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# The New Englander *OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2009*

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE

## *NEW ENGLAND CEMETERY ASSOCIATION*

**President**  
**Anthony Hollingshead**  
Swan Point Cemetery  
Providence, RI

*Honoring the Past      Serving the Present      Preparing for the Future*

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

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### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

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I am pleased to report that my term in office, to this point, has been exciting and fulfilling for me. As mentioned in my last report, the Association is fortunate to have a very committed board of directors and officers. They continue to devote energy to strengthen our membership, provide a careful watch over the Association's finances, provide top quality educational programs, and strengthen relations with our valued suppliers. The newsletter, website and Membership Directory / Resource Guide offer a wealth of valuable information to all of our members and suppliers.

In my last message, I did not take the opportunity to thank Dale Fiore for putting together a great 107<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and Conference. The program was well planned and the tours of Lowell Cemetery and the Hardy Doric Vault Company were positive additions to the agenda. Thanks also to Bray Walsh and the Hardy family for their hospitality and

work in planning our visits.

I attended the Massachusetts Suppliers Exhibition in September and had the chance to see some old familiar faces, and meet new members and suppliers. On October 13<sup>th</sup> I attended the Maine Cemetery Association's Annual Meeting held in Freeport, Maine. This meeting, too, was successful and well attended. President Deborah Grover, along with Secretary/Treasurer Steve Burrill, are to be commended for putting together an interesting program. They were kind enough to allow me the opportunity to bring greetings from NECA, speak about the benefits of belonging to our Association, and to encourage their members to take advantage of our programs.

First Vice President Kevin Cody, and Director Richard Sacca have been working hard to put together an interesting program for our 40<sup>th</sup> NECA Frederick R. Laffond Management Seminar. This year's sessions will include: Preserving Historic Monuments, Website Technology, Data Security, the Military Honors Program, and many more important topics. The seminar dates are December 1 – 3. The New England Center at the University of New Hampshire has been an ideal location this event for many years, and I regret to inform you that the university will

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## 40TH FREDERICK LAFFOND CEMETERY MANAGEMENT SEMINAR

One would think that after 39 years we would have learned everything relative to our industry. But time marches on, society's desires change and we all must adjust. Of course, thirty nine years ago our predecessors were also dealing with change but with today's instant communications these changes seem to happen far too quickly today.

The best way for you to prepare your cemetery to meet these changing demands is to attend the 40th NECA Frederick R. Laffond Cemetery Management Seminar at the New England Center for Continuing Education at the University of New Hampshire in Durham. As usual, the seminar will be held during the week following Thanksgiving, Tuesday, December 1st through Thursday, December 3rd.



This year Kevin Cody, chairman, and Richard Sacca, co-chair, have worked very diligently to provide you with an exciting, diverse program. They have arranged for talented, well-respected speakers who will provide you with information relative to technology, customer service, employee issues and maintenance, among others.

One thing we are all dealing with is the changing attitudes of the families we serve. Like all of us, they value individualized attention and want answers instantly. John Di Pietro and Joe Swift will present a program focused on meeting these requests. Brian Killelea will focus on communicating with these customers in real time and in a efficient manner through the World Wide Web and other technologies.

Continuing on the technological theme, Brian Hettrick of Soma Associates will discuss securing your valuable data. As we all move toward a paperless office it is imperative that we safe-guard our valuable records. Speaking of paperless, Robert Larochelle of HMIS will explain the intricacies of converting your cemetery maps into digital files.



Maintenance of the cemetery is one of the more significant duties that we all face. Because trees are a valuable resource when it comes to the cemetery landscape, Collins Tree Service will offer tips and suggestions to help you preserve these natural beauties. Many of us have significant, historic monuments within our properties and the responsibility of preserving and maintaining these priceless works of art falls upon us. "Preserving Historic Monuments" will be presented by Jonathan Appell of Gravestone Preservation.

Wednesday afternoon we will have the opportunity to learn more about the military honors that are presented at our cemeteries. With a better understanding of the process we may be better able to make the ceremony more meaningful for the families that we serve. In conjunction with this we will learn about a very unique and special program, "100 Nights of Remembrance".

