

The Evergreens Cemetery Quarterly Newsletter



In Memoriam

Jonathan M. Weld

The Evergreens Cemetery board and staff was deeply saddened by the loss of our long serving board chair, Jonathan M. Weld. The Evergreens had a special place in Jon's heart. He served on the board of the Evergreens for almost two decades, from 2001 until his death in May 2019. His vision guided the institution to great successes including safeguarding the historic landscape, ensuring the financial stability of the institution, establishing The Evergreens Cemetery Preservation Foundation, and supporting our mission to serve the community.



Throughout his tenure Jon gave actively of his time, talent and resources. He welcomed engagement with the local neighborhood and directed the creation of our seasonal and community programming for hundreds of families. With foresight, he spearheaded plans to establish additional burial capacity within the Cemetery to accommodate families wishing final resting places near their loved ones.

At the same time, Jon was instrumental in preserving the legacy of The Evergreens Cemetery and to telling its rich history. Under his leadership, the Evergreens was listed on the National Record of Historic Places and a formal Cultural Landscape Report was commissioned to document the Evergreens' pivotal role in American landscape history,

from A.J. Downing to the other pioneering figures of Calvert Vaux, Samuel Parsons, Jr., Oliver C. Bullard, Charles Pfeiffer, and John Y. Culyer. Jon also sought out noted historian and author John Rousmaniere to write *Green Oasis* in Brooklyn, a lucid and engaging review of the sociology of burials and the history of the Evergreens from its inception in 1849.

Jon had a deep and abiding commitment to the landscape of the Evergreens, to our surrounding community and to the service of families whose loved ones repose here. To that end, Jon made sure that the inviting tranquility and beauty of the Evergreens is safeguarded for the future. During his tenure, the Evergreens partnered with New York City's Million Trees program and with New York State's Urban and Community Forest program to plant new trees throughout the grounds. At his request, a special magnolia was planted in memory of his wife, Jane Paige, who predeceased him. The Cemetery will be establishing a tree fund in Jon's (The Weld Family) name to continue his legacy of safeguarding the natural world.

We will always remember Jon as an extraordinary visionary who led us through times of challenge and change with keen intelligence and great dedication, coupled with his uncanny sense of humor and his kind spirit. The peace and beauty of the Evergreens is one of his many gifts to future generations.



Letter from the President

Dear Friends of The Evergreens Cemetery,

As 2019 draws to a close we look back on our year at The Evergreens Cemetery. We are delighted to have welcomed so many of our families and neighbors to enjoy our beautiful landscape and to take part in our robust slate of public programs.

Throughout the year, we continued to offer popular events such as stargazing with the Amateur Astronomers Association of New York, community Easter and Halloween events for families, bird walks with NYC Audubon, Arbor Day celebration and tree explorations with Bill Logan. We expanded our offering of historical tours, including monthly walking tours and military history tours. We commemorated our veterans with a tour of the Rockaway Footpath, retracing the British march that helped decide the outcome of the Battle of Brooklyn. We also honored the young female victims buried at the historic and poignant Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire monument on our grounds.

For the third year, we participated in Open House New York Weekend, welcoming members of the public to learn about the art and architecture on our grounds and to tour our historic chapel designed by the renowned and prolific architect A.J. Davis.

We hosted several events focused on brewing history in Brooklyn, included a tour of the mausoleums along Brewers Row where many of Bushwick's beer barons are entombed. We look forward to continuing to offer an exciting array of programs in 2019 and hope you will join us.

As always, we continue work to maintain our beautiful landscape, designed by A. J. Downing and listed on the National Register of Historic Places. With a spotlight on preserving the health and beauty of our majestic collection of trees, we have embarked on an ambitious beautification project including pruning, removing overgrown bushes, planting new trees and reconditioning the green expanses throughout the cemetery. In this way, by maintaining the historic landscape we fulfill our mission to serve our families and the community at large.

