Each year, our Annual Report allows us 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 our volunteers’ dedication and our members’ support.

**Cemetery Improvement and Maintenance**

Preservation is one of the two major activities of the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery. Funds from membership, donations, and grants support this initiative. 75% of FOMH expenditures were used for cemetery restoration in 2023.

**Gravestone Preservation Projects in 2023**

- **Spanish-American War Section**
  Repairing downed or broken veterans’ stones is a priority for the FOMH. Funds for the restoration of the Spanish American War section were a gift from Sheila and Bryan Bishop in memory of Sheila’s maternal grandfather, Frank George Keller. He and his wife, Nellie, are buried in the Spanish-American veterans’ plot.

- **Section L**
  Section L is the largest of our 2023 projects. This extensive work was funded by a generous donation for historic restoration from Colleen Crowley and Jack Martin of Palm Springs, California.

- **Range 3/2, 3/3, 3/4**
  These areas, located on Greenleaf Avenue, mark the second of a multiyear project to repair monuments in Jewish sections in Mount Hope. Funds for this restoration are from the FOMH restoration budget and the Ames Amzalak Memorial Trust.

- **Section U**
  Section U work was completed in 2023. This initiative was supported by the Baum Family Foundation, generous donations by FOMH members Diana Marquis and Tom O’Neil, and FOMH restoration funds.

- **Section P along Indian Trail**
  This area is a project of the FOMH restoration fund.

- **Section P**
  This area bordering Mount Hope Avenue is adjacent to Section S, which was completed in 2022. This was our last project of the season and was partially finished. This project is paid for by FOMH restoration funds.

- **Cleaning of the Ellwanger/St. John Monument**
  The three iconic monuments in Mount Hope are cleaned on a rotating basis by Ellison Conservation, supervised by Peter Ellison. Proper care of these priceless monuments is paid for by FOMH restoration funds. In 2023, the St. John Monument at the Ellwanger gravesite was cleaned.

- **Maintenance of Areas Previously Repaired**
  These funds are to repair stones that were previously repaired but have been hit by fallen tree limbs or by lawnmowers.

**Save a Stone Project**

Often, members or citizens volunteer to pay to have our experts professionally repair or clean a gravestone. We welcome their enthusiasm and generosity. Communicate with us via “Contact Us” at fomh.org for further information about this opportunity.

**Stones Cleaning**

The stone cleaning committee took a year off to reorganize. A small group of vetted volunteers will clean headstones in the cemetery this summer.

**Cradle Grave Program**

In its fifth year, the Cradle Grave program continued to grow. Over 130 gardeners are maintaining 232 cradle graves. Many volunteers brought weed trimmers to clean up the tall grass around their gardens. Volunteers are contacted each spring to see if they plan to return to the program. Cradle garden volunteers are asked to fully plant their gardens by the end of May to take advantage of our northeast growing season. Robbie Dreeson is the chair of this committee.

**Care for Gardens**

FOMH volunteers maintain twelve garden plots and six planters throughout the cemetery. We are fortunate to have a creative team of gardeners dedicated to beautifying the cemetery. Our 2023 gardeners include: Mary Olinger, Jan Wyland, David Klotz, Joyce Dinkmeyer, K.C. Fahy-Harvick, Colleen Englert, Robbie Dreeson, Chris Petote, Janet Keller, and Gary and Betty Prodrick.
Landscape Volunteers
Our many landscape volunteers, led by Tom Jones and Chris Petote, collaborate with the City of Rochester on projects suggested in the City’s Master Plan. The FOMH operates the City’s Second Saturday Program of landscape volunteers. 2023 volunteers (Second Saturday and volunteer groups) donated over 674 hours of community service.

One new dedicated tree was planted in memory of John Pearsall. This Robin Hill serviceberry is located next to the gazebo. In addition, Tom and Chris planted some bottlebrush buckeye, a red kousa, a flowering crabapple, a white kousa, a cornelian cherry, and a lacebark elm. Many small caliber or bare-root seedlings were also planted.

