



Stonington  
Cemetery

P O Box 345  
Stonington CT 06378

PLEASE HELP US HONOR VETERANS by letting us know if the plot of a friend or relative has not been flagged. If you would like to have a flag remain in place during winter months, please contact us at [thestoningtoncemeteryassociation@gmail.com](mailto:thestoningtoncemeteryassociation@gmail.com). Flags are removed after Veterans' Day.

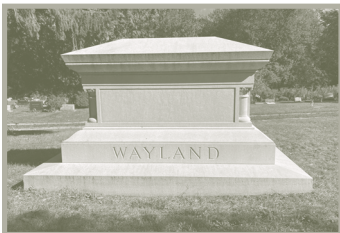


CHANDLER NORTON WAYLAND was born into happy circumstances in 1835 in Trumbull CT, the son of John and Sarah Wayland. In 1858, he married Lucy Elizabeth Elton and went to work for his father-in-law at the Elton Banking Company in Waterbury. He soon was a principal in several manufacturing businesses and served on local boards. His only child, John Elton, was born in 1860.

It was not until the next century that Chandler came to Stonington. This was after he owned one of the Thimble Islands off Branford, Connecticut. He was an enthusiastic yachtsman and cruised the New England coastline on his yacht, Viola. Perhaps this is how he found Stonington.



In 1902, Wayland purchased Whitehall from Charles P. William's widow, Georgia. The house, an easily recognizable stately columned structure set back from Main Street, came with acreage that extended to the water on the east. Some of it is now the Avalonia Land Preserve. Wayland went on to acquire additional properties and became the largest landowner in Stonington Borough. One of these properties, Wayland's Wharf, then a group of small buildings on the harbor, was gifted to the Borough in 1921 and is maintained as public water access. Stonington was not Wayland's only vacation property. In 1908, after purchasing Whitehall, he bought an estate in Bermuda, "Ardsheal," where he spent time every year until 1921, a year before his death.



Chandler Wayland is buried in a large plot just behind the Phelps burial area where the original stone wall border had been – recognizable by the depression in the ground where the wall once stood. His large granite stone is inscribed simply "Wayland." Although the plot is large, the family dispersed after Wayland's son, the inheritor of the properties, died. The plot contains only nine burials – Chandler (d. 1922), Lucy who predeceased him in 1910, John and his wife Isabel and five members of later generations. We are grateful to Elton Wayland Hall, a great great grandson for assistance with this piece.



Stonington Cemetery Association



Volume 6 • Fall 2021

## T O M B S T O N E   CHRONICLES

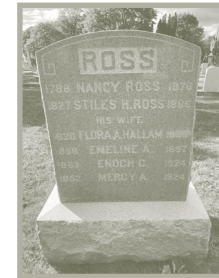


First Baptist Church Professional Care marker.

BY 1840, prosperity from railroads, banking and whaling had changed the economic and social life of the town. One of the groups that benefitted from these changes was the black community. Families like the Rosses, the Gardeners, and the Woods who might not have been as prosperous as some of their more well-known neighbors, were sufficiently secure and comfortable with their place in the community to form their own collective identity. This was demonstrated by the formation of a new religious body - the Third Baptist Church. The separation from the white First Baptist Church became official on September 28, 1846 when a group of seven parishioners (mostly members of the Ross family) received permission to form their own congregation.

Their pledge to nurture the "spiritual welfare of our own brethren" manifested itself in a plan to find a location where members of the community could be buried together. Although the Church didn't have its own graveyard, it soon turned to the newly formed Stonington Cemetery Association for space. Within the first walls of the Cemetery, and soon after the gates were open, the Third Baptist Church founders, their families and other important members of this community purchased plots and were buried here.

One can recognize the Third Baptist Church section by the many identically sized gray granite blocks engraved



Founding members  
Stiles H. Ross and  
Nancy Ross.

with "Third Baptist Church Fund Perpetual Care." Other stones are simple family markers, similarly sized and engraved. The headstone for the Gardiner family is an example. It reads: Clark Gardiner and Family, Third Baptist Church Fund. There are markers for the Henry Wood and the William H. Jordan families. These handsome unpretentious markers do not tell who the family members are. It is possible, that because burials of other family members were scattered, this is a way of remembering all.

Over the next 50 years, demographics and the Stonington economy changed again. Younger members of the Church community moved away to larger cities to find work. By 1924, the Third Baptist congregation, once 66 strong, had dwindled to three souls and the body received permission to dissolve. Remaining funds went to the Stonington Cemetery Association for the purpose of "perpetually caring for the graves of members of the church."

