

INVISIBLE NO MORE

HONORING THE DECEASED BURIED
IN THE PUBLIC SECTION OF
MOUNT HOPE CEMETERY



October 23, 2023; 10:00 AM
Mount Hope Cemetery
Rochester, New York

Event schedule

- Opening remarks
 - Dr. Ryan Thibodeau
- Remarks from distinguished guests
 - Rochester Mayor Malik Evans
 - Monroe County Executive Adam Bello
- Conclusion

Memorial funding

- Rochester Area Community Foundation
- Sisters of Saint Joseph of Rochester

Memorial committee

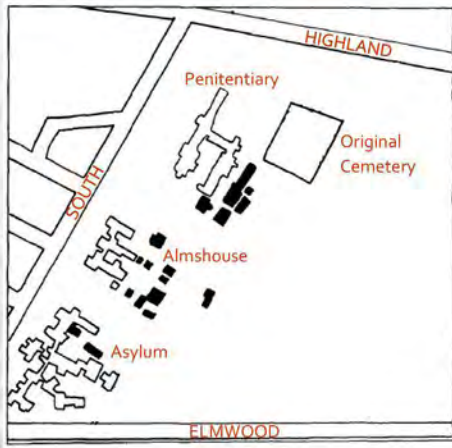
- Dr. Ryan Thibodeau
- Robert Riley
- Dr. Laurence Guttmacher
- Veronica Weider
- Dr. Margie Shaw
- Christine Ridarsky
- Ruth Rosenberg-Naparsteck
- Pat Corcoran
- Dennis Carr

Contributors and supporters

- Brian Liberti, Director of Buildings and Parks
- Jason Madison, Cemetery Operations Supervisor, MHC
- Jarod Terrell, Cemetery Manager, MHC
- Andrew Place, City Forester
- Pattie McCarthy
- Office of Sponsored Programs, SJF
- Office of the City Historian

Social welfare in early Rochester

Monroe County was once home to several social welfare institutions that date to the 19th century – an almshouse (poorhouse), “insane asylum,” and penitentiary. These institutions lined South Avenue, between Highland and Elmwood. Mount Hope Cemetery occupies an important place in their legacies.



Monroe County Almshouse

The Monroe County Almshouse opened in 1826 in a small brick building designed to accommodate 100 people. Initially, the facility housed not only the poor, but also people who were orphaned, widowed, blind, elderly, infirm, “feeble-minded,” and “insane.”

The original almshouse was replaced in 1933 by a newly constructed Monroe Community Home and Infirmary, known today as Monroe Community Hospital, at the corner of Westfall and East Henrietta Roads.



The Monroe County Almshouse. After an 1872 fire, this larger building was erected to accommodate 400 “Inmates.”

Monroe County Insane Asylum — RSH — RPC

The Monroe County Insane Asylum opened in 1857. Before that, the indigent “insane” were held at the almshouse.



Kitchen staff at Rochester State Hospital, ca. 1909.

The insane asylum became the Rochester State Hospital (RSH) in 1891 after the State of New York assumed control of the facility.

The name was changed to Rochester Psychiatric Center (RPC) in 1974.

Monroe County Workhouse/Penitentiary

The Monroe County Workhouse opened in 1854 as a correctional facility for people convicted of misdemeanors. It was redesignated as a penitentiary in 1858.

The penitentiary remained open until 1971, when the county transferred the last remaining inmates to the new Monroe County Jail on Plymouth Avenue downtown.



Penitentiary inmates tend the fields, ca. 1909.

Death and burial

Around 1863, the county began to bury deceased “inmates” of the almshouse, “insane asylum,” and workhouse/penitentiary in Mount Hope Cemetery. This new memorial looks onto the public section of the cemetery, where they and other “friendless” persons rest in unmarked graves, invisible to the public.

Our memorial aims to honor these individuals and to educate the public about a neglected aspect of our community’s history.