



Cranston Historic Cemetery Commission

Annual Report to the Cranston City Council

October 2018:



Presented by Gregg A. Mierka, Chairman, CHCC

This year the Cranston Historical Cemetery Commission (CHCC) held all its monthly meetings open to the public following all procedures established in Chapter 2.55 of the City of Cranston Code of Ordinances at the Governor Sprague Mansion Museum. Near the end of the 2017 year of operations CHCC Chairman Colin Parkhurst informed the Commission, since he was moving his personal residence out of the city, he would be stepping down as CHCC Chairman. All sitting members of the Commission must be city residents. Therefore under the rules of the city ordinance, he explained he also needed to step aside as an appointed commissioner. In November 2017 the Commission voted its 2018 officers. My first act as elected CHCC Chairman was to appoint Colin Parkhurst to be the Primary CHCC Advisor for 2018. This measure does not violate the rules of the City Ordinance citing residence to serve as Advisor. *See Appendix I.*

CHCC is pleased to report all goals set forth for 2018 have been achieved or are in progress of being achieved in the coming year. A list of appointees, their appointed authority, and the remaining Commission vacancies are included in *Appendix I*. A list of Cranston designated cemeteries, including those relocated, lost, or destroyed, is included in *Appendix II*. Examples of cemeteries in various conditions are detailed with photographs as well as cemetery descriptions are also included in *Appendix III*. A photographic sampling of work completed and coordinated by CHCC is included in *Appendix IV*.

As the 2018 Commission chair I determined there should be as much continuity as possible to pass the torch from the leadership of Colin Parkhurst to that of my own. Together Colin and I understood we needed to try to ensure a smooth transition to continue the progress of CHCC in a positive manner. Over the last year, the Cranston Historic Cemetery Commission has worked hard to build a strong foundation and organizational structure. Seven goals or endeavors were determined. As CHCC Chair I concluded all CHCC goals must first be efforts of leadership roles involving all current Commissioners. This enabled CHCC to accomplish many things during the year. CHCC is continuing to expand its involvement within the community. As chairman, it was my goal to do as much as possible to organize the structure of CHCC in a way that could address the total efforts of the commission as a team of commission committee experts working on behalf of the city and fulfil our mission for 2018.

The first 2018 goal of CHCC was to re-assess the condition and update the inventory of all the 87 known historical cemeteries within the city. Walter Slocumb, the 2018 commission Vice Chair, was appointed to lead and carry out this process. Since Walter began assessments and discovered there are actually over 100 historic cemetery sites in Cranston. He has compared his assessments with that of the State commission listings and is currently in the process of updating the Cranston data. Walter is also in the process of investigating and documenting the whereabouts of all military veterans of all American conflicts buried in each Cranston cemetery. It is already apparent through this assessment that conditions in several of the cemeteries have deteriorated without regular upkeep. Information that is catalogued during this assessment includes: 1) accurate GPS coordinates and street location, 2) condition of the grounds and vegetation, head and foot stones, signs, and fences, and 3) the determination of right of way and private property access. This information helps direct the formulation and development of plans and programs for the restoration, rehabilitation and maintenance of Cranston cemeteries.

To quote Colin Parkhurst's 2017 report, "it should be noted that 51 of these 87 cemeteries are on private property and efforts are being made to coordinate efforts with the property owners as their property rights take priority over any work done by the CHCC. The CHCC supports the discussion and consideration of any legislation by the City Council allowing a tax credit to landowners who maintain cemeteries located on their property. This assessment also includes the investigation and research of a recorded 48 cemeteries which have no confirmed location. Some of these have been undoubtedly destroyed while others have simply been lost. CHCC has begun efforts to track down these cemeteries through the comparison of typically vague cemetery descriptions from James Arnold's assessments done in the 1890s to historical maps and land records. There are currently upwards of a dozen possible sites to be investigated in the search for these cemeteries". Colin Parkhurst and Walter Slocumb were also appointed to advise the commission about future cleanup attention needed at various locations for 2018.

The second goal was to begin a comprehensive historical research program that can properly archive the great legacy of the city of Cranston in ways the people will appreciate in the future. James Hall was appointed to lead and carry out this process. He was also assigned the task of developing a transparent and structured CHCC finance system that matches the financial system of the City and all City departments so the commission can answer any and all questions concerning finances accurately. Since all meetings were held at the Sprague Mansion, James Hall (also the archivist of the Cranston Historical Society) was authorized to gather all records of the commission generated since the Commission was first formed and archive and store all such material on behalf of the city at the mansion for future public access.

