MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY AS A MUSEUM OF HISTORY

by Richard O. Reisem
photos by Frank A. Gillespie

There are several ways to look at Mount Hope Cemetery. You can regard the cemetery as a park, where man-made features combine with nature to make one of the most transcendentally beautiful areas in western New York. And finally, the cemetery is a 196-acre museum of history. And that is the subject that I have selected for this article. Let’s take a chronological journey through some highlights of 225 years represented in Mount Hope.

Colonel Nathaniel Rochester, the founder of the city of Rochester, is buried in Section R on a hill overlooking the Genesee River and downtown Rochester.

In 1779, General John Sullivan and his army of 5000 men arrived in western New York on orders from General George Washington to destroy the Seneca Indian nation. On September 13, General Sullivan sent out a scouting party to locate the principal Seneca village from which Chief Little Beard ruled his nation. That scouting party was led by a strapping 23-year-old Lieutenant Thomas Boyd and was overwhelmed in the historic Groveland Ambuscade. Boyd and Sergeant Michael Parker were captured and tortured to death by the Indians in a frightful ritualistic series of tortures that lasted throughout a whole night and that has had no equal in American history. The recovered pieces of their young bodies were finally put to rest in Section BB of Mount Hope Cemetery. The Oneida Indian guide in the scouting party, Han Yerry, was also killed in the ambush and is buried with Boyd and Parker.

Second, the cemetery is also a nonpareil outdoor sculpture and architectural museum.

Third, the cemetery can be viewed for its immense repository of Victorian and contemporary symbolism.

Fourth, the cemetery, with its wide diversity of epitaphs and inscriptions, can be studied for the variety of poetic sentiment to be found there.

The founder of our city, Colonel Nathaniel Rochester, is buried in Section R on top of Rochester Hill which overlooks the Genesee River and downtown. The Latin inscription on his tombstone reads: “Si monumentum requiris circumspicie,” which translates to: “If you would seek his monument, look about you.”

Myron Holley was handsome, courteous, well educated, and particularly articulate. When you view his obelisk, you may have difficulty eval-

Jonathan Child, first mayor of Rochester, is buried in Section R.

The Civil War lot is in Section BB. The city of Rochester contributed 5,000 troops to the Union forces.

The sculpture of a weary Civil War soldier and the company bugle boy was sculpted by Sally James Farnham, a student of Frederic Remington.
route on horseback, paying the workers, sleeping in shacks or under the stars, eating with Irish diggers, nursing malaria sufferers, and even burying cholera victims when others refused to touch their bodies. But what he accomplished, the Erie Canal, became the final element that created the Flour City.

Jonathan Child, buried in Section R, was Rochester’s first mayor. In his inaugural address in 1834, he said, “Let us forget our politics and our parties and seek only the public good.” Sound advice for Rochester and Monroe County even today.

Marion Ira Stout was in love with his sister, Sarah, who was married to Charles Littles. During an incestuous brother/sister relationship, Marion Ira lured Charles to High Falls, clubbed him with a hammer, and threw his body over the precipice. Ira’s eyeglasses and other evidence accompanied the fall, were recovered, and he was arrested, tried, convicted, and hanged on October 22, 1858. He is buried in an unmarked grave in Section D right beside the distinguished upright Rochesterian family of Hiram Sibley.

Elizabeth Atkinson Finney, buried in southern part of Section G, was the wife of the Reverend Charles Grandison Finney, the fundamentalist preacher. His evangelical, fire-and-brimstone sermons at revival meetings helped to cause 19th-century western New York to be called “the Burned-over District,” which implied that the many revivals that had swept over it like wildfire had left very few people yet to be converted. Finney pronounced that Rochester was, quote, “full of thrift and enterprise and full of sin.”

Monroe County provided 10,000 soldiers to the Union cause in the Civil War. Half of them were from the city of Rochester and many of them are buried in the Civil War lot in Section BB.

Dr. Hartwell Carver published a series of articles proposing a transcontinental railroad. He introduced a plan for creating such a railroad and spent years promoting its feasibility and practical use. He wrote and lectured incessantly across the country for the fulfillment of his dream until finally in 1862 the enterprise was begun. Union Pacific Railroad thanked him for his efforts by erecting in Range 2 a 50-foot-high memorial, the second highest monument in the cemetery.

