

Historic Cemetery Advisory Commission 2023 Annual Report



Activities/accomplishments in 2023

Stonework/sitework

1. 127 stones, 1 tomb, and 2 box tombs were treated this year.
 - Beyond the Gravestone (the official stone workers for the city) treated 101 stones; 85 in the Common Burying Ground near William Ellery and 16 in Braman Cemetery.
 - Volunteers Mary Jo Valdes and Korey Morris reset 4 marble stones in the Common Burying Ground. These stones were lying on the ground, having been dislodged from their original place.
 - Hall Masonry stabilized and sealed the Albro tomb in the Common Burying Ground.
 - Hall Masonry rebuilt two box tombs in the Common Burying Ground- Ann Fowler (1768-1820), Christopher Fowler (1763-1830)
2. Stonework by Beyond the Gravestone was masterfully accomplished. The city is fortunate to have them working in Newport.
3. GLAPP (GLA Preservation Project Foundation) funded the replacement of 4 Cherry Trees at the edge of God's Little Acre and Island Cemetery. The old trees were a risk of damage to gravestones from falling limbs.
4. Giles Eyre (GLAPP founder) and Patricia Miller (Chief Conservator at The Preservation Society of Newport County) presented their findings to the commission regarding treatment of slate gravestones. They visited multiple sites in New England to see in person, work completed on slate stones and spoke with the companies that did the work. The commission later reviewed slate work done by Beyond the Gravestone more than 5 years ago in the Common Burying Ground. While impressed with the work of the contractors Patty and Giles documented, the commission decided to have Beyond the Gravestone undertake slate work this year. The work is slated for Spring, 2024.
5. With City Council approval, traffic flow signage was installed in the Common Burying Ground to help the public avoid situations that place gravestones at risk of being driven over.
6. The commission worked with Scott Wheeler to update the bid solicitation for a gravestone conservator. We are pleased the city continued the relationship with Beyond the Gravestone.
7. Granite curbing using extra granite posts was added along the road to protect gravestones from vehicles.
8. Two infected Ash trees in Braman cemetery were replaced and other Ash trees were treated.

Community engagement

1. With City Council approval, commission membership was reconfigured to 9 members to include three institutions; Newport Historical Society, Preservation Society of Newport County, Rhode Island Black Heritage Society
2. An April 19th event took place at Newport Historical Society to thank the many volunteers who have helped in recent years. Thirty of the forty invited people attended and greatly appreciated the event. Commission members funded the event which included refreshments, a certificate for each person and a lapel pin.
3. Following the clearing of vegetation in the Easton Burial Site, the commission conducted an open house. Many neighbors stopped in (about 25 people in total) to learn more about the history of the site.
4. The commission joined neighbors in cleaning stones in the Quaker burial site on Feke Street and Tilden Ave.
5. Volunteers from Embrace Home Mortgage spent their community service day for the 4th time in the Common Burying Ground. They spread gravel and cleaned gravestones.

6. The commission engaged with the Off-Broadway Neighborhood Association and the Museum of Newport Irish History concerning the deteriorating Warner Street wall at St. Mary's cemetery.
7. A self-guided walking tour of the Coddington site was created and is posted at the site and 400 brochures have been printed this year. The self-guided brochures at 3 other sites continue to be appreciated by the public and the majority have been used by site visitors. Printing this year included 700 brochures for Clifton, 100 for Braman and 600 for the Common Burying Ground.
8. The self-guided tours were digitally added to the Discover Newport site with the help of their staff.
9. The commission is developing interpretive signage at seven historic burial sites. Financial backing for the project (about \$8,000) and design input will come from Discover Newport.
10. Through RI Black Heritage Society, funds were raised to repair the sign at God's Little Acre.

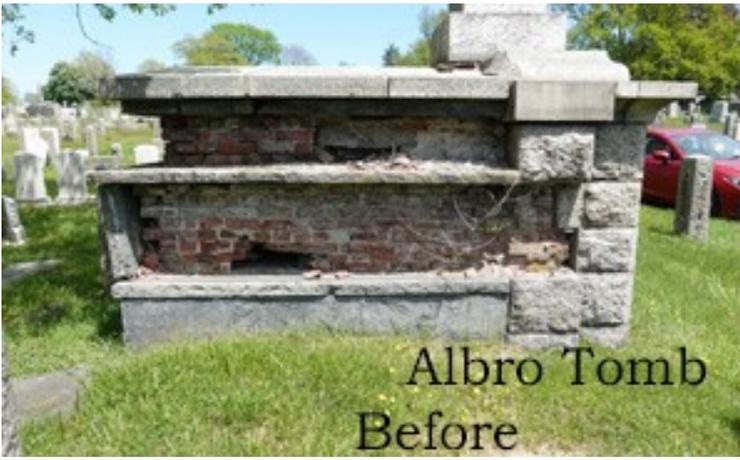


The commission was honored to receive a 2023 Doris Duke Preservation Award from the Newport Restoration Foundation.

The commission is very appreciative of the support of the City Council and staff.

We are one part of the team that works together to maintain our historic burial sites.

A few of the stones treated this year



Albro Tomb
Before



After



before



Box tombs

after





