

# EPITAPH

The Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery

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## PATH THROUGH HISTORY

by Richard O. Reisem

(Photos for this article provided by the Communications Bureau, City of Rochester, NY)



Parents with three young children take a walk in Mount Hope Cemetery to the gravesite of one of the distinguished permanent residents during the Path Through History event.

**O**n a warm, sunny Saturday, June 20 from 10:00 to 3:00, the city of Rochester staged a celebration in the north entrance area of Mount Hope Cemetery. It was the cemetery's part in the New York State 2015 Path Through History program, a statewide series of events to encourage people to visit historic locations throughout our state. Mount Hope Cemetery chose to honor the 17 historic figures whose portrait banners now hang on streetlight

poles on the west side of Mount Hope Avenue from McLean Street to Elmwood Avenue. Each banner recognizes a person from Rochester's history whose contributions to our city are especially significant and who are buried in Mount Hope Cemetery.



A volunteer sets up balloons and display near Susan B. Anthony's gravesite.

The current list of 17 important former Rochesterians is just the first of future planned banners to honor the many other individuals who have contributed so much to our city's growth and culture. Look for them on the streetlight poles as you drive up and down Mount

Hope Avenue alongside this historic cemetery. The faces on the first 17 historic figures of distinction now adorning Mount Hope Avenue are:

- Susan B. Anthony, internationally famous activist for women's rights and author of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.
- John Jacob Bausch, cofounder of the great optical company, Bausch & Lomb.
- Adelaide Crapsey, famous American imagist poet.
- Frederick Douglass, Maryland slave who became head of the antislavery movement in America.

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The 17 prominent Rochesterians honored at the Path Through History event are (clockwise from top left) Susan B. Anthony, George Ellwanger, William Warfield, Seth Green, Hiram Sibley, John Jacob Bausch, Col. Nathaniel Rochester, Lewis Henry Morgan, Captain Henry Lomb, Adelaide Crapsey, Frank Ernest Gannett, Henry Augustus Ward, Myron Holley, Margaret Woodbury Strong, Fletcher Steele, the Rev. Thomas James, and Frederick Douglass.

- George Ellwanger, cofounder of America's largest horticultural nursery, Ellwanger & Barry.
- Frank Ernest Gannett, publisher and founder of the giant newspaper and media chain.
- Seth Green, inventor of the fish hatchery and superintendent of New York State fisheries.
- Myron Holley, Erie Canal crusader who became canal commissioner, treasurer, and superintendent of construction.
- Reverend Thomas James, escaped slave who started AME Zion Church and founded the first antislavery society in Rochester.
- Captain Henry Lomb, cofounder of Bausch & Lomb optical company and chief founder of Rochester Institute of Technology.
- Lewis Henry Morgan, Rochester's great intellectual leader and founder of the science of anthropology.
- Colonel Nathaniel Rochester, founder of his eponymous city.
- Hiram Sibley, founder of Western Union Telegraph Company and Rochester's wealthiest person before George Eastman.
- Fletcher Steele, nationally famous landscape architect.
- Margaret Woodbury Strong, noted collector of Victoriana and philanthropist who founded the Strong/National Museum of Play.
- Henry Augustus Ward, world-renowned geologist and naturalist, founder of Ward's Natural Science Establishment.
- William Warfield, internationally renowned bass-baritone singer, stage and screen actor, and America's musical ambassador around the world.

The Path Through History event was headquartered in the north entrance area of Mount Hope Cemetery, on the great lawn where the Florentine Fountain spilled water from a vessel



*One of the tents had coloring materials and other items of interest to children.*

held aloft by a cast-iron female statue and tumbled into two basins, the lower of which spilled water through the mouths of rams into the ground pool. White tents in a semicircle around the picnic area provided food and beverage services, children's cemetery-related coloring supplies, and Mount Hope and cemetery publications and photographs. Free cards with portraits and

biographies of the 17 honored historical figures were available as well as all the chocolate and vanilla cupcakes that you could eat.

