

WRITTEN IN STONE

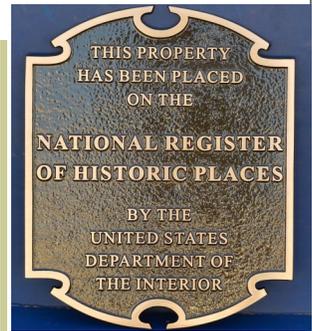
Winter Edition 2013

A Look Back...2013 A Year of Collaborations & Accomplishments

2013 was a banner year for the Friends of Burial Hill!

In January of 2013, town meeting recommended \$500,000 for the conservation of 1000 of Burial Hill's more than 2500 markers. During June and September the public was invited to free lectures from renowned experts in the study of gravestone carvers, James Blachowicz and Laurel Gabel, respectively. On August 7th Burial Hill was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Fox 25 News made a zip trip to Plymouth on August 30th and highlighted the Friends of Burial Hill. On September 27th FOBH partnered with Plimoth Plantation, the Town of Plymouth, and Tourism Cares. We instructed more than 50 travel and tourism professionals in the cleaning and surveying of nearly 100 gravestones. In October, the Plymouth Archaeological Rediscovery Project (PARP) revealed the results of the ground penetrating radar (GPR) survey conducted earlier in the year to 70 attendees. While the area suspected to be the mass grave of the Brig Arnold's seamen was closer to verification, still in question is the location where the fort once stood.

FOBH will be seeking grants and soliciting donations for further study. We would like to raise \$3000.00 for this important work. Your donations will help us to engage the required professionals to conduct additional GPR. On November 16th, Return of the Dead, a Civil War funeral re-enactment drew a crowd of well over 100, with visitors from as far away as Georgia and South Carolina. The 22nd Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Recreated, re-enacted the funeral of Plymouth's fallen soldiers, Sergeant Wadsworth and Corporals Collingwood and Hayden. Thanks go out to the 1749 Courthouse Museum, The Plymouth Garden Club, Stop and Shop, and The Standish Guards for their contributions. Sunrise on December 31st marked the end of a wonderful year for the Friends as FOBH participated in Frank Mand's (OCM) final sunrise photo #365 at Plimoth Plantation. Thank you to all who helped make 2013 a success!



Featured Stone: Mary Rickard



*"Here lies buried ye body of
MARY RICKARD
Aged 35 years decesd
August ye 28th 1712."*

Mary Rickard was born in Plymouth 27 October 1677. She died a single woman and was buried beside her father John, who had died some five months earlier. John's inscription was recorded in 1892; in the century -plus since, his stone has largely

crumbled away. Recent cleaning of Mary's stone revealed its intricacies. The designs begin with a winged skull. While this may seem gloomy, to contemporary viewers the motif represented hope, symbolizing the soul and flying away to heaven. The carver then added embellishments: two small blossoms curve over the winged skull; on each side a large flower cascades over a column of fruits. Mary's stone was not made by a local carver; Plymouth would not have resident carvers of this sophistication until the 1770s. The clue to the identity of the initials "W" and "C" on each side of the blossoms - William Custin, originally of Boston. William Custin is a shadowy figure with little documentation. Some nine stones

initialed "WC" have been found: three in Marblehead and Boston in 1711; Mary in Plymouth in 1712; two in Connecticut in 1712; William Thomas in Plymouth in 1714; two in West Tisbury on Martha's Vineyard in 1715. While it is tempting to try to map out William Custin's travels, we don't know when the stones were actually carved - it is possible that the stones for Mary Rickard and William Thomas were both done after Thomas' death in 1714.

PMBaker, 2013

Note: Mary Rickard's slate stone was cleaned and surveyed in a gravestone conservation workshop earlier this year.

Slate Breaking News

March 29, 2014 9 am

FOBH members meeting

October 11, 2014 1pm

Massachusetts

Archaeology Month Event

More information to

follow.



Gravestone Iconography

The death's head, often including wings or crossbones, emphasized the mortality of man.

Friends of Burial Hill



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Announcements

-A media committee has been formed for the Friends of Burial Hill. Co-chairs are Jae Dunn and Donna Shea. We welcome other members who may be interested to get in touch with Jae and/or Donna directly. E-mail:

Jae Dunn jaecress@verizon.net
Donna Shea jfsdms@verizon.net

-Peg Baker has volunteered to do a content piece for the newsletter with Mary Rickard's marker as the first installment.

-We are looking for photographers for FOBH events. Please contact Cheryle for more details.

-The winning name for the newsletter, by a good margin, is *Written in Stone*. *Slate Breaking News* we found too good not to be used, hence the column.

-FOBH is uploading completed survey sheets on gravestones that have been cleaned by workshop volunteers for all to access. These sheets will include epitaphs, dates, etc. that had previously been illegible as well as the condition of the stone now. We will provide information on this project on the FOBH website as it is available.

www.friendsofburialhill.org

Winter on Burial Hill



To contact the Friends of Burial Hill, become a member, or renew your membership, please visit

www.friendsofburialhill.org, or email

Cheryle: cheryle.burialhillfriend@verizon.net

or June:

june.burialhillfriend@hotmail.com

Our New Year's Resolution is to conduct more conservation workshops.

Membership dues for 2014 remain the same and are due by January 31, 2014. A printable form is available on the website.