



## CHENEY CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

### CHENEY CEMETERY ASSOCIATION, INC.

#### Minutes of Annual Meeting of Directors October 7, 2020

The Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors of the Cheney Cemetery Association was held Wednesday, October 7, 2020 via a Zoom conference call. All directors were present: Carol L. Cheney, Richard O. Cheney, IV, John Fiske, K. Dexter Cheney, IV, Tom Myers, Austin C. Smith, Kate Cheney Chappell, Andrea Learned, Nathaniel Cheney and Kristin Merrill.

It was moved to approve last year's minutes. The Board approved committee assignments unchanged from the prior year, with Rick's recommendation to add his son, Ricky Cheney, to a committee. Ricky, 28, has an MBA with a concentration in finance. He might be interested in Finance or shadowing Grounds or Membership. A list of current committee assignments is attached to these minutes.

The Board reviewed the proposed Grounds budget for 2021 as prepared by Rick Cheney. The line items total \$72,700, based on the same level of work as last year, and with the anticipation of replacing trees. The 2020 actual budget was \$64,000. The replacement of trees is budgeted at \$11,000 for 2021—an active year for tree loss. It is typically around \$3,000.

A grounds review was conducted on 9/24/20, attended by Dexter, Carol and Rick Cheney, Barry Dolby, Kevin Regan and Alice Willard. Alice suggested that we try to use some of the little saplings that are in the woody area of the cemetery to replace some trees. Kate Cheney Chappell thinks it would be wise to try the saplings but not exclusively. Young trees growing in a neighborly cluster, may not have developed their own root systems fully and may not survive. Rick Cheney would like to replace some of the trees with additional hemlocks. We have 65 now, the largest stand in Connecticut. Other species should be considered for replacing the lost hemlocks, since this species is still vulnerable to disease.

Dexter Cheney pointed out that during the cemetery review some of the headstones are shaded out by quick growing trees and so there is green mold growing on them. Part of the headstone maintenance should be trimming the trees back. Executive will come tomorrow to trim back around all the headstones. Ruth Shapley Brown will come next year to clean the headstones.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the 2021 Grounds budget; the Finance committee agreed the tree replacement costs could be sustained. The investment account that supports the maintenance of the cemetery started at \$80,000 in 1960 and is now nearly \$1.8 million. Jerry Fiske says that we customarily use some money from principal every year as the interest income does not cover all the CCA expenses.

Dexter Cheney mentioned that the cemetery gate was successfully repaired. Unfortunately the Town of Manchester work crews piled up soil at the base of the fence posts during a sidewalk improvement project. Carol Cheney and Rick Cheney will discuss remediation with Dave Bisi, The Town Parks Foreman.

Carol Cheney presented the recommendations of the Donations Committee for donations for 2020 grants from the Cheney Family Fund. The amount available is \$21,340. The Board ratified the recommendations approved in a donations committee email exchange in September. Carol



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pointed out we are later than usual in making these recommendations to the HFPG and that Covid has slowed down the work of all nonprofits.

Of concern to Carol Cheney is the family tree upkeep, last updated in 2002 by genealogist Edward Little and including only partial information into the 13th generation. Carol Whitmer digitized the family tree in 2015, however we were not able to access her file. The only way the CCA will continue into the future is to build a website that will have password protected area for families to update their own information. Carol Cheney proposed that we make an investment in a website developer to build a site with public and password protected areas. She recommends Bronwen Hodgkinson of Ardent Design, who designed the Russell Cheney website. The new site would be done in WordPress, which Kristin said she can update easily. A motion to budget \$20,000 on a website was made and approved by the board.

Setting up the Cheney genealogy in the public domain was also suggested for purposes of research. It was recommended we use Facebook and Instagram. Kristin Merrill agreed to work on the social media.

