

OUR CONTRIBUTORS' NAMES ARE WITHHELD FOR INTERNET PRIVACY



A private birthday party in the Cemetery, summer, 2011

**Postmaster: Address service requested**

NEW YORK MARBLE CEMETERY  
P. O. BOX 315 NEW YORK, NY 10159



ANNUAL RECEPTION  
& OWNERS' MEETING  
SUNDAY, MAY 6, 2012  
1-4 PM

# NEW YORK MARBLE CEMETERY

SECOND AVENUE ABOVE EAST SECOND STREET

[www.marblecemetery.org](http://www.marblecemetery.org)

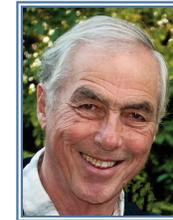
November 2011

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## OVER 100 YEARS OF DEDICATION FROM THE LUQUERS

Though most descendants found out about their connection to the Marble Cemetery only recently, a few people have known about it their entire lives. Peter Luquer is one of them.

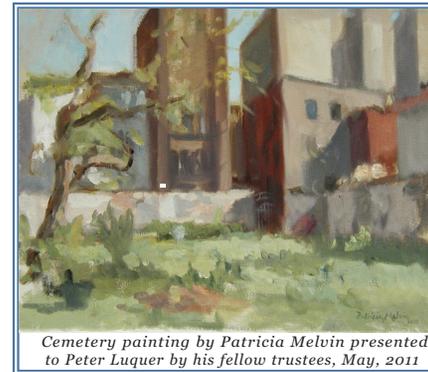
In 1915, Thatcher T. P. Luquer agreed to be a trustee. Did he ever suspect that he would serve for 43 years? In 1946 his nephew Evelyn joined him and did not relinquish his position until 1977. As he was stepping down, he furthered tradition by bringing his own nephew, Peter, into the fold. Peter is trying hard to ease his way out, having become Trustee Emeritus last year. His counsel is so respected, however, and his architect's eye so valuable that he will never escape. Amazingly, his family's century of support is for a vault with just one burial - that of his third-great grandmother's first husband.



He recalls: *"The most devoted Trustee at that time was Jimmy Robbins, the father of our Treasurer. Two young trustees and I were selected shortly before Jimmy retired, although his interest continued unabated for the remainder of his life. One of the new*

*appointees immediately faded from view after discovering his new position had a certain distinction deficit. The other, a lawyer, determined that the bylaws allowed the endowment to be used for routine maintenance only. I thanked him for his research and he resigned before suffering any liability attributable to major restoration expenditures.*

*The NY State Division of Cemeteries was very supportive of me and arranged periodic meetings to review our degenerating situation. The resolution was an engineering survey and historical analysis conducted by the highly regarded NY firm, Robert Silman Associates. They recommended that we try to arrest further wall deterioration by flashing and replacing the capping. The selected bidder was Paragon, Inc. of New Jersey. The cost was enormous, but with a dicey economy we were able to negotiate a long-term payout extending several years after the work was completed."*



Cemetery painting by Patricia Melvin presented to Peter Luquer by his fellow trustees, May, 2011

Living many hours away, Peter's visits have always been few and far between. He remembers the grim discovery that the Cemetery was a haven for derelicts and only haphazardly overseen by the employee of a demolition company.

Generous grants from the Dillon Dunwalke Trust and the Division of Cemeteries helped make full payment possible. Around 1999, during this work and the gate rebuilding by Bob Barrett, more descendants began to be found. Their contributions and energies have enabled the Cemetery to continue the restoration that Peter singlehandedly started. Thank you, Peter, for your wisdom - past, present, and future.

## LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

This past season saw a wonderful diversity in rentals and visitors. Location scouts are putting us on their lists. While rental income helps to supplement private donations to pay for our maintenance, we make sure the content of each event is consistent with our mission. New Balance launched an advertising campaign for a new line of shoes using our bucolic setting, complete with camping tent; a dozen friends and family celebrated a successful graduation from law school with an intimate cook-out; an afternoon fundraiser for a young women's empowerment training center returned for the second year; and a descendant from Australia came and played the harp for her ancestors.

