Somerville is fortunate that its oldest cemetery still exists intact. Due to the unique historic significance of Milk Row Cemetery, visitors should be aware of several issues:

- **Free public tours are periodically scheduled. Enjoy Somerville’s heritage!**
- **Gravestone rubbings are not permitted, because they can damage the stones, which are truly irreplaceable historic artifacts.**
- **Please do not sit or lean on tombs or gravestones, since they could injure you, or shift, fall over or break.**
- **No dog-walking, skate-boarding, roller blading, picnicking or other potentially damaging activities within the cemetery are allowed. The consumption of alcoholic beverages is not permitted.**

Please report any mischievous behavior, vandalism or other relevant issues to the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission.

**THE FUTURE**

With a preservation plan in place, it is hoped that conservation and other improvement activities will soon follow. A Friends of the Cemetery Group is forming and seeking activities will soon follow. A Friends of the Cemetery Group is forming and seeking

**WHAT’S IN A NAME?**

Milk Row, now Somerville Avenue!

**CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS MONUMENT**

Civil War Soldiers Monument
(1864 Town of Somerville Annual Report)

The Civil War Soldiers Monument plot was successfully petitioned by the citizens of Somerville to take control of the cemetery in 1892, in order to ensure that the Civil War Soldiers Monument plot was improved. The City undertook many improvements, including a new iron fence along Round House on Atherton Street, donated by Enoch Robinson, locksmith and builder of the marble memorial, which is thought to be the first marble monument in the country to honor those who died in the Civil War. Erected in the summer of 1863 with the contributions of citizens, this tall marble shaft stands and is engraved with the names of 155 Somerville men who were killed in battle or died from wounds or sickness during the Civil War. Though it was originally intended as a private burial ground, friends and neighbors were often buried there with permission from the owners. Historic Preservation Commission.

**THE FUTURE**

With a preservation plan in place, it is hoped that conservation and other improvement activities will soon follow. A Friends of the Cemetery Group is forming and seeking participants. Please call the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission (617-625-6600 x2500) for more information. Contributions to aid this important historic undertaking can be made to the Milk Row Cemetery Fund at the Somerville Historic Preservation Commission.

**DOROTHY A. KELLY GAY, MAYOR**

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144 Lincoln Street, Boston MA 02111

2002

**HISTORIC OVERVIEW**

Milk Row Cemetery was designated as a Local Historic District and listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places in 1988. While this historic gem includes a collection of artifacts, it is apparent that some have been damaged. The cemetery was designated as a Local Historic District and listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places in 1988.

**A BRIEF GUIDE TO MILK ROW CEMETERY**

Somerville, Massachusetts

Established 1804

With a brief historic overview of the cemetery and the Civil War Soldiers Monument, brief descriptions of some of the significant people buried in the cemetery, some gravestone facts and guidelines for use
The deterioration of gravestones is becoming increasingly evident. Stone is subject to deterioration by natural weathering and atmospheric pollution. Porous stones are more susceptible to acid deposition than marble. The incised lettering and low relief carving on slate is often still quite clear. Some of these stones have survived in good condition. Slate's relatively smooth surface does not absorb much water and is less affected by acid rain deposition than marble. The incised lettering and low relief carving on slate is often still quite clear. However, many of these stones often show some degree of delamination, due to moisture seeping in between the bedding planes or layers of stone.

Slate: These stones were the predominant material used for grave markers through the 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries. Shaped like a doorway, they suggest passage from this world to the next. Smaller footstones in combination suggest a bed, or final resting place.

Marble and Limestone: These stones came into use during the 1810s and remained very popular through the 1870s. Marble has not endured as well as the earlier slate markers because it is very susceptible to acid deposition and other pollution damage. Most of the marble markers have lost surface detail due to acid rain and other weathering.

Granite: During the 1870s and 1880s the use of granite increased because of improved quarrying and stone carving equipment. Now the standard for grave markers, granite is relatively impervious (even more than slate) and endures quite well in outdoor environments. It is the hardest and most stable grave marker material in general use.

**Some of the Significant People Buried in Milk Row Cemetery**

The vault tombs located in the southwest corner contain the earliest burials in the cemetery. In 1947, tomb 1 temporarily housed the bodies of repatriated dead of World War II before they were buried elsewhere.

1. Samuel Tufts [d1805], was the original owner of the farmland that the cemetery was built on and was responsible for the care of 2 local schools ‘beyond the neck’ in 1781. (tomb)
2. Timothy Tufts [d1805], participated in the Revolutionary War skirmish with the British on their return from Concord in April 1775, one of the 5 original owners of the cemetery. (tomb)
3. Samuel Cutter, Lt. [date unknown], Revolutionary War veteran, was responsible for the care of 2 local schools ‘beyond the neck’ with Samuel Tufts in 1781. (tomb)
4. Nathaniel Hawkins, Esq. [d1858], was Trustee of Charlestown Free Schools in 1793, one of 5 original owners of the cemetery. (marble)
5. Thomas B. LaCount [b1822-d1876], relative of Eugene LaCount who was the creator of the Sunday School seminars called LaCount classes, or adult bible classes, which are still taught today in Methodist congregations. (granite)
6. Widow Anna Rand [d1831], whose family moved to Somerville in 1740 and became large land owners. In April of 1775, she ran to Samuel Tufts, who was busy making bullets in his basement at the time, to alert him that the British had marched down Somerville Avenue. She had been out in the late hours checking on her freshly slaughtered pig when she saw the British. Widow Rand was related through marriage to John Stone, one of the original 5 cemetery owners. (slate)
7. Mary [d1817] and Emiline [d1846] Dane, wife and daughter of Osgood, a prominent Somerville resident, lived in the oldest extant house on Somerville Ave (1846). Presentday Granite Street was the road leading to the Dane’s slate quarry. It is unknown whether Osgood is also buried in the cemetery. (marble) (Emiline's marker is missing.)
8. A British soldier, killed during the Battle of Milk Row on April 19, 1775. The bones, found elsewhere c1850, were buried by Osgood Dane in the lower part of cemetery near the end of the line of tombs. While later building a wall there, Mr. Dane found the bones and reburied them. (approximate location, no marker)
9. Samuel Kent [b1760-d1835], born in Charlestown, one of the 5 original owners of the cemetery. (marble)
10. Phineas Howe [d1852], born in Norway ME, graduated from Brown University, studied theology in Newton and Hallie Germany, and was chosen as the first pastor of First Baptist Society in Somerville. He died 4 months later. (marble)