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## Association for Gravestone Studies e-Newsletter

**Issue #110**  
**June 2012**

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AGS Membership

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Please encourage others to join AGS.

Membership benefits include:

- The *AGS Quarterly*: Bulletin of the Association for Gravestone Studies
- The next published issue of *Markers*
- The AGS monthly e-Newsletter
- Discounts on AGS publications
- Discounts on AGS conferences

To join, renew, or for more information, visit <http://gravestonestudies.org/join.htm>. We invite everyone with an interest in gravestones and cemeteries to join the AGS.

Are you attending an event where you'll be with others who may share your interest? Please contact the AGS office to request promotional material you can distribute.

Please forward this e-Newsletter to colleagues and institutions in your network, and anyone who you think would be interested.

### **2012 AGS Conference and Annual Meeting**

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The 2012 Conference was great! A full report will be featured in the Winter 2012 *Quarterly*.

If you attended this year's conference, please consider sending your photos to the AGS office for possible publication.

Scenes from this year's conference



First Presbyterian Churchyard, Elizabeth



Wednesday Tour: Moravian Cemetery, Staten Island



Lunch at Moravian Cemetery



Wednesday Tour: St. Peter's Churchyard, Perth Amboy
Photos by Bob Drinkwater

**Plan to join us next year for our 36th
annual meeting and conference**

June 18-23, 2013
Willamette University
Salem, Oregon

AGS 2011 Annual Report

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The AGS FY2011 Annual Report was distributed to those who attended the Annual Meeting on June 22, 2012.

To view a PDF file of the report, [please click here](#).

**The AGS President's Bully Pulpit**

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**The President's Bully Pulpit-Bed and Breakfasts, Back Roads,
Burial Grounds and Back-ups**

Ian W. Brown

I attended graduate school at Brown University in the 1970s. My advisor, Jim Deetz, often affectionately referred to his students as "Killer Bs". I was happy to be included in this motley group on account of my surname but Jim, I think, would have been amused to learn that I took the metaphor to heart. Over the years I have made great use in my travels of what I call the "B system". Most of my long distance adventures occur by my lonesome, and for good reason. First off, although my trips may last for many hundreds of miles I never have any kind of music playing. Moreover, I refrain from listening to talk radio, even the good kind. This is because any sort of noise

distracts me from what I'm seeing and what I'm thinking about. "Still writing books in your head Dad?" This is the query of my two children, now both fully grown, but just as wise as ever. Once, in an unguarded moment I offered this as an explanation for my weird traveling behavior, and they have never neglected to needle me about it whenever I head off into the world of travel. Sometimes I am employed in this capacity, but more often than not I am just taking in the greenery, listening to the sounds of the whistling wind, and keeping a lookout for historic signs and cemeteries.

The four Bs of this article reference how I structure my travels. First off, I like to stay at B&Bs. Although I sometimes have been known to throw a sleeping bag and tent into the back of my car, as I have grown older I have become far more inclined to stay at B&Bs; especially Victorians, the "painted ladies" so to speak. I actually scout out possibilities and then plan my trip around them. Whether good or bad, I remember every B&B I have ever stayed in but, for the life of me, I cannot recollect a single Super 8 or Holiday Inn. Nancy, soon to be my wife of thirty-five years, also likes B&Bs, so there is no trouble with Stage 1 of the B system. And even for Stage 2, the back roads, she is not totally adverse, unless they become unbearably bumpy or a bit too isolated. It's Stage 3, the burial grounds where she starts to have some reservations. As I mentioned in my previous Bully Pulpit, "One Vineyard Equals Two Cemeteries," if I get too greedy with my cemetery stops, I have to throw a vineyard/winery into the mix. That's a critical problem because then my own interest starts to lag. The real clincher in my system of travel is Stage 4, the dreaded Back-ups. These Nancy cannot tolerate at all and very few of my fellow travelers have ever had much sympathy for such erratic behavior. If I pass a burial ground that catches my eye, however, I am bound and determined to make the loop and head back to it. Because I really do follow the AGS way and "Brake for Old Graveyards," I generally travel alone and I'm okay with that.

To read the rest of Ian's Bully Pulpit, [please click here](#).



J. & D. Crouch lost their son Cyrus, who was fighting for the Confederacy. An error was made in his death year, but was later fixed to read "Dec. 14, 1862." This is an ample amount of tragedy for such a peaceful little valley.

Obituary: Miriam Silverman

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We are sorry to report that longtime AGS member Miriam Silverman passed away on May 25th. She was a preservationist for the historic graveyards of Trinity Church, New York City and completed an immense project documenting and preserving the gravestones of the parish.

