Cemetery Trustees Minutes
Town of Canterbury, NH
September 15, 2026 –9:00 a.m. Meeting House

Members Present:
Cemetery Trustees: John Goegel (Chair), Jan Cote, Sam Papps
Sexton: Kent Ruesswick
Cemetery Historian: Mark Stevens

Members Absent:

Others Present:
Robert Fife, Linda Fife, Kevin Fife
Cheryl Andrew (Recording Secretary)

Call to Order:
John called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Burial Lots:
- Fife Transfer of 3 Lots and Placement of Headstones

Robert and Linda Fife and son Kevin Fife appeared before the Trustees to discuss the approved sale of two additional lots and the placement of the headstones. Mrs. Fife noted that they reviewed and designated eight lots on July 23, 2026. At that time the Fifes asked to purchase two more lots and John agreed. Both John and Sam noted that John's agreement on that day did not include a quorum of the Cemetery Trustees and was not a commitment of the Trustees.

Mrs. Fife further stated she received a letter in March that Robert and Linda Fife could transfer two of their lots to Kevin Fife. She said now there are new conditions on where they could place their headstones. John said the conditions were applied due to the purchase of the two additional lots, not the original request for transfer of lots. Mrs. Fife said she and Robert wish to place a "Fife" headstone in the center of the group of lots but the Trustees designated headstone placement does not match the configuration that the Fifes wanted. They feel putting the marker in the corner is awkward and want the stone in the center of the lots, and said the Trustees are accommodating the cemetery maintenance, not their wishes.

Kevin Fife said he would like to locate his headstone to the north side of the three lots marked as his. John agreed this request would work with the lawn care maintenance of the cemetery. Kevin Fife's stone would be at the back lined up with the "Fife" monument in the middle of the lots. The "Fife" monument would use a small portion of one of the lots transferred to Kevin Fife, who agreed with this placement. There would be flat markers for every grave in the group.

John and Kent confirmed pins are in place to mark the sites as agreed at the July 23, 2026 review. As the eight lots were not square, pins on one side were placed further into the corner.

When the lots in the back are needed, the backhoe will access them in the usual manner. If the graves need to be accessed for interment under the monument, the lots are large enough to accommodate the full burial or the monument can be moved.

John identified the placement of the headstones on the lots.

- Kevin Fife's headstone to be placed furthest East of the middle of the five easternmost lots.
- Robert and Linda Fife's monument stone to be placed centered on the front five lots.

The size of the headstone cannot exceed the length of the total lot group. The town of Canterbury has no other restrictions for sizing, but the Cemetery Trustees must approve the design of the headstones prior to manufacturing.

John made a motion to approve the sale of two additional lots to Robert and Linda Fife, and the transfer of three lots to their son, Kevin Fife, and agree on the placement of two headstones, one on Robert and Linda Fife's lots to be placed centered on the front five lots and one on Kevin Fife's lot, to be placed furthest East of the middle of the five easternmost lots. The motion was seconded by Sam, a vote was taken, all in favor, motion passed.

John said Sam will process the sale and transfer documents and send the new deeds to the Fifes. They will submit the headstone design plans to the Trustees before they are manufactured.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:

There were edits to the minutes of the August 13, 2026 meeting as follows:

- Line 52: Correction of the spelling of Deb Tomasek's name.
- Line 58: Winifred Maxfield, formerly of Boyce Road, will be interred at Maple Grove Cemetery when she dies.
- Line 118: The shed was donated by Scott Ruesswick's widow, Barb Cook.

Sam made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 13, 2026 meeting as amended, motion seconded by Jan. A vote was taken, all in favor, motion passed.

Sexton's Report:

- Kent reported Robert Robinson's step-children were interred in June on the Robinson lot.
- The remains of Mr. Wallace, the father, were interred on the Wallace lot.
- There is no update on the status of the shed.

Historian's Report:

Mark was contacted by Mr. Morrill, a member of the Sons of the American Revolution. The group would like to have a service in Center Cemetery in 2027. This request was forwarded from the Tricentennial Committee as the SAR would like to have their service at the time of the Tricentennial events. The Town has no restrictions on allowing groups to come in as cemeteries are open to the public. There is yet no date on the event set but the grounds will be mowed and maintained.

