

Lower Mystic Cemetery

ASSOCIATION

MYSTIC, CONNECTICUT 06355

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2005

Lower Mystic Cemetery has had a good year. We had a successful financial campaign last summer which has increased our endowment, although we are still far from self-supporting. Again, we thank all of you who contributed to the cause.

In October we were honored to take part in the Cemetery tours which were part of Mystic's 350th celebration. A role player from Fitch Senior High added color to the well-attended occasion. Last fall Mrs. Pam Ryley, a teacher at neighboring Cutler Middle School, took her classes to visit the cemetery in connection with a book about 19th century Mystic they were reading. The students were so impressed she plans to do this again.

The cemetery received a welcome grant of \$5800 from the Charles B. Allyn Foundation. With this money 57 gravestones were repaired or reset by Mark Bottinelli under the supervision of director Horace B. Lamb, Jr. Ian Rayburn, our friend from the Sub Base, has continued to volunteer his services and we are happy to report that he has been awarded the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal in appreciation of the hours he spent here in community service.

Detailed illustrated articles about Lower Mystic Cemetery appeared this spring in the Mystic River Press and The Day, describing our work and illustrating our needs. These brought a favorable response and we received a contribution from Groton Lodge No. 2163, Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks. Veterans' graves were marked with flags for Memorial Day courtesy of Bill Lewis and the local veterans' organization.

The Mystic Garden Club has long supported our efforts, and President Marilyn Comrie and Secretary Carol Kimball spoke about the cemetery at their January meeting. This spring we received a grant of \$600 from the Garden Club and through their suggestions we have found someone who will mow the cemetery at a reasonable rate.

Thanks to the kindness of our friend Jim Davis of Elm Grove Cemetery, he and his crew got the cemetery ready for Memorial Day. With the money received from the Garden Club we have started a mowing fund to keep the cemetery looking nice this summer.

FYI-CURRECT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Marilyn Comrie, President

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FROM THE PRESIDENT MARILYN J. COMRIE

THE PAST YEAR HAS BEEN VERY PRODUCTIVE for Lower Mystic Cemetery. The cemetery has looked the best it has for several years, thanks to many volunteers and some generous contributions. The board thanks Jim Davis and his crew from Elm Grove Cemetery for mowing the cemetery the past few seasons to keep it looking trim. We thank Ian Reyburn for his volunteer work that has helped to keep the yucca from overtaking the cemetery and has helped us identify the many stones that have fallen through the years.

We thank the Charles B. Allyn Foundation for its generous donation that allowed us to reset 57 stones in the cemetery and the Mystic Garden Club for its continuing support. And we thank you, the descendants and interested patrons of the cemetery, for helping us keep this piece of Mystic history in good repair. We hope you will continue to provide financial support to keep the cemetery mowed and trimmed.

As Groton celebrates its 300th birthday this year, the cemetery has received well-deserved attention through newspaper articles and historic walks. The board looks forward to another fruitful year in keeping this old wonderful cemetery in a condition it deserves.

OUR TRADITIONAL APPEAL FOR FUNDS

Since we organized this Board of Directors twenty years ago in 1985 under the guidance of Warren B. Fish, we have traditionally closed our newsletters with an appeal for funds. The late Barbara Jensen, one of our original members, was noted for her ability to compose these requests. Last year we asked for money to increase our endowment so that interest would be able to provide money for upkeep. The response was heart-warming.

This year we have set a goal to be able to pay for regular mowings of the historic 1849 cemetery, which we have not been able to do for some time. When we were without funds, we were most fortunate to have Mr. Davis helping us, but we hope that now, with the cost of six mowings approximately \$900, we will be able to pay for this. We have already received contributions from members of the Board of Directors and friends, relatives-or descendants-of those buried in this historic ground.-Under Horace Lamb's direction, one mowing has already been done. We hope to maintain the burial ground so we can have pride in its appearance at all times.

Our immediate objective is to provide funds for this summer's mowing of Lower Mystic Cemetery. We feel the price quoted, \$150 a mowing, is very reasonable. If you would like to pay for a mowing, or part of a mowing, please send your check to Carol W. Kimball, secretary, 28 Allyn Street, Mystic, CT 06355. It will help us achieve our goal and keep the cemetery looking cared-for all summer long.