

# GRAVE HAPPENINGS

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**BCAGP**  
Berks County Association  
for Graveyard Preservation



Berks County Association for Graveyard Preservation Officers

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1st Vice President

Anne Wagner  
2nd Vice President

Ralph P. Lorah  
Treasurer

Cyntiha Jimenez  
Secretary

Website Address  
www.bcagp.org

**ASSOCIATION HANDBOOK OF HISTORIC  
FAMILY GRAVEYARDS**

The handbooks are currently sold out. BCAGP is working to publish a revised edition that will be available at a later date.

Karen Brown  
Newsletter Editor

## **OUR AIM...**

To maintain and preserve Berks County's neglected historic graveyards.

## **WHO WE ARE...**

A group of civic leaders, professionals and interested citizens who share a common goal.

## **WHAT WE DO...**

Plan, engineer and oversee preservation through:

- ✓ Initial clean-up
- ✓ Tombstone repairs/resetting
- ✓ Wall repairs
- ✓ Regular inspection and maintenance

## **HOW?...**

- ✓ By organizing a network of civic groups and volunteers to perform necessary field work
- ✓ By educating the public about the importance of preserving these historic graveyards

## **WHERE DO YOU FIT IN?**

- ✓ Support the Association by becoming a member
- ✓ Let the Association know of gravesites in order to keep our lists current
- ✓ Become a caretaker – visit one or more gravesites routinely to evaluate it current needs
- ✓ Give of your time to cut grass (weeds) and / or generally clean up a site
- ✓ Become a Board member. Please contact Ralph Lorah [waterlorah@aol.com](mailto:waterlorah@aol.com), Les Rohrbach [les.rohrbach@comcast.net](mailto:les.rohrbach@comcast.net) or Keith Schaeffer [berksdowers@dejazzd.com](mailto:berksdowers@dejazzd.com) if interested
- ✓ You can tell us how you can help!

**THE BERKS COUNTY ASSOCIATION FOR GRAVEYARD PRESERVATION HAS OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE FOR ORGANIZATIONS SEEKING COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS. PLEASE CONTACT OUR WEBSITE OR EMAIL A BCAGP OFFICER IF INTERESTED**

**LEVAN CEMETERY  
MAXATAWNY TOWNSHIP**

Restoration of the Levan cemetery, located along Eagle Point Road, is near completion. The cemetery wall is in the process of being rebuilt. More than 30 stones, previously concealed under earth, have been recovered and reset. The cemetery ground, previously containing large holes dug by groundhogs, has been resurfaced.

The family buried at this site played an interesting role in our country's early history. Jacob Levan, a French Huguenot who arrived in the colonies in 1715, helped organize a militia to protect colonists during the French and Indian War. His son, Sebastian, served in the American Revolution as a colonel for the militia's 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion. Although a marker had been placed on Jacob's grave honoring his military service, there was difficulty in obtaining a marker for Sebastian due to confusion over his burial site.

Thanks to the determination of Anne Wagner and the support of Levan descendants, who worked to obtain information verifying the location of Sebastian's grave, a Revolutionary War marker was dedicated and placed at this gravesite to honor Sebastian on Veteran's Day 2008.



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**

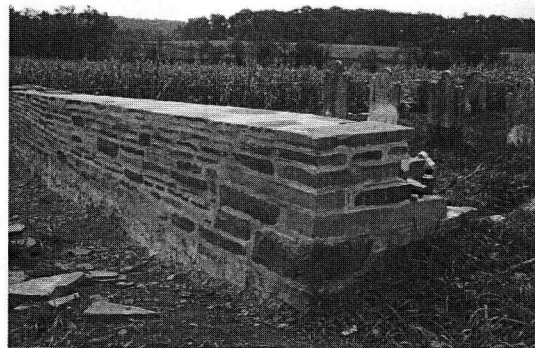
## **SEIFERT CEMETERY UPPER BERN TOWNSHIP**

Work is now complete on the Seifert cemetery. The stone wall has been rebuilt, and the gravestones have been repaired. The property owners added a nice touch by burying a time capsule at this site as well.

The following pictures were taken of the Seifert cemetery during restoration. As these pictures demonstrate, the wall was severely deteriorated.



**WALL PRIOR TO RESTORATION**



**WALL IN PROCESS OF BEING RESTORED**

## **VETERAN'S STONES**

If you are related to any veteran whose tombstone has been vandalized or broken you can request a replacement. If a veteran is buried in an unmarked grave, a tombstone can be provided (with proper military documentation) through the Veteran's Administration. Regardless of the date of death, VA will furnish, at no charge to the applicant with certain eligibility conditions, a government headstone or marker for the unmarked grave of any eligible veteran in any cemetery around the world.

Note: There is no charge for the headstone or marker itself, however arrangements for placing it in a private cemetery are the applicant's responsibility and all setting fees are at private expense.

It is quite possible that BCAGP can help descendants arrange a rededication of a historic graveyard after any preservation of the graveyard is completed and the new tombstone is installed. Preparation for this service takes a long time and involves many cooperating groups, but it is a program which develops a tremendous amount of individual and community pride in recognizing the veterans of early wars.

**JANUARY IS THE TIME TO RENEW YOUR ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP**

**PLEASE CONTINUE TO SUPPORT BCAGP BY RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2009. THE SUPPORT FROM OUR MEMBERS IS KEY IN ENABLING BCAGP TO CONTINUE OUR PRESERVATION EFFORTS.**

**IF NOT A CURRENT MEMBER, JOIN US AS WE CONTINUE THE WORK BEGUN BY SO MANY BEFORE US.**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Annual Membership, \$15.00.

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Donation earmarked for the Association General Fund

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Donation to be used for the \_\_\_\_\_ gravesite

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Annual business or municipality membership, \$35

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Donation to be used in \_\_\_\_\_ municipality

Total Amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail Checks to: B.C.A.G.P., PO box 3707, Reading, PA 19606**