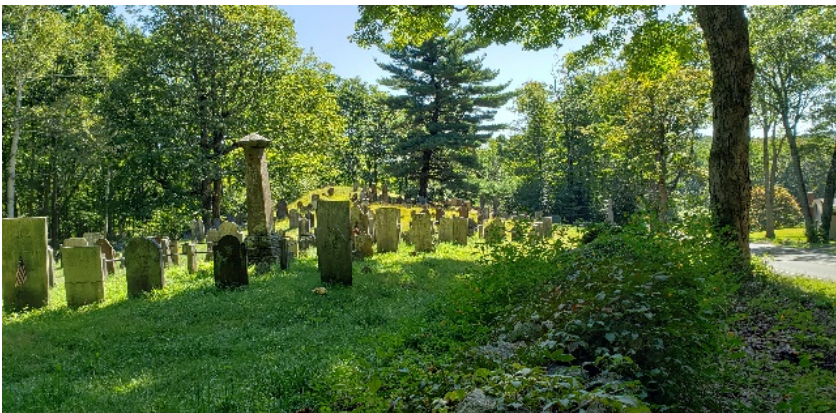


Woodlands Cemetery Update and History

The calendar has changed, we are now in a new year. Happy New Year!

It is the New England winter and our “residents” are resting comfortably under a cozy blanket of snow.

We are attempting to rally interest and commitment to address badly needed repairs in Main Road and Northeast (Old Westfield Road) Cemeteries. This month we will be again requesting CPA funding for cemetery preservation. Woodlands needs a small amount to finish a few repairs remaining from last year. And now we are also requesting funding for Main Road cemetery and Northeast (Old Westfield Road) cemetery.



The Main Rd cemetery was once owned by the Congregational Church and was turned over to the town when it no longer had the financial resources to maintain it. The town mows and takes care of some landscaping issues but the stones have deteriorated badly; some have broken and fallen. It is a closed cemetery in that sites are no longer available. This cemetery is easily viewed by everyone who drives by on route 57.

The Northeast Cemetery resides on property still owned by the town but surrounded in part by the City of Westfield Water Resources and in part by a private resident. It also is a closed cemetery with many stones badly in need of repair. Northeast Cemetery is quietly half-hidden on a hillside. It is a small, very lovely old cemetery and worth a stop to visit.



For 21 years, Marie Beckman Shaughnessy was a very active participant in the Woodlands Cemetery Association. She was a member, an officer, and a tireless worker for the benefit of not only Woodlands but the Main Road Cemetery also. From 1950 to 1971, she filled many positions and worked tirelessly for the benefit of both cemeteries. Not only did she take care of a multitude of administrative responsibilities but she also rolled up her sleeves and did much of the physical work herself. She was a determined spirit with ideas of her own. The minutes of meetings reflect an appreciation for that contribution.

“For a long time she suffered with arthritis but nothing would deter her from performing tasks in the cemetery far beyond her strength. For much of her work she received little or no remuneration. Her reward was the satisfaction of seeing the two cemeteries, neat, well-trimmed and places of beauty”.

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Woodlands Cemetery Update and History Cont'd

On one occasion, Marie helped a descendant of the Rose family from New York find the graves of her ancestors in Main Road Cemetery and received this thank you note in response.

"I found Granville so lovely, and its people so gracious that it will be a pleasure for me to return. Strangely I did not feel like a stranger, but like one going home for a visit. Went to the old cemetery and found the graves of Elisha Sharon and Peter Rose. How lovely and well-cared for the cemetery is, and it was thrilling for me to know that the people in Granville still remember and care enough about their early settlers to maintain their graves and set out those beautiful flags.

At dusk I sat down on Elisha's grave and mentally told him about his descendants, not that they are very spectacular – just good people trying to live right and of none of them ever set the world on fire, none of them ever tried to burn it down either. I was by myself – but not alone at the end of this perfect day". Leona Stella Delanson, New York.



Marie was also instrumental in the building of a dam that resulted in our large wetland called Shaughnessy Swamp. She and her husband John Brooke Shaughnessy, a veteran of World War I, are buried in Woodlands Cemetery. She is the grandaunt of our special town guys John, Mark and Bud Beckman.



From the members of the Woodlands Cemetery Association,
WoodlandsCem@comcast.net

