

Connecticut Gravestone Network

"Preserving and protecting Connecticut's old burial grounds and cemeteries"

Volume 9, No. 2

April 2003

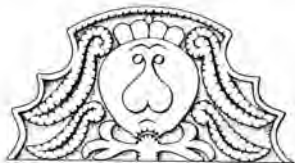
CGN 135 Wells, Manchester, Ct. 06040-6127

Exec. Dir. Ruth Shapleigh-Brown 860-643-5652

www.ctgravestones.com



CGN Symposium 2003 - Saturday April 26th



9 am. - 3 p.m.

**Wapping Community Church in South Windsor, CT.
and Old Wapping Cemetery, with its 17th & 18th c. stones.**

We are looking forward to a full day of sharing some of the best information available in Connecticut on old cemeteries. On board to date are the following presenters and displays.

The Friends of the State Office of Archeology (FOSA)

The Association for Gravestone Studies

Monument Conservative Collaborative

Cedar Hill, Hartford's Historic Rural Garden Cemetery

Old South Burying Ground, Hartford, CT

Roberta Halporn from the Thanatology Center in Brooklyn, NY with her display of books for sale.

Margaret Berg from Glastonbury, CT with rubbings from early in her career and discuss her special technique.

Graven Images will have T-shirts and a variety of novelty cemetery motif items for sale.

Friends of East Hartford's Center Cemetery, CT

Old North Burying Ground, Middlefield, CT.

Timothy Edwards Burying Ground, South Windsor, CT

Old & New Wapping Cemeteries of South Windsor, CT.

Program schedule times have had one change so please check the enclosed flyer.

The Joseph Peters mystery was a joint venture of CGN and FOSA in which John Spaulding will explain his genealogy search in response to Dr. Bellantoni's request to find an descendant, who would grant us permission to remove the remains of Dr. Joseph Peters, (who died of smallpox in 1761), from his grave on the old homestead in East Hampton, to a family cemetery in Hebron, CT. This presentation will also include the excavation, reburial and reunion with descendants from Ontario, Canada.

Video tour of Old Wapping Cemetery by Dick Lyman director of the New Wapping Cemetery in South Windsor will be available for viewing, as well as a database that he's been building for the New Wapping cemetery, that will provide statistics on the individuals interred there with all of the logistics needed to maintain present day records. He has also incorporated past records of personal and historic information, while providing pleasing visual graphics at the same time. Dick welcomes others to critique this program and I'm sure many of you will enjoy seeing his work.

Book sales and signings

David Cyr, author of **"Grave Rimes"** by Cap'n Bean is expecting to be with us for book signings. "Grave Rimes" sells for \$12.95 and the author has graciously offered CGN a \$3.00 contribution on each copy sold.

Blaikie Hines, author of **"Civil War Volunteer Sons of Connecticut"** selling \$34.95, will also be available for perhaps a short lunchtime presentation.

WE need each of you to help spread the word. Good attendance is important. Please post the enclosed flyer locally or through a group or mailing list. We still have some space for local Historical Societies or Cemetery Associations to showcase their history. Simple table display and someone to answer questions during lunch

break is all that is needed. Tables are 8 feet long and can be shared by two groups for a \$5.00 registration fee each. Let Ruthie know ASAP.

Killingworth Historic Note

Killingworth has many very interesting characters and lots of good old history, to which evidence can easily be found in their cemeteries. As an example, the grave of Mr. Hugh Lofting, the author of "Dr. Dolittle". Did you know that he was a Killingworth residence? When you reach the far corner of the cemetery where Mr. and



Mrs. Lofting are buried, you will see a box tomb, and of course assume that it is a memorial for the author of such a time-honored piece of work. But alas – it is for his wife. No, it is not a shared tomb, with both of their names written on the cover, it is only for his wife. His is a small marker close by.

Killingworth Cemetery Work



**Day
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The Cold and Courageous

Last November 3rd we had a Cemetery Tour in Suffield. Dot Holcomb planned a great day for us, but just couldn't do anything about the temperature. We began our activities at the Suffield First Congrega-

tional Church where our speaker, Anita Wardell, gave us a good background talk on the church's history. Then we were off to view stones of particular interest and discuss the carvers found here from the Bat Carver to Ezra Stebbins. We had a small group of about eight or ten, and we were pretty cold by the time we finished. After a break at the local donut shop to warm up, we were on to the West Suffield Cemetery. West Suffield Cemetery, still an active cemetery, also has a lovely collection of 17th century sandstones. Local historian Marge Phelon told us about the history of the town and the beginnings of the cemetery, and stories of some of the folks buried there. Marge is also the Sheldon Family Historian and can share many tales about the early days of the Suffield area. We thank all for their interest and stamina to get through the afternoon.

