



ANCIENT
BURYING
GROUND
ASSOCIATION

PASSAGES

Preserving A History Carved in Stone

Tablestones Restoration Project Underway

The Ancient Burying Ground Association has embarked on an ambitious restoration project to preserve one of the ABG's most distinctive and historically significant features: its 29 tablestone monuments. We have identified 11 tablestones that require prompt conservation attention.

To begin the restoration, the ABGA has contracted with nationally recognized preservationist Jonathan Appell of Atlas Preservation. He specializes in the conservation of historic cemeteries and gravestones and is known for combining traditional stoneworking craftsmanship with modern conservation techniques.

The first three tablestones selected for restoration are those of John Ellery, the Rev. Samuel Stone, and the Rev. Edward Dorr. Work on these monuments represents the initial phase of what is expected to be a project lasting at least two years.

Tablestones are among the most impressive forms of memorialization found in New England's colonial burying grounds. Constructed from large, horizontal slabs supported approximately three feet above the ground by four or five stone legs, they were substantial and costly monuments. During the 17th and 18th centuries, their size, craftsmanship and prominent inscriptions reflected the status and resources of the families who commissioned them.



Jonathan Appell of Atlas Preservation dismantled the 1500 lb. tablestone of John Ellery without mechanical equipment or extra help. Jonathan was able to skillfully "walk" the massive stone away from the base, leaving the base and legs accessible for conservation work.

These memorials have survived for nearly four centuries, but years of exposure to weather, temperature changes and moisture have taken their toll. While some remain relatively stable, others have deteriorated significantly and now require careful professional intervention.

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Bones of the Settlers

The development of Hartford is directly correlated to the shrinking of the ABG, with lots sold off along the Main Street area of the burying ground. Often progress meant disturbing the peace of those buried, with the removal and disposal of bones that were then likely lost or destroyed. Our modern minds are shocked by these actions, but the ABG, established in 1640

and owned by the City of Hartford, was never a consecrated nor a sacred site. Anyone who died in town, regardless of age, gender, race, ethnic background, economic status, or religious faith, could be buried there.

The plans for cellars under the buildings of the First Congregational Church, or Center Church, became a documented occasion when human remains were discovered. The

archives of the *Hartford Courant* are a fascinating dive into some of these events. "Bones of the Settlers" was the headline in a 1902 article, and in 1912 the headline was "More Bones Dug Up." Although excavations of the past may have ignored any protocols with bones, we see in the 1900s that attitudes changed.

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Thank You to Steve Morris

After six years of dedicated service to the Ancient Burying Ground Association, Stephen Morris is stepping away from the ABGA Board of Directors. While we will miss having Steve at our board meetings, we are grateful that he will remain a friend and supporter of the Ancient Burying Ground—and, whenever his schedule permits, a tour guide.

Steve has been an enthusiastic and knowledgeable member of the ABGA, serving in recent years as Vice President. He has brought a deep appreciation for Hartford's history and a genuine commitment to preserving one of the city's most important historic places.

That commitment has extended well beyond board meetings to leading tours and assisting with grave-stone evaluation for conservation.

Visitors who have taken tours with Steve have experienced the cemetery not simply as a historic site, but as a place filled with remarkable stories and connections to Hartford's past.

Steve is also deeply committed to another important Hartford mission. As Executive Director of Literacy Volunteers of Greater Hartford, he leads an organization dedicated to improving adult literacy by providing classes in English, reading, writing and citizenship. As that work continues to grow, the demands on Steve's time have made it necessary for him to take a leave from the ABGA Board.

And perhaps, when circumstances permit, we will have the pleasure of welcoming Steve back to the Board.

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Tablestones

From page 1

Today, these monuments provide a remarkable physical connection to Hartford's earliest generations. Their inscriptions preserve the names and stories of people who helped shape the young settlement, while the stones themselves offer evidence of the craftsmanship and materials used by colonial-era stonecutters.

The goal is not to make these nearly 400-year-old monuments look new. Rather, the objective is to stabilize and preserve them while retaining as much of their origi-

nal historic material and character as possible. Each stone presents its own challenges, requiring careful examination and a conservation approach appropriate to its condition.

The restoration of the tablestones is an important investment in the future of the Ancient Burying Ground. By undertaking this work now, the ABGA hopes to ensure that these remarkable monuments—and the stories they tell—will continue to be part of Hartford's landscape and history for generations to come.