Kit Carson Cody, buried in Range 2, was the son of Colonel William F. Cody, better known as Buffalo Bill. Kit died of scarlet fever at the age of 5 years. Buffalo Bill and his family lived in Rochester from 1873 to 1877. It was here where he developed his combination traveling circus, theatrical troupe, and stunt show known as the Wild West Show. Kit Carson played the part of a native American Indian boy.

At 7:30 p.m. on November 9, 1888, a fire started in the basement of the Steam Gauge and Lantern Works. It swept up the stairs and elevator, trapping 60 workers on the 5th, 6th, and 7th floors. In all, 34 men and boys perished, the worst death toll for any fire in our city’s history. A large memorial to them stands in Section BB.

And some people were even born in this famous place. Actually, Nancy Harris was not born in the cemetery, because Mount Hope wasn’t established until 1838. In 1818, however, there was a one-room log cabin here where she was born, joining her nine siblings and parents in the crowded cabin where they had to barricade the door and windows against the wolves and bears.

Despite Detroit’s claims to the contrary, the man who invented the first gasoline automobile lies in Mount Hope Cemetery. George Selden made his first engine in 1878 and

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**EPITAPH**

applied for a patent in 1879, Henry Ford didn’t believe in the U.S. patent system and used Selden’s idea. So Selden sued. An 11-year court battle resulted in the U.S. Supreme Court ruling that technological changes in auto manufacturing over those 11 years made Selden’s patents invalid. I think it was a blessing in disguise, because otherwise Rochester could be Detroit today. Selden’s grave is in Section C.

John Jacob Bausch discovered a way to make eyeglass frames from hard rubber. He teamed up with Henry Lomb to design and build the first high-powered lens-grinding machine in the U.S. And the great optical company was launched. The partners in business decided to be partners in death by purchasing a single plot for their two families. The family monument reads “Bausch–Lomb” on one side, but to be fair, “Lomb–Bausch” on the other side. Their lot is in Section D beneath a great weeping beech tree.

Johnny Baker became the son that Buffalo Bill Cody lost when Kit Carson died. Johnny was 7 years old then, and Buffalo Bill taught him to be a superb marksman in the Wild West Show. King Edward saw the show in London in 1905 and was so impressed that he wanted to congratulate the protagonists personally. Boy-wonder Johnny Baker gave the king a hearty handshake, creating a storm of comment in the newspapers over this breach of protocol. The king, however, seemed charmed. Baker is buried on top of the highest point in the cemetery, called Mount Hope, in Section I.

Fletcher Steele, the famous landscape architect who designed the private gardens of the wealthy, also designed the tombs for members of his family. He chose slate as a monument material, the weeping-willow-and-urn as the symbol, and, rather significantly in 1943, decided to call his mother the consort of his father. The Steele graves are in Section C.

Edward R. Crone, an American soldier, died in a prison camp in Germany during the second World War. Author Kurt Vonnegut—in writing his novel, Slaughterhouse Five—based the character, Billy Pilgrim, on Crone’s tragic life. Kurt Vonnegut personally visited Crone’s gravesite recently and visibly wept. Vonnegut also serves on the honorary board of the Rochester Cemeteries Heritage Foundation, which is working to preserve this incredible local cultural resource that we call Mount Hope Cemetery. Crone is buried in Range 4.

Clayla, was, for several decades of the 20th century, the Grande Dame of Rochester, not to mention one of the founders of the Chatterbox Club and involved in many civic and philanthropic organizations. On April 11, 1965, she learned that her 35-year-old son, Addison, and his son, Peter, aged 7 years, had been killed in a tornado in Ohio. They are buried next to her gravesite in Range 4.

Lynne Clarke, as zoning director of Rochester, led the city to adopt a preservation ordinance in 1969. Rochester was the second city in New York State to create architectural preservation of historic structures. Rochester’s ordinance created the city’s largest preservation district on East Avenue. This preservation district was followed by seven more, one of which includes Mount Hope Cemetery. Lynne Clarke was also mentor to me when I was chairman of the Rochester Preservation Board. She is buried in Section U.