Welcome New Member

Cheryl LeBeau

A new CGN member, Cheryl LeBeau, who came to our Suffield Tour, has quickly become a helpful member. Cheryl is working on her

BA in New England Folklore at Eastern College, while, at the same time, working at the Dean's office and at the college radio station as a Rock n' Roll DJ. She has put a public announcement on the air regarding our Symposium and helped to get the word out around campus. We will be hearing more from Cheryl as she is working this summer on preserving records and tapes that were created by one of Connecticut's famous folklore authors, David Phillips (Ruthie did her first Positively Connecticut spot with Diane Smith at Norwichtown Cemetery with Dave Phillips, a year or so before he passed away). With enthusiasts like Cheryl, his work will continue to be used throughout the state and help preserve these historic memories of times past.

For those of you that are fans of New England mysteries and folklore, you might want to check out Cheryl's web site on The New England Anomaly at

www.geocities.com/ne_anomaly. Cheryl not only points out what's strange about Connecticut's topography and past residents, but also questions how and why these stories originated.

Photo below:

CGN Suffield Cemetery Tour November 3, 2002





Lebanon CGN Exhibit

Our March 9th meeting at Lebanon's Historical Museum and Visitor's Center was a most pleasant experience. The museum staff did a fabulous job setting up the exhibit and putting together informative and educational displays. Joining us was member John Davis from Holbrook,

MA, who is caring for two family cemeteries in the Griswold area.



John and his family have also taken an interest in replicating the weathered stones; using new bluestone material, transferring old design in a stencil like format, and then using a modern sandblasting air chisel technique to cut the new stone.

John brought material with him and we showed a video of his work.

David Oat was surprised to see two of his early works of art, plaster cast

replicas of two Hartshorn lunettes, displayed on an upper shelf in the museum. Another pleasing highlight occurred toward the end of the afternoon when a local couple joined us, and brought their family genealogy with them to share. They were Oliver and Lucille Manning, descendants of the famous Manning family of stone carvers, from the Windham/Scotland area. We were very pleased to have them come and visit, and Ruthie enjoyed checking through the genealogy with them and seeing all of the references to

Josiah's work. All who attended enjoyed the social time and the prize-winning exhibits housed in the Lebanon Historical Society Museum & Visitors Center

The CGN exhibit will be on display until the beginning of June, so do go and visit them. Please see Calendar section for hours.