A Generous Gift from Fred Sawyer

The Ancient Burying Ground Association is pleased to announce that longtime supporter and Board Member Frederick W. Sawyer III is offering a \$10,000 matching gift for this year's Annual Fund. Every dollar contributed to the Annual Fund will be matched by Fred, up to \$10,000, with the proceeds supporting future conservation programs at the Ancient Burying Ground.

Fred has been an instrumental member of the Ancient Burying Ground Association for many years. During his service as both Treasurer and President, he helped establish important educational programs and strengthen the Association's financial procedures.

Fred also played an important role in the research and development of the original "Makers of the Markers" stonecarvers brochure. This valuable resource provides insight into the stonecarving families, craftsmen, and materials represented in the Ancient Burying Ground. The brochure has since been updated and is available on the ABGA website.

This past Father's Day, Fred's daughter, Jessica Warren, made a contribution to the ABGA in his honor. Along with her gift, she shared a message from a daugh-

ter to her father that beautifully captures the lasting impact of Fred's commitment to history and education:

The gravestone project we did when I was in 5th grade is a true highlight in my life. I loved learning with you about the colonists and the gravestone carvers. You taught me that history is about more than just wars and politics; it's about people and families and recognizing that the present is constantly informed by the past. As a 10-year-old, I was amazed that the street names in Glastonbury were from actual people!

I think understanding that is more important now than ever. Our country's past is important to preserve—all of the past, including the messy parts. Thanks for bringing me up with an appreciation for all of this.

Fred's generosity continues that same tradition of learning, preservation, and appreciation for the people whose stories are part of Hartford's history.

Please consider making a contribution to the ABGA Annual Fund. Your gift will be matched dollar-for-dollar, up to \$10,000, helping ensure that the Ancient Burying Ground will continue to be preserved and shared with future generations.

President's Message

As the summer heat gives way to the changing weather of fall, the Ancient Burying Ground Association looks forward to closing the year with a wide array of public programs. A full listing is on the website and in the newsletter.

The Ancient Burying Ground (ABG) is now on the CT Haunted History Trail, a new program from CT Visit, which has had great success with its Pizza Trail and other suggestions for places to visit and things to do in our fine state. This is one example of "cultural heritage tourism," which brings many visitors to the ABG from all over the country and the world. They come to see a small piece of land with markers that survive from the colonial days.

Annual Meeting

This year the Annual Meeting took place at the Hartford Public Library, where participants enjoyed a



Christine Jewell in colonial costume welcomes CT Visits to the ABG.

tour of the newly re-opened Hartford History Center. We invited Erin Monroe, the Kriebel Curator of American Paintings and Sculpture at The Wadsworth, who gave a fascinating talk on their latest exhibit, "Framing American Democracy." The lecture noted the connections between The Wadsworth and the Ancient Burying

We thank the staff at the Library and Ms. Monroe from The Wadsworth for their support of this program.

The ABGA elected its officers for this year. We'd like to thank Steve Morris, who is stepping down from the Board, for his contributions over the years, most recently as Vice-President.

Please turn to page 10



1924 photo from the Traveler's Tower. All the buildings to the right of Center Church have come down, with the Gold Building erected at the right, on the corner of Main and Pearl. This was before the east end of Gold Street (to the left of the church) was shifted south, to line up with Atheneum Square North across Main Street.

BONES OF THE SETTLERS

Dug Out of the Cellar of the Center Church Chapel

Workmen who have been and still are digging for a cellar under the south store of the building used recently by the Eckhardt art stores, and underneath the Center Church chapel, have found the bones of persons buried in the ancient burying ground which lies at the rear of the building and at one time undoubtedly extended nearly, if not quite, to Main Street.

The Center Church chapel building was built without a cellar, but it had heavy foundation walls. The exigencies of the prospective new occupants of the store require that a cellar should be put under at least one of the sections. This led to the excavation and to

the violation of the sanctity of the resting place of some, at least, of the settlers of Hartford.

Thomas Stafford, the contractor, who is making the excavations, said he was instructed to have a care, while digging in the cellar, and if he found any bones to preserve them for re-interment. For several days bones have been found, none of them remarkably well defined and most of them heavily coated with the damp clay which forms a part of the earth through which the digging is going on. These bones are mainly of legs and arms, and with other smaller bones have been put in a small packing case and are at present

stored in the boiler room of the building. There are probably about one bushel of them altogether, and they may have belonged to twenty-five or more, of the early residents of Hartford.

