DESCENDANT’S DAY:  
A VERY SPECIAL EVENT  
IN MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY  

by Richard O. Reisem

On Saturday, June 5, 2004, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., the Rochester Cemeteries Heritage Foundation, the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery, and the City of Rochester invite you and all Rochesterians to a very special open house in Mount Hope: Descendant’s Day. On this day, you can request information about relatives or friends who are buried in Mount Hope Cemetery, and city staff at computers in the north gatehouse will quickly locate the burial site, cite interment information about their burials, list other people interred in the family plots, and present you with detailed maps to help you find the sites. (If you pre-register your request on a form provided by Mount Hope Cemetery and file it in advance of Descendant’s Day, your requested information will be waiting for you when you arrive at Mount Hope. Call the cemetery office at 428-7999 to request an application form.)

Continuously operating vans will escort you to an appropriate drop-off point and pick you up after your gravesite visit. You can make other stops along the van route to meet costumed professional actors from the RMSC Players performing the roles of famous Rochesterians from our city’s rich history.

In the north gatehouse area, there will be music, refreshments, and tents with information, free “Epitaph” newsletters and cemetery pocket guides courtesy of the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery, and cemetery books and merchandise for sale. There will be special half-hour programs, all presented in the north gatehouse area. The program schedule is:

10:30 a.m. Rochester Genealogical Society representatives will give a lesson on how to proceed with genealogical research of your family.

11:45 a.m. University of Rochester Professor Emil Homerin will present a half-hour lecture on Victorian funerary symbolism.

1:00 p.m. Civil War expert Ben Maryniak will talk about the U.S. Civil War and Rochester’s part in it.

Also, if you choose, you can take a guided 20-minute walking tour of a historic section of the cemetery, which will include the gravesite of Susan B. Anthony and other famous Rochesterians.

The event is headquartered at the cemetery’s north entrance area on Mount Hope Avenue, opposite Robinson Drive. The city will allow free parking on the west side of Mount Hope Avenue from Cypress Street to Reservoir Avenue for Descendant’s Day. Parking is also available on Robinson Drive and side streets.

Descendant’s Day is being presented in conjunction with the Landmark Society of Western New York, which is concurrently staging a major house and garden tour on Mount Hope Avenue on Saturday, June 5, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. (The Landmark Society house tour continues on Sunday, June 6, also from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.) The tour has 13 stops and includes the magnificent Patrick Barry Mansion at 692 Mount Hope Avenue. The mansion is not only the grandest house on Mount Hope Avenue, it is famous for being one of the finest Italian Villa houses in America. Both the house and gardens will be open to tourgoers. This is a rare opportunity to visit the interior of this superbly restored mansion, now owned by the University of Rochester and utilized for special receptions and events.

Also open for the tour are the Warner
Castle where tea will be served (reservations required), the Castle's Sunken Garden; a charming, converted Greek Revival farmhouse at Mount Hope and McLean Street; two handsome Gothic Revival “worker cottages” built by the Ellwanger & Barry Nursery; the famous George Ellwanger perennial garden created in 1876; four additional, very interesting residences of various architectural styles on Linden Street and Reservoir Avenue; and, unique to this year’s Landmark Society tour, an antique car show that will include, among other classic automobiles, an early Rochester-produced Cunningham roadster, an early Buffalo-produced Pierce-Arrow, two early Syracuse-produced Franklins, a 1951 Studebaker, and a particularly rare Durant. For ticket information about the Landmark Society tour, call 546-7039, extension 10.

SUSAN B. ANTHONY’S FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND NEIGHBORS IN MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY

text by Richard O. Reisem
photos by Frank A. Gillespie

Susan Brownell Anthony (1820-1906) started teaching school at age 15 years, but after age 30, she became a pioneer crusader, devoting her life to furthering women’s rights. At a temperance rally in Albany in 1852, Anthony rose and attempted to speak, but was silenced because she was a woman. From that moment on, Susan B. believed that the only way women could effect reforms was from a position of social and political equality. She and Elizabeth Cady Stanton founded the National Woman Suffrage Association in 1869, and Anthony became its president.

In the presidential election of 1872, she led a group of women to a polling booth in Rochester and demanded to vote. As the ringleader, she was arrested, tried, convicted, and fined $100. From 1881 to 1900, she compiled the four-volume History of Women’s Suffrage.

Harriot Stanton, Elizabeth Cady Stanton’s daughter, wrote a letter to Susan B. Anthony in which she said, “You often seem to me like a superb warhorse. You are completely swallowed up in an idea, and it is a glorious thing to be. Carlyle says, ‘The end of man is an action, not a thought,’ and what a realization of that truth has your life been. You have never stopped for idle culture or happy recreations. You are possessed by a moral force, and you act. You are a Deed, not a Thinking.”

