

ANNUAL REPORT

2019



**FRIENDS OF
MARSHALL SQUARE PARK**
marshallsquarepark.org



FRIENDS OF MARSHALL SQUARE PARK

marshallsquarepark.org

• 2019 ANNUAL REPORT •

MISSION STATEMENT • Friends of Marshall Square Park (FMSP) is a group of concerned neighbors and local residents dedicated to the care, preservation, and improvement of the five-acre park for the benefit of all. FMSP's aim is for Marshall Square Park to be a focal point for the neighborhood and surrounding community.

WHO WE ARE • The community-focused park, originally an arboretum, has specimen trees, open space, a picturesque, historical Victorian fountain from 1889, (FMSP found and restored), a historical "Swiss Cottage," a rustic period gazebo, a Civil War monument, a joyful tree carving, and a well-used playground.

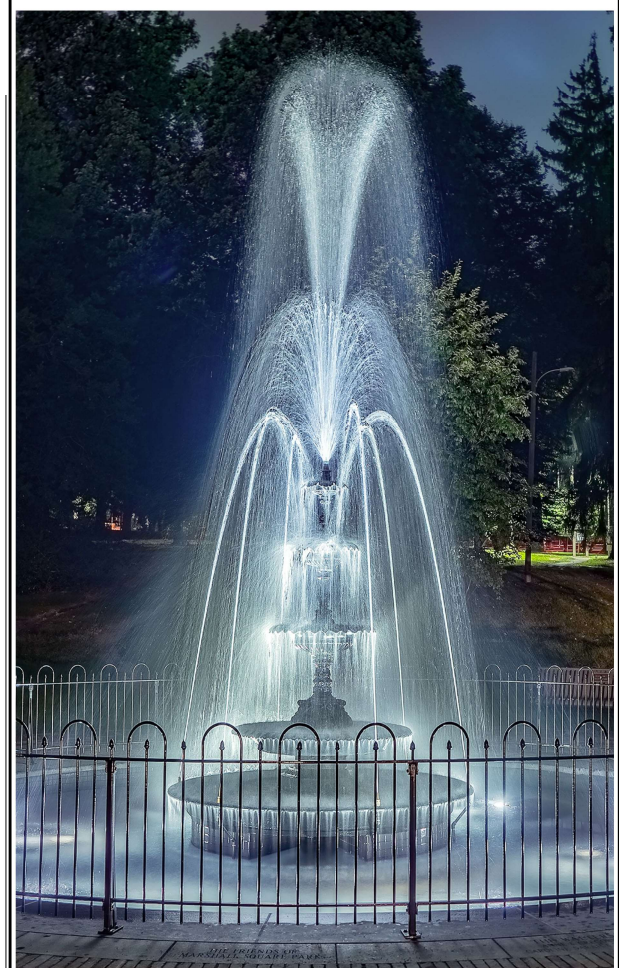
Friends of Marshall Square Park formed in 2006 and became an official 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in 2018.

To date, about 150 households pay annual membership support. FMSP relies on such funds to maintain and restore the park's historical structures, enhance the park grounds, and hold community activities and events.

As part of our mission to maintain and improve the park, FMSP often works in partnership with the Borough of West Chester to help identify tasks and prioritize ongoing projects such as the maintenance of park structures, sidewalks, stairways, and trees.

• HOW TO SUPPORT FMSP & THE PARK •

Come to an event • Social gatherings range from summer-time Music @ Marshall concerts and potluck picnics to the winter-time Progressive Dinner. Some events are free and open the public; two events are neighborhood fundraisers, priced accordingly.



Our Beautiful Restored Fountain. Photo by Jim Salvas





Friends of Marshall Square Park 2019 Annual Report

Join a Committee • The all-volunteer organization would benefit from your energy, efforts. Committees are listed later in this report.