Nicolaos Tahou was a Rochester restaurateur who ran a friendly, popular, 24-hour restaurant called Nick Tahou’s in the historic Baltimore & Ohio railroad depot on West Main Street. He was famous for his “garbage plate,” which included hot dogs or cheeseburgers, home fries, and macaroni salad or baked beans, all smothered in fried onions and Nick’s secret hot sauce. Diana Ross and Willie Nelson both dined here on garbage plates. Tahou is buried in Section U.

Well, with the inventor of the garbage plate, I have covered, in a very sketchy manner, a period of over 200 years, from the Revolutionary War to the current time, and we have never left the 196 acres of Mount Hope Cemetery.

Now, I would like to take just one individual and show you how much you can learn in Mount Hope about that person, others who interfaced with that individual, and that period in history. As that one individual, I have selected Susan Brownell Anthony.

Susan B. Anthony’s remarkable lifelong efforts have benefited every woman reading this article. She started teaching school at age 15 years, but after age 30, she became a pioneer crusader, devoting her life to furthering women’s rights. She does not lie in Mount Hope in isolation.

Susan B. is buried in Section C next to her sister, Mary, who was rarely in the limelight, but her quiet involvement behind the scenes enabled her sister to carry on her work. At Mary’s 70th birthday party, Susan B. said, “I cannot tell how she has helped and sustained me. She has kept a home where I might come to
Here is the family monument in the Daniel Anthony lot in Section C.

Dr. Josephus Requa, in Section C, was Susan B. Anthony's dentist. He also invented the first machine gun.

Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey Douglass (1818-1895), Section T, Lot 26, was the founder of the civil rights movement in America. He was a runaway slave who devoted his life to abolishing slavery, achieving success with President Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation effective January 1, 1863. His famous abolitionist newspaper, *The North Star*, was published in Rochester.

Before national emancipation, Douglass played a significant role in the operation of the Underground Railroad, a system by which runaway slaves traveled principally by boat on navigable portions of the north-south river system. Rochester was a penultimate stop where slaves would be hidden in private residences, many of them in Douglass' South Avenue home, a short portage from the Genesee River through Mount Hope Cemetery. Then, the slaves would board the next boat transporting them across Lake Ontario to unchallenged freedom in Canada. As an escaped slave himself, Douglass bought his official freedom from his owner (who had paid $100 for him) for about $1250. In 1889, he was appointed U.S. Minister to Haiti.

(The foregoing is a typical mini-biography reprinted from the new book, *Buried Treasures in Mount Hope Cemetery*.)

rest. From the very beginning, she has cheered and comforted me. She has looked after the great mass of details, my wardrobe, my business, leaving me free. Without Mary my work would have been impossible.”

Daniel Anthony, Susan B.'s father, was a Quaker who owned a successful textile mill in Massachusetts before financial reversals forced the family to move to a farm in Gates. His liberal views had an immense influence on his children – Guelma, Susan, Mary, Daniel, Jr., and J. Merrit.

About a 100 feet down the hill to the west of Susan B.’s gravesite still in Section C, lies her dentist, Dr. Josephus Requa. Dr. Requa not only worked on Susan’s teeth; he invented the first machine gun. Called the Requa rifle, it was first used by the Union army in the Civil War, where it was particularly effective in the recapture of Fort Sumter at Charleston, and at
OUR CHILD, EDWIN

by Sarah Edwards Peck Winans

(Editor’s Note: Sarah Edwards Peck Winans, wife of Ira Winans, kept a diary about her children. Excerpts from the handwritten diary for the years 1871 and 1875 concerning her newborn son, Edwin Peck Winans were transcribed by N. Blostein of the American Baptist Historical Society and were submitted for publication in the Epitaph.)


1871: Edwin Peck Winans was born in Rochester, New York, June 8, 1871, Thursday a.m. at a quarter to twelve. He weighed nine pounds naked. Our hearts are full of gratitude to God.

June 9: We named our new little boy. His eyes are dark blue or gray. How God has blest us, and what great responsibilities are ours!

June 11: Papa prayed with us, consecrating Edwin to God. It is our desire, if God please, that he may become a minister of Christ.

June 12: Edwin improves every day, and is a good baby. He looks uncommonly intelligent for his age, it is said, looks you right in the eye.

June 17: I think Edwin smiled.

