

Ulster Publishing.com

Home Info

SEARCH

Calendar Classifieds MAP

Newspapers

WOODSTOCK TIMES
NEW PALTZ TIMES
SAUGERTIES TIMES
KINGSTON TIMES
DUTCHESS BEAT
MID-HUDSON POST PIONEER

DISCUSSION BOARD

ADVERTISING INFO

Malkine
INTERACTIVE
WE BUILD NICE INTERNET SOLUTIONS.



The Woodstock Cemetery

by George Pattison

Land. The site comprises more than seven acres. The oldest section, traversing a north-south line at the top of a ridge, was originally owned by the Riseley, Hogan, and Elwyn families, which in some cases were related through marriage. The newer section, abutting Rock City Road, was reportedly purchased from the family of Morris Newgold, former owner of the Overlook Mountain House hotel.



Age. Officially, 177 years: the Woodstock Cemetery Association, Inc., which oversees the burial ground, was established in 1831 and incorporated in 1914. The history of the place can be glimpsed in some of its oldest gravestones, e.g., that of John George Happ (d. February 14, 1833), who served in the Revolutionary War from 1775 to 1777.

Graves. The estimated total is between 7,000 and 8,000. A number of ancient grave markers have either been rendered illegible by erosion or sunk beneath the surface, making an exact count impossible. Stylistically, visible markers - headstones of varying height and thickness, upright or flat slabs, or monuments on plinths, most of them made from marble or granite - range from the simple and unadorned to the glossy and elaborate. In the newest section, for example, one polished headstone depicts a golfer at the top of his swing. Another shows a couple walking hand-in-hand down a moonlit path. Attached to a third is a color photograph of two dogs overlooking a pond.

Who's there. Many of the town's and the area's most familiar family names grace the gravestones: Bonestell (or Bonesteel), Bradley, Elwyn, Hasbrouck, Hogan, Lasher, Lewis, Longyear, Myer, Neher, Reynolds, Riseley, Shultis, Stoutenburgh, Van De Bogart (or Van De Bogert).

Special features. A ground-thawing system, powered by propane gas, to permit wintertime burials, and a casket vault, for storage of caskets when winter burials cannot be performed promptly. The cemetery association hopes to construct a columbarium, which would serve as a repository for cremated remains.

Space. Scarce, and getting scarcer. Only one section of the cemetery, in the southeastern corner of the property, remains vacant.


Management. For the last eight years the governing association's president has been lifelong

Published 4/2/2009

JUMPTO DEPARTMENT

SPECIAL OFFERS

Sign our mailing list and receive free updates



name

email



Feature Story

Bridge over trebled water



Music

Get ready, 'cause here they come



Art

Saving the land through paintings



Movie Review

The blob who loved me



Night Sky

Meteorology by meteor



Woodstock Times

Woodstock resident Terry Breitenstein, who, along with the other officers - Stewart DeWitt, vice president; Kenneth Petersen, secretary; and John Mower, treasurer - is also a member of the board of trustees. The other trustees are Steven Dallow, Michael Densen, Varyck Graver, Andre Neher, William Reynolds, Arthur Rose, Roger Shultis, and Edward Quednau, who retired in 2000 following a 32-year career as the cemetery's superintendent. The current superintendent (the cemetery's sole employee) is Shea Cocks, who succeeded Quednau in 2001. The superintendent's responsibilities include groundskeeping (notably lawn mowing and leaf and weed removal) and gravedigging, using a backhoe.

Costs. The cemetery is a not-for-profit entity that is governed by the New York State Division of Cemeteries. As such, it is ineligible for funding sources like state grants. An application for registration as a state historic site has gone unanswered. The cemetery charges \$700 for ownership of a gravesite and \$500 for a grave opening. Unlike for-profit counterparts, it does not assess gravesite owners for maintenance of the grounds. As a result, the cemetery, while solvent, lacks up to \$100,000 for pressing expenses such as overdue maintenance, including tree cutting and restoration, and replacement of its antiquated maintenance building and some outdated equipment, including an undersized backhoe. (The trees in need of attention include stately maples that line the cemetery's roads. Several were reportedly donated by Byrdcliffe arts colony scion Peter Whitehead, who hoped they would block the view from Rock City Road of the grave-strewn ridge and hillside. It didn't quite work: the cemetery spread west, toward the road, across an open expanse of land.) Chronic vandalism also strains the cemetery's budget. Donations can be made to the Woodstock Cemetery Association, PO Box 244, Woodstock, NY 12498.

Veterans memorial. A designated area at the northwest corner of the property, near the Community Center parking lot, commemorates the military service of Woodstock residents. Demarcated by a square, flagstone walkway, the area contains a wooden flagpole and a Vietnam War memorial, in the form of an engraved granite stone that American Legion Post 1026 dedicated on November 11 (Veterans Day), 1987. A bronze plaque that encircles the flagpole lists the names of Woodstock residents who served in conflicts from the Civil War through World War II. The site also includes a footstone commemorating the only soldier from Woodstock who was killed in action in Vietnam: U.S. Army sergeant Richard F. Quinn, a medic, who died on July 12, 1970, 11 days before his 22nd birthday. ++



[Click here to discuss this article in our forum.](#)

[Home](#) | [Calendar](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Info](#)
[Woodstock](#) | [New Paltz](#) | [Saugerties](#) | [Kingston](#) | [Highland Mid-Hudson](#) | [Southern Ulster](#)

© 2009 Ulster Publishing, Inc.