



ANCIENT
BURYING
GROUND
ASSOCIATION

PASSAGES

Preserving A History Carved in Stone

Work to Begin on Restoration of Tablestones

The Ancient Burying Ground Association is pleased to announce that preparations are underway for a project that will focus on restoring several of the site's distinctive tabletop monuments.

These monuments, some of the most visually striking features in the burying ground, have experienced significant settling and shifting over time. Many have sunk unevenly into the ground, while others show misaligned legs or noticeable leaning. In some cases, this deterioration has created potential safety concerns for visitors and threatens the long-term stability of the stones themselves.

Under the proposal submitted by Atlas Preservation, led by conservation expert Jonathan Appell, the pro-



ABGA vice president Steve Morris and Jonathan Appell examine a tablestone in need of repair.

ject will address these issues through a combination of careful stabilization and, where necessary, full reconstruction. Each monument will be evalu-

ated individually to determine the most appropriate treatment. For those that are only slightly sunken, conservators may gently lift and re-level the structure, adding a stable base of crushed stone beneath. This delicate process requires precision, as the heavy stone tabletops—often weighing over 1,000 pounds—must be supported evenly to avoid damage.

More severely affected monuments will undergo complete disassembly. Their components will then be reset on newly prepared, compacted foundations designed to ensure long-term durability. This method, while more labor-intensive, provides the most reliable solution for stones that have significantly shifted or

Please turn to page 4

President's Message

As we close our fiscal year I am pleased to report that the Ancient Burying Ground Association (ABGA) has led a successful year of fundraising for our conservation projects and educational programs. Thanks to our supporters, our Annual Fund raised \$15,000 and our new membership program is growing. We appreciate your support!

Annual Meeting

The ABGA Annual Meeting and Lecture will be held on Thursday, June 25. We have partnered with



Ty Tryon

The Wadsworth and the Hartford Public Library/Hartford History Center for this program. All are wel-

come.

The evening will begin at 5:30pm with a tour of the newly re-opened Hartford History Center inside the Hartford Public Library at 500 Main Street, which has undergone renovations over the past few years. The Annual Meeting will follow at 6:00 pm.

At 6:30 pm will be the featured lecture presented by Erin Monroe, the Kriebel Curator of American Paintings and Sculpture. She will speak about The Wadsworth's latest exhibition, *Framing American*

Please turn to page 3

In Memoriam: Robert Lowell Hill (1931–2025)

The Ancient Burying Ground Association was saddened to learn of the passing of our former President, Robert Hill, on October 3, 2025, at the age of 94.

Bob was elected to the Board of Directors in 1998 and served the Association with distinction for 20 years. For 12 of those years—2005 through 2017—he led the ABGA as President, guiding the organization with steady vision and unwavering dedication.

During his tenure, Bob played a pivotal role in several important milestones. He was instrumental in the transfer of ownership of the White Tower Lot to the City of Hartford and in the comprehensive updating of the Association's bylaws. His presidency was marked by a strong commitment to keeping the Ancient Burying Ground relevant, and visible within the community.

Bob was devoted to the ABGA's education mission and fostered a number of notable programs. He created the Thomas Hooker High School Essay Contest, which inspired students from area schools to engage deeply with history through researching and writing a paper about an individual buried in the Ancient Burying Ground. He also oversaw a collaborative venture with the Presidents' College at the University of Hartford, where our Annual Lecture was held from 2014 to 2016. And he strongly supported the revival of the Summer Student Guide Program, which trained junior high school students to conduct tours of the Ancient Burying Ground—an initiative that fostered both historical knowledge and civic pride among young people. Bob was



also a devoted steward of the Thomas Hooker Award, established in 1987 to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to improving the quality of life in Greater Hartford.

Preservation of the Ancient Burying Ground gravestones was central to Bob's leadership. He worked tirelessly to secure funding for critical conservation efforts, including the crucial installation of an underground drainage system to protect fragile gravestones from standing water. Under his guidance, the brick terrace surrounding the statue of Samuel Stone was installed, enhancing both the beauty and accessibility of the site. Bob also worked hands-on in the burying ground, resetting and straightening stones, alongside board members and other volunteers.

