

PRESS RELEASE:

The Wading River Cemetery Association is pleased and honored to announce that we have been awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation. The funds will primarily be used to restore the monuments at the Oliver's Hill Cemetery located on Sound Road. The grant will also allow us to restore, at the Wading River Cemetery located on N. Wading River Road, a Revolutionary War veteran's monument and another which dates back to the early 1800s. Work at both cemeteries is expected to start the beginning of this September. "Restoring these historic monuments is an important step in preserving the history of Wading River and it will allow the public, when visiting the cemeteries, to have a more enriched experience," said Fred Finter, President of the Wading River Cemetery Association.

"The Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation is pleased to make this award. Our historic cemeteries are a great historic resource, not only with genealogy, but also as material culture documents touching on various themes including religious progressions, economic trends and civic records." said Kathryn M. Curran, Executive Director of the Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation.

It has been written that Oliver's Hill Cemetery (Circa 1690) is one of the oldest on Long Island. The site of this cemetery was originally the Hudson family burial ground. Historical records show that "the graves of both the patriot Henry Hudson, who fought for the colonies during the Revolution, and Major Frederick Hudson, known for his British sympathy, are in the cemetery." Henry Hudson's monument is clearly visible while Major Hudson's monument is yet to be found. Major Hudson's son, Oliver, for whom the hill is named, is also buried here. His stone has been "missing" for many years and was just recently discovered under the soil. It will be one of many historic monuments that are going to be restored.

The Wading River Cemetery was originally established on March 11, 1847 when The Religious Society of Wading River, which at the time referred to the Congregational Church, purchased one and one-half acres from Sylvester Miller for \$125 for the purpose of creating the cemetery. A second adjacent parcel was purchased on July 14, 1871 from Thomas Coles and the final parcel was purchased from the Coles' estate for the five acres which exists today. The cemetery was operated by the Religious Society until February 27, 1904, when it was deeded to the Wading River Cemetery Association.

The Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation, established in 1987, primarily supports the study of Long Island history and its role in the American experience. Robert David Lion Gardiner was, until his death in August 2004, the 16th Lord of the Manor of Gardiner's Island, NY. The Gardiner family and their descendants have owned Gardiner's Island since 1639, obtained as part of a royal grant from King Charles I of England. The Foundation is inspired by Robert David Lion Gardiner's personal passion for New York history.

The Wading River Cemetery Association is a nonprofit organization, governed by a Board of Trustees, that remains dedicated to maintaining both of these historic cemeteries, both of which have been recognized with Landmark Status by Riverhead Town. While both cemeteries provide residents with a vision into the past of Wading River's history and founding families, the Wading River Cemetery, since it is still an active cemetery, represents the past, present and future.