

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



THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 2026, 4 pm
City Hall Conference Room A
1 Junkins Avenue, Portsmouth NH
To participate via Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/JsPQXxwSRnCYwv94k9VZuA>

AGENDA

1. Call to order and Roll Call
2. Approve May 7 meeting minutes
3. Point of Graves Wall, donor and concept – Dee Forte
4. Revolutionary War soldiers gravesites in North Cemetery – Sue Polidura.
Walking Tour discussion
5. Rerevised rack card 2026
6. Woodbury Langdon plaque – Dee Forte
7. 250th celebrations City webpage
8. Other business
9. Public comment
10. Adjourn

**CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, NEW HAMPSHIRE
CEMETERY COMMITTEE**



**MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, MAY 7, 2026, 4 pm
City Hall Conference Room A
1 Junkins Avenue, Portsmouth NH 03801**

For the Zoom recording:

<https://www.youtube.com/live/UFRzsfMimeM?si=W3rnSMDWSeMuej4T>

1. Call to order and Roll Call: Chair Dee Dee Forte, Celeste Brooks, Bridget Buzzell, Steve Buzzell, Jennifer Merriam, Peter Splaine, Amy Dutton, Michael Griffin, Sue Polidura, Tara Rix. Staff: Corin Hallowell, Fiona Curran, Stephanie Seacord
2. Approve April 2nd meeting minutes – On a motion by Polidura, seconded by Buzzell, the committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes as amended.
3. Point of Graves Wall – Hallowell reported that DPW is awaiting cost estimates to accompany the design recommendation and expects to provide more information at the June 4 meeting. Anticipated construction work in 2027.
4. Serve with Liberty May 8 and May 15 – Forte and Hallowell have prepared the materials needed for the volunteers to paint the North and Union Cemetery fence on May 8, using high gloss Rustoleum rather than the POR paint which generates pervasive fumes and is very difficult to remove. For May 15 the plan is to have the volunteers clean headstones. Hallowell has secured three cases of D2 and will provide a water truck.
5. Woodbury Langdon plaque (agenda item taken out of order) – Forte reported that she and Hallowell will review the site and plaque placement on May 8 so that it can be installed the week of May 11, well in time to meet the June 10 deadline. No dedication event is scheduled yet.

Hallowell also introduced Fiona Curran, certified arborist and horticultural tech, who is a member of the Urban Forest team working on the landscape at City Hall, the Library and Prescott Park. She is shadowing Hallowell and his position as Arborist Foreman.

Rix asked who is responsible for controlling the invasive species (knotweed) encroaching on headstones and pathways in the South Street cemeteries, especially at the back corner of the ballfield. Hallowell said the City has a knotweed control program and is aware of the issue in that location.

6. Rack card 2026 edition – Brooks reported that she had expected to review her edits with the committee at this meeting. Seacord will incorporate in the next printing:
- North Cemetery historical marker image suggests that the information is only about North Cemetery – and is very difficult to read.
 - Headline and sub-head font size should be reversed.
 - Suggested the map should be higher resolution in order to read the street names.
 - Move the QR code to the front
 - In the list of historic cemeteries, the National Register and NH State Register notations should be differentiated from the cemetery names.
- Seacord will provide a revised draft at the June 4 meeting.

7. 250th Commemorative identification of Revolutionary War soldier gravesites
- Forte opened the discussion by suggesting the committee might do something to elevate awareness of the gravesites of local men who fought in the Revolutionary War. Polidura has researched a list of 30 names and gravesite locations. Seacord agreed that a page linked from the Cemetery Committee page on the City website would be simple to create and then provide the landing page for a QR code. Rix suggested a self-guided tour detailed on that page, which could be publicized with a dedicated rack card. The committee discussed the difficulty in finding the gravesites, even using “Find A Grave.” Dutton offered to visit each site to record the GPS coordinates. Each site could be flagged with a temporary fibreglas ‘snow stick’ (which would not impede mowing). Forte will ask Emma Stratton at Portsmouth Historical Society about the walking tour they did in North Cemetery last fall.

The committee also discussed the need to update the 40-year-old X map which, while extremely valuable, is not a good resource for identifying sites. Splaine offered to discuss mapping tools/programs with his brother who manages the historic Linwood Cemetery in Haverhill MA.

