

## **CEMETERY COMMITTEE**

The Cemetery Committee, which reports to the Board of Selectmen, is composed of three members, each serving a 3-year term. The committee this past year appointed an associate member, Stephen A. Gray. The committee is responsible for the management, maintenance and upkeep of the town's cemeteries.

The three cemeteries in Stow (Hillside Cemetery on Crescent Street, The Lower Village Cemetery at Great Road and Pompositticut Street, and Brookside Cemetery on Gleasondale Road and Box Mill Road) are all maintained by the Superintendent and seasonal part-time employees.

The main improvement this past year was the installation of a granite post fence at Brookside Cemetery. This project should be completed in the early spring. The Superintendent has also been working with the Historical Committee and the Community Preservation Committee to restore the stone wall at Lower Village Cemetery and to repair and restore many of the old markers that have been broken and are in need of repositioning. Many of these markers are showing their age due to being exposed to New England weather for hundreds of years.

The Committee again wants to recognize the outstanding work of Superintendent Robb "GH" Gledhill who, most of the time, maintains all three cemeteries by himself. He has been fortunate to have some seasonal help this past year, which allows him to work on other projects.

The Committee is always looking for anyone who would be interested in helping out with the maintenance of the cemeteries on a part-time basis. If you are interested, contact the Superintendent at the Office of the Cemetery Committee in the Town Hall.

The Committee wants to thank the Board of Selectmen, the Town Administrator, and all the townspeople who supported us this past year.

Respectfully submitted,

Fred Dodge, Chairman  
Roy A. Dudley  
William E. Clayton

Stephen A. Gray, Associate  
Robb Gledhill, Superintendent

## **COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE**

The Community Preservation Act (CPA), MGL c.44B, was enacted into legislation on September 14, 2000. The goal of the Community Preservation Act is to provide communities with the means to expand their ability to pursue and implement projects that preserve or enhance their quality of life. Under this legislation, municipalities may opt to participate by adopting a property tax surcharge to create a locally-controlled Community Preservation Fund. The state provides a match, up to a maximum of 100 percent, depending on what percentage surcharge is

adopted and the number of communities participating statewide. The Community Preservation Fund can be used to fund projects related to the acquisition and preservation of open space, the creation and support of affordable housing, and the acquisition and preservation of historic buildings, landscapes and documents.

Stow voters accepted the provisions of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) at the Town Meeting in May of 2001. At the subsequent Annual Town Election, Stow voters opted to enact a property tax surcharge of 3 percent to create the Stow Community Preservation Fund. Stow voters also opted to adopt all of the possible exemptions to the surcharge, including: those properties occupied by low-income property owners and those properties occupied by low- or moderate-income senior property owners, if such property owners show proof of income eligibility. The other exemption is on the first \$100,000 of assessed real property, which is taken automatically and reflected in the amount assessed to each property owner. As a result, Stow is participating in a manner that maximizes the state matching funds with the least possible financial impact to the community.

The fiscal year ending June 30, 2010 was the ninth year of collections and state matching grants. In October 2010 Stow was awarded \$176,222 – a 39.86 percent match – greatly increasing our community's ability to take action in the three specified areas. State matching funds have been awarded each year in which Stow has participated (over \$2.5 million in state matching funds awarded to date). Community Preservation funds are deposited in a locally controlled, interest-bearing account. Additionally, Stow has earned over \$600,000 in interest on CPA funds since adoption in 2001.

Pursuant to the adoption of the CPA in May 2001, the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) was formed to develop a Community Preservation Plan and to oversee implementation of the CPA in Stow. The CPC's role is to study the existing resources of the town, identify critical needs, evaluate various options for addressing those needs, and recommend specific projects for Town Meeting consideration. All projects recommended by the CPC also must be approved by a majority vote at Town Meeting before expenditures can be made from Stow's Community Preservation Fund.

### **Highlights of 2010**

In May of 2010, Town Meeting attendees voted to appropriate \$20,000 of CPA Historic Reserve Funds for the purpose of restoring the final section of historic stone wall at Lower Village Cemetery, \$48,000 of CPA Historic Reserve Funds for the purpose of restoring historic headstones at Stow's 3 cemeteries, and \$80,000 from the CPA Open Space and Recreation Reserve Funds to purchase a conservation restriction from the Stow Conservation Trust on 30± acres of land on two parcels near Maple Street and Edgehill Road.

At a Special Town Meeting in November 2010 Town Meeting attendees voted to appropriate \$46,000 of CPA Open Space and Recreation Reserve Funds for the appropriation of engineering design funds for a potential construction project of a portion of the Assabet River Rail Trail on Track Road. The Town previously acquired an easement on Track Road that allows the possible future construction of a portion of the Assabet River Rail Trail and allows public access to the existing trail.

Stow Community Park, funded with CPA money, was opened in Spring 2010. Over the past several months residents have enjoyed use of the fields, pavilion, and skating rink. The rear portion of the project continues to be under lease to a local farmer.

At the Annual Town Meeting in May of 2010, Town Meeting voters approved Community Preservation warrant articles for appropriating funds for administrative purposes (\$30,000) and for making the annual reserves and adjustments required under the Community Preservation Act: Acquisition and Preservation of Historic Buildings and Landscapes (\$62,000), Acquisition and Preservation of Open Space and Recreation Land (\$62,000), and Acquisition and Support of Affordable Housing (\$62,000).

The CPC looks forward to working with others to implement additional Community Preservation projects selected by Town Meeting voters. In addition, the Committee looks forward to evaluating proposals currently in the developmental phase including a Historic Documents Preservation project, a fire suppression system to preserve the historic Town Hall, and a town-wide Archaeological Reconnaissance Project. The prospect of receiving significant state matching funds appears promising for 2011. Stow voters are to be commended for deciding nine years ago to be one of first of the 147 communities in Massachusetts (representing more than one third of the Commonwealth) that are accruing the many and varied benefits of local adoption of the Community Preservation Act.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Wilber, Chairman	Open Space Committee
Mike Busch	Recreation Commission
Bill Byron	Council on Aging
Wayne Fletcher	Historical Commission
Bob Larkin	Housing Authority
Peter McManus	Finance Committee
Dominick Pugliese	Assessors Office
Kathy Sferra	Conservation Commission
Kathleen Willis	Planning Board
Deb Seith, Administrative Assistant	