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# Town of Shaftsbury

Municipal Offices

PO Box 409  
677 Vermont RTE 7A  
Shaftsbury, VT  
05262-0409  
(802) 442-4038

## Cemetery Department

### Superintendent's Report - May 6, 2026

It's been a long winter, but it is going to be a great year. Welcome to the new Town office building. I spent a lot of time editing many photos taken during the fall and adding information to Cemify. When I ran out of photos that I had taken I moved on to organizing files – a burial file for each burial that we have to store original paperwork, any historical documents, deeds, and anything we find in the move – we are finding a lot of items. This is a wonderful thing.

I have Waite Cemetery completed of file folders, and Village is coming along nice. The move happened – screeching halt. Now that the good weather is here this project will have to pick up next winter unless a volunteer steps forward to help. It is not a rush, but it is kind of fun to do. I bought a label maker (because I'm a neat freak)... So if a committee member is board some day and wants to hang out with Jen and make some file labels, come on down and I will set you up in my office and we will have some fun (now that I have the space to do that) 😊

**Burials:** There have been 5 burials. Three in Center and 2 in Waite. This is now starting to pick up as no families chose to bury over last winter.

**Lot Sales:** There were no lot sales over the winter.

#### **Gravestone Repairs & Maintenance:**

Significant progress has been made in repairing headstones, thanks to the dedicated efforts of the DPW crew and myself. In November of last year, we spent three full days working in Center Cemetery, primarily focusing on Sections D, E, and F. We straightened and repaired numerous headstones - so many that it became difficult to keep an exact count.

Waite was done in November and we finished division 2 in Grandview. This year if our schedules allow I will run a work party in Maple Hill Cemetery. There has not been any restoration work done in Maple Hill by us yet. It needs a great deal of work.

## 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Updates:



The 4th Sunday Program will officially begin its season on May 24th. All volunteers have received T-Shirts last year to wear to the work party events. We will be currently working in Center Cemetery.

We encourage anyone interested in participating to join us for this meaningful effort.

## Cemify Update:

I will be submitting the initial raw data for the historic Division 1 and submit it to Cemify for upload. At this stage, the information is very much in its preliminary form – Now that spring is here, I will begin the process of reviewing and refining each lot individually and finishing up the lot by lot audits of all Divisions in Grandview. I have no idea how long this will take. Grandview is a world of its own. I am using historical paper data, and headstones.

## Historical Society / 250 Celebration Tour:

Carol Dziubek (Corey) will provide me some updates to the Revolution Soldiers Tour – and I will redo the Map for her – I am waiting on her changes now.

➡ Here is a Tour Link: <https://shaftsburyvt.gov/rev-tour.php>

➡ Here is a Tour Map: <https://shaftsburyvt.gov/2025-tour/Rev-Tour-2025-walking.pdf>

## Headstone Replacements:

For this year's stone replacement, I am requesting one headstone with two names, as it is for a husband and wife.

Both individuals are buried in the historic section of Center Cemetery. Carol Dziubek has been working on a project to identify historic homes in the area and the people who owned them. During her research, she came across Parthenia and her husband, Jacob Galusha. Parthenia was listed in Cemify as "unknown," as there was no visible stone at the grave.

Through further investigation by Carol and myself, we determined that Parthenia's stone is located beneath her husband's broken stone. We confirmed this by comparing a photograph on Find a Grave with a photo I have of Jacob's damaged stone, which needs to be replaced.

Based on this evidence, I have added Parthenia to Cemify. Since both stones need replacement and they are buried next to each other, we can purchase a single stone with both names. The stone selected should blend appropriately with others in the historic section of Center Cemetery.

If the committee would like to take responsibility for selecting and purchasing the stone which should not be the cheaper stones online (Amazon – because it has to match historically), I would be happy to install it. Below is the information we have for the headstone.