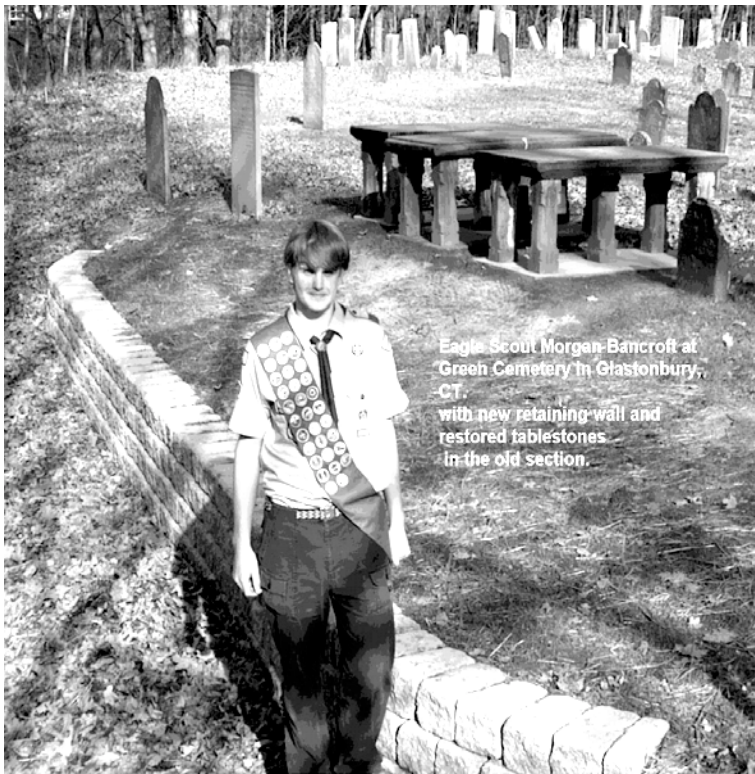
Glastonbury Rubbing Exhibit



Margaret Berg is going on the road! Well not really – but her rubbing exhibit in Glastonbury at the Welles Turner Library, as part of the “Books Sandwiched In” Friends of the Library series, was a huge success. The highlight of the program was on Wednesday March 19th, when Laurel Gable's slide presentation brought in an audience of about 80 people. Laurel has been an AGS researcher for many years and authored several books on the subject of New England Gravestone carvers. Margaret's works are now on display at the Unitarian Meeting House, 50 Bloomfield Ave., (just off of Albany Ave.) in West Hartford, for the month of April.



See Margaret's work at the Symposium April 26th.



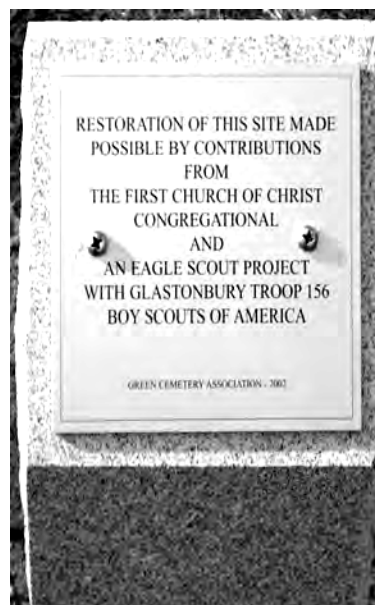
Eagle Scout Project Benefits Green Cemetery

Sent us by David Motycha, Caretaker of Green Cemetery

The Green Cemetery Association is continually trying to maintain and preserve the rich heritage of the Green Cemetery. In the spring of 2002, Morgan Bancroft, of Glastonbury Troop 156 BSA offered to do some work in the cemetery as an Eagle Scout Project. The oldest area in the cemetery has been steadily deteriorating, with erosion of the bank and encroachment of weeds and brush on the monuments at the west (Main Street) end. The gravestones of Glastonbury's first minister and his wives, located in this area, were in dire need of refurbishment. The Association proposed a project, agreeable to Morgan, to clear the area at the west end of the cemetery and build a retaining wall to prevent further erosion of the bank. In addition, they approached the First Church of Christ Congregational to share, with the Green Cemetery, the cost of the wall and complete refurbishment of the three tablestones of Rev. Timothy Stevens and two of his three wives,

Eunice and Alice. Over the summer, Morgan, with help from his troop, cleared the area and constructed the retaining wall. Green Cemetery regraded and seeded the area so that it can now be included in the regular mowing program. The tablestone bases and support legs were recon-

structed from reinforced concrete, colored to match the brownstone. The three Tablestones were cleaned and "consolidated" to extend their lives. "Consolidation" is a process of applying a material that bonds with the sandstone and "restores" its original strength. At the completion of the project a marker, with a plaque donated by Quality Nameplate Inc., was installed to commemorate the accomplishments.



Salem Cemeteries Need Help

Someone in Salem has been working very hard for the last few years to make a difference. Mr. Ray Snarkski has been caring for Salem's cemeteries by clearing the brush, mowing, and repairing stones when possible. CGN would like to acknowledge his efforts, and welcomes him as a new member. Because of the topography, many of these cemeteries, like the one shown, are difficult to access and not easy to maintain. Ray has also worked with the town to have the cemeteries marked with signs. Ray keeps several photo albums at his place of business, on Rt. 354, that he is most willing to share with anyone interested. The 1934 state Hale listing shows 31 cemeteries for the town of Salem. While Ray hasn't worked in all of them, he probably knows where each and every one is located – maybe even some we that were overlooked in 1934. A few years ago a local couple did an up to date inventory of some of the cemeteries and a copy of their findings is in Ray's collection. If any one out there has any questions or could make some time available to assist Ray in his endeavors to save these sites you can contact him at 860-859-0585.





