

## **DRAFT Minutes of Meeting September 17, 2008**

### **West Greenwich Town Hall**

**In attendance: Evelyn Wheeler, Pegee Malcolm, Judy Fardig, Sally Small, Bruce MacGunnigle, Robert Butler, Lee Teverow, Edna Kent, David Kirchner**

**Excused Absences: Paul Robinson, Carolyn Crist-Schwab**

**Former commission members who chose not to be reappointed: Rosemarie Mello and Roger Beaudry**

**Meeting called to order at 6:35 pm by Chairwoman Wheeler**

**Introduction of Minutes of June 18, 2008 by Chairwoman Wheeler**

**Sally Small requested that “Barrington Historical Cemetery Commission” be modified**

**to read “Barrington Cemetery Commission”**

**Motion to accept minutes as amended by Bruce MacGunnigle, second by Robert**

**Butler**

**9 – 0 to accept minutes as amended**

**Rules and Regulations have been approved by the Secretary of State and must be posted on their website for 30 days before they can become official**

**Member report on summer activities:**

- 1. Lee Teverow: Has been attempting to reach John Sterling for assistance with database printing issues at the RIHS Library**
- 2. David Kirchner: Veterans' Cemetery groundstaff and DOT assisted with the Cranston reburial; Current focus is on the federally funded construction and renovation project at the Veterans Cemetery with a target date of November 1st for completion**
- 3. Robert Butler: Current focus is on finding all the West Greenwich cemeteries – 140 have been located with GPS coordinates; Adopt a Cemetery program has about 45 people; After converting GPS coordinates to RI State coordinates, the Town Engineer will put cemeteries on all town plat maps**
- 4. Edna Kent: Working with volunteers on brush removal; Working with a student volunteer at the Heritage Society Archives; Located new cemetery on Route 5 in North Smithfield; Greenville dance class has volunteered to clean a cemetery, MA resident will help locate an ancestral cemetery in Gloucester**
- 5. Bruce MacGunnigle: Katelyn Baccari has volunteered to photograph all gravestones in East Greenwich, and is working with Bruce on this project; Reynolds Family Association invited him to speak; Public Works Director of EG has begun the GPS program**
- 6. Peggie Malcolm: Helping West Warwick Cemetery Commission get underway; attendance at Knight Street burials; Cleaned four cemeteries; Reburial of Charlotte Drive bones at Brayton Cemetery is scheduled for September 27th; Warwick Cemetery Commission meets the 1st Tuesday of every month – all are welcome to attend**
- 7. Sally Small: Fannin-Lehner Restoration Consultants repaired 15**

**stones; Prince's Hill Cemetery has lost 3-4 slate stones; Retired high school teacher is working on photographing and touching up photos of all gravestones in Barrington; Suggestion that graduating classes could photograph stones as a senior project each year**

**8. Judy Fardig: Project to clean up North Burial Ground in Warren – Boy Scouts helped to clean it up, the town put up a new fence, grass seed and flowers were planted, DPW will plant flowering trees, the Church's roof drain was redirected to prevent future wash-out**

**9. Evelyn Wheeler: Knightsville Cemetery cleaning – located 50 buried stones and will mark each burial using RI State Archives documents detailing all burial locations; Cranston Cemetery Commission ordinance approved and will go in front of City Council; Attended Sons of Union Veterans reburial of Michael McElroy; Attended AGS conference; Narrangansett will soon have a historical cemetery commission**

### **Next Year's Meeting Schedule**

**November 19, 2008: Warwick or East Greenwich location TBA**

**April 15, 2009: Warren Senior Center**

**June 17, 2009: Veteran's Cemetery Conference Room**

**September 16, 2009: Preservation Society**

**Discussion regarding whether a work session needs to be scheduled for October to work on additional legislative modification suggestions. Decision was made to attempt to reintroduce previously proposed legislation for the January 2009 session before**

**working on any new ones.**

**Demonstration by Kenneth Rahn on the new, searchable website for RI Graves. Following the demonstration, there was a general discussion regarding the future of the current database, and the scope of Kenneth's project.**

**Motion by Bruce MacGunnigle to offer thanks to Kenneth Rahn for the time and**

**effort he has put into this project.**

**Report on the Commission's accomplishments over the past two years:**

**1. Updated the "black book" and delivered them to all cities and towns to help make them aware of the historic value of our cemeteries**

**2. Helped several cities and towns to formulate awareness and adoption programs for historical cemeteries including Historical Cemetery Committees**

**3. Requested cities and towns put cemeteries on their plat maps**

**4. Put up a website, [www.historicalcemeteries.ri.gov](http://www.historicalcemeteries.ri.gov) with the help of a volunteer webmaster and RI.gov**

**5. Arranged to have John Sterling and Deby Nunes work on a link to make the website available to all instead of at a few libraries**

**6. Through news articles in the area newspapers and the NY Times, we have recruited many volunteers to clean up and document many cemeteries – on Earth Day as well as other times of the year**

## **Nominations and Elections for Chairperson and Vice Chairperson:**

- 1. Bruce MacGunnigle nominated Evelyn Wheeler for Chairperson with a second by Robert Butler. Voted 7 – 0 for approval with Evelyn Wheeler and Pegee Malcolm abstaining**
- 2. Bruce MacGunnigle nominated Pegee Malcolm for Vice Chairperson with a second by Robert Butler. Voted 7 – 0 for approval with Evelyn Wheeler and Pegee Malcolm abstaining**

## **Discussion regarding possible goals for the next year:**

- 1. Continue with website development**
- 2. Reintroduce previously proposed legislation for January 2009 session**
- 3. Help cities and towns that still need a cemetery commission (14/39) with a focus on Coventry and Foster first**
- 4. GPS readings for all cemeteries by June 2009**
- 5. Photographs of all slate stones by June 2009**
- 6. Find additional sources for volunteers to assist with cemetery cleanups**
- 7. Work with locations who have the full database to fix printing issues, starting with the RIHS library and asking Roger Beaudry for assistance**

**Motion to adjourn meeting at 8:35 pm and begin Open Forum by Chairwoman Wheeler**

**Katelyn Baccari asked for some information regarding what to do with the EG gravestone photos she is taking as they accumulate, and a decision was made to save them on CD or DVD for now. Commission will follow up with John Sterling and Barbara Austin for suggestions.**

**New signs will not be made, as the workshop has been closed down. 80 old signs were found, with 20 still left to be picked up.**

**Discussion regarding the Missing in America Project, an organization dedicated to locating and interring unclaimed cremation remains.**

**Possible new cemetery found in Charlestown on Nature Conservatory grounds**

**A new cemetery (SK 204) has been located in South Kingstown**

**Open Meeting adjourned at 8:52 pm**

**Next Meeting: November 19, 2008 at 6:30 pm – location TBA**

**Respectfully submitted by Emily Corbett**