President's Corner

The winter months are dwindling down and spring will be here in no time. This means the beginning of our tour season and the Friends garden committee will be hard at work preparing the cemetery gardens for the coming season. John Pearsall and his committee, especially Tish McKinney and Susan Maney, have really accomplished a spectacular job. Dennis Carr will be in charge of tours and will be assisted by Jack McKinney who will handle all special tours and arrangements. Call 461-3494 for additional information.

Remember these dates:

Arbor Day - April 29th (11:45 AM)
A City/Friends celebration of Arbor Day at Highland Park and Mt. Hope Cemetery. A wine and cheese reception at the Gate House will follow the ceremonies.

Mother's Day on Mt. Hope
May 8th, 1988
12:00 PM - 4:00 PM
Tickets - $2.00

A joint fund-raising effort by the Landmark Society, Friends of Mt. Hope and the Garden Center at Warner's Castle. This is the Friends' only fund-raising activity in 1988, so we would appreciate your support. The "Day" will consist of tours of Rose Mansion, the Ellwanger gardens, Mt. Hope Cemetery, the Garden Center's gardens, and their headquarters at Warner's Castle. Try not to miss this event.

White Bronze Monuments

Rare among the thousands of monuments in Mt. Hope Cemetery and actually all cemeteries are the white bronze or zinc molded variety. Capable of capturing minute details and retaining them for a very long time, it is surprising that they are not used more frequently.

Probably Mt. Hope Cemetery's best known white bronze is that of Alexander Millener, George Washington's drummer boy, who was from Rochester. There are at least 20 others in our cemetery, each with its own distinct Victorian motif.

continued

detail from Willie Knight's white bronze monument
President's Corner cont.

Heritage Day at Mt. Hope Cemetery
October 6th at 1:00P.M.-4:00P.M.

This event will celebrate the 150th anniversary of the first burial in Mt. Hope Cemetery. We are scheduling music, tours, dedication of a drinking fountain and a plaque commemorating the historical significance of the cemetery. It will truly be a gala affair, so please place it on your calendar as a reminder.

All in all it looks like a very busy year ahead and your support will be needed to make these events successful.

Currently, a "Friends" committee is looking into upgrading the newsletter to include more pictures, additional special columns and features. If you have some area of interest you would like to share with us, send the information to me at: 791 Mt. Hope Avenue - Rochester, New York 14620.

Until the next time--

Dick Brown

Association for Gravestone Studies

The 1988 Annual Conference and Meeting of the Association for Gravestone Studies will be held June 16-19, 1988 at Franklin and Marshall College in Lancaster, Pa. Co-Sponsor for the meeting is the Pennsylvania Folklife Society. The program will include guided tours of the historically significant burial grounds around Lancaster.

Proposals for slide or lecture presentations on any aspect of gravestone research are invited. Papers dealing with related topics are especially welcome. Proposals may be submitted to J. Joseph Edgette, Program Chair, 1988 AGS Conference, Loveland Hall, Widener University, Chester, PA 19103.

For further information concerning the 1988 Conference, contact Thomas E. Graves, Program Chair, 1988 AGS Conference, 110 Spruce Street, Minervilla, PA 17954 (717) 544-6705.

Correction and Apology

The name of Miss Carol Wannier, Life Member, was incorrectly given in our last issue. We regret this mistake.

White bronze monument for Willie Knight in Range C near the Bausch & Lomb site.

White Bronze cont.

In 1910 The Foundry magazine wrote: "Only a few foundries in the country make a specialty of the production of ornamental white bronze castings. White bronze is actually a refined zinc of absolute purity. When zinc is exposed to air it becomes covered with a hard enamel-like coating of oxide of a light grey, a natural pigment which lends itself well for monumental purposes. The skin which forms over the surface of the metal prevents further oxidation and the coating is so hard that a well tempered steel chisel will only cut through it with difficulty."

The magazine questioned continued use of marble and granite for monuments as "Their disintegration... from continued exposure is well known."

The Foundry cited the Soldiers and Sailors Monument erected at Marion, Massachusetts as being the "most pretentious" piece of ornamental white bronze work, being 21' 2" high by 5'4" square at the base.

My personal favorite zinc marker in Mt. Hope Cemetery is that belonging to Willie Knight, a little boy. There is much detail and the epitaph captures the Victorian sense of his tragedy, stating: "Our Willie over in the Summerland."

Carolyn Swanton Nail
Charles Mulford Robinson

At the intersection of Robinson Drive and Mt. Hope Avenue there is a brass plaque dedicated to a man who helped plan the development of many American cities as well as influencing that of our own city. On this relief is written the following inscription: "Charles Mulford Robinson - in his honor, Pioneer City Planner, loyal citizen, Christian gentleman; he inspired the city to acquire this park and planned the Drive". Cutting through an unspoiled portion of Highland Park, Robinson Drive is one of the loveliest streets in the city of Rochester. Once illuminated by hundreds of Claude Bragdon's "stained glass" lanterns, in the first of many Song and Light Festivals, it must have been quite a sight.

Robinson was the author of several books and tracts; including The Third Ward Catechism and First Church Chronicles. He was also the leading exponent of city-planning in the United States. Architect and historian, Carl F. Schmidt, called Robinson "the perfect Victorian gentleman".

Born in Ramapo, New York on April 30, 1869 he came to Rochester and worked as an editor for the Post-Express newspaper from 1891-1902. He served as secretary of the American Civic Association and for the American Park and Outdoor Art Association. He was also an associate editor of The Survey (1907-1912) and a frequent contributor to Architectural Record.

His specialization in town planning was inspired by a paper he prepared for the Humdrum Club of Rochester. Attracting favor for his expertise, city fathers requested his advice in their plans for Rochester, but Robinson declined, believing that he could not be sure he would always be impartial in his hometown.

Among his city designs are those of Denver, Colorado Springs, Oakland, Los Angeles, Honolulu, Fort Wayne, and others. He was on the committee for the plans of Columbus, Ohio and Omaha, Nebraska. Robinson was the first professor of civic design in the United States (at the Univ. of Illinois). He designed the Blow Memorial Gymnasium at William & Mary College in Virginia.

In his speech "Cities of the Present", Robinson said: "The city of present is the town of the past at, generally speaking, an ungainly age. In the olden days, when, as we look back, we see shining upon it - the light of early morning and the naiveté of childhood; it was pre-eminently picturesque. The picture still delights the artist spirit in us.

But we know now that in those days the town was neither wise nor far-sighted, not was it industrially productive. It was, in truth, a real child-city, playing well, fighting well, and when tired, sleeping well. The city doctors have no greater duty than to develop these half-grown child-cities into man-cities."

Robinson died on December 30, 1917 and was buried on Mt. Hope Cemetery's prestigious First Avenue.
MT. HOPE CEMETERY
1838-1988

Membership Rates

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Life Membership $500.00 or more

NAME

STREET

CITY & STATE ZIP

TELEPHONE

I cannot join, but would like to contribute $ 

FRIENDS OF MT. HOPE CEMETERY
791 Mt. Hope Avenue
Rochester, NY 14620