Removing invasive species, one of the projects of the Friends, was begun in earnest in 2022. We are fortunate to have an enthusiastic group of volunteers working on this initiative led by Susan Andersen. Susan leads our poison ivy control efforts, and our volunteers deal with the removal of Russian Olive trees and shrubs as well as volunteer interlopers between gravestones. In 2023 special attention was focused on the Holley Hill in Section G, cutting out invasives to restore vistas. This challenging task was supported by Chris McCoy and his students from Edison Tech.

FOMH provided funds for the annual professional treatment of five iconic trees that were gifts of the Ellwanger Barry nurseries in 1848.

Finally, the FOMH welcomed two companies who brought 50 to 100 of their employees to help with Mount Hope maintenance. We offer our sincere gratitude to Partners + Napier and to Home Depot and all their people who worked so hard!

2023 Tour Program
The Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery tour guide historians presented a stellar tour season in 2023. Our talented tour guide historians conducted over 125 tour presentations in 2023. The season kicked off early this year with the presentation of three Winter Tours, January-March, which combined interesting stories of Mount Hope “residents” and the wintertime beauty of the south/flat end of Mount Hope Cemetery.

In addition to our public tours offered on Sunday afternoons from May to October, we conducted a full complement of Twilight Tours, School Tours, Van & Tram Tours, and select group tours for private organizations and families.

Our seasonal tour schedule also included 30 Theme Tours covering a wide range of topics such as Rochester entrepreneurs, art & architecture, medical & public health innovations, Civil War history, cemetery symbolism, Rochester notables, the Underground Railroad, and the history of beer.

In response to audience feedback, Rally ‘Round the Flag: Civil War Stories of Duty, Sacrifice, & Valor, and The Pundit Club were conducted using the successful and popular ensemble format.

The season culminated with the October presentations of Undertakers, Wakes, & Tears: Mourning Rituals in 19th Century America, Fall Foliage Walk, Riverside Ramble at Historic Riverside Cemetery, Murder, Mischief, & Mayhem, and our principal fundraiser, From the Beyond: Tales of Melancholy, Grief, & Tragedy.

The tour program is led by co-chairs Deb Coffey and Dennis Carr.

Speakers Bureau
2023 featured seven opportunities for community outreach where FOMH tour guides would speak to local groups on a topic they had researched.

Self-guided Walking Tours
In 2023, four new tours were added to the two tours that were already available for download from the Apple App Store and Google Play. Starting in January, A Holocaust Walk in Range 10, and two tours about Susan B. Anthony were added to the app. The first tour covers the Anthony family plot, and the second covers major players in Ms. Anthony’s trial. Finally, in December of 2023, a tour about Frederick Douglass was added. Marcia and Eric Birken are co-chairs of this committee.

Holocaust Project
The committee has completed the installation and dedication of the Holocaust Monument and has a total of 68 survivor stories on the FOMH Holocaust Archive. Sixty-five additional survivor stories have yet to be researched, which brings the total number of survivors buried in Mount Hope to 133. In June, we applied for and received an IGNITE grant from the Jewish Federation of Greater Rochester to create an expanded database encompassing all Rochester Holocaust survivors. This will include and expand on work previously done by The Center for Holocaust Awareness and Information, the FOMH Holocaust Archive, MCC’s Holocaust Photo Essay Series, and Jewish Family Service. It will be called the Rochester Holocaust Survivors Registry. Finally, we are working with students in the University of Rochester Digital Media Capstone class to create interactive mappings of survivor graves at Mount Hope.

Educational programs about our Holocaust project include the May 7, 2023, dedication of the Holocaust Monument, attended by over 200 people, civic leaders from Rochester and Brighton, clergy from multiple synagogues, and Michael Dobkowski, who was the
keynote speaker. Marcia Birken and Marjorie Searl have also presented programs to the Historic Brighton organization (3/26/2023) and the Summit (4/13/2023). Marcia Birken and Marjorie Searl lead the Holocaust Committee.

**Old Chapel**
In February 2023, The Landmark Society of Western New York announced the selection of the Old Chapel for their Five to Revive annual list. This prompted City officials to seriously consider maintenance, renovation, and re-purposing of both the Old Chapel and the New Chapel. The committee shared resources in our possession with cemetery manager Jarod Terrell regarding the history of the Old Chapel and previous work that has been done to maintain the structure, including condition reports. City officials have since worked with several architectural firms to determine the current condition of both structures and are developing a strategic plan to address maintenance, renovation, and re-purposing. The committee has offered to assist in any way with this endeavor. Currently, the committee is acting in an advisory capacity. Chris Grooms is the committee chair.

