



# Niagara-on-the-Lake

Marnie Cluckie, CAO

Rome D'Angelo, *Director*

Burial Grounds

March 21, 2023

# Background

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## Challenges:

Rural municipalities are challenged to appropriately care for abandoned/inactive cemeteries

In August 2022, the Town delegated at AMO requesting government action related to funding and legislation concerning inactive cemeteries.

## Request @ AMO:

- ❖ **Develop a program that provides funding to adequately fund the costs of taking over a cemetery and annually helps cover the ongoing costs of maintenance and care**
- ❖ **Change the legislation to provide relief to rural municipalities that cannot bear the costs downloaded to overburdened taxpayers**

# Background

There is **one (1) active** and **eleven (11) inactive cemeteries** within the municipality that are cared for by Town Staff:

- *Ball Cemetery, Hunter Road*
- *Baptist Cemetery, Virgil*
- *Chrysler Cemetery, Line 8 @ Creek Road*
- *Clement Cemetery, St. Davids*
- *Homer Cemetery, Old Hwy. 8 at Canal*
- *Negro Burial Place, Niagara-on-the-Lake*
- *River Road Cemetery, at Browns Point*
- *Servos Cemetery*
- *Sterling Cemetery, Line 6*
- *United Church Cemetery, St. Davids*
- *Steele Village Cemetery*



# Background

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- Fortunately, Niagara-on-the-Lake has passionate, dedicated residents who want to make a difference, like the **Friends of the Forgotten.**
- **FOTF** has been fundraising for the **Niagara Baptist Church Burial Ground** to help make a difference and honour those buried there.



# Friends of the Forgotten

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The Negro Burial Ground





# Tonight's Objectives

- Explain the purpose of Friends of the Forgotten
- Introduce the members of the committee
- To seek your support in principle for achieving our Vision
- To keep you informed every step of the way



# FOTF's Goals

Friends of the Forgotten was formed in order to

- bring the same level of attention, care and respect to the Niagara Baptist Church burial ground that is given to other historic sites in NOTL.
- transform the currently unremarkable state of the burial ground into a point of pride for NOTL as a respectful memorial and historical site.
- honour the parishioners buried there, their role in the town's heritage, and the importance of Black history in NOTL.



# Who Are We?

The **Friends of the Forgotten** is a group of highly motivated NOTL residents and stakeholders. We bring a diverse set of skills and experience to the task.

- George Webber
- Niki Walker
- Cheryl Morris
- Sarah Kaufman
- Rene Bertschi
- Audrey Pellett
- Betty Knight
- Jamie Knight
- Barbara Worthy
- Juliet Dunn
- Kiera Sangster





# Accomplishments to date

- Advanced communication with Town staff to offer support and develop understanding of the role FOTF can play
- Independent research into the history of the site and people buried there
- Funded the Stage 1 archeological assessment through donations from foundation members, friends, and family. The Stage 1 report is expected by the end of March.
- Established a preliminary network of funding partners to help move forward with next stages, depending on Council, Town Staff and BAO directives



## Our request

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Tonight, we are asking:

1. That Council supports FOTF in principle
2. That Council invites us to return with Town Staff to present the Stage 1 archaeological assessment when it becomes available





# Staff Recommendation

## Staff respectfully recommends that

- Council supports the Friends of the Forgotten requests to:
  - Support the FOTF in principle
  - Return to Council with Town Staff to present the findings of the Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment (AA) when it becomes available
  - Directs Staff to continue to support the FOTF's fundraising efforts (e.g., *accept donations on the Town's website & issue tax receipts*)



*\* Next steps for this project will be determined based on the results of the AA and consultation with the BAO. Staff will report back to Council with future recommendations.*



**Thank you.  
Any Questions?**