More Gatehouse Renovations

Two rooms in the North Gatehouse have been renovated over the last three months. One room had a badly deteriorated wall. The old plaster was removed and the old lath replaced with new. Then the wall was replastered and the entire room repainted.

In the Waiting Room the wainscoting was stripped and restained and the walls repainted. The floors in both rooms were also stripped, sanded, and restained. Lighting fixtures were replaced with new ones typical of the kind used by businesses in the 1890s.

Cost of the renovation was shared by the City of Rochester and The Friends of Mt. Hope Cemetery. If you're in the area on a Sunday afternoon during the tour season, stop at the gatehouse and see the completed work.

Adopt a Plot

There is still time to adopt a Mt. Hope Cemetery plot. Enjoy the relaxation given by gardening and the feeling of satisfaction when your plants bloom and help beautify an area.

For information call 461-3494 and leave a message. Someone will contact you.

Epitaphs Found in Mt. Hope

Now we say "good night"
But in a summer clime
Will say "good morning"
(Enoch Dance, 1860-1924)

I used the talents that were given me, not for the purpose of deceiving others, but always looking for the light, always looking for the truth
(William Wright, 1838-1909)

That which is so universal as death must be a blessing
(Anah Babcock Yates, 1869-1902)

To live in hearts we leave behind is not to die
(Kathryn Kolb, 1887-1968)
There is undoubtedly no matter of greater concern to humanity than water. Societies depend upon it. Industrial development found it indispensable. Agriculture is impossible without it. Gardens thrive with it and languish without it. Animals drink water; boats travel on it. And without it, we would have no Coke, Pepsi, or beer.

Water is essential also in cemeteries. Any active member of the Friends garden committee can tell you that, as can any enrollee in the Adopt-a-Plot program who has picked out a likely-looking gravesite, only to discover that the nearest available water is either 200 yards away or minus 85 feet in elevation down a hill—or both.

Mt. Hope opened in 1838 without water other than what fell as rain, emerged from springs or occurred in inconveniently located natural ponds. This deficiency very soon evoked comment. By 1860, when a proposed citywide waterworks was in only the discussion stage, the daily press had become involved. A June 5 correspondent advised the Union and Advertiser that “Those who have assayed to grow flowers there find it laborious to carry water, wherewith to moisten them, half a mile or more, as they have to do sometimes.” His remedy: either wells dug throughout the cemetery, or a water wheel and pumping system to bring water up from the rapids of the Genesee River.

The latter suggestion was repeated in 1864 with the added proposal of a reservoir to be built on the hill in Section I where the observation tower then stood. This could, he said, give every lot owner "... at small expense, a living fountain or jet d'eau on his own ground.”

What actually got done was quite different. In 1869, George D. Stillson, an accomplished engineer who had become the cemetery's superintendent, designed and had installed a system for tapping into the very numerous springs that flowed freely on the western slope of the cemetery. This water, which had the advantage of being potable, was collected in a reservoir at the foot of the hill and, through use of a hydraulic ram, was pumped up to a series of smaller reservoirs in the vicinity of Indian Trail Avenue. From there it was partially dispersed to nearby cemetery lots. The remainder was piped down the east side of the Indian Trail ridge and across the lawn to a point near the cemetery gate and office, where drinking facilities were provided, along with a jet which sprayed water twenty or more feet into the air. This jet was undoubtedly the first ornamental fountain at Mt. Hope.

The system was expanded during the following year to serve most of the cemetery as it had then been developed.

What happened next must be pieced together from known topographical features of the cemetery and fragmentary newspaper accounts. By 1875, Rochester's municipal water system had come into being. The Union and Advertiser of June 14 reported that “The river from which the supply of water for Mt. Hope Cemetery is obtained is very low and the result is that enough of water cannot be obtained for watering the vegetation in the 'City of the Dead.' Plants and shrubs feel the deprivation. The Commissioners have ordered a connection to be made with the water works mains at once and then there will be a full supply of water.”
It seems apparent that sometime between 1870 and 1875 river water supplanted spring water, and in fact the older cemetery maps show a pumping station on the river. In addition, it has been established that the stone masonry piers on the east slope of the deep kettle in Section G supported a tank which received and stored the water pumped up from the river. What is new would be that, if the cemetery did in 1875 switch to city water, the river water system had a very short life.

Today, of course, water distribution to the Old Ground of the cemetery has almost completely ceased. The mains and laterals have rusted out. Most have had to be shut down, and high costs rule out any extensive rehabilitation.

The garden committee, however, is fortunate. Water is still available in the north entrance area between the 1874 gatehouse and the 1862 chapel, which means that the fountain and rock gardens there can be kept colorful for many years to come.

(Researched by Elizabeth Schmidt)

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**Directive**

**Dip**
- a small fragile tan color nub into the chilled earth

**Tuck**
- the loose dirt tightly like a final act of caring

**Wait**
- long nights short days
- Layers of snow to smother the spot
- And lie heavy like a stubborn habit

**Then**
- the spring breeze wears the crusty snow to mellow water
- The water seeps, seeps to the forgotten place

**Look**
- a small crack in the rich earth
- A wisp of green eagerly stretches upward

- Nancy Brone
Mt. Hope Slide/Tape Program

The Friends have a slide show about Mt. Hope Cemetery that is available to groups upon request. Someone from the Friends will make a brief presentation at the beginning of the program and will answer questions at the end.

Please call Ellie Klein at 473-0778 for information.

Cemetery Tours

The Sunday tours resumed on May 1 and will continue each Sunday at 2 and 3 p.m. through the last Sunday in October.

Special tours are available on a variety of subjects any time during the year. For information call 461-3494, leave a message, and someone will contact you.

THE FRIENDS OF MT. HOPE CEMETERY

NAME ________________________________

STREET ________________________________

CITY & STATE _______________ ZIP+4 _______________

TELEPHONE ________________________________

I cannot join, but would like to contribute $ ________________

NEW MEMBERS

Rob Bailey
Nancy Watson Dean
Eric M. Fairchild
Patricia A. Johns

FRIENDS OF MT. HOPE CEMETERY

791 Mt. Hope Avenue
Rochester, New York 14620-2752