

The Grove Street Bulletin

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A Publication of the Grove Street Cemetery

Spring 2005

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Progress Report on the Landscape Fund's Beautification Program

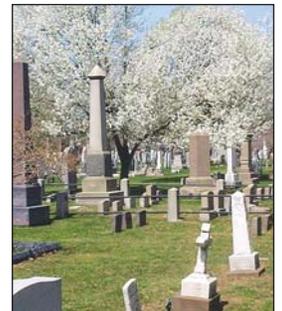
One of the early tasks undertaken by the Board of the Friends of the Grove Street Cemetery, Inc. after its founding was to embark on a major program to assist in the ever-needed effort for the rebeautification of the Cemetery's park-like setting. Toward that end, a **Landscape Fund** was established and funds were solicited and collected for that goal. Work on the project was begun in 2002. While more needs to be done, surely, an examination of what has been accomplished thus far is worthwhile – and certainly rewarding to those who have contributed financial support for this program.

In the spring of 2004, the Planting Committee of the Friends continued augmentation of the master plan prepared in 2001 by Balmori Associates for the rejuvenation of the Cemetery's grounds. Two locusts (*Tilia cordata* var. *Corinthian*) were added to the Central Avenue locust *allée* and three were planted on Linden Avenue. Other empty spaces were filled with specimens of interesting species: two sweetgums (*Liquidambar*), handsome native American trees which are lovely in the fall; five crabapples (*Malus*, var. *Velvet Pillar*), very blight resistant, to replace some diseased trees; a beautiful yellow magnolia on Magnolia Avenue (*Magnolia*, var. *Elizabeth*); and one bald cypress (*Taxodium*) for Cypress Avenue.

Planned for the spring of 2005 is a grouping against the wall at the foot of Linden Avenue: one *Chamaecyparis* (a handsome, tall false cypress) is to be planted along with laurel bushes at its base. Groupings of *Stewartia* will be used to fill other gaps along the streets. This tree is described as multi-seasonal: it has a beautiful silhouette, white gardenia-like blossoms in mid-summer, and fascinating exfoliating bark which makes it very decorative during the winter months.

Although the Balmori drawings showed avenues of equally spaced trees, in fact Billy Cameron, the knowledgeable and helpful landscaper at the Cemetery, has found many hidden underground obstructions such as water pipes and tree roots which inhibit any sort of rigid arrangement. Planting of the main avenues with ginkoes and locusts in the Balmori plan was accomplished in 2002 and 2003, when 26 ginkoes and 6 locusts were added to Central Avenue and Myrtle Path, but not always in parade-drill spacing. So now we are filling in the remaining vacant areas throughout the Cemetery with interesting varieties.

(continued on page 3)

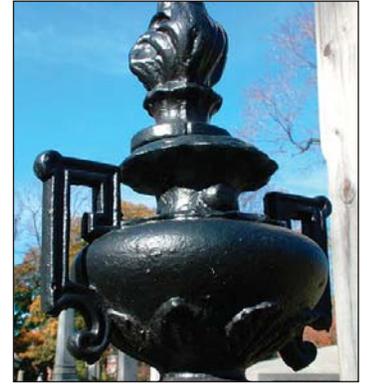
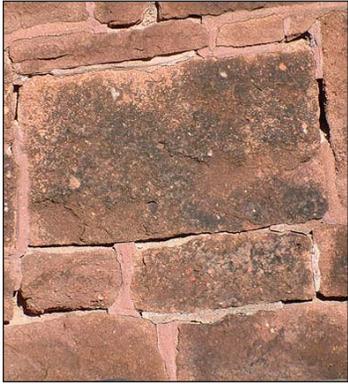


Josiah Willard Gibbs Honored on a Postage Stamp

Late in March, The United States Postal Service announced that on May 5, 2005, four new 37¢ commemorative stamps honoring noted American scientists would be issued. Among them is Josiah Willard Gibbs (1839-1903), who is buried in Grove Street Cemetery. He was a mathematical physicist at Yale who reformulated thermodynamics, the science of heat, in terms of probability and statistics. Josiah Willard Gibbs is listed on the Cemetery's brochure and map as a "Classical Scholar, Scientist, and the 'Father of Thermodynamics.'" A program, sponsored by the Standing Committee and the Friends organization, featuring a presentation about Josiah Willard Gibbs is planned for the fall of this year. All members of the Friends will be invited to attend.

Landmark Fund's Goals: Renovation and Restoration

Creation of **The Landmark Fund** under the auspices of the Friends of the Grove Street Cemetery, Inc. was announced in the Fall 2004 *Bulletin*. The Fund's principle objective is to provide the necessary financial resources to undertake and complete the renovations and restorations of the Cemetery's physical plant and park-like grounds. In other words, **The Landmark Fund** has been created as a funding source for capital expenses, as opposed to general day-to-day operating expenses. The primary areas on which the Fund's support will at first be concentrated include the following: stonework, fencing, curbing and paving, tombstone repair and horticulture. The Cemetery's imposing Egyptian Revival entrance gate, designed by Henry Austin, and the stonewall surrounding the property are examples of where some pointing of the stonework has been completed, but much more needs to be done to forestall further deterioration by the elements of nature. Similarly, the old cast iron fencing that surrounds many of the Cemetery's family plots clearly shows the ravages over time. Such structures can be restored and saved, as these pictures clearly illustrate.