Each afternoon there will be time set aside for our dedicated suppliers to discuss their products and services. It is an opportunity for you to see what's new out there that might help you in your day-to-day challenges.

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*Photos: Left—Patrick Healy speaking at the 38th seminar. Right— attendees during one of the sessions in 2007.*

## STATE NEWS

**New Hampshire:** submitted by Jeff Snow  
The New Hampshire Cemetery Association held our annual business meeting October 21st at The Derryfield Country Club in Manchester. 75 were registered to attend the morning meeting, which also included a talk by Kai Nalenz, proprietor of Gravestone Services of New England. His business repairs and cleans old gravestones and he shared a wealth of information on this subject. He was followed by Deb Gagne who is an administrator of the New Hampshire state "Moose Plate" grant program which funds conservation grants to publicly owned properties in the state. She explained some of the grants already given to cemeteries and how to go about applying for conservation money for our own cemeteries. She was followed by Lynn Smith who spoke of the fund raising efforts in Keene to benefit the Knight Chapel, "Painting for Preservation", which was written about in a previous New Englander. One of the paintings, as well as photos, was part of her presentation.

**Rhode Island:** by George Boardman  
The RICA held its Annual Meeting on October 14th at Roma Restaurant on Federal Hill in Providence. The following individuals were elected to serve as officers for the coming year. **President: Polly Stiles**, Riverside Cemetery, Pawtucket; **Vice President: Michael Seger**, Lakeside Cemetery Association, Rumford; **Secretary/Treasurer: Stephen Douglas**, Pawtucket Memorial Park, Warwick. Elected to serve as Directors were **Joseph Cavallaro**, Swan Point Cemetery, Providence; **Ensley Ramsey**, North Burial Grounds, Bristol and **Joseph Swift**, Highland Memorial Park, Johnston. **George Boardman**, Moshassuck Cemetery, Central Falls, will continue to serve as Past President.

The next meeting is scheduled for December 9th at the Pawtucket Country Club in Pawtucket. This is our Annual Toy Drive. We ask that every person attending bring an unwrapped toy to be distributed to needy children. As in the past this meeting is meant to be a social time for members and friends to gather and exchange holiday cheer. We hope that many of our friends from outside of Rhode Island will attend. For complete information please contact George at 401-723-1087.

**Connecticut:** by Ray Scholl  
The Connecticut Cemetery Association held its Annual Meeting on October 15th at the Grassy Hill Country Club in Orange. During the meeting the following members were elected to serve the association as officers during the next year: **President: Craig Neal**, Catholic Cemetery Association of the Hartford Archdiocese, North Haven; **Vice President: Branson Hawley**, Oaklawn Cemetery Association, Fairfield; **Secretary/Treasurer: Martha Smart**, Pine Grove Cemetery Association, Ansonia. **Raymond Scholl**, Milford Cemetery Association, Milford will serve as **Immediate Past President**. Elected to serve as directors were **Angel Morales**, Sacred Heart Cemetery, New Britain; **Judith Demko**, Lawncroft Cemetery, Fairfield and **Robert Devaney, Jr.**, Center Street Cemetery, Wallingford. Continuing to serve as Directors are: **Kevin Gerkins**, Mt. St. Peters Cemetery, Derby; **Matthew Knowlton**, In Memoriam Cemetery, Wallingford and **Jeffrey Pelletier**, Evergreen Cemetery, Watertown.



During the meeting it was reported that recently enacted legislation requires that all caskets entombed in a mausoleum must now be placed in a zinc lined or ABS plastic crypt liner or placed in a non-oxidizing metal or ABS plastic mausoleum tray. This has caused concern relative to the narrowly worded standards and each cemetery's ability to manage its property to its own specifications. A committee has been appointed to investigate the possibility of having this new law amended in such a manner that respects the rights of individuals along with cemeteries.