By the 20<sup>th</sup> century little space remained in the original Third Baptist area, members purchased plots in newer parts of the cemetery. The distinctive perpetual care markers tell the story. The last known burial in a Third Baptist plot was that of Elnora Brown Dortch in 1994. She is buried beside her father, Elias Brown who died in 1952 in a plot distinguished by this marker: Estate of Third Baptist Church.



AS ONE OF THE LONGEST serving community organizations in Stonington, we are responsible for important records beginning with our founding in 1849. The oldest leather bound volumes from the 19<sup>th</sup> century are stored in the Woolworth Library at the Stonington Historical Society along with some more recent books. Other newer records are safe but scattered. We have a data storage challenge common to smaller non-profits that don't have office space or full-time staff. How can records be safely stored and easily accessed?

This summer, the board signed a contract with Cemsites ([www.cemsites.com](http://www.cemsites.com)) to create a cloud-based digital filing and storage system to securely house information for our more than 4700 burials and plot sale records, plus deeds, invoices, obituaries and personal histories. We expect the program to be delivered early in November when we will begin work to review, correct and upload data. The new system will have the ability to access and process documents from remote locations and eliminate the problem of storage in milk cartons, shopping bags, and on multiple laptops. It's time.



WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK everyone who gave to the Stonington Cemetery Association during the past fiscal year – 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. Contributions received after June 30, 2021 will be honored in our Fall 2022 Newsletter. If we have inadvertently missed you, please forgive us and send a correction. Gifts of \$500 and over are noted with an \*. Gifts of \$1,000 and over are noted with a \*\*.

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Dear friends,

We come to you after a busy year with record plot sales, a healthy financial picture, and an enthusiastic Board of Directors.

Your energetic response to our fall and spring appeals this year resulted in a new record for donations received – over \$40,000 - with more donors than ever before. We are extremely grateful for your confidence in and involvement with us.

We hope to augment income from your gifts and other regular sources by applying for grant assistance to the following funders this year: The Town of Stonington, the Charles B. Allyn Foundation, and CT Humanities. Your show of support demonstrates our vitality to funders.

We have a handful of projects to complete next year — implementing the Cemsites program, continuing the professional numbering of plots by Craig Czaja that begun this year, progressing with the West Grounds plan and site work, rebuilding the Route 1 wall, and adding landscaping there. By the end of the year, we will see the last two sides of the hearse house re-shingled, as well as the addition of a fixed gate to the rear of the two building. The gate is a donation by Bob Wood. We will finally have the missing granite ball installed on the right front gatepost. Finishing is underway at Buzzzi Memorials.

A more detailed record of our past year can be found in the 2021 Annual Report and Financial Report. These are available on our website and can be emailed or mailed upon request. See our contact information to the left. We hope you will share your ideas and bring any concerns to our attention. You are making this work possible. Thank you.

Warm regards,

  
Lynn Callahan, *President*

Website: [www.stoningtoncemetery.org](http://www.stoningtoncemetery.org)

Email: [thestoningtoncemetery@gmail.com](mailto:thestoningtoncemetery@gmail.com)



Much of the work that went on during this last year can’t be seen. At least ten potentially harmful trees were removed. Thirty stumps, most remaining from trees felled years ago were ground out. Slanting stones were righted. Shrubs were pruned. Stones were cleaned. Our grounds are more inviting every year.



Perpetual care was a model for funding cemetery grounds maintenance that began with incorporation. Plot owners paid an annual fee to have their site cared for. Old record books contain years of entries. But what happens when plot owners die or move away and contact is lost? How does a landscaping crew with power equipment keep track of which plots are up to date with fees? The perpetual care model became outmoded years ago. The Cemetery Association now maintains all plots equally and pays for this through cemetery income sources and a conservative investment fund. Perpetual care markers are relics of our past.



A neglected corner of the 1849 grounds has been transformed through the generosity of Franklin and Leith Wood. A lilac grove was planted this summer along the north wall of the cemetery near the Palmer Mausoleum. Several generous donors have made other improvements possible including tree maintenance and removal. We are grateful for this assistance.



We shared our history with the Mystic River Historical Society in June. Steve Slosberg’s lively presentation informed members and guests about the contributions of those buried in Poets’ Corner. You can find his notes on our website. In October, Liz Wood, director of the Stonington Historical Society, led a tour of the grounds that highlighted important burials and provided a general understanding of our history using these individuals as examples.