

The Historian

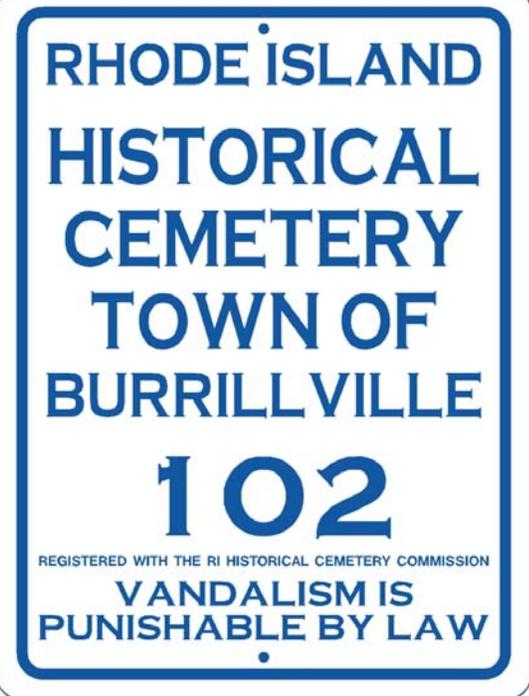
BURRILLVILLE HISTORICAL & PRESERVATION SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2010

New Signs for Historic Cemeteries

Thanks to a grant from Ocean State Power and private donations, the Society was able to purchase 19 new cemetery signs which will be put up in Burrillville's historical cemeteries this summer. With over 120 cemeteries in town, our first priority is to replace those signs that have become missing or stolen. We continue to seek donations to replace those signs that are rusty, damaged and difficult to read. We also purchased 31 galvanized posts to mount the cemetery signs on. Some time ago the State made a group of signs for various towns. We received about a dozen of these signs but had no way to mount them. Part of the Ocean State Power grant was also used to purchase posts for these signs.

The Cemetery Committee has been very active this spring and the following cemeteries were cleaned: #118 the Sayles Cook Lot, Pascoag; #88 the Burlingame-Sherman Lot, Brook Road; #32 the Mowry Lot, Douglas Pike; #2, the Brown-Millard Lot, East Wallum Lake Road, and #71 the Walling Lot, Douglas Pike. We are still looking for people to participate in our Adopt-a-Cemetery program.



This new cemetery sign will be put up at the Whipple Lot near Gazza Road in Mapleville

***** *President's Message* *****

I am very excited about the recent acquisition of copies of 135 glass plate negative images belonging to Earl McWilliams of Mohegan. His grandfather, Elmer Harrington Reynolds was a photographer and took pictures of that area in the early 1900s. Some of the most interesting images are

those of Camp Breeze, a small pox camp in Mohegan. In the early 1900s there was an epidemic and people were quarantined there. There are also some interesting images of the trains and trolleys in town. The photos are being printed and will be on display in the fall. I would also like to feature a slideshow of these images probably in September.

Please notice that there is a vacancy for the position of Direc-

tor. Please call one of the officers if you would like to fill this position.

There will be no meetings during the months of July and August. Have a happy summer.

Betty Mencucci

Upcoming Meetings/Events

June 22 - Meeting / Potluck supper - 6:00 p.m. Bring a your favorite dish and a friend.

From Old Newspapers:

“Punishment beyond the grave.”

September 24, 1886

This is what a young lad thought, recently, that had made a visit to Sherman’s Stock farm and was getting away with watermelons, with the proprietor of the farm after him with a whip, and hurrying through the graveyard fell into an open grave, where some bodies had been removed, and was caught.

Averill Maher

Averill (Young) Maher, a charter member of the Burrillville Historical & Preservation Society died peacefully at home surrounded by her family on May 22, 2010 at age 95. She had been an active member of the Society for many years serving as Treasurer.

She was the wife of the late former Fire Chief and Senator James C. Maher. Born in Glendale, she was a daughter of the late Raymond and Susan (Thompson)Young.

Averill was the town’s first female bus drivers for Nelson Bus Co. She also worked for the former Stillwater Mills for many years. Throughout her life, she collected information on the town’s history and was a wealth of information for anyone doing research.



Averill Maher

Oral History Project Now on CD

Thanks to Carlo Mencucci, the entire oral history project has been transferred from cassette tapes to CDs. The tapes were around 30 years old and had become degraded. With over 100 tapes this was a painstaking job which took three years to complete. Each tape was played and digitized to the computer as sound files. Imperfections were corrected before being recorded to audio CDs. The computerized sound files were also recorded on DVD-ROMs as a backup for archival purposes..

Building News

Thanks to a State Legislative grant we were able to have the ramp, deck and stairs at the Bridgeton School power-washed and sealed.



Mohegan Mill with trolley tracks in front of mill
Photo taken by photographer,
Elmer Harrington Reynolds, early 1900s

Please donate to the Cemetery Fund.
\$40 will purchase a new cemetery sign and
\$31 will purchase a new a new post.

BH&PS welcomes the submission of articles,
photos, and news items for its quarterly newsletter.
Send by mail or email bmencucci@cox.net

March was Membership Month.
If you have forgotten, please send in
your dues today !

Donations

Ralph and Ruth Cook - 2 Old Home Day photos

Robin Hopkins - Old envelope from Prendergast Mills, Bridgeton

Earl McWilliams - let us scan about 135 glass plate negatives. These negatives were taken by his grandfather Elmer Harrington Reynolds. They include scenes of Mohegan, Mohegan Mill, Bartlett Farm, Trains, Nasonville, etc.