It will be remembered that when the Waverly building was built a large quantity of bones were found when excavation for the cellar was being made. It had not been supposed that the burying ground extended quite so far east as the location where the bones have been found this week.

The Hartford Courant (1887-1922); Oct 2, 1902; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: *Hartford Courant* pg. 3

CENTER CHURCH EXCAVATION DONE REMAINS OF FOUR BODIES FOUND IN DEEPENING CELLAR. Braid of Hair Buried Century and a Half Still Retains Color. CELLAR WILL NOW RECEIVE A CEMENT FLOORING.

By tonight the greater part of the work of excavating under the Center Church will be completed, under the direction of William Angus and George Calder, and next week pegs will be set and an exact grade worked so that the concrete surface will slope to a drain in the southwestern part of the cellar.

About the time the work started Engineer A. L. Washburn showed Mr. Angus and Mr. Calder a map of the old burying ground, showing that the northwest corner of the church covers a section of it, and the excavation proved the truthfulness of the map. In all, parts of four bodies were found and these were within a few feet of the west end of the church. It was apparent that, when the church was built, the loam or humus was stripped from the area covered by the building, being perhaps bought or taken away by some thrifty member of the congregation, and the bare red subsoil was left.

As a result the remains found lay about four feet from the top of the ground under the church, where the depth of the excavation came about on a level with the bottom of the graves. There was little to be unearthed by the shovels and picks of the Italian workmen. Not a fragment of the wood of the coffin was found except a few pieces. The bones were in a fair state of preservation, considering the length of time they had been buried.

The remains were in very poor condition, except that portions of the larger bones were found in three cases, indicating that adults had been buried there. The fourth was the

grave of a young girl, perhaps 14 years old. In this practically everything had turned to dust again except the child's hair. Whoever had performed the last offices for the child had braided her reddish-brown hair in the "pig-tail" common to girls of her age now, and it has retained its shape, texture and color. Placed on a rule it was thirteen inches long from the head to the tip of the braid. It was fastened at the end with a bit of string or, possibly, with a piece of linen thread. At any rate, whatever it was, it lasted.

The present church was built 105 years ago and it is conservative to say that the burials in that section of the ground must have antedated this by at least fifty years and, it may be, by a longer space of time than that. No one knows who the child was; all that they know or conjecture is that this section of the old burying ground was given up to the poorer people of the town. The good women who prepared her body for burial, the pastor who committed it to the dust, have disappeared utterly from the minds of men, but the child's hair is almost as bright as it was when she died, for the interior of the braid still shows the natural color of the hair. Mr. Angus is now superintending another piece of work that has brought like relics to light. He is building an addition to Trinity Church, New York, and he says that between 150 and 200 bodies have been exhumed by the laborers, who pay precious little attention to these former residents of old New York. Here, at the Center Church, the remains have been carefully saved and

will be given decent burial. It will probably be a long time before any further remains will be brought to light, unless it becomes necessary to make some excavation to the northwest of the present structure.

