President's Corner

This will be a regular feature of our newsletter, primarily to make you, the members, aware of our activities and progress. Since our beginning in 1979, much has been accomplished. The restoration of the Gazebo and Fountain are the highlights of our restoration program but other projects are visually making their impact.

If you have recently taken a tour of Mt. Hope Cemetery, you may have noticed the excellent conditions of our gardens. The Garden Committee with John Pearsall as its chairman, has done an excellent job this year. The garden surrounding the fountain was designed by members of the Friends and installed by Arbor Heights Nursery. Most of the plants were supplied by the City of Rochester and the County of Monroe. All in all, our gardens have been one of the highlights of the 1986 Tour season. If you haven't had the opportunity to see them, I would urge you to do so.

Dick Reisem is now designing a picture gallery at the Old North Gate House. The walls of the "Waiting Room" will be the site of this project. Dick has acquired many photographs about the cemetery over the years, including many that he has taken. This display will be another plus in our efforts to beautify and restore the Old Gate House.

Dick Reisem has also written and produced a Slide/Tape program about the cemetery. It has been shown to many social, fraternal school, and business groups over the past two years.

Early Rochester Burying-Grounds

For the burial of their dead the early settlers used a half acre on the corner of Plymouth Avenue and Spring Street, which was formally deeded to the village corporation by Rochester, Fitzhugh, and Carroll, being a free gift, in June, 1821, but in September of that year the authorities exchanged it on even terms for three and a half acres on West Main Street, where the City Hospital (once stood), and the bodies were removed thither. On the east side of the river the first land used was on East Avenue, near Gibbs Street, but that was soon abandoned for a position further south, the deed to which was given in 1827, though interments were made there before that. In these two resting places – one called the Buffalo St. burying-ground and the other the Main St. burying-ground – all bodies were laid till after the village had become a city.

from Landmarks of Monroe County

Mt. Hope Trivia Quiz

Subject: Frederick Douglass

1.) Who said of Douglass, "He is my friend"?

2.) What was Douglass's real name?

3.) How did he come up with the name "North Star" for his newspaper?

4.) What was the password given at his door for the Underground Railroad?

5.) Who was the Rochesterian who inspired Douglass to move here?

Continued on Page 3
THE CELTIC CROSS

The Celtic cross is readily identified by the "wheel" or "ring" that joins the arms to the vertical shaft; sort of a circle superimposed on the silhouette of a plain Latin cross.

Obviously, by the name, the original Celtic crosses are found only in Scotland and Ireland. They were not used as a cemetery headstone, but rather as a public memorial to mark a particular historic event or place.

The typical Celtic cross would be ornately carved with a geometric pattern of intertwined "rope", continuously linked, along with some religious symbols. There are often subtle items of local color worked into the configuration. Our crosses as monuments are more precise than the crude craftsmanship of the medieval stoneworkers.

The old Celtic crosses were carved from the native stone: in Scotland—mainly granite, in Ireland—more limestone and sandstone. Because these stoncutters worked with primitive tools, the artistic results are testimony to their self-taught skills.

Again, the distinguishing feature of the Celtic cross is the "ring" or "wheel". This is thought to be a very practical construction as well, for it provides support of the horizontal arms and makes the unit less fragile. This would be especially true in working with the softer stones.

Here in Mt. Hope Cemetery we can find monuments that are adaptations of the Celtic cross. A familiar example is the Sibley family designed by Claude Bragdon at the top of the brick road near the gatehouse.

Others are found in the "new" grounds as well as in the historic area.

Robert F. Schnacky

Mt. Hope Trivia Answers

1.) President Abraham Lincoln

2.) Frederick Augustus Washington Bailey

3.) It was the North Star that guided the slaves run for freedom at night.

4.) "I am a friend with friends".

5.) Myron Holley
The Language of Flowers

The Language of Flowers by Kate Greenaway may be obsolete by today's practices, but like the symbols used on Victorian grave markers, might have influenced gardeners of past generations. For example, the Asphodel means "My regrets follow you to the grave". Separation is indicated by the Carolina Jasmine or the Ash-leaved trumpet flower; Silence by Belladonna and Lamentation by the Aspen tree. Most suitable for Mt. Hope Cemetery is the persimmon which means "Bury me amid Nature's beauty.

Harebells, marigolds and aloe signify Grief, however, marigolds together with cypress means Dispair, while cypress alone, like the willow means Death, or Mourning.

If you can find it, mouse-eared scorpiom grass expresses "Forget-me-not", but the flower of that name means something altogether different.

The Mourning Bride flower signifies an "Unfortunate Attachment, I Have Lost All". White roses (dried) represents "Death preferable to loss of innocence". Flowers of prophecy include the Gum Cistus - "I shall die tomorrow" and the Black Mulberry tree denotes "I shall not survive you".

Other messages which might be appropriate for cemeteries are the Green Locust suggesting "Affection beyond the Grave"; the Bay Leaf, signifying "I Change but in Death" and the Flowering Reed meaning "Confidence in Heaven". "Thy frown will kill me" is indicated by Currents and the Meadow Saffron symbolizes "My Best Days are Past".

Carolyn Swanton

President's Corner continued

It has just been updated to reflect improvements made in the cemetery. If your organization would like a presentation; please call me at 722-7293 (days) and 544-5532 (eves.)

The Friends have purchased and installed six Victorian styled meditation benches in various areas of the cemetery. Two of these benches have been dedicated to two former distinguished Presidents of the Friends; Dr. Rowland Collins and Alma Burner Creek. Plaques commemorating their contributions have been placed at the bench sites and we will have a formal dedication ceremony as a part of our annual meeting on December 8th.

As a result of our successful "Home Tour" in 1985, the Landmark Society and the Friends are discussing an annual joint event at the cemetery and Ellwanger Gardens in late spring. Although final plans have not yet been developed. More in this column as the plans progress.

The 150th anniversary of the opening of Mt. Hope Cemetery will be celebrated in 1988. The Friends along with the City of Rochester, plan a gala year long celebration with special events and projects.

In closing I hope you all can attend our Annual Meeting in December. It will be held at the Garden Center (Warner Castle).

If you have any requests, comments or you would like to volunteer for specific projects, please contact me.

Richard G. Brown

Epitaphs of Mt. Hope Cemetery

To introduce this new column I thought it would be appropriate to use that which is inscribed on Col. Nathaniel Rochester's gravestone; "If you seek his monument, look around you".

Carolyn Swanton
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 Mt. Hope Cemetery, check your chosen category of membership and send to:

Friends of Mt. Hope Cemetery
791 Mt. Hope Avenue
Rochester, NY 14620

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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I cannot join, but would like to contribute $__________.

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