Russell Knibb - 3 photos of Camp Dixie.

Cemetery Donations

Russell Lacey - weedwhacker

Keep saving those Dino's and IGA sales 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! Remember, we are also collecting used ink cartridges.

Up and Down Main Street Slideshow at the First Universalist Church

The slideshow titled "Up and Down Main Street, Harrisville" was presented by Betty Mencucci and Mabel Hopkins at the First Universalist Church in Harrisville on Saturday, May 1. This was an in-depth look at history of the buildings on Main Street. Following the show, refreshments were served by members of the church in the downstairs vestry. On display were some artifacts from the businesses on Main Street, a photo exhibit and a detailed history of the church.

Cleaning the Sayles Cemetery

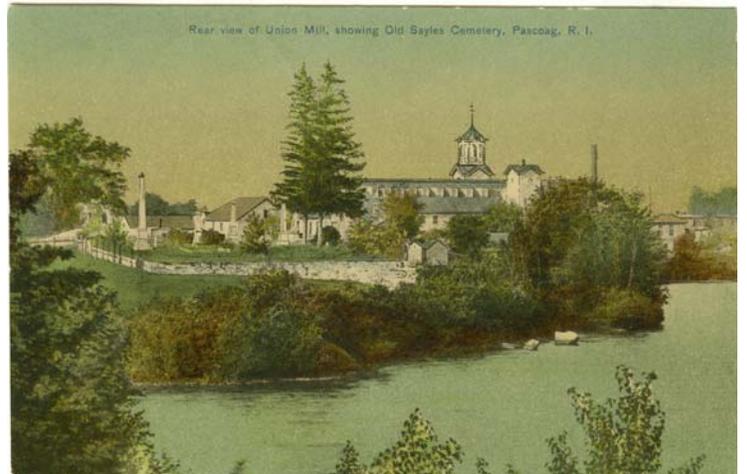


This monument is in good condition, but others like it have been toppled.

The BH&PS Cemetery Committee spent several days working in the Sayles Cemetery near the banks of Union Pond in Pascoag. This cemetery is a little unusual in that it has a number of very tall monuments. Unfortunately, some of them have been vandalized and are broken. The committee has asked the town DPW to assist in putting the monuments back up. Brush was clipped, the area was raked and a few headstones were discovered buried deep in the leaf litter. Thanks to all the volunteers who contributed in this cleanup effort. If you would like to visit this cemetery, park in the CVS parking lot and walk in the woods behind the store about 300 feet.



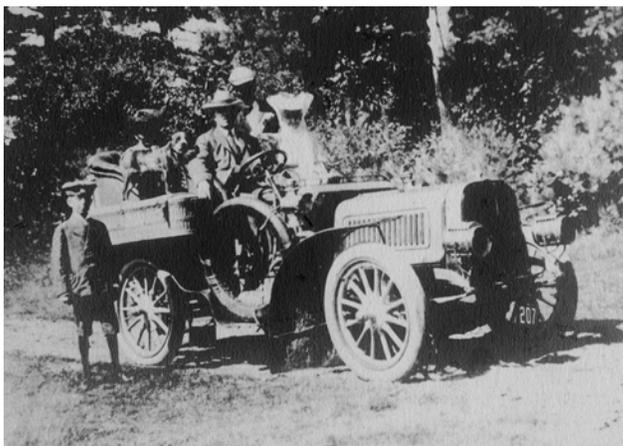
Buried gravestone was discovered and put back up



Early 1900s view of the Sayles Cemetery on the shore of Union Pond with Granite Mill in background.

Fred L. Sayles' New Touring Car by Betty Mencucci

In July 1903 Fred L. Sayles purchased a brand new 24 horse power four-cylinder Toledo touring car. The car was shipped to Providence and Mr. Sayles' coachman,



Fred Sayles' 1903 Touring Car

Benjamin Purdon was sent there to become acquainted with its mechanisms and operation. This vehicle was the first of its type to be purchased in Rhode Island and was the largest and most powerful vehicle to be owned in the state of Rhode Island. The coachman drove the car to Pascoag by way of Woonsocket and the 30 mile trip was covered in a little less than 2 hours. This machine was a sturdy, ruggedly built open roadster with high overstuffed seats. The engine cylinders were 4 1/2" x 5 1/2" and were copper-jacketed. The trans-

mission consisted of a sliding gear with three speeds: 8, 20 and 40 miles per hour.

The car could go about 150 miles between fill-ups getting about 9 miles per gallon. It had wooden wheels 34 inches in diameter with 4 inch detachable tires. The wheel base was 94". It was a luxury car popular among the country club set with a base price of \$3000. This price was several times more than the yearly income of most Americans.

Fred L. Sayles was a mill owner, a rich man who could afford such a car. He was born in Pascoag in 1865, the youngest son of Albert L. Sayles, owner of the Sayles Mill (later the Granite Mill in Pascoag). Fred L. Sayles was owner of the Lincoln Mill in Pascoag which was located about where the Rhode Island State Credit Union is now on North Main Street. In choosing a name for his mill, he used his middle name – Lincoln, which he received in honor of our famous Civil War President. Fred Sayles lived in a beautiful mansion on High Street, Pascoag where the Overlook Nursing Home is now.



Fred L. Sayles, c. 1895



Lincoln Mill Office and Mill



Fred L. Sayles Mansion

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