

# Connecticut Gravestone Network

"Preserving and protecting Connecticut's old burial grounds and cemeteries"

Volume 9, No. 1

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CGN 135 Wells, Manchester, Ct. 06040-6127

Exec. Dir. Ruth Shapleigh-Brown 860-643-5652

[www.ctgravestones.com](http://www.ctgravestones.com)



Above photo of East Hartford's Lantern Tour see inside.

## Exec. Director's Appreciation

Welcome to a new year. I would start off my saying thank you to all of you who responded to the last newsletter by sending in dues, your supportive comments, stories for the newsletter and offers of help. I've got CGN off to a strong start this year and I hope the membership will do their best to attend at least one of the spring programs.

This issue will feature stories of the successful programs held on the eastern side of the state past fall. The next issue will feature items concerning gravestones themselves, maintenance, treatment, abuse, removal – how it affects history. Again, thanks for your positive response and keep it coming.

## **Note with dues check OK.**

Some of you have again stated that you do not like tearing off the back page of newsletter to send in with your dues payment. Please note that if you do not have access to a copier, a handwritten note, stating date and

purpose for payment with your check, will be accepted.

## **CGN Meeting**

**March 9 1-3pm**  
**CGN Exhibit Reception and**  
**Museum Tour**  
**Lebanon Historical Society Museum**

All are invited to attend a gathering and reception to celebrate the opening of a spring CGN gravestone exhibit held at the new Lebanon Historical Society Museum. We will have a brief business meeting at 1 p.m. followed by time for CGN sharing and touring the historical Lebanon collections. For CGN members there will be two TV/Video set ups to view various video selections on cemetery projects and topics. The meeting and reception will be open to the general public as well.

Other current exhibits are "Turning the Soil: The Land and People of Lebanon", "From Home Front to Battlefield: Lebanon WWII" and "The Grant Huntington Retrospective", and a library. The Lebanon Historical Museum is located at 856 Trumbull Hwy. (Rt .87) Lebanon, Ct. –across from Town Green, on the north side of jct. of 207. For more information on LHS programs or their historic sites call 860-642-6579 or visit them at [www.lebanonct.org](http://www.lebanonct.org). If a snow date is needed check CGN web site, notice will be on the event calendar or call Ruthie at 860-643-5652 that morning.

Regular LHS Museum Hours are:

Wednesday 9 am. – 1 p.m.

Saturday 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.  
Other hours by appointment.

## **CGN 2003 SYMPOSIUM**

**April 26 – 9am – 3pm**  
**Wapping Community Church**  
**South Windsor, Ct.**

Yes, we are giving it another go. We do need membership support especially in the area of advertising to bring in a good attendance. Our past symposiums have always been the best seminar experience in the area for gravestone and cemetery history, education and general interest. The emphasis this year will be on sharing information, software preferences, and techniques regarding new computer technology available for documentation, recording, presenting and storing your family or community cemeteries. We will have sessions for discussion and presentation of various types of technology and programs. We welcome any person or group to register for a table to display books and photos of their cemetery, cemetery project or cemetery interest in art. We already have some artists, cemetery associations and book vendors registered. Our only criteria is that all displays must stay related to gravestones or cemeteries.

The Wapping Community Church is a perfect setting complete with large community room, side rooms for presentations, easy parking and cemetery on site, and we appreciate their willingness to work with us on this venture.

To date, scheduled will be presentations on; a Visit to Cedar Hill Cemetery in Hartford, The Joseph Peters Gravestone Investigation, How to Photograph Gravestones, Professional Old Stone Repair Q&A, Teaching Children in an Outdoor Museum and a Basic Conservation Session with introduction to some Connecticut carvers. The Old Wapping Cemetery is located right next to the church for self guided touring as well as a video tour arranged by Richard Lyman, Director of the New Wapping Cemetery Association. New Wapping Cemetery is located just a 1/4 mile up from the church. Lunch will be made available for a small charge courtesy of the church members.

Table space registration is \$10 for displays and \$15 for those selling items. Registration is payable by April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2002. Available tables are 8 ft in length (some can be shared) will be assigned as registration commitments are received. Admission will be \$4 for dues paying members and \$6 for others, payable at the door. Please check our web site's event calendar for details and updated information on programs offered as plans are still being mapped out. Flyers will be ready by March and enclosed in the next newsletter.

