

Lower Mystic Cemetery ASSOCIATION

MYSTIC, CONNECTICUT 06355
SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2006

Have you driven by Lower Mystic Cemetery lately? It looks the best it has looked in many years, thanks to generous donations from supporters like you and from civic organizations in the area.

Bill Lewis put flags on the graves for Memorial Day, so the cemetery was dressed out properly for the holiday.

2005 was a good year for the cemetery association. For several years, as you know, the cemetery was kept mowed through the generosity of the staff at Elm Grove Cemetery. Last year marked the first season in several years that we paid for the mowing and upkeep on our own. It costs \$150 per mowing and, with six to eight mowings per season, we spend \$900 to \$1,200 a year just to keep the grass under control.

But the cemetery's good looks go beyond the grass. The Rotary Club, under the leadership of John Bradshaw, cleaned brush from the back wall last fall and came back in the spring to do the same for the west wall. We are grateful to them for their efforts.

We also have received a generous donation from the Mystic Garden Club, an organization that has been a constant supporter of the cemetery upkeep through the years.

We also plan to apply to the Charles B. Allyn Foundation for funding to reset about 27 headstones that have fallen over through the years. It costs \$100 per headstone to have them reset. This is a continuing project. The foundation gave us \$5,700 two years ago and we had the first 57 stones set back in place. This will complete the project.

But we need your financial help for another situation we need to address soon. There are three trees encroaching on the cemetery along the north wall. The trees are on a neighboring property, but are hanging precariously over a stone in the cemetery. They must be removed. We have a price quote of \$1,500 to \$1,600 and we are appealing to you to help with this project.

Horace Lamb and I are working with the neighbor for permission to cross his property to get to the trees. We cannot bring the tree removal equipment across the cemetery property. We hope to have the work done later this fall.

So, our appeal to you this year is not only to help pay for the ongoing cost of mowing the cemetery, but also for help to cover the cost of removing the trees.

The proof that your donations are well spent can be seen every time you drive by Lower Mystic, a cemetery that is an important part of Mystic's history and one deserving of the care and respect it is now receiving. The cemetery association thanks you in advance for your help and support.

Please send your contributions to our secretary, Carol W. Kimball, 28 Allyn St., Mystic, CT. 06355-1622

Marilyn Comrie, president

LOWER MYSTIC CEMETERY'S HALL OF FAME: A. G. STARK'S LEGACY

Albert Gallatin Stark, one of Mystic's distinguished citizens buried in Lower Mystic Cemetery, owned lots 138 and 139 at the west end of our long north wall. He died of dysentery in 1853 when he was only 29 years old, but he packed a lot of living into his short life. Educated at Portersville Academy, he had a flair for business and prospered with his general store on Noank Road. This popular man was also elected as a Groton selectman, as the town's representative to the General Assembly and finally became Judge of Probate, all before he was 30.

On a holiday from civic and business responsibilities, Albert Stark treated himself to a steamboat excursion up the Hudson River. There, according to family tradition, he saw an unusual three-story octagon house built at Fishkill, N. Y. by phrenologist Orson S. Fowler, whose best seller, "The Octagon House: A Home for All," advocated the eight-sided structure as offering many advantages for health. In 1850 Stark built his own octagon house in a new real estate development we now call West Mystic Avenue. It still stands, one of the few left in Connecticut and one of the more unusual architectural treasures of Mystic.

The Starks were among the original supporters of Lower Mystic Cemetery. One of Albert's descendants, Mrs. D. Palmer Brown, was for many years secretary of the Cemetery board. She bequeathed her books -and her duties to her grandson, Robert Bankel, who still continues this interest. Robert served as treasurer and is currently one of the active members of our Board of Trustees.

MEMBERS OF OUR PRESENT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Robert Bankel	Marilyn J. Comrie, President
William G. Fish, Jr.	Kathryn G. Hill
Carol W. Kimball, Secretary	Horace B. Lamb, Jr. Facilitator
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WE NEED YOUR HELP !!

Maintaining a historic cemetery is an ongoing project that can only be done with generous contributions from interested people like you. Last year, several of you contributed enough to pay for one mowing. We hope you will be able to be as generous this year -and to keep the tree removal project in mind as well. Thank you again for your support and have a wonderful summer.

Please send your contributions to our secretary, Carol W. Kimball, 28 Allyn St., Mystic, CT. 06355-1622