

The Historian

BURRILLVILLE HISTORICAL & PRESERVATION SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2015

Society Receives \$3000 Grant from Ocean State Power

The BH&PS Cemetery Committee has received a \$3000 grant from Ocean State Power to help with the restoration/conservation work planned at the Sayles Cook Cemetery. They also volunteered to help with a cleanup of the site. On April 20th in preparation for the cleanup, a small BH&PS crew cut and removed a number of small trees in and around the cemetery. On May 2nd volunteers from Ocean State Power teamed up with volunteers from our group to clip brush and rake the cemetery. The Ocean State Power crew arrived with leaf blowers, clippers and rakes. They



Gary Rouleau, OSP and Brad Provencal, BH&PS find missing headstone.



BH&PS volunteers team up with Ocean State Power volunteers. Joe Collard, Ocean State Plant Manager, presents check to Betty Mencucci, BH&PS President.

also supplied coffee, donuts and muffins. Everyone worked very hard and the job was completed within 2 hours. During the cleanup, the stone of Adaline F. Arnold was found lying flat under

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President's Message

Our two big projects for 2015 are progressing. The hole for the foundation for the Civil War monument has been dug, the forms have been installed and now we are waiting for the concrete to be poured. BH&PS is still seeking donations through the Buy-a-Letter campaign.

The Sayles Cook Cemetery Project is moving forward with

cleanups, poison ivy removal and some repairs. We have met with the landowner about access to the cemetery. When the CVS was built, the original right-of-way was destroyed and a new right-of-way was created on paper. It is impossible to use the new right-of-way without a lot of work with a bulldozer. We have found an easier route and the landowner has agreed to make the route passable for a crane truck.

Henry Duquette, one of our active Cemetery Committee members has moved out of state. He will be

greatly missed, as he has helped the Society in so many ways. He was the driving force behind the Civil War Expos held in the last 2 years. Last year he power-washed and repaired the deck on the Bridgeton School and he was always there with his chain saw at cemetery cleanups. We will miss you, Henry, but wish you the best of luck in North Carolina!

Meetings
June-July Meeting will be held at a local restaurant on Friday, July 10th. Please call for details.

Society Receives \$3000 Grant from OSP

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several inches of soil. When the cleanup was complete, Joe Collard, Ocean State Power Plant Manager, presented the \$3000 check to Betty Mencucci, BH&PS President.

“TransCanada is proud to support the Burrillville Historical and Preservation Society’s effort to restore the Sayles Cemetery,” said Mr. Collard. “Burrillville as we know it today is inextricably linked to its rich industrial history; restoring this cemetery will link today’s residents to the lives of the people who helped make this a thriving community.” The Burrillville Historical & Preservation Society is extremely grateful for TransCanada’s involvement in this project.

Go Fund Me

We have started a fundraising campaign through GoFundMe to raise additional money for the Sayles Cook Cemetery restoration/conservation project. Please visit:

<http://www.gofundme.com/tg95nmg>

Travel to Ireland with BH&PS

We are promoting a travel fundraiser for BH&PS with Collette Tours. The trip is titled “Shades of Ireland.” It is a 13 day vacation departing on April 21, 2016. Highlights of the trip include: Dublin, Irish Evening, Kilkenny, Waterford Crystal, Blarney Castle, Jaunting Car Ride, Killarney, Ring of Kerry, Farm Visit, Limerick, Cliffs of Moher, Galway, Donegal Town, Lough Eske Castle, Derry, Glens of Antrim, Belfast and the shipyard where the Titanic was built. You will see northern Ireland’s famous phenomenon, the spectacular Giant’s Causeway and spend the night on the grounds of two iconic castles and experience old Ireland at its finest. Contact bmencucci@verizon.net. There will also be a link on our facebook page.

March Was Membership Month

If you haven’t already renewed, please send in your annual membership dues. An individual membership is only \$10.00, and a family membership is \$15.00.

Cemetery Report

Cleanups began in April. Cemetery #83 near Spring Lake and Cemetery #75 at Addieville were raked. In the beginning of May, “No Mow” grass was planted in the bottom part of Cemetery #75 but due to lack of rain, it has been slow to germinate. The Boy Scouts worked very hard raking Cemetery #12 on Howard Avenue, filling 60 bags with leaves. It looks absolutely gorgeous! We started cutting brush in Cemetery #48 off Lapham Farm Road, but did not finish. In 2011 the brush was cleaned from this cemetery and it looked very nice, but in just four short years the brush is dense again - some of it is seven feet tall. We need more volunteers!

Cemetery Conservation Report

Gravestone conservation work has begun in Cemetery #37, the Richardson Cemetery on Inman Road. The tripod was used to work on Welcome Ballou’s monument. It was taken apart, leveled and reassembled. A slate headstone and footstone were reset as well.

