

LOCAL



C.M. Glover/For the Register

The Center Street Cemetery is due for restoration, cemetery association officials say.

Cemetery seeks \$150,000 boost

By Evan Goodenow
Register Staff

WALLINGFORD — Members of the Center Street Cemetery Association are hoping a \$150,000 state tax credit will lead to some restoration at the 313-year-old graveyard.

"It is a town resource and people want to see it taken care of," said Gerald Farrell Jr., Center Street Cemetery Association president and a town councilman.

While the condition of the cemetery is generally good, a walk through it reveals many decaying or partially uprooted monuments and headstones. Cemetery Director Bob Devaney, in charge of up-

keep, said he and his two part-time assistants have worked hard to repair about 70 stones vandalized two years ago.

Devaney reported that extra money would be used to expedite resetting and cleaning monuments.

"It's all a large cost, and you're never going to tackle everything at once; it's got to be done in stages," he said.

That the cemetery was placed on the National Registry of Historic Places last year makes upkeep even more crucial, he added.

The town applied to the state Department of Administration Services Neighborhood Assistance Program, and should know the re-

sult by the fall, Farrell said. Inclusion in the program encourages corporations to make donations by giving them a tax write-off of up to \$150,000.

The association plans to discuss fund raising at its annual meeting Wednesday.

Farrell said the association is in the second year of a revitalization program for the several thousand stones in the cemetery, many of which are hundreds of years old.

"We've done probably in the range of about \$40,000 worth of work, . . . and each year, we try to do a little bit more and bite off a little more of the problem," Farrell said.