

## Minutes of Meeting April 17, 2013

### Glocester Heritage Society

In attendance: Pegee Malcolm, Edna Kent, Lester Hilton, Charlotte Taylor, Henry Duquette, Rick Whitesell, Alan Clarke, Letty Champion, Tom O'Connell, Roger Guillemette, Judith Fardig

Excused absences: Evelyn Wheeler, Sally Small, Dory Wagner, Kirsten Hammerstrom, Bob Butler and David Kirchner

Additional Attendees: Betty and Carlo Mencucci, Griffin Rouse, Karen Bradbury from Sheldon Whitehouse's office of Veteran's Affairs, and Maureen Buffi, secretary

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm by Chair Pegee Malcolm

- A motion was made by Judy and seconded by Lester to vote to allow the guest speakers to speak in advance of the regular business meeting.
- Betty and Carlo Mencucci from the Burrillville Historical & Preservation Society shared information about working in cemeteries they gained from workshops and classes they have attended as well as from their own experiences working in historical cemeteries in Burrillville. They distributed handouts they created, "Gravestone Conservation Materials" and "Caring for Historical Cemeteries".
- Griffin Rouse from the Smith Hill Community Development Corp. spoke about interest in the restoration of St. Patrick's Cemetery (PV 002) at the corner of Douglas Ave. and Chad Brown in Providence. He described the cemetery as being in catastrophic condition with many headstones down. He was looking for advice on what steps to take to utilize the student volunteers and how to find cemetery records. The commission provided him with contacts and suggestions.
- Regular Business meeting began at 7:48pm
- Introduction of Draft Meeting Minutes from November 14, 2012. Judy made a motion to accept and Henry seconded. Minutes were approved 11-0.
- Update on Signs  
Pegee ordered 281 signs, most for towns in southern RI..
- Update on New Website  
Michael Laferriere reported (via e-mail) that the new website has been converted from the old. The website is <http://rihistoriccemeteries.org>. Ken's website and the commission's old site are now redirected to the new website. He recommended that the web committee convene to

discuss using the website as the primary database. He plans to fine-tune and add search functions. Some commission members noted an inability to view individual records.

- Update on GPS

Evelyn reports (via Pegee) that the URI project is almost done but there are still places needing GPS readings. She will let the commission know which areas need to be completed at the June meeting.

- Pegee reported that Community Service volunteers were utilized over the winter in Cumberland, Burrillville, Warwick and Lincoln

- Commission Resignations

Letty Champion and Lester Hilton will not seek reappointment when their terms expire in September. Michael Laferriere will take Lester's place but a replacement from Newport County is still needed

- Implementation of RIGL 44-3-63

If a city or town is to implement abatement from taxation, for historic cemeteries, passed by the RI General Assembly, it must create its own ordinance and develop criteria. Evelyn asked (via Pegee) if any commission member is interested in forming a committee to contact cities and towns, they should notify Evelyn. Henry will contact Evelyn

- Update on Route 37 Monument

Mike Hebert informed Pegee that the job was put out to bid and they are now waiting.

#### Member Updates/Comments

Letty: Continues photographing. She passed along a request from Evelyn that if anyone is interested in taking Evelyn's place for a May 5 speaking engagement that she is unable to make to please contact David Kirchner.

Charlotte: A Native American burial site was found in East Greenwich when a survey of the land was conducted by a potential buyer. She emphasized the importance of towns being informed of the location of such sites so that future building on that land will be avoided.

Lester: Has been updating his cemetery records, sometimes adding data regarding individuals and including a brief history. He added details such as GPS readings, actual locations, post numbers and best access to the cemetery. He sent his updates to John Sterling.

Tom: In Westerly a Boy Scout project cleaned WY 023. Tom is following up on the condition of the lots Denison recorded in his book more than 130 years ago.

Roger: Only two people bid on purchasing the Nonquit School. Charlotte commented that state law does not allow a town to sell a burial ground. He picked up cemetery signs for Tiverton and Little Compton. Public Works in Tiverton will install their signs. Local Boy Scouts are looking for cemetery work as an Eagle Scout project.

Bob (via e-mail): The annual spring cleanup of WG 002 was scheduled in April. Cemeteries will be re-flagged for Memorial Day.

David: Headstones in sections G & H of the Veterans Cemetery will be realigned using a grant from Washington DC. They also applied for a grant for 2200 new columbarium niches. There will be a May 27 ceremony.

Kirsten: (via e-mail) reports that the Historical Society Library is re-opened following renovations.

Alan: Two cleanups were done in East Greenwich. The Republican Town Committee adopted a messy cemetery and did a good job cleaning it. Girl Scouts are scheduled to clean another. Also there is a Boy Scout looking for a cemetery project. Alan has 10 more cemeteries to find. He has GPS readings on the others. He had an inquiry from a property owner with a large cemetery having only 6 burials who wanted to know if he can have the size of the cemetery reduced. The last 25 cemeteries Alan has visited have been in rough shape. Another property owner with a cemetery doesn't want a cemetery sign installed but he has the right to refuse.

Rick: The Historical Society in Woonsocket is still trying to schedule a Boy Scout cleanup.

Judy: She is planning an Earth Day cleanup at the North Burial Ground in Warren. Two gates for the front fence were located and she hopes to have them sandblasted. There was a lot of tree damage in the North Burial Ground.

Henry: An Earth Day cleanup is scheduled for a cemetery (BU 083) on Spring Lake Rd. The Burrillville Historical & Preservation Society is sponsoring a Civil War Expo including guided and self-guided tours of cemeteries with Civil War veteran burials. In Foster, Ed Robinson's group is doing a great job. A contact is still needed for Scituate cemeteries. It is important that groups such as Boy Scouts and others doing cleanups understand cemetery "Do's and Don'ts" prior to working in cemeteries.

Edna: In a cemetery in Winsor Park in Harmony someone began using the cemetery as a right of way but two town councilmen got involved to correct the situation. Boy Scout leaders expressed an interest in getting involved with cemetery work. Edna would like to order 6 cemetery signs.

Next meeting will be June 19 in Providence at the RI Historic Preservation Commission Office on Benefit St. There is a parking lot behind the building. The September 14 meeting will be hosted by the Westerly Historical Society.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00pm

Respectfully Submitted by Maureen Buffi, secretary