One of Susan B. Anthony’s great “Deeds” was voting rights for women. She wrote, “The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.” These 28 words, known as the Anthony Amendment, became law as the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1920, 14 years after her death.

She is buried in Section C, Lot 93, beneath a white-marble, Colonial-tablet marker. She does not lie in Mount Hope Cemetery in isolation.

Susan B. is buried next to her sister, Mary (1827-1907), who was rarely in the limelight, but her quiet involvement behind the scenes enabled her sister to carry on her work. At Mary’s 70th birthday party, Susan B. said, “I cannot tell how she has helped and sustained me. She has kept a home where I might come to rest. From the very beginning she has cheered and comforted me. She has looked after the great mass of details, my wardrobe, my business, leaving me free. Without Mary my work...
would have been impossible." Mary had a career outside the home as a teacher and later principal in the Rochester school system, where she served for 26 years.

Less than 100 feet south of Susan B. lies Henry Rogers Selden (1805-1885), Section C, Lot 108. Susan B. Anthony’s defense attorney when she stood trial for voting illegally in the presidential election of 1872. After that dramatic event on November 5, 1872, Susan B. wrote Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “Well I have been and gone and done it! Positively voted the Republican ticket—straight.”

Daniel Anthony (1794-1862), Susan B.’s father, was a Quaker who owned a successful textile mill in Massachusetts before financial reversals forced the family to move to a farm in Gates. His liberal views on temperance, anti-slavery, and women’s rights had an immense influence on his children — Guelma, Susan, Mary, Daniel, and J. Merrit — particularly on Susan B. He died on his farm at age 69 from heart disease.

About 100 feet down the hill to the west of Susan B.’s gravesite, lies her dentist, Dr. Josephus Requa (1833-1910), Section C, Lot 128. Dr. Requa not only worked on Susan’s teeth, he invented the first machine gun, an apt invention for a dentist, we believe. Called the Requa rifle, it was first used by the Union army in the Civil War, where it was particularly effective in the recapture of Fort Sumter at Charleston, and at the battles of Petersburg and Cold Harbor.

About 150 feet to the east, above Susan B. Anthony’s gravesite, lies Elisha J. Keeney, (1810-1874), Section D, Lot 45. He was a builder and, later, chief of the Rochester police department before the Civil War. After the war, he was a deputy U.S. marshal. Keeney was the person who arrested Susan B. Anthony after she illegally voted in the presidential election of 1872. After she was tried, found guilty, and fined, Susan B. told the judge that she would not pay the $100 fine nor did she have the means to pay it. The judge ordered Keeney to find Susan B. Anthony’s means to pay the fine. On July 24, 1873, U.S. Marshal Keeney reported to the judge: “I have made diligent search and can find no goods or chattel, land or tenements with which to answer the judgment against

(Which meant she voted for Ulysses S. Grant.) “Fifteen other women followed suit. So we are in for a fine agitation in Rochester.” When he took her case, Selden had been lieutenant governor of New York State and also served as a judge on New York State’s highest court, the Court of Appeals. And when Abraham Lincoln was nominated to run for the U.S. presidency, Judge Selden was urged to accept the nomination for the vice-presidency. However great a jurist and leader he was, Selden, reflecting for once his retiring disposition, declined.

Susan B. Anthony.” Keeney may have arrested Anthony, but he assuredly sympathized with her.

Over in Range 4, Lot 90, lies Marcena E. Sherman Ricker, M.D. (1852-1933). She was a prominent Rochester physician in a private practice that focused on women’s
and children’s diseases. And she was Susan B. Anthony’s doctor, who sat with the pioneering suffragist in her final illness from March 3, 1906, until Anthony died on March 13 from heart failure, induced by pneumonia of both lungs.

I could continue to introduce you to many other friends of Susan B. Anthony, who are all buried in Mount Hope. Some of these include Frederick Douglass, Jean Brooks Greenleaf, Susan Porter, Samuel D. Porter, Mary Post Hallowell, Rhoda DeGarmo, Amy Kirby Post, Isaac Post, the Reverend Thomas James, and others. But maybe you’d like to find them on your own. If you do, my new field guide to Mount Hope, called *Buried Treasures in Mount Hope Cemetery, Rochester, New York,* will help you find your way. The 180-page, spiral-bound book is handy to carry around on your cemetery search. It is filled with 500 mini-biographies, detailed maps, and hundreds of illustrations. There is also a pictorial dictionary of Victorian symbols, which were carved on tombstones and gave significant meaning to our forefathers in their approach to death and mourning. So, use this guide to enhance your visits to Mount Hope and to make them more engaging and informative. You will find that in the course of your wandering and reading, you’ll learn a lot about Rochester history as well.