The initial fundraising goal of **The Landmark Fund** is \$1,000,000 and represents a very tangible aspect of the Friends organization's objectives to preserve and protect this historically important portion of the city's and our country's heritage.

Visit our Website: www.grovestreetcemetery.org

Our website contains much information about the Cemetery, including its history as well as its activities. A photographic tour of the Cemetery is available and, in addition, a Registry of the Cemetery's more than 14,000 burials within its walls can be accessed. A list of the inscriptions on the tombstones moved to the West and North walls of Grove Street Cemetery from the New Haven Green is also now available. Between 500 and 1000 individuals visit our website each month. Most viewers take a pictorial tour or search the list of burial records.

We encourage you to visit the website to learn more about the Cemetery and its National Landmark status. Additional information on the website includes data about its horticulture and trees, how to purchase a burial plot, how to contact the Cemetery and the Friends organization, guided tours and self-guided tours, a map of the Cemetery, a list of eminent people buried there, how to make genealogy requests, etc.

Ceremony on July 4 to Honor Signers of Declaration of Independence

The annual Independence Day commemoration in Grove Street Cemetery, sponsored by the General David Humphreys Branch Number One, Connecticut Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, will begin at 9:00 a.m., rain or shine. With participation by a local Boy Scout troop, brief ceremonies will be held at the gravesites of Roger Sherman and David Humphreys. The public is invited to attend and to participate in this patriotic event, which starts just inside the gate on Grove Street.

Tour Schedule for 2005

One-hour guided walking tours of the Cemetery will be held every Saturday at 11:00 a.m. May 7 – November 19, and on the first and third Sundays monthly at 12:00 noon, May 1 – November 20. For information on special group tours please contact Patti Illingworth at (203) 389-5403 or by email at p.b.illingworth@worldnet.net.

Burial Plots Available

One of the most 'frequently asked questions' we receive is: "Are burial plots available at Grove Street Cemetery?" The answer is: YES. Although a recent article in the *New Haven Register* detailed that at many of the local cemeteries there is a shortage of available burial plots, that is not the case at Grove Street Cemetery where there are over 1200 burial sites available for sale. Another frequent inquiry is often: "Can anyone be buried in Grove Street Cemetery?" And the answer to that is also: YES. There are no restrictions regarding who may purchase a gravesite within the walls of the Cemetery. And we are also asked: "How do I find out about buying a plot?" The answer is simple: call the Cemetery's office, between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., at (203) 787-1443 and speak with Mr. or Mrs. Cameron, the Cemetery's Superintendents. They are well regarded for their knowledge of the location of available gravesites, for the purchase procedure, for the history of the Cemetery, and for the care they lavish on the Cemetery's maintenance.

New Edition of History, Map and List of Eminent People

A new edition of our brochure featuring a history of Grove Street Cemetery, a map, and a list of Eminent People buried (or honored) in the Cemetery has recently been published and mailed to all those on our mailing list for the *Bulletin*. The map shows numbers which correspond to the numbers assigned to individuals on the list of Eminent People, thus making it easy to find those gravesites. The list is now arranged alphabetically and has been augmented by ten new names. Copies are available at the Cemetery's office or by contacting the office of the Friends of the Grove Street Cemetery, Inc. [See How to Reach Us on the back page.]

Inscriptions of Stones Moved from the New Haven Green Now on Website

You may have noticed in the first two issues of the *Bulletin* articles about a missing and 'overdue library book' containing the inscriptions of the gravestones moved to Grove Street Cemetery from the New Haven Green early in the 19th century. Now we can report that in addition to locating a copy of the list, courtesy of the New Haven Colony Historical Society, the stones' inscriptions, numbering over 1000, have now been added as a resource to our website. When the stones were brought to the Cemetery, they were laid against the West and North walls in alphabetic order (more or less) and remain there today. Regrettably, many of the inscriptions on the stones are now too faint from erosion to be easily read.



Gift-Giving through Friends of the Grove Street Cemetery, Inc.

The Friends of the Grove Street Cemetery, Inc. is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) organization. Therefore, contributions and membership dues paid to the Friends are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. In addition to accepting gifts of cash and/or appreciated securities, which may be a beneficial plan for some donors, we also encourage individuals to consider naming The Friends of the Grove Street Cemetery, Inc. as the recipient of a bequest under the terms of their wills. A representative of the Friends organization would be pleased to discuss this method of future giving with you and your attorney.

Gifts may be made for specific purposes – for example, such as for capital improvements (the **Landmark Fund**) or to continue the implementation of our plan for the restoration and improvement of plantings and trees (the **Landmark Fund**) within the Cemetery.