Become a Member • \$40 per family per fiscal year. See other memberships at:
<https://friendsofmarshallsquarepark.wildapricot.org/JOIN>

Contribute at Meetings • Because of the Coronavirus Pandemic, meetings are now virtual via Zoom; monthly, the second Thursday at 7 PM (except July, August, and December). Check <https://marshallsquarepark.org/monthly-meetings/> for updates.



• OUR HISTORY •

The **Borough of West Chester** established Marshall Square Park in 1848. Community-driven and cared for by friends and neighbors ever since, FMSP carries on that tradition.

The Park's founders included local botanists and arborists who carefully selected and cultivated trees, shrubs, and flowers. Several rare specimen trees still survive. Josiah Hoopes' nursery, once near the park, became the largest commercial enterprise in the nation, and so the park today reflects his interest in trees, labeling, and the subsequent pathways that he designed and modeled after Philadelphia's Washington Square.

The founders named the square after their 18th century predecessor, botanist [Humphry Marshall](#). Born in 1722, he left school at 12 years old; yet (appropriately for a cousin of William Bartram, America's most celebrated explorer/botanist), he published in 1785 "*Arbustum Americanum, the American Grove*," the first book of its kind published in the Western hemisphere! The nearby village of Marshallton, where Marshall spent much of his life, was named in his honor.



Weeping Cherry By Jim Salvas

• ANNUAL EVENTS •

FMSP's events are much more than fundraisers; they're like good old-fashioned neighborhood parties, with activities that include musical events, and dressing the park with holiday luminaria each year.





Friends of Marshall Square Park 2019 Annual Report

Most of all, FMSP fosters a sense of community and gives people a chance to connect with old and new friends and neighbors.

The Progressive Dinner • On the first Saturday in February four to five FMSP members volunteer to host a dinner course at their homes; guests progress to each home for good food, drinks, and time to visit. It's considered the neighborhood's event of the year.

Park Cleanup • The third Saturday in April to coincide with Earth Day, whose 50th Anniversary was April 22, 2020.



Music at Marshall • **Free summer concerts**—the third Thursday of June, July, and August! The bandstand (the gazebo), local bands, and the surrounding grounds are delightful for the nearly 250 people sitting on beach chairs and towels taking in the music of our dedicated musical groups.

The Fall Party • The last Saturday in September. A block party (or garden party) held in our lovely North East neighborhood with food, drink, and time to be merry.

Park Luminaria • We surround the park with luminaria for the people attending the Borough's Old fashioned Christmas.



• FMSP'S IMPACT •

Each time you visit the park you may find another improvement, whether it's something that beautifies the historical landscape, entices the kids, or adds to the park's unique character. The park is a community place for all to enjoy. The five acres of nature eases the mind and spirit.

"Swiss Cottage" • Restoration of the circa 1878 **"Swiss Cottage,"** (right) the only remaining structure of several Victorian "resting pavilions" designed in the Swiss Alpine rustic style.



1889 Fountain • The return, restoration, and installation of the park's original 1889 cast-iron fountain amid beautiful landscaping and a brick plaza. That project required many companies, hundreds of man-hours, and donations of approximately \$200,000.



Friends of Marshall Square Park 2019 Annual Report

Tree Sculpture • The Park's own public art named "FRIENDS" is a **giant tree sculpture** by Phoenixville chainsaw artist Marty Long. The century-old Red Oak lives on in the sculpture.

Park Benches • installation of period-appropriate **cast iron park benches** sponsored by park friends.

Playground Equipment • Premium **play equipment** featuring natural and aesthetically congruent colors.

• UPCOMING PROJECTS •

Some of the latest goals are especially designed to make the park a welcoming place for all-families with young children and people with disabilities.

Playground • **Enhancing** the area with new play equipment to expand the existing play area with toddler-friendly play equipment and a new, inclusive swing set.

Playground • **New fencing and landscaping** around the area. FMSP hopes to create a screen of plants, flowers, and fencing to enhance the safety and appearance of the E. Marshall/N. Matlack Streets area.