**COATED STONE
IN THOMPSON, CT**
By BOB KLISIEWICZ

It is the general belief that coating a stone with some kind of protective material as a measure of preservation is self-defeating. Although the sealant is meant to prevent further erosion or flaking of the stone, the opinion seems to be that a coating will so tightly seal the stone as to prevent the normal evaporation of moisture. The moisture will still attempt to leave the stone in it's normal fashion, and will collect under the seal, near the surface and eventually causes more extensive damage to the stone than would otherwise occur if the stone was left in it's natural state. Although this seems to be the general opinion (including mine), there does appear to be very little written documentation of the actual and observed effect of such sealers on gravestones. At least one example now presents itself for study. I frequently wander through the West Thompson (CT) Cemetery (also know as Mechanicsville Cemetery) and in the spring of 2002 noticed a double stone that, all of a sudden, was standing out in

appearance from it's neighbors. A closer look showed that the face of the stone had been freshly covered with a clear coating, similar to polyurethane, giving the stone a glossy, chocolate colored appearance (see photo). I must admit that the stone looked great, particularly in contrast to its weather-beaten companions, but I was also concerned about the long-term damage that might be the result of this unfortunate action. I attempted to contact the cemetery caretaker to assure myself that this was not just the first of a number of stones to be so "preserved", but contacting a part time

employee in a small town is not as easy as it

would appear.

The Town Administrator's office provided me with his name

and telephone number but a call proved that the number was not now in service. A trip back to the town hall informed me that the clerks had no record of his address (only that they knew that he lived in town). Their only information was his telephone number (a confirmation of the number assured me that I did call the correct number), and his name does not show up in the local telephone book.

As it turned out, during the spring and summer, none of the other stones ended up with similar coatings, so that one incident, more than likely, must have been an isolated attempt by a family member to preserve an ancestral stone.

I made a point to check, and photograph, the stone a few times over the

hot dry summer and through the relatively normal fall season, and, so far, it appears that the sealant is holding up pretty well, with no observable cracks in the seal, nor any blisters forming. The big test could come with the winter, when whatever moisture trapped inside the stone goes through the normal cycle of alternate freezing and thawing. I will report back on the condition of this stone in the spring.

***Below Photo is of Stone in
Thompson Cem***



**OLD SOUTH BURYING GRD-
MAPLE AVE.
HARTFORD, CT**

**Hartford's Second Burial Ground,
1773 – 1870's - City owned 1801**

This is a progress report, regarding work done to investigate the unmarked burial situation at Old South Burying Ground. by Bryon Benton.

Excavation of abnormalities found by Fuss & O'Neil's radar-penetrating survey yielded only one site of actual evidence. Connecticut State Archeologist Dr. Nicholas Bellantoni declared that the four parallel rectangles, which showed dirt colorations and staining, found in the northeast

corner, were definitely burials. Research since shows that this was probably the Benton family burial place, which was cited in family history books as behind their farmhouse in the 1780's. If that is so, there are then about 11 unmarked burials in total that should be in this area. Plans are underway to appropriately mark the site. The discovery of a Seymour Trust Fund gave our committee hope of obtaining a research grant since there are many Seymour graves in the cemetery and Thomas Y. Seymour sold the land itself to the City in 1800. Research to date has also provided us with information that the First Mayor of Hartford 1784 -1812, Thomas Seymour (d. 1829), is buried there, along with his wife Mary Ledyard Seymour, the sister to the famous Col. Ledyard who fought in the Battle of Groton Heights during the Revolutionary war, when New London was burned by British Troops under the command of Benedict Arnold.

We are awaiting approval of our application and expect to hear from the Fund in June. We hope to include the provision for an appropriate iron style fence to be replicated and erected, to replace the one that the city removed a few years back, when the new streetscape plan for the Avenue is drawn up. We are planning to have a public event in June and will be working with the city in May on a cemetery clean up project. Plans are in the works with Williams, Benj and Zito Monuments to help us remount the fallen sections of two pedestal monuments in the cemetery, one being that of Rev. Flint. Our committee consists of Paul Shipman, Sue Lang, Byron Benton and Ruth Brown and Janet Wallace, is our South Church representative.

Anyone that would like more information contact Ruth Brown at ctgravelady@cox.net or 860-643-5652

Calendar

OF COMING EVENTS

CGN Exhibit at Lebanon Historical Society Museum & Visitors Center

The CGN Gravestone exhibit at the new Lebanon Historical Society's Museum will be on display until the 1st week in June.

