

THE MOUNT AMWELL NEWS

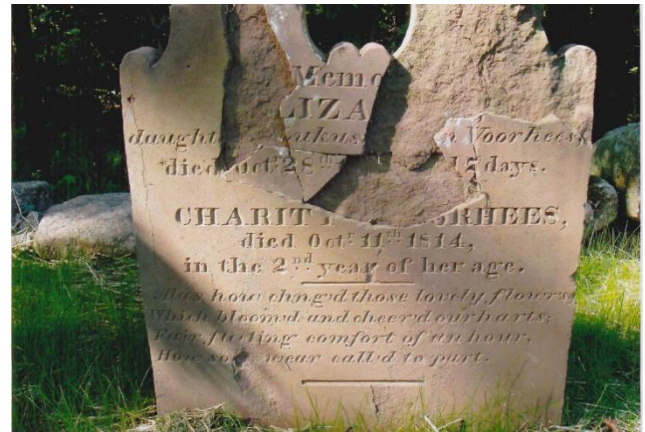
Saving the Graves of Elizabeth and Charity Voorhees

Valley. Preserving the graves of these two children buried over 200 years ago was important to Dave Voorhees and is undeniably important to all of us.



Figure 1: Dave Voorhees and his ancestor's gravestone

When the Mount Amwell Project assumed responsibility in 2016 to clear and maintain the Hay Press it was discovered that two graves were obstructed by a large partially fallen tree (see figure 3). Volunteer Dave Voorhees had already known that these two graves were family ancestors. They both were children that had died at a young age and in fact, they were his 3rd Great Grand Aunts. Their brother Abraham (1808-1878) is Dave's 3rd Great Grand Father. The children, Charity and Elizabeth, along with Abraham and two other brothers Elias and Lucas and sisters Catherine, Williampe, and Sara were born and raised by Lucas Voorhees (1787-1808) and Anna Emery (1789-1870) on 900 acres in Round



"In memory of Elizabeth, daughter of Lukas & Anna Voorhees, died Oct. 28th 1807, aged 7 days and Charity C. Voorhees died Oct. 11th 1814, in the second year of her age.

Alas how chang'd those lovely flowrs,
Which bloomed and cheered our harts;
Fair fleeting comfort of an hour
How soon we are called to part."



Figure 2: Restored with footstone



Figure 3: Fallen tree threatens graves

The task of removing the tree and restoring the gravestones facing Dave was monumental. The first step was removing the fallen tree was accomplished in 2016 by Chris Olenek, a volunteer and professional arborist. The remaining gigantic stump was dug out and removed in November 2017. In May of this year Dave together with Peter and Dylan Nace finished the restoration. They filled in the depression left by the stump removal, found several fragments of the head stone, reset it and the footstone, and planted grass over the grave as shown in figure 2.



Figure 4: Removing stump was a challenge



Figure 5: Peter and Dylan Nace



Figure 6: Headstone reset

Howell Graveyard Cleanup - October 12th



Figure 7: Cleanup crew left to right: Ray Simonds, Don Vandergrift, Paul Bergquist, Dave Reading, Joe Becker, Beverly Kirby-McDonough, and Ian Leith. Not shown is Mandy Leith (taking picture).

Cemetery tour event

A Cemetery Bus Tour jointly sponsored by the East Amwell Historical Society (EAHS) and the Mount Amwell Project, Inc. (MTAP) was held on June 2nd 2019. Approximately 25 ticket holders met at the East Amwell Historical society in Ringoes and travelled by bus to four cemeteries in southern Hunterdon County. At each cemetery a brief description of unique or important graves were presented. Brian Murphy spoke at the Ringoes Union Cemetery, 26 Boss Road, Jim Davidson spoke at the Amwell Ridge (Larison’s corner), 4 Old York Road, John Buckwalter and David Reading led the tour at Pleasant Ridge, 114 Old York Road, and John Allen led the tour at the Stout-Manners Cemetery (Wertsville Union). A wine and cheese reception was held at the EAHS following the tour.

Activities This Year

The Mount Amwell Project has been very active this year in fulfilling our mission preserving our cultural heritage. Our lawn care contractor Whole 9 Yards serviced four cemeteries and our volunteers completed work on the other two, including a major volunteer effort to clear the Howell Graveyard in Stockton. See table 1 for a log of all our 2019 activities.

