

ANNUAL REPORT OF HISTORIC FAIR HILL BURIAL GROUND

December 31, 2010

Our mission is to restore and preserve the Fair Hill Burial Ground:

- As a green space that is a source of peacefulness in an urban neighborhood
 - As part of Quaker history in Philadelphia
 - As a contribution to the restoration of its neighborhood
- And as an opportunity to carry forward the cause of equality for all people, which was the life work of many now buried there.

The Fair Hill Burial Ground Corporation has restored and is maintaining the 5 acre site at Germantown and Cambria Streets purchased eighteen years ago. During the past two years, the focus of the corporation has shifted from physical site restoration to partnering with the community on urban gardening and green space planning and offering programs to use the burial ground for history environmental education programs. Fair Hill also holds at least four public events per year, which combine volunteer work days with a celebratory or commemorative event. Here are some of the highlights of 2010 and plans for 2011.

In the spring of 2010, new interpretative signs were installed at the Cambria Street entrance. These show a map of the sections and lots so that visitors can find their way around. The signs also tell the story of Fair Hill and the reformers who are buried there.

PROGRAMS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

In February, Fair Hill holds a black history event with an essay contest for local school children to research and write about abolitionists Robert and Harriet Purvis. The children are excited to learn that their own neighborhood has important history. The contest grew from 6 entries to 35 entries in 2010. The winning entries are read at a ceremony held at a nearby community site. In 2011, the event will be on Saturday, February 19 at 1:00PM at the Evelyn Sanders Homes Community Room across Indiana Street from the burial ground gates. This year's event will feature Jamar Nicholas, graphic artist of the book "Fist, Stick, Knife, Gun" as the keynote speaker, and the essays will be on the topic "Violence in the Neighborhood."

In the spring, Fair Hill combines a workday, with tours and a spring egg hunt for neighborhood and Quaker youth. This year's spring event will be April 16.

In July, Fair Hill holds a summer festival with tours, children's games, music, food and horse and carriage rides. The last two July events have been co sponsored by Philadelphia Quarter. All Friends are invited to celebrate with us again this year in July.

During the summer months for the past three years, the burial ground was open to the public on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday afternoons, and through early fall on weekend afternoons. Children's activities were supervised by two dedicated teachers, who lead urban gardening projects, nature study, reading, games and art activities. The Davis Foundation supported the children's programs for approximately 25 children. The PYM Junior Interim Meeting used the burial ground for some of their Saturday morning activities in 2010.

In October, Fair Hill holds a workday with tours, a historical talk and dedication of new marker stone. In 2010, the speaker was a former resident of the Fair Hill neighborhood who spoke about the German history and culture of the neighborhood. Fair Hill also holds a book drive in the fall to collect new and gently used books from Friends schools and Meetings for local public elementary schools.

Fair Hill has become quite involved in partnering with the surrounding community on projects that are important for improving the neighborhood. Our most recent projects are focused on urban gardening. This summer and fall, Fair Hill volunteers helped plan, plant and tend two community gardens at 9th and Indiana. School gardens at the Potter Thomas Elementary School were installed by Fair Hill volunteers with a grant from the Philadelphia Eagles. Fair Hill volunteers also helped Hannah House, a nearby womens' halfway house, establish flower and vegetable gardens.

Fair Hill has developed other partnerships as well. Friends Central School has selected Fair Hill for one of their community projects and sends a group of volunteers for six days each year. The Penn Charter School has started a visitation program. The Carino Head Start program a block away visits regularly during the fall and spring for nature study tours. Visiting groups also came from Swarthmore First Day School, Germantown Friends School, Potter Thomas School, George Clymer School, and Mennonite Anti-racist committee in 2010. A number of descendents of people buried at Fair Hill and people interested in Civil War and the Underground Railroad also visited.

Our board member, Sarah Sharp, from Chestnut Hill Meeting and Upper School teacher at Penn Charter developed a curriculum on the Harriet Tubman mural across the street from Fair Hill. She added material about the history of Fair Hill and its connection to the abolition and women's rights movements to the curriculum, and it is being shared with area Friends Schools and neighborhood schools. Penn Charter is exploring ways to partner with Fair Hill neighborhood schools.

SITE MAINTENANCE AND PRESERVATION

In addition to special events and educational programs, Fair Hill continues to maintain the physical site. Maintenance and mowing is done by Awbury Arboretum Landscape Services and Ken Kolojicz Landscapers, both of whom use local labor.

In 2010, a missing section of our brick carriageway was restored and the entire Belgian block entrance drive on Indiana Street was replaced. A storm water retention basin was also added. Approximately 50 badly leaning and sunken stones were corrected. Graffiti was removed from the vault. One section of our iron fence was painted and repaired. The board continually assesses the need for capital improvements and repairs, and our Executive Director has been quite successful in obtaining grants for these improvements to the site.

BOARD DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATION:

The volunteer board oversees the organization and does much of the physical and organizational work, keeping costs down. The board has committees that plan and oversee grounds and landscaping, programs, development and finance, as well as nominations and strategic planning.

For the past three years, Richard Biddle has served as President of the board. He stepped down in November 2010. C. Baird Brown was nominated to serve as President going forward.

In 2010, new Trustee Jim Moran was recruited to the board. He is a descendant of several people buried at Fair Hill and gave a presentation on one of his ancestors buried at Fair Hill at the spring 2010 work day. Jim has a background in marketing and planning and a keen interest in history. He is also pretty good at gardening.

In November 2010, the following trustees were re-appointed to the board for three year terms, pending approval by the Quarter: Edwin C. Jordan (Kendal Monthly Meeting), James Glackin (Green Street Monthly Meeting), Signe Wilkinson (Chestnut Hill Monthly Meeting), Richard Biddle (descendant) and Mary Anne Hunter (Central Philadelphia Monthly Meeting). Fair Hill is focusing on board development in areas where skills are needed, and also with an eye toward diversity of skills and backgrounds. The Fair Hill Burial Ground Corporation Board requests that Philadelphia Quarter consider and approve these nominations at the earliest possible convenience.

Our part time Executive Director, Gerry Fisher, handles the day-to-day running of the organization, fundraising, publicity, marketing and oversight of outreach programs. It is due to the diligence and skill of our Executive Director that Fair Hill raised approximately 80% of its annual operating budget (approximately \$90,000) from individual donations and foundation grants. Gerry and the Fair Hill Board held its third annual fundraiser in September 2010, to raise endowment funds to preserve and maintain the site in perpetuity.

The outreach director, Jean Warrington, organizes school programs, summer activities, and contact with neighbors. Jean is tireless in her ability to connect with people and persistent in her quest to get things done.

Fair Hill began to revise its website in 2010, adding the environment and history education curricula as resources for teachers and students. The website revisions will be complete in 2011.

PLANS FOR 2011

Fair Hill is striving to become a self sustaining entity for the future. We also notice that our Quaker volunteers have diminished over the past few years. Toward this end, we are enlisting the assistance of our partners to help us expand our volunteer base and recruit future board members who will carry our endeavor forward. We are planning a half day planning session on March 19 from 9:00AM until 1:00PM to collaborate with our Quaker and community partners on best ways to move forward.

Fair Hill also welcomes invitations to present to Meetings, schools, Quaker retirement communities, and neighborhood organizations. We have two video presentations, *The Struggle for Fair Hill* and *City Kids and Big Trees*, as well as a PowerPoint presentation that we can bring to an interested group. We also have a website, www.fairhillburial.org.