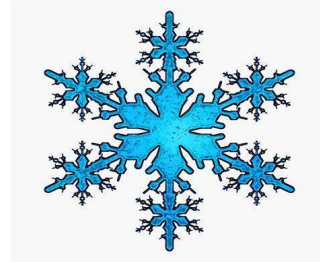


# NEWSLETTER

## January 2023

**Tax Deductible Donations  
may be sent to:**

**Friends of Middleborough  
Cemeteries, Inc  
P O Box 172  
Middleborough, MA 02346**



## WHO WE ARE

**The Friends of Middleborough Cemeteries Inc. is a 501(c)3 organization operated solely by Volunteers. No one is paid therefore we depend on donations to support the organization. You can donate by sending a check to Friends of Middleborough Cemeteries Inc, P.O. Box 172, Middleborough, MA 02346 or via PayPal.**

**Please feel free to forward this Newsletter to anyone you know who might be interested. We are always looking for new friends and volunteers. There are many opportunities available.**

## WHAT WE DO

The purposes of the corporation are as follows:

1. To preserve, maintain and restore the cemeteries located in Middleborough, Massachusetts including the graves, burial grounds, and burial plots,
2. To promote and improve awareness of the history and care of Middleborough cemeteries
3. To preserve and promote the memory of those persons interred within Middleborough, Massachusetts.

If anyone is interested in checking us out, we have monthly volunteer meetings (currently held on ZOOM) on the third Thursday at 7:00 PM. Please send an email to [clerk@friendsofmiddleboroughcemeteries.org](mailto:clerk@friendsofmiddleboroughcemeteries.org) if you would like to join us at the meetings and you will be sent a ZOOM invitation usually two days before the meeting.

**Note: Your Donations are 100% tax deductible**

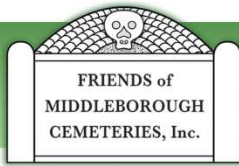
If you are picking up our Newsletters at one of the several locations in Middleborough and Lakeville, please consider signing up for an electronic version to help us defray the cost of printing. Send an email to: [clerk@friendsofmiddleboroughcemeteries.org](mailto:clerk@friendsofmiddleboroughcemeteries.org) with the word "Newsletter"

[www.FriendsofMiddleboroughCemeteries.org](http://www.FriendsofMiddleboroughCemeteries.org)    [www.FACEBOOK.COM/THEFoMC](http://www.FACEBOOK.COM/THEFoMC)

## **WHAT'S HAPPENING**

**The Friends of Middleborough Cemeteries is busily planning for the coming year. We will be hosting a Meet and Greet on Saturday, February 4<sup>th</sup> from 11 AM to 1 PM at the Middleborough Library. We will be sharing examples of the work we have done over the past years in the Town Entrusted cemeteries, cleaning the headstones, mowing the grass and removing trees in danger of falling and damaging more headstones. There are many ways in which people can donate time throughout the year. We have a Preservation Team that documents and cleans stones, a Veteran's Team that is building a database of veteran's buried in Middleborough for those doing genealogical family research and a Landscaping Team that keeps these cemeteries looking neat by mowing and clearing brush and leaves.**

**On March 25<sup>th</sup> we will again sponsor a '50's dance in the Oak Point Ballroom. Tickets are \$26.00 each and can be purchased at Muckey's Liquors, Oak Point or Rocky's Power Equipment.**



[www.FriendsofMiddleboroughCemeteries.org](http://www.FriendsofMiddleboroughCemeteries.org)  
[www.Facebook.com/theFoMC](https://www.Facebook.com/theFoMC)

The Friends of Middleborough Cemeteries, Inc. *presents...*

## The Legend Continues with *Joe Presley*

Join us for a night of **1950s** music  
and dancing,  
with *Joe Brown as Elvis Presley!*

