

**CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
COMMITTEE FOR CEMETERIES**



**PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4, 2025 at 4
pm CITY HALL – CONFERENCE
ROOM A
1 JUNKINS AVENUE, PORTSMOUTH, NH 03801**

**Members of the public also have the option to join the meeting over Zoom
Register in advance for this meeting:**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/TpjEBbQgSMSqBO7qdOhESA>

AGENDA

1. Call to order, Roll call and Welcome New Members (Brigid Brady and Tara Rix)
2. Approval of November 6 meeting minutes
3. Potential 2026 projects – Dee Forte
4. City Website features – Stephanie Seacord
 - Map of Graves
 - Cemetery Page Content
 - Database
5. Cemetery List of ToDos – Dee Forte
6. Headstone work in Cotton – Steve Buzzell
7. Langdon DAR Marker – Dee Forte
8. Promotional Materials – Dee Forte and Stephanie Seacord
9. “Serve with Liberty” in May 2026 – Dee Forte
10. Other Business
11. Public Comment
12. Adjourn

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COMMITTEE FOR CEMETERIES**



**PUBLIC MEETING NOTICE
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2025
1 JUNKINS AVENUE, PORTSMOUTH, NH 03801**

**For the Zoom recording:
https://youtu.be/rrEVEVH_n3E**

MINUTES

1. Call to Order and Roll Call:

Attending: Dee Dee Forte, Celeste Brooks, Steve Buzzell, Michael Griffin. Absent: Peter Splaine, Sue Polidura. Staff: Corin Hollowell, Stephanie Seacord (recording secretary)

2. Approval of the Minutes of the October 2, 2025 Cemetery Committee Meeting on a motion by Celeste, seconded by Steve.
3. Review of potential 2026 projects
- Wendell tomb repair (Pleasant Street Cemetery) – awaiting cost estimate from Chris Volpe. Steve may have alternate if needed.
 - North Cemetery – review of stone straightening and potential ironwork repair by Peter Hapny. Steve and Corin will review the stone and bent rail straightening and Dee will discuss fence detail repair/replacement work with Hapny. <https://www.portsmouthnh.gov/sites/default/files/2025-11/North%20Union%20Railing%20Project.pdf>
 - Steve suggested projects the Committee might address during the winter
 - Creating a GIS map of the City's historic cemeteries that could be added to the website.
 - Cemetery Committee page and information about the historic cemeteries needs to be updated.
 - Creating 'blue' historical markers for those cemeteries without them e.g, Cotton. Stephanie is now handling those projects and will followup.
 - Creating "State of the Cemeteries" inventory of work done and work needed. An Excel spreadsheet would allow for updates, help channel the resources and show the Committee's results.
 - Cleaning: all of the headstones have been washed with D2 (using the City's backpack unit) – except for the back corner of Union which should be addressed next spring.

4. UNH yellow fever project activity at North Cemetery – Dee met with Alex Garcia Putnam, his wife and two Salve Regina students to do more LIDAR work to try to find a mass grave for the victims of the outbreak c. 1785. Have not yet analyzed the data. For other LIDAR projects there would need to be a more substantive reason – but maybe use as an exercise to train students. Perhaps UNH archaeology students might be hired as interns for credit next summer?)

