont.

Its time again to sit in that real comfy chair of yours, you probably will be able to enjoy some nice fall sunshine, get your favorite beverage and see what we have for you. As you see we have a little info on the storm here in Vermont, a letter from our president Tom Giffin, an item from VOCA member Miriam Herwig, and some helpful ideas on preparing your self to attend a funeral for someone special to you, and a welcome aboard to our new members.

What's in the Vault?

1 Be sure to make it to the fall meeting! The directions and contact information are in the Presidents Report.

2 Let's welcome our newest members!! Liza & Chuck Wilson of Taftsville, Elizabeth Moore of West Rutland, and Barbara Butler of Woodstock, Vermont. Hope you all make it to the meeting!

Graveyard Preservation Is Our Business



Rochester, Vermont - August 29, 2011. A number of communities in our region are completely cut off from the rest of the world. Some have no telephone, internet or electricity. In Rochester-- a terrible and sad situation. Residents are dealing with so much destruction; homes are destroyed, so are roads and bridges and even a cemetery was destroyed. The final resting place for Rochester residents was flooded damaging headstones and graves. The Vermont Health Department is asking for help in identifying human remains that were exposed when part of a cemetery washed away in the town of Rochester during flooding caused by the remnants of Hurricane Irene. The Health Department says the graves of about 30 people were disturbed when the northwest corner of the Woodlawn Cemetery was damaged by the overflowing Nason Brook. Twenty-two sets of remains have been recovered. The search for additional remains continues.

State officials are working with the Rochester Cemetery Commission to get descriptions of the deceased as well as descriptions of clothing, jewelry and other mementos.

The recovered bodies are being placed in new caskets with the help of the Vermont Funeral Directors Association and they will be re-buried at a later date.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT FALL 2011

This year I have had many friends and acquaintances inquiring why I continue to be an unpaid volunteer for VOCA for so many years and as I am writing my report, I started reminiscing about my tenure with VOCA. I have been the VOCA President since October of 2001.

My oldest son, Justin was just eleven years old at the time and he would usually accompany me to every VOCA meeting, always assisting me in some aspect of the meeting. Those of you who attended these meetings would recall him using former VOCA Editor, Bob Hooper's lap

top computer during my always overwhelmingly popular president's report.

Justin is currently a senior at the University of Connecticut and still attends VOCA meetings when he is home. My youngest son, Jonathan, who starts 11th grade at Rutland High School and my daughter, Rachel who is doing an army tour of duty in Afghanistan, have all been part of VOCA in many capacities. All of them have spent time in VOCA meetings and have wandered through numerous cemeteries around the state. All three of my children are more knowledgeable of historical burial grounds and their significance (much to their chagrin) than most Vermonters. On behalf of VOCA I have testified and participated in new legislation on cemeteries and been present in court rooms when these issues were debated. I have spoken with and/or corresponded with hundreds of people around the nation on a variety of subjects ranging from a cemetery commissioner in Arkansas asking about a pauper's burial ground, to a sheriff in Belfast, Maine inquiring about two old monuments that were stolen from Norwich, Vermont.

In every organization there are issues on personalities, policies, procedures etc. Some have been contentious and time consuming, but most have been settled with everyone being on the same page.

To answer the original question why I continue to volunteer for VOCA, it is because I truly enjoy working with the membership and making a difference in preserving Vermont's history. I hope everyone who is planning a 2012 spring cemetery restoration project has already started the process with signing up volunteers.

Long time editor and past treasurer, Harry Fisher has moved to Idaho and has given his notice that he will no longer be able to continue as our VOCA Editor and coordinator of the membership list. Harry was instrumental in and creating the Leon Dean Fund and keeping VOCA finances in order. As editor, he received numerous positive compliments on his newsletter and he told me that he found doing the newsletter a "labor of love." His boundless energy and willingness to help out the organization on so many levels will be greatly missed.

I will personally miss his friendship and the assistance he provided to me. If you are interested in helping out the organization by volunteering to be VOCA's new editor, give Harry and/or officer a call or email. VOCA runs totally on volunteers, please consider becoming our new editor or assistant editor.

If interested in hiring a Vermont Department of Correction work crew for the 2012 year, please contact Rutland County Field Director, Keith Tallon at (802)786-5099. The DOC work crew program continues to be popular with many different organizations and is in great demand statewide.

Our Fall meeting will be in Addison, VT. And VOCA's 1st VP Diane Leary is coordinating the arrangements. A variety of hot dishes, salads, pickles etc. and desserts with coffee, tea, milk, ice water and usually lemonade will be available. The cost will be \$10.00 per person, all you can eat. Make the check out to the Addison Community Baptist Church 183 King Hill Road, Addison, Vermont 05491. The church is on the southwest corner of Route 17 and 22 A intersections. Route 17 is the East/ West route to the Champlain Bridge, now the Ferry. Folks from the North need to take the right off Route 7 in Ferrisburgh and take 22 A through Vergennes and up the hill on the south side of Otter Creek to Addison. The intersection is also called Addison Four Corners by the locals. From the South, depending on how far East or West of due south you are it is Route 22A to the intersection, or Route 30 to Route 17West or Route 7 to Route 17West.