Report on Beautification Program (continued from page 1)

The Cemetery is an appealing and restful place in which to stroll. When you walk through it, take some time to look at the handsome trees and plants as well as the monuments and famous names. The Cemetery is truly an oasis (*i.e.*, a green area in an arid region, a refuge) in the outer ring of downtown New Haven. Entering through Henry Austin's Egyptian Revival gateway, you may well be deeply impressed by the abundance of trees, bushes and flowering plants of many kinds. The Cemetery's organizers certainly planned on an oasis when they decided to name the north-south avenues for trees and several east-west paths for shrubs. In the lore of the Cemetery, this decision is attributed to the idea that living things should be recalled in the city of the dead. Even in the early phases of development, James Hillhouse was concerned with the appearance of the Cemetery and wrote that he thought Lombardy poplars and willows would be appropriate.

Although no tree in the Cemetery is original to its 1797 founding date, there are many handsome, huge old trees which date to the middle of the 19th century. Unfortunately, many of those trees are succumbing to advanced age, disease, and storm damage. As they die or become too deformed, they are being replaced, often by the same species but by a different variety. For instance, several venerable maples (*Acer*) on Maple Avenue have had to be replaced. A new variety (*rubrum*) was chosen because it will have a "shapely, dense, well-rounded head" and is noted for its "brilliant scarlet fall coloring." On Magnolia Avenue, the species name (*Magnolia*) offers numerous possibilities and you will find a number of different bush or small tree magnolias (vars. *stellata* and *soulangiana*), as well as several examples of evergreen magnolias (*M. macrophylla*), a tree more often seen in the South with great luscious perfumed white blossoms in the summer and shiny green leaves all year. There are cedars (*Cedrus*) on Cedar Avenue, though plants on all avenues are not exclusively devoted to their place-names.

In a pleasant way, different species throughout the Cemetery provide landscape interest. There are also some rare species – try to visit in the spring when dogwoods (*Cormus*) are in bloom and find the tree on the corner of Myrtle Path and Maple Avenue which is an unusual double-flowered variety. The Grove Street fence berm is planted with many annuals and beautifully maintained by Joan Cameron, her son and their assistants. There are benches there on which to sit back and survey the whole Cemetery.

For those who are particularly interested in the *flora* aspect of Grove Street Cemetery and who would like to help us continue the rebeautification program which we have undertaken with the Balmori plan as a foundation, your support through contributions to our **Landscape Fund** would be most welcome.

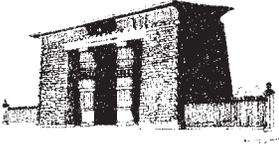
Interested in Becoming a Docent?

The Cemetery is in need of more docents to maintain its scheduled program of tours from early May through mid-November this year. Several of our present docents would be happy to provide you with the training needed to become a docent and would lend you an on-site helping hand before you embarked on a 'solo flight.' If you are interested in 'auditioning' to become a docent or want to learn more about it, please contact Patti Illingworth by phone: (203) 389-5403 or by email at p.b.illingworth@worldnet.net.

How to Reach Us

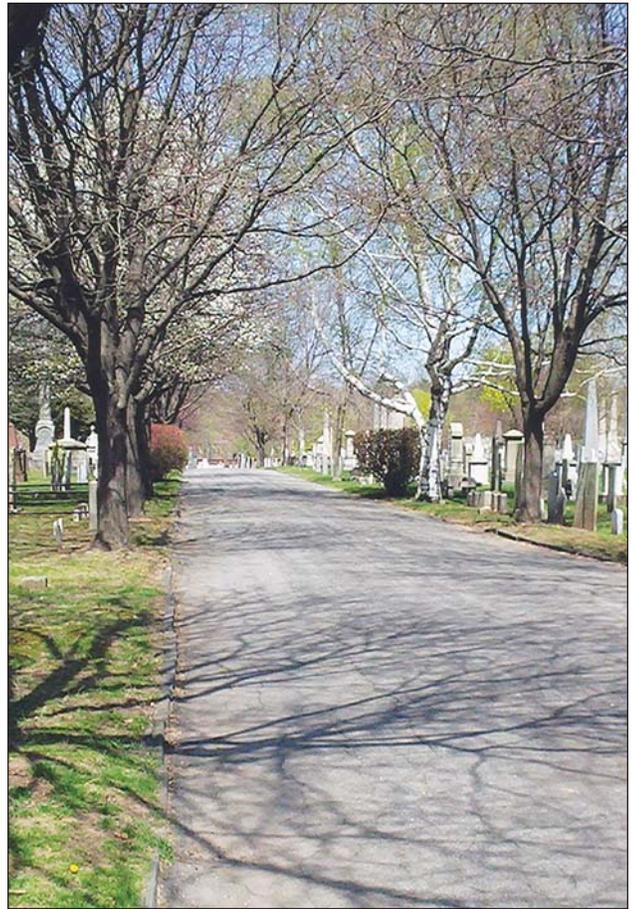
Grove Street Cemetery

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Friends of Grove Street Cemetery

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