GAZEBO FUND

In November 1981, the Rochester Area Foundation awarded a challenge grant to the Friends of $1,500 contingent upon the Friends raising an equal amount of $1,500 between December 1, 1981 and December 1, 1982. The Rochester Area Foundation is a community foundation dedicated to reinvesting in the Rochester community by helping with special community needs and with an interest in enhancing the quality of life in the area. It made the award in furtherance of the concept of urban parks.

As of April 30, 1982, the Friends have received $1,690 toward the Gazebo restoration since the challenge six months ago, thus qualifying for the award. The R.A.F. award, plus funds raised earlier, brings the total amount raised to $7,916.90. To date, $526.07 has been spent for architect’s expenses (all fund raising costs have been paid from the Friends’ limited operating budget), leaving $7,390.83 to pay for the basic structural and roofing repairs, now completed. This means that the Gazebo will not collapse, which was a real possibility earlier.

We still need funds to restore the original 19th century sand painting and arabesque designs so the Gazebo will look restored, and pleasing to the eye. The original finial has disintegrated beyond repair, but we hope to have an accurate reproduction made when and if funds are available. The Gazebo will then stand, hopefully, for another hundred years.

Since our Fall/Winter Newsletter, the following have contributed to the Gazebo Restoration Fund. Our thanks to them.

Barbara Billingsley
Elizabeth Brayer
Bridge Club
Patricia Brogan
Frank/Margaret Colgan
Jennifer Brown/Richard Curtis
Anthony F. Caccamo
Henry/Nancy Curry
James/Mary Davidson
Kenneth DeLaura
Dorothy Dubert
James/Arabelle DuBois
Dale/Barbara Endter
Kurt J. Hain
Robert Hoepfl
Hank/Elizabeth Jenkins-Smith
Joseph/Grace Jones
Mr./Mrs. F. Willis Knapp
Barbara Lipinski
Thomas C. Locke
Howard/Florence Merritt
Oakland Park Neighborhood Association
Erika H. Mason/R. Erik Hansen
Katherine Pearce/Paul Witenhall
Mrs. Donald S. Peoples
Richard O. Reisem
Charles/Nancy Munnings
Nancy C. Sleeth
Irene W. Swanton
SPRING WILD FLOWERS IN MT. HOPE CEMETERY

From its earliest days Mt. Hope was an esthetic attraction because of its romantic scenery which included man-made features such as lawns, driveways, ornamental fences and stone mausoleums. However, beside the cultivated features produced by horticultural skill, there have persisted numerous natural features. Among these were the spring wild flowers.

It is quite remarkable to find that even 144 years ago, in 1838, the very year the Cemetery was opened, there appeared a letter published in The Gem and Ladies Amulet, a weekly magazine. In its issue of June 2, 1838 a letter from a Rochesterian, signing her or himself with the initials M.B.B., part of which is worth quoting:

"In my numerous botanical rambles in this vicinity, I have never discovered in so small a territory, so great a variety of interesting objects of contemplation, for the admirer of nature's scenery, the lover of Flora, or the disciple of Linnaeus, as are found within the bounds of Mt. Hope Cemetery — although the cold of winter has been but a few days withdrawn and trees have not put on their livery of green, I yesterday discovered more than twenty species of beautiful flowers while passing over but a small portion of this interesting region."

Here is the list of flowers which the letter-writer M.B.B. found:
trailing arbutus, hepatica, dog-toothed violet, marsh marigold, globeflower, bellwort, spring saxifrage, early life everlasting, shadbush, white trillium, purple trillium, spring beauty, toothwort, lousewort, meadow rue, mitrewort, dark blue violet, yellow violet, white violet.

Some of us have seen still re-appearing several of the species, and in this day when we are so necessarily conscious of the state of our environment, it behooves us to check up on what wild flower species are even yet blooming in their old cemetery haunts. We know that some of them are.

A chance to identify spring flowers in Mt. Hope is being offered on Wednesday, May 19, at 10:00 a.m.; on our invitation Anne Claridge, well-known naturalist and guide will lead us on a wild flower identification trip.

W. Stephen Thomas
Co-Chairman, Tour Guide Committee

DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S REPORT

During the first six months of the fiscal year, a new gravedigging contract was negotiated with a 15% savings to the City. The largest single land sales in the history of the Cemetery was completed which added $82,000 to general revenue and $20,000 to the Perpetual Care Fund. The first six months also produced the second highest interest income for the City of any time. In 1980/81, while we did not completely eliminate the need for support from the General Fund, we did cut this contribution to its lowest point in ten years. Despite an increase in fees, the City has continued to maintain the prior level of grave sales and has increased cremation sales.