Lebanon Historical Society Museum
& Visitors Center 856 Trumbull
Highway (Rt. 87) Lebanon, CT
06249

Phone: (860) 642-6579 E-mail: lebanon.hist.soc@snet.net

Hours: Wednesdays, 9 to 1; Saturdays, 1 to 5; and by appointment
Located across from the historic Lebanon Green, just north of the Intersection of Routes 87 and 207.

Gravestone Workshop at Wequetequock Burying Ground Saturday, May 3, 2003

Rain Date: May 4th, 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM, Palmer Neck Road, Stonington, CT

(Route 1, Stonington to Greenhaven Rd., 1st Right off Greenhaven onto Palmer Neck) sponsored by the Wequetequock Burying Ground Association. Coffee and donuts served in the morning. Bring a bag lunch. Any amount of time donated will be appreciated.

Cleaning, straightening, mending, and setting applicable gravestones and yard cleanup. Training and guidance will be given to those who need it. Tools will be provided.

For more info contact Pres. Sue Hart at SueEdHart@aol.com

Saturday Workshop Killingworth, Ct Lane Cemetery April 19 10 am to 4 pm

"The Killingworth Historical Society will sponsor a program on cemetery restoration on Saturday, April 19th at the Lovers Lane Cemetery. This little cemetery has many medium sized marble tablet stones that are in need of some help. Ruth Brown of the Connecticut Gravestone Network will demonstrate how to properly clean gravestones and preserve our early burying grounds. The Society welcomes all who are interested in helping with this community service project to meet at the cemetery on Lovers Lane at 10:00 a.m.

For additional information, please call 860-663-1308.

Directions:

From Route 81 North - go approximately one mile past the intersection of Route 148 (stop light). As you come through the S-curve and Lover's Lane is on the right. Go approximately ½ mile and cemetery is on left.

From Route 81 South - after the rotary, go approximately two miles. Lover's Lane will be on the left. Go ½ mile and cemetery will be on your left.

CGN Symposium

April 26 – 9am – 3pm Wapping Community Church South Windsor, Ct.

The Wapping Community Church is a perfect setting, complete with a large community room, side rooms for presentations, easy parking and cemetery on site. To date, the presentations scheduled will be, Visit to Cedar Hill Cemetery - Hartford's Historic Rural Cemetery with sculptures and history that all will find interesting.

The Joseph Peters Grave Investigation - John Spaulding has documented and will do a power point presentation on one of several 2002 projects that CGN worked on with the state archeologist office and the friends group. Dr. Peters died of smallpox in 1761, his remains are buried on the family homestead in East Hampton. Before his remains could be moved to a family plot two towns away, John first did a genealogy search to obtain descendants permission to do so. Come see the entire story of the search, the excavation, stone repair and family from Canada that came for the reburial.

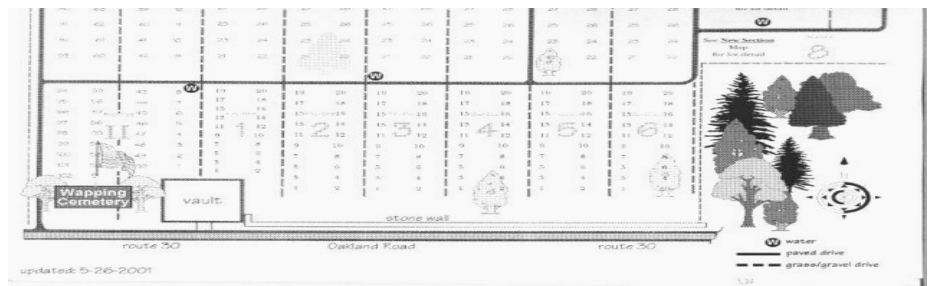
Old Stone Repair Irving Slavid from Monument Conservators Collaborative will do a presentation on old stone repair with a special focus on sandstone properties and problems.

Learning through the use of Rubbings will be discussed by AGS rubbing expert and New York's Thanatology Research Center Director Roberta Halporn.

Basic Conservation and an Introduction to some Connecticut Carvers by Ruth Shapleigh-Brown.

In addition to the presentations Margaret Berg will be displaying some of her rubbings and be available to demonstrate and discuss her particular technique. Margaret uses a silk span paper and pastel crayons which was quite unique back in the early 80's when she did most of her rubbings.

