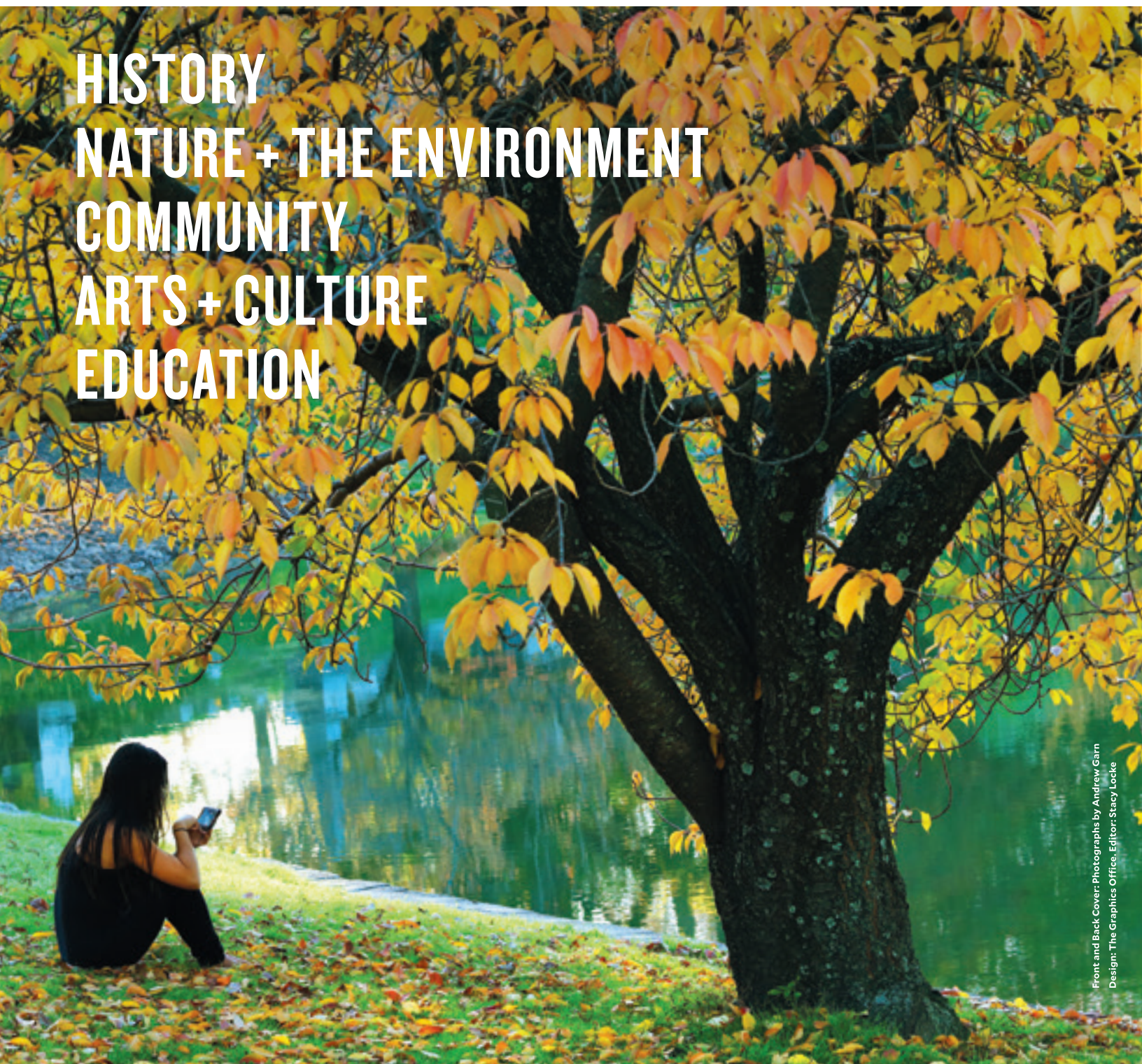


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**HISTORY  
NATURE + THE ENVIRONMENT  
COMMUNITY  
ARTS + CULTURE  
EDUCATION**



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Design: The Graphics Office, Editor: Stacy Locke

*News of  
Green-Wood for  
Members, Fans,  
and Friends  
2023-2024*

# THE ARCH.

**GW**  
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Green-Wood is a living cemetery that brings people closer to the world as it is and was, by memorializing the dead and bringing to life the art, history, and natural beauty of New York City.