The program to eliminate annual grass cutting charges and place all gravesites on an equal Perpetual Care basis has added approximately $500,000 to the Endowment Fund. The interest from this Fund helps defray maintenance costs. We expect that the current advertising campaign for pre-need sales will further increase our revenue.

These accomplishments have been able to happen only because we have kept an acceptable level of appearance and service. Our 1982/83 budget submission is for $11,000 less because of projected savings. We have increased temporary help to better maintain the heritage section of Mt. Hope Cemetery in order to market this valuable area. The Cemeteries are on the brink of reversing a twenty-year era of tax support, which started in September 1961. The combined cemeteries budget for 1982/83 as submitted is $652,630.
Sylvan Waters Clean-up

The U.S. Department of Agriculture and Soil Conservation is preparing specifications for the City to dredge and clean Sylvan Waters. The City will use the specifications to invite bids for the project. Sylvan Waters is one of several glacial kettles in the Cemetery.

Landscaping

Last fall the City Forestry Division planted 60 trees in the Cemetery, the first new plantings in modern history. Plantings included dogwoods, magnolias, and flowering pear. A small landscaping project is being undertaken this spring to screen the maintenance area in back of the office at 1133 Mt. Hope Avenue. The next large project is to remove 200 dead or diseased trees throughout the Cemetery. The last major tree removal was in the late 1960's.

WE LOSE A FRIEND

Miss Helen Ellwanger died on May 2, 1982. Her many contributions to Rochester, which included founding the Landmark Society and the Rochester Girl Scouts, have been detailed elsewhere. We will remember her as the last representative on Mt. Hope Avenue of a family which influenced and enriched the Cemetery by gifts of specimen trees, and shaped the character of the larger neighborhood through the long vanished nursery business and the still standing family houses and gardens. Miss Ellwanger's gracious presence in her family homestead will be missed even by those who never met her.

SPECIAL TOURS

Every Sunday from April through November dozens of visitors take the free guided tours that are offered at 2:00 and 3:00 p.m., led by our volunteer guides. During the week, however, there are also many privately arranged tours for groups. During the next month, for instance, the Girl Scouts, the League of Women Voters, the Chatterbox Club, and the Delta Gamma Sorority will all be taking special weekday tours arranged with the Tour Committee. The group that will have travelled the farthest is the Toronto Chapter of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, which has arranged through Dorothy Cooper of Landmark Tours to visit Mt. Hope.

Special tours yield a bonus to the Friends in the form of modest fees charged to groups able to pay, and so are helping to further our goals and underwrite our activities.

Any group which wishes to arrange a guided tour may call the Friends office and leave a message on the tape machine (461-3494) or call Steve Thomas (473-1281) morning, noon or twilight. There is a tour for every interest.

(Be sure to note: Anne Claridge will lead a wildflower walk on Wednesday, May 19, at 10:00 a.m., which is open to the public.)

Do you have a friend or neighbor who might like to be a Friend of Mount Hope? Here is a membership form to give to that person.

Yes, I'd like to participate in the conservation and beautification of one of America's earliest and loveliest Victorian garden cemeteries as a member of the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery. (Check your chosen category of membership and send to Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery, 791 Mt. Hope Avenue, Rochester, N.Y. 14620.)

Basic ($15.) Sustaining ($50.)
Contributing ($25.) Senior/Student ($5.)
I cannot join at this time, but I would like to contribute $_________.

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CALENDAR

April-November  Tours on Sunday, 2:00 and 3:00 p.m. Begin at Gatehouse (North Entrance)

May 14-23  Lilac Festival

May 19  Wildflower Walk, 10:00 a.m. Led by Anne Claridge

May 30  Memorial Day, the traditional day to visit the Cemetery

June 14-16  Annual Meeting in Rochester of the Garden Clubs of America

ADOPT-A-PLLOT

Do not forget adopt-a-plot. Whether you are a frustrated gardener dwelling in an apartment or have energy left over after tending your country estate, there is a place for you in the garden committee. There are many charming areas of the Cemetery which are begging to be transformed into Victorian plots. Why not start a little garden with pansies for thoughts, forget-me-nots, and rosemary for remembrance? (Or marigolds and scarlet geraniums, or lavender and ageratum, or ...) Contact Chairman Bob Hoepfl (244-4640, 247-3874 or 271-9199).

OFFICERS

John C. Clark III, President
Kathryn M. Hunter, First Vice President
Sarah H. Collins, Second Vice President
Marjorie Ewell, Corresponding Secretary
W. Stephen Thomas, Recording Secretary
Dorothy Humes, Treasurer

This newsletter is published four times a year by the Friends of Mt. Hope Cemetery.

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