**Those interested in circulating information prior to then please contact Ruthie for the updated program details. All help to advertise this event in organizational newsletters, local Historical Society's and libraries etc. is needed and welcome.**

### **Special Donations Received in 2002**

CGN would like to thank Mr. Christopher G. Burt of Burt Realty in East Hampton, CT for his extremely generous donations to support the repair of the Joseph Peters stone and the genealogical investigation to have Joseph's remains removed to a family burying ground. The full story will be presented at the April Symposium. Also this fall we received another donation from ConneCTions Recep-

tive Services, a Themed Tour business in Darien, C. The letter stated" the proceeds from a donation of \$1 each from the 100 men, women and children who participated in the Lantern Light walk in Norwich, Ct... The historic value of Connecticut graveyards plays a part in many of our themed tours...we support your work and mission."

## **Eastern Ct. has Busy Fall season**

### **Old Kinne Cemetery Celebration Voluntown, CT. Sept.28, 2002**

Photos taken by Ruth at the rededication of the Old Kinne Cem. Route 165 Voluntown, CT

General Ebenezer Huntington Society, Children of the American Revolution, under the direction of DAR lady Iva Arpin, historical leaders, and volunteers from the town of Voluntown were very proud on this day of

history. "Iva contacted me a few years ago to tell me about this site and asked me to look at it with her," he said. "I've driven by here many times and I was certain there was no cemetery. Iva took me here to look at it and I was flabbergasted. It was completely overgrown."



I saw gravestones covered in plants and leaves." Wilber said he became involved in the restoration effort and



celebration and over 50 people tended and. the cemetery never looked so good. The ceremony consisted of words of gratitude from Iva, Voluntown's 1st Selectman, Tom Wilber, and CGN's Ruth Brown to all those that have been involved and supported this project throughout the last two years. The first selectman spoke on behalf of the town to remind Voluntown residents and the Connecticut community of how important it is to preserve the state's

he assisted the team in excavating the grounds. He said the town also has funds set aside in its budget to help maintain these cemeteries, and he believes there are still cemeteries in town that remain to be discovered. Many of them are in the (Pachaug) State Forest. We want to get the state involved with helping us find those as well, so we can keep restoring them." A new resident to the town remarked that he was very pleased

with the attitude the community has toward its history.

More than 50 headstones were retrieved, including numerous field stone markers and two other gravesites that had never been documented. For example a Kinne brother and sister who died tragically. A 6-year-old girl, Happy Ann Kinne, daughter of Joel and Catherine Kinne, was inside a building used to store gunpowder when the building blew up. Six years later, her 17-year old brother, John Kinne, fell on his gun and was fatally shot in his side.

The CAR members contributed beautifully to the celebration by singing traditional patriotic songs, demonstrating a gun salute. One item of entertainment that Ruthie found most interesting was a musical piece done on a Bowed Psaltery, which is a colonial precursor and relative to a violin. A wonderful letter written by Terri Kula (who couldn't attend but was a right arm helper during the early work done at the cemetery) was read by Iva.



All were proud; Lady Iva most of all. And well she should be. Iva Arpin (also a Kinne family researcher and descendant) has dedicated herself to DAR, CAR, genealogy studies and instilling the importance of our founding history upon our children through their interest and pride in such projects and undertakings. Thank you all. by Ruth Brown



Above is picture of Old Kinne Cem.

### **Bozrah Forgotten Patriots Remembered – Sept. 29, 2002**

When Hugh and Barbara Moore of Middletown, RI discovered that four of their ancestors served in the Revolutionary War they found the graves were not recognized as veterans. They decided to correct this injustice of history.

The four veterans, David Gardner Jr., 3<sup>rd</sup> Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment, Continental Line, CT under Capt. John Durkee and Col. Israel Putnam; his brother, Isaac Gardner; and two cousins, Jonathon Gardner Jr. and William Gardner, all were part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Regiment, CT Militia, under Capt. Nehemiah Waterman and Col. Samuel Abbot and are all buried in the Gardner-Bulkeley cemetery in Bozrah.

Barbara, who's maiden name was Gardner, wrote to the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution in Washington when she found out the men had not been recognized as veterans. Hugh remarked that his wife put in hours of research over a period of six years tracing her family tree back to the Gardner line that served in the Revolutionary War. The Moores then visited the Bozrah site

expecting to find veterans markers, assuring them of this connection. To

their disappointment there was not a marker, plaque or even a flag to clue anyone in that these men had fought bravely for our country's freedoms. Barbara herself is a member of the Aquidneck Island Chapter of DAR and she contacted the group's national headquarters in Washington and obtained official national recognition and the graves are now marked with engraved brass plaques with flag holders attached.

