

## Dutchie Cemetery Grave Stone Straightening



The Evangelical Congregational Church of Worcester, or Evangelisches Versemmlangs Haus, was built in 1845 by German immigrants who fled to Pennsylvania to escape religious persecution. The building was referred to as the “Old Dutchie Church” by Worcester residents because of its German origins. The Worcester Historical Society has owned and maintained the Dutchie Church since 1978. This little white building with the cedar roof is situated on Valley Forge Road near Heebner road. Maintenance of the building and grounds is quite expensive. Over the years the historical society and local scout troops have come together to sponsor numerous Eagle Scout projects to maintain the church and grounds. Boy Scout Troop 152 of West Point has previously participated in three Eagle Projects including the restoration of the iron cemetery fence, painting the interior of the church and repairing and painting of the shutters.

This past weekend of August 23, 2020, Shane Harris, whose relatives were among the first interments in the cemetery, and his scout colleagues, parents and volunteers, seventeen in all, completed a fourth Eagle project to straighten grave stones. Over the decades, the majority of the eighty-one headstones in the small cemetery behind the Dutchie Church have succumbed to movements of the earth, wind, and moisture and eventually took on new angles, cracked, or just fell over. Shane organized a project around the straightening of twenty-three stones which included removal, digging of a new hole, replacing the stone, and refilling with stabilizing material. They completed the project by performing a total cleanup of the whole cemetery. Another job well done by Troop 152 and much appreciated by the residents of Worcester and members of the Worcester Historical Society.