June 22: Edwin is two weeks old and weighs 10 3/4 lbs. He is very observing for his age.

June 24: Edwin smiled when I sang “Froggy would a wooming go” to him. He is thought to look like Papa.

June 28: Edwin smiled a number of times today.

July 4: Edwin, after sneezing twice, looked up and smiled in Mrs. Tait’s face.

July 8: Edwin is a month old and weighs 12 lbs.

July 11: Washed and dressed new baby for the first time entirely alone, and succeeded nicely, though he cried lustily.

July 13: Edwin wants to be in arms all the time he is awake, and I try to teach him otherwise. It is hard to do what others in this boardinghouse do not like, and when the crying disturbs them too, I am often perplexed what to do.

July 14: Was much pleased to find that Edwin will lie in a chair on a pillow.

July 29: Edwin took his first journey, to Avon. “Ma” seemed delighted with him and he will be the pet of all. His eyes are thought very much like Papa’s, and are much admired.

1875 March 21: Edwin’s last Sabbath upon earth. In the morning, while we were dressing, I presume he asked as usual, “Is this Sabbath-day?” And the night before, “Is tomorrow going to be Sabbath-day?” He was always so glad when the Sabbath came. He went to church and school as usual; walking and sitting between us. He seemed tired and more silent on the way, I since remember. We have also learned since that he did not seem to feel well, and his teacher took him in her lap for a while. He asked her to.

He appeared as well as common in the afternoon, playing with Henry, his brother born January 1873, and his blocks. I sang to him, “Around the throne of God in Heaven,” and I believe “There is a happy land.” He was always still when I was singing, and I knew he was listening. Today he afterward asked me, “Why don’t they have church in heaven?”

I had lately, this winter, begun to pray with him Sabbath afternoons, using simple language so that he could understand me. I recollect with what alacrity he came upstairs with me that day, asking if I were going to pray with him. He kneeled with me by the green easy chair and was still while I prayed earnestly for the children and especially for him. I asked him afterward, if he understood me and he
He had a habit, when we asked him why he had done a wrong thing, of saying, "Because I was naughty" or "It was my naughty heart."

After dark, he asked me to sing "I would be like him, show me the way" occurring in "Lead me to Jesus" in "Pure Gold." I was busy then and could not. The next morning, before Ira went downtown, he got the book and we gratified him much by singing two or three verses.

Monday morning, he sat in my lap as he often did, after I had dressed him for the last time. He played about as usual during the day, and did not seem sick. He complained of his throat when he came down from his nap, but I did not know it then.

He waked in the midst of his nap, crying, but went to sleep again after I had been to him. About five o'clock p.m. he came and climbed into my lap saying he felt sick. I held him for a while and then put him on the lounge while I put the others to bed. He did not want any supper but some milk. He complained of his stomach and throat. I gave him two doses of Belladonna before he went to bed. I asked him if he would rather be there or sit in my lap and he preferred to sit with me, so I held him a little before he went to bed. Ira carried him upstairs, and he vomited when he entered the room. We had had veal the day before, and Ira thought it a fit of indigestion.

He was feverish all night with a quick pulse. I did not sleep till after three or four and then but little, till Ira relieved me. I gave him Aconite during the night. In the morning Ira went for Dr. Adams and also Dr. Beigter. The first was away and the latter not yet risen. When Dr. Adams came about eleven, he said Edwin had all the symptoms of scarlet fever without the rash and gave him medicine to bring it out and said he would come the next time. He seemed to suffer less on Wednesday, restless all night, uttering cries much of the night, but little, till Ira relieved me. I gave him Aconite during the night. In the morning Ira went for Dr. Adams and also Dr. Beigter. The first was away and the latter not yet risen. When Dr. Adams came about eleven, he said Edwin had all the symptoms of scarlet fever without the rash and gave him medicine to bring it out and said he would come the next morning.

In the afternoon, he seemed worse and I sent for the doctor. He came soon after six. It was with difficulty he and Ira could get Edwin to put out his tongue; he did not seem to understand. I stood at the foot of the bed and put out mine. He saw me and did the same. Then looked up at Ira and said, "Papa." I think these were his last looks at us and his last sensible words.

