Edgewood Cemetery draws interest

It’s an extraordinary commitment.
Randal Doaty, head of security for The Hill School, has taken it upon himself to begin the restoration and maintenance of historic Edgewood Cemetery, the resting place for more than 2,800 Pottstonians since its founding in 1861.
The 12-acre cemetery between High and Beech streets near The Hill School has fallen on hard times in recent decades. In 2007, the last functioning board of the non-profit cemetery association engaged a professional cemetery manager, John Bry, who had grand plans to restore the cemetery as a passive park and arboretum — if only he could raise the money.

Instead, Bry moved out of state, the board faded away, and the cemetery was left to deteriorate.

Last year, Todd Dawson of Todd’s Tree Service mowed the lawn as a public service after he grew weary of seeing the overgrown grass, fallen tombstones and collapsed graves.

Meanwhile, the borough has attempted to ascertain official ownership of the cemetery, as Pottstown Council seeks a non-profit organization to take over its care and maintenance. There is still vacant land at the cemetery, and burials are still being conducted by families with plots.

Once a clear title to the property can be established, Doaty says he would like to see an interim committee of interested citizens begin the work of creating records to locate existing graves, identify unused plots, and begin restoration of the cemetery — something that will take substantial funds.

(Thursday: The Hill School)

Until recently, brushwood occupied a neglected corner of Edgewood Cemetery near the Hill School. Randal Doaty, head of security for the Hill School, hired crews to remove the trees and smooth out the ground to reclaim it for cemetery use. The grass is being mowed and trimmed around tombstones in the 12-acre tract.