A wonderful patriotic ceremony was given and well attended by local folks and area DAR and CAR members participating in songs and readings of the era.

Ruth felt very fortunate to have met Hugh and Barbara as they also attended the Voluntown celebration. They were very dedicated and cordial couples that were a real treat to have met.

### **Lisbon, CT DAR Rededicates Revolution Gravesite**

A Revolutionary War veteran's gravesite at Ames Cemetery, which is located off Route 169 in Lisbon, was rededicated on Saturday Oct. 19, 2002. A ceremony was held by the Faith Trumbull Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

The veteran, Lt. Simon Perkins, was a Lisbon native who served in the French and Indian War and the American Revolution, so states Tucker Fox Hentz of Austin, Texas. While researching his family tree, Hentz discovered he was the fifth great-grandson of Simon Perkins and also found that he had many other family members buried in Ames Cemetery. Perkins, who died in 1778 of dysentery, was a veteran, but his gravestone did not attest to this, as it should have.

In order to become a member of the Sons of the American Revolution, Hentz had to prove a direct bloodline to an ancestor who had fought in the American Revolution. Our CGN, DAR cemetery veteran Iva Arpin of Griswold, is a member of the Norwich based chapter which hosted the rededication service. Iva explains "I received a call from a man in Texas last spring asking me to look at the gravestone," she said. "He said he was researching his family and believed that Simon was a veteran." Iva went out to the gravesite and saw that the original stone was quite deteriorated from the elements. Most of the lettering on the gravestone was illegible, but she said she could make out enough to find the name Perkins'. She and Hertz decided to restore the historic information and recognize Perkins for the veteran he was.

Hentz purchased and had a new stone placed to recognize Perkins not only as a Revolutionary War veteran but also stating that the Gen. Ebenezer Huntington Society of the Children of the American Revolution of Norwich had a hand in helping to restore the gravesite and set the new stone. Hentz had this new stone shipped from Texas. The comical part was that this very large stone came to Iva's house for delivery via UPS. The UPS driver had to admit that never before had he delivered such an unusual package.

Hentz could not attend the ceremony but sent a speech to be read. "The American Revolution was in many

ways our country's first civil war and it eventually became the first true world war," he wrote. "Today, we are here to remember my ancestor, Lt. Simon Perkins, one of those many courageous individuals to whom we owe a most solemn debt. Of course, as history has shown, his ultimate sacrifice and that of so many others helped guarantee this victory for his children and their future generations."

Dr. Albert Gosselin Sr. and his wife Laura Gosselin of Lisbon, members of the Lisbon Historical Society, also attended the ceremony. They were quite pleased with the whole affair and agreed that it is important that the community recognize local history. "We don't remember enough," Laura Gosselin said. "People kind of forget about it."

### **Lewis Cemetery Restoration** **Voluntown, Ct.**

Ruth can remember visiting this cemetery several years ago when Dr. Patricia Thevenet first located it and had concerns of it being lost to history because of the sad and almost invisible state it had succumbed to. At a quick glance it was impossible to see evidence of this overgrown graveyard just yards off to the east side of Bassett Road. Then the sun's light would glint a broken stone leaning up against a tree just right and from there through the thick layer of leaves one would find a gravestone lying on the ground, broken or one that had simply fallen and become buried over time. That was back in 1998.

Each year volunteers and family members have been working to clear the land, cut saplings, rake the leaves, rake the leaves again, and so on, to bring the cemetery back into being and back into history.

The Jewett City/Lisbon Reminder carried this past year a nice article on these efforts. Terri Kula joined Pat and the Thevenet family and went to work. Terri has become a very dedicated cemetery preservationist and likes doing the hard labor to make

things right again. She not only rakes and cuts small trees but has also become our gravestone cleaner of the east, straightens them up and does repairs when possible.

Keeping the brush down was the first major undertaking; it took four truckloads one fall to clean the ground off. Then the following spring Terri began probing and trying to find missing head stones and footstones. As many stones had come out of the ground or had been broken, they were at some point leaned up against trees. While an obvious measure to protect them, it also meant that many had been moved from their original positions.

Terri tells us that, according to the locals, neighborhood children used to play there years ago. (Not an uncommon happening whether rural or city as we have this same written history in our Old South Cemetery in Hartford.) Finally the overgrowth of poison ivy drove them off.