**Saturday, March 25th, 2023**  
**6pm-10pm**

**Music begins at 7pm**  
**Oak Point Ballroom**

200 Oak Point Dr. Middleborough, MA 02346

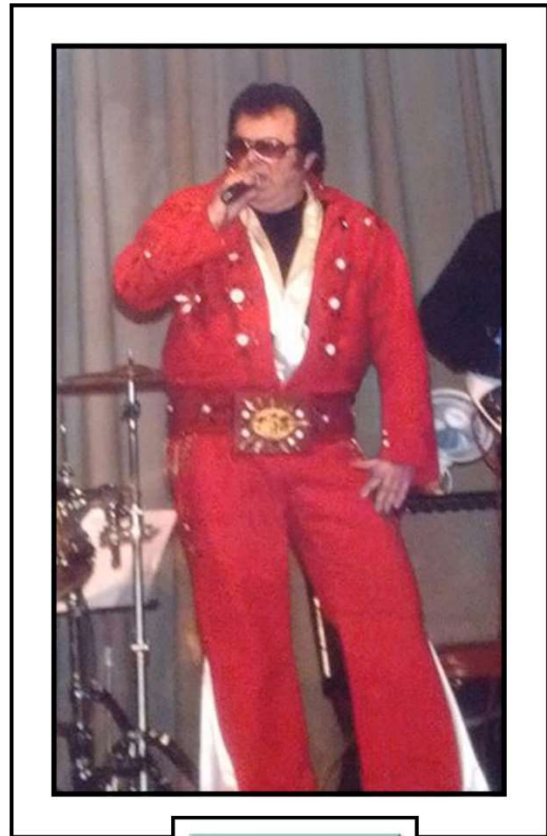
Tickets are **\$26**, cash only, at:

- **Oak Point:** Mary Dawson  
and Regina Moriarty
- **Muckey's Liquors**
- **Rocky's Power Equipment:**  
Sue - 508-807-1883

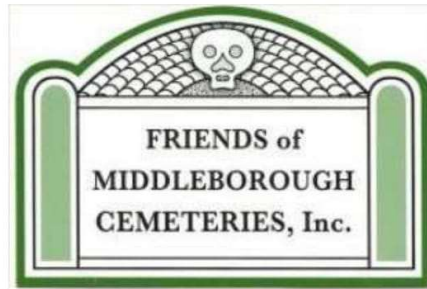
Not a BYOB event.  
Cash Bar services by:

*Muckey's*  
Liquors

**Snacks!**  
**Raffle Items!**  
**50/50!**



Proceeds from this fundraising event benefit the  
**Friends of Middleborough Cemeteries, Inc.**, a 501(c)(3) charity that provides assistance  
towards the restoration, maintenance, and beautification  
of all the cemeteries in Middleborough.



**Friends of Middleborough Cemeteries is hosting  
a Meet and Greet**

**Saturday, February 4, 2023 - 11 AM to 1 PM**

**Middleborough Library**

**Wilfred M. Silvia Library Trust Room**

**There are many opportunities for  
volunteering....Landscape Team, Preservation  
Team, Veteran's Team**

**Volunteer Meetings are held on Zoom the third  
Thursday of each month.**

**[www.friendsofmiddleboroughcemeteries.org](http://www.friendsofmiddleboroughcemeteries.org)**



## The Stories in the Stones - Abner Waterman

By Jeff Stevens - Friends of Middleborough Cemeteries

The Wood Cemetery is a small grouping of headstones right beside the new Cumberland Farm store on East Grove Street where Wood Street crosses. There are only five or six visible stones, almost all of which are in poor shape, with broken pieces and damages images and wording. Lying flat on the ground is a slate stone that tells us of a young man, Abner Waterman, who died at age twenty-two. Most of the stone is readable, and the carved image on the top is not badly damaged. There is little lichen on the stone, and it is possible that it has only recently been uncovered if it had fallen down years ago and been covered with leaves and dirt.

The stone reads :

In memory of  
Abner Waterman  
Son of Mr. Joshua Waterman  
& Mrs. Hannah his wife  
who died July 18, 1796, in his 22 year

Remember me as you pass by  
And see me lie alone  
Remember too, you must die  
So be prepared to lie near me.

The top of the stone has a willow tree branch arching over small side image of a person's head above a shield with 3 bells on it. Below the shield is a banner that says:

### THE LAST FEAR DEATH

We are fortunate to live in an area with great records, even back to colonial days. A check of the records in the Middleboro Clerk's office tells us that Abner was the first person buried in that cemetery. Research online with Ancestry tells us his parents were Joshua Waterman (whose headstone is next to Abner's) and Hannah Jones Waterman. The family appears to be connected to Robert Waterman who was born in England and who migrated to America and lived in Plymouth and later in Marshfield where he died in 1652.

That Abner was the first person buried in this graveyard may explain some of the wording of his stone. Colonial stones often had the person "talking" to the living. Abner tells the reader to "see me lie alone" because he was the first person buried there. Then he reminds the reader of his/her

ultimate end by saying, "Remember too, you must die. So be prepared to lie near me". Below the shield, the phrase THE LAST FEAR DEATH may also be a reminder of the death of all and the duty to live a good life to achieve heaven.

