

# LYONSVILLE CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

## 2019 NEWSLETTER

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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*Mark Richel, Vice President*

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*Sharon Comstock, Trustee*

*Charles Gerth, Trustee*

*Linda Hankus, Trustee*

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*(To reach a member of the Board, please call our Secretary, Judy Birmingham at 630-325-3208 or for financial questions, our Treasurer, Michael Belletete at 630-455-6170 and leave a message. Thank you.)*

**Lyonsville Cemetery**  
**6871 Joliet Road**  
**Indian Head Park, IL**  
**60525**

Email:  
[Lyonsville.cemetery@gmail.com](mailto:Lyonsville.cemetery@gmail.com)

*(To access the cemetery, enter off Joliet Road through the church parking lot.)*

Lyonsville Cemetery is located in the midst of suburbia and continues to maintain the look and nostalgic feel of a rural cemetery. The cemetery is rich in local history with the first burial taking place in 1833. Many of the areas founding families are buried here and we are proud to be the final resting place of veterans of every conflict from the War of 1812 through Vietnam.

**Important Access Update:** Although the cemetery is located behind historic Lyonsville Congregational Church and shares the name, the two are entirely separate entities and the cemetery is non-denominational. Some of you may have heard that Lyonsville Congregational Church has been going through a discernment process, in light of aging and shrinking membership, to determine the direction of the church and potentially their property.

To alleviate any concerns being raised regarding the question of how this may impact access to Lyonsville Cemetery in the event the Lyonsville Church property were to change hands, the Cemetery Board has contacted both the Pre-need, Licensing, And Certification Enforcement (PLACE) division of the Illinois Comptroller's Office as well as a real estate attorney. Below is a recap of what we have learned.

The PLACE division, which governs cemeteries in Illinois, said they believed there were statutes that guaranteed access as well as providing personal assurance that the Comptroller's Office would support our right of access.

Real estate law is more clear. According to case law in Illinois, when the trustees of Lyonsville Church sold the Cemetery land to the trustees of the Lyonsville Graveyard in 1889, they created an Easement by Implication. Simply put, the four access lanes of the Cemetery all exit onto Church property and the only way to use the Cemetery for visitation, maintenance, burials, monument installation, etc. is to cross Church property. A permanent easement was implied by the separation of the Cemetery property leaving it landlocked, except for crossing Church property.

The Cemetery has used this Easement continuously since 1889. The right to cross the property to access the Cemetery follows the property and is not impacted by what the Church may do with the property or who they may transfer it to in the future.

While this Easement could affect any parties that may have an interest in acquiring the Church property, the Cemetery Board need not be concerned. We have a very clear right of access across the property based on real estate law and State support to defend our rights.

Everyone is welcome at Lyonsville Cemetery! We are a not-for-profit organization run by a volunteer board.

Whether you have a loved one interred at Lyonsville, would like to know more about or become involved with preservation efforts or are simply interested in the history of the cemetery, we extend an invitation to all to attend any of our board meetings.

#### 2020 Board Meeting Schedule (all meetings begin at 7:00 pm)

Tuesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>

Tuesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>

Tuesday, August 11th

Tuesday, November 10th

#### **MEMORIAL DAY**

Memorial Day was once again observed with the American Legion Robert E. Coulter, Jr. Post 1941 conducting a short ceremony including a rifle salute. In the days before the ceremony, local Boy Scouts placed a flag on each of the 115 graves of veterans we have in our cemetery records. Before and after the ceremony the attendees and the American Legion enjoyed refreshments and baked goods provided by board members and friends. It is a very nice remembrance and we are delighted that attendance at the annual event continues to grow each year. The 2020 ceremony will take place on Monday, May 25<sup>th</sup> and usually begins at approximately 10:00 a.m. If you live in the area or are visiting that weekend, we look forward to welcoming you to the ceremony.



## FINANCES

The Lyonsville Cemetery Association is a recognized tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(13) of the Internal Revenue Code. As such, contributions to the Cemetery are tax deductible. We receive no local, state, or federal financial support and rely on the income from our Perpetual Care Fund (Care Fund) and gifts from individuals and estates to support our work.

We are very thankful for our donors. In the past twelve months we have received gifts from the Belletete, Bodine-Walker, Comstock, Gerken, Gohdes, McHale, Meile, Owen, Persche, Richel, Robertson, and Schweigert families. Many of these families are regular contributors and it is gratifying to see them appear each year.

Care Fund principal is restricted by the State and audited by them annually. We are pleased to note we have always been in compliance with State regulations. Care Fund income is used to care for and maintain the Cemetery. Our primary expense is mowing and trimming of the grounds. Annually, we also address various projects such as care of trees, repair of our fence, etc. Next year a planned project is the repair and restoration of some of our historic monuments. We look forward to sharing our progress with you in our 2020 newsletter!

