

Restoration work at graveyard upsets custodian group

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Inspecting: Keith Dubois, Denny Richardson and E Mcneal Stovell stand in the Tucker's Town Methodist Community Graveyard which has been undergoing restoration work. ((Photo by Glenn Tucker))

The Tucker's Town Historical Society (TTHS) are looking for answers after claiming they were left out of the loop in discussions between the Marsden First United Methodist Church and Dr Edward Harris of the National Museum of Bermuda to restore a sacred cemetery.

The Old Tucker's Town graveyard is on the Tucker's Point golf course and holds the remains of past residents of the area.

Work is being done at the site to remove the false sarcophagi and to extend a portion of the eastern wall under the supervision of Dr Harris and overseas archeologists which begun Monday.

The Tucker's Town Historical Society are the active custodians of the interest of the descendants of Tucker's Town that have been moved out of the residence in 1923, and believe that they should have been included in an meetings.

"We represent the people that lived here before, therefore we should have been in any discussions that were held in regards to the cemetery," said TTHS chairman Denny Richardson.

"They have a back hoe at the site and that is much different from a mattock or shovel.

"When did they make up their minds to actually this procedure because they had previously said that they would sit down with us to discuss anything that they would be doing and it was joint responsibility by both parties to be together in any decision.

"This hasn't happened and we are now trying to get to the bottom of this."

Pastor Joseph Whalen, of the Marsden First United Methodist Church, however, insists that the church nor the trustees owe anything to the TTHS and agreed to work being done on the graveyard with the Rosewood Tucker's Point (RTP) and Dr Harris.

During a memorial service held on October 1st of last year, Dr Harris made a presentation on the ground-penetrating x-ray of the cemetery and the immediate area that will been carried out, while greetings were made by managing director of RTP, Brian Young.

"They're not responsible for the graveyard, they have an interest in it but that's it," said Mr Whalen.

"The graveyard is in the custodianship of the Marsden First United Methodist Church, and because it is on the golf course at Tucker's

Point we have been negotiating with them about doing work.

"It's not like their society is responsible for the actual site or anything of that nature.

"We have been working with Dr Harris and talking to him and individuals in regards to Tucker's Point to come to an agreement that some work should be done to restore the site.

"You can't bring everyone into the loop so to speak because they aren't the principle players in determining what happens.

"Information should be given out in due time and that was going to be done to bring everyone up to speed, and this will still be done.

"The trustees of Marsden agreed to having the following work done by RTP for protection and preservation of the old graveyard including the late false sarcophagi being removed, the eastern wall of the cemetery being extended to include the probable graves noted in the Ground Penetrating Report, as well as the cemetery being protected by using monofilament netting supported by several tall palm trees.

"Dr Harris has been a friend of the project to protect and preserve the Old Tucker's Town Grave Yard.

"The church and RTP are profoundly grateful for his work on behalf of the interests of the broader community, which has historical ties to the graveyard."

Dr Harris added: "With the agreement of the parties and paid for by Rosewood, in August last year, we conducted a ground penetrating radar survey of the cemetery and areas surrounding it to ascertain if there are any possible graves outside the present boundary walls of the cemetery.

"A survey was also conducted within the cemetery and a number of possible graves were apparent in the graphs recorded by the radar equipment.

"As a result of that survey, some possible graves were located to the northeast of the cemetery, but no possible graves, or any other cuttings were found in other adjacent areas.

"At a meeting with Reverend Joseph Whalen and Rosewood it was agreed, at their expense, that Rosewood would extend the boundary wall of the cemetery to include those possible or probable grave sites."

OTHER PHOTOS POSTED ON RG WEBSITE:



A golf ball sits inside Tucker's Town Methodist Community Graveyard which is undergoing restoration work. ((Photo by Glenn Tucker))



Denny Richardson stands next to stones that were taken out of the Tucker's Town Methodist Community Graveyard during restoration work.

((Photo by Glenn Tucker))

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