

theundergroundmuseum.org

WINTER 2007

THE Laurel Hill Ledger

A FESTIVE FALL AT LAUREL HILL

Each year, the autumn season proves to be a busy and exciting time at Laurel Hill Cemetery (LHC). 2006 festivities began in September, with our participation in the Philly Fringe Festival, a collaboration of hundreds of regional artists, organizations and performers. *The Late Laureates of Laurel Hill: A Twilight Reading of Spoon River Anthology*, which was performed on the Cemetery grounds at dusk, sold out through the Fringe box office immediately. Thanks to much thoughtful preparation, and the amazing talent of our actors, the inaugural production could not have run more smoothly. We have already booked the show in our 2007 program schedule, and will include a new and expanded list of whimsical characters to provoke, startle and delight.

Nearly 100 people attended October's Friday the 13th tour, a first-time event at Laurel Hill cosponsored by the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia. And, despite uncooperative weather, we received a phenomenal turnout for our infamous Halloween flashlight tours. For the first time, the Friends of Laurel Hill Cemetery (FLHC) also offered a Dining with the Dead package, which included a tour and catered dinner in the Cemetery's historic Gatehouse. As always, our devoted guides and actors helped to make Halloween at Laurel Hill a truly unique and captivating experience. The Friends would like to thank these individuals for their

invaluable time, hard work and dedication to Laurel Hill Cemetery. *Actors:* Larry Arrigale (Elisha Kent Kane), Bill Bansbach (Issac Hull), Donna McFadden (Martha Drennan), Linda Palmarozza (Mrs. Penfield), and Bryan Ramona (Frank Furness). *Guides:* Laura Beardsley, Michael Brooks, Ty Gardner, Dave Horwitz, Tom Keels, Jerry McCormick, Al Michell, Jim Mundy, Ed Quinn, Mary Quinn and Andy Waskie. ■



The Late Laureates of Laurel Hill pictured from left to right: Donna McFadden, Kathy McMearty, Bob Berghaier, Bill VanBuskirk, Lisa Baron, Robert Toczek, Jerry Carrier, Jane Toczek, Bonnie Neubauer, Gil Seagraves, Janna Kane, McKeever, Steve Maurer, and FLHC Executive Director Ross Mitchell. Not pictured: Guitarist Michael London, who provided the show's music. Photographer: Ed Snyder



Beautiful weather and festive spirits brought scores of revelers to the annual General Meade Birthday Celebration on New Years Eve. 2006 marked the 16th anniversary of this Laurel Hill tradition, which is spearheaded by FLHC board member Andy Waskie, and cosponsored by the General Meade Society of Philadelphia.

A NEW YEAR, A NEW BOARD

2006 marked the end of Barbara K. Smith's long tenure as President of the Board of Directors of the Friends of Laurel Hill. We recognize and thank Barbara for her many years of dedication and commitment to the preservation and advancement of Laurel Hill Cemetery. She will continue to serve on the Board as one of three Company-appointed members.

The Friends introduce James G. Mundy as our new President. Jim works as Director of Library and Historical Collections for The Union League of Philadelphia. He has served on the FLHC Board for several years, and brings expertise, enthusiasm and important contacts to the organization.

The Friends announce with pleasure the addition of new Board members, Laura E. Beardsley, Thomas H. Keels, Raymond N. Skaddan and Company representative, Nevin W. Mann. We formally welcome all of our new members, and look forward to the many years of continued growth and success that lie ahead. ■

A PUBLICATION OF THE FRIENDS OF LAUREL HILL CEMETERY

Writer & Editor: Gwendolyn Kaminski

LAUREL HILL



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year has perhaps become more a greeting or form of politeness than what these three words actually imply. Here at Laurel Hill, they indeed have much more meaning, with the accent on new. The Friends have a new president, succeeding the twenty year tenure of Barbara Smith. As modest as Barbara has been about her dedication and service to the Friends, it is an accomplishment and achievement to dedicate that amount of time to any organization. We are grateful, and thankful, for Barbara's involvement and leadership. It has left us much the better than otherwise.