The committee is also interested in building awareness of the Medal of Honor recipient gravesites that Griffin has researched. Another linked web page can be created.

8. Other business
- WMUR interview – Rix determined that Rick Davidson and Bill Thompson, authors of Buried in New Hampshire, volumes I and II were the people she observed being interviewed in North Cemetery.
 - Hallowell was asked about the fence removed from the back of North Cemetery and explained the City is working on identifying the property line before proceeding with any kind of replacement. A line of trees rather than a fence is contemplated.

9. Public comment -- None

10. Adjourned at 4:50 pm. Next meeting: June 4, 2026

REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIERS IN THE NORTH CEMETERY. AS OF MAY

Name	Location	Data		
Billings, Richard	E2-E3	War Vet	Clerk to John Hancock	SAR list
Blaisdell, Abner	D4-A1	Langdon Light Brigade	Saratoga	
Bowles, Samuel	B6-C2	Langdon Light Brigade	Saratoga	
Champney, Richard	A6-C4	Fort W&M	Langdon Co.	
Clapp, Supply	E2-B10	Supply officer during the war. Fort W&M	Capt. S. Hodgdon Co./Pvt	
Cutter, Ammi, R Dr.	F2-D12	Doctor.	Served at Fishkill, NY. Revolutionary depot and medical station	
Fernald, John	D5-C3	Fort W&M, Portsmouth defenses. Raleigh	Forts Sullivan and Washington	
Folsom, Nathaniel	C5-C3	Langdon Brigade	Saratoga	
Gains, George	C5-E2	Fort W&M, Saratoga	3 rd NH Regiment. Col. Long.	
Hall, Ammi R(Cutter)	F2-D16	Patriot of the Revolution	Per Head stone	
Ham, Samuel	G4-B5	Langdon Light Brigade	Saratoga	
Hart, Daniel	D5-A7	Langdon Light Brigade	Saratoga	
Hart, Edward	E4-C1	Fort W&M	Removed gun powder from fort.	
Hart, George	B5-C5	Langdon Light Brigade	Saratoga	
Harvey, Thomas	A2-A7	Served at Brandywine.	Rescued Lafayette	
Hill, James	E1-A3	Bunker Hill, Langdon Brigade	Written on Head stone	SAR list
Holbrook, Samuel	E6-A2	War Vet as stated on his head stone	Capt. J. P. Jones frigate Ranger	
Jackson, Hall Dr.	C5-D5	Physician. Col. Long regiment	Bunker Hill, Piscataqua defenses	

REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIERS IN THE NORTH CEMETERY. AS OF MAY

Kennard, Nathaniel	C1-B6	Served on the Bonhomme Richard	Served with John Paul Jones. Privateer	SAR list
Ladd, Eliphalet Capt.	D1-I1	Captain, helped remove cannons from Fort William and Mary in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. following the raids of 14-15 December 1774	(source: Charles H. Bell, History of the Town of Exeter, pages 241, 420, Genealogical page 27).	
Langdon, John Col	E1-C3 Fam. Tomb	Patriot. Builder of the Raleigh, Ranger etc.	Fort William and Mary, Signer US Constitution First Senator for NH.	SAR List
March, John	D3-A2	Capt. M. Leavitt Co.		SAR List
Marden, William	F3-G4	Veteran of the Revolution	Per Head Stone. Capt. McClary Co.	SAR list
Marsh, Zebulon	E-6, a-7	Col. J. Stark Regt.		SAR list
Mendum, John	E3-C1	Quarter master, Ship Raleigh		SAR list
Neal, Thomas	B1-D4	Capt. Jewell's Company		SAR List
Osborne, George	F6-A3	Captain of [Continental] Marines on the "Raleigh";		SAR List 263655
Packer, Thomas	D4-d2	Capt. Folsom's Company.	Rhode Island	
Pickering, John Hon	B4-C4	Delegate to the NH convention where the first Constitution was voted on. 1776		
Reding, John	E4-F4	Capt. G. Turner Co.		SAR List
Rowell, Nehemiah	B4-E2	Langdon Light Brigade	Saratoga	SAR List

REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIERS IN THE NORTH CEMETERY. AS OF MAY

Salter, Richard	D3-F1	Fort W&M	Artillery. 3 rd NH Regiment. Privateer	SAR list
Sherburne, John	D3-B1	Major, Langdon Brigade	More than likely buried in the Sherburne Family tomb.	SAR list
Stoodley, James Esq,	B6-E2	Raid on Fort W&M was planned at in tavern.		
Swqett, Benjamin	C4-F7	Col. Drake Regiment		SAR list
Thompson, Thomas Capt.	D3-D5	Capt. of the Raleigh		SAR list 304415
Walden, Jacob	H3-A5	Served in the Ranger with John Paul Jones	Steward on ship Ranger	SAR List 311855
Walker, Joseph	C1-A5	Massachusetts Continental Line		SAR list
Whipple, Prince	E2-C1	War Veteran per NH's Roll.	Saratoga, Rhode Island	SAR list 317749
Whipple, William Gen.	D3-C6 Table Tomb	Signer, Declaration n of Independence	Saratoga, Rhode Island	SAR list 317767

Highlighted names mark participants in the December 1774 raid on Fort William and Mary (Fort Constitution). The raid was the first overt act of the American Revolution, with shots fired at civilians and the Royal flag brought down. This action signaled open rebellion against the Crown.

Sources

Revolutionary Veterans List from Portsmouth; NH Sons of the American Revolution, SAR.
<https://nhsar.org/revolutionary-war-patriot-graves-in-new-hampshire/>

Documents and Records, State of New Hampshire, From 1776-1783 Vol. VII
<https://archive.org/details/documentsrecords0007nath/page/n5/mode/2up>

List was compiled by Sue Polidura for the Portsmouth Cemetery Committee

Several biographical notes have been added below.

This list will be updated as new information becomes available.

John Langdon - John was a successful merchant, shipbuilder, Revolutionary leader, and statesman. He helped organize and lead the raids on Fort William and Mary, was a delegate to the Continental Congress, and fitted out ships for the Continental Navy at his own expense. Langdon became a signer of the U.S. Constitution, served as the first NH president (governor), and as the state's U.S. senator, including a term as the Senate's first president pro tempore. He hosted George Washington during the president's 1789 tour.

William Whipple - BG William was a ship's captain and a successful merchant in Portsmouth, He was a leading patriot, serving on the Committee of Safety and representing NH in the Continental Congress from 1776 to 1779 (signing the Declaration of Independence in August 1776). He commanded militia forces at the pivotal battles of Saratoga—where he helped secure the British surrender—and Rhode Island. After the war, he serviced as a state legislator (1780–1784), associate justice of the NH Superior Court (from 1782), and financial receiver for the state.

Supply Clapp - Supply was born into the prominent Clapp family of Woburn, MA. Supply was a Colonel in the local Portsmouth militia and played a significant role in the raid, entering the fort on December 14th. He was later named Commissary General of New Hampshire.

Edward Hart - Edward Hart was the son of blacksmith Col. John Hart. Entered the fort during the 1774 raids and most likely assisted in the removal of the powder.

George Gains - George was a cabinetmaker and built houses. During the raid, removed powder from the fort on 14 Dec 1774. He was a selectman in Portsmouth. During the RevWar, he was quartermaster and muster master in Col. Long's Regiment of artillerymen. He marched to reinforce General Ward at Fort Ticonderoga. He was also a brigade Major under BG William Whipple and marched with him to join the Continental Army at Saratoga.

John Fernald - John was a coppersmith. He was among those who captured powder from the fort on 14 December 1774. He was a selectman in Portsmouth during 1775. During Revolutionary War, he also was an artilleryman who served in the coastal defenses of Piscataqua Harbor at Fort Sullivan and Fort Washington.

Richard Champney - Merchant in Portsmouth. He took part in one of the conflicts earliest actions – the raid on Ft. William and Mary where guarded the fort commander, Capt. John Cochran.

HISTORIC CEMETERIES IN PORTSMOUTH NH

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



To 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, scan the QR code.



These City cemeteries are invaluable records of the lives and final resting places of residents of the community over its 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)

For a full map: <https://portsnh.co/Historic-Cemeteries>

