

Report of the Fremont Cemetery Trustees

Your Cemetery Trustees have been hard at work during 2023 overseeing a number of important projects and details. Slowly but surely, Fremont Cemeteries are being brought up to grade in care and maintenance that has taken several years but has been done in as cost effective a manner as possible without breaking the bank.

First, we wish to THANK all those various individuals that work so hard to make our cemeteries look so trim and neat. **Acre-Shaper** has done a stupendous job of keeping our town cemeteries neatly mowed, trimmed, and tidy. The Trustees received numerous compliments from various townspeople who are very appreciative of their hard work. We also wish to extend our sincere appreciation to Steve & Ben Carder for overseeing the maintenance and upkeep of the circa 1800-1813 Isaac Brown Cemetery located behind Carder Farms on Main Street. **They have diligently mowed this cemetery for 39 years!** The Trustees and Town cannot thank you enough for all your commendable years of hard work caring for this ancient cemetery. The future care of this cemetery will now fall under the supervision of the Trustees and the town maintenance person.

Again, without the professionalism exhibited by our **Cemetery Sexton Shawn Perrault**, our jobs would be much more difficult. Shawn oversees the burials in all Town Cemeteries, continues to research and organize cemetery records, and makes sure that the Trustees are kept up to date with new laws, cemetery-related services & businesses, and new cost-effective ideas in addition to the ones that the Trustees bring to the table. Thanks to her research, the Trustees this year approved contracting the computer record-keeping services of **Crypt-Keepers**. It will be a definite improvement in providing an organized efficient record-keeping format as well as provide public access to Fremont Cemetery burial records. Your hard work Shawn is genuinely appreciated and is a true credit to the town.

2023 was another year of great progress for our Cemeteries. A new and attractive cemetery wall was built on the north-end of the 1777 Knowles-Carr-Chase-Leavitt Cemetery – finally eliminating the old concrete-covered stone wall that was chipping and breaking after 96 years of wear and tear. No longer do cemetery mowers have to hit broken pieces of concrete with their lawn mowers causing damage to the equipment or scattering pieces in all directions throughout the cemetery. We also wish to THANK Leon Holmes Jr. for his help in overseeing some of the projects in the Leavitt Cemetery. We also thank our neighbors on both sides of Leavitt for their patience working with the Town in these matters!

2023 we also took steps to enforce the need for corner stones on each cemetery lot sold so that it would be much easier to know who owns what cemetery lot, and where the boundaries are specifically. This also allows us to record more efficiently exactly where certain people are buried on each cemetery lot, and what grave lots remain empty.

We began in late December to have numerous trees removed from the southwest corner of the rear section of the Knowles-Carr-Chase-Leavitt Cemetery. This will save considerable money by

removing these trees now, rather than wait to literally spend thousands more when these trees become much bigger and more expensive to remove and haul away. It is our hope to install new driveway paths in this newly cleared section so that as time marches on, mowing will be kept down to a minimum thus saving on manpower, gasoline, and upkeep. **Thank you Joey Bolduc** for undertaking this tree-clearing project at such a reasonable savings to the Town and its taxpayers, and to **Leon Holmes Jr and Leon Holmes Sr** for assisting with the stumping work as inexpensively as possible. **FREMONT IS VERY FORTUNATE TO HAVE SUCH DEDICATED TOWNSPEOPLE WHO STEP UP TO HELP OUR TOWN SAVE MONEY AND MAKE SURE JOBS ARE DONE EFFICIENTLY! This sort of dedication is getting harder and harder to find in many other surrounding towns.**

Another goal we will undertake in 2024 is the cleaning of gravestones and re-erecting of fallen gravestones. We encumbered funds for a training session and cleaner. Much of this will depend on volunteers willing to help us complete these tasks after the two training workshops with EPOCH PRESERVATION during the upcoming Spring. There are many gravestones that have been long overdue for upkeep and cleaning. This will be a respectful priority for the Cemetery Trustees in the years ahead.

The Cemetery Trustees met each month usually on the second Tuesday of the month between April and December. The public is always welcome to attend our meetings or watch them on the Fremont Cable TV channel or Vimeo. All meetings are posted in advance, and usually start at 4:00 pm in the Town Hall Basement Meeting Room.

We thank all townspeople for respecting the rules & ordinances for our cemeteries. They are there to help make sure our cemeteries are kept neat, orderly, and respectful. **We respectfully ask that all owners of cemetery lots PLEASE discontinue placing various trinkets, crosses, & paraphernalia on lots. These items will have to be removed if they obstruct the mowing process.** We encourage flowers to be the primary ornamental items placed directly in front of, or beside gravestones.

As many of our appreciative veterans know, the **WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA** observed its 15th year here in Fremont, with considerable **THANKS to coordinator Gerry Tilley, her family, friends, miscellaneous volunteers, and Troop #1 Fremont Boy Scouts** who work so hard to make this annual event possible. Fremont is just one out of 1,200 towns nationwide that actually holds a *Wreaths Across America Ceremony* and is just one of only 4,400 towns across the United States that places Christmas wreaths on the graves of all known war veterans buried within town cemeteries. **THANK YOU ONE AND ALL FOR MAKING THIS HAPPEN!**

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew E. Thomas, Chairman
Mary Jo Holmes
Steve Tomasz