To read her obituary, visit:  
<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/northjersey/obituary.aspx?n=miriam-hadassah-silverman-mimi&pid=157834067>

**Contact Information for Jessie Lie Farber**

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For those of you who know Jessie (a founding member and life-long supporter of AGS), and anyone who'd like to contact her--she has moved. If you'd like to send her a note, her new address is:

Jessie Farber
The Mark Wentworth Home, Room 249

346 Pleasant St.
Portsmouth, NH 03801
603-570-7829

Article: John Stevens Shop, Newport, Rhode Island

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*New Yorker* magazine's May 31, 2012 issue featured an article about Nick Benson. The Bensons own the John Stevens Shop, a stone-carving business in Newport, Rhode Island. We have visited the shop on AGS bus tours.

Read more <http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/backissues/2012/05/the-benson-craftsmen.html#ixzz1xJG3VOWk>

**Article: "Three Generations of the Collins Carving Tradition"**

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"Three Generations of the Collins Carving Tradition," an article by Valerie Legh Harriss, appears in the May 2012 issue of the *Walloomsack Review*, the journal of the Bennington (VT) Museum. The article summarizes her research on the work of Zerubbabel Collins and his sons. Valerie was a speaker and tour guide at the 2003 conference and served on the AGS Board.

Issues are \$3.95. For more information, visit: [Walloomsack Review](#).

Two articles about cemeteries in Vicksburg, Mississippi

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Two articles about cemeteries were featured in the February 15, 2012 issue of the *Vicksburg Post* (Mississippi)

The first is about 13 unmarked, unrecorded graves discovered at Vicksburg National Cemetery.

The second is about students who refurbished the sign for Vicksburg's Beulah Cemetery.

To read both articles: [Vicksburg Post](#)

**Article: "Tombstones from long ago surfacing on San Francisco beach"**

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This article is posted on [sfgate.com](#).

Albany Rural Cemetery Records Available Online

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The burial records of Albany Rural Cemetery (Menands, New York) are now in a

searchable database. As a result of their partnership with ancestry.com, the entire set of over 100,000 burial cards dating from the beginning of the Cemetery in 1841 up to early 2011 is now available.

To use the database:

<http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=2226>

**Conference: Mystery & Mayhem on the Isles of Shoals and Beyond**

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Mystery & Mayhem on the Isles of Shoals and Beyond
Saturday, August 25 to Tuesday, August 28 (or stay until Saturday, September 1)
Star Island, Isles of Shoals, New Hampshire

Investigate the lore and legends of the Isles of Shoals and the nearby seacoast. Determine the truth behind stories of pirates, treasure, ghosts and murder just 10 miles off the coasts of Maine and New Hampshire. Learn of the isolated village of Gosport on Star Island and the seemingly peculiar behavior of its residents. Immerse yourself in scandals of bygone eras.

The program includes:

- Ghosts and Maritime Mysteries
- Graveyard, Birding and Botany Tours
- Atmospheric Digital Photography
- Star Island Mystery Soiree

For more information and to register:

<http://www.facebook.com/HistoricStar>

<http://starisland.org/conferences/2012-listings/historicstar/>

Secret Cinema at Laurel Hill Cemetery, Philadelphia, PA

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**Secret Cinema at Laurel Hill Cemetery  
Friday the 13th of July, 2012**

The Secret Cinema has brought its 16mm film projectors to many unusual venues over its 20-plus year history, but none have been quite as unusual as the destination this Friday the 13th of July. On that evening, after the sun sets, the grainy joys of the film experience will be brought to audiences at everyone's favorite neighborhood burial ground - with the first movie screening for audiences living and dead amid the historic tombs of Laurel Hill Cemetery.

This rare screening will include an even rarer find: When Henrietta Garrett died in 1930, she left behind a 22 million dollar fortune from her late husband's snuff company, but no will to divide it, and no direct heirs to claim it. Before her affairs were settled, 26,000 people from all over the world came forward filing false claims as relatives. Numerous threats of grave robbers yielded the need for armed guards to keep nightly vigils at the Garrett gravesite in Laurel Hill Cemetery. In 1937, the court ruled that Henrietta's body be exhumed to determine if the missing will had been



buried with her. The violation of her right to rest in peace was mysteriously captured in a stranger's shaky, black-and-white home movie, recently unearthed by The Secret Cinema. Now, 75 years after this celluloid vestige was made, it will be screened for the public among the very graves that gave it purpose.

Afterwards, The Secret Cinema will screen the evening's feature film, *Plan 9 from Outer Space*.

