

## LOWER MYSTIC CEMETERY NEWSLETTER-SUMME 2014

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Lower Mystic Cemetery Association has had a year of growth and change.

Our President and Board member of twenty four years, Marilyn Comrie, has retired as President, but remains a most valued and appreciated ex-officio member of the Board.

I, Ken Buckbee, have become President and Lou Allyn has become Vice President and Treasurer, with Judey Buckbee remaining as Secretary. Lou is a most welcome addition to the Board and has longstanding family roots the Mystic area. He serves the local community in many capacities and is currently the President of the Mystic River Historical Society.

We welcome anyone who has family buried in the Lower Mystic Cemetery or who has an interest in preserving historic cemeteries to join us in helping to keep the cemetery well maintained. If you are interested, please contact me at 860-496-1562 or by email at [jsbuckbee@gmail.com](mailto:jsbuckbee@gmail.com).

Lou Allyn, Cindy Allyn, Rufus Allyn and Roy Bohlander have been very busy this season volunteering with the cleanup of small trees, vines and their debris in the Lower Mystic Cemetery, and are now waging war on the yucca plants which remain an ongoing challenge to the wellbeing of the grounds. We thank them for their efforts which are most appreciated!

In addition to these exciting changes, archives and original records for the Lower Mystic Cemetery that were previously held by Carol Kimball have been given to the Mystic River Historical Society for storage and safekeeping. These records can be easily accessed by anyone if needed for research purposes.

Our 2013 annual fund raising appeal resulted in individual donations in the amount of \$780.00. In addition, the Anderson-Pafford Foundation gave the cemetery \$1,500.00, and we also received two \$600.00 donations from the Mystic Garden Club. Both of these organizations have been faithful supporters of Lower Mystic Cemetery and we thank them for their continued generosity, as well as the individuals who made donations.

Donations are used for the upkeep and maintenance of the Lower Mystic Cemetery, which includes seasonal mowing by Bruce and Sons of Stonington. They have done a great job in keeping the cemetery looking its best, and we thank them for their efforts. We also purchased an annual general liability insurance policy through National Grange Mutual for the cost of \$264.00. This policy covers any liability claim against the property and Board if anyone were to be injured while in the cemetery.

As we move through 2014, the association is always striving to continue our work to maintain this historic cemetery, which has such a prominent location in Mystic. I sincerely hope that you will consider making a contribution to its upkeep this year.

Thank you. Ken Buckbee, President

## REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENTS TO THE CEMETERY

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Marilyn Comrie applied for a grant in the amount of \$1,600.00 from the Charles B. Allyn Foundation in 2013 for help in resetting four broken/fallen stones. These repairs were made by the Shawn Monument Company of Bradford, Rhode Island, and the stones look terrific.

In talking with a representative from Shawn Monuments, he said most people believe fallen stones in a cemetery are the result of vandals. That's not always true. Often, especially in older cemeteries, the wind is the culprit. If a stone's base becomes uneven, a good wind can topple the stone. Deer also rub against the stones, which also can push them over. And we definitely have deer tracks in the cemetery.

We will be assessing the need for additional repairs to other damaged stones during the next several months and applying for grant money from the Charles B. Allyn Foundation once the specific cost of repairs is determined. If you would like to contribute to our repair efforts, donations are always most welcome.

## SPECIAL PROJECTS

Local residents Joanna Case and Judy Hicks have completed a great reference project which is a database of all burials in the LMC following the "grid system" laid out in the Hale Collection which was compiled in 1934. The database is on CD and can be searched by either last name or plot number assigned to each area on the mapping grid that they created.

A complete set of the CDs and hardcopy printouts were given to Ken as President for use in researching burial information. Another complete set was given to the Mystic River Historical Society for their records and research purposes.

Scoutmaster John Sidlinger and Boy Scout Troop 2 of Groton placed flags on all of the veterans' graves in the LMC prior to Memorial Day. Our sincere thanks to them for their efforts, which made the cemetery look beautiful for this most special day of remembrance.

## CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS

The annual meeting of the Lower Mystic Cemetery Association was held on Sunday, April 27, 2014. An announcement appeared in the Mystic River Press giving the date and location. Below is a list of current board members and officers.

Ken Buckbee, President  
Lou Allyn, Vice President and Treasurer  
Judey Sawyer Buckbee, Secretary  
Marilyn Comrie  
Robert Bankel  
Kathryn Gremley Hill  
Carolyn Norton

## OUR HISTORIC CEMETERY

The people who are buried in Lower Mystic Cemetery depict many chapters in our country's history. It is the final resting place of many military veterans, including those that served our great nation during the Civil War.

One of the most touching burials is that of Horatio N. Fish, Jr. (1843-1864). He enlisted in Company C, 21st Regiment, Connecticut Volunteers, during the Civil War. This company, under Reverend John E. Wood, had 95 men from Groton, 5 from Ledyard, and 1 from Norwich. Fish was wounded on May 16, 1864, at the battle of Drewry's Bluff near Petersburg, Virginia, in the heaviest fighting in which the 21st Regiment participated. Fish died of his wounds on August 8, 1864, leaving us 150 years ago.

A prolific writer, Fish's letters to those at home have been compiled into a moving program by Marilyn Comrie. His letters are housed in the collection of the Mystic River Historical Society.



"Horatio, can we e'er forget  
One look, one act, one word of thine?  
Rest hast thou found, friends thou hast met  
And bleeding hearts must these resign."

PLEASE HELP US MAINTAIN THIS HISTORIC MYSTIC CEMETERY

Send your tax deductible contributions made payable to the "Lower Mystic Cemetery Association" for mowing, gravestone repairs and liability insurance to Lou Allyn, Treasurer, 14E. Forest Road, Mystic, CT 06355. Your support is most appreciated!