Established in 1838, The Green-Wood Cemetery, a National Historic Landmark, is recognized as one of the world's most beautiful cemeteries. As the permanent residence of over 570,000 individuals, Green-Wood's magnificent grounds, grand architecture, and world-class statuary have made it a destination for half a million visitors annually, including national and international tourists, New Yorkers, and Brooklynites. At the same time, Green-Wood is also an outdoor museum, an arboretum, and a repository of history. Throughout the year, it offers innovative programs in arts and culture, nature and the environment, education, workforce development, restoration, and research, as well as bold initiatives in climate resiliency and sustainability.



# “EVERY DAY AT GREEN-WOOD IS A REVELATION!”

Whether it’s a new tour, a new education program, a new environmental development, or new discoveries in the restoration and preservation department, there’s always something exciting happening here! That gives me lots of material for this column—sometimes, too much. But this time around, there are a few extraordinary milestones and accomplishments that deserve special attention.

Most significantly, on May 23, 2023, we broke ground on our new 20,400 square-foot Education & Welcome Center, cementing our role as a critical cornerstone in this Brooklyn community and as a true center of the arts, history, architecture, and environment. When construction is completed in 2025, the Center will offer visitors a place where they can get an introduction to Green-Wood before exploring the grounds. The space will also house two galleries for our art and archival collections, a classroom, a new Center for Research, staff offices, and an area that can be made available for local community events. I’m also very excited that the Center will allow us to offer comfortable indoor space for expanded year-round programs.

Speaking of expanded programming, nowhere is this more apparent than in the area of education. While some people would think it odd to bring classes of school kids to a cemetery every week, that’s exactly what PS 958 did during the last school year. Thanks to a new partnership with the school and local educational non-profit Sunset Spark, we gave children the unique chance to learn important lessons about nature, art, and architecture on Green-Wood’s grounds. In case this surprises you, it shouldn’t!

Green-Wood’s education department, under the direction of Rachel Walman, serves more than 5,000 3K-12th grade students every year—teaching a range of diverse subjects. This includes a robust slate of newly introduced environmental education programs that delve into topics like pollinators and climate change.

Outside the classroom, Green-Wood continues to be a leader in environmental resilience, working to mitigate the impact of climate change on the local community. Good progress is being made on one specific effort—our stormwater mitigation project. The robust initiative involves bioretention efforts (like the installation of water storage basins and permeable paving stones) that will enable us to divert water from overwhelming Brooklyn’s sewer system. And the project is fully funded thanks to a prestigious \$1.75 million grant from the NYS Regional Economic Development Council and an additional \$675,000 from the NYC Department of Environmental Protection. Construction on the initial components began in November.

There’s so much more to tell. For other news and upcoming events at Green-Wood, please go to our website. [www.green-wood.com](http://www.green-wood.com)

See you around the grounds!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard J. Moylan". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Richard J. Moylan  
President

# EMBRACING NATURE'S LESSONS

*Environmental Education  
at the Cemetery*

Learn more at  
[green-wood.com/  
education](https://green-wood.com/education)



Green-Wood's natural assets — including 478 acres of lush greenery, over 8,000 trees, and a wide range of wildlife — make it an ideal place to engage visitors in understanding and appreciating the natural world. It's why we recently rolled out a robust slate of school programs in environmental education. With generous funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, we hired our first-ever environmental education manager, Kristi Chaudhuri, in 2022 and got to work.

We started with middle schoolers. Sixth graders learned about pollinators, dissecting flowers to learn about plant reproduction, tracking the movement of bees and butterflies, and planting their own pollinator gardens. Seventh graders focused on climate change and the urban heat island effect (which happens in cities, where temperatures are typically higher than in surrounding areas), collecting surface temperature data from around the Cemetery. Eighth

graders studied how non-native species affect species endemic to the area. They collected and destroyed the eggs of spotted lanternflies.

Through a collaboration with local school PS 958, we expanded to children as young as three. Educators led scavenger hunts for students to gather and sort leaves, pinecones, seeds, and other natural materials. Kids collected fall leaves in their own "leafcases" and built a larger-than-life birds' nest from twigs found at Green-Wood.