Terri went to work setting straight what she could and then she and Pat placed an article in the local paper asking for volunteers. They were fortunate because several local folks did respond and become part of the work crew. Alex Macko of Griswold volunteered to cut huge roots so that some stones could be set and he helps with repairs. Woody Benson of Voluntown cut down 10 trees, cut them up and hauled them away as well as a lot of brush away from the walls. Judy Gluck came to help rake. Later town workers, Lester Davis and Ronald Millovitch, removed some large trees, brush and dropped off some pea stone for Terri to reset some stones in.

To date someone has offered to give us an iron gate for the entrance, and the town put up a small sign marking the site They still have some stones missing and three more to be reset. One broken large headstone is unfortunately missing the piece that has the words on it. Terri will continue her search for that one this coming spring.

Unfortunately the photos from the newspaper article will not copy well for our newsletter but Ruth will attest to the fact that it was quite an undertaking (as so many out in our rural areas) and this group deserves credit for a fantastic job and remarkable transition.

Anyone interested may call 860-376-2902.

Story by Terri Kula and Ruth Brown



Above picture is Fred Bitgood with Barbell Stones

### **Bitgood Family Visits Family Cemeteries in Voluntown**

Our May 26, 2002 family reunion was a huge success. We had about 30 or so Bitgoods meet at the Pachaug State Forest campground on Sunday. This was the first Bitgoods reunion and many had never met each other before. What a joy it was for me to meet cousins in the flesh and to learn family history from each other. Late in the afternoon we set out to find our family cemeteries.

Before we go further we must sidetrack for a moment. Elmer Bitgood is a cousin of mine who died about the time I was born. He and his brother were well known all over Eastern Conn. and Rhode Island. Elmer was most noted for making barbells of huge rocks with metal bars between them, and he was able to lift these weights, one of his many interesting and unusual feats. The Norwich Bulletin, Yankee magazine and other publications have written articles of his feats. These original masterpieces are located up on the Nieminen farm

at 222 Brown Road. in Voluntown. Elmer Bitgood is buried in Robbins Cemetery in Voluntown.

There are three Bitgood cemeteries that we knew of, and we also attempted to find the Elmer Bitgood barbells but were given the wrong directions and were not able to find them. The day was already getting dark, as we had to give up our search. My nephew, my family and I all decided to start very early the next morning to find the cemeteries and started out right after breakfast.

There are three Bitgood Cemeteries in Voluntown, according to the listing at the Connecticut State Library. The first one we found with no trouble at all as several people had found

this cemetery last year. This cemetery was listed as Bitgood cemetery #2. When we found it last year but it turned out to be not cemetery #2, but the listing # 25 in the cemetery listings in my family catalogue, described as Round Hill cemetery, south side of road, Old Shetucket Turnpike.

This cemetery has two crosses standing upright. The right cross names a Joel Bitgood with the death date of 1742. We could not make out the birth date and the other cross had no name listed on it. We surmised it was Joel's wife. All the rest of the graves, maybe 20 or so, are marked simply with a flat piece of rough stone set upright with no markings. The underbrush and trees has grown up so much we could not tell just how deep these stones went down into the ground. The cemetery is on top of the round hill and at the southwest corner at the bottom of the hill was the remainder of what appeared to be a root cellar. Many years ago there must have been a house on that very spot.

Several stonewalls also surround the site. We really have our work cut out for us to study this cemetery, to try and find out just who is buried there and who are Bitgood ancestors.

The next cemetery we visited was #13 in the Bitgood manual and was described as in the northeast part of town. This cemetery, the Bitgood/Pratt cemetery, is known quite well in our genealogy report but we did have a little problem finding it. When we did so we were overwhelmed to find stones that still could be read. John Bitgood, our patriarch, John Bitgood 2, and all of the Bitgood's direct ancestors are buried in this cemetery. There are some Pratts buried there also hence the name Bitgood/ Pratt cemetery. The two families apparently intermarried years ago. This property is next to the former Bitgood and Pratt homesteads and. I could not help but have tears in my eyes when I stood before the John Bitgood stone and retraced my ancestry.

First of my Father, Joseph Bitgood, then my Grandfather, Joel K Bitgood, then my Great Grandfather, Elisha Bitgood, then my Great Great grandfather John Bitgood 2 and finally my G-G-G Grandfather John Bitgood. My father, my Grandfather, and my Great Grandfather are all buried in Robbins cemetery, and the two John Bitgoods buried up here. All of this property is now owned by the state of Connecticut and is now part of the Pachaug State forest.

