



**The Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery
2021 Annual Report
April, 2022**

Each year our Annual Report provides us an opportunity to give our members and the community a brief description of our numerous activities during the preceding year. As an all-volunteer organization, these milestones are a testament to the dedication of our volunteers and the support of our members.

A year of challenge – 2021-- provided us opportunities for creativity. How could we fulfill our mission in a year with such a myriad of pandemic restrictions? Let's take a look.

Restoration

2021 was an exemplary year for restoration. Section A, one of the oldest areas of the cemetery, was completely restored. 148 stones were repaired, paid for by a fund raiser which raised \$14,500. The adjacent Section B island was also completely repaired thanks to a \$5000 donation with \$10,700 of FOMH funds. Two Victorian urns were purchased by the FOMH for the Frederick Douglass Family Plot, and installed, planted and maintained all season. A Victorian fence was erected at the newly-restored B'rith Kodesh site. The rededication of this historic plot was celebrated on June 13, 2021, and featured the dedication of a tree in honor of Mr. Earl Gurell in gratitude for his devotion and leadership on our Board. The Sibley cross was raised thanks to a contribution from Harper Sibley. The Susan B. Anthony fence was completed marking the end of the SBA Restoration Project. At the University of Rochester plot the steps were repaired, handrailed were installed, and 2 trees were planted, one in memory of our dear friend and trustee Emil Homerin. The tree committee planted and maintained 12 trees, eight of which were species new to Mount Hope. The stone cleaning committee led by Valerie O'Hara continued their Sunday workdays to clean stones.

Cradle Grave Program

In its third year, the cradle grave program continued to grow, featuring 123 gardeners maintaining 215 cradle graves. On Sunday, September 12, 2021, after having worked in virtual isolation for two years, the volunteers met at an outdoor picnic - a get together of gardeners who previously were just names on emails. Robbie Dreeson, chair of the committee, led a tour of nearby cradle graves. This initial tour allowed all gardeners to both learn from each other and celebrate the beauty of our amazing gardens.

Care for Gardens and Trees

FOMH volunteers maintained eleven garden plots and four planters in the cemetery. Mary Olinger led our gardening group working in the fountain area. FOMH provided funds for the annual professional treatment of five iconic trees, trees that were gifts of the Ellwanger Barry nurseries in 1848. FOMH volunteers also maintained the Douglass and Anthony Family plots. A volunteer-created website focusing on the trees in Mount Hope Cemetery (<https://www.plantsmap.com/organizations/fomh>) expanded.

Landscape Volunteers

Our many landscape volunteers led by Tom Jones, Chris Petote, and Tony Filer, worked in collaboration with the City of Rochester on projects which were suggested in the City's Master Plan. Every week our teams were hard at work. The City's Second Saturday Program of volunteers is operated by the FOMH. In 2021, our landscape events donated a total of 460 volunteer hours and 98 Board Member hours for a grand total of 558 hours to the City of Rochester.

Removing invasive species, one of the projects of the Friends, was begun in earnest in 2021. We are fortunate to have an enthusiastic group of volunteers working on this initiative led by Susan Andersen.

Speakers Bureau

2021 featured many opportunities for community outreach where FOMH tour guides would speak to local groups on a topic that they had researched.

Holocaust Project

Our work in 2021 was highlighted by the Holocaust Project commemorating Holocaust survivors buried at Mount Hope. Biographies of these survivors have been researched on our FOMH website, and we are currently in the midst of a fundraiser to erect a Holocaust monument in Range 7 of the cemetery.

2021 Tour Program

Our tour program returned to normal in 2021, featuring over 100 tours for the season. The tour program is led by co-chairs Deb Coffey and Dennis Carr.

In addition to Theme Tours, Twilight Tours, and Sunday tours, from July through October, we conducted two Pop-Up Historian programs. Each of the programs had a unique theme that connected the stops and stories together.

- Witnesses to History: Revelations of Section L
- From Beyond: Tales of Melancholy, Grief & Tragedy

New in 2021 was a growth in private tours, where families or groups of friends would schedule a special tour at their convenience.