The third goal was to focus on a doable number of cemetery cleanup projects to show the city the CHCC cemetery beautification progress from start to finish. Part of this process was the repair work needed at many of the cemeteries such as the reassembling of tomb stones and small cemetery monuments and memorials. The Commission is a small group with no annually assigned budget, so CHCC must also rely on outside assistance. We wish to thank volunteers who came to help CHCC at Oakland Cemetery this year as part of RI State-wide Resolution #7203 designating April 14 as Cemetery Awareness/Clean Up Day. We want to recognize the Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church Men's Club for their cleanup assistance at Oakland Cemetery and their hard work volunteering to maintain the Armenian gravesites at Oakland. Mayor Fung, attended as well as Warwick Mayor Avedisian, and Secretary of State Gorbea who gave words of encouragement. This Resolution has now become law in the State of Rhode Island designating the 2nd weekend in April officially as Historic Cemetery Awareness Clean-up Day. To quote Colin Parkhurst, it is the goal of CHCC to bring all of Cranston's cemeteries to a low-maintenance state by clearing, restoration, and repairing the site during organized cleanup events attended by community volunteers. At the same time, each individual grave marker will also be recorded to include name, dates, veteran status, stone condition, and a photographed image for inclusion in the state commission's digital database. This will assure the information acquired will never be lost and that the details registered on the interment are accessible for public use. Thanks to Stop & Shop, Shaws, Pepsi & Crystal Springs Water for drinks/snacks.

CHCC continues its efforts to determine and to pursue means for funding large-scale and recurring maintenance projects. For this year, the CHCC shares a budget with the Historic District Commission through the coordination of its former chair, Lynn Furney, and Finance Director Robert Strom. The CHCC plans to present a proposal to the Cranston City Council for inclusion in the next year's budget separate from the Historic District Commission. CHCC has developed a list of existing and required assets to determine an annual budget. This includes capital materials (such as ground testing equipment, rakes, saws, and mowers), non-capital materials (office supplies, gloves, trash bags, mortar, etc.), and operational expenses (i.e. volunteer web site subscriptions). CHCC has been allowed to use space in the Governor Sprague Carriage House as a place to operate and safely store all its assets and property.

In addition to an annual budget from the City, the CHCC asks the City Council to consider the possibility of obtaining 501(c)3 status in order to obtain non-profit funding from external sources. This may be one way CHCC can avoid an impact on the overall City budget. Pending approval, nonprofit grant foundation funding could be used for long-term maintenance projects, including regular landscaping of low-maintenance cemeteries, support for local small business contractors, address dead tree removal from abandoned cemeteries to prevent damage or injury, and assist with the re-interment of the individuals located inside the abandoned and condemned Roger Williams Mausoleum.

The fourth goal was to work with City departments such as the Cranston PD, Cranston Dept. of Public Works, and Cranston Parks & Recreation to achieve its goals. In the coming year CHCC will be creating a cemetery adoption program to try to involve the general public in ongoing cemetery maintenance. Since CHCC is small in number it will continue to focus most of its attention on abandoned cemeteries in public domain. Most private cemeteries are adequately managed by owners. Abandoned cemeteries are at highest risk by vandals and they tend to be in the worst shape. We do our best to educate the public about these cemeteries. Some people living near these cemeteries have volunteered their time and expense to assist CHCC with efforts to help keep abandoned under control. We thank all citizens for their efforts. We will work to get more people involved in the future and we are researching out to the small business community to try to lend their assistance. Our goal is to assign all abandoned cemeteries to people who value the importance of perpetual cemetery maintenance.

The fifth goal was to work more closely with the court system to coordinate efforts assigned by the courts for cemetery work needed. CHCC will be asking retired Judge Frederick Joslyn to speak to other judges and recommend assigning more people who need to perform public service to assist CHCC. At this time CHCC also asks the City Council to assist with contacting and asking for the possibility of getting ACI inmate work cooperation to help conduct cemetery maintenance when/if possible. If these efforts can be approved CHCC can annually provide a schedule of needed work and the commission will also keep the Community Outreach Cranston PD officer Captain Vincent McAteer informed so all Cranston PD officers on patrol will know the efforts of the commission at all times. To assist CPD concerns about cemetery work vs. the potential of vandalism CHCC produced photo ID badges to be worn by all commissioners in the field. The badges include the city seal and info about each commissioner.

The sixth goal was to coordinate and improve standard communications social media efforts, plus find new ways to involve the public schools to assist with cemetery projects. The purpose of this effort is to reach out to as much of the community as possible and teach students the importance of Cranston cemeteries and the history of our city. Catherine Mills, CHCC Secretary, was appointed to lead this effort. Mary Mierka the CHCC Mayoral appointed Commission Alternate was also appointed to assist Catherine. For this purpose CHCC will need a modest budget to better perform these endeavors in the future. However a major concern is the severe magnitude of poison ivy growth existing in many Cranston cemeteries. This situation is a problem for CHCC workers and especially outside volunteers and school student volunteers. For example I myself had to seek medical attention due to serious poison ivy infections four separate times during the course of year 2018. CHCC can make better headway with volunteers in the coming year if it can get more attention on this matter. While we do not want to over stress the cooperation with Cranston departments we still need more of their assistance especially with poisoning efforts.