Pathways • **New Pathways** using a porous rubber paving material that is ADA (American Disability Act) compliant and will not increase storm water runoff.

Tree Preservation • FMSP has an ongoing interest in **tree conservation** and is developing plans that will help prioritize issues. Efforts include studying the current state of health for the major specimen trees and developing a plan for their care, maintaining the tree identification markers, and replacing them when vandalized.

FMSP works with the Borough of West Chester's arborist to assist in our management plan, to ensure that all the park trees receive attention and are included in our updated **tree inventory**.

Speaking of specimen trees, the park's Blue Ash (*Fraxinus, quadrangulata*) is designated a **Pennsylvania Champion Tree**, the largest in Pennsylvania. The tree, located near the Lafayette Street stairs, is a rare species and is over 90 feet tall. Blue Ash is mostly native to western Ohio and is so named because early pioneers extracted a blue dye from its inner bark.





Friends of Marshall Square Park 2019 Annual Report

• OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT THE PARK & FMSP •

Park Benches • Sponsor a handsome dark bronze commemorative bench that complements the park's Victorian era. A \$5,000 donation funds a bench with your inscription on a 10 x 5-inch bronze plaque. [See our website](#) for more information about these wonderful benches by Keystone Ridge Designs.

Fountain Coping Stones • You can still have a granite coping stone engraved on the border around the fountain. [Click for details.](#)

FMSP Officers & Board Members • 2018/2019 •

President - Jeff Beitel - jeff@beitelarchitects.com

Vice President - Jim Salvas - camerajim@me.com

Treasurer - Linda Scott - lcscott5@verizon.net

Assistant to the Treasurer - Glen Sweet - gsweet510@verizon.net

Secretary - Veronica Balassone - ymbalassone@verizon.net

Board members: Rick Ammons, Chantale Fieldhouse, Anne Walters

Fountain Restoration Committee; Chair - Anne Walters

Membership Committee; Chair - Rick Ammons

Events Committee; Chair - Lee Miller

Summer Concerts Committee; Chair - Jeff Beitel

Playground Committee; Chair - Chantal Fieldhouse



*FMSP Logo View By Timlyn
Vaughan Photography*

Visit the FMSP website for www.marshallsquarepark.org.

