

News & Views

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**Historic
Lexington
Foundation
Incorporated**

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HLF PROMOTES PRESERVATION OF AREA'S HISTORIC CEMETERIES

This past June, Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) Conservator Kate Ridgway visited Lexington to walk through Stonewall Jackson Memorial Cemetery and Evergreen Cemetery to advise HLF on the conservation needs of both cemeteries. She pointed out numerous preservation issues and advised HLF to establish priorities for addressing those needs with public safety as the top priority.

DHR official Kate Ridgway (right) discusses Lexington cemetery conservation needs with HLF Preservation Committee Co-chairs Jim Busch and Dee Joyce-Hayes.



Kate Ridgway points to damage to Chandler and Darst gravestones incurred during grass cutting.



The Evergreen grave of Wonderful P. Pettigrew. Born Feb. 10, 1895. A victim of the World War, shot to death in Charleston, West VA. Sept. 8, 1923. Being deaf. He was a Christian soldier. Rest from his labors.

Following the DHR visit, HLF determined that it was important to have a trained cemetery conservator undertake a more detailed preservation plan for both Lexington cemeteries. The plan would help Lexington identify and prioritize conservation needs and provide cost estimates for a multi-year conservation effort.

In November, HLF's executive director Don Hasfurther organized tours of Stonewall Jackson Memorial Cemetery for HLF board members, for members of Lexington's Cemetery Advisory Board, and City officials. In addition to emphasizing the historic significance of the cemetery and its importance to local tourism, participants focused on the many conservation needs of the cemetery. All agreed that a walking tour guide of the cemetery is needed to give a better historic perspective to visitors. Also discussed was

Left: Gravestone of John Middleton. Once mended where it had cracked in two, it is now leaning severely and thus jeopardizing the earlier crack. **Right:** First cemetery tour.



the importance of involving the community in ongoing preservation needs in the two historic cemeteries.

HLF plans to have a preservation plan for both cemeteries concluded early in 2018. HLF is also in discussion with DHR about undertaking a cemetery workshop in Lexington in the spring. The workshop would be open to local municipalities, preservation organizations, church cemetery committees, land-owners with historic cemeteries, genealogical organizations, and other interested parties. Additionally in 2018, HLF will continue its work to maintain the historic McDowell Cemetery near Fairfield.



Executive Director Don Hasfurther points to tabletop gravestone of Annie Baxter. The stone is cracked in two, off its foundation and supported by adjacent tabletop stone.