In the 2023-2024 school year, we're offering environmental education school programs on an even wider range of topics, from bird behaviors to cemetery geology. Our goal is to foster a lifelong appreciation of the environment. By getting outdoors and combining learning with experience, students who come to Green-Wood are becoming stewards of the natural world.

# A TREASURE TROVE OF HISTORY

## JUST A FEW CLICKS AWAY

*Green-Wood's  
Burial and Vital Records  
Database*

Cemeteries are repositories of history. They memorialize and tell the stories of the people interred there—both in their archival records and on the monuments across their grounds. And with 570,000 permanent residents spanning over 185 years, Green-Wood's institutional records present an amazing untapped resource for historical research.

Until recently, most of Green-Wood's archival records were accessible only by Green-Wood staff. With the completion of the new Burial and Vital Records Database, however, demographic data on over 400,000 people interred during Green-Wood's first century can now be accessed free online.

The database is the result of a massive undertaking to transcribe and digitize a series of sixty handwritten ledgers known as the Burial Registry. From Green-Wood's first burial in 1840 through 1937, Cemetery staff painstakingly recorded, in chronological order, the details of every person interred at Green-Wood. The records include name, interment date, and location in the Cemetery, as well as additional demographic data like age at death, cause of death, place of birth, late residence, marital status, and name of the undertaker.

Even at a cursory glance, fascinating bits of history reveal themselves on every page. In the spring of 1849, rates of infant death by cholera surged as the second cholera outbreak hit New York City. In December 1876 hundreds of unrecognized bodies were interred after the tragedy that was the Brooklyn Theatre Fire. In March of 1888, Green-Wood halted burials for the first day in nearly 50 years as New York was hit with the most intense blizzard in its recorded history.

In all, it's a comprehensive set of data which can provide insights in the fields of history, anthropology, epidemiology and public health, immigration statistics, and more. And for the first time, it's entirely searchable. Researchers can sort and analyze the data, revealing trends across time and place, providing a new lens through which to view history.

We're hoping that our work can be used as a blueprint for other cemeteries around the country, providing scholars, researchers, and the public even more access to primary-source documents. There is astounding potential to make a significant impact in this field.

To access the Burial and Vital Records 1840-1937, head to [green-wood.com/burial-and-vital-records](http://green-wood.com/burial-and-vital-records)

*This project was made possible by a generous grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.*

# DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS

AN ANNUAL FAMILY CELEBRATION



**A representative from local business Novedades Mexicanas hands out Mexican candies in costume as La Catrina (a skeletal icon associated with Día de los Muertos).**

Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) is a celebration of life and death—a day when families gather to joyously revel in the memory of their ancestors. Originating in Central America, it is today celebrated throughout Mexico, in parts of Latin America, and across the Mexican diaspora.

Each year on November 1st, Green-Wood welcomes community members of all ages to gather in celebration of Día de los Muertos with an afternoon of food, dance, activities, and remembrance. For the Latinx community in Sunset Park, Green-Wood's own neighborhood, it's a beloved annual event.



Visitors leave offerings (ofrendas) at communal altars in tribute to lost loved ones



Cetilizti Nauchampa Quetzacoalt In Ixachiltlan give a ceremonial performance and traditional blessing of the altar



Las Mariposas (The Butterflies), a group of elementary-school-age Mexican folkloric dancers, in traditional vibrant costumes and face paint





# THE MEADOW AT MAGNOLIA AVENUE

## *A New Kind of Memorial Landscape*

If you're a frequent visitor to Green-Wood, you may have noticed something new developing near Valley Water. This experimental meadow, seeded in 2022, features areas with different combinations of native grasses and wildflowers that our team will monitor over the next three years as we determine what mix is ideal for the Cemetery. The goal is to identify a combination that doesn't obscure the gravestones, supports pollinators and other wildlife, and requires less of the maintenance that can be harmful to both the monuments and our environment (like the use of fossil-fuel burning lawnmowers). Ultimately, we hope to find the ideal mix and expand the template to other areas.

At Green-Wood, we're committed to mitigating the impacts of climate change and acting as stewards to the natural world. We seek to build a resilient future that balances the needs of our lot holders and families with best environmental practices.

*This meadow planting is supported by a generous gift from the Brooklyn Bird Club, made in memory of Janet Schumacher, a long-time member of the Club and frequent birder at Green-Wood.*



Plants with staggered bloom times provide foraging options for pollinators all growing season long.