This being Memorial Day we had to stop our search because I was in the hometown parade, which started at Robbins cemetery for the services, followed by a parade down town. It started at 2 p.m. and it lasted till about 5 pm. While at the veterans' memorial park a stroke of luck came my way. A man came over to me and told me his wife, who had lots of information on the Bitgoods, wanted to meet me and discuss them.

When they arrived at our campsite later she had a folder full of information about the Bitgood Genealogy,

and some pictures of the former Bitgood and Pratt Homesteads, and a small Bitgood school, one of those one-room schools you only hear about now.

Naturally these buildings are forever gone but what a treasure these pictures are. Then a small bombshell landed on us. My son asked this lady if she knew where Elmer Bitgoods *barbells* were and she said yes, they are up on her property on Brown Road.

We immediately drove there and were able to photograph and video tape them. For frosting on the cake this lady took us on a tour of the Wylie school on Rt 49 and Mason Grey road. This nice lady heads up the historical society and has keys to the one room school, the only one left in existence. By the time we got this all done we had to get back to our campground as it was getting dark, again!

Upon our return we were surprised to find a letter and directions to the Bitgood Cemetery # 2 listed as # 14 and described as on the Samuel Bitgood Farm. Samuel Bitgood was a son of John Bitgood 2. This letter was from Stan and Tammie Bitgood who were at the reunion. They remembered the location of this Cemetery after exploring Voluntown about 10 years ago. They describe the graves of Samuel and Susan Darius (Bitgood) 1833 and 1860.

Now we have located all three of the old Bitgood Cemeteries. Unfortunately we were unable to go and see this third cemetery as time to head back to Virginia so my grandson could get back to school the next day. However I have the map and good directions to get to this cemetery. I plan on mapping all three of these cemetery locations for my relatives.

I just wish I had known about these cemeteries some 30 years ago and had gotten interested in genealogy then. We could probably have all the graves identified by now. Maybe some of the younger Bitgoods will

take up the pursuit to try and identify the Bitgoods buried at the Samuel Bitgood Farm and the cemetery located on the round hill marked only by a cross with Joel Bitgood and a death date of 1742. By Wilfred Bitgood, and inquiries can be made to Fred at [frell@earthlink.net](mailto:frell@earthlink.net)



Gideon Olmstead

**EH Lantern Tour Oct. 5<sup>th</sup>, 2002**  
**A Great Success**

Exec. Director Ruth is also on the board of directors for Friends of Center Cemetery in East Hartford, and she is very pleased to tell you all that the October Lantern Tour she organized was a real success. Volunteers from the East Hartford Historical Society and Friends members teamed, up to be the “actors” who were impersonating various historic characters interred at Center Cemetery. Others worked as guides or greeters.

Some of the characters of interest were Colonial Governor Pitkin played by town politician and ancestor, Donald Pitkin, and his wife played by Mary Dowden who is the Friend’s historian, Pomp Equality, a colonial black property owner played by town councilman, Mr. Lee Griffin, the flamboyant Gideon Olmstead played by professional actor Dan McDermott, Mrs. Rogers whose husband invented the first steamboat in Connecticut and died at sea, was por-

trayed by EH Historical Society member Gretchen Tedeschi, Henry Brownell who lived in East Hartford, fought with Admiral Farragut and wrote the ode to John Brown, was portrayed by Friends own Craig Johnson. Also under The Civil War era and most popular were Kevin Johnson of the Ct. State Library who did the part of a black soldier (many commented that hearing his song – in the background in the night – was a fantastic feeling) and Mrs. Flint played by Jane Sabetelli, a Civil War reenactor who traveled all the way from Torrington to join us. Mrs. Flint’s part was especially popular to most visitors as her sad story took a while to unfold. She had died before her family, and proceeded to tell the audience how bad times were during the war and how of her children and husband had come to join her. *JUST to name a few highlights.*

The real topper for help with the event was having the aid of a professional seamstress who provided us with her expertise to attain some professional costumes. The audience really liked that extra touch. Thank you, costume lady, Pam.

By 7 p.m. we had people lined up out the gate and around the block. We had a total of at least 300 people who came through. For our first production we had some glitches but the town is still talking about it and asking us to do it again this fall.

Ruth is just as excited that so many people who attended said that they never realized how much history was right in their own town, and have shown an interest in coming to other cemetery events.