*Buried Treasures* can be purchased at the cemetery’s north entrance on Descendant’s Day, Saturday, June 5, as well as on any Sunday afternoon from 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. from now through October. Major bookstores and museum gift shops also carry the book, and you can order it on the Internet at www.landmarksociety.org.

---

**MOUNT HOPE SUNSET**

*by Pat Janus*

It is the hour when the crows come to tell the sun to set.

Crows converging from every direction their wings tilted west splattered with gold.

Tree branches bend heavy with their weight.

A few stragglers strut the snowy path feathers ruffled against the aching cold.

By some occult command they wheel into the sky, so many crows they create their own triangle of night.

Their caws combine into a sound more solemn than silence.

The moon, a sliver short of full, rises to signal them home and the black cloud unravels into wisps and strands.

( Editor’s Note: As many people know, Mount Hope Cemetery is a rookery. Particularly in the fall, thousands of crows scour the skies and burden the trees, creating black foliage in the cemetery forest. In her charming poem, local poet Pat Janus captures the dramatic scene.)

---

**DR. JOSEPH C. A. DE NEVE, SURGEON TO NAPOLEON, WAS PRESENT AT NAPOLEON’S SURRENDER**

On Monday, May 23, 1881, *The Rochester Herald* announced the death of Dr. Joseph C. A. DeNeve, who was born in Holland in 1793 and emigrated to Rochester, New York in 1849. He lived to be the oldest physician in our city. He was 88 years old when he died in 1881. His residence was at 54 St. Joseph Street, a street of elegant houses for prominent Rochesterians in the late 1800s. And DeNeve was a prominent physician in the community. His death was met with what the *Herald* called “profound sorrow.”

In the 56 years before he arrived in America, DeNeve had a very eventful and remarkable life. Joseph DeNeve was born in 1793 in the village of Verune, which at the time was located in the Netherlands, but today, is part of Belgium. Early in life, he studied medicine, but had not obtained his degree when he decided, at age 19 years, to join the volunteer army of Napoleon Bonaparte, which at the time, near the end of 1812, was in retreat from Moscow. He was immediately appointed army surgeon.

On August 26-27, 1813, Napoleon defeated the allied army from Bohemia in the Battle of Dresden. It was Napoleon’s last major victory on German soil. DeNeve was there.

On October 16, Napoleon left Dresden with occupying troops in place. He wanted to avoid being cut off from France by the three allied armies that were attempting to unite in his rear. The decisive battle was fought around Leipzig. The Allied forces united, being reinforced with a Russian reserve unit, and formed a huge semicircle around the French army. The Allies greatly outnumbered Napoleon's forces, and on October 18, they completely defeated the French in a fierce nine-hour battle. Napoleon, having lost 30,000
men, hastily retreated from Leipzig. Again, DeNeve was there.

In his retreat, Napoleon’s armies engaged the Allied forces in a series of battles, but when a combined Allied force of 200,000 men invaded France on January 1, 1814, and stormed the Montmartre in Paris on March 30, Napoleon was forced to capitulate. He abdicated unconditionally on April 11, 1814. Through it all, DeNeve was there.

Dr. Joseph C. A. DeNeve, who had ties to Napoleon Bonaparte, is buried in Range 3, Lot 64. Photo by Frank A. Gillespie.

At the close of the war, Joseph DeNeve returned to Holland to continue his study of medicine, obtaining his diploma in Middleborough. He was married to Sophia Korsten in 1816 and practiced medicine in his native land until 1849, when he decided to emigrate to America with his family. They settled in the boom-town city of Rochester. He had barely established his medical practice here when the great cholera epidemic of 1852 hit Rochester and presented another challenge for him. He proved to be particularly successful in saving the lives of cholera victims and earned a reputation as an outstanding physician. He was also highly adept at treating children’s diseases. To the end of his life, Dr. DeNeve recounted many incidents relating to his life as an army surgeon for Napoleon and the numerous historic events that he personally witnessed. In the Mount Hope Cemetery Interment Index, it is noted that he died of “old age” at the age of 87 years, 9 months, and 2 days. He is buried in Range 3, Lot 64, alongside his wife, Sophia DeNeve, who died in 1872, and eight other members of his family.

CIVIL WAR MONUMENT RESTORED

Last year, the Rochester Cemeteries Heritage Foundation Board of Trustees decided to restore the distinguished 22-foot Civil War monument in Mount Hope Cemetery as a demonstration project to show the type of improvements and restorations that are needed in the cemetery.

The Civil War Memorial in Section BB at the intersection of Grove and Firemens avenues was dedicated on September 25, 1908. Over those 96 years, the bronze sculpture of a soldier carrying the Union flag and standing beside the company’s bugle boy had deteriorated to the point where the bronze metal was pitted with holes and the copper in the bronze had created an irregular green patina on the surface of the metal. Similarly, the bronze plaque below the sculpture had also discolored to the point of making the inscription difficult to read.

