

Marblehead Cemetery Commission
Election 2023
Candidate: Pam Peterson

Qualifications

I am seeking the office of Cemetery Commissioner; I was elected last year to complete an unexpired term and am now seeking a complete 3-year term. I am a historian, and have long been interested in local, Marblehead history. Cemeteries are a part of our history, full of stories of lives lived. Each grave holds memories, and the Cemetery Department has the important job of maintaining and protecting Waterside and Harbor View cemeteries.

I have served on the Old Burial Hill Oversight Committee since 2008, which has been a great opportunity to learn about the site, help facilitate the maintenance and restoration of many of the graves and learn about the history of Marblehead and Burial Hill.

I also serve on the Marblehead Historical Commission and have been involved in many projects related to preserving and exhibiting objects that represent Marblehead history.

Goals

Waterside and Harbor View Cemeteries are well run and well maintained by the Cemetery Department. They are active cemeteries, but they are also historic. Established in 1853, Waterside cemetery is 169 years old. The records associated with the cemeteries are important documents for both individuals and families, as well as the history of the town. I am pleased that the records are being digitized and will be available to the public for research. Making these records accessible is my primary goal and interest. As this is already underway, I would see my role as supporting in any way needed.

Challenges

Challenges for the Cemetery Department are primarily financial. The Department's need is for more maintenance staff and assistance.

Upkeep is a never-ending task, and there are plans to expand the existing cemetery spaces and add more spaces for cremated remains.

Future Direction of Cemeteries

Interestingly, I think there could be a trend back to earlier cemetery concepts. At one time cemeteries were a place for families to spend an afternoon walking, visiting family graves, admiring various monuments and being outside. If cemeteries are seen as green spaces, suitable for quiet activities, this could be a great future trend.