

## 2012 CEMETERY COMMITTEE REPORT TO NYQM JULY, 2012

The cemetery committee continues to be a strong and active committee, even without having full membership. The members are Mary Doty, clerk, JoAnne Dally, Elizabeth Gilmore, Mary Eberhardt Owen and Alice Pope.

The work of the committee focuses on four areas:

1. management of property
2. supporting families at the time of death
3. gravesite reservations—site selection and fee collection
4. workdays, visiting days, history tours and genealogical help

MANAGEMENT OF PROPERTY--Huge progress was made over the past year with the installation of the entrance road to the shed and the new ramp into The Glade (formerly called the Mott Plot).

--Numerous trees and flowering shrubs were installed along the hillside on the western side of the Hicksite area. Two new benches were purchased, so now there are four iron and wood benches; and more benches were created by cutting up logs from fallen trees.

--An arboretum aspect to the cemetery has been initiated by identifying the Latin and English names of 15 trees, and installing appropriate signage.

--Severe storms, including a hurricane and heavy snowstorms, required extensive clean up and tree removal as well as repairs to the fence. Many dead and dying trees were also taken down.

--Road repair to the upper road has been delayed because the construction company was very busy with the PPA reconstruction of the skating rink and surrounding area. Our upper road widening and repair should be completed by the end of 2012.

**SUPPORTING FAMILIES AT THE TIME OF DEATH** There have been three burials during the past year compared to nine in 2010: MELVIN DAVIS, 15<sup>th</sup> Street Meeting attendee--ashes scattered on 5/7/11; PATRICIA LaVISCOUNT, Brooklyn Meeting member-- full body burial on 9/9/11; and PAUL WILLIAMS, 15<sup>th</sup> Street Meeting member--ashes buried on 10/16/11.

#### **GRAVESITE RESERVATIONS AND RECORD KEEPING**

The total number of people with reservations is 90, with 13 new reservations being made during this past year. Collection of fees totals \$36,550.

At the recommendation of the NYQM attorney an adjustment was made to the reservation fee policy. Instead of charging everyone the fee amounts set at the July 2009 Quarterly Meeting, those individuals who already have a family member buried in the cemetery were charged the rate which was in existence at the time the reservations were made. There were about a dozen families affected by this change of policy. Letters were written to everyone resulting in NYQM returning a total of \$1100 and lowering the charges for those who had not yet paid. Several individuals who had made full payments requested that their money be considered contributions to the cemetery; their gifts amounted to \$5,750.

Major accomplishments in record keeping were achieved this year. Archival quality copies were made of the original books kept in the cemetery shed and database corrections were completed.

#### **WORKDAYS, VISITING DAYS, HISTORIC TOURS AND GENEALOGICAL INFORMATION**

Work and Visiting Days at the cemetery have become a major way of engaging Quaker schools and Quaker families to help improve the property and to promote appreciation for the beauty of the

cemetery. During the past year there were 85 students and teachers from Friends Seminary, 80 students and teachers from Mary McDowell Friends School and 150 children and parents from Brooklyn Friends School participated in workdays. They raked leaves, built a ramp into the Glade, planted daffodil bulbs and pulled weeds. They also worshiped and picnicked and visited gravesites of Quakers educators and schools committee members. Individuals and families from all the Meetings of the NYQM also came for visits, workdays, picnics and meetings. So the cemetery has become a gathering place for the living as well as a graveyard for those who have passed on.

The historic tours led by the sexton and members of the committee are open to the public with 20-40 people attending each day of the fall and spring workdays.

The cemetery receives 5-10 requests a year for genealogical information and for visits to family gravesites. In most cases the committee is able to provide names and dates of buried Quakers. Family members find the information to be very helpful.

**FINANCIAL INFORMATION:** 2011 income for the Cemetery Committee consisted of \$10,150 in reservation and burial fees, \$2,700 in contributions and \$700 from the sale of an old mower for a total of \$13,550. The committee carried out its business within the budgeted amount of \$88,050. Cancellation of the Verizon phone and securing a free Google phone account will save the committee over \$450 per year. New number of the cemetery line is 646-580-9147.

Submitted for the committee by Mary Doty, Clerk