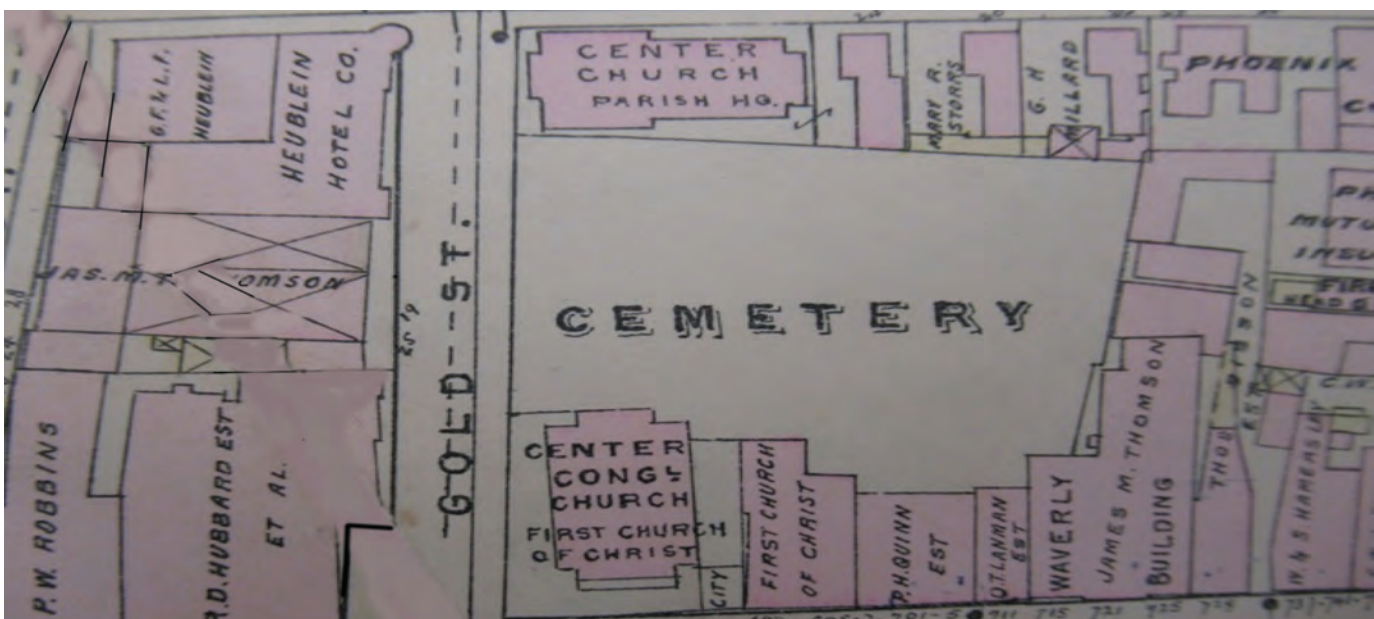
The *Hartford Courant* (1887-1922); June 1, 1912; ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Hartford Courant pg. 5

MORE BONES DUG UP.

Remains of a Man Come to Light Under Center Church.

Some more human bones, evidently those of a man, were found yesterday morning beneath the Center Church, where a cellar is being excavated. They were dug up in the northwest corner of the building by one of the laborers. Among them was a portion of a skull, arm and leg bones and several small bones. No portions of clothing whatever were found. These remains will be placed in a casket with the other bones, found on Wednesday, and buried in the cellar near the spot where they were found.

The bones found on Wednesday were obviously those of a woman and also included a skull, to which was adhering a fairly long braid of hair tied with a ribbon. The age of these bones is probably at least 150 years as it is over 100 years since the church was built and the use of the lot as a graveyard had been discontinued long before that time. It is not expected that any more skeletons will be unearthed as the digging is almost completed.



The above is taken from the "Atlas of the City of Hartford and the Town of West Hartford Connecticut," by Richards May Company 1909

“The Nightwalkers” from *Uncovering Their History: African, African American, and Native American Burials in Hartford’s Ancient Burying Ground, 1640-1815*

Uncovering Their History, a research project completed in 2020, resulted in a website devoted to research about and remembrance of colonial Hartford’s least visible population: the Indigenous, African, and African-descended people who lived, worked, and died here. The project team was led by Dr. Katherine A. Hermes, who joined the faculty at Central Connecticut State University in 1997 and retired in 2022.

Uncovering Their History is a project of the Ancient Burying Ground Association and has its own website,

africannativeburialsct.com, which is used by a broad population. There are features for the K-12 student, the college and university student, the family genealogist, the scholarly researcher, the interested member of the public, and the merely curious. The goal was to make all of the findings accessible and usable, and to honor the lives and deaths of hundreds of people who have no other public marker of their time here.

Below is one account recorded by the Project Team that brings attention to the practice of nightwalking.

The Nightwalkers: Drusus, Jecovons, Benn, Ismael, Lydia and Two Maids

By Allison Golomb; edited by Katherine Hermes

In the colonial era taverns were the center of a town’s political and social life. Today “tavern” is just another word for a bar or restaurant, but in the past it was an inn that served food and drink to both locals and travelers who stopped in to spread news and gossip.[1] Business dealings occurred there as well.[2] Merchants sold and bartered some of their goods and bills of sale records were kept there. Town officials hung new ordinances and laws on the buildings’ walls, as taverns were popular places.[3] Laws banned tavern owners from serving Indians and blacks, though some did so anyway. Most Natives and Africans, though, had to find their social enjoyment outside of taverns.

