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## Association for Gravestone Studies e-Newsletter

Issue #65

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## Call for Papers: AGS Conference 2009

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**CALL FOR PAPERS**

AGS Conference 2009  
 June 24-28, 2009  
 Union College  
 Schenectady, New York

Proposals are solicited for scholarly papers, 20 minutes in length, to be presented during the evening and daytime lecture sessions. Please send your proposal and 250-word abstract by January 1, 2009 to: Program Chair: Dr. Ian Brown, [ibrown@bama.ua.edu](mailto:ibrown@bama.ua.edu).

Proposals are solicited for Participation Sessions, classes of 50 minutes in length, to be presented Wednesday morning and afternoon, June 24. Please send your proposal and a 250-word abstract by January 1, 2009 to: Participation Sessions Chair: Frank Calidonna, [frankc@twcny.rr.com](mailto:frankc@twcny.rr.com).

## AGS to be at Archaeological Institute of America Fair

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 Please join us at The Second Annual Archaeological Institute of America and the [Museum of Science Family Archaeology Fair](#) to be held on Saturday, October 11, 2008, from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM at the Boston Museum of Science.

We will be presenting a hands on program of designing and etching on slate, as well as, a rubbing class. Come celebrate Archaeology Month with us and bring the whole family.

The event is FREE with admission to the Museum.

## Query: Location of a Monument

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 This query comes from Bob Arr. He writes: "Two years ago I came across an internet blog that contained the following photo of a sculpture. The blog itself recounted the writer's beloved grandmother, long gone, but it fit perfectly with the sculpture. In a word, I was blown away.

It has taken me this long to make contact with the author, and unfortunately, she doesn't remember just where she found the image. Here's what she says:

'I, too, love the sculpture you have named 'Death's Kiss.' The moment I saw it, I felt my heart open, stretch, squeeze. . . such poignant beauty. I found it when searching under the subject title 'graveyard art.' I'm sorry, but I didn't save the exact site and can't recall the name of it. I seem to remember that it is a gravestone sculpture found in an old cemetery somewhere in the southern states. . . Georgia, maybe.'

Can you help me find the location of this sculpture?  
 Bob Arr, [bobarr@mindspring.com](mailto:bobarr@mindspring.com)."



*Death's Kiss*

**Query: "SCS" on a Celtic Cross**



This query comes from AGS member Sue Lorraine. She writes: "On a Celtic cross in Little Falls, New York, each of the four gospel writers have their usual square with animal figure. This particular one also has their names but above each name is 'SCS.' Can anyone tell me what the 'SCS' means?"  
-Sue Lorraine, [slorraine@roadrunner.com](mailto:slorraine@roadrunner.com)."

**Request for Proposals to Prepare a Burial Ground Preservation Master Plan**

The Town of Sandwich, Massachusetts is seeking proposals from a qualified consultant to prepare a Preservation Master Plan for the Sandwich Old Town Burial Ground. The scope of the project shall include documentation, evaluation, recommendations for preservation approaches, and a grave marker inventory. The Master Plan shall also include specific recommendations for sensitive routine maintenance by the Town, which will serve as a template for other town owned burial grounds as well. The Master Plan's recommendations should include preservation standards applicable to this major contributing National Register District Site.

Request for Proposal documents may be obtained at Sandwich Town Hall, 130 Main

Street, Sandwich MA 02563, (508) 888-5144, or via e-mail sent to [townhall@townofsandwich.net](mailto:townhall@townofsandwich.net), beginning Monday September 29, 2008 at 9:00am. Proposals shall be received no later than Friday October 31, 2008 at 4:00pm at Sandwich Town Hall, 130 Main Street, Sandwich, MA 02563. Proposals will not be opened publicly.

The Town of Sandwich reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part and to make awards in a manner deemed in the best interest of the Town.

### **AGS Member in the News: Robert Carlson**

AGS member Robert Carlson was featured in the September 2008 issue of *The Cape Cod Voice* magazine. The article discussed his preservation work in Barnstable County, Massachusetts cemeteries. The issue will be available by download soon at: [www.capecodvoice.com](http://www.capecodvoice.com). You have to register to view archived issues, but registration is free.

### **New Publication: *Translating Tombstones***

*Translating Tombstones: Your Guide to Symbolism and Meaning in the Cemetery*, by AGS member Minda Powers-Douglas is now available.