The meeting was ended abruptly due to a software glitch. Ex post fact, Carol Cheney made a motion to adjourn and Kristin Merrill seconded. The meeting adjourned at 1:50 pm. The members meeting followed at 2 pm on a separate zoom call.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristin Merrill, Secretary  
Cheney Cemetery Association  
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CHENEY CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS TO BE HELD VIRTUALLY  
THROUGH ZOOM

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2020 1 PM

**AGENDA**

- (1) Review minutes from the Board of Directors 2019 meeting
- (2) Review committee assignments
- (3) Review proposed grounds budget
- (4) Review 2020 donation proposal
- (5) State of the cemetery
- (6) Family tree, website
- (7) Membership and volunteer growth



## **CHENEY CEMETERY ASSOCIATION, INC. 2020**

### **DIRECTORS**

Carol L. Cheney, President  
Richard O. Cheney IV, Vice President  
Kristin Merrill, Treasurer/Secretary  
K. Dexter Cheney, IV  
John Fiske  
Andrea Learned  
Katherine C. Chappell  
Austin C. Smith  
Tom Myers

### **COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS**

Grounds  
Richard O. Cheney IV, Chair  
K. Dexter Cheney, IV  
John Fiske

#### **Investment**

John Fiske, Chair  
Austin C. Smith  
Nathaniel B. Cheney

#### **Audit**

Austin C. Smith

#### **Donations**

K. Dexter Cheney, IV  
Katherine C. Chappell  
Carol L. Cheney, Chair  
Andrea Learned  
Tom Myers

#### **Nominating**

Carol L. Cheney, Chair  
John Fiske

#### **Membership and Communications**

Carol L. Cheney, Chair  
Thomas Myers  
Andrea Learned  
Kristin Merrill



**CHENEY CEMETERY ASSOCIATION  
GROUNDS COMMITTEE  
2021 BUDGET**

	2021	BUDGET
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES:</b>		
<b>Consulting:</b>		
Willard Flowers		\$3,000.00
<b>Care of Trees:</b>		
Mountain Tree:		
Pruning: Trees & Shrubs	\$6,000.00	
Feeding	\$11,000.00	
Pest Control	\$8,000.00	
Cabling	<u>\$500.00</u>	
	\$25,500.00	
Emergency Tree Removal (Storm damage)	\$3,000.00	
Tree Replacement	\$11,000.00	
Total - Mountain Tree		\$39,500.00
<b>Care of Lawn, Shrubs &amp; Beds:</b>		
Town of Manchester: Mowing; Leaf & Snow Removal	\$6,500.00	
Town of Manchester - Water Department	\$1,000.00	
Executive Lawn Services	\$14,000.00	
Franks Landscaping - Irrigation Maintenance	\$1,200.00	
Green Carpet - Lawn Fertilization	\$2,250.00	
Misc.	<u>\$250.00</u>	
		\$25,200.00
<b>Capital Improvements:</b> Headstone Cleaning and Maintenance		\$5,000.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>		<u><u>\$72,700.00</u></u>



## Cheney Cemetery Association Cemetery Update 9.24.2020

After six months of staying at, or close to, home (well worth it to remain Covid-free!) I was very happy that we could meet Thursday morning and walk through the Cemetery together in such lovely weather. Despite the unusually dry and warm summer we've experienced, the Cemetery looks healthy overall and the lawn is surprisingly green, thanks to Rick's attention to the irrigation system. The large Dogwood branch that fell into the Mountain Laurel in the southwest corner, where we usually park and enter the Cemetery, has been removed, and the Mountain Laurel fortunately had less damage than I expected, and now looks healthy. There is a three to four foot section of that branch remaining on the Dogwood, which Barry will have removed since its upfacing open core may trap water, leading to disease or rot.

The aged and long-declining tree closest to where we park has been removed; Barry suggests replacing it with a native Shadblow tree, and I agree. The nearby Magnolia (and other Magnolias in the Cemetery) should have all suckers and water sprouts removed from their base and branches. The groundcover in the Royal Azalea planting bed includes much Poison Ivy which should be removed along with the numerous Maple seedlings.

Lots 18, 19A and B, and 20 look excellent, neatly-mulched, and with lovely Hostas. Some of the Rhododendrons and other evergreens behind the stones in these plots need to be trimmed back to avoid crowding and shading the stones. A Rhododendron should be replaced behind Knight Dexter Cheney, Jr. and III, and Ruth Lambert Cheney stones in Lot 19A.

