

# The New Englander

MARCH / APRIL 2017

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE

## NEW ENGLAND CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

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

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

Editor: Mary Anne Hawthorne  
Cedar Hill Cemetery  
453 Fairfield Ave, Hartford, CT 06114  
860.956.3311 fax 860.956.3997  
mhawthorne@cedarhillcemetery.org

Secretary  
Raymond Scholl  
Milford Cemetery Association  
Milford, CT

Treasurer  
Joseph Swift  
Highland Memorial Park  
Johnston, RI

**President**  
Craig Cunningham  
Oak Grove Cemetery  
Bath, ME

First Vice-President  
Patrick Healy  
Green Mount Cemetery  
Montpelier, VT

Second Vice-President  
James Holman  
Mount Auburn Cemetery  
Cambridge, MA

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



#### Dear NECA Family and Friends:

It is truly an honor to be addressing everyone as President of the New England Cemetery Association. I look forward to working with the Board of Directors to provide our membership with yet another successful year.

I would like to congratulate Robbin Kelley on her successful 2015 – 2016 Presidential term. I also want to welcome Mary Anne Hawthorne and David Boyle as our newly elected Board members.

First Vice President Patrick Healy was the Chairman of the 2016 Fredrick R. Laffond Cemetery Management Seminar. This year's seminar was again held at the Holiday Inn Conference Center in Boxborough, Massachusetts on Tuesday, November 29 through Thursday, December 1, 2016. Patrick put together an excellent program that was beneficial to all NECA members. James Holman, Patrick's co-chairman provided great support for the event.

I am excited to announce that the 2017 NECA Annual Meeting and Conference will be held at the Union Bluff Meeting House in York, Maine June 19 through June 22, 2017. This is an oceanside venue. In looking back, it has been thirteen years since we have been in Maine.

I look forward to serving our membership as the 2016 – 2017 NECA President.

Craig R. Cunningham, NECA President 2016 - 2017

**College Scholarship** In 2015 The New England Cemetery Association established a College Scholarship Program. In the first year four scholarships were awarded to very deserving students.

With this success, it was determined that the program would be continued as an ongoing opportunity for our members' qualified dependents (cemetery members and suppliers alike). A qualified dependent is a child, step child or grandchild of an active member in good standing in NECA. The student must be accepted to or presently attending a four year accredited institution of higher learning.

For more information and an application please go the Scholarship page of the NECA website at [www.newenglandcemetery.org](http://www.newenglandcemetery.org) and download the application. The deadline for applications is May 1st.



---

## 114TH ANNUAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE

---

The 114<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and Conference of the New England Cemetery Association was held last June at the Nantasket Beach Resort in Hull, MA. President Robbin Kelley presented a spirited and very educational program.

The subjects included VA benefits for veterans and their families, tips to avoid stress and rejuvenate as well as a tour of historic Hull and the lifesaving museum. Robbin helped us learn how to use genealogy to find heirs. Kelly Perry of Swan Point Cemetery led us through an understanding of the growth of the garden cemetery. John Bolton and Lori Salberg looked into the future to help us



understand changes that we can expect in our industry. Everyone most certainly left having learned something and with renewed enthusiasm.



Karen Sprague of Karen Sprague Stone Cutters graciously led the spouses on a fun filled program of sculpting with sand on the beach directly across the street from the conference center. It was the talk of the conference this year!



## Bill Griswold Retires

After 54 years of dedicated service, Executive Superintendent Bill Griswold of Cedar Hill Cemetery, Hartford, CT, retired at the end of 2016.

Bill's association with Cedar Hill is truly a remarkable story. A place he has called "home" his entire life, Bill grew up on cemetery grounds. As a youngster, he filled his free time following his father, Bill Sr. (then Cedar Hill's Operations Manager) around the cemetery and exploring the grounds. At the age of 16, Bill began working summers at Cedar Hill. In 1964 he became a full-time employee, working alongside his father in field operations. Much of the work at that time was performed manually. Grave digging and tree trimming was done by hand, and mowing was accomplished using push mowers.

