

New York Quarterly Meeting
Report to Trustees
July 14 2018

The cemetery committee meets monthly. There are 5 official members; although we have requested that our one co-opted member be added to the membership, we have not been advised of any change.

We are pleased to report that our projects of computerizing our data base and having a survey of the property are now complete.

We have held three work days with enthusiastic participation from students and parents from Brooklyn Friends School and Mary McDowell Friends School. There were 100 and 77 participants at the two fall work days and 64 at the spring work day. We have not had any participation from Friends Seminary. We held one Memorial Meeting. Brooklyn Monthly Meeting First Day School held a picnic in the cemetery; there were 20 attenders. There have been 7 burials, 4 ashes and 3 full body, 1 of which was a green burial.

Our main concern is storage for cemetery equipment and supplies. Last year we purchased a golf cart to better enable persons with mobility issues to visit the cemetery. At the same time an "assemble-it-yourself" shed was purchased. However this shed does not meet our needs because it is not waterproof or dustproof, and because it is susceptible to colonization by mice. Also, it is not resistant to break-in. As a result, equipment either has to be piled into the existing building, or hosed down before every use if stored in the new shed. We strongly believe that a cinder block shed will meet our needs, but we have experienced a number of problems with this project and are in contact with our sexton, the Meeting Director of Facilities, and our Lawyer, Brian Doherty, in an effort to move forward.

The Prospect Park Alliance has continued to perform routine maintenance. We are very satisfied with their performance. We also supplement the work with an additional worker in the springtime because of the increased work load. Our main maintenance problem is erosion due to rainwater run-off around the concrete ribbons. We have not yet been able to come up with a workable plan to stabilize the ground.

Last year we reported that our "Open Saturdays" program had been so poorly attended that we intended to cancel it. Friends urged the committee to continue the program but the attendance did not improve; for all the Saturdays, our maximum attendance per event, aside from committee members, was one. We have not rescheduled this activity. Attendance at the Memorial Meeting this year was also very low - only 9 attended, including cemetery committee members.

We are concerned about this seeming lack of interest in our cemetery on the part of our Meetings. Although members express their appreciation of the grounds and acknowledge its beauty and tranquility, their absence at cemetery events (workdays, Memorial Meeting) speaks loudly to us. This apparent lack of concern is also manifested in a difficulty in finding members who are interested in serving on cemetery committee. This is an extremely enriching and rewarding committee (we speak from experience) with responsibilities on many levels: horticultural, pastoral care, legal, managerial, and care of buildings and supplies. As a committee we consider this to be a sacred space for the entire Meeting. There will be several vacancies soon, as the present co-clerks have nearly completed

their maximum terms of service. We hope the spirit will move Friends to join together in carrying on the care of our beloved cemetery.

In Friendship,