In Lot 8, a dead Rhododendron should be replaced behind Frederick, Carrie, Arthur J., and John Sherwood Cheney stones.

In areas needing replacement or "filler" Hemlocks/other Conifers, Barry recommends planting young trees in Spring (ground is too dry now); he will be looking for them through the winter.

On the East side, the Cheney Oak is growing very well, as is the Paperbark Maple. The Star Magnolia in the same bed as the Paperbark Maple was slightly wind-damaged; Barry thinks it's okay and will keep an eye on it. Kevin will fluff the mulch in the large beds to be sure it doesn't become too compacted to absorb rain (when it comes!). He will also continue to remove/control the Sassafras on the eastern border, and he'll trim damaged branches in the Witch Hazel on the Southeast border and cut back the Lamium (groundcover) near the Dexter Cheney stone. Kevin noted that some of the Dogwood and other saplings in the wooded area along the North fence could be transplanted to fill in open spots.

The northwest corner is much-improved, but new Oriental Bittersweet vines are coming back FAST, as they are wont to do. Removing the vines **with their roots** should be done as soon as possible, and every time they appear again, wherever they are found.

As always, I welcome your questions. With my best wishes to all that we stay healthy and safe through this challenging time,

Alice



## Report on Cheney Family Fund Donations for 2020

We continue to work with the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving to make grants in Manchester and the Hartford area in keeping with the Cheney Cemetery Association's philosophy of supporting education and the arts in a way that supports education and the arts and the perpetuation of the Cheney legacy in its physical and programmatic presence. Covid has devastated nonprofit budgets. Notes from the grantees written during the request phase are included here to give you more information about the recipients. —Carol Cheney

**\$21,347**      **Total in the Cheney Family Fund for distribution in 2020 (market value of fund \$591,051.23)**

**\$1,000**      **Hartford Artisans Weaving Center**

Thanks very much for your recommendation of a \$1,000 gift to the Weaving Center from The Cheney Family Fund. It has been a difficult year for all, but we are fine. Your grant in 2019, and one this year, would again support the weaving program for visually impaired individuals and seniors. As part of the strategic plan, the Center entered into a two-year lease with the Manchester Historical Society at the Cheney Machine Shop to expand programming for floor loom weaving classes and to bring together Hartford and Manchester weavers for a Show and Tell event of finished work. We are going ahead with our classes in Manchester at the Manchester Historical Society and former Cheney Mills. The first class starts on Thursday, Sept 17. With your \$1,000 gift, we would use the money to pay the rent for the Manchester space, and compensate the Manchester weaving teacher. — *Claudia Spaulding, Treasurer, Hartford Artisans Weaving Center*

**\$3,500**      **Mary Cheney Library**

The first Cheney donation supported our Adult Summer Reading program, which has exponentially grown, becoming a mainstay in our programming. Services for adults have a positive impact on our community. With libraries being one of the few places where people can come free of charge, no questions asked, our mission to educate and entertain becomes even more crucial. We had great plans for this year, but alas, like everything else, we had to modify and slim down our plans...For your statistical purposes, we had 449 participants, 3121 total books read, with *28 Summers*, *Where the Crawdads Sing*, *Hideaway*, *Big Summer*, and *The Other Mrs.* being our top books. While being smaller, with your continued support we are able to offer programs and services to our population that we would not be able to otherwise. We are looking forward to planning a special Winter Adult Reading Program, called "Book Blizzard," as well as our continued plans to offer a "One Book One Town" program when we are able to gather in large crowds again. We would really appreciate your continued support of our Adult Summer Reading program and adult services. — *Jenn Bartlett, Librarian 2, Head of Reference*