The seventh goal was to identify a historically significant cemetery site in the city that might attract attention to the efforts of CHCC. The cemetery site identified this year was the Sheldon Family Cemetery located on Park Avenue near the Cranston entrance of Roger Williams Park, or the cemetery listed on the State registry as CR-036. CR-036 has become a very important project. We found the cemetery contains history is not only important to Cranston, but it contains a history important to the State and the Nation. We discovered there are two original Revolutionary War period officers of the Pawtuxet Rangers buried in 36 (Colonel Elisha Arnold & Captain James Hawkins), plus an officer of the Colonial War period (Captain Philip Sheldon). However we also discovered an officer named Captain Jonathan Pitcher is also buried in 36. Pitcher was among the very first group of less than 10 sea faring officers commissioned by the Continental Congress in 1776 along with John Paul Jones creating the United States Navy. In other words Cranston has

one of the Founding Fathers of the United States Navy (Captain Pitcher) buried in our city. He was the first commanding officer of the USS Providence and served aboard the USS constitution after the war. As result CHCC is working with the Pawtuxet Rangers to support a ceremony planned for Rhode Island Independence Day scheduled for May 5, 2019. Pitcher's original headstone was completely destroyed by vandals so Colin Parkhurst was put in charge of ordering a new stone through the Federal Government. CHCC is also working with the Cranston Discovery Network committee to design and post a historic tablet/sign in 36 that tells the public about the history of the cemetery. All members of the city council, the mayor's office and the general public are invited to attend the ceremony next spring. The Pawtuxet Rangers will be providing musket solutes to all the veterans in the cemetery along with fife and drum music. CHCC will keep the city informed as the scheduled event unfolds. Col. Ronald Barnes (of the Pawtuxet Rangers), James Hall, Walter Slocomb, Colin Parkhurst and I are currently in the process of designing the Cranston Discovery Network historic tablet/sign for CR-036. The Bricklayers and Allied Craftsman Union Local No. 3 has volunteered their time and efforts to redesign the entrance of the cemetery and Anchor Brick & Concrete/Castlerock-Cranston has donated all the material need to complete the job at 36. Sherwin Williams Paint-Cranston donated paint and supplies to improve the appearance of 36.

On behalf of CHCC I would like to thank Mayor Allan Fung, Council President Michael Farina, Director of Administration Dr. Robin Muksian, Chief of Staff Carlos Lopez, Mayoral Assistant Paula Smith, CPD Chief Michael Winquist, Cranston Public Works Director & member of the Cranston Discovery Network Committee Kenneth Mason, Cranston Parks & Rec Director Anthony Liberatore, Finance Director Robert Strom, City Clerk Maria Wall, City Grant Writer Lisa Kirshenbaum, president of the Cranston Historical Society & member of the Cranston Discovery Network Committee Sandra Moyer, Cranston Library Director & member of the Cranston Discovery Network Committee Edward Garcia, Pegee Malcom Chairperson of the RI State Cemetery Commission, Col. Ronald Barnes Commander of the Pawtuxet Rangers, Kenneth Pike Commander as well as former commander Henry Duquette of RI Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War Elisha Dyer Camp No. 7, John Duchesneau State Commander and Rev Raymond Ferrick of the RI Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States, Grant Pilkington of House Speaker Nicholas Mattiello's office, Meri Kennedy of the Cranston Herald, all CHCC Commissioners and CHCC Advisors, and all members of the Cranston City Council including Councilman Paul Archetto for your unwavering support.

In conclusion, CHCC views all Cranston cemeteries as *final neighborhoods* located throughout our great city that need ongoing attention. The question we all must continually ask our self is, "Do we want our final neighborhoods to be places Cranston residents, Rhode Islanders and out of State tourist guests will want to visit and enjoy, or do we want to allow our final neighborhoods to lapse in to the condition of a ghetto that no one will ever understand or ever want to visit". Our cemeteries and monuments are symbols or icons of our history. They tell the story of who we are. If we understand and fully appreciate their importance their history can help point the path to a better future for everyone. On behalf of CHCC I want to thank President Farina and the entire City Council for the opportunity to submit this report for 2018.

A considerable amount of maintenance and cleanup work throughout Cranston's cemeteries has been done in the past year and will continue through the remainder of 2018 as long as weather allows. The Public Works Department and the Parks & Rec Department have been crucial to completing many of these tasks. CHCC is extremely appreciative of their continued support. The following is a list of six major projects that have been completed or are currently underway:

