The Heritage Fund

2025 Annual Drive

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

HARTSDALE PET CEMETERY
1896

Dear Friends,

Once upon a time, four cats got together and decided to start their own band. Each was a talented performer in his own right, but they still needed an instrumentalist to complete their quintet. When the cats issued a call for tryouts, along came a rabbit bearing a lute and offering to play—yet they rebuffed him, saying, "no thanks, this is for felines only." But the rabbit was undeterred. A short while later he came back, only this time he wore the mask of a cat to conceal his identity. His audition began. With each strum of his paw, the lute's music became more tuneful, more mellifluous. The cats were so enchanted they couldn't resist the urge to join in. Finally, just as their singing and playing reached a glorious crescendo, the rabbit pulled off the mask to reveal his identity. And the cats, surprised as they were, set aside their prejudice to welcome him into the fold.

There's no greater moral than one about how acceptance and friendship can lead to something joyous and beautiful, particularly here at Hartsdale Pet Cemetery where people from all walks of life find a sense of community through their shared love of animals. It was particularly true this past fall, when in celebration of National Pet Memorial Day, we were treated to a benefit concert featuring some of the finest actors and musicians that Broadway has to offer, all thanks to sixteen-year-old Angelina Gui, who proposed and organized the event. As she explained to us, it was her family's way of giving back for the empathy and compassion they experienced when they came to the cemetery two years ago to bury their dog. "Every time I walk here, I aways feel at peace and there is no fear, remorse or guilt," says this impressive young lady, whose wish was that the concert would "serve to bring peace and comfort to people as they commemorate the lives of their loved ones."

About the Cover

Installed in 2011, these larger-than-life bronze renderings based on the parable of the cats' music band mark the resting place of noted wine connoisseur Philip Seldon's beloved Persians. It was the wish of Mr. Seldon, who passed away in 2016, to be buried alongside them. "You know one thing about Hartsdale," he said, "all who are buried here are loved."

Year after year, you have shown your own love for Hartsdale by giving generously to the Heritage Fund and ensuring the many natural and historic treasures that make this place so special are going to be here for future generations to appreciate. Every aspect, from the tiniest headstone to the tallest tree, gets the care it needs to stay vibrant and vital, and that's all because of you. My heart is filled with gratitude—and joy--for your generosity and for your many kind words of encouragement.

As always, I wish you all good things for 2025.
See you around the grounds!

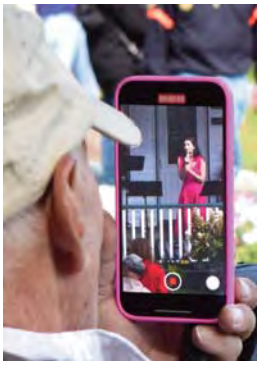
Mary

Mary Thurston, Historian

Broadway Benefit Concert Celebrates the Lives of our Furry Friends

Clockwise from top left: ***Mark Klett*** *(keyboard),* ***Taylor Rey, Valeria Fernandez*** *(violin),* ***Pat Oberstaedt*** *(bass),* ***Daniel Klein, Dayna Grayber, Angeline Gui, Bill Nolte***

It was a perfectly sunny afternoon when Hartsdale Pet Cemetery played host to a performance of songs relating to animals, love and remembrance in conjunction with National Pet Memorial Day on September 8, 2024. The free charity concert, which featured fourteen well-known Broadway arias such as "Some Enchanted Evening" from *South Pacific* and "You'll Never Walk Alone" from *Carousel*, were sung by Bill Nolte, Dayna Grayber, Taylor Rey and Daniel Klein, with Angelina's dog, Sandy, chiming in from time to time. Our deepest gratitude to Angelina Gui and her mother Emma Wang, founder and producer of the Yaya Theater Company, for gifting us this very special event.



The monument for Ming the Tiger, one of our most popular tributes, has been revised in light of newly discovered documents. Ming's plot holder, Henry Jones, recently began detailed diligence in researching the genealogical background and movement of Ming's transfers. In the course of this investigation, he discovered Ming's actual date and place of birth was June 18, 2001 in Potosi, Wisconsin. Consequently, a newly carved granite plate with accurate information about Ming's life has been installed at his plot. The tiger gained widespread fame in 2003 when he was discovered living illegally in a Harlem apartment. After a dramatic rescue by the NYPD, Ming was transferred to Noah's Lost Ark, a no-kill, nonprofit, charitable Exotic Animal Sanctuary in Berlin Center, Ohio, where he lived amongst other tigers for over 15 years. Founded in 1998, the sanctuary is dedicated to providing nurturing, permanent safe havens for unwanted and abused exotic animals. To learn more or to donate, please visit www.noahslostark.org

Meet Josie, our new feline ambassador who's been adopted by Hartsdale and taken up residence here. You'll find this friendly little girl either basking in the sun on one of the verandas or spending time in the offices, where she's adored by staff and visitors alike.

Once again in 2024, ***Wreaths Across America*** paid Hartsdale a visit to decorate our beloved War Dog Memorial in time for the holidays. WAA coordinates volunteers and supporters at over 4,000 cemeteries throughout America to remember fallen soldiers as well as those who serve, and to teach the next generation about the value of freedom. Our thanks to Lisa Wernick, Sam Waltzer, Heather Blasko and Comcast for their sponsorship of this event.

Please Help Us Preserve and Improve Our Irreplaceable Treasure

WAR DOG MEMORIAL PINS

Only for a Limited Time!

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 place of profound cultural significance. With this recognition comes a new level of responsibility to care for the cemetery's many historic features and assets. Hartsdale's general maintenance fund is not sufficient to cover these costs and unlike human cemeteries we are not tax exempt from federal and state taxes, nor do we receive any federal or state funding. We therefore depend entirely on supporters like you to help us protect this legacy of animal history. As a valued member of our family, we ask you to please help us protect this precious national asset.

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 commemorative pin*

Name_____

Plot Number_____

E-mail_____

Address _____

City_____

State _____ Zip _____

To give online, visit www.petcem.com

❑ Visa ❑ Master Card ❑ Discover ❑ AmEx

Card # _____

Exp. Date _____

❑ Enclosed is my check payable to:
Hartsdale Pet Cemetery

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