



FRIENDS OF MARSHALL SQUARE PARK

marshallsquarepark.org

REPORT TO DONORS 2022

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, an impressive tree carving, and a well-used playground.

WHAT WE'VE DONE

Friends of Marshall Square Park formed in 2006 and became an official 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization in 2014.

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 care of our beautiful towering trees and the maintenance of park structures, sidewalks, and stairways.



**All photos are courtesy of
longtime supporter, Jim Salvas**

HOW TO SUPPORT FMSP & THE PARK

Come To An Event

Social gatherings range from summertime “Music @ Marshall” concerts to the wintertime Progressive Dinner. Some events are free and open the public; two events are neighborhood fundraisers, priced accordingly.

Join A Committee

The all-volunteer organization would benefit from your energy and your efforts. See the committees listed in this report.

Become A Member

The cost is \$50 per family per fiscal year. See other membership levels at our web site.

JOIN US!

Share Your Ideas Our meetings are held in-person but we have also held virtual meetings via Zoom. Meetings are held the second Thursday of the month at 7 pm (except July, August, and December).

Visit our web site for updates at

<https://marshallsquarepark.org/>

FMSP Officers, Board & Committee Members

President : Jeff Beitel

President@marshallsquarepark.org

Vice President: Rick Ammons

VicePresident@marshallsquarepark.org

Treasurer: Linda Scott

Treasurer@marshallsquarepark.org

Assistant Treasurer: Glen Sweet

AsstTreasurer@marshallsquarepark.org

Secretary : Ronnie Balassone

Secretary@marshallsquarepark.org

Board Members: Anne Walters, Chantale Fieldhouse, Roger Lacy

Chair of Summer Concerts & Playground:

Chantale Fieldhouse

Co-chairs of Events Committee: Susan Sabo & Beth Soldswich

Chair of Memberships : Rick Ammons.



OUR HISTORY

The West Chester Borough 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 tree identification and park design. The pathways and swales (shown below right before restoration) were designed by him and modeled after Philadelphia's Washington Square.

The founders named the park after their 18th century predecessor, the colonial botanist Humphry Marshall (see above). Born in 1722, Marshall left school at the age of 12, yet he became widely known for his contributions to astronomy, meteorology, agriculture, and natural science.

Marshall established the nation's second botanical garden (John Bartram, his cousin, had the first) as well as one of the first arboretums of native trees in the nearby village of Marshallton, named in his honor.

ANNUAL EVENTS

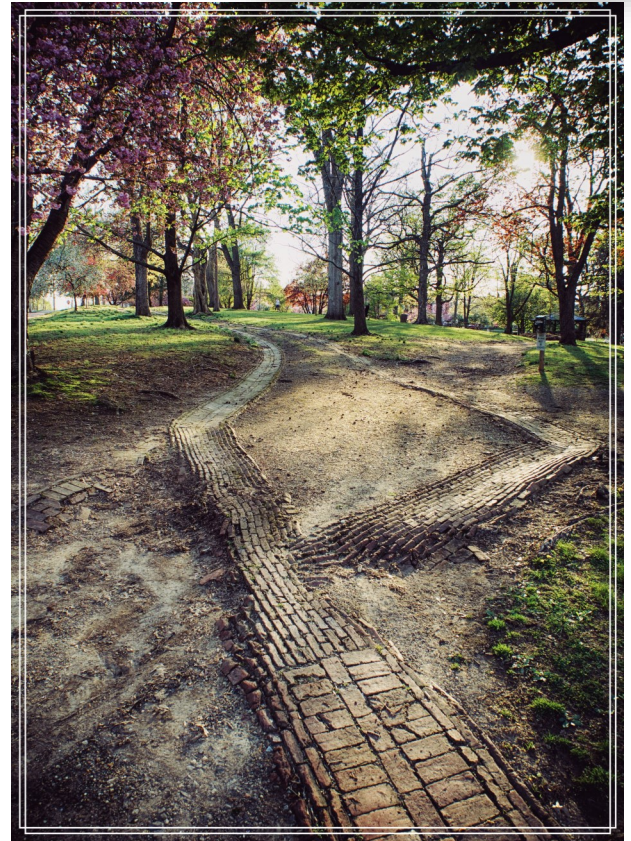
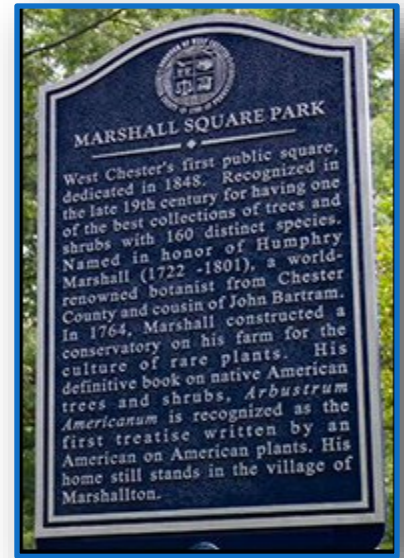
Our events are much more than fundraisers; they're like good old-fashioned neighborhood parties, with activities that include free summer concerts featuring a different band in June, July, and August as well as a fall garden party, and decorating the park with holiday luminaria each holiday season.