In November of 1710, a group of indentured Indians and enslaved Africans was arrested for “night-walking” and causing a disturbance. One of the nightwalkers, a Native man named Drusus, belonged to Jonathan Bunce. Not long before, Drusus had been willed to Bunce by his father-in-law, Zechariah Sanford, along with a white indentured servant or apprentice named James Jarrell. Now Drusus and the other night-walkers were being tried at a court held in the Bunce tavern at the corner of King Street (now Main) and Central Row, across from the meetinghouse.[4] Along with Drusus, the sheriff arrested “Joseph Bull’s Indian man named Jecovons, Samuel Howard’s Indian man named Benn, Nathaniel Hooker’s Negro man named Ismael, an Indian woman named Lydia (a widow), Mr. Caleb Watson’s Negro maid and William Washington’s Negro maid.”[5] Noticeably, James Jarrell was absent from the group of offenders. The arrest tells us a great deal about how

enslaved and indentured people formed community.

Jonathan Bunce was married to Susannah Sanford (also spelled Sandford), and Bunce had inherited his tavern from his father-in-law, Lieutenant Zachariah Sanford, who had also leased it to the Colony for its court hearings.[6] Bunce’s sister was married to Samuel Howard, Benn’s master, who lived at the intersection of King (Main) and Elm Streets. Benn had been in trouble before for threatening Thomas Andrews with a knife. Caleb Watson, the school teacher in Hartford until 1705, lived near the schoolhouse on Main Street, near the tavern. Joseph Bull, Samuel Howard and Robert Sanford all owned the same piece of property, which they passed on seriatim to one another.[7] The masters

Continued on next page



Artwork by CoraMarshall.com

UNCOVERING THEIR HISTORY:
African, African-American
and Native-American Burials in
Hartford’s Ancient Burying Ground
1640-1815.

View the project here:
africannativeburialsct.org



[illegible]

Shortly after Jonathan inherited Drusus and the tavern, the court moved to Caleb Williamson's tavern. Court proceedings stayed at Williamson's Tavern for a short period of time until a permanent State House was built.[8] The Bunce family later owned another tavern, The Black Horse (also known as Flagg's Tavern), which was widely known in the surrounding area.[9] The mingling of indentured, enslaved and free people of color was not an unusual event in Hartford. They formed friendships, intermarried and sometimes they got a little wild and had a party together in the streets of Hartford. Yet their relationships were neither random nor freely chosen. Their ability to associate with one another often depended on their masters' and mistresses' own networks. And for any fun they had, they often paid dearly.

Notes from the Nightwalkers

Connecticut Historical Society, 1978), 18; Charles William Manwaring, comp., *A Digest of the Early Connecticut Probate Records, Hartford District, 1700-1729*, vol. II (Hartford: RS Peck & Company, 1904), 288.

[5] Miscellaneous Papers, 1635-1789, Connecticut Archives Index. No. 31., accessed on Sept. 14, 2018, <https://cslib.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p128501coll3/id/3409/rec/1>.

[6] Love, *The Colonial History of Hartford*, 139, 235.

[7] *Hartford Land Records*, vol. 1: 111, 234, 481, 484; vol. 2: 89.

[8] Clark, *A History of Connecticut*, 59-60, 256.

[9] Love, *The Colonial History of Hartford*, 81.



The City of Hartford will be working soon to develop the space on Gold Street between Bushnell Park and the ABG and Main Street. Plans include the repair of the sidewalk and lighting along the southern edge of the ABG and improved sightlines to the Gold Street entrance.

Reflections on Calendars & Sleep Patterns in Times Past

By Kate Dimancescu

When one is visiting the Ancient Burying Ground, time does seem to stand still. Despite cars and buses going by and sirens blaring on occasion and the sounds of daily life and work in downtown Hartford, there is a special timelessness one embraces. One is surrounded by a sea of headstones, table stones, and historic markers, each representing and documenting life stories and legacies from centuries past. Being in the Ancient Burying Ground becomes a privilege and a chance to actively engage with Hartford's past.

Taking a guided tour or simply strolling around on one's own may kindle and inspire curiosity to learn about times past and how they differed with prior daily rhythms, some of which are quite different compared to our modern lives. Two major examples are the yearly calendar and the sleeping patterns, which have changed dramatically.

The current calendar most people use in the United States is not the same as the one used by the 17th and 18th century visitors and residents of Hartford. For the first colonial settlers in Hartford the new year officially began on "Lady Day," the 25th of March, on the Julian calendar. It was not until the adoption of the Gregorian calendar in 1752 that the transition to marking January 1 as the first day of the new year occurred.