**\$2,000**

**Howell Cheney Technical High School (PAID)**

We established the Spirit of Innovation Awards in 2017 in memory of Howell Cheney. The awards go to two deserving students selected by the faculty and carry a \$1,000 cash prize each, the amount voted on by the CCA board last year. “This year’s recipients are Caitlin Coonan and Sasha Martinez. Caitlin has chosen the Mechanical Design and Engineering Technology trade. She is a quiet leader but does a lot for the school and her community at the public library. Caitlin is also the recipient of the Excellence in Senior Trade Portfolio for displaying attributes of excellence in achievement which will facilitate future success and the Red Cross Blood Drive Volunteer award for outstanding support of the blood drives. Sasha has chosen the Culinary Arts trade. She has volunteered for every evening activity that Culinary has put forth at Cheney. She has worked at school as a Red Cross Blood Drive Volunteer and is a recipient of that award. She is also the recipient of a Culinary Art award for most outstanding culinary student and Verplanck Mentor award in recognition of service as a literacy mentor to the Verplanck Elementary students. In her community, Sasha has grown out her hair and donated it to Hair We Share, and so doing has helped children to maintain dignity affected by hair loss.”—*Bonnie Bell, Cheney Tech*

Prize Day was cancelled this year due to Covid. I was very disappointed not to attend, but sent the young women their framed citations, and arranged for them to receive their cash awards from the HFPG. Caitlin and Sasha both sent notes of gratitude.

**5,000**

**Manchester Community College**

This year it is especially important to support the Cheney Family Scholarships in honor of John and Linda Sutherland at Manchester Community College. Covid has wreaked havoc with institutional budgets and individuals’ ability to pay for tuition and expenses. Our gift matters. I am assured that our scholarships mean a lot to those selected by the college to receive them. For last year’s donation, Deon Doran wrote, “...Without your generosity it would not be possible for me to continue with my schooling, and for that I owe a debt of gratitude. It is an honor to receive your assistance, and the inherent responsibility that accompanies such a gift is one I do not take lightly...Your investment will not only help me, but it will help my family, my local community, and even the national economy. Cheney Family Scholarships provide a great public service by subsidizing the educational costs of students in need; helping to lift the boot off their throats.” And Denise Harned wrote, “Thank you once again for the merit scholarship that was awarded to me for the fall semester. It was put to great use paying for books, online access codes, and fees. My current grade is a 4.0 for this semester. I am planning on continuing my studies in the spring and can now see the light at the end of the tunnel.”

**2,500**

**Connecticut Historical Society**

“Last year we submitted a proposal to digitize and upload digital records relating to George Cheney’s World War 1 material. Due to the shutdown for Covid, the construction of our digitization lab was put on hold. Construction should be complete in a few weeks, and we anticipate being up and running by





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Thanksgiving. CHS would like to continue the work proposed last year, to digitize and make available on the Connecticut Digital Archive, previously cataloged material in the Cheney Family Collection. A high priority is digitizing photographs in the collections created by Philip Cheney and Horace Bushnell Cheney. There are thousands of photographs in these collections, so we would work on these items until the funds are expended. A \$2500 grant would support approximately 130 hours of work.”—Andrea Rapacz, Director of Collections

**3,000**

### **Manchester Historical Society**

Peter Millett is the chairman of the Homestead Committee, which oversees the upkeep, exhibits, and building, along with open houses, tours, special events and other programming, including the heritage gardens. A large number of volunteers have contributed dozens of hours of time. I asked Peter what some of the priorities are identified by his committee that we might support.

“GARDENS: We have three gardens—Electa's herb garden (within the curved stone wall), the 1818 Homestead Kitchen garden, and a new planting of roses honoring the flowers and art of our last resident, Dorothy Cheney. These gardens also focus on women of the Homestead, their lives and activities, including the role of Native American women in our "Three Sisters" section of the kitchen garden and their contribution to early American survival. There are always needs in the gardens involving a financial outlay.

“SHADES: We want to replace 20 shades throughout museum (not apartment),s the current shades are getting old and are of medium quality. In addition, there is more sunlight on the south side due to the tree being removed last September. We're hoping to get higher quality, light reducing and insulating shades. We can install them ourselves.

“SIGNAGE: We would like to install exterior signage for self-guided tours of the Homestead gardens and buildings, possibly also in braille. The cost would be +/- \$1,500 for 3-5 professionally produced signs and post mounting materials. This would allow visitors the ability to have independent outside tours, and possibly make the history more handicapped accessible.