- CR001 – St Ann's Cemetery: Historical Research, Probing & Assessments, three group work visits
- CR003 – Oakland Cemetery: continuing work is being done to clear overgrown areas, remove trash and debris, and reset fallen gravestones, also straightened more stones. Researched the cemetery and people buried there. Took photos & measurements—wrote a report, three group & two research work visits
- CR019 – Nicholas Sheldon Lot: Assessed this cemetery generated maps, photos, researched and wrote report for archives
- CR020 – Knightsville Meeting House Lot; overgrown cemetery was cleared twice, a new historic cemetery sign was posted, two group work visits
- CR025 – Uriah Eddy Lot: overgrown cemetery was cleared twice, Parks & Rec poisoning twice to eliminate heavy poison ivy growth, stones are being reset, fallen logs cut for removal, probing for lost graves, historical research, logging of four Civil War veterans, two group visits
- CR030 – King Randall Lot: Volunteers cleaned this site & it is in good condition
- CR032 – George Colvin Lot: Volunteers cleaned this site & it is in good condition
- CR036 – Captain Philip Sheldon Family Lot: overgrown cemetery was cleared twice, Parks & Rec poisoning twice to eliminate heavy poison ivy growth, stones are being reset, federal stone ordered for Captain Pitcher, fence painting, fallen

logs cut for removal, probing for lost graves, historical research, a Cranston Discovery Network Sign/Tablet is being designed, a brick stairwell is being redesigned by the Cranston Bricklayers Union for public safety and improved appearance, four group work visits. May 5th RI Independence Day 2019 ceremony being planned. Additional work: Researched people buried there and searched for hidden stones and artifacts. *See Seventh CHCC 2018 Goals of commission for more details about plans for this cemetery*

- **CR039** – Ebeneezer Fuller Lot: continuing work is being done to clear overgrown areas and to repair and re-set damaged stones, lot cleared twice, two group work visits
- **CR069** – Assessed this cemetery generated maps, photos, researched and wrote report for archives
- **CR074** – Caleb Burlingame Lot: School Dept. Western Hills Middle school assigned students to assist with clean up project
- **CR078** – Wescott-warner Lot: Volunteers cleaned this site & it is in good condition
- **CR099** – Hawkins Lot: continuing work is being done to re-set fallen gravestones, lot cleared twice, one group work visit
- **CR103** – Alvin Warner lot: Volunteers cleaned this site & it is in good condition

NOTE: Additional assessments were completed at a location next to Lowe's Hardware after several workers informed CHCC that a lost Civil war veteran was buried in the land next to their store. The RI Dept. Sons of union Veterans of the Civil War and the RI Military order of the Loyal Legion of the United States were informed. This investigation is still on going. Both organizations were also informed there may be missing graves at Oakland cemetery. More research needed at that location as well. Thank you to the Dept. of Public works for donating gravel for stone setting and for debris removal at sites.

The CHCC is currently posting new Cranston Historic cemetery signs at all cemeteries needing new signs or needing signs at sites never posted in the past. The commission maintains its inventory of cemetery signs at the Sprague Mansion Carriage House.

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Appendix I

Membership Member Title/Affiliation	Name
1	<i>Mayor Appointee[1]</i> Vacant
2	<i>Mayor Appointee[2]</i> James Hall
3	<i>Mayor Appointee[3]</i> Gregg A. Mierka <input type="checkbox"/> Chair <i>Mayor Alternate</i> Mary Mierka
4	<i>Council President Appointee[1]</i> Walter Slocomb <input type="checkbox"/> Vice Chair
5	<i>Council President Appointee[2]</i> Vacant
6	<i>Council Pres. Appointee[3]Alternate</i> Catharine Mills <input type="checkbox"/> Secretary
7	<i>Planning Director's Designee</i> Peter Lapolla Stephen Mulcahy
8	<i>Parks/Rec. Director's Designee</i> Anthony Liberatore Vacant
9	<i>Cranston Historical Society Designee</i> Sandra Moyer, Mary Mierka
Honorary Advisor (1) RIACHC	Margaret "Pegee" Malcolm, <i>State Cemetery Commission Chair</i>
Primary Advisor (2) RIACHC	Colin Parkhurst, <i>Former Chair</i>
City Hall Finance Advisor	Robert Strom
Grants & Funding Advisor	Lisa Kirshenbaum