When the calendar changed to Gregorian in the British Colonies (including the Connecticut Colony), days were suddenly "lost." The Julian calendar did not exactly align with dates on the Gregorian calendar. The Connecticut State Library provides a useful overview of these issues during a period of a little over



one hundred years in which burials were taking place in the Ancient Burying Ground in Hartford.

"Between 1582 and 1752, not only were two calendars in use in Europe (and in European colonies), but two different starts of the year were in use in England. Although the 'Legal' year began on March 25, the use of the Gregorian calendar by other European countries led to January 1 becoming commonly celebrated as 'New Year's Day' and given as the first day of the year in almanacs. To avoid misinterpretation, both the 'Old Style' and 'New Style' year was often used in English and colonial records for dates falling between the new New Year (January 1) and old New Year (March 25), a system known as 'double dating.' Such dates are usually identified by a slash mark [/] breaking the 'Old Style' and 'New Style' year, for example, March 19, 1631/2.

Occasionally, writers would express the double date with a hyphen, for example, March 19, 1631-32. In general, double dating was more common in civil than church and ecclesiastical records. In accordance with a 1750 act of Parliament, England and its colonies changed calendars in 1752. By that time, the discrepancy



between a solar year and the Julian Calendar had grown by an additional day, so that the calendar used in England and its colonies was 11 days out-of-sync with the Gregorian Calendar in use in most other parts of Europe. England's calendar change included three major components. The Julian Calendar was replaced by the Gregorian Calendar, changing the formula for calculating leap years. The beginning of the legal new year was moved from March 25 to January 1. Finally, 11 days were dropped from the month of September 1752."¹

Awareness of the change in calendars coupled with a visit to the Ancient Burying Ground might inspire visitors to later consult colonial records at the Connecticut State Library, which is within walking or driving distance of the Ancient Burying Ground, to learn more about the lives and legacies of individuals buried there; if so, it is useful to know the Connecticut State Library has also thoughtfully provided additional pertinent reference information. "Out of context, it is sometimes hard to determine whether information in colonial records was entered 'Old Style' or 'New Style.' Some examples: In the

Calendars & Sleep Patterns

Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut, 'A Corte at New Towne [Hartford] 27 Decr. 1636' is immediately followed by a court held '21 Febr. 1636,' which is followed, in turn, by 'A Cort att Hartford, Mrch 28th, 1637'. Although it may first appear that the February session was entered out of sequence, the arrangement is actually correct. Under the 'Old Style' calendar and legal new year, 1636 began on March 25. December 1636 was followed by January 1636 and February 1636, and 1636 continued through March 24."²

Now, let's move on to addressing "Daylight Saving," a practice in the United States of changing the clocks to "spring forward and fall back." The history of "Daylight Saving" is relatively new, which may come as a surprise, and has been utilized on and off for only a little over one hundred years.

"Some have said Benjamin Franklin first came up with the idea for daylight saving time (DST). Others believe it was adopted so farmers could have more hours of sunlight to work in the field. The real history of daylight saving time is much more complex. It was first introduced in Germany in 1916 during World War I as an energy saving measure, according to CU Boulder sleep researcher Kenneth Wright. The U.S. followed suit, adopting DST in 1918. Initially implemented as a wartime measure, it was repealed a year later. Daylight saving time was reinstituted in 1942 during World War II. The next couple decades were a free-for-all, when states and localities switched between DST and standard time (ST) at will. To put an end to the clock chaos, Congress finally passed the Uniform Time Act in 1966,



Two-sleep cycle sleepers likely used a candlestick like this one from the 19th-century, often referred to as a hog-scraper.

which standardized daylight saving time—with the exception of Hawaii and Arizona, which opted to keep standard time year-round. During the energy crisis of 1974, the U.S. decided to adopt permanent DST. However, after the first winter of dark mornings, public support dropped so low that it was repealed."³

The main complaints that often surface when the clocks change are disruptions to sleeping patterns, because "springing forward" means losing precious sleeping time in the spring and that means adjusting to a new sleep rhythm, which is not necessarily welcome despite sunnier mornings. So what might individuals who were buried in the Ancient Burying Ground have thought about Daylight Saving and clocks?