“Two additional signs with introductory information by the entrance to the Keeney Schoolhouse and Homestead would be useful.

The signs would provide visitors the fundamental information, and docents and interior signs/info will provide more in-depth history. With Covid, we are limiting our direct contact, and this would assist us in continuing to promote our interesting history.”—*Peter Millett*

A side note to this grant recommendation: I made a personal \$15,000 grant to MHS earlier in the year for the rebuild of the organization's website using a professional designer and my pro bono time as project manager. It became apparent in our Discovery meetings that MHS had work to do in clarifying its mission and programs as well as instituting policies and guidelines to protect its assets and to operate as efficiently as possible. This would be necessary before we can pinpoint the site plan



and creative elements of the site. They have undertaken this work, and we will move forward when they have things pulled together. The MHS also continues to receive a \$25,000 annual gift from the Alexandra and John Preston Foundation.

**2,500**

### **Wadsworth Atheneum**

Casey Mallinckrodt is the Objects Conservator at the Wadsworth Atheneum, where she oversees care of the museum's highly varied object collections and collections care issues. She wrote, "As you know, conservation responsibilities vary widely depending on whether the task is evaluation of an incoming loan, creating stable housing for fragile materials or—the core of our work—carrying out the extensive examination, technical analysis and documentation that precedes and is a part of treatment.

"The Wadsworth conservation studio lacks a high-quality stereomicroscope mounted on a flexible arm stand for close examination, documentation, and treatment of objects. We had previously identified this as a high priority designated for object conservation and available for the examining paintings and other media if needed. The acquisition of a stereomicroscope would facilitate examination of textiles and garments that have been underserved in recent years, of special interest to the Cheney Family.

Leica microscopes are widely used in museum conservation labs and—if we later add a camera—have developed photographic software well suited to our needs. Floor models of the type we want can be acquired at 15% to 20% discount. Retail cost for scope and arm stand +/- \$3,500. Thank you for your consideration and your ongoing support."

**1,500**

### **Manchester Little Theatre**

*Dwayne Harris, Director of the Manchester Little Theatre* at Cheney Hall writes: COVID-19 abruptly halted all Little Theatre of Manchester's programming in March. Since then, we have worked diligently to ensure the organization would not sustain an irrecoverable financial loss this year. The choices we were forced to make were difficult and painful, but we mitigated nearly all the potentially devastating loss.

As we shift from survival to recovery planning, we are still faced with incredibly difficult decisions about when to return to programming, how to do it safely, and what steps will ensure we don't waste our all-the-more-valuable resources, especially that of our human capital—LTM's nearly 150 active volunteers.

At this time, it is highly infeasible for us to present any indoor programming, so we have decided to shift toward attempting outdoor events this fall, starting with a concert series in our parking lot. We plan to present 3–4 evenings of intimate concerts that require little to no amplification and can serve about 60–75 patrons, all while maintaining the federal and state mandates and suggestions for keeping our guests, volunteers, and artists safe.



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There are three goals of this concert series program:

1. To present high quality entertainment to our primary audience. Our patrons are generally age 65 or older and have little-to-no access to the arts outside of the Greater Manchester area—for many, we are their primary cultural interaction each year.
2. To utilize the proceeds from these concerts to help secure our 2021 season. The realistic scenario forecasts no programming for half a year, so it is critical that we find ways to mitigate that resulting deficit.
3. To engage with the general public. We will remind our community that LTM is still around, relevant, and has plans to welcome them all back to Cheney Hall soon.

As part of this program, the general public will utilize and have access to our chairs and tables and the inside of our building (for restroom access). The proper sanitation of our space and our equipment is an area we have little expertise.

With the Cheney Family Fund's support LTM will be able to hire an outside firm to develop, to provide equipment and products for, and to train our staff on a proper cleaning and sanitation regimen. The benefits of this expertise will last well beyond this planned concert series, but it is critical that we have it in place before moving forward with the program.”

**21,000 TOTAL**

**Respectfully submitted, Carol Cheney**