New also means that we have new members of the Friends board. Laura Beardsley, Ray Skaddan, Nevin Mann, and the returning Tom Keels are expected to help move the Friends to its next level of operation, activity, and programs. With our new marketing plan and image as "The Underground Museum" we will be moving the Friends, and the cemetery, in a new direction.

It is also a time of renewal. Organizations like us constantly need to renew our relationship with you, our supporters. We will be looking at new ways to strengthen the ties that bind us together.

Happy NEW Year everyone!



*FLHC President
James G. Mundy*

EAST FALLS TREE TENDERS PARTNERSHIP

Last summer, Laurel Hill Cemetery partnered with the East Falls Tree Tenders (EFTT), a volunteer organization established under TreeVitalize Neighborhoods—an \$8 million program to reverse the 15-year loss of more than 5 million trees in Southeast PA. EFTT anticipates the planting of 100 trees in 2006 and 2007. Laurel Hill Cemetery has and will continue to serve as the delivery point for the trees.

During phase one of the project this past fall, LHC staff members Frank Rausch and Greg Gontz transported the trees from Laurel Hill to individual planting sites around the community. EFTT donated a number of trees towards the Ridge Avenue beautification project, which have been planted along the sidewalk in front of the Cemetery, further enhancing Laurel Hill's image and appeal. ■

IN LOVE AT LAUREL HILL



Husband-and-Wife-to-be Trevor Hughes and Kiki Garmus became engaged during a private Victorian picnic on Laurel Hill's Terrace... a lovely setting for a monumental event.

AUDIO TOUR DEVELOPMENT AT LAUREL HILL

FLHC recently received a \$20,000 matching grant from the Schuylkill River Heritage Area to support the development and implementation of an Audio Tour Program for Laurel Hill Cemetery. An Audio Tour will enable our site to accommodate the increased visitation that we ultimately depend upon. By bringing our National Historic Landmark up to par with like organizations and attractions, both within the Philadelphia region and across the nation, an Audio Tour will work to reestablish Laurel Hill as a viable destination spot and recreation area. By appealing to more visitors through programming, FLHC will be able to generate the increased support and funding necessary for the conservation of the site's environmental, cultural and historic treasures. We are now in the process of seeking the support of public agencies, private foundations, and individual donors to help us fund this vital programming initiative.

To find out more about how you can help support this new and exciting program for Laurel Hill through a tax-deductible contribution, contact us at 215-228-8200. ■



Gravediggers' Ball revelers Patricia Conway and Rob Stoller toast to a magical evening.

2006 GRAVEDIGGERS' BALL A SUCCESS

Our second annual Gravediggers' Ball took place on October 6th at the Crystal Tea Room, located downtown in Philadelphia's renowned Wanamaker Building. The event included a cocktail hour and open bar, seated dinner, dancing and a silent auction. Over 225 people attended the gala, and all enjoyed a fantastic evening.

In addition to our major sponsors, the Friends thank everyone—contributors, auction donors, advertisers, ticket buyers, staff and volunteers—who helped to make this year's Gravediggers' Ball a success. Proceeds from the event have completed the grant matches for phase one of our *Old Mortality* and Gates restoration projects.

The generous support that we have received will help to ensure the preservation of Laurel Hill Cemetery's unique beauty and vibrant history for generations to come.

We will be bringing the Gravediggers' Ball back to the Crystal Tea Room in 2007, where the event will take place on Friday evening, October 12th. Please check our website frequently for updates as more information becomes available on the details of another unforgettable night.