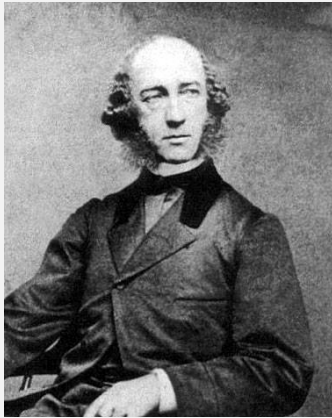
Please join me in supporting the Evergreens by making a gift to the 2019 Annual Fund of The Evergreens Cemetery Preservation Foundation. These funds support our slate of dynamic programming, the preservation of our landscape, and the fulfillment of our mission to serve our families and communities. We are grateful for your support and thank you in advance.

Happy holidays to you and your family, and best wishes for 2020!

Warmest regards,

Notable Resident

This article continues our series highlighting important people buried at The Evergreens Cemetery.



Martin Johnson Heade (1819 -1904)

Martin Johnson Heade was an American painter who defied categorization, painting still lifes, landscapes, seascapes and tropical birds. Although he is most associated with the Hudson River School, art historians tend to disagree on how much he should be considered a part of that movement. Hudson River artists' primary focus is on landscape paintings. While Heade produced a number of landscapes, he also painted many other subjects and became especially enamored with tropical flowers and birds later in his life.

Heade was born in Bucks County, Pennsylvania in 1819. As a young man he received his only art training from the iconic Quaker, folk artist Edward Hicks. Later, he spent two years living in Rome and returned to America to eventually exhibit his own works in Philadelphia and New York during the early 1840s. He eventually settled in New York around 1859 and would stay there until he did what many New Yorker's have also done, retiring to St. Augustine, Florida in 1883.

Unfortunately, his work was largely ignored during his lifetime only to be re-discovered in the 1940's. Now recognized as one of the great American painters, his works are found at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh, and the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Heade was honored with a US Postal Service stamp in 2004 depicting his painting "Giant Magnolias on a Blue Velvet Cloth."

A year after his death in 1904, Heade was buried in the Ivy Path section of the Evergreens Cemetery.



Recent Events at The Evergreens

Stargazing with the Amateur Astronomers Association of New York

On Friday, September 13th the cemetery hosted its highly popular stargazing event in partnership with the Amateur Astronomers Association of New York, a group dedicated to observing the sky and introducing



the public to the wonders of astronomy. According to AAA member, Tom Haeberle who helped organize the event, "attendees were treated to views of several bright celestial objects that the night sky had to offer."

Guests were able to observe the binary star system in the handle of the Big Dipper, known as Alcor and Mizar. Volunteer members of the astronomy club enjoyed stargazing in the cemetery because of the low light pollution from the city. The club looks forward to future stargazing events at this location.

Exploring Trees at The Evergreens Cemetery

On Saturday, October 5th we held a guided tree walk led by noted arborist and author William Bryant Logan. Visitors enjoyed the spectacular Fall foliage as they explored the grounds and learned to identify a variety of tree species. According to Bill Logan, "Looking at Evergreens trees is a voyage of discovery. There are many species, each with its own story. A few of the largest trees predate the cemetery." An attendee said she enjoyed the event.



Open House New York (OHNY) Weekend

The Evergreens Cemetery was proud to participate in Open House New York (OHNY) Weekend, a citywide celebration of architecture, design and New York City. The Evergreens Cemetery, a historic cemetery in the 'rural' style, was incorporated in 1849 and covers 225 acres. It was designed by notable landscape architect Andrew Jackson

Downing. Over 500,000 people are buried here, including notables such as tap legend Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, jazz musician Lester Young, and painter Martin Heade.

Community Halloween Event



On Saturday, October 26th over 200 people dressed in their favorite Halloween attire enjoyed a fun fulfilled family event at The Evergreens. Visitors enjoyed a horse drawn hayride, a magician show and a petting zoo at this free family event for the community. The Evergreens is delighted to welcome the community to explore the lush tranquil surrounding that it has to offer.

Spotlight Funder

On a warm sunny day in the fall, we welcomed Gloria VanDuyne to the Evergreens. Ms. VanDuyne is the Director of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Urban and Community Forestry Program, and we had invited her to inspect some of the wonderful new tree plantings that have been funded by the Urban and Community Forest Program.