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Appendix II

Confirmed/Active Cemeteries

Number	Cemetery Name	Number	Cemetery Name
CR001	ST ANN'S CEMETERY	CR019	NICHOLAS SHELDON LOT
CR002	POCASSET CEMETERY	CR020	KNIGHTVILLE MEETING HOUSE LOT
CR003	OAKLAND CEMETERY	CR021	NEHEMIAH KNIGHT LOT
CR004	JAMES HILLS BURIAL GROUND	CR022	JACOB CLARKE LOT
CR005	WILLIAM FENNER LOT	CR023	BETHANY LUTHERAN SWEDISH CEMETERY
CR006	JOSEPH BURTON LOT	CR024	NATHAN THORNTON LOT
CR007	FIELD-LAWTON LOT	CR025	URIAH EDDY LOT
CR008	FREEBORN BRAYTON LOT	CR026	JOHN STAFFORD LOT
CR009	GEN CHRISTOPHER LIPPITT LOT	CR028	SAMUEL STONE LOT
CR010	UNKNOWN LOT	CR030	KING-RANDALL LOT
CR011	SANFORD KNIGHT LOT	CR032	GEORGE COLVIN LOT
CR012	ALFRED GRAVES LOT	CR034	THOMAS ANDREWS LOT
CR013	JULIA A KNIGHT LOT	CR035	RHODES-GREENE LOT
CR014	DAVID POTTER LOT	CR036	CAPT PHILLIP SHELDON LOT
CR015	KNIGHT-FISKE LOT	CR037	DR GEORGE WATERMAN LOT
CR016	ROBERTS - MATHEWSON LOT	CR038	SARLE LOT
CR017	WILLIAM BAILEY LOT	CR039	EBENEZER FULLER LOT
CR018	FENNER - LAWTON LOT	CR040	MAJ THOMAS FENNER LOT
CR042	WILLIAM KNIGHT LOT	CR074	CALEB BURLINGAME LOT
CR043	LODOWICK BRAYTON LOT	CR075	NICHOLAS SHELDON LOT
CR044	WILLIAM NICHOLAS LOT	CR076	WIGHT - ARNOLD LOT
CR045	JOHN STONE LOT	CR077	ELISHA ANTHONY LAWTON LOT
CR046	URIAN WESTCOTT LOT	CR078	WESTCOTT-WARNER LOT
CR048	JEREMIAH KING LOT	CR079	HOLLIMAN POTTER LOT
CR049	CRANSTON LOT	CR080	CHARLES WIGHT- HENRY BAKER LOT
CR050	ELDER ELISHA GREENE LOT	CR089	DUTEE COLVIN LOT
CR051	EPHRAIM MARTIN LOT	CR091	DEA STEPHEN KNIGHT LOT
CR052	JOSIAH WESTCOTT LOT	CR097	CAPT JOHN PITCHER LOT
CR053	JOSEPH BRAYTON LOT	CR098	JONATHAN REMINGTON LOT
CR054	THOMAS BAKER LOT	CR099	HAWKINS LOT
CR055	ARKWRIGHT CEMETERY	CR100	UNKNOWN LOT
CR056	BENJAMIN CARPENTER LOT	CR103	ALVAN WARNER LOT
CR057	NATHAN PEARCE LOT	CR104	RANDALL RALPH LOT
CR058	DANIEL S CONGDON LOT	CR105	SAMUEL BENNETT LOT
CR059	BENJAMIN RANDALL JR LOT	CR106	EPHRAIM CARPENTER LOT
CR061	STATE INSTITUTION CEMETERY #2	CR107	STATE FARM CEMETERY ANNEX
CR062	UNKNOWN LOT [POSSIBLY RELPH]	CR108	ZURIEL POTTER LOT

CR064	CHARLES BENNETT LOT	CR109	BARZILLAI KNIGHT LOT
CR065	SLAVE CEMETERY - BAKER FAMILY	CR110	ISAAC CONGDON LOT
CR068	FRIENDS BURIAL GROUND	CR111	DEA WILBUR SEARLES LOT
CR069	JEREMIAH WILLIAMS LOT	CR113	JUDGE GEORGE BURTON LOT
CR070	AMOS WHITAKER LOT	CR114	OAKLAND SCHOOL FOR GIRLS
CR072	EDDY LOT	CR117	REV JONATHAN KNIGHT LOT
CR073			WILLIAM BURTON LOT

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Appendix II Cont'd.

Lost/Nonexistent

Number	Cemetery Name	Number	Cemetery Name
CR094	ARNOLD FAMILY LOT	CR552	TOWN FARM LOT
CR095	JAMES FENNER LOT	CR553	JOHN DAVIS LOT
CR096	COTTRELL T WILCOX LOT	CR554	UNKNOWN LOT
CR101	RUFUS SPRAGUE LOT	CR555	POTTER FAMILY SLAVE LOT
CR102	NATHANIEL DAVIS LOT	CR556	JOB WILBUR LOT
CR112	SAMUEL JENISON LOT	CR557	UNKNOWN LOT
CR558			SEARLE FAMILY CEMETERY
CR301	PHILIP ARNOLD LOT	CR559	JOB SAMBO LOT
CR307	BRAYTON-WILBUR LOT	CR560	UNKNOWN LOT
CR308	JAMES HARRIS LOT	CR561	SLAVE LOT
CR351	WILLIAM KNIGHT LOT	CR563	STUKELY TURNER LOT
CR564		ELIZABETH HILL LOT	
CR509	GEORGE REED LOT	CR565	UNKNOWN LOT
CR510	AMASA STONE LOT	CR566	DANIEL GOULD LOT
CR512	RANDALL LOT	CR567	CAPT URIAH ARNOLD LOT
CR514	SPRAGUE LOT	CR571	CHARLES BROWN LOT
CR516	OLNEY-COLLINS LOT	CR572	FIELD LOT
CR519	ANGELL-LUTHER LOT	CR575	HORNE LOT
CR531	BARNEY-WATERMAN LOT	CR576	UNKNOWN LOT
CR532	SAMUEL JENISON LOT	CR577	BENJAMIN KNIGHT LOT
CR534	ANDREW HARRIS LOT	CR578	JONATHAN KING LOT
CR536	JOHN RICE ARNOLD SERVANT	CR579	JOSEPH WESTCOTT LOT
CR537	COMMON BURIAL GROUND	CR580	BENJAMIN WESTCOTT LOT
CR538	POLLY WARREN LOT	CR584	BENJAMIN WATERMAN LOT
CR542	KING LOT	CR585	DAVID RANDALL LOT
CR543	GEORGE MOORE LOT	CR586	JOSEPH RANDALL LOT
CR546	STUKLEY WESTCOTT LOT	CR587	CAPT ARTHUR FENNER LOT
CR548	BURTON LOT	CR589	UNKNOWN LOT
CR550	BENJAMIN HAMMOND LOT	CR601	JONAS L WANTON'S FARM CEME
CR551			SQUIRE WILLIAM BURTON LOT