I am always willing to give a VOCA presentation and if you are aware of an organization that would be interested, let me know. Please check your address label and see if your membership will expire this year and consider doing a five year membership renewal. If you have any questions or concerns regarding VOCA please contact me at tgifvt@msn.com or (802) 773-3253.

Tom Giffin

The following item was provided by Miriam Herwig:

In the 1940's on the third Monday in August, the country folks around our community of Dresden, Tennessee, would stop their work and bring hoes, shovels, axes, crosscut saws and all their old broken dishes, along with a basket of food for lunch, to the Graveyard Cleanup.

It was like a reunion, seeing all the kinfolk and neighbors, and each graveyard had a set time to gather. Everyone worked to scrape the gravestones clean of grass and weeds that had grown in a year's time. Tree limbs were trimmed and fences repaired to keep cattle from wandering onto the graves. Children were taught that it was a dishonor to step on the grave.

A delicious meal was set on wagon beds; fried chicken, homemade biscuits, corn bread, fresh corn on the cob, cakes and pies of dried apples and peaches.

After the meal and the work were done, pieces of the broken dishes were placed on the graves for decoration and to keep the grass and weeds from growing.

The work was enjoyable, and all the children felt useful and needed.
(Story as told by Jessie Mansfield Dresden, Tennessee)

Ever wonder what to Do, Say, and Wear at Funerals?

By [Sue Fox](#)

Going to funerals or memorial services can be uncomfortable for some people because of the emotions involved. Knowing what to do and say at funerals — and what to wear — can ease the discomfort.

When in doubt about going, do try to attend the service. Generally, the more difficult the situation, the more the family will appreciate your presence and your words of support.

Your willingness to go out of your way to say a word or two of comfort will be very much appreciated.

These services provide a sense of completion, a process for mourning, and comfort for the living. The outpouring of grief and support for the family enables them to eventually go on with their own lives.

Attending a funeral or memorial service

In many cultures, the first event that follows a death is a *visitation, calling, or wake* — a courtesy call at the funeral home prior to the funeral. The casket is present (open or closed), with flowers on display, and the family receives visitors who come to greet them and offer words of comfort and support.

A *funeral or memorial service* may be a very public event, attended by family, friends, colleagues, neighbors, and even acquaintances. A eulogy, prayers, or other funeral customs are observed. Because the immediate family may be overwhelmed, you need only to greet the mourners and briefly offer condolences. Most important for the family is the knowledge of your presence. (If the service is private, those attending will be notified personally, usually by telephone.)

Burials usually follow funerals. Some cultures consider it a sign of respect to deposit a ceremonial shovel of earth into the grave. This ceremony is initiated by a member of the family and followed by others. If you were close to the deceased, you may take your turn.

In almost all cultures, taking a meal in the company of close friends and family is a symbol of the continuation of life and a moment of separation from the intense details of the death, funeral, and burial. Recalling fond memories of the deceased may inspire smiles and even laughter at this gathering — this behavior is perfectly acceptable.

Expressing condolences at a funeral

Most people are at a loss for words when it comes to comforting someone who is grieving. If you don't know what to say, start with these thoughts:

- You're so sorry to hear this sad news.
- The deceased will be sorely missed by friends and colleagues.
- How much you loved this person and how bereaved you feel.

You know how much the deceased loved and cared for the people who are left behind.

- The grief you feel for the person who is left behind.
- What a wonderful person the deceased was.

Recounting anecdotes, warm remembrances, and stories about the deceased is a kind thing to do. Remembering the person's accomplishments and all that person meant to you and did for you, and sharing that with the family, is very important and much appreciated.

The etiquette of consoling a dear one is the etiquette of genuine affection. Do what you can to comfort and assist the survivors, and be alert for an indication that your attentions have been gratefully received and are no longer necessary. Sometimes people need to work things out for themselves.

What to wear to a funeral

In Western society, black has long been the traditional color for mourning. However, wearing black isn't required any longer. Wearing a color other than black isn't a sign of disrespect, as long as the color isn't bright or wildly patterned. In many cultures, red is a color for festivals and would be inappropriate for a funeral. Generally, play it safe with any dark or subdued color. Hats may be worn by women, and at Orthodox Jewish services, yarmulkes are worn by the men.

Dark suits and ties for men and dresses or suits for women are always appropriate.

Some religions impose strict standards of modesty on women. When in doubt, ask someone or do an Internet search. If you don't know whom to ask, make sure that the only skin you display at a funeral is from the neck up and the knees down.

What Do I Do When the Memorial Service is Over?

In a traditional funeral, the memorial service or burial service is followed by a less formal gathering. Held at the [funeral home](#), the house of a relative, or at a facility for hire, these gatherings almost always include food, friends, family, and the sharing of memories.