Adding new trees to the Evergreens is a crucial priority. It is important because many of the trees of the Evergreens are mature, or were destroyed by Hurricanes Sandy, Irene and Lee, and we want to establish the next generation of trees to maintain the beauty of our grounds. We are the guardians of a historic landscape designed by A. J. Downing, one of the most influential landscape architects in American history. Because he died early in his career in the Henry Clay steamship explosion on the Hudson River, very few of his landscapes exist. When he died, Downing was the preeminent landscape designer in the United States and was designing the grounds of the National Mall and the Smithsonian Museum in Washington D.C., but these plans never came to fruition.



But beauty is not the only reason we prioritize our urban forest. Trees provide significant health benefits to humans and to the environment:

- Trees can reduce street-level air pollution by up to 60% and it has been suggested that children who live on tree-lined streets have lower rates of asthma.
- Trees stabilize soil and support other plantings.
- Trees provide a habitat for wildlife including birds, the insects that birds eat, and the insects that pollinate our flowers and our crops.

In addition, in this time of climate fluctuations, trees are great stabilizing force:

- Trees decrease energy consumption and moderate local climates by providing shade and acting as windbreaks.
- Trees act as mini reservoirs, helping to slow and reduce the amount of stormwater runoff that reaches storm drains, rivers, and lakes. One hundred mature tree crowns intercept roughly 100,000 gallons of rainfall per year (U.S. Forest Service 2003).
- Trees help reduce noise levels, cleanse atmospheric pollutants, produce oxygen, and absorb carbon dioxide.

As we toured the different sections of the Evergreens with Ms. VanDuyne, we were impressed by her knowledge of all things natural, her love of the birds that call the Cemetery their home, and her interest in our tree graced landscape. As we pointed out the new trees refreshing our winding tree lined drives, we also had the opportunity to show off our collection of evergreens at our main Bushwick Avenue gate, including our new Japanese White Pine, Lacebark Pine, Himalayan White Pine, Limber Pine, and Korean Pine. Each new tree is mulched and staked appropriately with watering as needed to make sure it thrives. With the goal of attaining recognition as an arboretum, we already have more than 125 species of trees and approximately 2,600 trees on our 225 acres.

We are grateful to the Department of Environmental Conservation for funding to help maintain our urban forest. The Evergreens is a community resource, a green oasis in Bushwick. We invite you to visit and to enjoy our expansive vistas of large stately trees and see the new plantings supported by New York State. Our next tree event will be Arbor Day in spring 2020. We hope you will come as we plant more trees for the future.

*With thanks to Urban Arborist and Davey Tree for new tree plantings and the Davey Tree Resources for the list of tree benefits.

The Evergreens Cemetery offers various services that we have available for your loved ones final resting place including:

- Seasonal care program
- Endowment care program
- Power washing of monuments
- Re-cementing of a monument
- Reconditioning & sodding

For more information, please contact the office at 718-455-5300 or send an email to info@theevergreencemetery.org.



Support Us

We are committed to maintaining our beautiful historic cemetery, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and offering our green space to our community through a wide variety of programs. Your support helps make this possible. It allows us to offer historical tours, tours of cemetery architecture and art, tree walks, stargazing, bird walks, Easter and Halloween events for local children, and other events. We are grateful for your support in helping us fulfill our mission.

Your tax-deductible donation may be made by credit card through PayPal or mailing a check to:

The Evergreens Cemetery Preservation Foundation
1629 Bushwick Avenue
Brooklyn, NY 11207

To make a donation through PayPal please click [HERE](#).

Making Arrangements

The Evergreens Cemetery provides a beautiful final resting place for loved ones, and we are pleased to discuss the variety of options available.

Contact:
Damaris Rodriguez
Family Service Counselor
718-455-5300
dr@theevergreencemetery.org

Cemetery Hours

Grounds/Gates open 7 days a week:

Office:

8:00 AM to 4:30 PM

Please visit our website or contact the office for holiday closures.

Monday through Friday:
8:00 AM to 4:30 PM

Saturday:
9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

The Evergreens Cemetery Board of Trustees

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Newsletter designed by Elba Luna

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