



# THE GATEWAY



VOLUME XV, NO. 2

CEDAR HILL CEMETERY

453 FAIRFIELD AVENUE, HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06114

FALL 2011

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## FROM LEDGER BOOKS TO COMPUTER ENTRY: CEDAR HILL MAKES A LEAP INTO THE 21ST CENTURY

**W**hen Cedar Hill Cemetery sold its first lot in 1866, staff recorded the lot purchase and burial in a ledger book. This recording style continued until the 1920s when Cemetery staff converted to a card-and-drawer system. Using this "new" system, burials were recorded using alphabetized cards that were cross-referenced to an individual's history and lot cards. It was this system that Cedar Hill used for nearly a century to catalogue information related to its more than 31,000 residents.

As Cedar Hill entered 2011, Board and staff began questioning what would happen to the Cemetery's records in the event of a fire, burglary, flood or similar tragic event. This concern resulted in researching other options that would serve to preserve and protect the records already on file while also serving to provide an easy-to-use method to search file information.

This goal prompted Cedar Hill Cemetery staff to hire Boston Computer Scanning (BCS) to scan and archive the Cemetery's existing records making them available electronically. Completed in September, the records are now managed through

Cemeteryfind, a software program designed by BCS specifically for cemeteries to store, search and protect cemetery records.

For four months, Cedar Hill staff worked with BCS to scan and archive more than 31,000 historical records. To accomplish



Cedar Hill Cemetery's Index Card Filing System

this goal, Cedar Hill hired Miranda Mantello, full-time student at Franklin Pierce University, and Brandon Best, a senior at Kingswood-Oxford High School, over the summer to enter data into the software system. In addition, Cedar Hill Cemetery and BCS staff scanned and archived approximately 15,000 lot cards and 31,000 burial record cards.

"The fast pace at which technology evolves measured against the necessity that the Cemetery's records remain permanently available made choosing a way to manage the records particularly challenging," explained Office Manager Mary Anne Hawthorne. "A state-of-the-art computer system may easily become obsolete in fewer than 15 years."

For this reason, Cedar Hill staff selected a system that allows for the cards to be

(Cont. on page 3)

Visit Cedar Hill Cemetery at [cedarhillcemetery.org](http://cedarhillcemetery.org) & Cedar Hill Cemetery Foundation at [cedarhillfoundation.org](http://cedarhillfoundation.org)



# REMEMBERING AND COMMEMORATING YOUR LOVED ONE

When a loved one passes, family members must make several decisions not the least of which is whether to bury or cremate the body. According to the Cremation Association of North America, preliminary figures indicate that more than 46% of people were cremated in 2010, and the number of people choosing cremations for their loved ones continues to rise. This trend raises the important question of what to do with a loved one's cremated remains after the decision to cremate the body has been made. Understanding that this decision can be extremely difficult, Cedar Hill Cemetery offers a variety of options for families seeking answers to this question.

For families who seek a traditional burial option, a lot can be purchased as if a full-body burial was taking place, the cremated remains can be interred in the lot, and families can place a memorial in remembrance of their loved one. By selecting this placement option, families can select their favorite location in the Cemetery, including near other family members, and memorialize their loved one in perpetuity in what is considered a traditional manner. In addition, current Cemetery rules allow for the burial of three cremated remains in one lot.

In addition to the traditional burial option, located on Section 27 Cedar Hill offers a beautifully-designed community columbarium containing 20 single and 20 double niches. Overlooking the pond, the columbarium is surrounded by a memorial urn garden. Similar to a traditional burial, families can

memorialize their loved one's final resting place in the urn garden with a flush marker.

Cedar Hill also has two mausolea in which cremations can be entombed. The first of the mausolea, the Garden Mausoleum, offers an open-roof design allowing for a garden in the center of the building and niches with granite fronts, which can be inscribed with your loved one's name. The second of the mausolea, the Community Mausoleum, offers cherry wood ceilings, a stunning stained-glass window featuring a nature scene, and granite front and glass front niches. Located in the southeastern corner of the Cemetery, the mausolea neighbor the wood-line and are surrounded by rolling hills, open fields and a pond.



Glass front and Granite Niches in Cedar Hill's Community Mausoleum

As more and more people are choosing to return to nature by scattering their loved one's cremated remains, Cedar Hill has created Jacob's Way - a beautiful, wooded path along the eastern shore of Lake Llyn Mawr where cremated remains can be scattered. Lake Llyn Mawr is the largest body of water on Cedar Hill's grounds and is located alongside the entryway drive.

When families select Jacob's Way to scatter their loved one's cremated

remains, they have a peaceful and serene place where they can visit, remember and feel close to their loved one.



Jacob's Way Scattering Grounds  
Alongside Lake Llyn Mawr

Cedar Hill commemorates each scattering in Jacob's Way in its *Book of Remembrance*, which sits on display in the Northam Memorial Chapel entranceway. This beautiful hand-bound, leather book includes the names of the people whose remains are scattered in Jacob's Way. In addition, families receive a formal certificate recording their loved one's name and date of scattering. This data is also recorded in Cedar Hill's permanent cemetery records for family and friends seeking information in the future.

While making decisions after the loss of a loved one is never easy, Cedar Hill firmly believes that everyone deserves to be remembered. Cedar Hill Cemetery offers a variety of options to commemorate and remember your loved one in traditional and non-traditional ways, and staff is committed to working with you to commemorate your loved one in a manner that is respectful and meaningful to you. To learn more about these options and how Cedar Hill can help you commemorate your loved one, please call 860-956-3311.