A rare experience of the day was the opening of the normally shuttered and locked old chapel, which was built in 1862 and had an addition constructed in 1912 to house a crematory, the first one in Rochester. The entrance was opened wide and the interior



*White tents and seating form a semicircle around the Florentine fountain.*



*A rare experience was seeing the interior of the old chapel.*

was lighted to reveal interior views of cremation retorts, the framework for the original grand stained-glass windows, and the passage to the vault in the hillside where bodies were stored in winter to await burial in the spring after the ground thawed. The vault could store 75 to 100 caskets.

Visitors were given maps to find the burial sites of the “Famous 17”, several of whom were buried within walking distance, others reached by vehicles. Each of the gravesites were decorated with signage describing the person’s history and accomplishments, and there was a Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery volunteer at each site to talk and answer questions about the person buried there.

The highlight of the event was a program in front of the Florentine fountain. Actor Tim Cawley, dressed formally in gray waistcoat and black jacket with tails, played Colonel Nathaniel Rochester, founder of our city. In his round-framed spectacles, the unusually tall Colonel Rochester described life in the early days of his village and served as master of ceremonies for the afternoon.

Actor J. P. Simpson, in a black suit and wide black cravat, was Rochester’s great intellectual leader, Lewis Henry Morgan, and spoke about Morgan’s pioneering work as an anthropologist and his books on the Iroquois culture.



*A couple of visitors learn about Margaret Woodbury Strong, interred in the mausoleum, from FOMH trustee Pat Corcoran.*



*Tim Cawley as Colonel Nathaniel Rochester, David Shakes as Frederick Douglass, Barbara Blaisdell as Susan B. Anthony, and J. P. Simson as Lewis Henry Morgan.*

In a black suit and bow tie, and wearing a black bowler hat, actor David Shakes presented a stirring rendition of a portion of Frederick Douglass' famous July 4th speech. It was titled, "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?" It was originally delivered in Corinthian Hall, Rochester, New York, to an audience of nearly 600 people on July 5, 1852. Shakes' inspired version of Douglass' commanding oratory was one of the most passionate deliveries of this ironic speech.

Actress Barbara Blaisdell became an imposing Susan B. Anthony. Dressed in a black Victorian dress and black-and-white hat and with a bright red shawl over her shoulders, Susan B. Anthony talked of women's rights in a forceful manner.



*Thomas Warfield talked about his uncle, William Warfield.*

Thomas Warfield, whose uncle was William Warfield, presented a brief history of the internationally famous singer, stage and motion-picture actor, and professor of music at the University of Illinois and Northwestern University. He ended by singing one of William Warfield's favorite hymns, "Shall We Gather at the River?" It was a fitting ending to a wonderful day of remembering.



*FOMH trustee Vicki Schmitt (center figure) talks about Susan B. Anthony to a couple of visitors.*