Our volunteer board works very hard at keeping Lyonsville Cemetery looking beautiful. Our meetings are open and our meeting calendar is listed in this newsletter. You are always welcome to attend to learn more about our work. We also hope you consider the Lyonsville Cemetery Association when making charitable gifts and in your estate planning.

## AVAILABILITY OF GRAVES AND PRICING

There are still a substantial number of grave plots available at Lyonsville. They can be purchased individually or in adjacent multiples.

The single plot cost is currently \$850. A single plot may contain one full body burial, a combination of a full body burial and an ash inurnment, or two ash inurnments. Full body burials are arranged in conjunction with funeral homes. The Cemetery charges \$950 to open and close a grave for a full body burial and \$400 to open and close a grave for an ash burial. There is also a specially-designated section for Ash Burials. An \$800 fee includes space for two ash inurnments. The charge for opening and closing a grave for an ash burial is \$400. Please note that all burial pricing is subject to change dependent upon weather conditions.

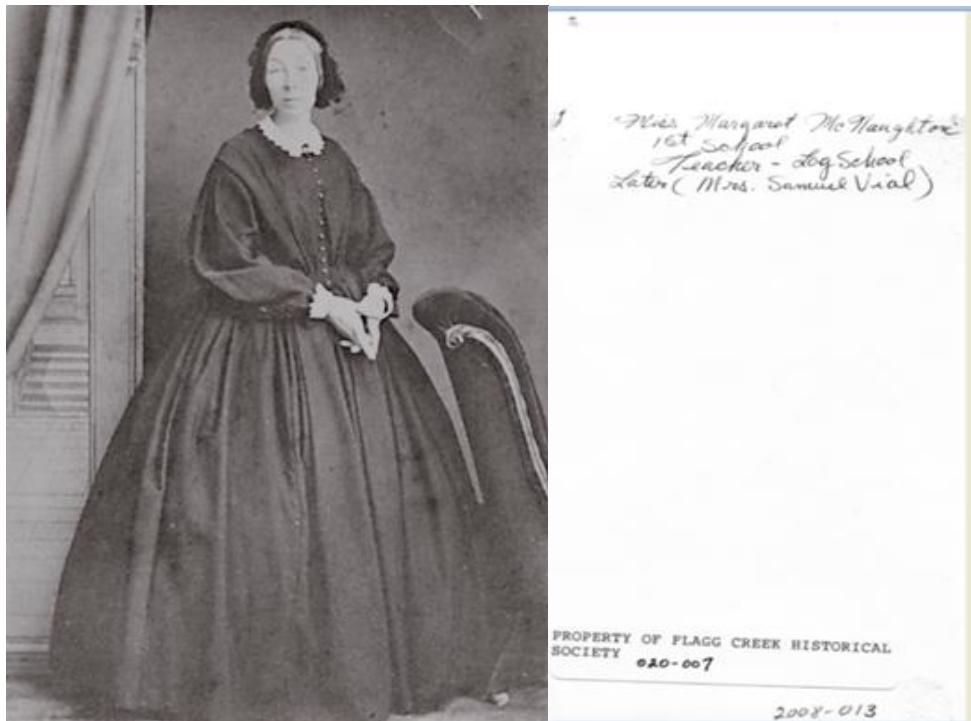
Lyonsville Cemetery **does not** permit "green burials".

## HISTORY LIVES AT LYONSVILLE CEMETERY

### **Calling All Sleuths! Margaret (Mary) McNaughten Vial or Gertrude Holton North Vial?**

Beneath our feet as we traipse the Cemetery are many stories that we can "dig up" to connect us with the roots of the early history of our area. Sometimes those histories are mysteries that are so compelling they inspire us to travel the globe to solve them. Such is the case this fall, when a Vial descendant who now lives in Germany contacted the Lyonsville

Cemetery on a research visit. Her mission? To substantiate the identity of the woman in this photograph:

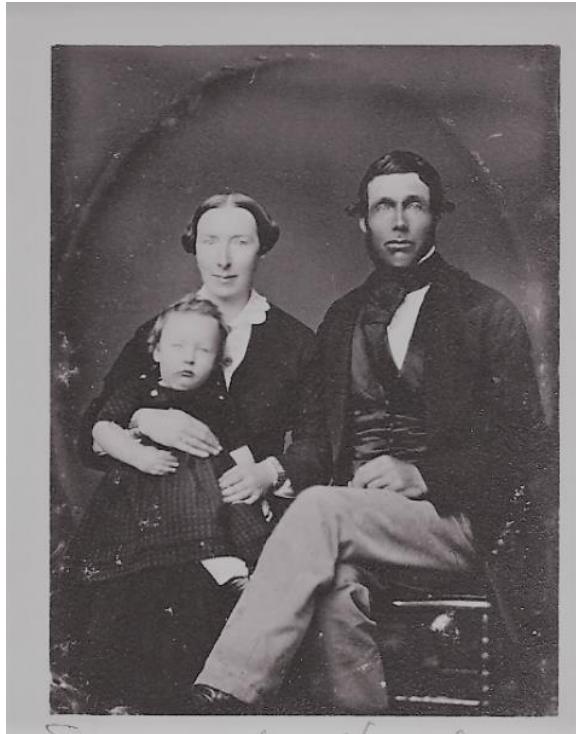


Is she Margaret (Mary) McNaughten as written on the back of a photo in the Flagg Creek Heritage Society archive? Or Gertrude Holton North Vial, second wife of Samuel Vial as suspected by family stories and remarkably similar—but unlabeled—photo(s) of the visiting Vial researcher and genealogist?

To complicate matters, perhaps the following photo (in a private family collection) labeled “Gertrude North Vial” is, indeed, the mystery visage of Ms. North?



And what of this labelled photo of Margaret (Mary) McNaughten with her young husband Samuel Vial and their child? Can we be fairly confident this is, at least, correct?



How can we know who is who for certain?

Why should it matter?

Well, for local history it matters quite a bit! McNaughten (Lyonsville Grave plot 28, #5: Born 1814, Aberdeen Scotland, U.K.; Died: May 18, 1856) was named as a founding member of Lyonsville, and first school teacher of the first school house that same year. Its log structure was located in a plot near the corner of Wolf and what was then still referred to as the Joliet Trail. A commemorative marker stone now sits at the north and east corner of the Lyonsville land. Some documentation indicates Mary's school would form the basis for the schools Pleasantdale and Plainview. (Plainview would eventually become Highlands School, District 106.) Margaret (Mary) and Samuel Vial would marry Nov. 19, 1846.

The graves, characteristically, are silent when it comes to identifying images of these women. We can verify by marriage records and the two women's death dates, however, that Samuel remarried by the end of the very year of Margaret's untimely death in 1856. It was very common for widowers to remarry quickly, especially when there were children to raise.



In light of the emerging history research brought to our attention this fall, we at the Cemetery are updating our use of the photo of Margaret McNaughten Vial to reflect the (as-yet!) unquestioned image of her with Samuel. Our thanks to local history and genealogy sleuths Hazel Martin Sharp and Lynn (Vial) Buendgen for their efforts to bring us closer to solving this local history mystery. As we are learning, history isn't set in (grave?)stone and photographs aren't always fact. It often comes down to probing family stories, drawing on memories of our oldest residents, and being open to newly discovered, crowd-sourced documentation. In that spirit, we are calling on family lore-storians to help us move from having a "history hunch" to firmer fact. Please do reach out to us if you have any information that can help confirm the image identity of Ms. North.

#### **GENTLE REMINDERS FROM THE CEMETERY BOARD**

Since this is our only opportunity to communicate with the majority of you we'd like to remind you of the following:

- Do not drive off the designated roadways within the cemetery. We recognize the possibility that another vehicle could potentially block your path. Please ask the other driver to move their vehicle rather than driving around it. There are very old unmarked graves near the roadways and they can easily collapse under the weight of even the smallest car.
- Limit plantings to annuals or perennials that are not invasive such as hosta.

- The cemetery provides watering cans near the watering stations; please refrain from leaving plastic jugs or other containers you might have brought anywhere in the cemetery.
- We ask that you do not bring flowers in vases containing water to avoid mosquito infestation.
- If you visit with a canine companion, please pick up after them.
- **REMEMBER:** Artificial flowers and other decorations are removed from the cemetery by December 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. Christmas wreaths and decorations are removed February 1<sup>st</sup>. If you wish to reuse your Christmas decorations but cannot remove them by that date, please contact us to prevent removal.

**MOST IMPORTANTLY, PLEASE REPORT ANYTHING THAT NEEDS ATTENTION  
TO THE CEMETERY BOARD!**

Thanks for visiting the cemetery and we appreciate your cooperation and help in keeping the cemetery beautiful.

**HAS YOUR CONTACT INFO CHANGED?**

Please complete the form below and return it to the address below or email to:  
**[lyonsville.cemetery@gmail.com](mailto:lyonsville.cemetery@gmail.com)**

**Lyonsville Cemetery Association  
6871 Joliet Road  
Indian Head Park, IL 60525**

---

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please update my address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I prefer email delivery: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

No thanks... please remove me from the mailing list.