

PASSAGES

ANCIENT BURYING GROUND ASSOCIATION, INC.

"Passing Connecticut's Heritage from Generation to Generation"

Henry & Judith Zachs 2009 Thomas Hooker Honorees



2009 Thomas Hooker recipients Henry and Judith Zachs are shown above at the right of Hartford mayor Eddie Perez (5th from left) and ABGA board members (l to r) Maisie Russell, Deetsie Bradford, Curt Hickcox, Ray Nichols, (Mayor Perez), Shep Holcombe, (the Zachs), Bob Hill, Judy Wawro, Ty Tryon, Harmon Leete, and Anne Holcombe.

On Wednesday evening, October 14th, the Ancient Burying Ground Association honored Henry and Judy Zachs with the Thomas Hooker Award.

The Zachs have provided distinguished leadership and philanthropy to a multitude of institutions. While the organizations serving the Jewish community have a special place in their hearts, the Zachs have generously supported an exceedingly broad and varied list of educational and cultural institutions.

A licensed clinical social worker focusing on gerontology, Judy Zachs is in private practice and has also taught and worked in the field. A member of the adjunct faculty of the Social Work Department at Southern Connecticut State University, she was also employed as a social worker at Hartford Hospital in the Department of Psychiatry. She has volunteered her expertise and ideas through board service with the Mental Health Association, the Greater Hartford Jewish Federation, The Bushnell, and the National

Conference for Community and Justice. She is a Director emerita of the University of Connecticut Foundation and a member of the Dean's Advisory Committee of the UConn School of Social Work. The Zachs have given funds to support a PhD chair in Social Work at the University of Connecticut, making it the only public university in New England to offer a doctorate in social work.

Henry Zachs is known for his enterprise and innovation in telecommunications. He is currently

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New Board Members

William Magee, Jr.

Bill Magee is a 38-year resident of the Hartford area, where he moved after college to take a trainee position with The Hartford National Bank and Trust Co. (now Bank of America). He has spent substantially all of his business career in banking, specialty finance, and investing in the communications industry, with offices in CT and formerly in NYC.

Bill is married to Joyce and has 2 grown children, Andrew and Samantha.

Bill was a trustee of Renbrook School for 8 years where he chaired the building committee through a successful building and renovation effort before retiring from the board in 2001. His interests include education, health, the environment, and the arts. Bill was attracted to the ABGA because of its historical significance and its ability to provide a continuity bridge to future Hartford area residents. Bill says, "History is one of our best teachers."

The ABGA welcomes Bill as our new Treasurer.

Curtiss B. Hickox, Jr.

Curt Hickcox is a longtime resident of the Hartford area. He attended the Loomis School, Middlebury College and received a graduate degree from the University of Hartford. He spent his career in information technology, lastly with the NASDAQ Stock Market. Curt is a retired officer from the U. S. Army Reserve.

A special interest of his is history and genealogy. Curt's ancestor William Hickocks arrived in Farmington, Connecticut in 1640 and his ninth great-grandfather was Thomas Upson, a founder of Hartford.

Curt is married to Jan M. Hickcox; they have two children, Kitty and Curtiss III.

Curt brings years of experience assisting visitors to the ABG and answering questions, in support of his wife Jan, who served as ABGA's Executive Director.

Ancient Burying Ground Hours

The gates to the Ancient Burying Ground are open 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, and Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., from April 1 to November 30, conditions permitting. The Burying Ground is open also by appointment. Call (860) 228-1517 or the Hartford Guides at (860) 522-0855. For a guided group tour, call (860) 643-5652. There is no charge to visit the Ancient Burying Ground.



Ancient Burying Ground Association Executive Board Members

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Frederick W. Sawyer. . .Vice President
Anne Holcombe.Secretary
William Magee, Jr.Treasurer

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John Provencher
Douglas T. Putnam
Maisie Russell
Thomas Seymour
Ty Tryon
Judith Wawro
Walter W. Woodward
ABGA Representative
Ruth Shapleigh-Brown

Ex-Officio

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Governor, Founders of Hartford
Eddie Perez
Mayor, City of Hartford

Thank You Brian Goulet

Many thanks to retiring ABGA Treasurer Brian Goulet for his years filling both Treasurer and bookkeeper positions. We're glad to report that Brian is staying on as a regular board member. And we're pleased to welcome Joy Zahner as our new bookkeeper.