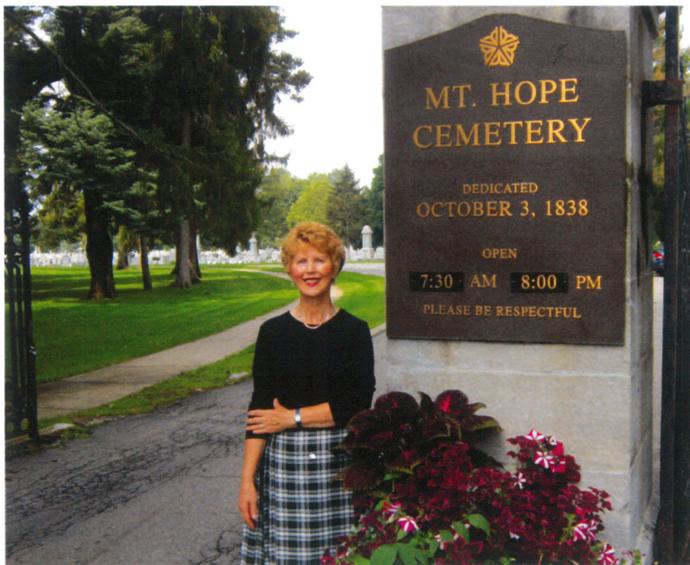


# Scott Souls Find A Home In Mount Hope Cemetery



By Elsie Taylor Cleary

I'm drawn to historic cemeteries. They are the perfect spot to be stony lonesome. Yet for me, they are exciting and fascinating. It's like opening the first pages of a great history book. Inside, there are countless untold life stories waiting to be discovered, just by studying the engraved words on gravestones. Sometimes, it's possible to learn how, when, and where whole families lived and died. Other times, it's sad when the last physical reminder of someone's existence is lost to time and the elements. Often, it's like trying to solve a puzzle with missing pieces. More questions are raised than answers provided.



Author Elsie Cleary poses in front of the Mount Hope Cemetery entrance.

Deciphering the words on gravestone epitaphs is just what I've always enjoyed. Decades ago in northeast Scotland, I relished Family History Society field trips when, armed with wire brushes and buckets of water, our motley enthusiastic crew marched

into forgotten burial grounds and kirkyards (churchyards). Our official purpose was to document memorial inscriptions, and the flawed thinking at that time was to first remove all moss and lichens with a vigorous scrubbing. I shudder to think of the potential damage caused. Procedures have changed over the years, and we would almost certainly be subject to reprimand nowadays for such reckless amateurism.

After moving to the United States and then to upstate New York with my Navy veteran husband, it didn't take long to discover the visual treats in Mount Hope Cemetery. My Scottish mother came to visit in 2003, and we often took the two bairns (children) to



David Lindsay's family was a neighbor of author Elsie Cleary in Glensesk, Scotland.

picnic there and collect tadpoles at the old kettle pond. One day we stumbled upon an old gravestone, all by itself on a rise near the pond. The inscription immediately caught my eye. "David Lindsay, died Dec 21, 1875, aged 35, of Glensesk, Scotland. Erected by his brother Jonathon." I was astounded! We knew the Lindsay name well. Centuries ago, the Lindsays were a prestigious landowning family in Angus, my home county. They built historic Edzell Castle in the 16th century to guard the

entrance to Glenesk. Even more astonishing was this coincidence that I too, hail from Glenesk! Had we found a kindred soul from my homeland, buried and forgotten in foreign soil?

After identifying the nearby stones of other Scots, it was clear that we were standing on a designated Scottish plot. A short walk took us over to the cemetery office where office manager Clare Mosher showed us the original plot record and told us some intriguing history. It was named in the record book as the Old Scottish Burial Plot, purchased in 1856 by the Caledonia Society of Rochester. It was filled to capacity yet only that lone

from again. Perhaps they sought their fortune but met their fate in distant America.

Those whose passion, like mine, is genealogy will know that Scottish "strays" have been found in the farthest reaches of the world. It is a duty and honour to send their names back to their native land. Just two years ago I decided to record the inscriptions on the few remaining gravestones scattered in the Old Scottish Burial Plot at Mount Hope. This time, to avoid a brush with the law, I was armed with only a digital camera. With the help of kindly Clare Mosher, and long hours of studying



*Edzell Castle was built in the 16th century and is now in ruins, but the gardens continue to be maintained.*

Lindsay stone still stood intact. I wanted to learn more about the Lindsay brothers, so the following year on my trip to Scotland, I conferred with Glenesk historian Gilbert Lowden. David Lindsay, it seems, was of the Auchmull Lindsays. My childhood home actually overlooks Auchmull Farm one mile across the glen. David, the youngest of four, and his brother Jonathon disappeared off the Scottish censuses and were never heard

fragile records, we went a step further and compiled a list of all the Scottish residents buried from 1851 to 1897, with and without markers, including dates and causes of death. The list included some stillborn infants, and many young children who sadly died from diseases like erysipelas, marasmus, and worm fever. Two died from drowning. The details of a surprising total of 70 Scottish-born strays were duly sent off to the Strays Coordinator of the Scottish Family History societies.