**History of the First Catholic**



## **Church and Cemetery** **In New Haven 1834 1848**

**By Anthony A. Griego**

The Rev. Bernard O’Cavanagh was the first resident priest in Connecticut. He made his home in Hartford on August 26, 1829. On Sunday, December 21, 1829, he said Mass in New Haven at the home of Mr. Newman. The first Catholic Church in Connecticut was located in Hartford as Holy Trinity Church.

The first resident priest in New Haven was Rev. James McDermott and his first wish was to build a church in New Haven. On May 9, 1833, Adolphus Michael Baguelin made a transfer of a lot on the corner of Whiting and Hill Streets to Bishop Fenwick for the sum of \$450.00. On September 24, 1833 this piece of land was given to Timothy Alling in exchange for a lot at the corner of York Street and Davenport Avenue, adjoining the land of Jannett Driscoll. A portion of this was set apart and became the first Catholic cemetery in New Haven. Burials here started in 1833 or 1834.

On this lot was erected the first Catholic Church in New Haven, the second in Connecticut. Newspaper accounts of that time reported that it was located on Mount Pleasant west of the New York Turnpike. (Davenport Ave.) According to an 1836 City of New Haven map, Davenport Ave. continued straight across and intersected on George Street between High and College Streets. Cedar Street did not exist yet. It was a wood frame building, sixty by thirty-five feet, exclusive of the sacristy, and twenty-two feet to the plates with one gallery. Building cost was placed at \$3000 dollars. The feast of the Ascension, May 8, 1834 was the date assigned for its dedication.

On May 8, 1834 at 10 o’clock Bishop Fenwick and Father McDermott along with many New Haven Catholics were in the church for the dedication. As the ceremony began the gallery gave way and fell into those assembled below. The gallery had been built for a choir of singers. One boy,

fourteen years old was killed instantly and many more were seriously hurt. The boy that was killed was Abraham Lloyd Bryan and the other victim was his grandfather, Mr. Hardyear, of West Haven who died the following day. Mr. Hardyear’s dying request was that he and his grandson, Abraham be buried together in the same grave. The next day both were buried together in the same grave in the small cemetery adjoining the church. Those seriously injured were Jane Taylor, Mary Collins and a Mrs. Hinman, wife of Deacon Socvil Hinman. All later recovered.

The cause of the disaster was ascribed to the carpenter who had constructed the gallery. The original plan had two Gothic columns to support it, but the carpenter deemed this unnecessary and instead he used trussing for support.

The Sunday following the disaster, May 11, Bishop Fenwick said Mass and dedicated the church as “Christ’s Church”. At that Mass Bishop Fenwick preached and administered confirmation to Margaret Finnegan, Margaret O’Leary, Ann Reynolds and Bridget Toohey.

In October 1834, Christ’s Church was broken into and the altar was stripped of its ornaments. The crucifix and silver chalice were stolen. The Protestants of New Haven were so upset by the theft that they presented the church with a handsome silver chalice to replace the one stolen.

On Sunday night, June 11, 1848 the Catholics of New Haven suffered yet another tragedy when a fire burned Christ’s Church to the ground. It was supposed at the time that the fire had been set. The church was valued at between \$8,000 and \$9,000, and was insured for \$5,500. The fire most likely destroyed church birth and burial records from 1834 – 1848.

The small cemetery remained at Davenport and South Streets

and was used for burials up until about 1851 when another site was purchased for a Catholic cemetery. The “West Bridge” purchased land and this area was blessed on September 1, 1851 as St. Bernard’s cemetery.

On Sunday, April 18, 1858 Bishop MacFarland laid the corner stone for St. John the Evangelist Church and on September 28, 1858 the church was dedicated. The church was located on the former site of the earlier Christ’s Church at Davenport and South Streets. The church was of the Celtic architecture, which prevailed throughout Ireland in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. The architect was P.C. Keely. Father John Smith, the first pastor of St. John’s church died in 1864. St. John’s second pastor was The Reverend Doctor Hugh Carmody.

New Haven’s first Catholic Church, Christ’s Church and the cemetery stood on the corner of Davenport and South Street facing what is now Cedar Street. Many years later St. John’s church was removed to make room for the Yale New Haven Hospital’s Emergency Department. Nothing remains today to mark these important locations of New Haven’s Catholic history.