Bob Hill and his wife Barbara moved to the Hartford area in 1998, where he served as corporate counsel for Aetna Life & Casualty Company. Even after retiring from Aetna, Bob continued practicing law, representing many clients on a largely pro bono basis. Bob also served in the U.S. Army, and continued for 29 years as a JAG officer in the Army Reserve, retiring with the rank of full Colonel.

Bob's civic engagement extended



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far beyond the ABGA, serving leading roles in numerous organizations.

Bob Hill will be remembered for his boundless energy, integrity, and devotion to service. His leadership strengthened the Ancient Burying Ground Association in enduring ways, and his legacy will continue to shape our work for years to come.

President's Message

From page 1

Democracy: Radical Roots. In conjunction with the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence (1776) and the 200th anniversary of the birth of Frederic Edwin Church (1826–1900), this exhibition untangles the Connecticut roots of American democracy and its legacy.

Conservation in 2026: Tablestones Project

Following last year's successful Adopt-A-Stone and Leaners Project, the ABGA is focusing on the tablestones in the Ancient Burying Ground for conservation this year. The Ancient Burying Ground has one of the largest concentrations of these monuments and memorials to "the influencers" of the colonial period. Recently we had our first meeting with renowned conservator Jonathan Appell of Atlas Preservation to discuss the project. It's always a pleasure to meet with Jonathan and to listen to his observations.

The list of tablestones that we have identified for repair include the one for Reverend Samuel Stone. Rev. Stone was among the 100 people, including women and children, who accompanied Rev. Thomas Hooker to establish the Puritan community in Hartford in 1636. Stone was responsible for the education of the congregants.

America 250

This year, the Ancient Burying Ground Association welcomes spring with many opportunities to become involved as a volunteer and to learn more about the Ancient Burying Ground's history through our tours. The programs will focus on the American Revolution and will commemorate the 250th anniversary of

the signing of the Declaration of Independence. View our upcoming programs on page 11.

Support from the Society of the Cincinnati in the State of Connecticut will provide for enhanced signage at the Main Street gate as well as QR code signs for veterans of the American Revolution. Founded in 1783 by officers of Connecticut's Continental Line, the Society of the Cincinnati preserves and promotes the legacy of our state's remarkable service in the American Revolution. We appreciate the longstanding support of the Society.

We have also received support from the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), Ruth Wyllys chapter. Ruth Wyllys was the wife of General Samuel Wyllys and represents the numerous family members who served in the American Revolution. The DAR will be supporting the costs of our upcoming Gravestone Cleaning & Learning workshops as well as additional QR code signs for the Wyllys Family Monument and for that for Emily Holcombe, the chapter's first regent. The DAR will also have a wreath laying for the Wyllys monument on Friday, July 3.

Birdies for Charity

Now is the time to donate to the ABGA ~ Birdies for Charity is back! Every donation includes a 15% bonus, thanks to the generosity of

Webster Bank and Aetna. That means your donation goes even further to support the ABGA'S mission to conserve and promote Hartford's historic burial ground. This year, all donations will go towards the Tablestones Project, conserving several large scale monuments and markers. (See page 10)

CT Culture Lab

We are proud to be accepted into the CT Culture Lab program from CT Humanities! We look forward to building capacity to serve our audiences better in the coming years. Thanks to the Greater Hartford Gives Foundation for collaboratively funding this program. The Ancient Burying Ground Association looks forward to increasing volunteer involvement and collaborating with the other participants.

Your Support

Each year the New England weather and other factors put stress on the gravestones, tablestones, markers, and memorials in the burying ground. Maintenance, repair, and conservation are an ongoing, never-ending process that requires constant evaluation, attention, and financial resources.

Please make a generous contribution to the Ancient Burying Ground Association to help us preserve these delicate artifacts of our early past so that they may be enjoyed by future generations.

Become a Member of the ABGA!

Members receive discounts on programs, newsletters by mail, and e-news. Members of the Ancient Burying Ground Association are also invited to the Annual Meeting held in June of each year to elect members of the Board and to review ABGA's accomplishments.