*Photo above—Ray Scholl presenting the CCA gavel to newly installed President Craig Neal.*

## MORE STATE NEWS

**M**assachusetts: by Bray Walsh

The Massachusetts Cemetery Association held its' Annual Suppliers Day Exposition and New England Clambake in Medway, MA on September 16<sup>th</sup>. The event was well attended by both cemetery and supplier members. The Board of Directors would like to thank all of the supplier members who attended our event which contributed to its great success.

President James Shattuck led the attendees around the field introducing each supplier member representative and gave each of them an opportunity to speak about the goods and services that they provide to our industry. Many of the vendors had gifts which were given away to the lucky recipients who held the winning numbered ticket. The members of the association thank the suppliers for their generosity.



The entire Board of Directors encourages our membership to support our supplier members through their business when they have the opportunity to do so.

We were fortunate to have a special guest attend on the day of our Suppliers Day Exposition. Anthony Hollingshead, Past President of the Massachusetts Cemetery Association and current President of the New England Cemetery Association and President of Swan Point Cemetery in Providence, RI joined us for the day. Thank you for coming Anthony. Many of our members were pleased to see a Past President who has moved on to a neighboring New England state.

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(MCA continued)

The Massachusetts Cemetery Association will be holding its Fall Luncheon program at Tower Hill Botanical Gardens again this year in Boylston, MA on Thursday, November 5<sup>th</sup>. Our guest speaker for the day will be plant pest specialist Jennifer Forman Orth, from the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources. The discussion will cover the biology and history of the Asian Longhorned Beetle and the latest about its status in the Worcester area. Also included in this session will be tips to identify the beetle, what host trees it prefers and what Asian Longhorned Beetle tree damage looks like. Beetle and wood specimens will be on display.



*Above—MCA members enjoying lobster at the recent Suppliers Day Expo. Above left—MCA supplier walk-through Photos by Bray Walsh*

SEE MAINE CEMETERY ASSOCIATION NEWS ON THE NEXT PAGE

## PERSONALIZED URNS

Personalization is a fast growing trend in our industry and Cremation Solutions of Arlington, VT has developed what may be the ultimate. Their unique “personal replica urns” offer one-of-a-kind memorials that families may choose. Using several color photos Cremation Solutions are able to produce a custom urn in the likeness and shape of the deceased or another famous person. While the outside is a photo-realistic replica, the interior is a chamber for holding the cremated remains. The Personal Urn works the same as any other urn except that instead of an opening at the bottom, the top of the cranium is removed to deposit the remains. Hair can be added as a wig or printed in 3D. This will most certainly make for an interesting memorial within a glass front niche. The photo is from Cremation Solutions’ website at [www.cremationsolutions.com](http://www.cremationsolutions.com).



**M**aine: by Debbie Allen Grover

We held our annual meeting & conference on October 13<sup>th</sup> at the Hilton Garden Inn located in Freeport, Maine. Although the weather was wet and cold, MCA had an increased attendance over previous years with a few new faces in the audience.

Anthony Hollingshead, President of the New England Cemetery Association brought his well wishes to the conference and spoke about the upcoming Frederick R. Laffond Cemetery Management Seminar held for the last time at UNH in Durham, NH. The association presented Tom Santillo of Matthews International with a Certificate of Appreciation for his many years of support of the Maine Cemetery Association and genuine friendship with its members.

Due to the rainy weather our tour of the Old Parish Burying Ground was canceled. I would like to personally thank Hugh LeMaster of Collette Monuments (Lewiston, ME) and a member of the Maine Funeral Directors Association, who stepped up to the plate and filled this time slot for the association. Hugh did a round table discussion on how cemeterians and funeral directors could work better together to assist families during their time of grief.

We hope to expand our vendor area next year as we are already planning for 2010. It's currently leaf raking and blowing time as we prepare our cemeteries for winter in Maine. We wish everyone a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season.