The sculpture is the work of Sally James Farnham (1876-1943), who studied with Frederick Remington until he died in 1909. In 1908, Remington visited the Roman Bronze Works in Brooklyn where Farnham was casting the Mount Hope Civil War Memorial. After the visit, Remington wrote, “Sally Farnham there. She has a dandy two-figure group soldier monument.”

James Polmenteer, a bronze restoration expert, was hired to undertake the restoration project. With the assistance of bronze experts at the Smithsonian Institution and consultations with a Massachusetts firm that has restored many bronze sculptures, Polmenteer and an assistant began the renovation task. After a scaffold was built
around the monument to afford easy access, the sculpture and its stone base were cleaned using a power wash that included ammonium sulfite. This thoroughly cleaned the bronze metal and removed the green patina. Then the laborious task of plugging the pinholes with bronze nails began. The exposed ends of these pins were filed to form a smooth fit with the surrounding metal. Finally, to bring out the bronze color of the sculpture, seven coats of a special colored wax were applied and buffed.

The repaired memorial was revealed early in September 2003. To maintain the monument in the future, its condition will be evaluated every five years. Generally, the treatment that the Mount Hope Civil War Memorial received should last between 25 to 30 years before another cleaning and waxing is needed.

Lorenzo Hills had a penchant for long walks, and these were a cause of great concern to his family. Just a year earlier, at the age of 102, he disappeared for two weeks and was found in Providence, Rhode Island at the home of a friend. He had made his way there by walking and hitchhiking.

When Lorenzo Hills died on November 6, 1930, he was not interred in Mount Hope Cemetery, his chosen resting place. Instead, his gravesite can be found in Rochester’s Riverside Cemetery, Section P, Lot 9.

He was survived by his daughters, Ella Ross of Rochester and Mrs. J. M. Smith of San Antonio, and one son, A. L. Hills of Chicago. His funeral service was held at the Miller Brothers Funeral Home on Lyell Avenue. The Reverend Henry Mosley officiated. Flowers were gratefully declined.

(Editor’s Note: Let Lorenzo Hills’ story be a lesson to anyone seeking permanent rest and peace in our country’s first municipal Victorian cemetery, one of the most prestigious burying grounds in western New York State. Lots are available among distinguished Rochesterians from the Revolutionary War to now.)
Blanche Stuart Scott was born in 1886. At the age of 13 years, she persuaded her father, John C. S. Scott, to buy her a car. At the time, driver’s licenses were not required, but Blanche created such havoc on the streets of Rochester that the Rochester Common Council tried to banish her from the road. In 1910, she became the first woman to drive an automobile across the United States.

Next, Blanche took up flying. After three days of lessons, she became the first woman in America to fly an airplane. The thrill of flying dissipated after she crashed her plane, killing several friends and suffering over 40 broken bones herself. So she sold her plane at the beginning of the first World War.

Then, she bounced around Hollywood for a number of years, becoming a comedy writer and talk show host. Finally, she returned to Rochester in 1935 and hosted a radio show called “Rambles with Roberta.”

Blanche Stuart Scott (also known as Blanche Scott Hennings) died on January 12, 1970 at the age of 84 years. She was cremated on January 13 at Mount Hope Cemetery. A book was written about her escapades, but she managed a final one: Although she was cremated at Mount Hope, she was not buried there. Her ashes were delivered to Hedges Memorial Chapel and then disappeared.
THOMAS HASTINGS: COMPOSER OF “ROCK OF AGES”

In Section V, Lot 18, there is a gravestone memorializing Thomas Hastings, who died April 1, 1875 at the age of 57 years. Below this inscribed information, there is the notation: “composer of hymn ‘Rock of Ages.’”

Thomas Hastings, who lived on Phelps Avenue between Lake Avenue and Edgerton Park, did indeed compose the music for the famous Christian hymn, Rock of Ages. Augustus M. Toplady wrote the lyrics. The hymn was published in 1832. Here is the first verse:

“Rock of Ages, cleft for me, Let me hide myself in thee. Let the water and the blood, From thy side, a healing flood. Be of sin the double cure, Save from wrath and make me pure.”

Thomas Hastings’ tombstone in Section V, Lot 18, indicates that he is the composer of the hymn, “Rock of Ages.”

THE FRIENDS OF MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY

- works to increase public use of, interest in, and appreciation for Mount Hope Cemetery.
- cooperates with the City of Rochester to preserve, promote, and protect the cemetery.
- aids in maintenance and restoration of the buildings, monuments, and grounds of this significant cultural resource.