

## Minutes of Meeting May 21, 2025

Location: Warwick City Hall Annex

In attendance: Pegee Malcolm, Elise Carlson, Lynne Rider, David Guiot, Betty Mencucci, Jeff Burns, Charlotte Taylor, Jim Bessel, Deb Suggs, and Maureen Buffi

Excused absences: Larry Hunter, Judy Fardig, Richard Ring, and Christine MacWilliams

Also in attendance: Carlo Mencucci and visitors from North Smithfield (regarding NS #47)

- Meeting called to order at 6:36 pm by Pegee Malcolm, chair
- Introduction of February 19, 2025 meeting minutes

Lynne abstained from voting as she was absent for the February meeting. Charlotte made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Jim. All voted in favor to accept the minutes.

- Cemetery Awareness Activities/Member Updates

As of the meeting date, 54 events had been reported, compared to a total of 104 events in 2024.

Elise reported that they held their event in Johnston with a few participants in spite of the rain.

Lynne reported in Foster there was a May 3 clean-up and stone cleaning demo. There are plans for a June 8 tour of Hopkins Mills Lot (FR #045).

Also, a pauper's graveyard was discovered at a former town asylum but it is not known how many were buried. It was suggested to check with SOS Archives and Town Clerk.

Jeff reported that Charlestown #50 and #23 had clean-ups.

Jim reported that Dory worked on Exeter #35, the Ladd School lot on the grounds of Veterans Cemetery.

David noted that a scheduled tour of Pocasset Cemetery had to be cancelled. A 'Zinkie' tour and a stone cleaning are scheduled for June 21. Students needing community service hours did a clean-up. There will be future clean-up sessions at the Training School Cemetery but the dates are TBD. Ken Postle is flagging Pawtucket cemeteries including Walnut Grove.

Additionally, David said that the special master appointed to Oakland Cemetery (CR #003) is wrapping up and transferring funds to a land trust for the cemetery.

Betty reported having to cancel a stone cleaning and setting demo at Riverside Cemetery (BU #26). She will be hosting walking tours on May 28 and 31 at Buck's Hill and on land newly acquired by the Lant Trust. Also, a segment they did with Pamela Watts was nominated for an Emmy Award.

Jim noted an upcoming restoration in June by Fannin-Lehner at Tyler Point. At Prince's Hill Cemetery, Cub Scouts cleaned veterans' graves. At the Veterans Cemetery, a flagging event will be held Saturday (May 24) and on Monday (May 26) there will be a Memorial Day ceremony.

Deb reported that some scheduled South Kingstown clean-up events had to be cancelled due to rain. URI Veterans group had to reschedule their event in Narragansett. She noted that the South Kingstown Town Council discussed a cemetery where digging took place within 65' of the cemetery. Deb followed-up on a previous discussion regarding Elm Grove cemetery in North Kingstown, confirming that the board is legally registered with the state.

Peggie announced that RIACHC still needs a representative for Newport County to replace Elliott. Also, Caroline has resigned as a Bristol County rep.

Peggie reported that she continues to receive the usual assortment of phone calls; complaints, requests to buy cemetery plots, demands to call city hall, as well genealogical inquiries.

Additionally, Peggie noted that Chet (Browning) will be doing a talk on pauper burials.

- Community Service Volunteers

Peggie reported community service volunteer requests for Providence, North Smithfield, South Kingstown, Hopkinton and Pocasset Cemetery.

- Burrillville Cemetery #13 Update

Betty gave an update regarding cemetery damage resulting from a car crash at the beginning of the year. Since then, a volunteer mason was able to repair the wall and Betty and Carlo were able to make repairs to the headstones. Peggie recommended they use the Justice Assistance League to obtain payments from the offending driver. It was also suggested that Betty go to court with the details of the accident and an invoice of the expenses incurred.

- Historical Cemetery Signs

Peggie announced that she placed an order for cemetery signs and will be able to order additional signs up until Friday (June 23).

- North Smithfield # 47

Property owners who believed their home had just one burial discovered it had 5. The location of the lot in their yard created a hardship so they laid down the stones. There is a cemetery sign on-site. The homeowners are seeking to reposition the gravestones in a different place in their yard, where they will be less intrusive.

After discussing the options with the Commission and the representatives from the North Smithfield Heritage Association during the meeting, the homeowners decided that it would be acceptable to keep the stones at their current location and leave them face down on the ground.

- Next Meeting

The final meeting of 2025 will be Wednesday October 15.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:16 pm on a motion made by Charlotte and seconded by Dave

Respectfully submitted by Maureen Buffi, secretary