Join The Secret Cinema at Laurel Hill Cemetery for this summer screening under the stars, to take place on Friday, July 13 at 9:00pm (with a rain date of Friday, July 20, 9:00pm). Ticket holders can check in at Laurel Hill Cemetery's Gatehouse entrance, 3822 Ridge Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19132. Free parking is located in the lot across the street from the Gatehouse. Bring your own blankets, beach chairs, snacks, beer, wine and/or other beverage.

The cost is \$10/person general admission. Proceeds benefit the work and missions of The Secret Cinema and the Friends of Laurel Hill Cemetery. Advance reservations are recommended, and can be made by phone (215) 228-8200 or email [tours@thelaurelhillemetery.org](mailto:tours@thelaurelhillemetery.org). Tickets can be purchased at the door, or online at [www.thelaurelhillemetery.org](http://www.thelaurelhillemetery.org).

**News from Spirits Alive, Portland, Maine**

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Spirits Alive is a non-profit organization dedicated to the protection and preservation of Portland's historic Eastern Cemetery through a range of activities including promotion and education.

They are happy to announce that Portland's City Council accepted the Master Plan for the Eastern Cemetery in early June. The City's Comprehensive Plan has been amended to reflect the policies in the Master Plan that are aimed at effective maintenance and active preservation measures. The Eastern Cemetery has suffered from neglect and vandalism throughout its 344 year history. With the Master Plan in place, Spirits Alive will work with the Public Services Department to follow the priorities outlined therein, in hopes of ending the cycle for good. In addition to a complete analysis of the cemetery property, the Master Plan includes the first inclusive history of the cemetery. Details of the plan will be posted on the Spirits Alive website (<http://www.spiritsalive.org/>).

Brooklyn's Green-Wood Cemetery Honored by Historic Districts Council

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**Brooklyn's Historic Green-Wood Cemetery  
Honored by Historic Districts Council at Annual  
Grassroots Preservation Awards & Preservation Party**

[The Historic Districts Council \(HDC\)](#), the citywide advocate for New York's designated historic districts and for neighborhoods meriting preservation, has presented [Brooklyn's Historic Green-Wood Cemetery](#) with its [2012 Grassroots Preservation Award](#). Green-Wood was among seven honorees at this year's award ceremony which took place on June 5, 2012 at the South Street Seaport Museum.

Every year, HDC honors and celebrates the activists and groups who work to preserve New York City's historic neighborhoods. "These advocates are the foundation of the preservation movement and their efforts benefit everyone who lives, works or visits New York City," said Simeon Bankoff, executive director of HDC. "It's an honor and pleasure to be able to shine the spotlight on these neighborhood leaders."

Mr. Bankoff said that Green-Wood Cemetery was honored for its [long-time historic preservation efforts](#), including its recent acquisition of the [endangered Weir-McGovern Greenhouse](#). Built in 1895, and the only surviving Victorian-era commercial greenhouse in New York City, this designated landmark had fallen into disrepair over the years. Under the leadership of Green-Wood's president, Richard Moylan, the cemetery is committed to restoring the greenhouse to its full glory and to readying it for its new role as Green-Wood's visitor center, across the street from the cemetery's main entrance.

Mr. Moylan said, "Green-Wood's commitment to preserving our history is strong. Our historic monuments, sculptures and buildings, and natural beauty are unrivaled. Maintaining them so that future generations can share in our rich heritage is a responsibility and an honor we cherish. I'd like to thank Simeon Bankoff and the Historic Districts Council for this prestigious award."

He also noted that Green-Wood will commemorate its 175th anniversary next year (2013).

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THE GREEN-WOOD HISTORIC FUND is a registered 501(c)(3) not-for-profit membership organization established in 1999 to maintain Green-Wood Cemetery's monuments and buildings of historical, cultural, and architectural significance; to advance public knowledge and appreciation; and to preserve the natural habitat of one of New York City's first green spaces.

Incorporated in 1838, Green-Wood Cemetery stretches across 478 acres and boasts extraordinary works of 19th-century art and architecture. Home to hundreds of famous historic figures, historic Green-Wood Cemetery offers many tours of its grounds, concerts and events throughout the year. Green-Wood has been designated a National Historic Landmark by the United States Department of the Interior. For more information about Green-Wood Cemetery please visit [www.green-wood.com](http://www.green-wood.com).