Such musings could lead to the surprising revelation that sleep patterns have changed throughout the centuries. Many may grumble about losing an hour of sleep when the clocks move forward one hour in the spring. What might modern day

individuals have made of a "two-sleep cycle?"

This was the focus of a piece written by Heather Teysko dated 14 March 2025 and titled "Medieval Two-Sleep Cycle: A Lost Tradition," in which she shared the following: "So I'm very interested in how people slept in the past. And it might actually blow your mind a little bit to know that people did not always lay down for eight hours at once and think that was the best way to sleep. In fact, they slept in two phases. It was biphasic sleep – first sleep and second sleep. And then you got up in the middle of the night and did some stuff in the middle."⁴

Teysko also wrote, "The historian A. Roger Ekirch wrote the book *At Days Close: Night in Time's Past*. He was reading a document about a nine year old girl, Jane Rowland, in 1699, who woke up from what she called her first sleep. And this phrase, "first sleep", was probably something people passed over regularly, but it stuck out to him and he wanted to investigate what is a first sleep, just this casual mention. And it actually hinted at a whole pattern of life, one that was so ordinary it didn't need any explanation at all. So for millennia, humans slept in two distinct shifts, so this idea of going to sleep once and waking up, going to bed at 11 and getting up at 7 or whatever your thing is, that's a very modern, very new type of thing. . .biphasic sleep, segmented sleep, refers to the practice of dividing the night into two distinct phases, the first sleep and the second sleep. Between these periods was an interval of wakefulness known as the watch. This wasn't a quirk or anything, this was a widespread and normal part of life across

Calendars & Sleep Patterns

pre-industrial societies. Historical records are filled with references to this practice. Chaucer mentioned it in the Canterbury Tales. William Baldwin described it in Beware the Cat, a satirical story from the 16th century. It appears in medical texts, in letters, in diaries, and even in ballads. For example, the old ballad of Robin of Portengale includes the lines, 'At the wakening of your first sleep, you shall have a hot drink made'. And it wasn't unique just to England, it was across Europe.”⁵

Might it be possible that some of the individuals buried in the Ancient Burying Ground were themselves “two-sleep cycle” sleepers in the 17th and 18th centuries before

the Industrial Revolution began to fundamentally change the rhythms of daily life? Why is this worth contemplating? The sleeping patterns of individuals buried in the Ancient Burying Ground and their contemporaries may surprise modern day visitors to the burial ground because sleeping patterns in times past may have been centered around very different cycles of waking and sleeping than what one might believe to be typical or customary. So, as the moment for the clocks of many Americans to “fall back” nears again, it is worth pondering that what may begin as a visit to the Ancient Burying Ground to view historic burial sites, headstones, and monu-

ments might morph and evolve into a subsequent inspired immersive exploration into how our modern day lives differ from those who came before us and an appreciation of how lives have been and continue to be shaped and changed by calendars, clocks, and sleep no matter the date on the calendar currently being used.

In closing, for those readers who have suddenly found themselves curious about what the experience of temporarily transforming into a two-sleep cycle sleeper would be, let it be known, there are at least two individuals on Instagram, who have documented their experiences. The first source is Gareth Sothcott, who via his “garethinasia” Instagram account

President's Message

From page 3

I'd like to acknowledge Molly Gilmore for stepping up to become the Vice-President. We look forward to her energy and input for the next phase of our organization's growth.

Annual Fund

The Ancient Burying Ground Association ensures that the grave-stones, tablestones, markers, and memorials are constantly monitored. Each year the New England weather and other factors put stress on these delicate reminders of our past. We hope that you will consider donating to our 2026 Annual Fund to support our mission to conserve these stones and this historic place in the center of Hartford may be enjoyed and studied by future generations to study and appreciate.

CT Culture Lab

The ABGA is one of ten recipi-



The leg on the left has "walked" inwards from the top and base, creating a very unstable situation, which will be corrected when the Ellery stone is reassembled.

ents of a new competitive grant project funded by CT Humanities. This two-year program brings the Board

and the Director together to participate in multiple learning intensives, monthly coaching calls, and group networking opportunities.

We look forward to working with experts in order to serve our community better, including our followers throughout the country and the globe and the local folks who appreciate the solace and beauty of the ABG.

One of our first goals is to build the capacity of the Board to address long-term planning goals, including developing a Board Recruitment Plan.

Please use the code below to make a contribution that will help us reach our goals.



