VULNERABLE SCULPTURE PROJECT COMPLETE

by Richard O. Reisem

On many Wednesday mornings from nine to noon in pleasant weather from spring through fall for the last five years, three trustees of the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery systematically surveyed the cemetery for vulnerable sculpture, that is, monuments of particular historic or aesthetic interest, gravestones and other objects of value to antique dealers and collectors, and sculpture that would be attractive and appropriate in private gardens. We called all such material: vulnerable sculpture. Our project was to catalog all of it for reference in case any of it was damaged or stolen.

The 196 acres of Mount Hope contain more than 350,000 burials, so this comprehensive study was no small task. One trustee, Frank Gillespie, photographed each selected subject; another, Jack McKinney, made notes about the permanent residents at each site and then determined its exact field location from cemetery records. Finally, I measured each item and placed an identification number on the site so that it would appear in the photograph.

Needless to say, the project proved to be enormous. In fact, the flocks of sheep (stone lambs on children's graves) became so overwhelmingly numerous that we finally dropped them from the survey. Also, the survey uncovered a number of previously undiscovered fascinating epitaphs, which we will reprint from time to time on these pages in future issues. Similarly, we noticed many unusual monument designs that we had never spotted before. All of which attests to the vast amount of ingenuity brought on by the death of and mourning for loved ones.

We undertook this survey after several significant sculptures were professionally stolen from the cemetery in 1992. If we had had then what we have prepared now, it would have greatly aided the police investigation, prosecution, and recovery of the stolen items.

(See photo on page 2.)
19TH-CENTURY JEWISH LEADER SPEAKS ABOUT MOUNT HOPE IN 1860

Isaac Mayer Wise (1819-1900), the leading figure in Reform Judaism in 19th-century America and who was based in Cincinnati, came to Rochester in 1860 to visit the Brith Kodesh congregation. His visit included a tour of Mount Hope Cemetery. Afterwards, he wrote an article for the weekly magazine, the *American Israelite*, recounting his impressions of Mount Hope on that July 11, 1860 visit:

“I must notice Mount Hope, the city cemetery for all societies and religious denominations, a plot of ground which nature designated for this purpose. Its ups and downs, its hills and rivulets are the symbols of life's perpetual changes, and there the dead rest in silent repose and peace. We ascended the highest point of Mount Hope, and there we mounted the observatory. What a grand sight! To the north, Lake Ontario bounds the horizon, below the city of Rochester with her fine buildings, and southward, the fertile Genesee valley, with its numerous villages and hamlets stretching away for many miles. It is a panorama of nature and art grand enough to rouse every sensation of admiration, grandeur, and piety in the heart. There the dead slumber, and the very spot elevated above the surrounding country, the Pisgah from which the holy land can be seen, is an expressive symbol of immortality. They see the valley of life, behind the details and totality of earthly existence and dwell in undisturbed peace.”

We thank Peter Eisenstadt, who is writing a history of Brith Kodesh in Rochester, for sharing this bit of Mount Hope Cemetery history.
MORE LARGE MONUMENTS UPRIGHTED

Work is now completed on restoring ten large monuments in Mount Hope Cemetery. Photograph by Frank A. Gillespie.

Earlier this summer, the project to restore a number of fallen large monuments, an undertaking that began last fall, was completed. After the earth, spongy from heavy spring rains, finally became firm enough, heavy equipment was moved into Sections C, G, and R to erect tall, weighty monuments, some of which have lain on the ground for many years. Altogether, ten large monuments — two of them figure sculptures and the rest mostly tall obelisks — were restored in this project in which the costs were shared by the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery and the city of Rochester. Hugh Schnacky, restoration chairman and trustee of the Friends, supervised the restoration; the work was accomplished by Monument Repair and Setting. While working in the area of Susan B. Anthony's gravesite, the contractor gave us a bonus by restoring a number of smaller monuments nearby, including a bird bath that after years on the ground is now upright and filled with water for the pleasure of Mount Hope Cemetery birds.
CHAPEL CHANDELIERS RESTORED

Former cemetery manager, Mary Lou Tyndall, admires the newly restored, early 20th-century Mount Hope chapel chandeliers. Photograph by Frank A. Gillespie.

by Richard O. Reisem

Before she retired as manager of Rochester municipal cemeteries last year, Mary Lou Tyndall arranged for the restoration of two early 20th-century chandeliers that once hung in the old chapel at Mount Hope. That chapel was designed in Gothic Revival style by the prominent Rochester architect, Henry Searle, and built in 1862. Around 1912, the interior was redecorated and electric chandeliers replaced earlier gas lighting. The replacements were huge, heavy, silver-plated brass fixtures with pendulous, tubular, stained-glass enclosures for the light bulbs.