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Appendix III

Cemetery Conditions; Examples of cemeteries in Good condition vs. the Impact of Neglected Cemeteries

As reported last year, the current condition of Cranston's cemeteries varies greatly, depending on the level of care each cemetery has received in the past. The longer a cemetery has been neglected, the greater the efforts will be required by CHCC to restore the lot to a low-maintenance condition. Cemeteries regularly maintained by property owners or adoptive volunteers require minimal assistance and represent the standard of the CHCC's ultimate goal. However some of these locations may need minimal work from time to time, such as the resetting of leaning stones. Low maintenance cemeteries may be maintained irregularly, but can still be maintained by volunteers with minimal direction from the CHCC. According to Colin Parkhurst, "further efforts should be made to find adoptive volunteers to regularly maintain these sites. Major maintenance will be required for completely overgrown sites with many damaged stones. These locations will require multiple events over the course of years to restore and should be a high priority of the commission. However, it must be noted that only a few of these projects should be managed at any given time."

Good Condition



(i) Example of No Maintenance Required; CR007 - Field-Lawton Lot;

This cemetery on Seven Mile Rd is privately owned and maintained, requiring no action from the Cranston Historical Cemetery Commission.

Fair Condition



(ii) Example of Low Maintenance Required; CR008 - Freeborn Brayton Lot

The cemetery on Seven Mile Rd is overgrown and can be maintained by a volunteer group with minimal guidance

Poor Condition



(iii) Example of Major Maintenance Required; **CR076 – Wight-Arnold Lot**

This cemetery on Burlingame Rd was completely overgrown and required a major coordinated effort to clear and restore with heavy involvement from the CHCC (completed 6/2017 under leadership of Colin Parkhurst)

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2018 Photo Examples of Restoration Work Completed or work still underway by the CHCC

1. At CR003 – Oakland Cemetery 18th Century Lot April 14 RI State-Wide Cemetery Awareness / Clean Up Day at Oakland 2018. CHCC members did continued research/probing/marketing 1700s section at Oakland during the summer.



Before



Oakland in dire need of cleaning, clearing fallen trees – It is in disarray since we volunteered April 14.



Volunteers on April 14



CHCC sponsored April 14 Cemetery Awareness Day
Mayor Fung,
Warwick Mayor
Avedisian and
Secty of State
Gorbea



Oakland CleanUp



Researching 1700 section @ Oakland / probing vicinity for stones

2. At CR020 – Knightsville Meeting House Lot Note: we went to #20 two times. As of this writing, it is overgrowing again. Poison ivy needs to be addressed & jungle growth.



Before



After clearing incl. poison ivy. Will need spraying for poison ivy to get back in to clean/clear

3. At CR025 – Uriah Eddy Lot



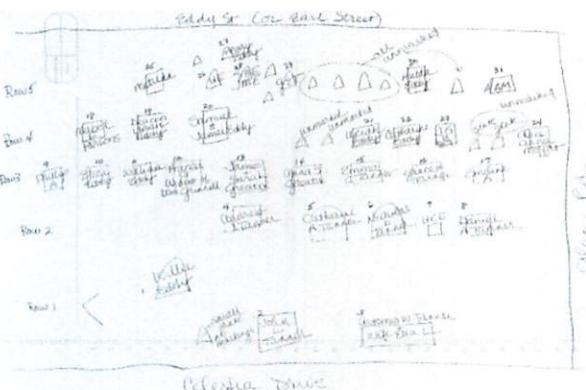
Before



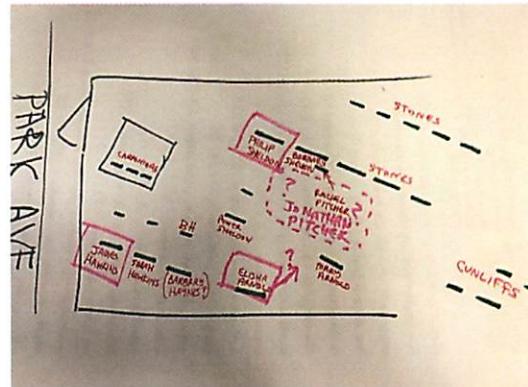
Cut up felled tree, 50 bags / After clearing incl. poison ivy