In 1979 Bill became Superintendent, one of only six people to hold that post since Cedar Hill was established in 1864. Highlights of his career are many and include: numerous major capital building and grounds construction projects; modernization of cemetery operations; and the rebuilding of dams, ponds and the many roads within Cedar Hill's historic grounds. In 2006 he was promoted to the position of Executive Superintendent, during which time he has served as the senior executive of Cedar Hill.

His affiliation with both the Connecticut and New England Cemetery Associations spans 30 years, holding the positions of President, Secretary/Treasurer, and Director for the organizations. His renown as a cemetery professional is recognized industry-wide. In turn, many professionals have benefitted from his willingness and unique ability to mentor and share knowledge and ideas with colleagues.

In his retirement, Bill looks forward to spending time with his family which includes his wife, Susan; a daughter, Sherry; a son, Keith; and three grandchildren. He will also continue to pursue his hobbies of fishing, hunting (with faithful dog Bullet) and gardening.

The entire membership of the New England Cemetery Association extends congratulations to Bill on his well-deserved retirement.



**Plan to attend the 115th Annual Meeting and Conference** at the Union Bluff Meeting House overlooking the Atlantic ocean in picturesque York, Maine. President Craig Cunningham is busy planning the event scheduled for June 19th through the 22nd. You can be certain that the program will be current and informative. This is a great time to gather with your fellow professionals and share ideas and experiences. Look for registration and programming specifics soon. In the meantime please visit the Meeting House website at <http://www.unionbluff.com>

## FREDERICK LAFFOND CEMETERY MANAGEMENT SEMINAR



This past November the 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Frederick R. Laffond Cemetery Management Seminar was held in Boxborough, MA. Chairman Patrick Healy and Co-Chair, James Holman provided us with a very informative and diverse program. Subjects ranged from green burials to gravestones; from pesticide re-certification to honey bees; from compost to visual media.

Multi media artist, filmmaker, photographer Roberto Mighty shared his project with Mount Auburn Cemetery docu-

menting ordinary lives as they intersect with the cemetery. Through his interaction with these families he helped us understand the varied meanings of the cemetery and how we affect their individual experiences. Laurel Gabel from the Association for Gravestone Studies helped us understand the meanings behind gravestones and how their styles have changed over time.

Patrick arranged to have Taryn LaScioia from the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources instruct on the safe and beneficial use of pesticides within our cemeteries. The program allowed holders of pesticide applicator licenses to earn continuing education credits. Jerry Mendenhall, Assistant Greenhouse Manager at Mount Auburn Cemetery talked about protecting honeybees and the benefits these pollinators offer the landscapes within our cemeteries.

On Wednesday evening we were pleasantly entertained by Jeff Hardy and his band, AttiK. The acoustic trio set an enjoyable tone in which the attendees were able to comfortably discuss the events of the day.

To end the three day event Patrick and Martha Smart led a group dialogue answering tough questions. These open discussions within the group are always well received and they seem to be one of the best learning tools NECA offers.



Congratulations to Patrick and Jim for the excellent program. Plan to attend next year's seminar already in the planning stages for the last week in November, 2017.



## 114TH ANNUAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE (CONT'D)



The 2016—2017 New England Cemetery Association Board of Directors were sworn in at the Presidential Banquet held at the Nantasket Beach Resort on June 29, 2016.

From left to right are: **James Holman**, 2nd Vice President, *Mount Auburn Cemetery*, Cambridge, MA; **Joseph Swift**, Treasurer, *Highland Memorial Park*, Johnston, RI; **Craig Cunningham**, President, *Oak Grove Cemetery*, Bath, ME; **Mark Hemmann**, Past President / Director, *Cedar Hill Cemetery*, Hartford, CT; **Mary Anne Hawthorne**, Director, *Cedar Hill Cemetery*, Hartford, CT; **Robbin Kelley**, Immediate Past President, *Town of Harwich*, Harwich, MA; **David Boyle**, Director, *Town of Chelmsford*, Chelmsford, MA; **Raymond Scholl**, Secretary, *Milford Cemetery Association*, Milford, CT; **Dan Krueger**, Past President / Director, *Beaverdale Memorial Park*, New Haven, CT. Not present were President **Patrick Healy**, 1st Vice President, *Green Mount Cemetery*, Montpelier, VT and **Jeffrey Pelletier**, Director, *Evergreen Cemetery*, Watertown, CT.



Spring is coming!