Ms Tyndall consulted the Landmark Society in selecting the restorer, Lars Sandel of Acme East Vintage Lighting. Months of work resulted in stunning, unusual chandeliers, shown here with a pleased Mary Lou admiring the expert restoration. Sandel also had solid wood containers built in which to store the chandeliers. They now rest protected and safe in a city warehouse until the day when the old chapel itself is restored, perhaps as a columbarium for interment of cremated ashes. Then, the chandeliers can be reinstalled in their original home and softly illuminate the handsome, quartersawn-oak, hand-carved, wood paneling that lines the interior walls of the old stone chapel.
A PAIR OF SPECIAL FALL TOURS

September and October will see a couple of special tours especially designed for members to broaden their knowledge and appreciation of Mount Hope Cemetery. And because you support the Friends with your membership, the tours are free to you and your family. Others are welcome, of course, but we ask nonmembers to pay $5 individually or $3 for a family.

NOTABLE AND INTERESTING WOMEN TOUR
Saturday, September 27, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Tour starts from North Gatehouse opposite Robinson Drive. Tour guides: Fran Coleman and Dennis Carr.

A baroness, a philanthropist, a suffragette, and a congresswoman. These are just four of the more than a dozen interesting and notable women who will be featured on a special tour on Saturday, September 27.

Susan B. Anthony, who with her perseverance and dedication worked endlessly to afford women the right to vote, will be one of the key gravesite visits on the tour.

Anthony deliberately broke the law by voting in the presidential election of 1872. She was arrested, but not sent to jail, convicted and fined $100, which she never paid. Anthony said that she would not pay the fine until the Constitution was changed allowing women the right to vote. The 19th Amendment was finally passed in 1920, 14 years after her death.

Jessica “Judy” Weis was Rochester’s first congresswoman. She seconded Thomas Dewey’s nomination for U.S. president in 1948 and also served on the new House Committee on Space and Aeronautics.

Margaret Woodbury Strong, both a philanthropist and noted collector of Victoriana, was a descendent of the Mosley-Motley flour-milling family and acquired part of her wealth from that inheritance. She was also one of the largest holders of Eastman Kodak Company stock. Her father, John Woodbury, invested $1,000 in George Eastman’s fledgling photographic film company; that stock grew to a value of $63 million by the time of her death in 1969.

Our very own baroness, Katharine Evans von Klemmer, was in fact a native Rochesterian. Katharine Evans was educated at the Rochester Free Academy on South Fitzhugh Street and taught school in Rochester. Her family moved to New York City where Katharine met and married Baron Rudolph von Klemmer. She founded the National Opera Club in 1913.

FALL COLORS TOUR
Saturday, October 11, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. Tour starts from North Gatehouse opposite Robinson Drive. Tour guide: Bill Knapp, former city forester.

If you have never walked through Mount Hope Cemetery in the height of fall-season tree color, you have missed a great experience. With its thousands of trees in hundreds of varieties, Mount Hope presents a Technicolor show. There is no one better with whom to enjoy the brilliant fall colors than Bill Knapp, retired Rochester city forester. He will inspire you with his knowledge and enthusiasm for autumn in Mount Hope.

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The Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery Membership Application

Name _____________________________
Street Address ________________________ Zip __________
Phone No. ____________________________

I can help with:
___ Adopt a Plot
___ Gardening
___ Gatehouse tour receptionist
___ Historical research
___ Membership
___ Newsletter
___ Programs
___ Restoration
___ Slide/tape presentations
___ Special events
___ Tour guide
___ Other__________________________

Membership Categories:
___ Basic $15
___ Contributing $25
___ Supporting $35
___ Patron $50
___ Benefactor $100
___ Life $500
___ Retired/Student $5

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A joint venture of the Memorial Art Gallery and the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery brings together fascinating two-part stories about famous Rochester artists: their artistic work in the permanent collection of the gallery and their peaceful rest in sculpture-filled Mount Hope. A day-long seminar on Saturday, October 4, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., will explore this unique relationship with a program of slide lectures relating to artists' works in the Memorial Art Gallery and a guided walking tour of artists' gravesites and original sculpture in Mount Hope Cemetery. A map of related pieces currently on view in the gallery will be available for all participants on the day of the seminar. The day's activities include lunch provided by Cutler's Restaurant and a reception in the cemetery's historic north gatehouse after the tour.

In the morning program, Marjorie Searl, curator of American art at the Memorial Art Gallery, will present a lecture about art works by prominent Rochester artists who are buried in Mount Hope or whose art decorates the cemetery. Included will be works by George L. Herdle, distinguished painter and first director of the gallery; local artists such as James Havens and Grove Gilbert; Nicola Cantalamessa-Papotti, famous Italian sculptor with significant examples in both the gallery and the cemetery, and works related to important Rochesterians such as Dr. and Mrs. James Sibley Watson.

Also in the morning program, Laurel Gabel, national authority on gravestone symbolism, will deliver a slide lecture on intriguing funerary art. Richard Reisem, author of Mount Hope: America's First Municipal Victorian Cemetery and 200 Years of Rochester Architecture and Gardens, will present a slide lecture on Mount Hope Cemetery, including many fascinating stories related to the artists. During coffee and lunch breaks, there will be book signing by Richard Reisem and Frank Gillespie, who made the spectacular photographs for the Mount Hope Cemetery book.