Book description: "A dove? An anchor? A book? A skull and crossbones? You can find these and many, many other symbols on tombstones, but what do they mean? Cemeteries are fascinating places filled with history, art and meaning. The symbols carved on tombstones say a lot about the people who are buried in our eternal parks. This book will explain the meanings behind the symbols and help you understand the special language of tombstones."

The book is an 88-page soft cover in 6x9" format for easy carrying in your tote. It sells for \$18.95 (\$15 for book, \$3.95 s/h).

To order, visit [www.TheCemeteryClub.com](http://www.TheCemeteryClub.com).

### **New Publication: *Westfield Massachusetts-Stories Carved in Stone***

*Westfield Massachusetts - Stories Carved in Stone*, a new book by Bob Clark, takes you into Westfield's graveyards for a look at more than three hundred fifty years of history, and the people who lived it.

This fifth book in the *Stories Carved in Stone* series continues to explore the fascination with early colonial America in the Connecticut River valley. Together these books present an interesting picture of the early settlers, the gravestone carvers, and early headstone art. Gravestone fans and genealogists alike will find much to explore in these old cemeteries. It contains an extensive index of local family names and places.

It retails for \$15.95. To order, or receive more information on this book and the rest of the *Stories Carved in Stone* series, please visit:

<http://www.dogpondpress.net/wfdstone.html>.

### **Cemetery Tours: Westfield, Massachusetts**

As part of The 5th annual Westfield Colonial Harvest Day on Sunday, September

28th, the Mechanic Street Cemetery, also known as the Old Burying Ground, will be open for tours from 12 noon until 4:00 PM. Historical Commission members will be on hand with information about some of the historic gravestones in the cemetery.

For the most up-to-date information, visit the "Westfield on Weekends" website at [www.westfieldonweekends.org](http://www.westfieldonweekends.org).

### **Music Inspired by Gravestone Inscriptions**

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 Martha Gallagher wrote to the AGS office about her songs inspired by gravestone inscriptions. She writes: "I am a Celtic harper, singer and songwriter, based in the Adirondack region of New York state. I have long loved to wander in cemeteries and love collecting headstone inscriptions. Two years ago I received a grant to write and present concerts of original music inspired by headstone inscriptions; a project called 'Songs from the Stones.' It has turned out to be a very well received collection of music.

You can hear the music online by visiting my website, [www.adkharper.com](http://www.adkharper.com).

'Songs from the Stones' are available on CD. I offer concerts of the music, which include stories of the cemeteries and inscriptions that inspired the songs."

### **Articles and Websites about Missouri Cemeteries**

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 Donna Volkenannt wrote an article on Bellefontaine and Calvary Cemeteries which appeared in *The Ozark Mountaineer Magazine*, Sept./Oct. 2007 issue, pp. 26-29. To order copies, go to this website: [www.ozarksmountaineer.com](http://www.ozarksmountaineer.com).

There are photos of several monuments, such as General William Clark's bust, the David Rowland Francis gravesite, the Griesedieck monument at "Brewers Row" and the Anheuser-Busch family mausoleum, all at the Bellefontaine Cemetery in the northern part of St. Louis, MO.

Volkenannt also included information about General William Tecumseh Sherman's marker, Dred Scott, Auguste Chouteau, Tennessee Williams and other notables who are buried in the Calvary Cemetery, also in St. Louis. The Calvary Cemetery website includes a virtual tour of the grounds, [www.stlcathcem.org](http://www.stlcathcem.org).

Kansas City's Union Cemetery Historical Society website features history of the cemetery, a virtual tour, and links to its newsletters. Visit: <http://www.uchskc.org/home/>.

The 2008 Missouri Tourist Information guide has information about cemeteries to visit all over the state. To order a copy, visit [www.visitmo.com](http://www.visitmo.com).

### **Amherst, Massachusetts Cemetery Records Available Online**

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 The town of Amherst (site of the 2008 AGS conference) has posted cemetery records for the North and West Cemeteries on [the Town of Amherst website](#). It is a searchable database.

### **Website: The New Jersey Cemetery Association**

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 Please take a moment to check out the redesigned website for the New Jersey

Cemetery Association: <http://www.njcaonline.org/>.

The New Jersey Cemetery Association is a 70 year old not-for-profit organization representing more than 225 religious, municipal and non-sectarian cemeteries located in New Jersey.

