

The Remember Garden



Take a walk through Highland Park in the city of Rochester, New York and you will find a gorgeous array of lilac bushes, pansy beds, trees and a lily pond as well as various gardens and memorials. Highland Park is known nationally as the lilac capital of the world. Now there is a new addition, the Remember Garden, which was recently dedicated.

In 1984, an unmarked mass grave was discovered at Highland Park. Those buried there died over a century ago while institutionalized at the Monroe County Insane Asylum, Almshouse, and Penitentiary. No records were kept of the individuals buried at the site. Only a single large stone marked the grave.

A few years ago, a group of community members came together to plant a garden at this site. Gillian Conde, Vice President of DePaul Community Services, spearheaded this project and after five years of planning and fundraising, the Remember Garden came to fruition and was dedicated on May 20.

At the dedication, the garden was filled with community members, clients, county officials, and representatives from various mental health agencies, who all came to honor those buried at the site. Conde spoke of the community-wide support this project received.

"Lady Bird Johnson said, 'Where flowers grow so does hope.' The Remember Garden represents the work of so many. The commitment to this garden celebrates the great improvements made in our community in mental health care. This is a place for us to honor those buried here and to remember," said Conde.



People paid their respects to those buried at the Remember Garden by laying a flower on the stone marker.



Deacon Brian McNulty of the Rochester Psychiatric Center blesses the stone marker commemorating the dedication of the Remember Garden.