FLHC is now seeking sponsors, contributors, advertisers and auction donors for our key fundraiser. Please contact us if you, or anyone that you know, would be interested in supporting this important cause. ■

The Friends of Laurel Hill would like to thank the following individuals and businesses who helped to make the 2006 Gravediggers' Ball a success:

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FRIENDS OF LAUREL HILL CEMETERY

2006 REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The Friends of Laurel Hill Cemetery have had a very successful year and I wanted to thank everyone for supporting our missions of educational outreach and the preservation of this unique National Historic Landmark. Our programming continues to grow and nearly 5,000 people visited the cemetery last year. Our goal is to draw 30,000 visitors to Laurel Hill annually, which is the number of people who visited in 1848. The following are some of the highlights of 2006:

TOURS & PROGRAMS

Victorian Digs: Gardens & Graves: We have developed a program for tour groups in conjunction with the Morris Arboretum which includes a Victorian tour of the Morris Arboretum, lunch, a bus tour and a visit to Laurel Hill for a mock Victorian funeral, complete with re-enactors.

Franklin & the Revolutionary Generation: Four tours were held at Laurel Hill Cemetery in accordance with the Franklin 300 celebrations that took place throughout the region in 2006.

Memorial Day Service: 125 people turned out for this annual free event, cosponsored by the General Meade Society of Philadelphia.

General Meade Birthday Celebration: 250 attended this free New Years Eve event, which included a champagne toast at the Victor of Gettysburg's graveside. The General Meade Society also cosponsored this birthday celebration.

Titanic Tour: April's Titanic tour was well received with over 50 attendees. It included an intimate look at the lives of the six passengers at Laurel Hill and the five passengers at West Laurel Hill. The tour was followed by a slide show and lecture, and was capped off with a dinner re-creating the last meal served aboard that fateful night. Please save the date for this year's Titanic event scheduled for April 14th to coincide with the 95th anniversary of the sinking.

Juneteenth & the Civil War: In partic-

ipation with the Juneteenth celebrations taking place throughout the city, Laurel Hill's tour highlighted the collaboration between blacks and whites in the Civil War. Juneteenth is the yearly celebration of African American independence from slavery.

Wharton School Project: Laurel Hill worked with a group of nine business majors who developed and implemented a program focusing on art and architecture at Laurel Hill targeting middle-school audiences.

MARKETING/OUTREACH

Marketing: We were able to leverage a Fels Fund grant into an \$80,000 pro-bono marketing/re-branding campaign. Advertising firm, **Red Tettemer**, created the concept of marketing Laurel Hill as the "The Underground Museum," designed a logo for the Cemetery and developed a guerrilla marketing campaign set to be initiated in spring 2007.

Website: **Red Tettemer** also developed our new Laurel Hill Cemetery website. There have been over seven thousand visits since the site opened in August 2006. If you haven't done so already, visit us at www.theundergroundmuseum.org.

Volunteers: A very special thank you to the volunteers who have helped us by working at events, organizing our archives and developing our programming this past year, including Jeffrey Cohen, Deborah Cooper, Tom Fisher, Joe Gervasi, Amy Henson, Bruce Hustis, Sandra Markham, Aaron Wunsch, Carla Yanni and Carol Yaster.

GRANTS

Old Mortality: We have met the PHMC matching grant and Kreilick Conservation began work on the Old Mortality preservation project. Phase one of this long-term conservation project is nearly complete. Thank you to everyone who contributed to our Old Mortality preservation efforts.

Historic Gates: We have also matched our PHMC grant for the phase one preservation of our ornamental wrought iron gates. This phase investigated and documented the extent of damage from past repairs, and included X-rays of the gates.

Hoxie Harrison Smith Foundation: We have received a \$5,000 grant towards the restoration of Commodore Hull's memorial. We are still in need of \$6,000 to complete the restoration of the canopy to protect this beautiful monument from the elements.

Year-end Membership Appeal: Our year-end membership appeal was very successful with a 100% increase in donations from last year.

Arboretum Donation Policy: We are proud to announce our new arboretum donation policy, which was created to help ensure the long-term preservation of the Cemetery's horticultural aspects. Please see our website for details or call for more information about how you can participate in this program.