The Art of the Afterlife

The website for the Ancient Burying Ground Association has been updated to include Self-Guided Walking Tours. The previous brochure on the stonecarvers, the “Makers of the Markers” is now updated in a new document, “The Art of the Afterlife,” that visitors can access under VISIT. We’ve also been posting some of this content on social media. We are always pleasantly surprised by how many descendants will comment about their relationship to these ancestors. If you have family ancestry that connects with the Ancient Burying Ground, please like, comment, and share on our Facebook and Instagram page.

The new brochure features high resolution images from the “Carved in Stone” photo inventory project, also accessible on the ABGA website. The fine details of the stonecarver’s art can be seen in the work of carver John Hartshorne (1650-1737) who moved to Franklin, CT from Massachusetts about 1722.

His work included a blank face with a pair of what may look to be rabbit ears and he often carved four converging hearts in the shoulders of his stones. Hartshorne’s carving techniques influenced the later granite carvers of eastern Connecticut.

The gravestone for Samuel Wentworth is a favorite with visitors because of the Death’s Head. This imagery features a skeleton-like skull along with wings emerging out of both sides. It is believed to reflect the Puritans’ grim attitude toward human mortality, but also serves to remind the viewer that death comes to everyone, and may come at any time. As with many of the epitaphs in the Ancient Burying Ground, the symbolism is meant to encourage the viewer to pray, to attend sermons in the

Meetinghouse, and to conduct themselves in a Christian-like manner.



Captain Thomas Hosmer died on March 9, 1732 in his 57th year.



Samuel Wentworth died December 6, 1711.

Tablestone Restorations

From page 1

become unstable over time.

The project is expected to encompass between four and seven tabletop monuments, depending on the condition of each structure and findings during excavation. Full reconstructions require considerable time and care, which may limit the total number completed; however, if several monuments can be stabilized without full reconstruction, more can be

preserved within the project scope.

All conservation work will adhere to professional standards established by leading organizations in the field, including the National Park Service, the Association for Gravestone Studies, and the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works. Materials such as clean gravel, sand, and historically appropriate mortar will be used to ensure both structural soundness

and historical accuracy.

Once completed, the restoration will markedly improve both the safety and visual character of the site, ensuring that these remarkable monuments continue to tell their stories for generations to come. The ABGA looks forward to sharing updates as the project progresses and welcomes continued community interest in preserving Hartford’s oldest historic treasure.

What the Stones Reveal: The Legacy of Allan I. Ludwig

By Molly Gilmore

The recent death of Allan I. Ludwig marks the loss of a scholar whose work reshaped the understanding of early American burial grounds. His influential book, *Graven Images: New England Stonecarving and Its Symbols, 1650 - 1815* (1966), established gravestones as important cultural and historical artifacts rather than simple markers of death.

Before Ludwig's research, early New England gravestones were often viewed as antiquarian curiosities.

Ludwig demonstrated that they are rich visual documents. Their carvings—winged skulls, faces, cherubs, and urns—reflect changing religious beliefs, artistic traditions, and attitudes toward mortality in colonial America.

Through detailed analysis, Ludwig identified regional carving styles and linked many stones to specific artisans and workshops. He traced the evolution of imagery from the stark “death’s head” motifs of the 17th century to the more serene carvings of the 18th. This transition reflected a broader cultural shift from an emphasis on mortality and judgment toward remembrance and spiritual consolation.

The Ancient Burying Ground in Hartford contains many of the types of stones Ludwig studied. As one of the oldest historic burial grounds in the United States, it preserves a record of the city’s earliest generations. Among its markers are early brownstone slabs carved with winged skulls—faces whose hollow eyes and outstretched wings remain striking despite centuries of erosion—as well as later stones bearing gentler, more human features. Together, they form



a visual record of changing beliefs over time.

Ludwig's work provides a framework for interpreting these markers. Inscriptions, imagery, and stylistic differences can reveal patterns of belief, artistic practice, and community history. Even subtle variations in carving can point to individual artisans or regional traditions. Stones that might otherwise appear similar become distinct once viewed through this lens.

Graven Images also helped bring attention to the need for preservation. At a time when many burial grounds faced neglect, Ludwig's work underscored their importance as historical resources. That recognition continues to inform the work of organizations such as the Ancient Burying Ground Association, whose efforts to conserve, repair, and document gravestones help protect these fragile records.