The Old Wapping Cemetery is located next to the church for self guided touring as well as a video tour arranged by Richard Lyman who is director of the New Wapping Cemetery. The New Wapping Cemetery is located just a 1/4 mile up from the church. Richard has been working very hard the last couple of years on a *computer database that provides a complete, efficient inventory record of New Wapping Cemetery's history, grave locations and families, all in one program.* Mr. Lyman has also added some very pleasing with entertaining graphics to keep the data intriguing and interesting. Richard



would love to have genealogists and cemeterians alike critique his program and share their thoughts. Lunch will be made available for a small charge courtesy of the church members.

Table registration is \$10 for displays and \$15 if selling items payable by April 18th, 2002.

To register or make inquiries please contact Ruth Brown, address and phone on front page. Admission will be \$4 for dues paying members and \$6 for others, payable at the door.

May 10 - Saturday – 10 am to 3 pm Annual Activity Day



Center Cemetery, East Hartford, CT

Sponsored by the Friends of Center Cemetery, their annual spring Activity Day happening at the cemetery located on Main St. East Hartford, CT. Volunteers from the Friends group will be there to greet you. Join us for a self-guided tour of our historic characters and gravestones, come to learn about the carvers, or

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lend a helping hand and work with us to straighten and repair stones that need attention.

We welcome anyone to come and learn with us. We especially appreciate teachers, who are looking for new material, to come and explore our outdoor classroom with us. We would be happy to make arrangements to work with the local school system on programs. From Interstate 84 west from Hartford take Connecticut Blvd. exit right after the Founders Bridge (stay in far right lane going over the bridge), follow Conn. Blvd. to end and turn left and you will pass Cemetery on your right, take next right into Walgreen's Drugstore. Park behind Walgreen's and walk around to the front gate.

For more information call Ruth

Brown 860-643-5652 or contact her at ctgravelady@cox.net or call Doris Suessman 860-568-6178

May 18th - Sunday 12:30pm - 3pm Carver Tour and Social Tolland South Cemetery Tolland, Ct.

Join us for a social gathering and exploring at Tolland South Cemetery.

We'll have the mirrors and snacks; you bring your camera, beverage, a friend, and an interest in carvers.

South Cemetery has a nice collection of sandstones and schist with a good carver variety. Here you will find Ezra Stebbins, Aaron Haskins and Manning examples (who is who) plus several by the Bucklands:

Most are attributed to William, but just how many were Peter's? Other stones are by Loomis, and earlier carvers like Hovey, Collins and let's not forget one by the Tolland Ghost carver. Who can find that one? There is a large (6'+) schist stone by the Mannings there that has a wonderful epitaph - if only we could read it... want to try? Let's have some fun.



Directions:

North of I.-84 in Tolland, Cider Mill Rd. intersects with Old Post Rd. and Merrow Rd. (Rt. 195) just south the town Green, go south and under the highway (bear left if there's a decision to be made) and the cemetery is just on your left. The exit off 84 onto 195 going north or south is exit 68, and you'd be heading east and just about 1/2 mile up the hill (it comes up very quickly) is Cider Mill Rd. on your left.

For more information or to RSVP tour host, Becky Krassumann, at avplus@cox.net

New Book For Sale

"Gravestone Rimes" by Cap'n Bean (author of Grimmericks – The Final Curtain).

Gravestone Rimes is a collection of poetic thought provoking epitaphs, inspired by those that the author found on many real gravestones. He expresses "ideas tied to the passing of human life ...and strong emotions."

David Cyr is selling the book for \$12.95 and has very generously offered CGN a \$3.00 donation for each book sold through our membership, to support the work we do in preserving our historic cemeteries. We are grateful and thank him for his consideration and contribution. Cap'n Bean will have copies at our CGN Symposium April 26th, and be available for a book signing. If you cannot attend the symposium and would like to participate in this offer, please use the coupon below. (a copy of coupon is also acceptable)

Gravestone Rimes by Cap'n Bean

IMPORTANT: This coupon must accompany your order for the CGN donation to be realized.

Name _____

Address _____

Address books are to be mailed to if different than above:

\$15.15 for each book mailed within Connecticut (book price + sales tax + postage)

\$14.40 for each book mailed outside of Connecticut, within the U.S. (book price + postage)

Number of copies purchased _____ @ \$15.15 each _____ @ \$14.40 Total copies _____

Please send and make check out to: David Cyr
179 Burke St.
East Hartford, CT. 06118

Per CGN..March 2003 revision, Ruth Shapleigh-Brown, Exec. Director

