



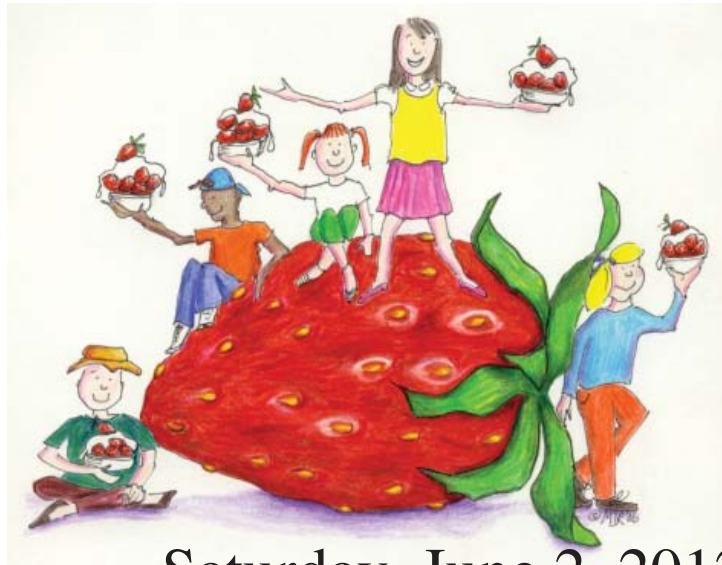
Bedford Cemetery Views

A Public-Private Partnership

The mission of the Friends of Town of Bedford Cemeteries is to support the restoration and maintenance of the four cemeteries

May 2012

STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL



Saturday, June 2, 2012

10:00 am- 2:00 pm

Bedford Town Pool Field

JUST SOME OF THE EXHIBITORS THAT WILL BE PRESENT:

EXHIBITORS

Bedford Fire Department
Bedford Police Department
Bedford Mom's Club
Bedford Historical Society
Bedford Library
Bedford Village Common
Bedford Women's Club
Bedford Mothers Club
Bedford Lions Club
Destination Imagination –
Born Wild

New Hope Christian
Fellowship
Animal Rescue League

CRAFTERS

Craft Workers Guild
Carol Davis
Sue Stretch
Athena Chisholm
Sumner Bennett
Diane Phelps

Martha Brisk
Joan Major

ARTIST

Bill Earnshaw
Connie Aro

Happenings...

Gravestone Cleaning Morning
Saturday June 9th
9:00 am
Bedford Center Cemetery
Church Road

Happened...

VINNIE TOLAND
Speaker at Cemetery Tour

On April 14th 75 people joined cemetery tour to hear about many of the Civil War Veterans buried in the Bedford Center Cemetery.

In the fall the Friends will present a tour at the Old Bedford Cemetery on Back River Road. Featured will be veterans of the Revolutionary War buried there.

THE UTTERLY AMAZING LIFE OF GEORGE ORR

compiled by Julia Schappals

Think all of Bedford's early residents were boring farmers? George Orr was an eighteenth century Indiana Jones. Born in Bedford in 1734, of Scot-Irish stock, he was orphaned as an infant and raised by an aunt in what is now Windham. At age 16, he went to sea on a merchant vessel for what he thought was a voyage of one year. A military squabble broke out in Europe, the British Navy "impressed" (forced) him into service aboard a Man-o-War for three years. After the squabble ended, he was paid and discharged honorably in London. Rather than spend his money on a coach, he walked to Edinburgh, Scotland and sailed to America. He returned to Bedford, purchased land but needed money to make the last payment so he returned to sea on a merchant vessel, intending to return in one year. However the Seven Years War began on his outbound voyage and he was again impressed into the British Navy for several years, seeing action in the Mediterranean. In a stroke of luck, a captain of another British warship received orders to sail to America. That captain, fearing the Yankees impressed into service aboard his ship might desert upon arrival in America, asked the captain of Orr's ship to exchange the Yankees for Europeans. Orr spoke with a Scottish brogue, pretended to be Scottish born, volunteered to be exchanged and soon arrived in Portsmouth, New Hampshire where he promptly jumped ship. The Navy hotly pursued him, threatening death for desertion, but he was hidden by friends in Londonderry until the ship left. Despite his forced service in the British Navy, notorious for its harsh discipline, "he always spoke of his Naval officers with great respect and said their strict discipline was indispensable and that he himself 'never got a single scratch from the boatswain's cat'" (referring to the whip called the "cat-o-nine-tails").

As nobody had heard from George for years, his lands had been sold, and he was now penniless. The women of Londonderry made clothing for him and he hired himself out as a farm laborer in Bedford. But he knew little about farming and needed money but did not dare to return to sea. Instead, he chose the very dangerous life of a trader on the frontier and made yearly trading trips by canoe from Albany, through Iroquois country to Canada, then up to Indian traders in Makinaw (modern Michigan). After several years, he purchased a farm in Bedford, married Margaret Wallace and had several children


Not destined for a quiet life, during the Revolution, he joined the Continental Army. He served under General Arnold (of later infamy) at the ferocious battle of Lake Champlain in October, 1776 in which the Americans fought a huge British fleet seeking to recapture Fort Ticonderoga. George served as a boatman and suffered a hand wound but participated in the incredibly daring night escape of Arnold's surviving forces under the noses of the British and fought in the running battle the next day. Although the American fleet was obliterated, the action delayed the British and save Fort Ticonderoga and Crown Point from recapture. On the British side, the battle distinguished a young midshipman, Edward Pellew who is featured in the fictional "Horatio Hornblower" book and television show.

After the war, George returned to Margaret worked his farm in Bedford until his death on October 18, 1807. George is buried in the old cemetery on Back River Road.

Many Thanks...


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 (through December 2012)

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Friends of Town of Bedford Cemeteries
 24 North Amherst Road, Bedford, NH 03110

(Please disregard if you are already a member)