Website

The ABGA's website is www.theancientburyingground.org.

The site includes extensive information about the Ancient Burying Ground's history, about headstones and carvers, past Hooker Award winners, and an archive of old newsletters, among other items.

Halloween at the Ancient Burying Ground

This year we had a very active Halloween weekend, and favorable weather for tours, offered in conjunction with programs at the Old State House and the Wadsworth Atheneum.

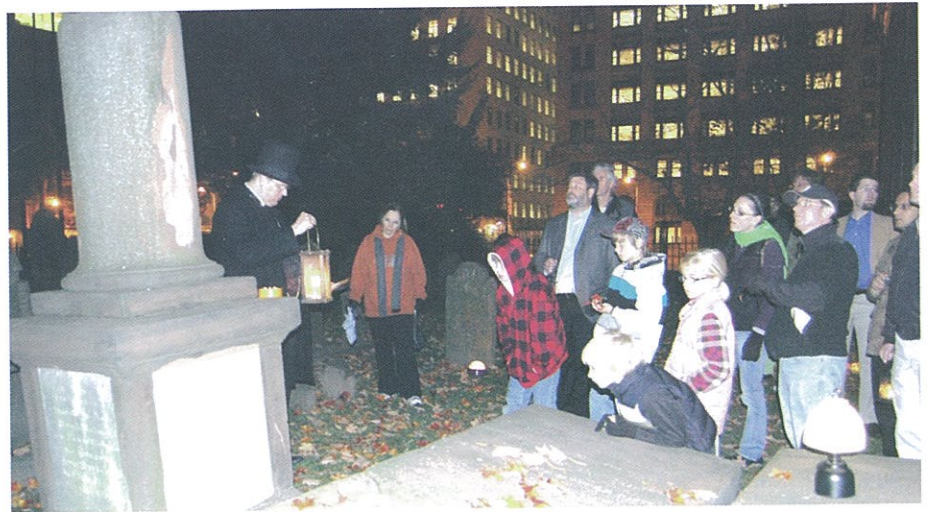
At the invitation of Rebecca Taber-Conover, Programming and Curriculum Manager at the Old State House (OSH), we developed a nighttime walk through the Ancient Burying Ground, to finish the October 30th evening programs at OSH. Ruthie Shapleigh-Brown was joined by ABGA Board members Jon Harden, Anne Holcombe, and Ty Tryon, as well as past board member Nancy Pexa, and OSH staffer Ron Bolin.

Also on hand were David and Valerie Carrien from Hartford, volunteering much appreciated assistance as guides and set-up help.

We each told stories of our favorite residents and illuminated carvings and inscriptions, with Nancy's reading from the Roderic Lawrence tomb sending chills up our spines:

"Behold my Friend as you pass by
As you are now, so once was I
As I am now, so you must be
Prepare for Death and follow me."

Ruthie laid out the basic route, supplied costume and lighting aids, and along with Jon Harden welcomed our visitors. Jon also spoke about *Courant* publisher Ebenezer Watson and Samuel Wyllys. Anne presented the story of the African-American monument, and Ruthie explained the history of its carving.



Ron Bolin tells the story of the Jeremiah Wadsworth monument.

(Andy Hart photo)

Based on history garnered by past ABGA Essay Contest winner Erin Feeney, Anne told the story of Capt. Israel Seymour, whose gravestone reveals his death by lightning-strike. Ruthie pointed out the David Gardiner monument, and then Nancy told stories and shared family secrets from the Lawrence and Steele families. Ty Tryon posed as a Mountaineer soldier and told about Loyalist Moses Dunbar, who was hanged as a traitor. Lastly, Ron Bolin of the Old State House staff

told the history of Jeremiah Wadsworth.

Saturday was Family Day at the Wadsworth Atheneum.

