



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

March 2011

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Bedford Cemetery Windmill

By Emily Weiss
Head of Reference Services
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and Doris Peck Spurway

It may be hard to believe, but a water tower topped by a windmill used to tower over Bedford Center Cemetery. The windmill was erected as part of Frances F. Woodbury's cemetery restoration efforts.



By 1873 the cemetery had fallen into disrepair. Current and former residents came together to beautify the cemetery. Beginning in 1893, Frances F. Woodbury continued these improvements. According to the 1903 edition of the History of Bedford, "The great renovation began which made the desert bud and blossom like the rose."

Because the newly planted trees, shrubs, flowers, and grass needed a water source, workers dug a well. A fifty foot high stone tower with a windmill on top capped the well. This tower could hold 3000 gallons of water. Frances Woodbury donated funds for the tower and designed it. The stone was donated by Freeman R. French, who owned a nearby quarry. The structure cost \$3,000.

In 1952, the windmill machinery was removed when electricity was installed in the tower. Eleven years later, in 1963, the structure was dismantled down to the base. The hexagonal remains of the once proud tower were capped over.

In Memory

Former Bedford Cemetery Trustees



Ralph Wiggin, Jr.


February 23, 1923
March 5, 2011




Don Folsom

July, 1925
March 14, 2011

Many Thanks...

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Bedford Cemetery Spotlight Thomas and Susanna Chandler

compiled by Julia Schappals

Thomas Chandler was the grandson of one of Bedford's early founders. He was born in Bedford 1772 . In addition to a farm, he owned The White Horse Tavern, a popular stopping point in Bedford for the many wagon drivers supplying the growing mills along the Merrimack. He and his wife, Susanna, had strict rules for the tavern: no more than three per bed and without boots and prohibited spitting tobacco on the floor. He was educated in the public school in Bedford (in the building Matthew Patten helped to build) and was a man of many traits. He was a sought after fiddler for parties and dances, became a justice of the peace in 1808 and made a captain in the militia in 1815. In 1818 and 1827 he was elected to the state legislature. He was elected to the US Congress as a Jacksonian Democrat, serving from 1829 to 1833. His wife, Susanna, was born in 1772 and was known as a friendly but "no nonsense" sort. Every September, on the first day of school, Susanna sat outside the tavern and give apples to children as they trudged home. Susanna died in 1857 and Thomas died in 1866. They are buried side by side in the Old Center Cemetery.