

# MIDDLETOWN LANDMARKS COMMISSION

One Kings Highway  
Middletown, NJ 07748-2594



Settled in 1664  
“Proud of Our Rich Heritage”

## Restoration of Middletown's Historic Cemeteries

Restoring an historic cemetery takes patience and work, but it is a very satisfying experience. Here is some information that will help you.

### A. Safety first

- Please be careful if you use garden tools
- Please be careful of the headstones and footstones

These cemeteries are 150-300 years old. The headstones and footstones are priceless and reveal where people are interred. Some of them have fallen down and will be easily broken if someone walks on them, so be on the lookout for headstones and footstones on the ground.

- When your group begins to clean up, it is important to clear the area with care. Small handle tools such as clippers or larger handheld tools can be used to make the initial clearing until headstones and footstones are located.
- DO NOT use lawn mowers, weed whackers, and machetes. Many of the headstones are made of sandstone which can disintegrate just by rubbing your hand across the stone. These lawn tools would cause severe damage to these headstones.
- DO NOT use weed killers. As much as we would all like to see the weeds go away forever, weed killers contain harmful products that will deteriorate these ancient headstones.

If the headstone has fallen on the ground and is not heavy, you and your other helpers may try to erect it in the ground. If it is too heavy, leave it alone.

### B. Type of work to be done in the cemetery

- Clean out brush, weeds, vines
- Put downed branches (that can be easily lifted) near the curb and call the road department at Kanes Lane for pick-up

### C. People involved in the restoration

- Adults MUST be involved in the restoration and must be in attendance when

work is being performed in the cemetery. If children are involved in the restoration, please impress upon them the historic significance of the cemetery and that they should be on their best behavior in the cemetery.

- There shouldn't be more than 20-25 people in there at one time. These historic cemeteries are small, and too many people working in there at one time can cause injury to the headstones and footstones.

D. It is very important that you contact the Landmarks Commission of Middletown when you **begin** and **finish** the work. You may contact Roseann Eteson, Landmarks Commissioner, at [historic-cemeteries@middletownnj.org](mailto:historic-cemeteries@middletownnj.org).

E. The cemetery will look wonderful when you are finished restoring it, but mother nature will send her vines and weeds in there to take over the cemetery again. If you can go in the cemetery once or twice a year for maintenance, the cemetery will continue to be a historic beauty.

The Landmarks Commission is very grateful for your interest in restoring one of Middletown's Historic Cemeteries, but we and the township are not responsible for any injury that one might experience while working in the cemetery.