*Eliot, S.H., The Attractions of New Haven, Connecticut, 1869*

*O’Donnell, James H. Rev., History of the Diocese of Hartford 1900*

*New Haven Palladium Republican, May 1834, Sterling Library Folio AN7.N37N3697 V.5*

*Duggan, Thomas Rev. D.D., The Catholic Church*



## Calendar of events

### CGN Meeting March 9 - 1 3 p.m.

#### **Exhibit Reception and**

#### **Museum Tour**

#### **Lebanon Historical Society Museum and Visitors Center**

All are invited to attend a gathering and reception to celebrate the opening of a spring CGN Gravestone exhibit held at the new Lebanon Historical Society's Museum. We will have a brief business meeting at 1 pm. followed by time for CGN sharing and touring the historical Lebanon collections. Two video/tv sets will available for members to view and share short tapes that Ruth has collected from members. Anyone having his own is welcome to bring it along for sharing. We do not have a scheduled snow date as of this time so call Ruth that morning if there is any question. 860-643-5652

### March 15 - April 1 2003 Gravestone Rubbing Exhibit

#### **Friends Room at**

#### **The Turner-Welles Library**

#### **2407 Main St., Glastonbury, Ct**

As part of their "Books Sandwiched In" Lecture Series The Friends of The Welles -Turner Library is sponsoring a program on Gravestone Art, featuring rubbings from the collection of Mrs. Margaret Berg of Glastonbury, CT. Margaret, a long time Association for Gravestone Studies member and a faithful Connecticut Gravestone Network member since its beginnings, will be displaying rubbings of stones dating 1648 – 1806 that she made from her 32 years of collecting and making rubbings on trips throughout New England. Margaret's technique was different from those made with the typical wax and paper. The technique she created over time and after experimenting with various dabbing methods is one using Japanese Oil Pastels on Silk Span Paper. Recently Margaret won the

Blue Ribbon Award at her housing complex when they had their Fall Art Exhibit.

The highlight of this exhibit will be on **Wednesday, March 19, 12- 1 p.m.**, when gravestone studies scholar and author **Laurel Gabel will do a slide presentation "Gravestones and The Stories They Tell"**.

The exhibit will be open to the public at the following times March 18<sup>th</sup> 1:30 to 4 p.m. and March 21<sup>st</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> 6 to 8 p.m. For more information: call the library at 860-652-7719 or programs schedule at the library web site [www.friendswtlib.org/Programs](http://www.friendswtlib.org/Programs). The Library is on Main St. just north of the Hebron Ave. intersection.

### March 13 - 7:30 pm.

#### The Cemeteries of South Windsor

#### **South Windsor Public Library**

#### **1550 Sullivan Ave.**

#### **South Windsor, Ct.**

Cemeteries of South Windsor sponsored by the South Windsor Historical Society and The South Windsor Public Library. The program will be held at 7:30p.m. at the South Windsor Public Library located at 1550 Sullivan Ave. South Windsor, Ct. (just past jct. of Ellington Rd.) behind Wapping Community Church.

Richard Lyman will be giving a presentation on the Old and New Wapping cemeteries and Ruth Shapleigh-Brown will be doing a short slide presentation covering some basic conservation questions as well as carvers and gravestones found in South Windsor, CT.

For more information call the Library at 860-644-1541

### April 6th at 1:30 pm.

#### Southington Cemetery Tour

#### **Quinnipiac Cemetery and**

#### **The Old Merriman Burying Ground.**

The group will meet at the Quinnipiac Cemetery at 1:30 p.m. which is located just off Interstate 84 at exit 30 on the west side of the highway. Join us as we walk around and read the

oldest stones. There is Barnabas Powers and his two, or is it three, wives? It would seem that two of his wives died in childbirth. There are wonderful examples of the Cowles family carvers in this yard. Come and make discoveries with us.

The Old Merriman Burying Ground is a rescue project adopted by the Southington Genealogy Association. They have worked at finding fragments and doing what they can to protect this old first settlers ground which has recently become very visible due to the development of a new housing project that has gone up around it.

It is located just a about a mile west of Quinnipiac Cemetery on Marion Rd. You'll also be passing Wonx Spring Cemetery along the way. Ray Thomas, Barbara Kerr and other members of the Southington Genealogy group will be on hand to tell you about their adventures and the history of Rev. Merriman who first lived in at this location and first interred at this burying ground.

