

Historic Cemetery Advisory Commission
Annual Report
2017



The commission met fourteen times this year and is pleased to share the summary of our actions as noted below.

Activities/accomplishments:

1. **Working with the City, fifty two gravestones have been conserved** (two examples shown below). The commission was involved with creating and distributing the RFP for a stone conservator, resulting in numerous applications and the hiring of Beyond the Gravestone. The commission surveyed stones for consideration for conservation work and collaborated with the conservators on three rounds of stone work. In addition, the commission coordinated the conservation of two stones prior to the hiring of Beyond the Gravestone.
2. Surveyed stones in God's Little Acre to identify those most in danger of being lost due to deterioration. The survey will be the basis of grant requests to be submitted in 2018.
3. Created and approved "Policy for Restoration, Conservation, and Addition of Gravestones" in Newport's public burying grounds to protect the integrity of our historic burying grounds from inappropriate stonework.
4. Engaged the public with our burying grounds by creating and providing documents for the City website to promote our historic burying grounds (general information about our sites, map of burying grounds and cemeteries in Newport, gravestone repair regulations, walking tour of the Common Burying Ground).
5. Engaged the public by creating and installing a self guided walking tour of the Common Burying Ground. To date, about 500 brochures have been used, an indication of the approximate number of people who have experienced the tour.
6. Conducted an open house on April 15th as part of the Rhode Island celebration of Historic Cemetery Day.
7. Conducted a tour of God's Little Acre.
8. Proposed a change in ordinance to allow leashed dogs in the Common Burying Ground.
9. Conducted a workshop for training on how to clean and reset gravestones. Twenty people attended, and several headstones were cleaned and reset with the help and guidance of our conservators.
10. Guided the creation and selection of a logo (pictured at the top of the page) to be used in conjunction with all historic Newport burying grounds.
11. Designed welcome signs to be installed at the entrances of the Common Burying Ground. The signs will be installed in the spring of 2018.
12. Conducted a fundraising campaign to return the sign to God's Little Acre.
13. Worked with groups interested in conserving stones for Dr. Isaac Senter and Rev. Nicholas Eyres.
14. Helped numerous individuals find graves of family members in the Common Burying Ground and Braman Cemetery.

15. Hosted a meeting of the Rhode Island Advisory Commission on Historical Cemetery and provided a tour of the Golden Hill/Clifton Burying Ground.

The Commission would like to extend *special thanks* to the City Council, for their continued support of our efforts and Scott Wheeler, for his valuable contributions. Carol Bowman, Department of Public Services has also been extremely helpful to the commission.

