

July 2023

Tax Deductible Donations

may be sent to:

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



Remembering Our Middleborough Veterans

Several years ago, The Friends of Middleborough Cemeteries honored Civil War Veterans by documenting and cleaning the headstones of the 383 known veterans of the Civil War who are buried in Middleborough's 33 cemeteries. This year we are beginning the task of documenting and cleaning the headstones of the known veterans of all the other wars who lie in Middleborough cemeteries. Below are some before and after pictures of the work done for the Civil War Veterans. If you have a military veteran buried in Central Cemetery, please let us know their name, where their stone is and any other information you may have and we will make sure that it is cleaned first.



As always, we welcome anyone who would like to learn how we document and clean headstones. If you are interested, just email

clerk@friendsofmiddleboroughcemeteries.org and we will let you know when and where.

The Story In the Stones

by Jeff Stevens for the Friends of Middleborough Cemeteries

Civil War Vets Stand Out



As you drive towards Trucci's on Old Centre Street, you will go past the cemetery that was widely used by folks living in Middleboro during the last half of the 19th century. It is called Central Cemetery because it was located near the new "center" of town as compared to the Cemetery on the Green that is located in the colonial center of Middleboro (called the Green where the Town Meeting Hall, Congregational church, and the Sproat Tavern were found).

In the last year or so, some stones at the Central Cemetery have become much more noticeable. These are white marble stones that were widely used from about 1820 thru the early 1900s. Colonial stones were made of

gray slate and 20th century grave markers are usually granite. You may not have noticed the white stones before because most of them are gray or blackened by molds, fungus, and other discoloring substances, making them hard to read and unpleasant to look at. Why have some become gleaming white again? What do the clean white stones have in common?

Looking at these white stones you soon see a pattern. Almost all the clean ones are for men and many tell of the Civil War service of the person buried there. Often a metal post beside the stones shows the person was part of the Grand Army of the Republic. All these stones have been cleaned by the Friends of Middleborough Cemeteries. This volunteer group is cleaning and documenting all the Civil War veterans' stones they can find in all of Middleboro's cemeteries. Middleboro provided well over 400 Civil War soldiers who fought, and many returned to Middleboro, died later in life, and were buried in Central Cemetery. Central Cemetery was the most "active" cemetery in the 50 years following the Civil War, so many GAR vets are buried there.

The image with this article shows two stones, one cleaned and the other very discolored, showing how much these stones benefit from cleaning. The gleaming white stone is for Ephraim Simmons who served with Co. C. 4th Mass. Regiment. The other stone is for his widow, Valeria, who lived another 22 years after her husband's death in 1863. A little research on ancestry.com tells us that Ephraim was a farmer. It also tells us that he died in Louisiana "from disease". He enlisted in September, 1862, and he died seven months later. Many more Civil War soldiers died of disease, compared to battle injuries. Actually, Ephraim is really buried in the Chalmette National Historic Park in Chalmette La., so his marker is really a "cenotaph" commemorating his service but not marking his grave.

Volunteers are always welcome in the Friends' cleaning project. Visit their site at

www.friendsofmiddleboroughcemeteries.org

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:

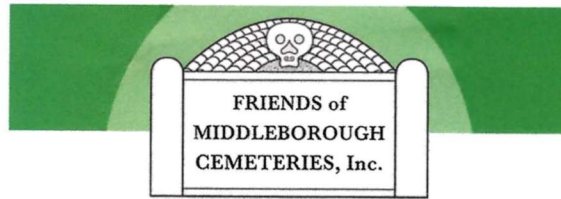
1. To preserve, maintain and restore the cemeteries located in Middleborough, Massachusetts including the graves, burial grounds, and burial plots.
2. To promote and improve awareness of the history and care of Middleborough cemeteries
3. To preserve and promote the memory of those persons interred within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

If you are 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 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

Visit our Facebook page at www.FACEBOOK.COM/THEFoMC



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!