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

Here are the Year's Highlights

The Progressive Dinner

On the first Saturday in February each year, 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.



ANNUAL EVENTS continued

Park Cleanup

Held the third Saturday in April to coincide with Earth Day, this day of volunteering brings together FMSP members who help to mulch around trees and rake away winter's debris to prepare for spring blooms.

Music @ Marshall

Four free summer concerts are held each June, July, and August with food trucks and live music in the bandstand (aka the gazebo).

This popular event attracts 300 to 400 music lovers who enjoy sitting outdoors on beach chairs and towels and taking in the music of our dedicated musical groups.

The Annual Fall Dinner

Held the last Saturday in September, this community block party (some call it our annual "garden" party since its held outdoors) takes place in a different part of our lovely North East neighborhood each year with food, drink, and time to meet our neighbors.

Holidays at Marshall

Every December, we dress the park for the holidays with wreaths, garlands, and lights on the fountain. We also surround the park with dozens of luminaria to usher in the borough's Old-fashioned Christmas Parade. In addition, we work with the borough to bring Santa to the gazebo shortly before 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.

Here are some of our accomplishments:

Restoration Work Restoration of the circa 1878 Swiss Cottage, the only remaining structure of several so-called Victorian “resting pavilions” designed in the Swiss Alpine rustic style.



The return, restoration, and installation of the park's original 1889 cast-iron fountain that now stands amid beautiful landscaping and a brick plaza.

The project involved numerous companies, hundreds of man-hours, and donations of approximately \$200,000.

Park Additions

Unique public art A century-old red oak lives on in a custom-made tree sculpture. Known as “Friends,” since the giant tree sculpture features many animal friends of the park, this unique park feature was created by Phoenixville chainsaw artist Marty Long.



Park Benches After much planning, we are happy to announce the installation of period-appropriate cast iron park benches. Each bench was sponsored by a park friend.

Many bench sponsorships are still available. Visit our web site: <https://marshallsquarepark.org/bench/>

Playground Equipment This year saw the installation of additional premium play equipment featuring natural and aesthetically congruent colors.

ONGOING PROJECTS

In addressing new projects, FMSP follows a master plan developed several years ago that serves to guide our near and long-term investment in park improvements. One recent consideration was to think of ways to make the park a more welcoming place for all residents such as families with young children and people with disabilities.

To that end, we enhanced the children's play area (established in 2017 for 5- to 12-year-olds) with new play equipment including toddler-friendly play equipment and a stand-alone, inclusive swing set that replaced the notorious squeaky one built in the 1960s.

ONGOING PROJECTS continued

Landscape Features

The FMSP board hopes to continue with the plan to create a privacy screen comprised of plants, flowers, and fencing that will enhance the safety and appearance of the E. Marshall and N. Matlack Streets area.

Pathways

As part of FSMSP's plan to make the park more accessible, we hope to install new pathways using a porous rubber paving material that is ADA (American Disability Act) compliant (while not increasing 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.

FMSP works with the borough's arborist to assist in our management plan and to ensure that all the park trees receive attention. An important part of this borough relationship is working with the arborist to replace trees lost to age or to storm damage.

We also maintain an updated tree inventory, which is tied to our tree identification program. FMSP actively maintains all the tree markers, replacing old ones when needed. The most recent tree labeling took place in 2022 as part of the county-wide celebration of Humphry Marshall's 300th birthday.

Look for the identification markers found on specimen trees. All appear in Marshall's 1785 book *Abrustrum Americanum: the American Grove*, a catalog of American plants, trees and shrubs that followed the Linnaean system of plant classification. It was the first publication of its kind in the Western hemisphere!