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
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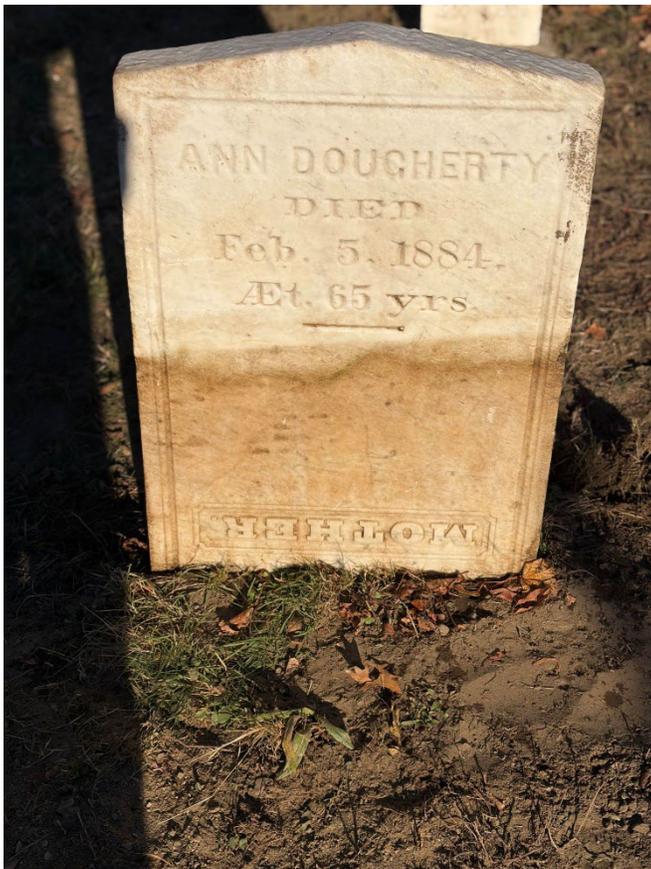
5. Cemetery tours in October – Dee tried to join a tour but they were all sold out. Portsmouth Historical may resume the tours in the spring.
6. Headstone straightening at Cotton - Steve and Corin reported that two members of Corin's crew were very engaged in assisting Steve. He noted that $\frac{3}{4}$ of one white marble stone that had been buried in the dirt crumbled to dust when he tried to lift it, underscoring the need for this work. He is now working on bases for the stones that have been toppled.
7. Committee terms and new members - Dee has discussed with June Philbrick in the City Clerk's office. Brigid "Briggs" Brady was appointed by the City Council at their October 6 meeting and will be receiving the packet of information and joining the next meeting. June will send Dee a list of all Committee members and their terms.
8. Other business
 - Daughters of the American Revolution requested the placement of their marker at the Woodbury Langdon tomb. The committee would like to meet with the requester, Caroline Barrio to ask what the plaque says, the intended placement and the ceremony the DAR would like to hold before voting to approve.
 - Resident Laura Kostick has asked if the white marble epitaph on the Sherburn tomb could be replaced as it has worn to illegibility. That requires approval by the descendant and the City. Perhaps the original wording is in Louise Tollman's 1983 report?
 - Matthew DeLouis, Northern Masonry has expressed interest in working on the Point of Graves wall. Corin will keep him informed as the design/engineering and bid process will precede hiring a mason. Suzanne Woodland is contacting the NH Division of Historical Resources regarding the project.
 - CIP – A joint work session of the City Council and Planning Board will discuss the CIP on November 12 at 6 pm in Council Chambers. Dee will attend to advocate for funding the Cemetery Committee's requests. The Council will hold the first Public Hearing on the CIP at their November 17 meeting.
9. Public Comment – Suki [full name?] and Kathy Logan, residents of the South End complimented the committee on their work and discussion. They are interested in the Point of Graves project. Getting a design/engineering plan may take 6-12 months to complete the bid and selection process for hiring design/engineering and then completing a plan. Sooky Lassen may have a donor – who may not want to wait for a long bureaucratic process. Dee will followup with Suki.

Next meeting: Thursday, December 4 at 4 pm.

Committee voted to cancel the January meeting – with the option of scheduling a date other than January 1, if needed.