Conservation work has begun in the Sayles Cook cemetery with the repair of a base for the spire which is part of the 14-foot monument of Hardin Sayles. This cemetery is lush with poison ivy and we have begun its eradication before the serious work begins.



Henry Duquette cuts small trees in the Sayles-Cook Cemetery

Wanted

Scrap pieces of rigid foam insulation. This type of insulation is used in new home construction and scraps get thrown away in dumpsters. We need pieces (any size) to create slots when constructing new bases in our gravestone conservation work. Please call 568-8449 if you know of any sources for this material. It’s a shame that we have to spend money buying it when so much of it is thrown away.

Donations

Richard Nolan – antique bee-lining box once owned by Samuel M. Salisbury. It is a very unusual box, ornate and elaborate in its construction. Most people have no idea what it is unless they keep bees. Beekeepers used these boxes to locate bee trees in the woods. They would catch bees, feed them, mark them, release them and then time them to see how long it took the bees to return. They would watch the line of the bee’s flight to locate the bee tree; hence the name, bee-lining box.



BH&PS Joins the Alliance

BH&PS is now a member of the Alliance of Rhode Island Historical Associations (ARIHA). It is an organization dedicated to bringing historical societies together to share ideas and expertise and discuss common problems. One of the problems is getting the public to visit and become interested in our collections and what we have to offer. They have designed a treasure map where each member of the Alliance chooses one of the “coolest” objects in their collection to be placed on the map. The map will include a picture of the treasure, a brief description and information about the organization that owns it. The treasure map will be printed as a color brochure and distributed throughout the State. People will be encouraged to discover all the treasures that the historical societies have to offer. We have chosen the bee-lining box recently donated by Richard Nolan as our treasure.

BH&PS earns money from DINO’S and IGA slips. BH&PS receives a percentage of the total. Drop them off at the Jesse M. Smith Library, mail them or bring them to a meeting. Proceeds are used to preserve our archives! We also save used ink cartridges and redeem them at Staples for office supplies.

Civil War Monument Yard Sale Fundraiser – Big Success



Digging a Deep Hole for Civil War Monument



Chris Dale, Betty and Carlo Mencucci stand in the hole they dug by hand for the foundation for the Civil War monument. The forms for the concrete are on the right. The foundation is 3 feet deep, 40 inches long and 22 inches wide.

On May 30th the grounds of the Bridgeton School became a buzz of activity as people came to buy yard sale items, books, baked goods and letters on the monument. It was one of our most successful sales ever, raising funds for the Civil War monument. Special thanks go to Ken Hopkins of Affordable Tent Rental for the lovely blue tent and the many tables loaned for use at the event. It was a beautiful day and we had lots of good stuff for sale thanks to the many donations from Henry Duquette.

Austin T. & June Rockwell Levy's Amazing Second Act by Kenneth Proudfoot

The Levys had been introduced to the Bahama Islands by June Rockwell Levy's parents. So it came to pass that the Levys acquired a small home in Nassau on the island of New Providence in the Bahamas. June viewed the home as a way to get her husband away from the work and stress of running his mills, public speaking, and the politics of the day. It was while visiting Nassau that the humane Levys noted the lack of available dairy products for the islanders. With his wife's encouragement, Austin Levy immediately began experiments to assess the islands' agricultural potential that had previously shown little farm development. This led to the purchase of 2,000 acres of undeveloped land on the



Eleuthera Dairy

island of Eleuthera, some 52 miles east of Nassau, and the introduction of a dairy herd from Harrisville, a flock of Rhode Island Red chickens, and the creation of a thriving dairy and poultry operation.

The operation, named The Harrisville Company, was based at Hatchet Bay and included 600 head of cattle, 60,000 hens, and investments in a sales agency, a 10-store chain of milk stands in Nassau, a fleet of ships to transport his products to the other islands, a stevedoring firm and a power company. Much as he had done with his textile business, Austin T. Levy envisioned a dynamic integrated business enterprise that produced, processed, transported, distributed and retailed important



Austin T. Levy at Eleuthera (2nd from right)

food products throughout the Bahama Islands during the Great Depression and during and after World War II.



Milk Stand— 1940s

The town of Hatchet Bay was soon the envy of the entire island and other islands among the 700+ in the Bahamas. Levy built homes, equipped all of the buildings with electricity, running water and indoor plumbing (the only town on the island with such features), had furniture built, provided good paying jobs, and built specialty shops so residents could buy clothing, groceries, and other imported items.

In 1950, The Harrisville Company was valued at over six million dollars. For the rest of the story, watch for the upcoming release of the one-hour documentary, *The Amazing Life & Times of Austin T. Levy*. A new film trailer is online at <http://vimeo.com/125949592>.

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