

Hope Celebrates 150 Years



From the top left: *Gravestone rubbing demonstration by the Gravestone Girls; Mayor Timothy Murray, City Manager Michael O'Brien, Commissioner of Park Recreation and Cemetery Robert Antonelli, and Friends of Hope Cemetery President Ann C. Nelson cut the anniversary cake; Sutton militia at the Civil War Gravesites; Robert Goddard monument with floral tribute by Skaff Floral Creations, Northborough. On the mailer: Anniversary bench donated by Rock of ages Monument Company and plantings donated by Mrs. Howard Booth.*



FORGET-ME-NOT: A FLORAL TRIBUTE

Forget-Me-Not: A 150th Anniversary Celebration

Hope Cemetery put on its Sunday best and never looked so grand as hundreds of area residents celebrated its 150th anniversary on Sunday, 6 June 2004. The festivities began at 11 a.m. at the Cemetery office building with remarks by Michael V. O'Brien, city manager; Mayor Timothy P. Murray; and Robert C. Antonelli, Jr., acting commissioner of Parks, Recreation & Cemetery. Ann C. Nelson, president of the Friends, cut the official birthday cake and led the dedication of a handsome granite bench donated by Rock of Ages Monument Company of Worcester.



Houghton Mausoleum

Participants were treated to an afternoon of tours, interpretative presentations, and beautiful floral arrangements throughout the Cemetery—all planned by the Friends. Pink balloons dotted the gray sky and pink geraniums led the way to twenty-six grave sites of Worcester notables which had been decorated for the celebration by local florists, nurseries and members of the Friends. Participating florists included: Herbert E. Berg Florist, Bloomer's, Danielson Flowers, Flor-Al's, George's Flower Shop, Holmes-Shusas Florist, The Perfect Package, Skaff Floral Creations, and Sposato Flower Shop.

Plants and shrubs were donated by Pleasant View Nursery, Bigelow Nurseries, and Breezy Gardens. The garden at the Cemetery administration building was the gift of Mrs. Howard M. Booth.

The Cemetery and the stories it holds came alive as visitors learned about the life of the Civil War soldier with members of the Sutton Militia in the G.A.R. veterans lot, and Bill Wallace offered an introductory walking tour of the 150-year-old cemetery. Fred Belanger, unofficial historian of the Worcester Fire Department, discussed the life of the 19th

century fireman at the Fire Memorial dedicated in 1896, and members of the Goddard Memorial Committee were at the Robert Goddard grave site to talk about the "father of the space age." Very popular were the two gravestone rubbing workshops offered by The Gravestone Girls in the area of the Mechanics Street Cemetery removals with their early 19th-century slate markers. Worcester's role in 19th century reform movements came alive with members of the Worcester Women's History Project at the Stephen and Abby Kelley Foster grave site. And at the nearby Gough plot, visitors heard from "John B. Gough" and the Hillside Restoration Project discussed its plans for the exciting restoration of his Boylston home. The afternoon's program closed with a tribute to award-winning Worcester poet Elizabeth Bishop led by Laura Menides and other members of the Worcester County Poetry Association.

The Friends 150th Celebration Committee included Barbara A. Booth, honorary chair, Edla Ann Bloom, Mary Johnson, Kenneth Lundquist, Ann C. Nelson, Sally Talbot, and William Wallace. In addition to the participating florists and presenters, special thanks to members of the board of the Friends of Hope Cemetery, Hope Cemetery staff, A.C. Moore of Worcester, Perennial Planting, Alden Reed, Peter Taylor, and Martha Coes Thayer for their support and participation.

Friends of Hope Cemetery Board of Directors

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* For membership information, please call 508-754-3136.

Hope Cemetery's Zinc Treasures

Among Hope Cemetery's many treasures, one group of treasures is often overlooked and neglected. This is a group of 28 zinc gravestones that stand scattered throughout the older sections of the cemetery. These gravestones have a different look to them, a look that sets them apart from other gravestones. This "different" look is one of the things which make these grave markers special, yes, makes them another of the treasures of Hope Cemetery.

In the mid-1870s, the Monumental Bronze Company of Bridgeport, Ct, began producing cast zinc grave headstones, footstones, and monuments (along with other zinc products such as statues.) These gravestone zinc products, which were often called White Bronze, became an alternative to granite and marble gravestones. The company produced its own catalogue to advertise its varied line of grave markers and sold the markers directly to the buyer or through its sales agents.

Why buy a zinc marker? One reason was that these gravemarkers could be easily customized to suit individual wishes and taste. Once a basic marker design was decided upon, the family could customize the monument from simple markings (see the Henrietta E. Lakin stone on the hillside of Section 11 on Locust Avenue), to extensively decorated monuments (see the Isaac Tranton stone in Section 22 off Ash Avenue at Laurel Avenue).