# FROM LEDGER BOOKS TO COMPUTER ENTRY (CONT.)

scanned digitally, much like a photograph, ensuring the original integrity of the catalogue cards remain intact, and a system that allows for modifications to be made as needs and expectations of the system change.

“We need to consider the future many, many years ahead,” said Hawthorne. “It is exciting that our new system will preserve Cedar Hill’s records while also providing easy and reliable access to those records in the future.”

With Cedar Hill’s 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary approaching in 2014, many would agree that it is about time for the Cemetery to enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century with such software technology. However, the software is not a

replacement for Cedar Hill’s paper records. “We’ll continue to keep our paper records,” clarified Hawthorne, “but will use the software technology as a means of archiving, preserving and searching information related to our residents.”

In addition, this step allows for other possibilities in the future such as lot mapping services similar to GoogleMaps and Mapquest, online record accessibility for the general public, and even a kiosk for visitors to locate and research information about their loved ones when the office is closed. While these next steps are not currently in the Cemetery’s plans, the possibilities of such offerings are now within reach. Perhaps these next steps will come to fruition within the next 150 years.

## CHCF’S YEAR-END EVENTS

**T**wo events remain in Cedar Hill Cemetery Foundation’s 2011 Tours and Events Season. CHCF is hosting its annual *Haunted History Lantern Tour* on Friday, October 28 from 6:00pm - 9:30pm. Held the Friday before Halloween, tour groups of up to 30 people each will leave every 15 minutes for lantern-lit tours through Cedar Hill’s memorial grounds. During the approximately one-hour tour, character actors will share the true-yet-darker tales of some of Cedar Hill’s residents.

This year’s event will feature Cedar Hill residents such as Mrs. Olcott and Bessie Allen who were in the Old Colony Railway accident and John Root who met his demise on the Berlin Turnpike just steps away from Cedar Hill Cemetery’s entrance. While this reservations-only event is sold out, mark your calendars to join us the

Friday before Halloween in 2012 for this annual event.

On Saturday, December 3 at 5:00pm, CHCF will host its inaugural event *Reflections and Remembrance: Cedar Hill’s Walk of Light*. As winter settles in and holidays approach, Cedar Hill invites the community to remember and reflect on the lives of those who have passed before us. Join us for a candlelight vigil to commemorate family and friends. The light of our collective candles will represent the history, memories and legacies of loved ones we have laid to rest. The vigil will celebrate life through poetry, song and dance and conclude with a candle-lit walk through Cedar Hill’s memorial grounds led by a Ring Shout - a counterclockwise march unifying participants in love, light and song.

To learn more, call 860-956-3311.

## STAFF UPDATES

### FAREWELL

Foundation Director Wendi Fralick and her husband, John, welcomed a son, Zachary Chase, on March 19 making the couple proud parents of two boys. With this life change, Wendi resigned from her position as Foundation Director in July. We wish her well in her future endeavors and are confident she will not be a stranger to Cedar Hill.

### NEW STAFF

Cedar Hill Cemetery would like to welcome Debra Sigmon as its new Customer Service Representative. Many visitors know Deb as she has been volunteering with and working at Cedar Hill for the past three years. She is a welcome addition to Cedar Hill’s staff.

Cedar Hill Cemetery Foundation is excited to welcome Beverly Lucas as the new Foundation Director. Beverly joins Cedar Hill from CT Landmarks where she was the Curator & Grants Administrator. She has a passion for history and has been an active supporter of Cedar Hill Cemetery Foundation for the past several years.

### NEW ADDITION

Board Director Beverly Amon and her husband, Chris, welcomed their first child, Michael Harold Amon, on August 3.





**NEWSLETTER**

is published twice annually by

**CEDAR HILL CEMETERY**

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**CEDAR HILL CEMETERY**

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**IT'S TIME TO ORDER YOUR HOLIDAY DECORATIONS!**

To order horticultural services for winter, please complete the below form and mail it to:

*Arthur H. Hutchinson, Cedar Hill Cemetery, 453 Fairfield Avenue, Hartford, CT 06114.*

You may send payment with your order or staff will bill you when the order is received.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Street/City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Deceased: \_\_\_\_\_ Section #: \_\_\_\_\_ Lot #: \_\_\_\_\_

Evergreen Blanket(s) Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ \$74.00 Sub-total: \_\_\_\_\_

Evergreen Basket(s) Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ \$40.00 Sub-total: \_\_\_\_\_

Evergreen Wreath(s):  Small (12") Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ \$32.50 Sub-total: \_\_\_\_\_

Large (14") Qty: \_\_\_\_\_ \$40.50 Sub-total: \_\_\_\_\_

You can send payment with your order, or we will bill you when the order is received.

Amount Enclosed

Please Bill Me

**DEADLINES AND REMINDERS**

The deadline for the delivery of flush markers to Cedar Hill Cemetery for this year is November 11. If you are planning to have a flush marker installed before winter, please contact your preferred monument dealer to arrange for design and delivery. For a listing of local monument dealers, call Cedar

Hill's offices at 860-956-3311.

In preparation for fall clean up, Cedar Hill staff is beginning to remove flower pots in the memorial grounds with plantings that are no longer green. All pots will be removed by November 1. If you would like to retrieve your pot,

please remove it from the memorial grounds as soon as possible. Families and friends may place holiday decorations beginning November 15. Please note that all decorations must contain natural greens only. Thank you, and we wish you and yours a happy and healthy holiday season.