

The Heritage Fund

2019 Annual Drive



AMERICA'S FIRST PET BURIAL GROUNDS
LISTED ON THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
A NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION HABITAT



“Dear Friends,”

That was how Dr. Samuel Johnson opened his letter in 1919 to ask the cemetery’s plot-holders if they might be interested in “raising a monument to the war dog that will live for the ages.”

Those who brought their pets here for burial already knew how specially trained Red Cross dogs in Europe risked their lives to locate and rescue critically wounded soldiers. As newspaper headlines announced, “Many Thousands Saved by the Splendid Courage of Dogs on the Battlefield,” donations poured into the cemetery from both Hartsdale patrons and animal lovers throughout the country. “The project has been met with such hearty enthusiasm that designs and plans are already underway,” Johnson reported in a follow-up letter, and it wasn’t long before the dramatic granite and bronze tribute that now stands on our summit--the first of its kind in the nation--had become a reality.



Hartsdale Pet Cemetery plot-holders decorate the War Dog Memorial in 1922. This is the earliest known photo of our monument.

One hundred years and six wars later, people from all walks of life still come together in Hartsdale to remember these special canines along with a wider range of animals who have contributed to the betterment of humanity. Today the cemetery is home to a growing complement of tributes, including ones recognizing animals sacrificed in the name of medical research, space exploration and as of last October, for agricultural purposes. Funded in part by plot-holders and titled *To Animals We Do Not Mourn*, it recalls generations of farm animals who sustained our ancestors and continue to support us today. The monument’s evocative design reminds us that every creature has its own kind of nobility, even ones not generally regarded as companions or heroes, and that they too deserve our appreciation.



In 2018, Hartsdale was honored to host the semiannual conference for the New York Chapter of the Association for Gravestone Studies. An international nonprofit organization, the AGS is dedicated to the preservation and promotion of historic cemeteries and the art and culture they contain. The Association welcomes anyone, professional or hobbyist, who shares these interests. For more information visit www.gravestonestudies.org. Special KUDOS to the NY Chapter President Eva Bowerman for coordinating the morning session at St. Andrews Church next door, and Virginia Martin for her skilled handling of the video presentation equipment.

If you subscribed to our floral program, contributed to the Heritage Fund or added a special bequest to your will for the cemetery in 2018, I can’t thank you enough for your generosity. Caring for this remarkable place and the many monuments residing here is only possible with your participation. Please be assured that any gift, no matter the size, helps us continue the mission to keep America’s most historic pet cemetery an inspiring destination for all.

Dear friends, I hope you will join us again in 2019 as we look forward to another year filled with events, activities and special projects. Until then, I wish you and your beloved animals all the best.

Mary Thurston, Historian

War Dog Memorial Celebration Remembers WWI Centennial and America's First War Dog



Keynote speaker Curt Deane gave a riveting talk on the life and times of Stubby, the only American dog to serve in World War I. The small mongrel lived through 17 major battles in France, where despite a lack of formal training he comforted traumatized soldiers, warned of incoming gas attacks and even caught a German spy. At war's end, Deane's grandfather, J. Robert Conroy, brought Stubby home to live with his family. Hailed as a national hero, Stubby was received at the White House by two Presidents and he was personally decorated by General Pershing. With the support of veterans and dog lovers, Deane commissioned a life-size bronze statue of Stubby by the sculptor Susan Bahary, and last May it was dedicated at the Veterans Memorial Park in Middletown, Connecticut. Deane hopes renewed interest in Stubby will help increase support for organizations dedicated to training service dogs for veterans of today's wars. For more information visit sergeantstubbysalutes.org.



We were also honored with a return visit from Marine combat veteran Matthew Plumeri and his retired explosives detection canine Gulliver. Plumeri and the twelve year-old Visla spent seven months together in Afghanistan's Helmand Province, one of the country's most dangerous regions, where they led over 500 combat patrols. "Nobody who ever walked behind us was injured," Plumeri said, "I credit that 100 percent to Gulliver." In 2014, Plumeri adopted Gulliver and brought him home to New York to spend the rest of his days in peace and comfort.



New Faces at Hartsdale

The cemetery is pleased to introduce three new members to our landscaping team, Adan, Mike and Sean. Also, meet little Tina who was adopted last year by the Martin family. Most days you'll find her in the cottage under Brian's desk. A former Texan, the Chihuahua-mix has a heart as big as a lion and she's always ready to greet whoever comes through the door.



New Monument Honors Forgotten Animals



Last October, Florida-based artist Linda Brant installed a special memorial dedicated to farm animals at Hartsdale. Funded in part by cemetery plot-holders and with grants from the nonprofit Culture and Animals Foundation, (cultureandanimals.org), the tribute is inscribed, *To Animals We Do Not Mourn*.

"I hope my work is a statement of the need for greater mindfulness in our treatment of these individuals," says Brant. The permanence of its materials--granite, bronze and crystal—stand in contrast to the perception that certain animals are disposable.

The work's unique design and placement in a place reserved for the honoring of animals is already garnering attention from leaders in the field of human-animal studies. A formal unveiling is planned for the spring of 2019. Process photos of the making of the monument can be found on Brant's project website, www.unmourned.net



Please Help Us Preserve and Improve Our Irreplaceable Treasure



The U.S. Department of the Interior added Hartsdale Pet Cemetery to the National Register of Historic Places, making it the first and only animal burial ground to receive such distinction as a site of profound cultural significance. With this recognition comes a new level of responsibility to care to Hartsdale's many historic features. The cemetery's general maintenance fund is not sufficient to cover these costs, nor was it designed to do so. Unlike human cemeteries we are not tax exempt from federal and state taxes, nor do we receive any federal or state funding. Therefore we depend entirely on generous supporters like you to help us protect this precious legacy of animal history. As a valued member of our family, we ask you to please help us protect and revitalize this precious national asset.

Now available: Limited Edition Postcards with your \$100 donation and Posters with your donation of \$500 or more!

YES, I want to help the Hartsdale Pet Cemetery Heritage Fund!

No matter what size, every gift counts. Thank you!

\$100 \$500* \$1,000* Other _____ * Eligible for limited edition artwork

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Please note: Hartsdale Pet Cemetery is not a 501(c)(3) corporation. Your contribution is not tax-deductible.