The need for preservation remains urgent. Hartford's brownstone, while beautiful and workable for carvers, is especially vulnerable to weathering. Over time, inscriptions soften, edges blur, and once-clear imagery can fade beyond recognition. Without sustained care, the historical information contained in these stones can be permanently lost.

Allan Ludwig's scholarship made clear what is at stake. By demonstrating the depth of meaning contained in early gravestones, he helped establish them as essential records of American history. His work continues to guide historians, preservationists, and visitors seeking to understand the past.

The continued preservation of Hartford's Ancient Burying Ground ensures that these voices—and the history they embody—will remain visible for generations to come.

The Wadsworth Family and the Founders Monument

One of the most prominent markers in the Ancient Burying Ground is the Founders Monument. The monument is made of solid pink granite from Stony Creek, Connecticut, and rises high above the other gravestones with its prominent obelisk shape topped with a pyramid. The current monument is the second version, placed in 1986 by the Ancient Burying Ground Committee of the Society of the Descendants of the Founders of Hartford (SDFH) to commemorate Hartford's 350th anniversary.



The first Founders Monument was placed in 1837 through the efforts of Daniel Wadsworth and others. Daniel was the son and heir of Colonel Jeremiah Wadsworth, a master statesman and veteran of the American Revolution. The Wadsworth family in Hartford prospered through the connections of Jeremiah Wadsworth and his longstanding family history in Connecticut. Ancestor William Wadsworth is on the Founders Monument and relatives were also located in Middletown. Jeremiah was born in Hartford in 1743. His father was Rev. Daniel Wadsworth, the minister at First Church. His mother was Abigail Talcott, the daughter of Joseph Talcott, a governor for the colony of CT.

Jeremiah benefited from his family connections. When he was four his father died and he was sent to Middletown to be raised by his uncle, Matthew Talcott, and his wife Mary Russell. Matthew Talcott was involved in local government and the lucrative maritime trade, which included supplying plantations in the Caribbean with Connecticut goods in exchange for rum and sugar-cane. Jeremiah would have grown up with the knowledge of this trade and its implications with slavery. His mother, Abigail Talcott, had inherited an enslaved person whose name was Rose, from the estate of her father Joseph Talcott. During the American Revolution, Jeremiah relied on enslaved individuals and servants to work on his farms and most likely in his household. We know that Peleg Nott, an enslaved man, “drove a provi-

sions cart” for Jeremiah.

In 1767 Jeremiah married Mehitable Russell and out of five children, two survived to adulthood: Daniel and Catharine. By 1775, Jeremiah and his family were living in Hartford on his father's land. Jeremiah's wealth enabled him to accumulate land throughout the region. He extended his Hartford plot down to the water, where many wharves held the name of Wadsworth. During the Revolutionary War, he supplied American and French troops with food and other supplies, helping to earn Connecticut the name the

Provision State. Wadsworth and his wife entertained important dignitaries, including General George Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette. Following the American Revolution, Jeremiah represented Connecticut in the House of Representatives and established important infrastructure in Hartford, including the Hartford Bank.

Throughout his life Jeremiah suffered from unexplained health issues, and died in 1804 at the pinnacle of his career. In Jeremiah Wadsworth's will and probate inventory (available through Ancestry.com), his estate details the possessions that he accumulated over the years, including farms, land, shares in roads and banks, and lavish furnishings. The probate inventory lists furniture, carpets, books, and “200 large china plates.” In his will he ensured that his wife, Mehitable Russell, was taken care of, as well as his two sisters, Eunice and Elizabeth Wadsworth. He also ensured that his two children could continue to live in their dwellings that were built on Wadsworth land in Hartford.

This land is now the home of The Wadsworth, the museum that Daniel Wadsworth helped to establish on the grounds of his family estate. Daniel continued the legacy of his father and utilized his fortune to establish a myriad of projects to benefit the city of Hartford. Daniel was a founding member of the first Ancient Burying Ground Association and one of the first people to see the value of maintaining the Ancient Burying Ground.

It had suffered from severe neglect. Animals were allowed to graze there, a going practice in early days. It was not until the late 19th century that cemeteries became more park-like, encouraging people (especially the expanding workforce) to appreciate the serenity of the outdoors.