Sam said he did meet with Mr. Morrill and referred him to John. John noted the SAR wishes to know which sites belong to Revolutionary War veterans. The SAR event would be the Cemetery

Trustees contribution to the Tricentennial. Mark has agreed to be the point of contact as he is the Cemetery Historian and is also on the Tricentennial Committee.

Veteran's Affairs Report:
Two additional military veterans have been identified in Canterbury cemeteries. John has placed markers on each grave.

- William Hazeltine, Center Cemetery. Revolutionary War Veteran, fought and wounded at Bennington, in the Saratoga campaign.
- Winthrop Young, Shell Meeting House Cemetery. No found record of service in the Revolutionary War, but recognized by the Sons of the American Revolution and the Daughters of the American Revolution; post- Revolutionary War service in the NH Militia.

Cemetery Keepers Coordinator's Report:
Raymond Wibles informed Jan he is no longer able to keep the cemetery assigned to him. Jan contacted Caroline Brenner, who has agreed to take this cemetery as well as the one assigned to her.

Kent said the Cemetery Keepers should be recognized, whether in the Town Report or the newsletter. Mark said he could thank all Cemetery Keepers and specifically mention one or two. Jan will give Mark some information on the Keepers before the Town Report is due in January. Mentioning a couple in each newsletter was also noted as a good idea.

Jan said inspections have been done on all cemeteries in town, except for the smaller outlying cemeteries. She has asked the Keepers to send her a report but has not had much response, so the Trustees will continue with the inspection rotation. Jan will review the list and schedule inspections beginning the week of September 27, 2026.

Old Business:

- Review of Updated ***Cemetery Rules/Regulations***, ***Bylaws/Regulations***, and **Right to Inter Document**

The trustees should review the Right to Inter documents from other communities and note how the applications are processed. This can then be adapted to suit Canterbury. John suggested the Trustees discuss this and finalize regulation updates during a working meeting in the winter season.

- Headstone Repairs – Center Cemetery

John reported the work has been completed, photos received and the work has been invoiced.

New Business:

- Identifying Interments on Private Property

There are requirements for full private burials which are sent to all who request the information. The state has statutes requiring setbacks from property lines, wetlands, etc. Canterbury follows RSA 289, that private citizens are responsible for the burial and for following the requirements to notify the town. The Trustees are responsible for maintaining the record of burials. Citizens are responsible for notification.

There is a list identifying some of the private sites. Mark noted that spreading ashes is fine, erecting a monument is also fine, but when you do both the area becomes a cemetery. Sam noted that full burials are a different category. The remains must be located and reported in the deed, as required by law. John suggested continuing this discussion during a winter working session.

- Burial Lot Purchase by Maynard Family

There will be no sale of lots to non-Canterbury residents, however, they will be allowed interment in the three unused lots owned by the Robinson family. They are related to Robert's late wife.

- Mitigation of Bittersweet at Center Cemetery

Kent reported the bittersweet has spread into the cemetery and he is able to cut it at the base of the stalk. However, it originates from a neighbor's tree growing at the corner of the cemetery. Kent will discuss the problem with the neighbors who own the tree. He will also contact Brian Magoon to see what he might do or suggest.

- Other

Kent asked if there are still funds to address dead trees and fallen limbs. Currently, Maple Grove has fallen limbs and Shell Meeting House has a dead black birch right outside the wall. Sam noted $2,000 is available for tree removal.

Removing more trees from the Center parking area should also be considered. Kent will contact Brian Magoon for the removal. John suggested the cemetery inspections should also include checking the trees.

All who are available will meet Friday, September 25, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. at Maple Grove to inspect the cemetery and pin the Fife's sites at the same time.

Sam had three deeds to be signed, and distributed maps showing remaining lots in various cemeteries. Sam also reported Craig Newcomb bought two graves and will move the family headstone from Sugar Hill to Canterbury.

Adjournment:

With no further business to discuss, John made a motion to adjourn the meeting, motion seconded by Jan. A vote was taken, all in favor, motion passed.
The meeting adjourned at 10:37 a.m.

Next Meeting: October 13, 2026, 9:00 a.m. at the Meeting House
Minutes submitted by: Cheryl Andrew, Recording Secretary