Clean & cleared, some stones need righting; needs spraying for poison ivy



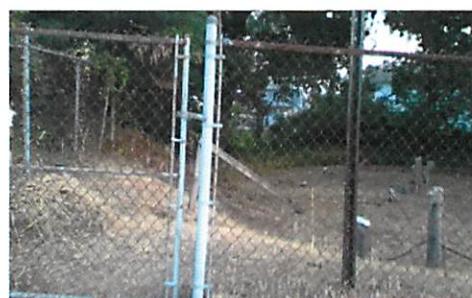
Uriah Eddy Cemetery Map/research on who is buried here



*The Capt. Philip Sheldon Family Cemetery CR-036
on Park Avenue*



Sheldon Family



4. At CR036 – Captain Philip



After incl prohng/finding righting stones

5. At CR 039 Ebinezer Fuller Lot
Hawkins Lot

and

6. At CR 099



The RI Independence Day ceremony with the Pawtuxet Rangers honoring all four revolutionary War veterans buried in this cemetery plus the Cranston Discovery Network sign/tablet will educate future generations about the high importance of this historic site. It is scheduled for May 5, 2019.

<u>Cem #</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Stone Material</u>	<u>Carving</u>	<u>Birth Year</u>	<u>Death Year</u>	<u>War</u>
CR036	ARNOLD	POLLY	slate			1862	
CR036	PITCHER	JONATHAN, CAPT					REVOLUTION
CR036	SHELDON	PHILIP, CAPT	slate		1710c	1800	REVOLUTION
CR036	SHELDON	BARBARY	slate		1714c	1802	
CR036	HAWKINS	JAMES, CAPT	slate	winged cherub/other	1744c	1781	REVOLUTION
CR036	STAYNES	BARBARA			1748c	1831	
CR036	PITCHER	RACHEL	slate	winged cherub/other	1751c	1798	
CR036	HAWKINS	SARAH	slate		1754c	1821	
CR036	CARPENTER	ELIZABETH	marble	no carving	1757	1819	
CR036	CARPENTER	COMFORT A, DR	marble	no carving	1760	1850	
CR036	ARNOLD	ELISHA, COL	marble	no carving	17633	1849	REVOLUTION
CR036	ARNOLD	MARY	marble		1763c	1840	
CR036	SHELDON	POWER	slate	winged cherub/other	1766c	1767	
CR036	CUNLIFF	MARY	marble		1779	1833	
CR036	CUNLIFF	WILLIAM			1783	1850	
CR036	CARPENTER	FREDERICK A, DR	marble	no carving	1800	1827	

CR036	ESTEN	ABBY T	marble		1801	1898
CR036	CUNLIFF	IRENA	marble		1809c	1892
CR036	STONE	STEPHEN T	marble	no carving	1818c	1852
CR036	STONE	WAITSTILL G	marble		1821c	1889
CR036	ARNOLD	HARRIET HENRY	marble		1829c	1838
CR036	STONE	HANNAH	marble		1840c	1841
CR036	CUNLIFF	LARUE S	marble		1841c	1878
CR036	CUNLIFF	WILLIAM	marble		1841c	1845
CR036	STONE	ELISHA ARNOLD	marble		1843c	1861
CR036	STONE	MARY A	marble		1844c	1852
CR036	STONE	NATHAN T	marble		1845c	1878
CR036	STONE	ABBIE G	marble		1848c	1878
CR036	STONE	GEORGE HENRY	marble		1849c	1871

1775 - 1783	Revolution
1812 - 1815	War of 1812
1846 - 1848	Mexican war
1861 - 1865	Civil War
1898	Spanish American War



May 15 Cemetery Awareness Lecture Governor Sprague Mansion, Cranston Historical Society. The Cranston Historical Society welcomed visitors and featured Cranston Historic Cemetery Commission -- we shared an informative talk and display about the Commission's mission, work and goals. *The evening's guest speaker was Karin Sprague, RI Stone Carver.* Karin and her talented team compassionately design and hand carve monuments for families. Her work is in cemeteries across the United States & Ireland. She is a mother of three and lives in a stone cottage surrounded by beautiful gardens in Scituate RI. Her studio is tucked into the woods close by. Karin Sprague Stone Carvers, Inc. is one of a dozen remaining stone carvers in the U.S., continuing in the rich tradition of memorial and gravestone carvings by hand. Their works include tombstones, sculptures, monuments, memorials, celebration stones – carving meaningful designs of remembrance, working from hand drawn letters, symbols and sculptures using time-honored tools of various mallets and chisels.

