

Shutesbury Cemetery Commission Annual Report

7/01/2019 – 6/30/2020

The Cemetery Commission consists of three members and is responsible for management of the four Town cemeteries in Shutesbury. FY20 was a busy year! We started with updating the prices of burial plots, which had not been changed in 20 years. After researching the average price of plots in neighboring towns, we raised the price of a resident plot from \$100 to \$350 and a non-resident from \$250 to \$550 (still less than surrounding towns). We also updated a number of policies, especially regarding the Green Burial section in West Cemetery. The Commission began work on their website, which still needs more work. The Commission hired a third groundskeeper, who is responsible for the Pratt Corner and Lock's Village cemeteries, and helping with Memorial Day preparations at West Cemetery & the Luther Henry Tomb Lot.

There was a special focus on West Cemetery this year, beginning with the Gravestone Restoration Project. Funding came primarily from the Community Preservation Committee, with donations from the Historical Commission and Friends of the Historical Commission as well. The Historical Commission also got a small grant from the State Historical Records Board to preserve objects significant to the history and experiences of military veterans in the Commonwealth, which will be used on the monuments of 8 Civil War veterans. After a lot of effort trying to get paperwork done during the pandemic, a contract was awarded in June to Historic Gravestone Services (HGS) of New Salem. They will be restoring and cleaning 18 gravestone monuments that have been assessed as highest priority for public safety because of their possibility of falling over. The Veterans graves belong to Charles Griffin, James W. Hayden, Marcus M. Morrison, Edward P. Pierce, Joseph F. Spear, Edward P. Twitchell, Benjamin D. Waterman and George B. Wood.

We also contracted with a surveyor to create an accurate plan of the roads and lots in the back portion of West Cemetery. Phase 1 of the survey mapping was completed, and a second phase will start Spring 2021. Much of this work had to be coordinated and done during the lockdown associated with the pandemic, which began in March and continued through the year. We are hoping for better conditions in FY21, so that we can work with volunteers on gravestone cleaning and repair.

Walter Tibbetts, Chair
Janice Stone, Secretary
Ray Cusson, Commissioner through April 2020.



E.P. Pierce monument needing repair and cleaning.



Green Burial section of West Cemetery