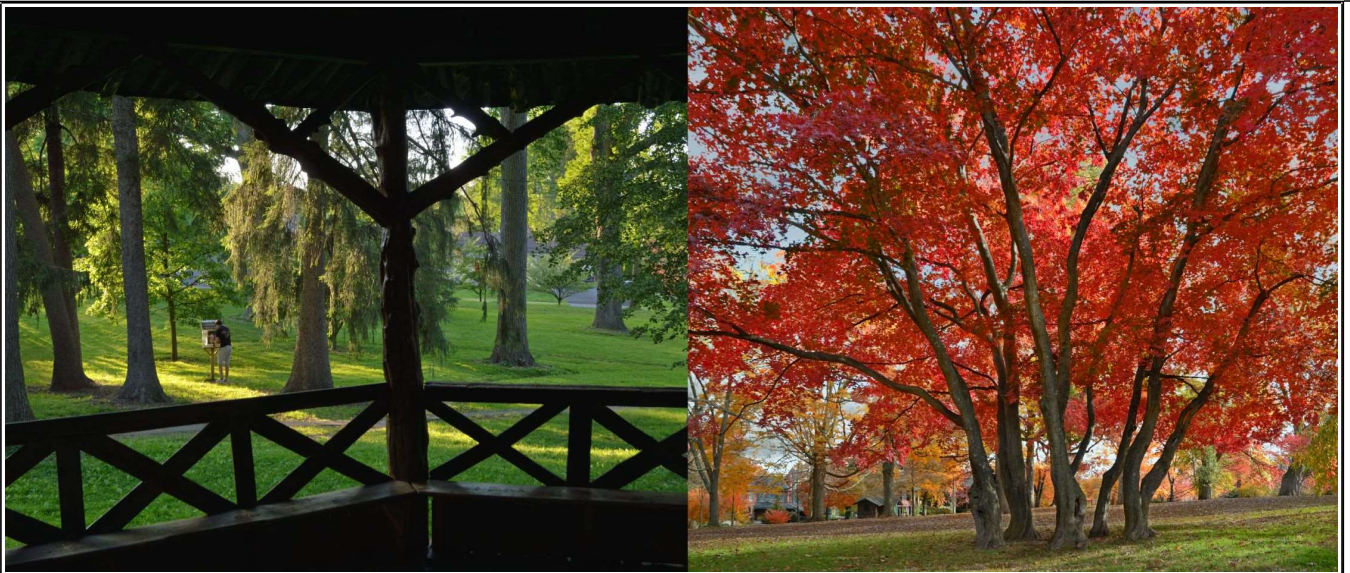


Photo Collage By Fred Weyman



Friends of Marshall Square Park 2019 Annual Report

• STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION •

FINANCIAL POSITION •

Year ending December 31, 2019
Accrual Basis, Unaudited

ASSETS •

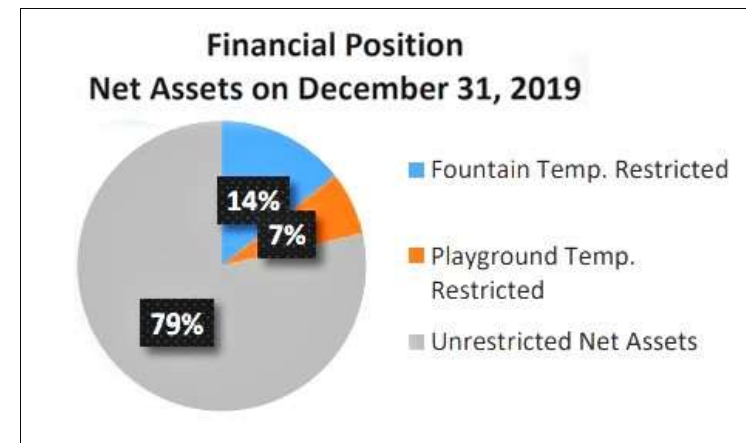
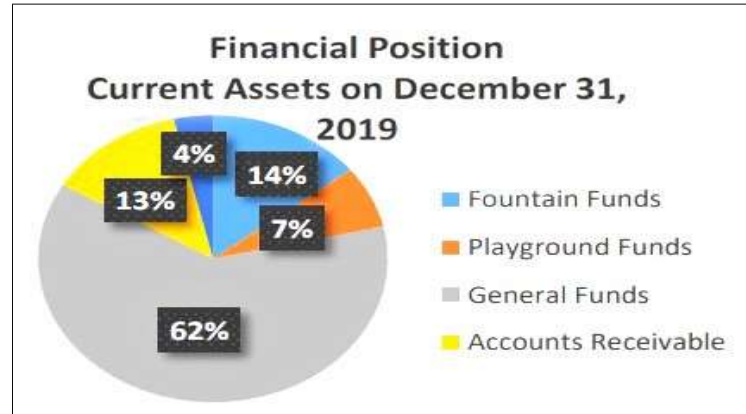
Fountain Funds	\$5,037
Playground Funds	2,474
General Funds	21,813
Accounts Receivable	4,478
Other Current Assets	1,274

TOTAL ASSETS **\$35,076**

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS •

Liabilities	\$0
Net Assets	
Fountain Temp. Restricted	\$5,037
Playground Temp. Restricted	2,474
Unrestricted Net Assets	27,565

TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS **\$35,076**



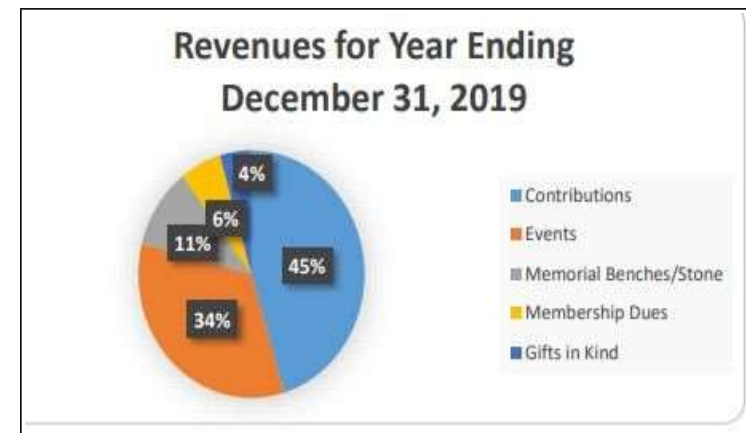
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Year Ending December 31, 2019
Accrual Basis, Unaudited

REVENUES •

Contributions	\$21,419
Events	15,914
Memorial Benches/Stone	5,000
Membership Dues	2,793
Gifts in Kind	2,130

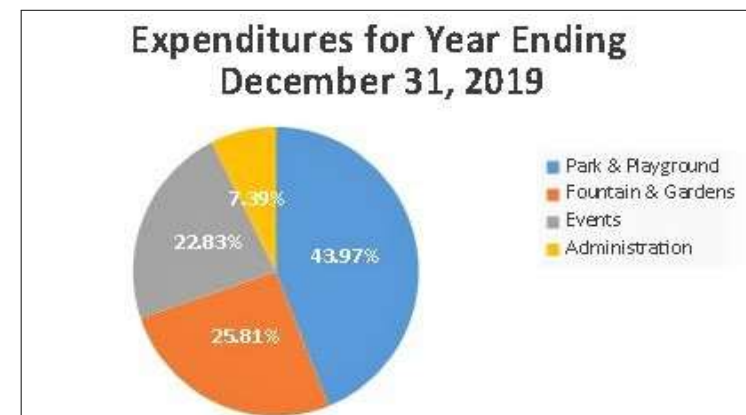
Total Revenue **\$47,256**



EXPENDITURES •

Park & Playground	\$16,098
Fountain & Gardens	9,450
Events	8,360
Administration	2,706

Total Expenses **\$36,614**





Friends of Marshall Square Park 2019 Annual Report

Completed Projects •

The following list of some major projects undertaken by FMSP underscores the range of work--and the joys of joint accomplishment--that have helped beautify the park and make it a delightful community space.

2006: Began a major project to locate, restore, and install the **original c. 1889 fountain** to working condition. Completed in 2016.

2007: Installed a historical sign to honor **Humphry Marshall**, the colonial botanist and namesake of the park.



2008: Facilitated the installation of a rustic-style message board by a local Eagle Scout.

2009-2011: Completed major work on the **historical Gazebo**, including the installation of a brick surround and entry pad, new LED lighting and roof stabilization rods. A complete upgrade of electric service including a new service panel in the center of the park and new outlets in the Gazebo.



2010: Completed the major rehabilitation of the circa 1878 "**Swiss Cottage.**"

2012: The first phase of installing **tree identification** labels and creating a published tree map and guide available online and in the park.

2014: Worked with the borough for the installation of design-appropriate trash receptacles including recycling bins. Installed new stone paving and brickwork at SE corner entry.

2017: Facilitated the installation of a "Little Free Library" (right) by a local neighborhood family as part of a national nonprofit initiative that promotes neighbor book exchanges.



The installation of fencing and landscaping around the fountain.

2018: Submitted the application for the park to be listed as a **Historical American Landscape**, an initiative of the National Park Service to document historically important landscapes through plans, photographs, and historical research archived in the Library of Congress.

The installation of three **granite ground signs** at the park corner entrances. Worked with the borough and helped fund the restoration of the antique brick sidewalks and the stone stairs off Lafayette Street.

Commissioned artist Marty Long to carve a **large tree sculpture** from the remains of a 150-year-old red oak that recently had died.