

ROCKY HILL'S CENTER CEMETERY TIMELINE

DATE		EVENT	
SEVENTEENTH CENTURY			
1637		Wethersfield burial ground first used for burials	
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY			
1730	19-Jan	Stepney Parish voted new Burying Ground at Coles Hill	The History of Ancient Wethersfield, by Henry R. Stiles, A.M., M.D., The Grafton Press, New York, 1904
1730	3-Mar	Wethersfield TM approves committee to lay out cemetery	
1731	2-Jul	Daughter of Benjamin & Mary Deming first burial in Coles Hill	
1737	31-May	Stepney Parish voted to carry on funerals among us	
1764	16-Sep	Rev. Daniel Russell, Congregational Minister died (1st CC Minister)	Rocky Hill Life, "A Walk Through History", by Barbara Wysocki (research done by Beverly Matthews), 9/2009 edition.
1776 1785	30-Nov	Rev. Burrage Merriam Congregational Minister died (2nd CC Minister) Coles Hill Cemetery expanded to southwest	Rocky Hill Life, "A Walk Through History", by Barbara Wysocki (research done by Beverly Matthews), 9/2009 edition.
1792	28-Apr	Rev. John Lewis, Congregational Minister died (3rd CC Minister)	Rocky Hill Life, "A Walk Through History", by Barbara Wysocki (research done by Beverly Matthews), 9/2009 edition.
1797	18-Jul	Dr. Joseph Higgins died	

NINETEENTH CENTURY

1800		The burying ground was widened, on the west side about 180 feet.	The History of Ancient Wethersfield, by Henry R. Stiles, A.M., M.D., The Grafton Press, New York, 1904
1804		Dr. Aaron Hosford died (believed to be the Town's first doctor)	Rocky Hill Life, "A Walk Through History", by Barbara Wysocki (research done by Beverly Matthews), 9/2009 edition.
1821		Ct. Gen, Assembly gives School Societies control of cemeteries	
1843	16-Dec	Dr. Daniel Fuller died. Practiced medicine for 39 years in RH	
1844		Susanna Shailer (1801-1844), weaver of the first cotton cloth made in Connecticut)	Wethersfield Post, "A Visit to Rocky Hill's Oldest Cemetery", by reporter Ted Simons, August 8, 1968 edition.
1847		Coles Hill Cemetery expanded to Northeast	
1848		The burying ground was extended north between the roads.	The History of Ancient Wethersfield, by Henry R. Stiles, A.M., M.D., The Grafton Press, New York, 1904
1851	16-Mar	Rev. Calvin Chapin, Congregational Minister died (4th CC Minister. Served for 54 years)	
1856		School Societies abolished by General Assembly	
1856		Stepney Society presumed to be in control of cemetery	
1858		Coles Hill Cemetery expanded to the North	
1859		The burying ground was extended further north. This extension was divided into lots of 20 by 10 feet, and sold by the single lot to the highest bidder-all expenses of lay-out and fencing covered by sales. The right of burial only was sold, the land remaining in the possession of the Town.	The History of Ancient Wethersfield, by Henry R. Stiles, A.M., M.D., The Grafton Press, New York, 1904
1886		Coles Hill Cemetery extended to the South	
1893		RH Town Meeting allows \$50.00 for repairs and improvements	
1894		Dr. Rufus W. Griswold estimated 3,000 burials to date	
1894	October	RH Town meeting receives report of \$44 spent on repair & improvements	

TWENTIETH CENTURY

Information provided by The New York Times. January 2, 1896 and December 1, 1919 editions, the website of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the website of the Schenectady Digital History Archive, the Lennox Church on the Hill Burial Grounds burial records in Lenox, Massachusetts. Minutes of the May 9, 1909 records of the Rocky Hill Cemetery Trust Fund committee, and the minutes of the October 17, 1909 records of the Rocky Hill Board of Selectmen.

Rocky Hill Life, "A Walk Through History", by Barbara Wysocki (research done by Beverly Matthews), 9/2009 edition.

Memories surface at Center Cemetery, by Melissa Miller, Herald Correspondent, New Britain Herald, 4/16/93 edition.

Story from Hartford Courant (?)

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March 19, 1971 newspaper article (Hartford Courant? New Britain Herald?)

1909		Installation of memorial gate of William H. Bradford, by his wife Anna Augusta (Dexter) Bradford. William was eighth in direct descent from William Bradford, governor of Plymouth Colony.
1917	January	Rocky Hill Cemetery Association incorporated to manage cemetery
1917	4-Jul	The flagpole in Center Cemetery was dedicated.
1919		Samuel Ashwell dies. He was the last resident who'd served the Union cause in the Civil War.
1943		Dennis McNamara dies. He was buried in the southern part of the cemetery, where the back door of his farmhouse once was. After the house burned down, he moved to West Street, but asked to be buried where his back doorstep had been on the land he once owned.
1944	24-Jun	Pvt. Horace H. Bennino was the first Rocky Hill to give his life in World War II. He was reported killed on June 24, 1944, of wounds received in action in France.
1944	6-Aug	Cpl. Frank Bennino lost his life in France on August 6, 1944.
1971	March	Vandals destroyed 23 brownstone grave markers dating back to the Revolutionary War era or before.
1979		Rocky Hill Cemetery Association turns cemetery over to the Town of RH

There was an item in the 10/24/91 Hartford Courant(?) about a deed transferring ownership of the burial grounds from the Rocky Hill Cemetery Association to the Town being filed with Town Clerk Marion Palmer earlier in the day (what day?)

1991	November 18?	Quit claim deed from RH Cemetery Association to Town of RH
1992		Center Cemetery expanded by 2.9 acres, with the addition of 2,100 new plots

TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

- 1) When was the cemetery's name changed from Cole's Hill cemetery to Center Cemetery?
 - a) Who were the Cole's? (Samuel Cole from Wethersfield?)
- 2) Research the fire of Dennis McNamara's house (see 4-16-1993 article in New Britain Herald).
- 3) Look for Ray Sweezy's comments on Center Cemetery.