### **Update: Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers**

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From the National Trust for Historic Preservation:

#### Report Delivered to Congress: Cemetery Officials Commit to Repair, But Preservationists Must Remain Vigilant

I am pleased to report that last fall, thousands of you responded to our call to urge the Superintendent of Arlington National Cemetery and Congress to "repair, not replace" the Tomb of the Unknowns in response to non-structural cracks in the marble face of the monument.

Your voices were heard and in January 2008, Congress, led by Senator Jim Webb and Senator Daniel Akaka, mandated that a report be prepared laying out all the options for the Tomb including repair. That report from the Department of the Army, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and Arlington National Cemetery, was delivered to Congress on August 11th.

In the report, federal officials have agreed to properly repair the Tomb in the immediate future, which is a dramatic turn-around from their previous position and a direct result of the action of preservationists, veterans, and other concerned citizens.

While we were elated to learn that repair is in the offing, we remain very concerned about the long-term future of the historic Tomb, which is the only national monument to soldiers killed in World War I and one of our country's most important war memorials.

Why? Because decision-makers at the Cemetery continue to seriously consider replacement of the authentic Tomb as a possible "long term" strategy, according to the report. Astonishingly, they continue to pursue this misguided approach even after their own analysis concludes that replacing the Tomb with a replica would:

- Significantly harm the historic character of Arlington National Cemetery and
- Cost exponentially more than restoring the Tomb: a whopping \$2.2 million compared to \$65,000 for repair.

National Trust staff now is preparing our detailed response to the report, which we received on August 14th, and you should be assured that we will continue our efforts to protect the Tomb as the federal historic preservation review process moves forward. If you would like to read the report to Congress, you can access it at [www.preservationnation.org/tomb](http://www.preservationnation.org/tomb).

An article about the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier also appears on [CNN.com](http://www.cnn.com).

### **Civil War Cemeteries and Veterans' Gravemarkers**

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Civil War cemeteries - both national and Confederate - were unlike any graveyards that

Americans had ever seen. These were not clusters of family tombstones in churchyards, nor garden cemeteries symbolizing the reunion of man with nature. Instead the Civil War cemetery contained ordered row after row of humble identical markers, hundreds of thousands of men, known and unknown, who represented not so much the sorrow or particularity of a lost loved one as the enormous and almost unfathomable cost of the war.

From *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* by Drew Gilpin Faust, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008, pp. 248-249.

#### **An account of how these "humble identical markers" were made:**

A successful application of the "sand blast" in cutting marble for monumental purposes was made at Sheldon & Slason's works at West Rutland, [Vermont] about the years 1875-1876, in preparing headstones for soldiers' graves at the national cemeteries. Similar work has since been done at other localities, but on a smaller scale.

The blast of sand upon marble rapidly wears it away, but if a portion of the surface be protected from the chiseling action of the sand, that part will soon stand out in relief. By using the ingenious process perfected by Tilghman the work was rapidly and cheaply done. The parts of the stone to remain uncut were protected by an iron shield, while letters and figures of chilled iron were placed upon the spaces where the inscription was to be raised. The blast of sand, turned on to the prepared stone, would eat away the unprotected part, while that protected would rise up in high relief out of the block. By this method, the name, company, regiment and rank of a soldier could be put upon a stone in less than five minutes of time. Contracts were filled by which 254,000 lettered headstones, having dimensions of three feet in length, ten inches in width and four inches in thickness, were placed in the national cemeteries at an expense to the government of \$864,000. The economy of the process alone made it possible to place these monuments at the soldiers' graves for so small an amount. [about \$3.40 each]

From "The Marble Fields and Marble Industry of Western New England" by Henry M. Seely, in *The Marble Border of Western New England, Its Geology and Marble Development in the Present Century*, Papers and Proceedings of the Middlebury, Vermont Historical Society, Vol. I, Part II, 1885, pp. 39-40.

Contributed by Bob Drinkwater.

#### **Articles: Metal Theft in Cemeteries**

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This first article is from [USA Today](#), and is about increased thefts of metal ornaments from cemeteries. Connecticut Gravestone Network Executive Director Ruth Shapleigh-Brown is quoted in the article.

In the July 2008 issue of the AGS *e-Newsletter*, we posted a link to another article about cemetery metal theft on [msnbc.com](#). Shapleigh-Brown is also interviewed in this article.