The disease went to his brain and he was very restless all night, uttering cries much of the time. He seemed to suffer less on Wednesday, but was very restless. When not asleep, he was turning his head from side to side, or continually trying to get up towards the right side of the bed. The medicines did not seem to affect him at all. The rash came out some on his back, but was not the right color. We were anxious about him, but had much hope.

I had confidence in Dr. A and especially in homeopathy, knowing that it was especially successful in scarlet fever. I prayed earnestly that if Edwin might grow up to be a Christian man, God would spare him. I dared not ask for his life otherwise.

Edwin called "Mama" twice, and in the afternoon asked for some water when Anna was with him. He seemed quieter in the afternoon and we hoped he was better. But never did his eyes fix upon us or look intelligent. The doctor said every time he came that he was very sick—that is, every time but the first. He came three days each time.

I think his cheeks were cool towards night and continued so. In the evening, bottles of hot water were put at his feet and hands. The doctor told us that all we could do was to keep him covered up, and we gave medicine according to directions.

March 24: His head & neck perspired much in the evening, but it was the forerunner of death. About eleven I was disheartened to see a film over those sweet eyes. At about half past, his breathing grew less frequent and feebler, till very peacefully and without a struggle he fell asleep. My child! My precious Edwin! Gone forever from us here.

Oh! How sweet and pure & fair he looked as he lay there! So peaceful & lovely his dear form! A very peaceful expression was on his mouth and face the next day.

1875—3—24
1871—6—8

Edwin's age at death: 3—9—16

March 26: The funeral occurred on Friday at 2:30 p.m. Mrs. Ellery and Miss Taft sent a bouquet. Mrs. Willis and Aunt Mary and Mrs. Hamilton brought flowers. We also bought a beautiful wreath and some cut flowers, which Mother W. paid for. Mary W. and I arranged them around his neck and head, on his dress and in his hands, those exquisite hands. Oh how hard to give such beauty to the earth!

He was dressed in white cassimere with satin cuffs at his wrists. He looked very sweet and peaceful in his rest. The casket was covered with white velvet and had silver handles and a plate with his name and age upon it.

I shall never forget with what gentleness, and as if he had been an angel, Mr. Mudge and his helper carried our darling from the room up stairs.
FIRST REGISTERED NURSE IN NEW YORK STATE HONORED

by Philip C. Maples

On a rainy October 2, 2004, a marker was dedicated in memory of Ida Jane Anderson, a 1902 graduate of the Rochester Homeopathic Hospital and first Registered Nurse in New York State. The dedication was part of the Second Annual Medical History Tour of Mount Hope Cemetery co-sponsored by the Baker-Cederberg Museum and Archives and the Genesee Hospital School of Nursing Archives.

Ida Jane Anderson was born in Ontario, Canada in 1869 and graduated from the Rochester Homeopathic Hospital in 1902. She nursed patients at Hope Hospital during the smallpox epidemic of 1903, and later saw duty in the southern tier of New York during a typhoid epidemic. She was also active in the passage of the Nurse Practice Act of 1903, which established the title of Registered Nurse. For further information, go to the web site: www.viahealth.org/archives/exhibits.

An interested group of participants at the October 2 dedication gathered at the north entrance to Mount Hope Cemetery on Mount Hope Avenue at 9 a.m. A two-mile walk took the group past the graves of other nursing and medical pioneers. They included Lillian Wald (founder of the U.S. Public Nursing Service), W.W. and W.S. Ely (W.W. was an early physician at Rochester General Hospital), Isabella Graham Hart (early donor and Women's Board member at Rochester General), Lois Whitney (early donor and Women's Board member at Rochester General), and Eva Allerton (early director of nursing at Genesee Hospital). The tour was conducted by myself, acting the part of a 19th-century physician. Other interpreters included Christine Ridarski as Ida Jane Anderson dressed in her 1902 uniform, Amanda Bloomer as Marcena Sherman Ricker (Susan B. Anthony's physician), Philip C. Maples as a 19th-century physician, Christine Ridarski as Ida Jane Anderson (first Registered Nurse in New York State), and Sylvia Schenck as herself, a Registered Nurse and chair of the TGH Nursing Alumni Archives Committee.