Table 1: Activity Log

Date	Activity
April 8 th	Fixed footstones at Slacktown
April 27 th	Howell Cleanup
April 29 th	Fixed stones at Slacktown
May 11 th	Cleared Howell
May 18 th	Cleared Howell
May 20 th	Inspected Haypress restoration
May 23 rd	Whole 9 Yards double cut Swackhammer
May 25 th	Advisory Board Meeting
May 31 st	Whole 9 Yards double cut RBG
June 1 st	Applied weed control Swackhammer
June 2 nd	Cemetery bus tour East Amwell
June 4 th	Whole 9 Yards cut Slacktown
June 7 th	Whole 9 Yards cut Haypress
June 7 th	Whole 9 Yards applied weed control at Swackhammer
June 8 th	Cut ground cover at Howell
June 21 st	Cut grass Howell
June 22 nd	Cut logs Howell
June 28 th	Cut grass Woodschurch
June 29 th	Whole 9 Yards cut RBG
June 29 th	Grass cut RBG
July 3 rd	Cut grass Woodschurch
July 5 th	Cut logs Howell
July 5 th	Whole 9 Yards cut Swackhammer
Jul 6 th	Whole 9 Yards cut Slacktown
July 12 th	Filled dirt Slacktown
July 20 th	Moved, cut logs, string trimmed Howell
July 24 th	Cut logs RBG
July 25 th	Whole 9 Yards cut Swackhammer
July 25 th	Whole 9 Yards cut Haypress
Aug 5 th	Cleared tree from road Howell
Aug 6 th	Whole 9 Yards cut Slacktown
Aug 8 th	Whole 9 Yards cut Swackhammer
Aug 22 nd	Whole 9 Yards cut Swackhammer
Aug 24 th	Whole 9 Yards cut RBG
Aug 26 th	Cleared lower section RBG
Aug 31 st	Advisory Board Meeting
Sep 4 th	Cleared east section RBG
Sep 5 th	Whole 9 Yards cut Swackhammer
Sep 6 th	Whole 9 Yards cut Slacktown
Sep 15 th	Approved Eagle Scout project results
Sep 19 th	Whole 9 Yards cut Swackhammer
Sep 21 st	Howell cleared bottom section to 275'
Sep-26 th	Cut Howell
Sep-27 th	Whole 9 Yards cut Haypress
Sep-27 th	Whole 9 Yards cut RBG
Oct-2 nd	Whole 9 Yards cut Swackhammer
Oct-12 th	Volunteer clean-up Howell
Oct-17 th	Whole 9 Yards cut Swackhammer
Nov-2 nd	Annual Luncheon

Scout project

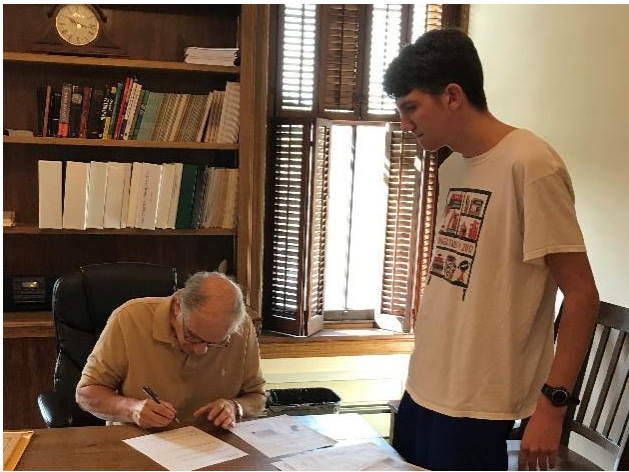


Figure 8: Dave Reading signs approval of Scout Drew Peterson's cemetery project results.

As previously reported in 2018 the Mount Amwell Project contacted Boy Scout Troop 168 in Three Bridges to discuss Scout projects related to historic cemeteries. We are happy to report that a project was suggested and approved for Eagle Scout candidate Drew Peterson. He would document the headstone inscriptions for two previously unrecorded cemeteries and provide that information to the Hunterdon County Historical Society's vertical cemetery file created for genealogical research. Drew documented over 500 graves in the Hillside section of the cemetery near the Readington Reformed Church and over 200 in the new section of the Pleasant Ridge cemetery in East Amwell Township. Drew's completed work was approved on September 19, 2019.

Advisory board

After fourteen years the Mount Amwell Project, Inc. is faced with a challenge common to many small non-profit start-ups - that is, survivability. The MTAP has established an advisory board to help guide us towards meeting that challenge.

Initial board members were Jefferson Barnes, Beverley Kirby-McDonough, Peter Kinsella, John Loughlin, and Marie Newell.

Annual Luncheon

The well attended 14th annual luncheon meeting held at the Frenchtown Inn on November 2nd was a great success. Mark Nonistiad, division head of Middlesex County Office of Arts and History presented an excellent lecture on the discovery of 1918 Influenza victims graves using Ground Penetrating Radar.



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