#### **Article: Fairbanks, Alaska cemetery's future remains uncertain**

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This article, posted on [newsminer.com](#), is about the recent approval for constructing a cell-phone tower on Birch Hill Cemetery's land.

### **Exhibit: *Ashes to Arts*, Graton, California**

September 27-November 30, 2008: *Ashes to Arts*, the 4th international biennial exhibition of new funerary art, original contemporary funerary urns, vessels, reliquaries and personal memorial art.

*Ashes to Arts* will be held at the Gallery at FUNERIA, Graton, Sonoma County, California.

<http://www.funeria.com/>

### **Cemetery Preservation Workshop: New London, Connecticut**

The National Park Service's National Center for Preservation Technology and Training will be hosting a Cemetery Monument Conservation Workshop in New London, Connecticut, on October 7-9, 2008. This intense three day hands-on workshop will take place at the Antientest Burial Ground in partnership with the City of New London. This workshop will cover the topics of documentation, condition assessments, cleaning techniques, adhesive repair, reinforced repair, resetting, and consolidation. This years workshop will focus on the conservation of slate and brownstone. The workshop cost is \$695 per person and is limited to 32 participants. This is the sixth year for NCPTT's Cemetery Monument Conservation Workshop series and the first one to be held in New England. For more information and registration please go to <http://www.ncptt.nps.gov/Training/>.

### **News and October Events: Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge, Massachusetts**

#### **Mount Auburn Cemetery Appoints New President**

Mount Auburn Cemetery is pleased to announce the appointment of David P. Barnett, Ph.D., as the new President and CEO of Mount Auburn Cemetery.

Dr. Barnett's appointment ends a year-long national search to find Mount Auburn's new president. Dr. Barnett has been at Mount Auburn for over 15 years, serving this institution in many critical capacities. He came to Mount Auburn in 1993 as the Director of Horticulture. In 1999 he became the Cemetery's first Vice President of Operations & Horticulture and in January 2008 he was appointed Mount Auburn's first Executive Vice President. He became Acting President July 1, 2008, on the retirement of former President William C. Clendaniel.

#### **October Events:**

**Thursday, October 2**, 12:15 PM: Brown Bag Lunch Series - Monument Inscription Celebration: "Honorable, benevolent and brave." Admission: Free. Each month this fall, a member of Mount Auburn's staff will highlight an exciting preservation project currently underway. This month they will feature inscriptions captured this past spring and summer at the Monument Inscription Workshops.

**Thursday, October 2**, 3:30 PM and **Saturday, October 25**, 1:00 PM: "Timeless and Available" - a walking tour with Candace Currie, Director of Planning & Cemetery Development, Mount Auburn; and Jim Holman, Director of Cemetery Services Administration, Mount Auburn. Admission: Free. Mount Auburn is still an active cemetery 177 years after its founding--this will be a walking tour of Mount Auburn's available burial and memorialization options.



**Saturday, October 4**, 2:00 PM: "Discover Mount Auburn." Admission: \$10. This 1.5-mile walking tour will focus on stories of history, monuments and the lives of those buried here.

**Thursday, October 9**, 10:00 AM: "Mount Auburn Book Club" Admission: Free. This month's book discussion will be about *Where Death and Glory Meet: Colonel Robert Gould Shaw and the 54th Massachusetts Infantry* by Russell Duncan.

**Saturday, October 11**, 1:00 PM: "Understanding Cremation" - a presentation by Walter L. Morrison, Jr., Crematory Manager, Mount Auburn. Admission: Free. This program that will answer any questions you may have about cremation procedures and costs.

**Saturday, October 18**, 2:00 PM: "The Hawaiian Connection: A Family's Journey" - a talk and walk by Susan E. Pitman, Social Historian. Admission: \$10. The journey of Benjamin Pitman from Boston to Hawaii in the 19th-century was filled with incredible opportunities and great adventures. Learn about his friendship with Kamehameha III, his marriage to Kinooole, high chieftess of Hilo, and finally, his return to Massachusetts. Slide presentation and a walking tour to the Pitman family lots.

**Sunday, October 19**, 2:00 PM: "The Company He Kept: George Nixon Black, Jr. and his Circle" - a walking tour with Jane Goodrich, Social Historian. Admission: \$10. Buried less than a few hundred feet apart, George Nixon Black, Jr., and his circle of friends are as close at Mount Auburn today as they were in life. Seared by the Civil War and cemented by the bonds of common ancestors, school fellowships and philanthropic goals, their friendships helped build many of Boston's most beloved institutions. This walk will focus on a generation of influential Boston men.