2007 looks like it's going to be an even better year for the Friends of Laurel Hill. We have doubled our tours and programs and look forward to a higher profile in the region as a heritage tourism destination. With your help, we will not only preserve Laurel Hill, but also make it relevant for future generations.

Thank you for your invaluable support,

Ross Mitchell
Executive Director

The Friends of Laurel Hill Cemetery Welcomes These New and Returning Members

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LAUREL HILL CEMETERY 2007 PROGRAM SCHEDULE

February

Sunday 11, 2:00pm
The Victorian Celebration of Death
Ed & Mary Quinn \$15

March

Sunday 11, 2:00pm
The Spirits and Spiritualists of Laurel Hill
Michael Brooks \$15

Saturday 24, 2:00pm
The Ladies of The Hill
 Commemorating Women's History Month
Carol Yaster \$15

April

Saturday 14, 3:00pm*
R.M.S. Titanic: 95 Years Later
 Tour, Lecture and Dinner
J. Joseph Edgette \$75

Sunday 22, 8:00am
Birding Amongst the Buried
 Celebrating Earth Day at Laurel Hill
Barbara Ricker \$10

Sunday, 29, 2:00pm
Designing for the Dead: Art & Architecture at Laurel Hill
Thomas Keels \$15

May

Saturday 5, 8:00am
Birding Amongst the Buried
Barbara Ricker \$10

Saturday 12, 2:00pm
The Quick & the Dead:
 Transportation & Laurel Hill
David Horwitz \$15

Saturday 19, 2:00pm
Dead White Republicans:
 The History of the Republican Party in Philadelphia
Anthony Waskie \$15

Sunday 27, 12:00pm
Memorial Day Observance at Laurel Hill
 Service and Reception
The General Meade Society Free

June

Sunday 10, 2:00pm
In Their Own Words:
 Laurel Hill in Letters and Diaries
Laura Beardsley \$15

Saturday 16, 2:00pm
Free At Last
 A Tour Commemorating Juneteenth and the Civil War
Anthony Waskie \$15

Saturday 30, 12:00pm*
Laurel Hill's White Bronze Monuments
 A Workshop and Tour
Richard Sauers, Scott Kreilick \$35

July

Sunday 8, 2:00pm
1876: The Centennial and Laurel Hill
 Celebrating America's 231st Birthday
Ed & Mary Quinn \$15

Saturday 14, 12:00pm*
The Cemetery and The River
 A Tour and BYOF Picnic Overlooking the Schuylkill
Michael Brooks \$20

Sunday 29, 2:00pm
Philanthropic Philadelphians:
 Serving the City of Brotherly Love
David Horwitz \$15

August

Saturday 4, 12:00pm*
A Kids' Eye View of Laurel Hill
 A Family Day to Learn and Play
 adults \$15 kids Free

Sunday 12, 2:00pm
Philadelphia's Industrial Magnates:
 The Making of a Nation
Richard Sauers \$15

September

Sunday 9, 2:00pm
People, Politics and Power:
 Laurel Hill and The Union League
James Mundy \$15

Saturday 15, 6:00pm*
The Late Laureates of Laurel Hill:
 A Twilight Performance of Spoon River Anthology
 A Philly Fringe Festival Event \$20

Sunday 30, 2:00pm
Classy Broads and Daring Dames
Carol Yaster \$15

October

Friday 12, 7:00pm*
Gravediggers' Ball \$150

Sunday 14, 2:00pm
Sinners, Scandals and Suicides:
 A Tour of Laurel Hill's Dark Side
Thomas Keels \$15

Friday 26*
A Hallowed Halloween at Laurel Hill
 Flashlight Tours with re-enactors start at 7pm, and depart regularly until 9:30pm \$20

Friday 26*
Dining with the Dead at Laurel Hill
 BYOB Dinner and Tour Package
 5:00pm and 6:30pm seatings \$50

Saturday 27*
A Hallowed Halloween at Laurel Hill
 Flashlight Tours with re-enactors start at 7pm, and depart regularly until 9:30pm \$20