*Members enjoying the Maine Cemetery Association Annual Meeting and Conference. Photo provided by Debbie Grover.*

## FALL/WINTER CALENDAR

**December 1, 2, & 3, 2009: NECA**  
39th Annual Frederick R. Laffond  
Cemetery Management Seminar  
University of NH, Durham, NH

**December 9, 2009: RICA**  
Annual Toy Collection  
Pawtucket Country Club, Pawtucket, RI

**January 29—31, 2010: NECA**  
Mid-Winter Meeting  
Mystic Hilton, Mystic, CT

## NEWENGLANDCEMETERY.ORG

Have you visited the website for your association recently? Ray Scholl and Brain Killelea have been working hard to improve the site.

It is up to date with information relative to the upcoming management seminar. The “Members Only” page is especially helpful in communicating with other members. To have access you need to register, a simple process to simply verify that you are a member. When you register you have the opportunity to link the website for your cemetery creating more exposure.

There is also a page for supplier resources. As this page becomes complete it will be a great way for companies to communicate with us and for you to find that tool or resource that you need.

The contact page is a simple and easy way to communicate with the association. Just go to the site, click on the Contact tab and drop us a line. As you visit the site and notice errors or deficiencies please be sure to utilize the Contact tab and let us know. It is your website, designed to assist you.

## NATIONAL LEGISLATION

The recent scandals at Burr Oak Cemetery in Alsop, IL; Menorah Gardens Cemetery, Palm Beach, FL and Tri State Crematory in Georgia have resulted in the introduction of the Bereaved Consumer’s Bill of Rights Act of 2009 in the House of Representatives of 111th Congress recently. This bill is based on 9 findings which includes “the Federal Trade Commission’s Funeral Trade Industry Practices Trade Regulation Rule (the Funeral Rule) dictates consumer protections in the funeral home, but does not cover the practices of cemeteries, crematoria, or the sellers of monuments, urns or caskets”. Its definition of funeral services includes “services provided by funeral directors, morticians, cemeterians, cremationists and retailers of caskets, urns, monuments and markers”.

As you can see this is a clear move to include all cemeteries in the FTC Funeral Rule and subject all of our operations to federal review. The only cemeteries that will be exempt are those who complete less than 25 services or deed less than 25 interment or entombment rights each year. All others will be included, even religious and municipal.

You can go to <http://thomas.loc.gov> and search for H.R. 3655 under bill number to view the actual language and follow up to date action. This is an issue that all of us must become involved in.

## SQUIRRELS PARTICIPATE

As reported in the Hampton Union there has been a rash of flag thefts from veterans’ graves at the High Street Cemetery in Hampton, NH. Initially it was thought to be a case of vandals. Then, it was reported that it could be squirrels utilizing the flags for winter nests. Cemetery Superintendent Dan Kenny said that cemetery workers have been dealing with the squirrels for years. He believes that many of the newer flags are taken by them. The workers have actually seen a squirrel take a flag and run up a tree with it.

Then on October 19th a cemetery trustee told the selectmen that several of the flags had been removed by employees of the cemetery. The flags were damaged and



were taken to the American Legion post and put into their flag burning container. This was never reported to the post itself, adding to the confusion.

Mystery solved! It appears that the culprit is a combination of normal cemetery maintenance, the squirrels and occasional youthful (why do we always seem to want to blame the kids?) vandals.

*Correction: In the last issue of the New Englander it was noted that all photographs of the Annual Meeting and Conference were provided by Bray Walsh. Actually several photos were provided by Raymond Scholl.*

*The Editor*

Glorious Insults—I recently received a list of quotes by famous individuals that are not inspiring but actually quite humorous in their own unique way. I may use them from time to time as fillers and to inject a little humor.

*“I didn’t attend the funeral, but I sent a nice letter saying I approved of it.” Mark Twain*

*( President's Message continued)*

be utilizing the facility for other purposes; therefore, this will be our last year on campus. I hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to attend the seminar and enjoy the wonderful setting of the New England Center for one more time.

The Mid – Winter Meeting is right around the corner and once again will be held at the Hilton Mystic, in Mystic, Connecticut. Mark your calendars for January 29 – 31, 2010.