**Cemetery Traveler Blogs**

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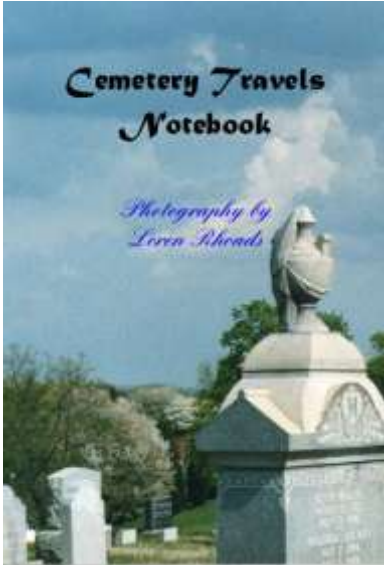
Please take a moment to check out Ed Snyder's "Cemetery Traveler" blogs. He writes: "Ed Snyder began this blog in order to share his decade-long experience with all things cemeterial. As a photographer specializing in images of cemetery statuary, I've run into some interesting people, had some unexplainable experiences, and had a lot of fun."

<http://thecemeterytraveler.blogspot.com/>

http://networkedblogs.com/blog/the_cemetery_traveler/

New Publication: Cemetery Travels Notebook

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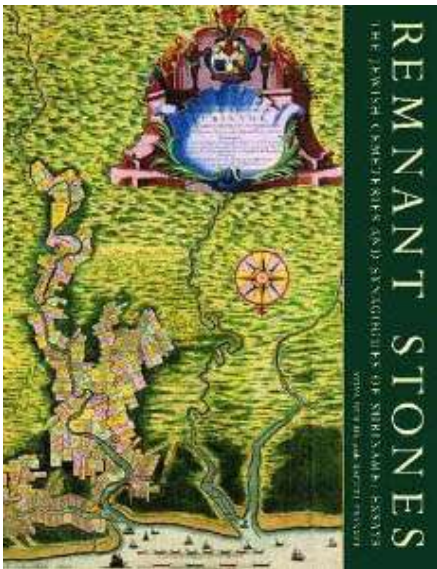
Cemetery Travels Notebook is a new publication by AGS member Loren Rhoads. It is a place to keep field notes from your own cemetery adventures. There are 80 lined pages, interspersed with 20 lush full-page color photographs of cemeteries around the world.

The Cemetery Travels Notebook is available for \$21.95 (softcover) or \$38.95 (hardbound). To order and see a preview, visit:

[Cemetery Travels Notebook](#)

New Publication: Remnant Stones: The Jewish Cemeteries and Synagogues of Suriname: Essays, Volume 2

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This volume offers a historical and cultural overview of Suriname's Jewish community, with special emphasis on the former Dutch colony's synagogues and Jewish and Creole cemeteries. It complements the first volume, *Remnant Stones: The Jewish Cemeteries of Suriname* (Cincinnati, OH: Hebrew Union College, 2009), which presents transcriptions, English translations, and photographs and annotations of more than 1,600 gravestones, accompanied by scaled plans of the cemeteries.

In the 1660s, Jews of Iberian ancestry, many of them fleeing Inquisitorial persecution, established an agrarian settlement in the midst of the Surinamese tropics. The heart of this community-Jodensavanne, or Jews' Savannah-became an autonomous village with its own Jewish institutions, including a majestic synagogue consecrated in 1685. Situated along the Suriname River, some fifty kilometers south of the capital city of Paramaribo, Jodensavanne was by the mid-eighteenth century surrounded by dozens of Jewish plantations sprawling north- and southward and dominating the stretch of the river. These Sephardi-owned plots, mostly devoted to the cultivation and processing of sugar, carried out primarily by enslaved Africans, collectively formed the largest Jewish agricultural community in the

world at the time and the only Jewish settlement in the Americas granted virtual self-rule.

Sephardi settlement paved the way for the influx of hundreds of Ashkenazi Jews, who began to emigrate in the late seventeenth century from western and central Europe. Generally banned from Jodensavanne, these newcomers settled in Paramaribo, where they established their own cemeteries and historic synagogue. Meanwhile, slave rebellions, Maroon attacks, the general collapse of Suriname's economy, soil depletion, absentee land ownership, and a ravaging fire all contributed to the demise of the old Savannah settlement beginning in the second half of the eighteenth century. This project's points of departure are three Sephardic cemeteries, whose monuments date from 1666 to 1904; one Ashkenazi cemetery, whose monuments date from the 1680s to the late nineteenth century; the Creole (Afro-Surinamese) cemetery in Jodensavanne, dating to the late nineteenth century at the latest, and the remains of a seventeenth-century synagogue in the heart of Jodensavanne.

For more info and to order: <http://wsupress.wayne.edu/books/1488/Remnant-Stones>

Contact Information

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