The Founders Monument can be considered one of dozens of plaques, memorials, and statues that adorn Main Street and the city. Following the American Revolution, new American citizens were proud of their heritage and wanted to legitimize their stakes as “founders” of the colonies. This was also a time when segregation dug in its heels. The founders never included the Indigenous population, whose knowledge, foodways, and alliances supported the colonists. Nor did the founders include the work of the enslaved and indentured servants whose labor supported Connecticut’s status as the “Provision State.”

The Founders Monument is based on the English colonial settlers who came to Hartford from present-day Cambridge, Massachusetts in 1636. It lists the names of the landowners of the town, who were primarily Anglo-Saxon men. The information was probably gathered from land records and is reflected in a map, located in the collections of the Connecticut Museum of Culture and History. The details indicate, “This map was arranged in 1838 from the old records” and was surveyed



Some details from the 1640 map show the location of the meeting house and the future site of the ABG.

and drawn by William S. Porter.

Among the 160 names listed on the Founders Monument, there are two women. One can find profiles of most of the individuals on the website for the SDFH. One of the women was the widow of John Chester, Dorothy Chester, a proprietor and landowner. She was also the sister of Reverend Thomas Hooker. The other woman was Mary Betts. She was a widow known as “the School Dame,” who owned land “by the courtesy of The Towne.” Although she was given the privilege of owning property, she was required to pur-

chase the land from Seth Grant.

Daniel Wadsworth also placed a monument for his father and the Wadsworth family in the Ancient Burying Ground. The monument features a large square base with marble inlays. At the top is a classical column that is broken or cut short, a symbol of Jeremiah’s untimely end. The side which commemorates Jeremiah simply states:

To the memory of
Jeremiah Wadsworth, Esq.
son of the
REV. DANIEL WADSWORTH &
MRS. ABIGAIL WADSWORTH.
He was born on the 12th of July AD 1743
& died on the 30th of April AD 1804

Another side commemorates his wife:

Beneath this stone lies the remains of
MRS. MEHITABLE WADSWORTH
relict of the late
JEREMIAH WADSWORTH, Esq
She was born November 19, 1734
and died March 26, 1817.

Today, many descendants get in touch with the ABGA because their ancestry searches lead them to Hartford and the Founders Monument. Many of the individuals listed on the monument do not have gravestones and this is the only testament to their lives. We hope that this illuminates some of the mystery surrounding the Founders Monument and why genealogists and descendants may end some of their searches with this memorial. We support “genealogy tourism” and encourage anyone with ties to Hartford, Connecticut to make a visit.

On the Hunt For Elizabeth (Reade) Winthrop's Grave

By *Kate Dimancescu*

March was an ideal time to search for the Hartford burial site of Elizabeth (Reade) Winthrop, the second wife of long-serving 17th century colonial Connecticut Governor John Winthrop, Jr. March is Women's History Month, which thus made the timing of learning about Elizabeth and her family an especially rewarding enterprise. I found myself appreciating what can come out of researching a prospective burial in Hartford's Ancient Burial Ground (ABG); the process of working on establishing whether or not Elizabeth was laid to rest in the ABG after her death in 1672 not only led to new insights into her life and her family tree but also to me discovering more about early colonial New England and 17th century England. This became another instance of curiosity about a possible ABG burial expanding to incorporate historical and

genealogical research avenues that I might not have followed otherwise.

Elizabeth Reade was born in England at a time when James I of England (who was also James VI of Scotland) still sat on the English throne and William Shakespeare was seeing out the last years of his life. When Elizabeth was a very young child, the colony of Virginia was still quite a new venture in North America and the Mayflower had not yet set sail on its now famous voyage. As Elizabeth grew up, she might have been able to envision that her life would be spent living far away across an ocean in a foreign land, raising a large family with her husband.

When Elizabeth Reade married John Winthrop, Jr. in 1635 and moved with him to the Massachusetts Bay Colony from England, she was not the first Mrs. Elizabeth Winthrop to do so. Just a few years earlier my then widowed maternal forebear Elizabeth (Fones) Winthrop

(she would later become Mrs.