2018 CEMETERY ASSESSMENTS BUDGET

2018 Clean up / Public Reach Out Budget

\$15 month for Facebook

\$1500 tripod - capital expense

Cost of one truckload of stones

\$300 year for mailing/postage

\$3000 trailer - capital expense

200 lawn bags

cleaning brushes/brooms

3 cases water

200 black trash bags	3 doz work gloves and box latex gloves
epoxy for stones- don't know how much	Stone jack - capital expense

2018 Budget for History Committee

1. 2 each white 3-ring binders	\$42
2. Dividers	\$10
3. Engr Graph Paper	\$20

2018 Cemetery Assessments Budget

Printing & photocopy services	\$150
Cemetery related workshops & training	\$ 400
Workshop/training mileage	\$ 100

Tools and Supplies Request (cont)

Other items to consider as part of the general budget include:

- * commission membership in gravestone or cemetery study organization;
- * cemetery software;
- * commission related publications and periodicals;
- * tools, both new and replacement.

Tools	unit price	Number	Total
Grass/leaf rake	12.00	4	48.00
Garden (Iron) rake	15.00	1	15.00
Weed wacker (Battery)	40.00	1	40.00
hatchet	25.00	2	50.00
Axe	30.00	1	30.00
Loping shears	35.00	1	35.00
hand pruner	15.00	3	45.00
battery chain saw	200.00	1	200.00
pruning hand saw	25.00	1	25.00
bow saw	10.00	1	10.00
Pole pruner	40.00	1	40.00
long handled shovel	20.00	2	40.00
square blade shovel/garden spade	22.00	1	22.00
pry bar	15.00	1	15.00
10' black iron pipe (pry bar)	10.00	1	10.00
work gloves	2.00	20	40.00
Plastic gloves (box)	15.00	1	15.00
bottled water (case of 24)	5.00	3	15.00

leaf bags (60)	43.00	2	86.00
ball of cotton twine	4.00	1	4.00
Wooden Stakes	10.00	1	10.00
marking tape/flagging	10.00	1	10.00
hand soap	1.00	2	2.00
towels			0.00
5 gallon pail for tools			
collection of wood 2x4s (3 to 6 inches long)			0.00
			\$807.00



James Arnold cataloged vital records for RI -- 1900s.

In this photo, it is assumed he is visiting one of Cranston's historic cemeteries in early 1900 -- His work is famous all over New England. Overgrowth of historic cemeteries (and all cemeteries) has not changed and is still a problem that needs to be addressed today.

It is the objective of CHCC to compare his research with current research to provide Cranston with most accurate data possible. The cemetery in back of Arnold in the photo shows needed cemetery work 100 years ago. Unfortunately the same level of work needed to properly maintain cemeteries today remains the same. The job is never done.

Work and Record Committee Thoughts

- 1) File system with miscellaneous Cranston facts and histories. This could be both a three-ring binder and an electronic file with an index. A start on items to include:
 - Earliest recorded cemetery: Maj Thomas Fenner Lot CR040
 - Notable headstones with biography of person including:
 - Earliest headstone, Maj Thomas Fenner 1653 – 1718. Maj Thomas Fenner Lot CR040
 - Earliest veteran's headstone, Maj Thomas Fenner 1653 – 1718. Maj Thomas Fenner Lot CR040 Colonial wars
 - Earliest woman's headstone, Mary Jenks 1721-1723 Maj Thomas Fenner Lot CR040
 - notable or noted individuals (Titanic survivor-Oak Land Cemetery)
 - location of original Arnold's cemetery Records and related information (PPL), location of typewritten index of Arnold's Cranston graves and cemeteries (CPL);
 - Items related to individual cemeteries including newspaper articles, letters, verbal or written remembrances;
 - On line resources such as:
 - <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~inpcrp/repairtoolbox.html>
 - <http://blog.southerngraves.net/>
 - <http://www.savinggraves.net/>
 - <http://www.thc.texas.gov/preserve/projects-and-programs/cemetery-preservation/maintenance-conservation-and-repair/locating>

- o <http://bloggingadeadhorse-dmt.blogspot.com/2009/02/last-words-glossary-of-cemetery-terms.html>
- o <https://www.in.gov/dnr/historic/3748.htm>
- o https://www.in.gov/dnr/historic/files/cem_glossary.pdf
- o <http://www.iscga.org/> (the guide on the left hand side is useful)
- o <http://www.iscga.org/what-are-the-different-types-of-gravestones.html>
- o <http://www.gravestonepreservation.info/about>
- o <https://www.gravestonestudies.org/>

➤ Is there a way to post information on the Cranston cemetery website or some other site?

http://ricemeteries.tripod.com/cr_ceme.HTM

2) Work with the City Tax Assessor to identify cemeteries on the GIS and other maps with the RIHCC number.

3) Improve a cemetery review form as a basis for determining the physical status of cemeteries and the levels or types of work needed.

3a) develop a sortable form to record information from 3 above

4) Develop connections with other commissions for the exchange of information and training.

5) Develop sources of skills needed for cemetery maintenance and upgrading

masonry, Iron work (gates), heavy carpentry (railroad tie stairs)