

Newton Burying Grounds Restoration Project
Historic Newton
December 4, 2009

Project Summary:

To stabilize, secure, restore, preserve, program, and improve access to Newton's historic East Parish Burying Ground, West Parish Burying Ground, and South Burying Ground.

We have repaired or restored hundreds of gravestones at East Parish, West Parish and South Burying Grounds and have completed all of the contracted work for gravestones at these sites. We have addressed major tree-related problems at each of these historic burying grounds, making them safe, both for visitors and for the monuments in them. We have made progress at all three sites – in reclaiming and stabilizing the landscape, repairing gravestones, and increasing programming. Walking tours, clean-up days, and a focused lecture have been a few of the programmatic highlights this year.

While we have made steady progress, there remains much to be done, especially in regards to the tomb restoration. In 2009 we successfully dispersed an RFP to consulting engineers and reviewed experienced applicants showing expertise in the field. We have entered into contract with the highly qualified Structures North Consulting Engineers, Inc. at a cost not to exceed \$47,750. Early this winter we expect completion of their condition reports and their assistance in the development of an RFP to select contractors to restore the tombs. Execution of the sensitive tomb restoration is expected to commence, and hopefully be completed, in 2010. The installation of new fences, gates, and signage is also on the horizon. Development of new programming, continued research, and interpretation is ongoing.

To date we have stayed within or under budget for all contracted work. The remainder of our budget needs to be reordered and realigned. Some components that were slated for Phase 2b and Phase 3 in the original plan may be moved up to cover the entirety of costs for tomb restoration. The preliminary report from Structures North suggests that the tomb restoration may cost between \$200,000 - \$300,000. We have not yet had the opportunity to discuss their findings and recommendations. Once this meeting occurs the Burying Grounds Committee and CPA representatives will then convene to review and update the budget in detail.