Elizabeth (Fones) Winthrop Feake Hallett) sailed from England to New England with her young daughter in 1631. She was a widow at the time due to the unexpected death of her first husband, Henry Winthrop, who also happened to be a first cousin of hers, so during their brief marriage and up until she married her second husband Robert Feake, she had been known as Mrs. Elizabeth Winthrop. Her brother-in-law at this time was Henry's brother, John Winthrop, Jr., whose first wife was Elizabeth's sister Martha Fones; so in a rather intricate turn of events Elizabeth became, before Martha's untimely death in 1634, both sister and sister-in-law to Martha, and John Jr. briefly became her brother-in-law as well as a first cousin of hers and Martha's, too.

It was after the deaths of Martha (Fones) Winthrop and her infant that John Jr. returned to England

Please go to page 9



and eventually married his second wife, Elizabeth (Reade) Winthrop. What makes all of this genealogical information a bit more intricate is that my maternal forebear Elizabeth (Fones) Winthrop Feake Hallett and Elizabeth Reade both had sisters named Martha, who lived in present-day Ipswich, Massachusetts. It was swiftly becoming a very small genealogical world, after all.

Turning to the final resting place of Elizabeth (Reade) Winthrop, she died in Hartford in 1672. I expected to find that she was buried in the Ancient Burying Ground and her burial site is listed as the “First Burying Ground of Hartford.” This reference led me to learn that at some point after Reverend Thomas Hooker and his fellow English colonists traveled from present-day Cambridge, Massachusetts to establish Hartford, a burial ground was created in the vicinity of what is now the Old State House. This burial ground predated the Ancient

Burying Ground. The ABGA website records that “Anyone who died during the four years after the first English settlers arrived in Hartford in 1636 was likely buried near the first meetinghouse, built that same year, roughly where the Old State House stands today. That first burying place may have been located on a small hill on what now is the lawn east of the Old State House and the area to the northeast. What happened to the remains of those buried there and any markers that were erected is unknown.”

The breakthrough I had hoped for regarding Elizabeth’s burial came from Ruthie Brown, a consultant to the Ancient Burying Ground Association (ABGA). I learned from her about a publication titled *The descendants of James Stanclift of Middletown, Connecticut and allied families* by Sherry Smith Stancliff and Robert C. Stancliff. This book contained all of the information I had been actively seeking. The authors

write, “Before his death, James negotiated with the Winthrop family on a Tablestone for Elizabeth, the wife of John Winthrop Jr., Governor of Connecticut, the contract was completed many years later by his son, William.” Another passage conveyed this insightful information: “Both James Stanclift and wife Mary, seem to have been casualties of the influenza epidemic that swept through New England in 1712...James lies under a Table stone with an unusual tripod arrangement of legs... There is a good possibility that this stone was originally intended for Elizabeth Winthrop, the wife of the Governor of Connecticut. James Stanclift had been commissioned to carve a Tablestone for the wife of Governor John Winthrop Jr. in 1709. The following year James Stanclift wrote to the Winthrops and indicated that the stone was ready, but the Winthrops had not provided the information to be engraved upon the stone, nor had

Please go to page 10

The Roots of Democracy in Hartford

Ancient Burying Ground Association Annual Meeting & Lecture

Thursday, June 25 | 5:30pm - 7:30pm



Frederic Church (American, 1826-1900), *Hooker and Company Journeying through the Wilderness from Plymouth to Hartford, in 1636, 1846*. Oil on canvas. The Wadsworth, Museum Purchase, 1850.9.

The Ancient Burying Ground Association presents a lecture on democracy’s roots in Hartford. Erin Monroe, the Kriebel Curator of American Paintings and Sculpture, will speak about The Wadsworth’s latest exhibition, *Framing American Democracy: Radical Roots*. The museum’s founder, Daniel Wadsworth, was the heir of Col. Jeremiah Wadsworth, a statesman, business leader, and veteran of the American Revolution. Daniel placed a monument to his father and family in the Ancient Burying Ground. The burial ground also hosts tablestones in honor of Hartford’s colonial founders, including Rev. Thomas Hooker. Discover how Hooker and others laid the foundation for democracy in America. *The lecture will be preceded by a tour of the Hartford History Center followed by the Annual Meeting. Refreshments will be served.*

5:30pm: Tour the newly re-opened Hartford History Center

6:00pm: Ancient Burying Ground Association Annual Meeting

6:30pm: “The Roots of Democracy in Hartford” Lecture

Location: Hartford Public Library’s Downtown Library

Center for Contemporary Culture, 500 Main Street, Hartford, CT



Free; please register online:

ancientburyingground.com



THE WADSWORTH



If you require special accommodations to take part in this program, please call the (860) 874-2432 at least two weeks in advance.