Today I re-read an article that was published in the October edition of the *AARP Bulletin*, entitled *The High Cost of Dying*, and as I read, I could feel my blood pressure elevate. It was the usual boilerplate report on the “high costs” of funerals and many of the associated services. John S. DeMott, the author of the article, in a section entitled “*Do It Yourself*” describes how a family elected to handle all the arrangements for the cremation of a loved one on their own, including transporting the deceased to the crematory in a pickup truck. To me and *only* for me personally, that somehow doesn't resonate the respect and dignity that I would have preferred for a member of my family. As I read the daily obituaries, I am perplexed to see that an increasing number of services are private, or to be held at the convenience of the family. No bother, keep it simple and convenient. It saddens me to think that many Americans read this and may possibly begin to believe that a funeral, memorial service, or graveside service is of little value and importance for those left behind.

Fortunately my spirits began to rise as I thumbed through the prior edition of our newsletter for a second time. I read the state reports, read information about gravestone preservation workshops, our certification program, and about the solid commitment and dedication of our member cemeterians and suppliers in providing the best services and products to those we serve. What we do is of great value.

A sign for a monument company in the Boston area reads: “If a life is worth living, it is worth remembering”. Well said.

Keep up the good work. I wish you a happy and healthy fall season, and I hope to see you at the management seminar in New Hampshire.

Respectfully,  
Anthony W. Hollingshead  
President

## NEW COLUMBARIUM IN MILFORD

The Milford Cemetery Association dedicated its recently completed columbarium in King's Highway Cemetery, Milford, CT. The columbarium was constructed in response to an increased public demand for above-ground sites to entomb cremated remains. Superintendent Raymond Scholl added plantings, including yellow mums, to create a very attractive setting.

About 40 souls assembled for a brief ceremony the afternoon of Wednesday, September 30th. With Association President James R. Beard presiding, former Mayor Joel Baldwin gave a brief history of city cemeteries which date back to 1689. Architect Ray S. Oliver spoke about the decision to employ a rustic, rough hewn granite design. Mayor James Richetelli offered a few words and the ceremony was concluded with the Reverend Karl Duetzman, convener of the Milford Clergy Association, offering a prayer respectful of an interfaith setting.



The columbarium grounds include a red brick circular committal area at the easterly end of the wall suitable for services both at the columbarium and for in-ground interments conducted in inclement weather. The structure is a granite faced wall 144 feet long, containing 400 niches, each 12” x 12” x 20” deep. The stainless steel niches were provided by Matthews. Granite panels 24” x 24” along the face of the wall, secured by bronze rosettes, cover 4 niches each. Niches are priced according to their distance from the ground with those in the top row commanding the highest price. Superintendent Scholl reports that interest has been keen with quite a few sales already completed.

*Contributed by Atty. Steven F. Rogers, Secretary of the Milford Cemetery Association. Photo by Ray Scholl.*

## 40TH FREDERICK LAFFOND CEMETERY MANAGEMENT SEMINAR

*(Continued from page 2)*

As valuable as all of these programs are, the one thing that is priceless at each year's seminar is the opportunity to talk to your peers about cemetery issues. Each evening there is a social hour prior to dinner. During this time, as well as during breaks and at other meals, you will be able to meet and converse with individuals from throughout New England. While there are many days when we all feel alone thinking that our issue is unique, you can be assured that other attendees have faced the same problem and will be able to offer suggestions and advice.

The Board of Directors of NECA urges all of the members to make every effort to attend. Also, if you know of a non-member who might be interested, please invite them. For additional registration packets please visit [www.newenglandcemetery.org](http://www.newenglandcemetery.org). Kevin and Richard have arranged for an excellent program and it appears that this will be our last year at the New England Center, the only home the seminar has known. NECA is hopeful it will be one of the best attended.

**You should have received your registration packet by now. If you have not registered please do so immediately. If for some reason you have missed the deadline please do not hesitate to contact Kevin Cody at 603-622-3215 or Ray Scholl at 203-874-8998.**



No, this is not Chicago. In Connecticut most municipalities hold elections on the odd year. This sign was placed near one of the auxiliary entrances to Beavertdale Memorial Park.