The Cemetery Committee Report
New York Quarterly Meeting
15 July 2023

The Cemetery Committee meets monthly and has a roster of 5 members, plus one on sabbatical.

We continue to meet monthly via Zoom with exception being August.

Events

The cemetery has been active over the past year

6 interments with 85 in attendance
Lawrence White
Elizabeth Williams
Gregory Brown
Michael Black
Michael Barlow
Miriam and George Carlin

We also had 15 visits from family and one academic.

There has been 2 CQL events in the past year with approximately 90 people in attendance. By all accounts, these have been productive and meaningful for Friends.

We continue to run Open Saturdays every third Saturday of the month, running from April to October. Regrettably, inclement weather has led us to cancel a few times but so far we have had 225 attendees. These events have been a joy for us to hold as not only do the Friends attending find it a great time to enjoy the grounds as their leisure, but neighbors and park visitors have remarked that they were excited to explore and understand more about the place and Friends. We are opening next Saturday, July 22nd, so please come out and enjoy the grounds at your own pace and pleasure.

Our Fall Work Day was cancelled because of inclement weather. Our Spring Work Day involved 98 people.

There have been 3 work days involving Mary McDowell, Brooklyn Friends, and Friends Seminary with 252 people participating. Brooklyn Friends joined our Spring Work Day. Mary McDowell and Friends Seminary held their own work days. We're delighted to have the schools inspired participation. It should be noted that after much outreach we got Friends Seminary's participation after their absence of many years.

Brooklyn Monthly Meeting held a picnic with 15 attendees.

All events led to a total of 682 people coming through the gates over the past year. This heartens the committee as we look toward expanding the opportunities for all to partake in the special place.

Facilities

The committee continues to pursue a new office and meeting building in consultation with ARO. But all agree that the present needs of the cemetery regarding erosion mitigation, access improvements, and a long-term plan for the environmental care of the grounds takes precedent. It is also expected that this work would influence the optimal site for any new construction. We are presently engaged with the architectural landscaping firm MLNA to create a systemic evaluation of the grounds and what needs to be done going forward. We look to this work to also guide on possibilities for the fencing of the property, which we are repairing on a relatively frequent basis due to natural and human damage.

The committee and the Quarter continue to engage the Prospect Park Alliance for necessary maintenance of the grounds. We have a new agreement with them after operating for many years without one, and are happy that we will continue to receive their invaluable help caring for the cemetery.

And I wish that Robert Wilber was here because he is instrumental to all that happens here.

Other Matters

One member of the committee has been reaching out to organizations and doing research on a Native American acknowledgement and has been reporting to the committee on his progress. We letting this season before proceeding with any action.

We've been updating the Cemetery Handbook with a focus the plot reservation process. Our goal is to remove as much ambiguity as possible, including providing a more detailed outline of total costs. We expect to complete this project this year.

We have a dedicated committee but as a couple of members have moved from the city over the last year, we are going to need the Quarters support and help.

Presented by
Bryan Oettel
Clerk, NYQM Cemetery Committee