*John L. Stewart purchased the New Scottish Burial Plot in 1888 on behalf of the Scottish Society of Rochester.*

It was during this project that the record of a second Scottish plot came to light, named in the cemetery archives as the New Scottish Burial Plot. Purchased in 1888 by John L. Stewart on behalf of the Scottish Society of Rochester, it contained a further three unmarked Scottish graves, but the largest portion of it lay, for some unexplained reason, empty. The oldest buried there was Jane McCrone, 98, who died on December 31, 1890 of exhaustion, at the Rochester Home for the Friendless. How ironic that she died of such a cause on Hogmanay (New Year's Eve), in such an oddly-named institution.

Along with the discovery of the second plot came unsettling news. Due to over a century of inactivity the empty part of the plot was "Subject to Reclaim". In other words, if no plot owner or trustee stepped forward, the City of Rochester, which operates Mount Hope Cemetery, could eventually resell the land. Since the plot had already been purchased fair and square, and intended for Scots folk, this seemed unfair. I decided I had to take some immediate action to right the situation. I needed to find out how the trusteeship had been misplaced, then I needed to try to restore it to what should be its present-day rightful titleholder, so that burials could continue.

In early 2014, I approached Craig Barclay, president of the Rochester Scottish Heritage Society, and was invited to speak at an upcoming board meeting. The board was most receptive in hearing my presentation and supportive of my efforts. Later that year, I was privileged to join the board of the Scottish Heritage Society to conduct research. In due course, I formed the New Scottish Plot Committee: myself, my husband Tim, Janice Beutner, and Ryan Liddell.

I embarked on a fascinating yearlong journey hunting for links between the old Scottish societies and ours of today. I dug deeper into the cemetery records of the Scottish burial plots and learned of the many good-hearted Scots businessmen who acted as society trustees. I scoured archives at the Rochester Museum and Science Center. Often, I got enjoyably sidetracked, leading me to records of Scottish settlers in places like Scottsville and Caledonia. I even discovered the existence of a Scottish Women's Society of Rochester, who spent long years raising \$5,000 to purchase a hospital bed for sickly Scots, only to change their minds in 1913 and create a charitable trust fund for needy Scotswomen. My research took me to Rochester Law Library and Harvard Law Library and beyond. I was especially pleased to speak with John McDonald, 80th chief of the Caledonia Club of New York City, who was most supportive of my cause and offered good counsel.

Many Sunday afternoons were spent in the Local History Department downtown poring over articles in newspaper archives. They clearly showed that innumerable Scottish Society benevolent events have been held locally over the last 150 years, sponsored by the likes of the St. Andrews Club, the Caledonian Society, the Buchanan Club and the Sons & Daughters of Scotland. According to the *Rochester Union Advertiser* of 1852, one such evening event in the Minerva Hall in Rochester drew "500 persons present—a number sufficient to make a jolly time of it." The pre-dinner speech went as follows: "At a meeting of Scotchmen held in this city, it was deemed expedient to form into a body to be better able to aid those of our countrymen whom misfortune might have overtaken while seeking a new home in a land of strangers." The speaker continued: "Our purpose is to relieve them from the dread of the consummation of disgrace as paupers."

Later in 1887, it was reported that "great numbers of needy Scotchmen have applied for aid" and that a bequest had been set up for Scots widows and orphans. At their end times, the

intention was to provide impoverished Scots with a dignified burial instead of the humiliation of a pauper's grave. So, this was the noble sentiment that led to the purchase of land in Mount Hope for the Scottish burial plots.

In the early part of this century, the trusteeship of the New Scottish Burial Plot had been jointly held by three members of the Rochester Scottish Society, to be handed on in a like manner. Due likely to unforeseen deaths and wars, the trustees dwindled to two and then finally one. The sole remaining trustee was Hugh Hamilton who died in 1931. The name of his intended successor, John W. Johnston, an Orkney man was unfortunately missing from the estate papers. In 1932, Johnston, representing the Scottish Society, called on his friend Supreme Court Judge Arthur E. Sutherland to transfer the trusteeship from Hamilton's widow to himself so that burials could continue. Letters show that Mrs. Hamilton, knowing her late husband's wishes, was



*This is the logo of the Scottish Historical Society. Alba gu bràth is a Scottish Gaelic phrase to express allegiance to Scotland, which in the vernacular translates to "Scotland Forever".*

keen for this to happen, although no records indicate that it took place. After the death of Johnston, the trusteeship with the right to approve burials was all but forgotten.