The image on the top of this stone is unusual. The willow is well known as a sign of sorrow and eternal life that overcomes death. Below the willow is a "soul effigy" in the form of a side view of a head. This may represent the soul being released by death. Below that are three bells that may be a "call to worship".

Our community is full of historic gravestones, each with a story to tell. A little research online or a trip to the Town Clerk can tell you of an early resident of our community. Please visit our historic burial grounds and "STOP AND CAST AN EYE", as the stones tell you their stories.



**Is Your Ancestor's Headstone Unreadable ? ? ?**

**Does it need Cleaning by a Professional ? ? ?**

**Look No Further !!**

**Friends of Middleborough Cemeteries Inc can help !**

**Many of the graveyards and cemeteries in Middleboro have historic headstones of ancestors of present-day citizens in them. Unfortunately, many of these historic stones are made unreadable and discolored by lichens, fungi, and other growths that cover the images on the headstones, causes damage to the stones and make it impossible to see the names and dates on the stones.**

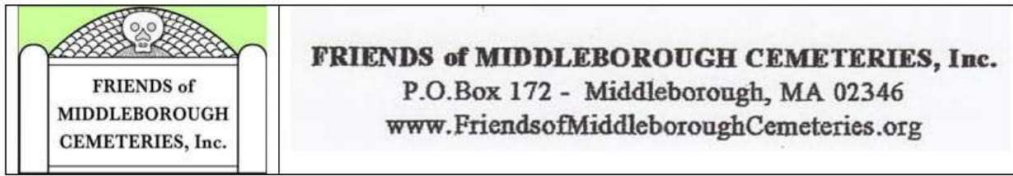


**The Friends of Middleborough Cemeteries members have been cleaning and straightening the headstones in our historic cemeteries for years, using techniques that do no damage to the stones or to the environment.**



**As a fund raiser for the Friends of Middleborough Cemeteries, we will clean and straighten up your families' gravestones, making them readable and much more attractive.**

**CONTACT: The FOMC at [clerk@friendsofmiddleboroughcemeteries.org](mailto:clerk@friendsofmiddleboroughcemeteries.org) for more information**



**Headstone Cleaning Fundraiser Project  
Information Form**

**Cemetery Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location in the Cemetery (Plot #):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of Ancestor on the Stone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Stone Material:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Requestor's Information (In case the Team has questions)**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Full Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

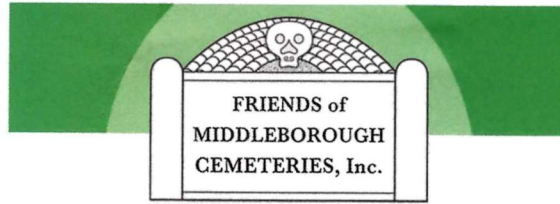
**Any other information you would like us to know**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to: Friends of Middleborough Cemeteries Inc**

**Please mail the checks to: Friends of Middleborough Cemeteries Inc**

**P O Box 172  
Middleborough, MA 02346**



FriendsofMiddleboroughCemeteries.org  
www.Facebook.com/TheFoMC



# WE NEED YOU!



## WHO WE ARE:

The FoMC is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Our purpose is to preserve, restore, and maintain the burial sites in Middleborough, Massachusetts. We aim to promote a greater awareness of the history and care of our local cemeteries, and preserve the memory of those interred within.

## WAYS YOU CAN HELP:

**JOIN** the group by attending meetings.

**VOLUNTEER** to help clear an overgrown cemetery or maintain a cleared burial ground.

**USE** your technology skills to help document cemetery data or update our website.

**PHOTOGRAPH** gravestones to create a lasting visual documentation for our database.

**LEARN** how to properly clean and care for our gravestones.

**HELP** with outreach and fundraising through writing news releases or by organizing events.

**MAKE** a tax-deductible monetary donation.

## WHO WE NEED:

**ANYONE!** We're looking for those *who would like to help us preserve our historic gravestones* before it's too late and they become unreadable! Graveyards are essentially outdoor museums, and must be managed as such.

We're looking for those *who like to do yardwork, wield a shovel, and get dirty!*

We're looking for those *who would like to honor our ancestors by doing research and preserving records.*

We're looking for those *who would like to get experience being on a board of directors.*

We're looking for younger folks *who would like to do community service.* It looks great on your resume!

**IN OTHER WORDS—WE NEED YOU!**