

THE HEADSTONE

February 2023, Vol. I, Issue II

As work moves along on both the cemetery and the website, so does time. Here we are in February. As I start to write this issue of the *The Headstone*, I pause and wonder where fall went! I appreciate the passage of time, for that is why we work so feverishly at times, often way past our normal bedtime, on genealogical challenges. Time has hidden some things from us that we will never find, but there are still many historical treasures left that hard work and persistence can and will reveal and preserve. I guess that's why we and so many like us search for those time-hidden historical treasures. The cemetery project has led me to meet others that share the same passion and for this newsletter, at least part of it, I will "introduce" you to several of these people.

It was historian, author, and CEO of Lot's Wife Publishing, Nancy Sorrells, that pointed me to Dr. Carole Nash, Professor, School of Integrated Sciences, Director, Environmental Archaeology Laboratory, James Madison University. It was Dr. Nash who pointed me to Dr. Kathleen Connor. It was the two of them that resulted in me also meeting Jan Jones, team member of the Blue and Gray Search and Rescue Group and Cindy Schroer, President of the Massanutten Chapter, Archaeological Society of Virginia. And yes, they all came to Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery to see just what they could do to help us, and maybe satisfy their passion in the process. It was June 20, 2022. Virginia State Senator Emmett Hanger and his wife Sharon also came to the cemetery for that first visit. His great-great grandfather was David Ott Hanger, reported far and wide as being buried at Dutch Hollow, yet one of our mystery graves yet to be discovered.



Pre-cemetery visit briefing. A group I dubbed "The Cemetery Scientists"

Dr. Nash assessed the cemetery and informed me that she would develop a research plan for the cemetery, and the following was that plan, just as she laid it out to me.

I'm touching base with you about possible work at the cemetery this fall:

**As a way of keeping track of your progress, the first step is mapping the cemetery and its features. We can do this with survey-grade GPS -- we have a high-end unit with antenna that gives us sub-meter accuracy. In fact, we just got a new unit that I'd like to try out. This work would require us to sit down with you so we can better understand the layout of the cemetery and how mapping will further your research. I'm thinking it will take several visits to complete this, as we will input information from the stones as we map them: surname/given name; date of birth; date of death; military service; headstone shape; headstone material; symbolism; notes. Special family markers have their own categories.*

We will also map depressions (more on this in a minute), trees, ornamental plantings that are visible at the time, fences, etc. This work will create two products: high accuracy map and searchable spreadsheet that you can use for research.

**Kathleen Connor would like to bring out her dogs again, if that's OK, and we'll also map their 'hits.'*

**Once the maps are made, we can pinpoint areas that are good candidates for ground penetrating radar. Given the size of the cemetery, we'll divide it into study areas -- it's going to take a while to get the entire thing done, so we will want to figure out which areas are in greatest need of attention. This is where we'll bring in the information about the depressions I mentioned above, as well as the dog hits. The GPR will help us test their findings, and we'll all learn a lot.*

I'm glad to talk with you about this. I do hope that you have thought some about Nancy's suggestion of starting a non-profit for the cemetery, and I'm also wondering if there is a Hanger family association of some kind that might be willing/able to donate toward the cemetery's upkeep. For example, I have worked with the Reverend Anthony Jacob Henckel National Family Association on a project at Fort Hinkle in Riverton, WV.

Thank you again for all you're doing and for hosting us in June! Carole

Now that is what I call a research plan. Dr. Kathleen Conner has been back since this plan was developed and she did more work with her cadaver dog, Seamus.

So where are we now? Dr. Connor and her highly skilled canines identified fifteen potential gravesites during the first visit in June. On her second visit on July 25th, Seamus located nine more for a total of twenty-five. Dr. Connor believes there are many more graves to be located, but during both visits, especially the second one, the summer heat would not allow for a long session with the dogs.



Dr. Kathleen Connor with Seamus, and Jan Jones carrying flags to assist.

We are still awaiting a start date from Dr. Nash, but just as I stated at the beginning of this newsletter that I paused to ponder where the fall went, I feel certain that Dr. Nash has asked herself the same question many times since our last harvest moon.

Just to reduce the confusion of yet more symbols on the website Grave Plot Map, I did not include the cadaver hit locations there, but they are plotted on a master map. That sounds like something I need to include on the website on a separate map sooner rather than later so look for that to be completed in the near future. The Focused Surname Research files continue to grow, as does our membership. I look forward to our work ahead, and I am grateful for the accomplishments thus far.

I would be remiss if I did not share a little about Dr. Connor, taken from her bio on the website for the animal hospital where she works as a Doctor of Veterinarian Medicine.

Dr. Connor began her career early in life. One of her family chickens was attacked by a dog and when they called the local vets, no one worked on chickens! So, at ten years old, Dr. Connor performed her first surgery. Things snowballed after that. Dr. Connor graduated from Virginia Tech with a bachelor's degree in Animal Science in 1987 and from the Virginia Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine in 1991. She has lived in the Shenandoah Valley for 14 years. She

grew up horse-obsessed and planned to become an equine veterinarian, but after becoming involved with a canine Search and Rescue (SAR) team in Harrisonburg in 1996, that quickly faded.

Currently, Dr. Connor is involved with Blue and Gray SAR Dogs, where she is the training director. She has also served as the president of the team and has had the opportunity to travel both nationally and internationally. She and her SAR dog, Finn, have gone to New Orleans after Katrina and to the jungles of Guyana, South America to search for a missing plane. Her extreme interest in SAR has caused her to become a more canine sports-oriented veterinarian. Dr. Connor has been trained in Veterinary Acupuncture and plans to pursue training in Veterinary Chiropractics. At this time, she is owned by her five Labrador retrievers, two horses, and five cats.

Website Updates:

Focused Research

George Stuart Hanger 1856-1926

Henry Swortzel 1815-1882

Ernest Lynwood Hanger, Sr. 1878-1959

Library / Archives

1979 Virginia DHR survey of McKamy Schoolhouse No. 7 in Dutch Hollow

Over 250 Obituaries & Death Notices

Passenger Lists for the Ships *Brothers* in 1750 and *Robert and Alice* in 1740, both to Philadelphia from Rotterdam. Johan Melchoir Hangerer on the Robert and Alice. Phillip Holl (Hull) on the *Brothers*. Ship *Neptune* 1746 carrying George & Johannes Kauffeld. The *Ann Galley* carrying Johaness Ott 1746.

New Category – “Life In Dutch Hollow” 19th century newspaper articles about day-to-day events

Cemetery Records

Old Providence Church New Cemetery - 1301 Burial Records added. Photos to be added in Spring/Summer.

Until the next newsletter, happy searching. And remember, if you get lost in you research and become bewildered, don't fret, sooner or later your will come to your census.

Glenn Hanger

President, Dutch Hollow Hanger Cemetery