Elizabeth Winthrop

From page 9

they decided whether it should have pillars or be enclosed in the sides. James asked for instructions, but the Winthrops could not determine the words they wished to have on the stone. Before the stone could be finished, James died. His son, William, would finally complete the contract, but not until 1718. When William finally took the stone for Elizabeth Winthrop to Hartford, his letters confirm that it was a newly cut stone. Before his death James and William both carved Gravestones. James carved the Tablestones and William carved many of the smaller upright stones. Because the stone is a unique design and done in the style used by James Stanclift, it may be that the stone William used for his father was



John Winthrop, Jr.

the special stone his father had shaped for Elizabeth Winthrop..."

In closing, although my search for the gravesite of Elizabeth (Reade) Winthrop did not reveal a surviving headstone or even a known gravesite location in the Ancient Burying Ground, my quest to find her late 17th century gravesite was a thor-

oughly worthwhile enterprise nonetheless for what I learned in the process. At the time of this article's completion, I find myself keenly anticipating Walter Woodward's upcoming virtual lecture on John Winthrop, Jr. and I am preparing by reading his book *Prospero's America* upon which the lecture shall be based. Photographer Ted Hendrickson was inspired by Woodward's book and created the online photographic exhibition titled "Looking for John Winthrop Jr." (the webpage is: tedhendrickson.com/portfolios/looking-for-john-winthrop-jr. Perhaps I may come away also inspired, as photographer Ted Hendrickson was, to carry on exploring and showcasing the 17th century in captivating ways with fresh eyes and renewed enthusiasm.



The ABGA is a participant in the Traveler's Championship Birdies for Charity program. Now through June 28 is a great time to make a donation. Every gift through Birdies receives a 15% bonus, thanks to Webster Bank and Aetna. All proceeds will support the Tablestones Project. Click on the QR code to donate or mail a check to: Travelers Championship, Attn: Birdies for Charity, 90 State House Square, 11th Floor, Hartford, CT 06103.

Join Us for Tours and Workshops

Everybody Welcome! Please register online
ancientburyingground.com



UPCOMING TOURS

Spring out of the Office Tours

Thurs, May 28 | Tues, June 2 | Thurs, June 11

1pm | \$8; free for Members

Discover Hartford's past in this oldest-surviving colonial site, founded in 1640. Commemorate America's 250th and hear stories of struggle and success in the pursuit of freedom and liberty.



CT Open House Day

Sat, June 13 | 11am | Free

Learn more about the people, places, and events that took place through the fascinating gravestones of hundreds of individuals in this historic site in downtown Hartford.

CT VISIT **OPEN HOUSE DAY** JUNE 13, 2026



American Revolution & Main Street

Fri, July 3 | 11am | Free

Learn about Hartford's history during the American Revolution. Begin in the Ancient Burying Ground and discover the real life stories from the people and families who lived and worked in Hartford. Across the street, walk to the site that held important meetings with General George Washington at the Wadsworth. Continue to Connecticut's Old State House to view outdoor exhibits on Rev. Thomas Hooker and the American Revolution.

VOLUNTEER

Gravestone Cleaning & Learning

Sat, May 16 & June 6 | 10am - 1pm | Free

Learn about the history of the Ancient Burying Ground, gravestone art and iconography, and how to conduct basic cleaning of gravestones. Training and supplies provided. *Co-sponsored with the Daughters of the American Revolution, Ruth Wyllys Chapter.*





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The Roots of Democracy in Hartford

Ancient Burying Ground Association Annual Meeting & Lecture



Church (American, 1826-1900). Hooker and Company Journeying through the Wilder-
Plymouth to Hartford, in 1636, 1846. Oil on canvas. The Wadsworth, Museum Purchase,

Thursday June 25 | 5:30 pm ~ 7:30 pm | (Details on page 9)