Calendars & Sleep Patterns

began documenting in late August 2026 what he referred to as his “medieval biphasic sleeping” experiment, taking on the challenge he set for himself of “sleeping like a medieval peasant for 30 days.” He documented each day in a short video shared on Instagram, which succinctly broadcast his early morning thoughts, his reflections about the experiment, and how he used the time when he was awake in the wee hours. The second source is the

“Medieval Slapdashery” Instagram account, which shares “Anna & Rachel’s Medieval Shenanigans.” Amongst the selection of shenanigans is another “sleeping like a medieval peasant for 30 days” experiment also shared via short videos. This particular experiment was apparently inspired by the discovery of a BBC article dated 9 January 2022 titled “The forgotten medieval habit of ‘two sleeps’” by Zaria Gorvett. The video discussing this

discovery of this article and how it led to a two-sleeps experiment, from what I could discern, reached an audience of 5.4 million viewers after it was posted in summer 2026. Their subsequent videos documented the sleep experiment and the concluding video had reached 115,000 viewers by the beginning of this September. All of this, to me, demonstrates a fresh modern-day interest in and an unabashed rekindled fascination with the two-sleeps methodology.



ANCIENT BURYING GROUND HARTFORD, CT ancientburyingground.com Fall 2026 Programs & Events



Find the Ancient Burying Ground on the new CT Haunted History Trail developed by CT Visit! Tours on the “Witchcraft Trials” are available for school groups, students, and visitors. Contact us at info@ancientburyingground.com or call 860-337-1640.



Witchcraft Trials in Colonial Hartford

Fri, October 23, Sat, October 24 & Thurs, October 29 | 6pm

Members: \$8; Non-Members: \$15

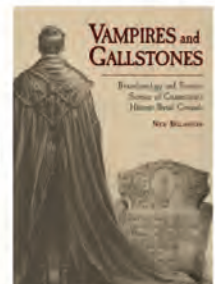
Follow a costumed interpreter and listen to the stories of the witchcraft trials that reached a crisis point in Hartford in the 1660s. Hear the stories, gossip, and intrigue about the people involved, such as the “First Lady” of Hartford, Susannah Hooker, Rev. Thomas Hooker’s wife.

Vampires and Gallstones: Bioarchaeology of Unexpected Discoveries

Beneath Connecticut’s Historic Cemeteries | Virtual Lecture

Wed, October 28 | 6pm | Members: Free; Non-Members: \$10

Dr. Nicholas F. Bellantoni, Connecticut State Archaeologist emeritus and UCONN professor, will discuss his latest book. He is often called to investigate human burials due to economic development projects, natural disasters, suspected crime scenes, and by request from families. Excavations uncovered a few surprises, including the burial of a suspected vampire and more.



Please register
for all
programs
online.



Portraits of Patriots Virtual Lecture

Thurs, November 12 | 6pm | Members: Free; Non-Members: \$10

Honor the patriots of the past for Veteran’s Day with author Damien Cregeau. Learn more about John Trumbull, his artistically-talented sister, Faith, and four fellow officers from CT in the Revolution.

VISIT The Ancient Burying Ground is free and open daily at 679 Main Street, Hartford, CT. Access **Self-Guided Tours** on the website >>



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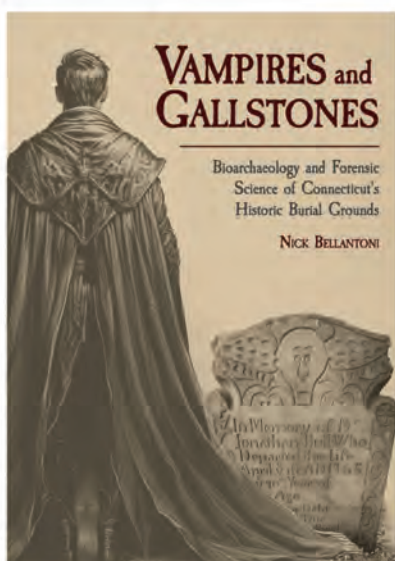
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Vampires and Gallstones: Bioarchaeology of Unexpected Discoveries Beneath Connecticut's Historic Cemeteries

Wed, October 28 | 6pm

Dr. Nicholas Bellantoni, CT State Archaeologist emeritus will tell the fascinating stories of excavations that uncovered a few surprises, including the burial of a suspected vampire and more.

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