However, the documents gathered during my research showed that successive Scottish societies had an assured claim on the property. After a series of meetings our committee successfully

came to an agreement with Jeffery Simmons, manager of Mount Hope Cemetery. A survey of the New Scottish Burial Plot was completed which showed 25 grave spaces available. On February 11, 2015, the board of the Scottish Heritage Society of Rochester passed a motion to assume trusteeship of the New Scottish Burial Plot with the right to approve burials once again. Applications for gravesites were carefully drawn up, following a fair procedure based on the original intent. The process to assign the remaining graves in Mount Hope Cemetery is now underway and is being overseen by the New Scottish Burial Plot Committee.

On a final note, although the Mount Hope Cemetery project had a successful outcome, some points of interest surfaced along the way that piqued my curiosity. For example, apart from financial aid and the two burial plots, what else did early Scots benefactors provide for kinsmen in Rochester? What kind of life did those lost Glenesk Lindsay brothers lead? Did they leave descendants, and if so, are there Lindsays still in the local area? What happened to the \$5,000 trust fund deposited in the Rochester Trust & Safe Deposit Company for "Scots women as may need help"? And, what about the descendants of the dozens of other Scots in Mount Hope Cemetery; how do I trace their family lines to the present day to tell the living about their family roots? Once again, more questions raised than answers provided. The history archives are calling my name, and I feel compelled to learn more. So off I go again!



# RECENT IMPROVEMENTS IN MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY



By Richard O. Reisem

The construction of the Hurlbut mausoleum last year on Grove Avenue made it necessary to close a rarely used road just to the right of the mausoleum that led steeply downhill to Cedar Avenue. The roadway was partially filled in and the mausoleum is located where the south entrance to the roadway existed. But the road closure opened an opportunity to create a pedestrian walkway with stone steps along a curving terraced portion of the old roadway. A series of



*The construction last year of the Hurlbut mausoleum in rainbow granite necessitated closing and filling in the portion of Glen Avenue between Cedar and Grove avenues.*

more than 50 stone steps are interrupted by five relatively flat terraced sections. The hillsides on either side of this picturesque walkway are enhanced by new perennial plantings. The old stone retaining wall on the east side of the walkway that curves around to follow Cedar Avenue eastward has been retained and complements this new attractive addition to the cemetery. The LA Group of Saratoga Springs, New York was

selected by the city to design the grading, stone stairs, railings, and plantings. Mount Hope Cemetery funds paid for the work, and Robin Schutte, Department of Environmental Services, was



*Pictured are 20 of the more than 50 stone stairs that create a new walkway between Cedar and Grove avenues in the area that previously was a rarely used section of Glen Avenue. The area is also planted with perennials. When this photograph was taken, the stair railing had not yet been installed.*

the project manager. The walk will be closed to pedestrians until the perennial plantings are well established. Stair railings were not installed at the time the photo was taken.

A project that the city of Rochester recently undertook was the replacement of the metal finials on the Gothic spires on either side of the old chapel entrance in the north entrance area of the cemetery. The old finials were so badly deteriorated that new ones needed to be fashioned to exactly match the various parts of the original. The finials, which have a long, octagonal base that slips over the tapered octagonal stone spires, incorporate



Mark Cooper, Spring Sheet Metal Works, studies a makeshift partial finial composed of deteriorated parts of the two original finials, before starting to create the new finials.

Gothic-style parts that resemble plant forms like acanthus leaves. The new finials have been wired to the ground to act as lightning rods.

A third project, this one undertaken by the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery, involves the stained-glass windows in the gatehouse. The gatehouse was constructed in 1874, and the five stained-glass windows were probably installed soon after. The muntins that support adjacent pieces of glass are made of lead and after 140 years start to lose their rigid support, causing the window to bow and, if not restored, collapse. With funds provided by the Friends, one window, which was badly bowed, has been removed, cleaned, disassembled, releaded, stabilizing strips added, and reinstalled. Similar treatment to the remaining four windows will be undertaken as needed in the months and years ahead.