Sunday 28, 12:00pm*
Fall Fun for the Family at Laurel Hill
 Apple Bobbing, Scavenger Hunts, Tours and More
 adults \$15 kids Free

November

Saturday 03, 2:00pm
The Language of the Dead:
 Victorian Funerary Symbolism
Michael Brooks \$15

Sunday 11, 2:00pm
KIA: Heroes Killed in Action
 A Tour in Observance of Veterans' Day
Anthony Waskie \$15

December

Sunday 09, 2:00pm
Designing for the Dead:
 Art & Architecture at Laurel Hill
Thomas Keels \$15

Monday 31, 12:00pm
General Meade Birthday Celebration
The General Meade Society Free

* Indicates that Reservations are Required
Members and students with ID receive discounts on selected tours; children under 12 years of age are free.

Thank You for Your Contributions and Support.

To become a member of the Friends of Laurel Hill Cemetery, please contact us at 215-228-8200 to receive a membership brochure and pledge card.



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FLHC was recently awarded a 2006-2007 General Operating Support grant from the **Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission**. This critical funding, which is often the most difficult to obtain, will be used towards maintaining our ongoing organizational services and programs.

URBAN MOURNING: AN IMPORTANT AND TIMELY PROJECT

FLHC is in the early phases of developing a program entitled the Urban Mourning Project (UMP). The UMP has evolved in response to the rising levels of violence throughout the city and, correspondingly, to the increasing appearance of urban memorials, spray-painted RIP murals, commemorative t-shirts, car decals and tattoos. The UMP will not only help children to discover and appreciate these new rituals emerging in themselves, their families and their communities, but will also introduce them to historic mourning rituals that have been lost over time. By offering a powerful, nonviolent outlet in the form of artistic expression, the Friends hope to help children realize alternative means for channeling their grief, thus steering them away from reacting violently in the future.

Laurel Hill Cemetery has over 170 years of experience in dealing with mourning rituals and, although the memorials have changed over time, the impetus behind them remains the same and continues to connect human beings across time and cultures. The rich historical and aesthetic resources at Laurel Hill place us in a unique position to help children better understand the history, meaning and necessity of healthy mourning rituals.

FLHC is initiating the planning stages of the program, supported by a broad and impressive committee of stakeholders that includes experts from a range of disciplines in the arts, history, healthcare and community service. The enthusiasm and support with which the Urban Mourning Project has been met are testament to the significance of and need for such a program in Philadelphia. FLHC looks forward to working with our community partners in the continued development of the UMP, offering our city's youth alternative outlets for their aggression and pain, and working not only to provide solutions to violent crime, but also to open up honest, constructive and long-overdue discussions about the real causes of and meanings behind such violence. ■



*One of the many artistic examples of contemporary Urban Mourning Rituals that can be found throughout Philadelphia's neighborhoods.
Photographer: Michael Brooks*

HISTORIC Laurel Hill



CEMETERY FOUNDED 1836

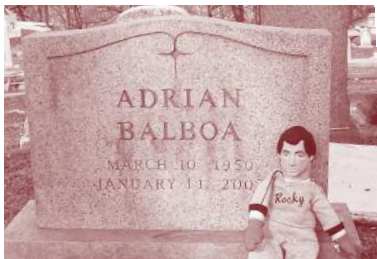
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ROCKY AND LAUREL HILL: PHILADELPHIA TRADITIONS

Philadelphia's favorite underdog, *Rocky Balboa* (the movie), was released in theaters on December 20th. If you've already caught a screening of the aging star's alleged final bout, then you likely noticed something familiar in the film's Cemetery scenes. All were shot at Laurel Hill, where Stallone and his crew set up residence for two action-packed days in January 2006. After seeing Laurel Hill on the big screen, be sure to stop by and see our breathtaking scenery, art and architecture in person. You can even pay your respects at Adrian Balboa's "gravesite" while here.



CEMETERY HOURS

MON-FRI 8:00AM-4:30PM • SAT & SUN 9:30AM-5:00PM
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