

Cumberland Monastery

- INDIAN BATTLES
- WOODLAND TRAILS
- THE OLDEST VETERANS GRAVE SITE IN THE COUNTRY
- MONASTIC RUINS
- UNTOUCHED WOODLANDS
- NATIVE PLANTS
- A POND
- STONE WALLS
- GARDENS
- ...AND GHOSTS



If any of this interest you, the Cumberland Monastery is a great place to volunteer. The history of the property goes back to 1676, when a group of soldiers sent up from Rohoboth to seek our Wampanoag Indians in the area were killed and buried in a common grave on the site, which is known as “Nine Men’s Misery.” To this day, Veterans Associations decorate the grave site.

Fast forward to 1900 when Cistercian Monks purchased the property from the Diocese of Providence and built the Monastery, naming it “Our Lady of the Valley.” The Monastery was built by the monks from stone quarried on the property. The monks were self-sustaining, having orchards and gardens and they also kept cows, pigs, and other farm animals.

In 1950 a devastating fire destroyed the Monastery, leaving only part of the original building, the structural stone walls, and the gatehouse standing. The monks then sold the property to the Friars of the Attonement who stayed until 1972. The Town of Cumberland then purchased all 530 acres for \$285,000. Shortly thereafter, the town sited the library and senior center in the renovated Monastery.

As the property began to be used by the Town residents, the serenity and natural beauty of the property was discovered and people began walking the old Indian trails around the building. Then the Town cleared and maintained the trails, built a gazebo, brought in picnic tables and built fire pits, and installed a pond.

Then, in 2000, the URI Master Gardeners were asked to design and help install a garden. The garden was accepted as an MGA Community Project and we’ve been there ever since.

Oh...about the ghost. Some very sober Town residents, while walking on the trails, have seen an Indian figure cross the path in front of them.