



**New England Cemetery Association
55th Annual Frederick R. Laffond Cemetery
Management Seminar
December 8th – 10th, 2025
The Publick House, Sturbridge, MA**

PROGRAM

Monday, December 8

11:30 – 12:45 p.m. Registration

12:45 – 1:00 p.m. Welcome Remarks & Introduction of First Timers

1:00 p.m. **Historic Cemeteries Facing the Future**

Presented by Regina Harrison, Mount Auburn Cemetery

As cremation rates steadily rise throughout North America, cemeteries are being handed an opportunity to add exciting and appealing burial spaces using pieces of land that would previously have been seen as problematic or unusable. Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge and Watertown, Massachusetts has embraced this opportunity in a variety of cemetery development projects, ranging from simple and budget-friendly to complex and high end. Each project is designed to appeal to today's purchasers, and several solved maintenance issues while also improving the existing landscape and bringing in significant revenue. In this talk we will look at several types of projects and how they fit into Mount Auburn's landscape, sharing ideas that you can take back to your own cemetery. Not all these projects will work in all landscapes but with eyes open to cremation, you will find new potential in your own landscape.

2:00 p.m. **Burial Trends and Consumer Expectations in 2025**

Presented by Nick Timpe, webCemeteries

How are burials trending across the country and in New England in 2025? In this session, Nick Timpe, CEO of webCemeteries and Dean of ICCFA University College of Technology, will provide a quick evaluation of real burial trend data, and discuss consumer expectations that feed into these trends. We will explore how cemeteries can leverage technology to better reach families and meet their modern needs.

3:00 p.m. Break

3:15 p.m. Introduction of Suppliers

3:30 p.m. **Cemetery Trivia**

Presented by Karin & Kristin Sprague, Karin Sprague Stone Carvers

Attendees will be broken into groups and given the opportunity to show off their cemetery knowledge by competing in "Cemetery Trivia."

4:30 p.m. Free Time

6:00 p.m. Social Hour and Dinner

Tuesday, December 9

8:00 a.m. Registration

8:50 a.m. Welcome Remarks

9:00 a.m. **This is My Cemetery**

Presented by Patrick Healy, Green Mount Cemetery

Patrick will share with you the unique characteristics and challenges that Green Mount Cemetery in Montpelier, VT presents and how, through his creativity, he has been able to meet the needs and desires of the families he serves. This includes incorporating green burials and a more natural landscape into his municipal cemetery.

10:00 a.m. **Essentials of Human Resources in the 21st Century**

Presented by David R. Nichols, Sr., Quality Transitions Inc.

Explore what is necessary in this changing world to navigate success for all aspects of Human Resources as we move through the 21st Century. We will also share the necessary steps in the hiring process in making the "right hire."

11:00 a.m. Morning Break, Supplier Introductions and State Updates

11:30 a.m. **Vicarious Grief: What Deathcare Workers Need to Know**

Presented by Wilson Hood, Grief Counselor, HopeHealth

While education about grief in general is often limited, education about the impact of vicarious grief-the grief we experience in response to another person's direct loss-is even less common. Deathcare workers of all kinds, including cemetery workers, are exposed regularly to the grief process, both of those they serve directly and the general public, and are therefore at a higher risk of experiencing vicarious grief. Despite the silence around it due to both lack of education and social stigma, vicarious grief can have a profound impact on our wellbeing and on the wellbeing of our colleagues. In this session, we will learn more about vicarious grief, share our experiences, and discuss best practices for managing and integrating our vicarious grief into both our professional and personal lives.

12:30 p.m. Lunch

1:30 p.m. **Monument Restoration: Finding Practical Solutions to Common Problems**

Presented by Jonathan Appell, Atlas Preservation

Discussion will focus on using the best techniques to SAFELY raise, reset, and preserve monuments, which Jonathan Appell has taught to more people than anyone in the industry during his 48-state tour that has taken him to over 200 free events in just the last 5 years alone. Mr. Appel's goals are to eliminate extraneous information and keep things as simple as possible in his quest to further professionalize the field.

3:00 p.m. Break and Time with Suppliers

3:30 p.m. **Roundtable Discussion: "What was your worst day on the job?"**

Attendees will discuss the most difficult situations they have been in throughout their careers, as well as how these issues were ultimately resolved.

4:30 p.m. Free Time

6:00 p.m.

Social Hour and Dinner

Back by popular demand, we are pleased to have

A Completely Different Note

perform for us again.

A Completely Different Note (CDN) is UConn's oldest lower voice a cappella group, founded in 1999. In the last 25 years, CDN has prided itself on its' musical prowess and diversity, tackling songs from artists like James Taylor to Hozier. Delivering performances across Connecticut and the country, CDN always brings the character and charm that has defined them over the years. The group recently released its' sixth studio album titled "Noteworthy."

Wednesday, December 10

7:00 – 9:00 a.m.

Breakfast and Farewell

Sponsorship Opportunities

Breakfast Table 4 Available @ \$200
(Tues/Wed)

Lunch Table 4 Available @ \$250
(Tuesday)

Cocktail Hour 2 Available @ \$300
(Mon/Tues)

Friends of NECA 15 Available @ \$150

All Sponsors will be listed with their Company or Cemetery Name & Logo on the Display Boards throughout the event and listed on the NECA website.