**Monday, October 20**, 2:00 PM and **Saturday, October 25**, 2:00 PM: "Awash in Color" - a fall foliage walking tour with Kelley Sullivan, Horticultural Staff, Mount Auburn. Admission: \$10.

**Wednesday, October 22**, 9:30 AM: "Bulb Planting at Mount Auburn" - a volunteer event. Admission: Free. Volunteers will join the gardening staff, helping to add blooms to Mount Auburn's early spring season.

Call (617) 607-1981 for information or visit <http://www.mountauburn.org/>.

### **October Events: Laurel Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

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**Saturday, October 4th** from 6:00-9:00 PM, *Dead Men Do Tell Tales*, presented by South Jersey Ghost Research. SJGR recently conducted several telling investigations of historic Laurel Hill Cemetery. SJGR is a professional paranormal research group and registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with an established history. Founded in 1955, SJGR has been assisting individuals, as well as institutions like Laurel Hill, in dealing with ghosts, hauntings and other psychic phenomena.

In this presentation they will reveal the findings of their investigations at Laurel Hill Cemetery, and shed light on the history, techniques and equipment of ghost hunting. Afterwards, raise your own 'spirits' with wine and other warming treats in Laurel Hill's historic Gatehouse.

The cost is \$35 per person. Kids under the age of 12 are free. Tickets are limited, and should be reserved in advance through the cemetery office by calling (215) 228-8200,

or by emailing [events@thelaurehillcemetery.org](mailto:events@thelaurehillcemetery.org).

**Sunday, October 12th** at 2:00 PM. *Sinners, Scandals & Suicides*. The tour will be guided by Thomas Keels, author of *Philadelphia Graveyards and Cemeteries*. The cost is \$15.00 per person, \$12 for members, \$8 for students, children's admission is free.

**Friday evening, October 17th**, *Dining with the Dead: A BYOB Dinner and Nighttime Tour*. This package will include a buffet-style, catered, candlelit dinner and dessert in Laurel Hill's historic Gatehouse, followed by a moonlit tour through the cemetery. There will be three seatings: 5:00 PM, 6:30 PM, and 8:00 PM. The cost is \$50.00 per person. Space is limited, and reservations must be made in advance.

**Friday, October 24th and Saturday, October 25th**: Laurel Hill Cemetery's infamous *Halloween Flashlight Tours*. Guides will lead you along winding, dimly-lit pathways and through "old forests" of gravestones and sculptures as you learn about the history of this enchanting site. Along the way, you'll meet some of Laurel Hill's most restless spirits, as portrayed by talented local actors.

Hour-long tours will depart approximately every half-hour beginning at 7:00 PM, and continuing until 9:30 PM. The program is recommended for ages 12 and older; the cost is \$20 per person, \$15 for members and students.

**Sunday, October 26th**, *Fall Fun for the Family at Laurel Hill Cemetery*. Spend an autumn afternoon exploring the many wonders and mysteries of Laurel Hill Cemetery while celebrating Halloween! Fall Fun for the Family at Laurel Hill will thrill and chill both the young and old with behind-the-scenes tours of the site. Activities will include apple bobbing, scavenger hunts, arts and crafts, storytelling and Halloween games. Feast on an assortment of delicious cookies, hot apple cider and other spooky treats in Laurel Hill's historic Gatehouse. The program begins at 1:00 PM, with tours departing every hour until 3:00 PM. The cost is \$15 for adults, and children's admission is free.

For information, please call (215) 228-8200, or visit [www.thelaurehillcemetery.org](http://www.thelaurehillcemetery.org).

#### **Correction: Slideshows in August 2008 AGS e-Newsletter**

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Two slideshows of photos from the 2008 AGS Conference in Amherst, Massachusetts featured in the August e-Newsletter were mislabeled. Please see below for the corrected versions:

Old Bernardston Cemetery, Bernardston, Mass.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/melvis/sets/72157605848336500/show/>

Northfield Burying Ground, Northfield, Mass.

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/melvis/sets/72157605851533821/show/>

#### **Contact Information**

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(413) 772-0836

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[www.gravestonestudies.org](http://www.gravestonestudies.org)  
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