Report to Donors 2022

FRIENDS OF MARSHALL SQUARE PARK

Statement of Activities
January 1 to December 31, 2021
Unaudited, accrual basis

Revenue		
Contributions	\$ 24,800	59%
Special events	12,400	30%
Memberships	4,800	11%
Total revenue	<u>\$ 42,000</u>	<u>100%</u>
Expenses		
Invested in Park	\$ 11,600	35%
Fountain	8,800	27%
Fundraising	7,800	24%
Technology, Insurance	4,600	14%
Total expenses	<u>\$ 32,800</u>	<u>100%</u>
Net	<u>\$ 9,200</u>	



FRIENDS OF MARSHALL SQUARE PARK

Statement of Activities
January 1 to December 31, 2020
Unaudited, accrual basis

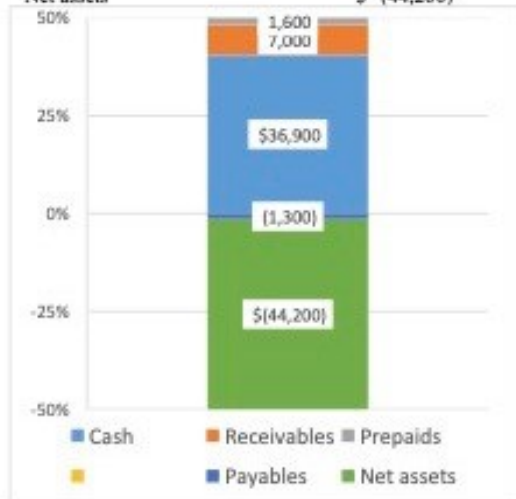
Revenue		
Contributions	\$ 23,100	70%
Special events	5,400	16%
Memberships	4,500	14%
Total revenue	<u>\$ 33,000</u>	<u>100%</u>
Expenses		
Invested in Park	\$ 15,300	46%
Fountain	14,000	42%
Fundraising	1,500	5%
Technology, Insurance	2,200	7%
Total expenses	<u>\$ 33,000</u>	<u>100%</u>
Net	<u>\$ -</u>	



FRIENDS OF MARSHALL SQUARE PARK

Statement of Financial Position
As of December 31, 2021
Unaudited, accrual basis

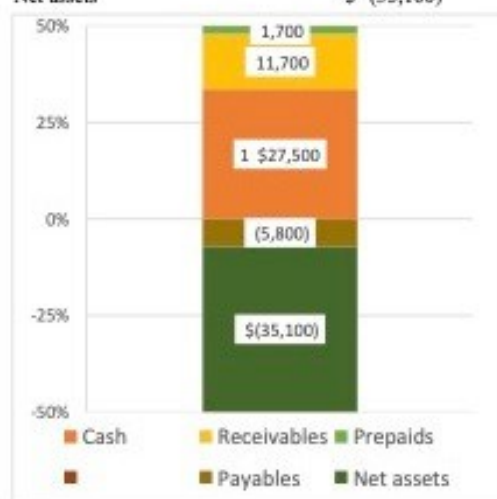
Assets, Liabilities, Net Assets	
Cash	\$ 36,900
Receivables	7,000
Prepays	1,600
Payables	(1,300)
Net assets	<u>\$ (44,200)</u>



FRIENDS OF MARSHALL SQUARE PARK

Statement of Financial Position
As of December 31, 2020
Unaudited, accrual basis

Assets, Liabilities, Net Assets	
Cash	\$ 27,500
Receivables	11,700
Prepays	1,700
Payables	(5,800)
Net assets	<u>\$ (35,100)</u>



OTHER WAYS TO SUPPORT THE PARK & FMSP

Put your name or the name of a loved one on the following structures:

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. For more information about these wonderful benches by Keystone Ridge Designs visit:

<https://marshallsquarepark.org/bench/>

Fountain Coping Stones . Names are engraved on granite coping stones that comprise the stone border around the fountain. Visit this link and download an application:

<https://marshallsquarepark.org/fountain/>



COMPLETED PROJECTS

The following list of some major projects undertaken by FMSP underscores the range of work of our work. All these accomplishments have helped to 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 namesake of the park.

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

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" (right)

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 the southeast corner entry.



PROJECTS: continued

2017: Facilitated the installation of a “Little Free Library” by a local neighborhood family as part of a national nonprofit initiative that promotes neighborhood book exchanges.

* The installation of fencing and landscaping around the fountain (at right).

2018: Facilitated the listing of the park as a Historic 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, “Friends,” from the remains of a 150-year-old red oak that had recently died.

2020: Repairs on the park gazebo including its floor and the rustic roof braces. Completed the application of a high-performance sealant on the gazebo, the Swiss Cottage, and the “Friends” tree sculpture.

2021: Installation of the Dog Water Fountain shown here.

This little dog named Whiskey is one of countless neighborhood dogs that enjoy the park’s latest amenity. The dog fountain was named in honor of the late Dorothy “Dot” Laume, a much-loved resident who over the decades became a familiar sight walking her dog in the park. Dot’s former neighbors created a fund to create this special dog fountain. A plaque above it lists the three dogs Dot owned over the years.