A surprise birthday party was meticulously planned by a set designer for his astonished wife. She was lured to the cemetery with the promise of an invitation-only exotic furniture auction. Instead, she found



Visitors study Cemetery history at Open House New York photo: Meg Robbins

an Arabian Nights tent furnished with oriental furniture, costumed waiters preparing her favorite foods, and dozens of friends who were in on the planning.

A hit TV show and an independent movie both used our grounds for key scenes. The CBS series, CSI: New York, shows rescuers entering fake doors built in the lawn and then searching through fictitious catacombs. Their clue is a microscopic chip of Tuckahoe marble on a vault key. The film, "Greetings from Tim Buckley," a biography of the 1960s Greenwich Village folk singer, depicts a young couple entering through the wrought-iron gates and holding an intimate conversation on a corner bench.



Trustees, standing: Peter Luquer, Anne Brown, Brooks Robbins, Caroline DuBois. Seated: Lydia Potter, landscaper Gresham Lang & Ruby, Daphne Jay Bell.

### NEW YORK MARBLE CEMETERY, INC.

P. O. Box 315 • New York, NY • 10159

office@marblecemetery.org  
www.marblecemetery.org



#### TRUSTEES

Anne W. Brown	Lynn K. Rollins
Caroline S. DuBois	Daphne Jay Bell
Lydia L. Potter	Peter C. Luquer,
E. Brooks Robbins	<i>Emeritus</i>

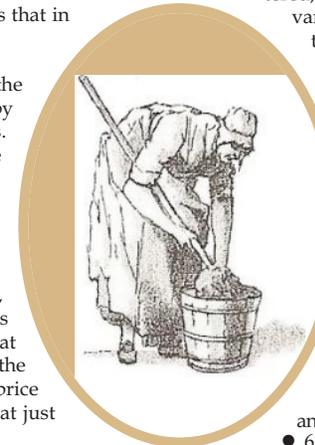
## 1830 ECONOMICS

One of the most frequently asked questions about the Cemetery is the original cost of a vault. The answer is straight-forward: \$250. The question which invariably follows is far more problematic: "What is that in today's dollars?"

\$5,200 is the answer if using the inflation formula developed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Most of the population in the 19th century was agrarian, however, so the BLS uses proxies such as living costs for dairy farmers in Vermont, which have no relevance to urban land values. In July, 1830, developer Perkins Nichols paid \$7,000 for the half-acre that became the Cemetery. Using the BLS multiplier, that would price undeveloped NYC land today at just \$300,000 per acre.

John Fowler, an English tourist, traveled throughout New York State in 1830, notebook in hand. While staying in Brooklyn Heights,

visiting Manhattan, and going up the Hudson River and along the Erie Canal, he recorded in detail everything he encountered, from table manners to mosquito varieties to market prices. One can therefore compare the cost of a brand-new Marble Cemetery vault to other contemporary purchases with some degree of accuracy. According to Mr. Fowler's entries, each of the following cost approximately \$250 and was therefore equivalent to a New York Marble Cemetery vault:



- 8 wool overcoats
- 1 good saddle horse
- 4 acres of land on Long Island
- 1 live-in housemaid's wages for 6 years
- 1 day-laborer's wages for a year and a half
- 6 months' rent for a 2-storey house in a prime NYC location

So ask again what that \$250 vault is worth today. It's priceless, in more ways than one.

GO TO [WWW.MARBLECEMETERY.ORG](http://WWW.MARBLECEMETERY.ORG) TO MAKE A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE DONATION ON LINE VIA OR SEND A CHECK TO:

**E. Brooks Robbins, Treasurer**  
**New York Marble Cemetery, Inc.**  
53 Fearing Road  
Hingham, MA 02043-1836

ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

For information on gifts of appreciated stock or for a financial statement, phone 781-749-1312 or email treasurer@marblecemetery.org. The New York Marble Cemetery is a Sec.501 (c) (13) registered charity.