Ruthie hosted our guests from the Wadsworth from Noon to 2pm, in concert with a visit to hear organist Jason Charnesky at Center Church, all part of a Halloween program that was organized by Anne Butler Rice, Associate Museum Educator for Adult Audiences at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art. All together there were about 30 adults and 25 children who came. The weather held out and by the time Anne arrived with her troop of costumed visitors, the sun was out in full force, and the grave-stones were wonderfully lit for all to view. Some visitors stayed on until 3pm, walking with Ruthie asking questions about various carvers and connections.

Many thanks to the Old State House and the Wadsworth Atheneum for including us in their programs. We look forward to future collaborations.

— Ruthie Shapleigh-Brown



Ruthie Shapleigh-Brown talks about the carving of the African-American Memorial.

(Andy Hart photo)

ABGA Summer Student

The Ancient Burying Ground Association sponsored its Summer Student Tour Guides Program again in 2009. For the eight-week program, which ran from June 22 through August 14, Coordinator Andrea Ader interviewed 34 students and selected Khalil Harris-Abrams and Tiffany Mitchell, from the Hartford Magnet Middle School, and Benjamin Harlee and Shania Myers, from Classical Magnet School.

The program began with two weeks of instruction on the Ancient Burying Ground itself, the history and culture of Hartford, the specific skills of being a tour guide (voice projection, knowledge of the subject) and the general job skills necessary for the world of work (neat appearance, reliability, ability to adjust to changing circumstances). The students then started conducting daily weekday tours from noon to 2 p.m.

The group toured various historic and cultural sites including the



Andrea Ader (l) watches the summer guides clean tablestones. (l to r) Benjamin Harlee, Tiffany Mitchell, Shania Myers and Khalil Harris-Abrams.
(Ruth Shapleigh-Brown photo)

Butler-McCook House, Hale Homestead, Bushnell Park Carousel, Old State House, Museum of CT History, Capitol and Legislative Office Building, CT Historical Society Museum, the tall ship Half Moon, and the Wadsworth Atheneum. Study and work sessions were held in the basement of the Education Building, which Center Church generously made available. The church sexton also took the stu-

dents on a wonderful tour of the meetinghouse - from the basement to the top of the steeple to look down on the bell!

Ruth Shapleigh-Brown came and shared her expertise in gravestone cleaning, an activity the students enjoyed. Students also visited the Hartford Public Library and the CT State Library regularly to explore a wide variety of sources, including primary documents. Andrea instructed them in historical research and oversaw their writing individual papers on subjects related to the Ancient Burying Ground. These included:

- Sports in the time of Jeremiah Wadsworth, by Khalil Harris-Abrams
- Fashions of Emily Seymour Goodwin Holcombe, by Tiffany Mitchell
- Foods probably prepared by Dorothy Chester, by Shania Myers
- Weapons in the time of Lt. William Knox, by Benjamin Harlee

Shania was able to hold the actual inventory of Dorothy Chester from the late 1600s - very impressive for a sixth-grader.

The number of visitors given



Khalil, Tiffany, Shania and Benjamin give a tour of the Burying Ground to Hartford Mayor Eddie Perez.
(Andy Hart photo)

Tour Guides Program — 2009

sixth-grader.

The number of visitors given tours or provided with specific assistance totaled 374, representing 24 states and 12 foreign countries. Attendance was certainly "dampened" by the nearly non-stop rain in July. One whole section of the site was under several inches of water for some time because previous downpours had already saturated the ground, and the drainage there is poor. On many days there was standing water under several of the table stones and in the depressions around many other markers. [Resolution of the drainage issue is of primary concern as the ABGA continues its mission of caring for the gravestones and grounds.]



*Tiffany leads a tour at the Thomas Hooker tablestone.
(Ruth Shapleigh-Brown photo)*

The response from visitors was extremely positive, praising not only the guides' knowledge, but also their public speaking skills. A group of visiting tour guides from the Hale Homestead was particularly impressed. Mayor Perez and a surprising number of downtown workers (including a construction crew) stopped for tours and information.

— Adapted from the report by Coordinator Andrea Ader

Thank you to supporters of the Summer Program

For funding support, The ABGA thanks the William and Alice Mortensen Foundation, and the Travelers Foundation Community Action Awards Program.

For their ongoing support, warm thanks to Center Church staff and members.

And thanks for in-kind support, neighborly and caring, from the Servus Parking Company at the Financial Plaza Gargae.