Attendees who already own these books are encouraged to bring them for signing, and there will be a 10 percent discount from the Gallery Store for those who wish to purchase books on the day of the seminar.

The afternoon will be devoted to a special tour of Mount Hope to be conducted by Eric Logan, president of the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery; Anne Kingston, secretary of the Friends, and Richard Reisem. Sites to be visited on the walking tour include the gravesites of many prominent Rochester artists and people with significant relationships to the Memorial Art Gallery, including George L. Herdle and Gertrude Herdle Moore, first and second directors of MAG; Emily Sibley Watson and her son, James G. Averell, in whose memory she founded the gallery. Also on the tour will be sculpture designed by Claude Bragdon, Fletcher Steele, Nicola Cantalamessa-Papotti, and others. Mausoleums to be visited include that of James Goold Cutler, the architect who provided funds to build Cutler Union, now incorporated into the gallery. The tour will end with a reception in the newly restored historic north gatehouse.

To encourage your participation, the whole day's events - including lunch, coffee breaks, and reception - have been attractively priced for members of the Memorial Art Gallery and the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery at $20. Non-members are welcome at $25. This is a one-time event of very special interest that should not be missed. Register now to ensure your reservation. If you have questions, call MAG Education at 473-7720, extension 3027.
PROPOSED SITES FOR OCTOBER 4 TOUR OF MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY

1. James G. Averell, headstone designed by Claude Bragdon, Section D, Lot 143.
2. Emily Sibley Watson, headstone designed by Claude Bragdon, Section D, Lot 141.
3. Laura Knapp, original sculpture designed by a group of Rochester stonecutters, Section D.
4. Fletcher Steele, four slate monuments designed by Fletcher Steele, Section C, Lot 215.
5. Emma Lampert Cooper, local artist, Section C, Lot 215.
7. Susan B. Anthony, just because every tour must include her and she is right there.
8. George M. Haushalter, local artist, in Wilder plot, Section C, Lots 31 and 46.
10. Seth C. Jones, local artist, Indian Trail Avenue near Roggen, Section E, Lot 3.
11. Weary Pilgrim, sculpture by Nicola Cantalamessa-Papotti on Aaron Erickson plot, Section G, Lot 27.
12. James Goold Cutler mausoleum, architect who gave money for Cutler Union, Section MM, Lot 91.
13. Frank A. Gannett, monument designed by Fletcher Steele, Section MM, Lot 247.
14. Coon family, monument designed by Tiffany Studios, Section MM.
15. Clara Dennic, penman, calligraphic monument, Section AA near Grove Avenue.
17. James H. Dennis, local artist, Range 4, Lot 72, in front of Wesfall marble column with urn.
19. Frederick Douglass, like Susan B. Anthony, because he is on the way.
20. George Ellwanger, monument designed by Nicola Cantalamessa-Papotti, recognizing Helen Ellwanger, life member of MAG board, Section V.

Not on tour, but photographs of monuments to be on display in a gatehouse exhibit:

Virginia Jeffrey Smith, Section K, Lot 90.
Edwin Landseer Harris, Section W, Lot 122.
James Johnston Inglis, Range 2, Lot 308.
Charles Gruppe, Range 3. Lot 371. oak branch and acorns around artist’s palette, behind Saks.
Alling M. Clements, Range 8, Lot 304, west of Van Slyke.
Frederick E. Ladwig, Range 9, SE 1/4 of Lot 203.
Civil War monument designed by Sally James Farnham, Civil War plot.

RESERVATION FORM

Name: ____________________________ Phone: ____________________________
Address: __________________________ Zip: ____________________________

Luncheon choice: includes sandwich (check one), salad, beverage, and cookie:

[ ] Croque Madame
   Grilled multi-grain bread, served open faced
   Alaskan crab, dill, aged cheddar, and grained mustard

[ ] Smoked Turkey
   Smoked turkey on multi-grain bread, served with fresh fruit

Cost: $25. ($20. for members of MAG and Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery)
(Includes lunch, reception, coffee breaks, program cost, and a small donation to MAG/Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery.)

Deadline for reservations is September 19, 1997

Please make checks payable to Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery.
Send your check and registration to:
Friends of Mount Hope
C/O Memorial Art Gallery Education Dept.
500 University Avenue, Rochester, NY 14607
On Sunday, May 4, the summer tour season at Mount Hope Cemetery began with a concert by bagpiper Howie Smith, who entertained the crowd gathered for the 2 o'clock tour. In colorful regalia, he played both mournful and spirited numbers that gave a unique touch to the start of our tour season.

Tours continue every Sunday afternoon at 2 o'clock and 3 o'clock through the last Sunday in October. They're free, and so are the lemonade and cookies in the old gatehouse afterwards. You should catch a tour before the season closes.

Photograph by Frank A. Gillespie.