**Publications**
FOMH printed and distributed four issues of its acclaimed Epitaph magazine to all members. Kristine Klein served as editor during 2023. Patricia Sorce will be the editor starting in 2024.

**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, but also from historical researchers. During 2023, FOMH genealogist Nancy Uffindell assisted 145 people who requested information on 395 names.

While many of the interment requests were located within Mount Hope or Riverside Cemeteries, some were located in other Rochester cemeteries. A few were not locatable in Rochester, but through research, Nancy was able to send information on possible burial locations elsewhere to the requestors.

**Public Relations**
FOMH maintains an active, up-to-date website managed by Kristine Klein and a Facebook page kept current by members of the PR team. Throughout 2023, FOMH communicated with the public via outreach to local newspapers, social media, and our email newsletter. Our Instagram and Facebook presence has grown thanks to the committee's hard work.

**Membership**
At the end of December 2023, we had 492 members. Many of our members have taken advantage of joining FOMH or renewing their membership through our website. We are grateful for the generosity of our members and hope to continue to build our membership numbers in 2024. The Membership Committee chair is Kristine Klein.

**Bluebird Project**
Mount Hope Cemetery is proud to be a “Certified Wildlife Habitat.” Our Bluebird Project is part of this initiative. In 2006, 12 nest boxes were placed in the best habitat areas for encouraging bluebirds. Our bluebird project continues today. We are so grateful to Sheryl Gracewski and her team of volunteers who monitor our nests and write us a final report each year. This group monitors our flying squirrel and red-tailed hawk population as well. Sheryl’s report for 2023 is available on our website.

In conclusion, in 2023, people throughout the community and afar 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 and research.

Kristine Klein
President
Financially, 2023 was a productive year for the Friends of Mount Hope. As shown, FOMH generated significant revenues through membership, tours & events, and merchandise sales. Coupled with contributions, including a generous donation of $20,000, FOMH’s 2023 revenues exceed expectations.

Because FOMH is an all-volunteer organization with low overhead expenses and uses the Cemetery’s Gatehouse free of charge, FOMH is able to devote a high percentage of its revenues to its programs and Cemetery Improvements, including an ongoing effort to clean, repair, and raise gravestones.

FOMH’s investment revenues were also strong. FOMH’s investment assets, plus five FOMH trust accounts designated for specific mausoleums and family plots, plus one endowment account, are managed by the Rochester Area Community Foundation. Increased with the bequest of John Pearsall, FOMH ended 2023 with investment assets of $260,178 (excluding trust and endowment accounts).

FOMH operates on a “cash basis” that produces different results from an accrual system, as restricted funds (both grants and designated donations) are recorded in the year received. However, all monies are always spent as designated. FOMH started 2023 with $45,412 of previously received grants and donations, received $14,828 in additional grants and restricted donations, expended $32,589 of these monies in 2023, and had $25,151 in restricted funds for Cemetery Improvements at the start of 2023.

The Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery utilizes a CPA firm to prepare IRS Form 990 and NYS CHAR 500 and to provide accounting advice. Treasurer Henry McCartney, a volunteer with over 35 years of nonprofit management experience, with assistance from board member Carina Gassman, oversees FOMH’s finances.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2023 Income</th>
<th>FOMH</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Trusts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>32946</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchandise</td>
<td>4531</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tours &amp; Events</td>
<td>22260</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>40630</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bequest</td>
<td>25000</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investments and Interest</td>
<td>28700</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>37817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Revenues</td>
<td>156567</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>37817</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2023 Expenses

| General/Admin        | 8837 | 8%   |        |
| Tour & Event Expense | 1045 | 1%   |        |
| Web/Education        | 6425 | 6%   |        |
| Newsletter           | 8367 | 7%   |        |
| Other FOMH Activity  | 4451 | 4%   |        |
| CEMETERY IMPROVEMENTS| 86950| 75%  | 2341   |
| Total Expenses       | 116075| 100% | 2341   |

Net 40492 35476
John Q. Sample
123 Main Street
Anytown, NY 12345-6789