Mourning in the Morning

We are very excited and proud of our Mourning in the Morning program. This collaboration with the Rochester Public Library has allowed our members to share their research beyond the Rochester community. Each of these one-hour presentations are available on our website. Presenters in 2021 were Patricia Corcoran, Dennis Carr, Marjorie Searle, and Christopher Brandt.

Publications

The highlight of 2021 was the publication of the Mount Hope Cemetery Coloring Book for young children. This was designed by artist Ann McCracken with script written by Marcia Birken. FOMH also printed and distributed to all members four issues of its acclaimed *Epitaph* magazine edited by Richard Reisem and Chris Conway.

Genealogical Services

As a free, volunteer service to the public, FOMH responded to inquiries for burial and other information, typically from family members and descendants of persons buried in the cemetery. During 2021, FOMH genealogist Nancy Uffindell assisted 120 people from the United States, Canada, England, Germany, and Israel.

Public Relations

FOMH maintains an active up-to-date website managed by Kristine Klein and Pat Corcoran and a Facebook page kept current by Chris Petote. Throughout 2021, FOMH communicated with the public via outreach to local newspapers, radio, and TV outlets and reached its members via email alerts (Constant Contact). Our PR chair and zoom specialist is Pat Sorce.

Membership

At the end of December 2021, we had 511 members, of which 162 were new members.

The number of members was up by 56 members from 2020. We are grateful for the generosity of our members, and hope to continue to build our membership numbers in 2022. Membership chair is Kristine Klein.

In conclusion, while the pandemic continued in 2021, people throughout the community continued to visit Mount Hope in unprecedented numbers. Members worked on their cradle graves, participated in work projects, attended tours, and expressed their creativity through virtual programs.

The vital work of the Friends was able to continue even during a pandemic. Our beautification and restoration projects offered solace and hope to our many visitors during this challenging time.

**Patricia Corcoran
President**

Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery
Financial Information – 2021

2021 was a stellar year financially for the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery, with strong membership revenues, high tour revenues, and remarkable support via grants and contributions. Also in 2021, FOMH unexpectedly received a \$20,000 award from Monroe County and \$26,000 provided via a dissolved private trust. Because FOMH is an all-volunteer organization with low overhead expenses and uses a building (the 1874 Gatehouse) provided by the Cemetery, FOMH is able to devote a high percentage of its revenues to cemetery improvements.

FOMH operates on a “cash basis,” so restricted funds (both grants and designated donations) are recorded in the year received, though all monies are always spent as designated. FOMH started 2021 with \$26,964 of previously received grants and donations, received \$49,371 in additional grants and restricted donations, expended \$41,734 of these monies in 2021, and will have \$34,601 in restricted funds for Cemetery Improvements at the start of 2022.

FOMH has five trust accounts at the Rochester Area Community Foundation designated for specific mausoleums and family plots. In 2021 an endowed account, made possible with a \$25,000 donation, was established to support future projects in Jewish sections in the cemetery. As below, FOMH’s accounting always treats these funds as separate activity.

FOMH ended 2021 with investment assets of \$236,501 (excluding trust and endowment accounts).

2021 Income	FOMH	%	Trusts
Membership	\$ 30,865	16%	
Merchandise	\$ 2,704	1%	
Government	\$ 20,000	11%	
Grants	\$ 22,902	12%	
Tours & Events	\$ 16,699	9%	
Contributions	\$ 75,512	40%	\$ 25,000
Investments	\$ 20,265	11%	\$ 36,525
Total Revenues	<u>\$ 188,947</u>	100%	<u>\$ 61,525</u>
2021 Expenses			
General/Admin	\$ 6,719	6%	
Merchandise Expense	\$ 858	1%	
Tour Expenses	\$ 1,884	2%	
Web/Education	\$ 11,283	10%	
Newsletter	\$ 7,360	6%	
Publications	\$ 9,182	8%	
CEMETERY IMPROVEMENTS	<u>\$ 76,374</u>	<u>67%</u>	<u>\$ 2,347</u>
Total Expenses	\$ 113,661	100%	\$ 2,347
Income less Expenses	\$ 75,286		\$59,178