*Mayor Perez with Khalil, Shania and Tiffany at the Founders Monument
(Ruth Shapleigh-Brown photo)*



*Benjamin Harlee and ABGA Chairman Shep Holcombe.
(Anne Holcombe photo)*

You might be able to help...

Looking forward to next year's program, Andrea Ader hopes to **expand our outreach** to local groups, such as senior groups and historical societies.

We also hope to **maximize media attention**.

As much as the students learned to project in their delivery, we are also looking for a good **portable amplification device** to overcome the downtown traffic noise.

Thomas Hooker Award



Henry and Judy Zachs receive the Richard Welling print of the Ancient Burying Ground, and congratulations from Mayor Perez and Judy Wawro.

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President of Zafa Towers and Message Center Management. He has served on the boards of many cultural and charitable organizations including The Bushnell, Connecticut Historical Society, Connecticut Institute for the Blind, Jewish Community Foundation, Wadsworth Atheneum, and Trinity College, where he received the highest alumni award. He also served as president of the Jewish Federation of Greater Hartford and Co-Chair of the Community Capital Campaign at the Federation.

Of the Zachs' activities to promote education, quality of life and preserve art and history, one of their efforts in particular aligns with the objectives of the Ancient Burying Ground Association. Seven years ago Henry Zachs became involved with the Association of Jewish Cemeteries. This group strives to ensure the proper and respectful maintenance of 28 Jewish burial places in our community. These cemeteries had been established by congregations that have since relocated to the suburbs or have since dissolved.

Henry Zachs first became involved in 2002, when he witnessed the desecration and vandalism at the Agudas Achim cemetery in Zion Hill in Hartford, where his grandparents are buried. Aside from being a trustee of the association, Henry makes weekly visits to all the cemeteries. Together, he and Judy have contributed major funding for the Association's restoration and maintenance efforts.

When Judy Wawro asked of their proudest achievement, the Zachs discussed their pleasure in seeing their children and grandchildren involved in philanthropy. Henry and Judy Zachs have encouraged this by establishing a charitable fund for each child to oversee upon graduation from high school, researching and selecting the recipients.

As part of their acceptance, Judy Zachs read her poem about the heroes who preserve our heritage.

Who Knows Where Heroes Come From

Who knows
where heroes come from —
what uncovers courage undiscovered?

Who knows
what brings forth
inner strength and greatness?

Who knows
where heroes come from?

He who devotes himself
to just and noble cause,

keeps honor safe, and peace,

appreciates
a past
that has made us worthy
and formidable,

he who inspires a future that upholds tradi-
tion—

he is a hero.

