

Our Youth as Caretakers

Residents and visitors to our cemeteries recognize the cultural and genealogical value of maintaining cemeteries. We are working with the Lion Cubs 4-H and the school to ensure our youth know, respect and care about our town cemeteries.

During the summer, seven of our youth, along with three of their leaders and two parents, donated a Sunday to stain the fence at Center Cemetery to preserve it. Their sense of civic responsibility and pride in their community are essential for the future.



Lion Cubs 4-H members paint the fence

Returning Home

We move away for a time to pursue the good life, but we never forget our roots and often want to come home. Many make that one last trip to join friends and family in their final retirement at our burial grounds.

Touching Our Past

Considerable genealogical research goes on, with information requests and visits from relatives or researchers from all over the United States and Canada. Many of these individuals make a special trip to town to visit our cemeteries once they have located a relative from their past.

What Is Involved in Cemetery Care?

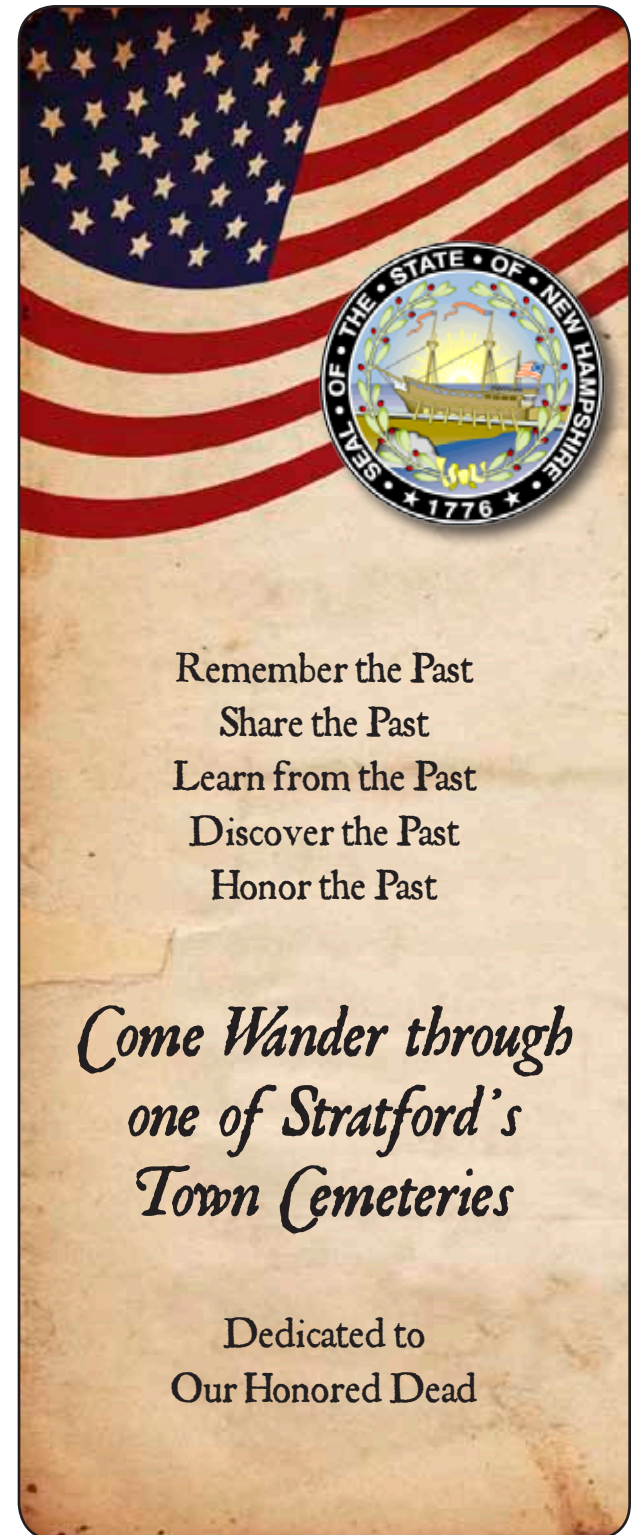
Trustees are elected volunteers who administer burials, arrange for mowing and fencing, ensure perpetual care graves are maintained, keep cemetery records, and prepare the budget. For a fee, graves may be designated as perpetual care and are forever maintained via funds kept apart from town money. Each year the town purchases and trustees place flags on graves of veterans to honor those who have served in our nation's military.

Stratford's Cemeteries:

Baldwin Cemetery (town)
Burnside Cemetery (town; inactive)
Catholic Cemetery (private)
Center Cemetery (town)
Fairview Cemetery (private)
Haynes Cemetery (town; inactive)

Town of Stratford, PO Box 366
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Our Past, Our Present, Our Future

Ever see cemeteries as a living repository of town history? Or as a physical location to connect to online genealogical research?

Preserving History and Memories

How sad it is to see forgotten cemeteries crumbling and in disrepair, to see stones fallen, broken, and returning to earth.

Most of us become aware of cemeteries only when we lose a loved one. Yet, there is more to cemeteries than internment, mowing and decorating for Memorial Day.



Stone flat on the ground and partly buried

What Is This Restoration Project About?

For the past dozen years, the Cemetery Trustees have been working on stone cleaning and stone repair, particularly at Center Cemetery. Money for this work has come from taxes, as voted at town meeting.



*Same stone dug up, cleaned,
and prepared to epoxy together*

To date, we had cleaned all and repaired 13 of 135 damaged or fallen stones in need of work to prevent further deterioration.

In 2010, the Trustees received \$14,800 from the Neil & Louise Tillotson Fund of the NH Charitable Foundation and restored 35 additional stones. Each year, Trustees also set aside a portion of their part of the town budget to continue working with damaged stones of rich and poor, known and unknown—upon grant completion, over a 100 stones will still remain in need of repair. We want to repair all the stones.

What Can One Person Do?

- » Report damage to stones when you see it happening or when you visit.
- » Support the budget—money is used to mow and to clean and repair stones.
- » Support the parks budget—part of the money is used to purchase grave flags.
- » Vote for the volunteers who stand for election and donate their time to oversee cemeteries.
- » Visit a cemetery today.
- » Invite our youth to visit a cemetery.
- » Use cemeteries to share our history with our youth to instill a sense of belonging and pride in our past.



*Same stone assembled
and upright on a new base*