The larger monuments include individual plates that could also be customized to include various emblems as well as the names of the deceased. Additional names could be added as family members died and were buried in the family plot. Many markers have at least two names, often a husband and wife; most have more than two names including children and other family members.

Another attraction of zinc markers was the price, which was usually less than granite or marble stones. One often sees zinc markers for a "wife of" with the husband buried elsewhere, or in some cases, buried with granite gravestone nearby (see the Lakin stone mentioned above or the small stone



Sloan Monument

for Harriet A. Hooley in Section 66 off Curtis Avenue at North Street). Alas the low price may have been one of the best reasons for the decline in the use of zinc markers, for who among us wants to be seen as economical in commemorating a deceased family member?

The Monumental Bronze Company also appealed to potential customers that zinc products would outlast stone markers. The company even used testimonials from scientists to validate their claim. Time has proved the claim to be true. All of the zinc stones are still readable today. Fred Simon Farrar's stone in Section 17 on River Avenue, while having some staining, is in sharp contrast to his mother's nearby granite stone which is barely legible.

One of the zinc treasure not to be missed is the impressive Parlin family monument in Section 1 on Maple Avenue. Located just behind the large Jackson zinc monument, the Parlin monument is kitty-corner to all the other gravestones in the area. It is topped by a large (six foot), statue of a lady. The lady's hair is parted in the middle and she holds a rose garland in her hand. Her dress is draped with many folds, the short sleeves buttoned up. There are also four zinc footstones, one for each member of the family buried there.

Another large zinc treasure is the Sloan monument in Section 6, also on Maple Avenue. While the gravestone is in good condition with a clear portrait of T.S. Sloan himself on one of the plates, the large (six foot) statue of "Hope" stand on the ground in front of the lower part of the monument. Originally set atop of the gravestone, the statue has fallen to the ground awaiting its return to its proper perch. To be left on the ground only invite further damage.

While most of the zincs in Hope Cemetery are in excellent condition, some do need work. The major need is to reset some of the stones, which are tilting or listing from their bases, with adequate ground support. With some tender loving care, these zinc stones will continue to stand as one of the treasures of Hope Cemetery.

by Victor G. Bonneville, a member of the Friends

Sleepy Hollow Trip

On a sparkling October day, a group of the Friends of Hope Cemetery boarded a bus for Concord, Massachusetts to visit Sleepy Hollow Cemetery founded in 1855. We were greeted by President Kevin Plodzick and led into the cemetery to meet our counterparts from the Sleepy Hollow Friends and two tour guides.

The cemetery boasts many wonderful old stones but its most famous site is Author's Ridge where Henry Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Louisa May Alcott, and her father Bronson Alcott are buried. The fall foliage provided a beautiful setting for our walking tour.

Following the tour, we were treated to cider and plates of sweet goodies at one of Concord's new municipal buildings. We thank our energetic hosts for a delightful Halloween Day!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

☛ Commemoration of the Dead in Stained Glass

A lecture by Virginia C. Raguin, PhD, Professor of Art History, College of the Holy Cross
Sunday, February 27, at 2:00 pm 2005

☛ Arbor Day Celebration

Friday, April 29, 2005 at 10 a.m.

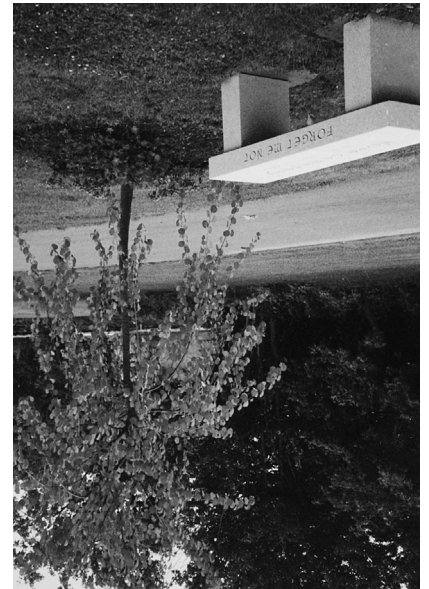
Students from Gates Lane School help celebrate National Arbor Day with a tree planting and a shot program.

☛ Hope Cemetery Bird Walk

May, 2005

The Friends will join Massachusetts Audubon's Broad Meadow Brook Wildlife Sanctuary and Conservation Center members for a morning of birding. Tailgate reception to follow.

Memorial Bench donated by Rock of Ages Monument Company of Worcester.



Friends of Hope Cemetery
119 Webster Street
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