**Jacob Galusha**  
**DOB 12-28-1750**  
**DOD 7-25-1834**

**Parthenia Galusha**  
**DOB 4-19-1754**  
**DOD 8-18-1846**

### **Perpetual Care Fund Report**

For a couple of years, I have questioned the perpetual care fund. Where is it? How much is in it? How much interest is it earning? Etc.. I just had questions. I wanted to make sure that half of each grave sale was going into this fund as it should be. I asked the Treasurer, and she said it was. However, I could not see it rising in any of the Town Reports going back several years. So I asked Rob Steuer, a Trustee of Public Funds responsible for our Town investments.

It turns out that I was correct. Money was not properly being put into the fund as it should have been. Rob knew that we had a Perpetual Care fund. However, since he has been a

Trustee, he personally has not made a Deposit into the fund. This was a problem. We found it, and now we had to fix and – the balance, and prevent it from happening again.

These funds result from payments made to the Town of Shaftsbury to provide for the perpetual care of cemetery lots (Landscaping and repairs of headstones). An amount for this purpose is included in the price of each lot sold. Monies received by the Town from this source become part of the principal of the fund and may not be used for any other purpose but to produce income for perpetual care to maintain the cemeteries. This income is used by the town for cemetery care under the supervision of the Selectboard. The annual net income from this fund is remitted to the Town of Shaftsbury after the close of each the fiscal year.

The Treasurer has been placing the Money on a liability line for years. However, never actually cut the check to the Trustees. With all of us working together, we have made sure that this will not happen in the future.

**Cemetery Perpetual Beginning Balance:**

\$168,281.54

**Cemetery Perpetual – Deposit from Liability Fund - Treasurer**

\$36,657.50

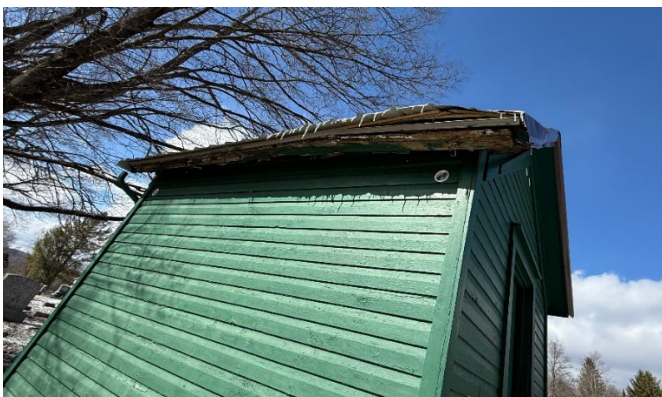
**Cemetery Perpetual New Balance: 12/31/2025**

\$205,865.59 (much better)

**(See Attachments)**

**Grandview Storm – Damage**

A wind storm brought down a huge maple tree limb on to the new roof of the Grandview shed.



The DPW crew was able to repair it for approximately \$100.00. The adjacent landowner, who reported the downed limb, cut up the tree and used it for firewood.

## **Maple Hill Historic Sign**

The Maple Hill Cemetery historic sign was originally donated by Robert Adelberg who lives on Maple Hill. He phoned me and asked if we had money to repair it, and I said not at this time. He offered to pay to have it done by a specialist and cover the cost himself. It is being done right now. What a wonderful thing.

I thought the committee would like to think about a small plaque to honor his original donation in 1991 (I believe) and the restoration 2026. What are your thoughts?

## **White Burial – 3 Ring Binders**

I began this phase of my plan during the winter months when burial activity was minimal and after all fall photographs had been edited and uploaded into Cemify. This provided an opportunity to focus on organizing and preserving our physical records.

Historically, the Cemetery Department has retained all documentation related to burials, including original sale sheets, notes, photographs, correspondence with families, obituaries, and cremation certificates. However, these materials were not stored in a consistent or centralized system. Previously, many documents were kept informally, resulting in gaps and inconsistencies. As part of this project, I have been systematically transferring records from the original burial books and other sources into a structured filing system using file cabinets in my new office. This effort serves as a comprehensive historical backup to our digital records. We are only putting so much in Cemify.

While we are continuing to move toward a fully digital and publicly accessible records system, maintaining physical copies remains essential. In addition to preserving historical integrity, this practice ensures compliance with Vermont's public records laws (see Vermont Public Records Act). **(1 V.S.A. §§ 315–320)**

Specifically: <https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/section/01/005/00316>