THE MARKER WOULD BE PURCHASED AND INSTALLED BY THE GENESSEE HOSPITAL SCHOOL OF NURSING ALUMNI ARCHIVES COMMITTEE.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Descendants' Day

Receiving my Epitaph reminded me that I never got a chance to thank Mr. Gillespie for helping me locate my grandparents' graves on Descendants' Day. I located them easily, had a wonderful narrated van ride and thoroughly enjoyed the fine day at Mt. Hope. I even saw some forgotten relatives' graves. I would also like to thank Maureen Clark for translating and submitting Mattie Morrison's letter. This was written with so much feeling I felt I was there with her. What a range of emotions she felt on her 4th of July. It's really interesting to note her descriptions of transportation to Mt. Hope, that it was in the "country," and her descriptions of the children's homes in Rochester. We don't picnic in cemeteries today, but if we did, I couldn't think of a finer place than Mt. Hope to bring my basket.

Rod Knowles
Rochester, New York

Error on D.A.R. Plaque

Han Yerry on the Parker-Boyd site of the D.A.R. lot was an Oneida chief, not a Stockbridge, as the plaque states. Of the six Iroquois tribes (Mohawk, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, Seneca, and Tuscarora), only the Oneida served on the American side during the Revolution. This distinction alone demands a correction.

Michael T. Dunn
Phoenix, Arizona

A WONDERFUL GIFT FOR A CEMETERY FAN

Our best-selling book is Buried Treasures in Mount Hope Cemetery, spiral bound, 176 pages, $19.95.

This book resurrects the stories of some 500 individuals buried in world-famous Mount Hope Cemetery, Rochester, New York. The good and the bad, the famous and the notorious, the rich and the destitute, the creative and the eccentric, the lucky and the unfortunate, are all represented on these 176 pages with mini-biographies, area maps to lead you to them, photos of their tombstones, and a pictorial kaleidoscope of Victorian funerary art. The book covers the period from the cemetery's inception in 1838 to the present and includes burial transfers from as far back as the Revolutionary War. There is even a dictionary of symbols and decorative motifs used in 19th- and 20th-century gravestone design. This is a book to enhance your visit to America's first and largest municipal Victorian cemetery. It is also a book to read at your leisure about Rochester's amazing past. Inspired text by Richard O. Reisem. Stunning photographs by Frank A. Gillespie.

Order it on-line from landmarksociety.org; click on "Shop"; then click on "Rochester Books and Prints"; and scroll down to "Buried Treasures."

Or visit the Landmark Society Christmas Shop at 133 South Fitzhugh Street in Corn Hill. It's open Monday through Friday from 10 to 4 and Saturdays from 10 to 2.

The book is also available at Barnes & Noble (Pittsford), Borders (Hylan Drive), Memorial Art Gallery, Susan B. Anthony House, Jeff's Books, and the Mount Hope Cemetery Office (open 8:30 to 3:30 Monday through Saturday) at 1133 Mount Hope Avenue, across from the Distillery.
TRUSTEES OF THE FRIENDS OF MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY

The bylaws of the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery permit the organization to have a total of 24 trustees. Here is the list of current trustees:

Dennis Carr (vice-president), Patricia Corcoran, Jean Czerkas, Frank Gillespie, Donald Hall, Emil Homerin, Joan Hunt (president), Sue Jaschik (corresponding secretary), Anne Kingston, Eric Logan, Richard Miller, Marilyn Nolte (vice-president), Timothy O'Connell, Edward Olinger (treasurer), John Pearsall, Robert Potter, Sandra Potter, Richard Reisem, Paul Sackett, Victoria Schmidt, Dawn Straight, Nancy Uffindell (secretary), E. Robert Vogt, Jan Wyland.

Trustees emeritus include: John C. Clarke, Laurel Gabel, Elizabeth Schmidt, Shirley Stephens, Grauman Wiksten.

NEW MEMBERS OF THE FRIENDS OF MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY

We welcome the following new members who joined the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery in 2004. Thank you so much for your support.


Thanks also, to the hundreds of current members who renewed their membership during the year. The Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery has one of the highest membership renewal rates for a Rochester cultural organization. Your contributions to the Friends are fully tax-deductible.

MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery is to optimize the cemetery's potential as a cultural resource through education, preservation, and promotion of Mount Hope Cemetery's unique heritage.