

# Wellesley settlers honored with ceremony

by Linda Gerber  
Independent  
correspondent

WELLESLEY — A most unusual marker, dating from the 19th century, was honored Sunday in a special unveiling ceremony at Rushes Cemetery,

sponsored by the Wellesley Township Historical Society.

This gave the opportunity to honor not only one, but all settlers who founded the township, said past president of the society, Phyllis Kitchen. The

ceremony was the society's contribution to the Founder's Year celebrations.

The memorial being honored was a white marble tombstone in Rushes Cemetery, marking the graves of two women, both of whom were married to Dr. Samuel Bean, a pioneer doctor from Philadelphia who settled in Linwood with his wife Henrietta. After the death of his second wife, Susanna Clegg, he married Annie Wankmiller who was buried in the Strasburg Cemetery. Dr. Bean later died at sea.

The reason the tombstone is so unusual, is that there is a cryptogram inscribed in the soft marble. Decoded, the message reads,

"In memoriam. Henrietta, 1st wife of S. Bean, M.D. who died 27th Sept. 1865, aged 23 years, 2 months & 17 days & Susanna, his 2nd wife, who died 27th April, 1867, aged 26 years, 10 months & 15 days. 2 better wives a man never had. They were gifts from God

and are now in Heaven. May God help me S.B. to meet them there."

Above the inscription is a hand pointing upwards, above which are the words 'gone home' and beneath which is the name Bean, followed by the names Henrietta and Susanna. Below the message is the invitation "Reader meet us in Heaven."

Mayor Albert Erb, master of ceremonies for the occasion welcomed all those who braved the cold to attend the ceremony.

He said that the people were gathered together for three reasons, the uniqueness of the stone; the interest and persistence of Flossie Dewar; and because of the generosity of the owners of Superior memorials, John Weber and Alex Whorwood, who donated the replica of the original memorial.

Dewar then briefly explained that she has had an interest in the marker for years. She decoded it in 1934, but was not the first to do so. It was decoded by

the late John Hammond of Crosshill, former caretaker of the cemetery. Dewar explained that the lettering on the marker was eroding and fading.

She tried to interest various groups in preserving the marker and finally approached Phyllis Kitchen who was then president of the society, who in turn handed the matter over to Mayor Erb.

Erb contacted Superior Memorials who came and inspected the memorial. After an inspection, they decided that the best course of action was to make an exact replica of the original, but of grey granite, which is harder and weathers better than marble. Marble doesn't weather well at all, and also tends to become brittle. The replica was

then erected beside the old marker.

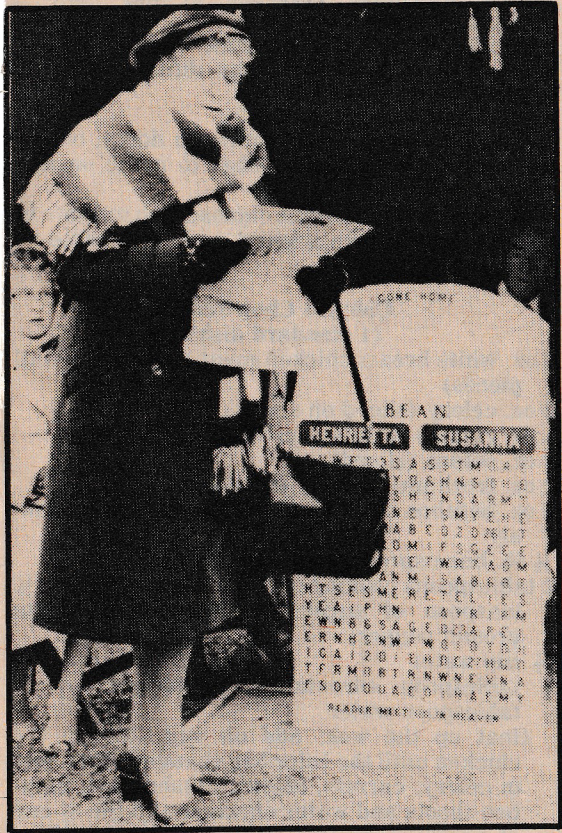
Debbie Kroetsch, interim president, then read a poem which was written by the late John Hammond, called Rush's Cemetery.

After the unveiling of the replica by Mayor Erb, the Rev. Gerald Swartzentruber of the Wellesley Mennonite Church, offered a prayer of dedication and dismissal.

Rushes Cemetery

lives on the highway between Wellesley and Crosshill in Wellesley Township. The site of the cemetery was originally owned by a family called Rush.

Later a man called Ferris bought the farm and donated the land for the cemetery. At one time, a Methodist Church stood on the brow of the hill beside the cemetery. It is long gone now, and so is most of the hill.



PAST PRESIDENT PHYLLIS KITCHEN addressed a crowd who turned out to witness the memorial service for the headstone marking the graves of two wives of the late Dr. Samuel Bean. The outstanding feature of the stone is a cryptogram carved on one side.