This Thomas Hooker Society
for years has preserved
the past—

so the future will not forget,

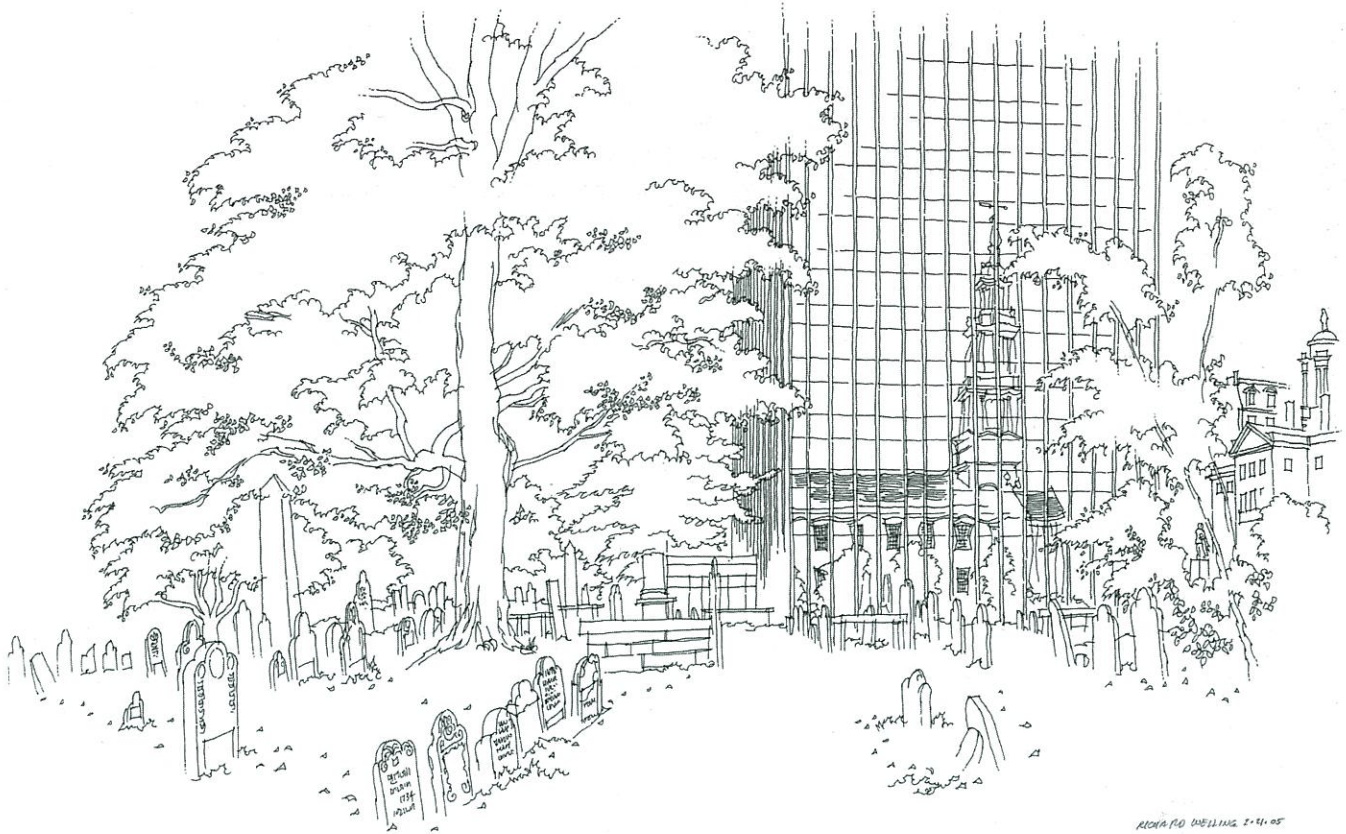
and in remembering
will know
where heroes come from —
keep them stepping to the fore.

— *Judith Zachs*

Following the awards presentation, Walter Woodward, State Historian of Connecticut and Assistant Professor of History at University of Connecticut, discussed the Hartford Witch Hunt of the 1660's. Professor Woodward discussed the Reformation and events in Europe that led to the Catholic Church's dictate to its clergy and leaders to seek out witches as devil-worshippers. Witch trials in Europe led to the horrific torture and execution of 100,000 men and women. In New England, witch trials and hysteria overcame Salem. But in Connecticut, Governor John Winthrop, Jr. demonstrated a Solomonic rule in ceasing executions and creating law that protected wrongly accused defendants.

— *John Avignone*

Richard Welling



Richard Welling died November 5, 2009 at age 83. He was a lifelong resident of the Hartford area, having graduated from Hall High in West Hartford in 1944. His pen and ink drawings are famous for chronicling not only Hartford, but also New York and Boston. Of particular note are his series of drawings made during the construction of the World Trade Center.

When the Thomas Hooker Awards were started in 1987, we asked Richard Welling to create a drawing

which would be appropriate. And here you see it: in the Gold Building, a reflection of Center Church, which Thomas Hooker founded; the graveyard in which Thomas Hooker is presumed buried; and (in the right background) the Old State House, where the first church was originally located, with the statue of Thomas Hooker in front of it!

We are most grateful to him for creating this special drawing for our Thomas Hooker Award recipients.



Ledyard Tablestone Straightened



The tablestone for John Ledyard was in hazardous position this past summer. The base stone was settling to the southwest corner, creating a serious tilt and shifting the weight off one or more legs. Gravestone conservator Jonathan Appell has raised and leveled the base, adding support. Look for a complete report in the Spring 2010 issue of *Passages*.
(Ty Tryon photos)

Bassett Headstone Slated for Repair



Brian Goulet cordons off the fragile Bassett stone with caution tape. The stone will be stabilized as part of our ongoing preservation work.



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