Directions: Interstate 84 going east or west and take exit 30, turn west and the cemetery is on your right. There are two entrances, use the one further to the west and please remember not to block any roadways through the cemetery. We will go to the Merriman yard from there. Contact for this event is Ray Thomas: email [Ba-hai999@aol.com](mailto:Ba-hai999@aol.com)

### April 19 Saturday Workshop

#### **Killingworth, Ct.**

#### **Lane Cemetery**

#### **Killingworth Oct. Slide Program**

The Killingworth Historical Society had Ruth down for a presentation and they had a great turnout with lots of enthusiasm (and they didn't come because of Ruth's birthday, although they thoughtfully did surprise her with a lovely cake). The Historical Society has now planned to take that energy and sponsor a Workshop for this spring. Please see calendar of events on web site for details as they become available.

This little cemetery has many medium sized marble tablet stones that are in need of some help. Volunteers will be working with preservationist Ruth Shapleigh-Brown, to learn how to document, clean and reset these old markers restoring the value of one more historic cemetery.

## CGN Symposium 2003

**April 26 – 9am – 3pm**

**Wapping Community Church**  
**South Windsor, Ct.**

The Wapping Community Church is a perfect setting complete with large community room, side rooms for presentations, easy parking and cemetery on site, and we appreciate their willingness to work with us on this venture.

To date, the presentations scheduled will be a slide presentations; Visit to Cedar Hill Cemetery, The Joseph Peters Gravestone Investigation, How to Photograph Gravestones and a Stone Repair Q&A, Historic Learning through Rubbings, Basic Conservation and introduction to some Connecticut Carvers.

The Old Wapping Cemetery is located right next to the church for self guided touring as well as a video tour arranged by Richard Lyman who is director of the New Wapping Cemetery which is located just a 1/4 mile up from the church. Lunch will be made available for a small charge courtesy of the church members. Table registration is \$10 for displays and \$15 if selling items payable by April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2002. To register or make inquiries please contact Ruth Brown, address and phone on front page. Admission will be \$4 for dues paying members and \$6 for others, payable at the door.

**May 10 - Saturday - 10 am to 3 pm**  
**Work Day in Center Cemetery,**  
**East Hartford, CT**

Sponsored by the Friends of Center Cemetery, their annual spring Activity Day happening at the cemetery located on Main St. East Hartford,

CT. Volunteers from the Friends group will be there to greet you. Join us for a self-guided tour of our historic characters and gravestones,



Center Cemetery East Hartford - 2002 Activity Day

come to learn about the carvers, or lend a helping hand and work with us to straighten and repair stones that need attention. We welcome anyone to come and learn with us. We especially appreciate teachers who are looking for new material to come and explore our outdoor classroom with us. We would be happy to make arrangements to work with the local school system on programs.

From Interstate 84 west from Hartford take Connecticut Blvd. exit right after the Founders Bridge (stay in far right lane going over the bridge), follow Conn. Blvd. to end and turn left and you will pass Cemetery on your right, take next right into Walgreen's Drugstore. Park behind Walgreen's and walk around to the front gate.

For more information call Ruth Brown 860-643-5652 or contact her at [ctgravelady@cox.net](mailto:ctgravelady@cox.net) or call Doris Suessman 860-568-6178

**May 18<sup>th</sup> - Sunday 12:30pm - 3pm**  
**Carver Tour and Social**  
**Tolland South Cemetery**  
**Tolland, Ct.**

Join us for a social gathering and exploring at Tolland's South Cemetery.

CGN members and anyone else interested in joining us for a walk about in Tolland's South cemetery on Cider Mill Rd. We'll have the mirrors and

snacks; you bring your camera, beverage, and a friend. And an interest in carvers. South Cemetery has a nice collection of sandstones and schist with a good carver variety. Here you will find Ezra Stebbins, Aaron Haskins and Manning examples (who is who) plus several by the Bucklands: Most are attributed to William but just how many were Peter's? Loomis, and earlier carvers like Hovey, Collins and let's not forget one by the Tolland Ghost carver? Who can find that one? There is a large (6'+) schist stone by the Mannings there that has a wonderful epitaph - if only we could read it... want to try? Let's have some fun.

North of I-84 in Tolland, Cider Mill Rd. intersects with Old Post Rd. and Merrow Rd. (Rt. 195) just south the town Green, go south and under the highway (bear left if there's a decision to be made) and the cemetery is just on your left. The exit off 84 onto 195 going north or south is exit 68, and you'd be heading east and just about 1/2 mile up the hill (it comes up very quickly) is Cider Mill Rd. on your left.

For more information or to RSVP  
tour host, Becky Krassumann, at av-  
plus@cox.net