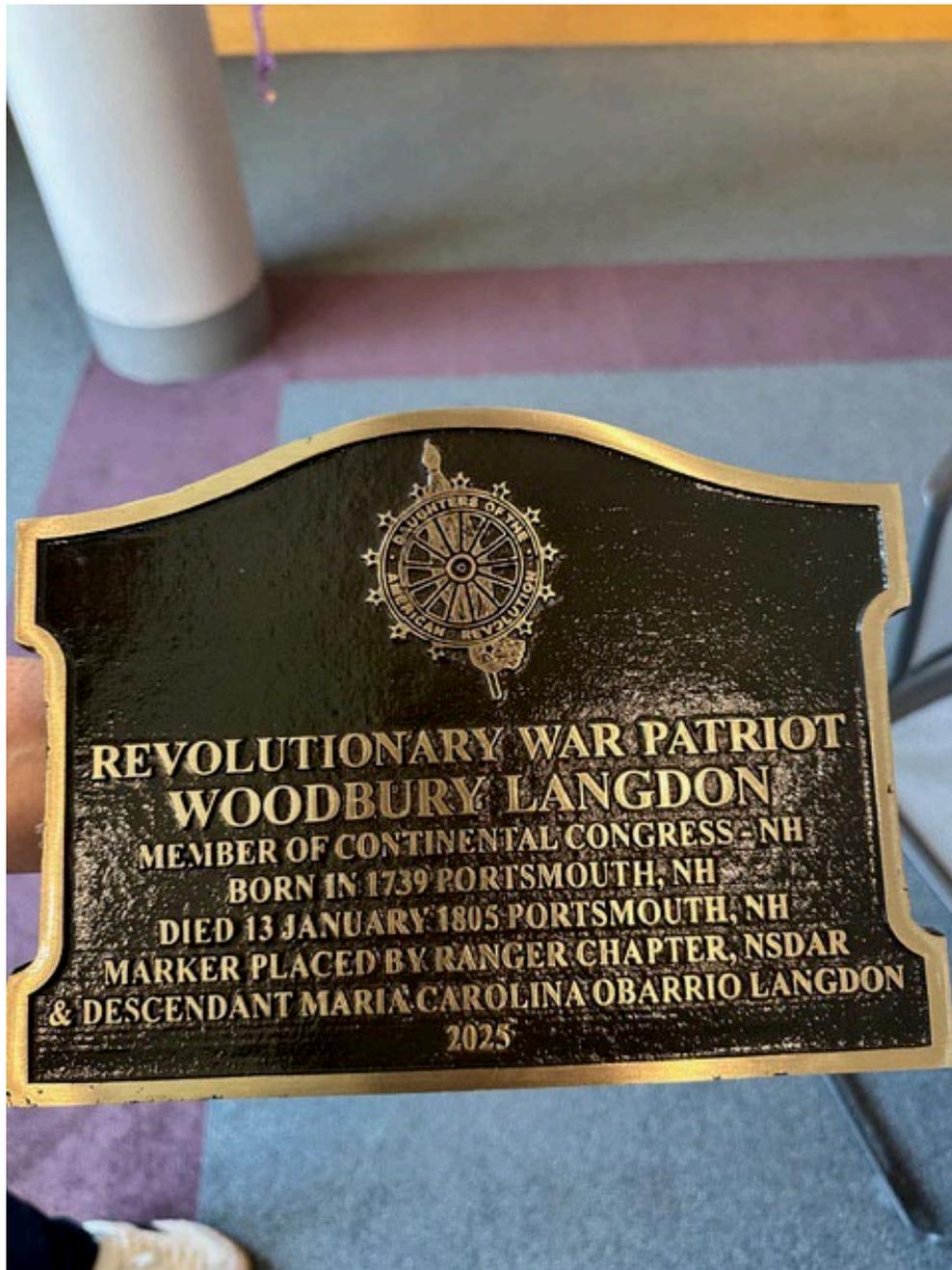
Adjournment at 5 pm on a motion by Celeste, seconded by Steve.

Cotton Cemetery Work





DAR LANGDON MARKER



Historic Cemeteries of Portsmouth NH

Discover the stories of patriots, preachers, politicians and philanthropists of Portsmouth's past.




NORTH CEMETERY

This was the third public burying ground established in Portsmouth in the Colonial Era. Here are buried many people important in local, state, and national affairs from 1753 through the first half of the nineteenth century, including Revolutionary War participants, formerly enslaved Africans and the town's first known Jewish and Catholic residents.



WILLIAM WHIPPLE
c. 1756
 A Revolutionary War general who fought at Bunker Hill, he later served as governor of New Hampshire. He was a signer of the Declaration of Independence.



PRINCE WHIPPLE
c. 1756
 A son of William Whipple, he fought in the Battle of the Clouds during the Revolutionary War.



ESTHER MULLINAUX
c. 1800
 A Quaker abolitionist who was the first woman to be elected to the Portsmouth City Council.



MARY FOLSOM
c. 1754
 She was the daughter of an African American slave who was freed and became a member of the South Church.



THE WALKER CHILDREN
c. 1750
 The youngest of the five young children of the Rev. John Walker and Mary Walker.



CAPTAIN THOMAS THOMPSON
c. 1800
 An abolitionist, he was one of the first to be elected to the Portsmouth City Council.



ROBERT GREENOUGH
c. 1802
 He was one of the first to be elected to the Portsmouth City Council.



JOHN LANGDON
c. 1800
 One of Portsmouth's most important historical figures, he was a signer of the Declaration of Independence and a member of the Portsmouth City Council.

These City cemeteries are invaluable records of the lives and final resting places of residents of the community over its nearly 400-year history.

Point of Graves (1671)
Cotton Cemetery (1721)
Elmwood Cemetery (1759)
Hall Cemetery (1789)
North Cemetery (1753-1926), National
Register of Historic Places
Union Cemetery (1844), NH State Register of
Historic Places
Pleasant Street Burial Ground (1754)
African Burying Ground (1705-1800)
& Memorial Park (2015)

Learn more about Portsmouth's historic cemeteries, the restoration plan and ongoing preservation work, volunteer opportunities, and other ways to support the work of the Cemetery Committee:



Visit interactive map: <https://tinyurl.com/344dw3un>

