

The Cemetery Committee Report
New York Quarterly Meeting
16 July 2022

The Cemetery Committee meets monthly via Zoom and has a full roster of 6 members.

Events

The committee has focused on making the cemetery more welcoming and accessible to Friends. Most of all, we remain dedicated to being thoughtful and dedicated stewards of this special place and balancing that long historic role with a greater sense of openness and community. We've been delighted to see more visitors to the cemetery and a wider use of the grounds.

- 6 Interments
Joseph Hayman
Henry Koster
Glenn Bibler
Ellen Deegan
Steve McBrien
Patricia Chernoff
- 4 Memorial Meetings
- 1 SQL Meeting for Grieving
- 2 Open Saturdays (May, June), with next one on July 23, 2022.
- 4 Workdays
2 Quarterly Meeting + Brooklyn Friends School w/nature & historical tours (Fall, November 2021, Spring, April 2022)

1 Mary McDowell School Workday

1 Friends Seminary Workday

These events drew more than 550 visitors out of which 400 were students, family members, staff or teachers for Workdays

Another 150 attended other events, including the Open Saturdays, private visits to graves and Quarterly Meeting participation in Workdays

We will continue to have a monthly Open Saturday, all tentatively scheduled for the 3rd Saturday of each month through October 2022.

We will also schedule a Fall Workday in November.

By opening the cemetery gates more often the committee has seen great excitement from many Prospect Park visitors, many of whom have referred to the mysterious place with gates always closed, and the joy that they felt having a chance to walk the grounds.

The committee will continue to explore ways to make the cemetery more welcoming and accessible to Friends. Most of all, we remain dedicated to being thoughtful and dedicated stewards of this special place and balancing that long historic role with a greater sense of openness and community.

Facilities

The Cemetery Committee has been motivated by the Quarter's embrace of a new facility to create a more inviting environment for Friends. We met with the Quarter's architectural firm on retainer, ARO, and had a great meeting that had us inspired and full of hope that we could make a positive move in 2022. However, scheduling time with them to has proven more difficult than anticipated and we haven't been able to to advance the long-desired new building that would include a new sexton office, a secure storage, and a welcoming place for family gatherings and Friend meetings. Our goal remains to ultimately build a new structure in the cemetery that will reflect Quaker values while also offering a more visually appealing and more useful building. The committee will continue to push the ARO connection since they offered the most comprehensive services needed for the array of projects in the cemetery.

Landscape

The cemetery grounds require constant vigilance to address broken fences, down trees, and much more –and it wouldn't be possible without our sexton, Robert Wilber. And we continue to be thankful for the Prospect Park Alliance's efforts caring for the 12 acres of land surrounded by Prospect Park.

We also want to move forward with short-term priorities focused on a land survey and needed maintenance of the property, such as addressing erosion on the path leading up to the upper Hicksite area. This work is necessary before anything can be done regarding a new building.

Native American Land Acknowledgement

John Major is leading our effort and we look forward to using the rest of the year to achieve Land Acknowledgment.

In Friendship,
Bryan Oettel
Suzanne Stout
John Major
Jessica Fleischer-Black
Maureen Healy
Chris Roddick