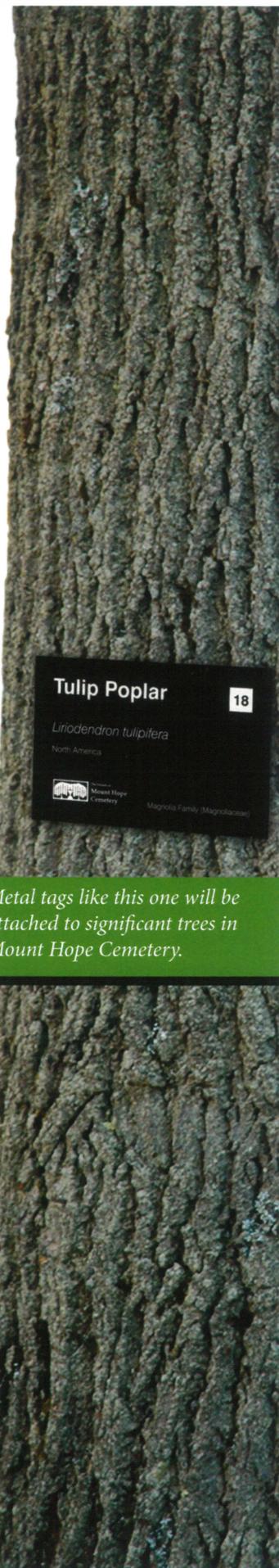


This window in the north gatehouse was restored by Pike Stained Glass Studios, Rochester, NY.

A fourth project, also implemented by the Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery, will identify significant trees in the cemetery with 4 by 6-inch, black-and-white metal tags. This project, originally suggested by former Friends trustee Ed Olinger, was continued by Friends trustee, Zak Steele, a landscape architect, with help from an FOMH member, Tom Jones.

Zak will identify approximately 50 rare and interesting trees for tagging. Spring-loaded screws attach the 4 by 6-inch tag to the tree, allowing for tree-trunk expansion as it grows. Zak is also preparing a brochure describing the tagged trees and their locations. It will be made available to the public.

In the late summer and fall months of this year, the Friends have scheduled restoration of the terne-metal roof of the gazebo's dome in the north cemetery entrance area and the bronze sculpture in the Civil War plot. The gazebo will receive a new metal roof that will be painted with its current arabesque design. The work will be done by CSTM Corp.—which specializes in copper, slate, tile, and metal—and is operated by Kurt Catalano. The bronze Civil War monument—a work by the famous sculptor, Sally James Farnham—will be restored by Peter Ellison of Ellison Conservation. As part of this project, Ellison will also restore Carlo, the bronze dog from the Pratt mausoleum lawn, now on display in the 1874 gatehouse.



Tulip Poplar

18

*Liriodendron tulipifera*

North America



Mount Hope  
Cemetery

Magnolia Family (Magnoliaceae)

Metal tags like this one will be attached to significant trees in Mount Hope Cemetery.



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City photographer Ira Srole snapped this photo of a red-tailed hawk in Mount Hope Cemetery near the old chapel on June 30.

Joanne Mitchell, who conducts bird-watching tours in the cemetery, noted: "You can see the outside edges of the tail feathers are reddish, making this a red-tailed hawk. The top side of the tail feathers are that reddish brown. The light breast with the streaked 'belly band' is typical of a red-tailed hawk. A pair of red-tailed hawks nested in one of the tall evergreen trees near the old chapel this spring. I have seen others in Mt. Hope as well—lots of prey, with all the chipmunks and squirrels and rodents. The groundhogs are a bit too big for this bird. This type of hawk tends to hunt things on the ground. They won't turn down an easy meal at a bird feeder, but they are not as maneuverable in hunting in the air as falcons or other hawks like a Cooper's hawk."



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