Because these gatherings tend to be small and private, it's important not to attend unless you have been invited. This is not the time to air personal grievances or harbor hurt feelings about who might or might not have wished you to attend, so please respect whatever wishes the family has laid out. If you are asked to attend, you might want to offer your services (either in the shape of a place to gather, refreshments, or to help even clean up afterward). There is no need to make a grand gesture, but demonstrating that you are willing to help out can go a long way in making things easier on the family.

What Happens Next?

For some people, it takes years and lots of outside support to fully heal from the death of a loved one; for others, it might be a transition best completed alone. The only thing you can really do is provide whatever support you can without being an additional burden.

This is also a good time to consider your own funeral pre-planning efforts. Life is never appreciated more than after the loss of someone you care about. It is a time for personal reflection, for putting your own affairs in order, and for determining how you intend to support your loved ones even after you're gone. You can't prevent death, and you can't always help others cope with it, but you can make it a little bit easier.

2011-2012 Headstones

Thomas Giffin, President, 61 East Washington St, Rutland VT, 05701 tgiftv@msn.com802-773-3253
 Diane Leary, 1st VP,..... 4670 Greenbush Rd, Charlotte, VT, 05445..... 802-881-1951
 Chris Book, Treasurer, 44 North Main St, Rutland, VT, 05701 802-773-6252
 Vacant!!!!!!!!!!!!, Grants Administrator Assistant,This could be you!!!!!!!!!!!!.....Vacant!!!!!!!!!!!!
 Arthur Hyde, 2nd VP&Grants Admin, 1991 Upper Plain, Bradford, Vt 05033 802-222-4088
 Harry Fisher, Membership& Newsletter Ed, P O Box 3282, Nampa, Idaho, 83653..... 800-675-8815
 Merci Fisher, Assistant Newsletter Ed., PO Box 3282, Nampa, Idaho, 83653.....800-675-8815
 Justin Giffin, Asst Treas, 61 E Washington St, Rutland, VT justingiff@hotmail.com..... 802-779-1671
 Charles E Marchant, Sec, P O Box 132, Townshend Vt, 05353cemassoc@svcable.net.....802-365-7937
 Edmund Wilcox, Exe Board, 4996 Georgia Shore Rd., St Albans Vt, 05478802-524-3318

WEB MASTER

Darryl Harris webmaster@voca58.org
VOCA Website www.voca58.org

FOOTSTONES

2012 **Wesly Mowry, P O Box 297, Hartland, VT, 05048**802-436-3383
 2011 **Richard Howrigan, P O Box 16, Fairfield Vt, 05455**802-827-6513
 2010 **Robert Hooper, 44 Charity St, Burlington Vt, 05401** hooper9999@aol.com802-862-0708
 2010 **Vacant**Are you the one we are looking for?.....
 2010 **Ruth Barton, P O Box 309, Putney, Vt, 05301**802-254-1128
 2011 **Chris Book, 44 N Main, Rutland, VT, 05701**802-773-6252

Vermont Old Cemetery Association is a non-profit organization founded in 1958 to “encourage the restoration and preservation of neglected and abandoned cemeteries in the State of Vermont”. Meetings are held twice yearly on the 1st Saturday in May and October. The VOCA newsletter is published by the editor four times a year to coincide with the seasons. The IRS granted VOCA tax exempt status 3/21/1969 (Ref BUR EO59-26)

VOCA Books For Sale

The 3rd edition of “Burial Grounds of Vermont”, lay-flat binding \$35.
 Addendum to 1st & 2nd editions \$4.00, “Stones&Bones”, a teacher’s resource packet \$24.00. These prices include shipping costs; we are not required to collect Vt sales tax. Send check made out to “VOCA” and a return address label, if possible, to “ Charles E Marchant, VOCA Secretary, P O Box 132, Townshend, Vermont, 05353”

VOCA County Representatives

***** These are people who will come help you with your VOCA grant application *****

Addison- Betty R Bell 802-453-3947	Grand Isle- vacant
Bennington – Jean Kosche – 802-447-2241	Lamoille- Deanna French 802-888-4537
Orange- Arthur Hyde 802-222-4088	Orleans- Wanda Webster 802-525-3550
Caledonia – vacant	Rutland- Cliff Giffin 802-773-3743
Chittenden- Robert Hooper- 802-862-0708	Washington- Vacant
Essex- Richard Colburn- 802-723-4833	Windham- Charles Marchant 802-365-7937
Franklin- Edmund Wilcox- 802-524-3318	
Windsor- Ken Barrett- 802-875-2941	

Circle One

Renewal + member number / Change of address / New member

Name _____ member # _____

Address _____

Town/City _____

State _____ zip _____

Telephone # _____

e-mail _____

Dues are for calendar year: 1 year \$10.00, 5 years \$40.00 and lifetime is \$140.00

**** A new member joining in Oct or Nov or Dec will have dues applied to the following year ****

Make check payable to VOCA, mail to: Chris Book, VOCA Treasurer, 44 North Main Street, Rutland, Vermont 05701

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