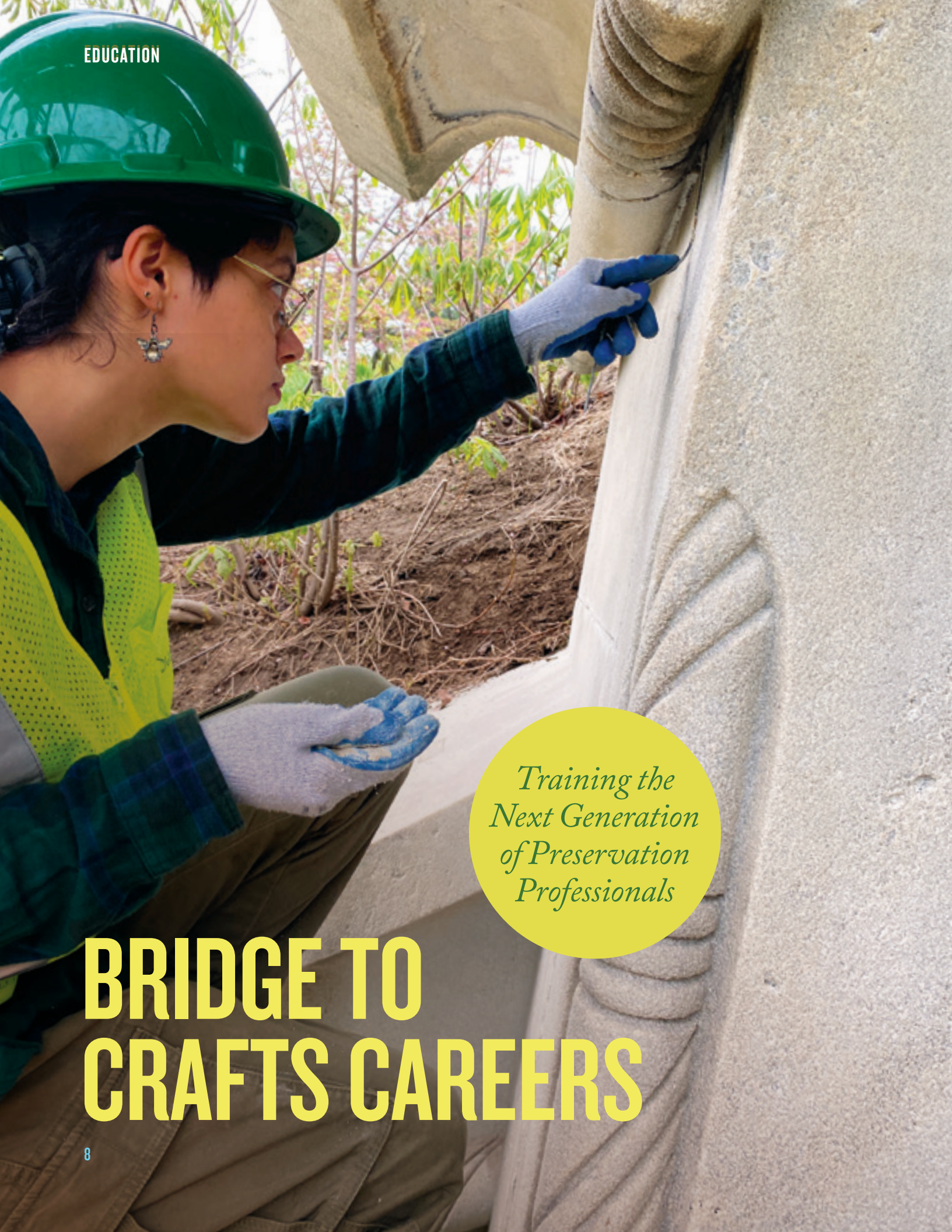


Native plant species, including milkweed and yarrow, provide vital nourishment for butterfly and moth larvae.



Providing critical habitat for insects means more food for birds.

Bird: Matthew Wills via iNaturalist.org / All others: Stacy Locke



*Training the  
Next Generation  
of Preservation  
Professionals*

# BRIDGE TO CRAFTS CAREERS

Since 2018, Green-Wood has partnered with World Monuments Fund and Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow for an uncommon educational experience: Bridge to Crafts Careers. The unique program provides young people hands-on training in masonry restoration right here at the Cemetery. Under the skilled supervision of Green-Wood's restoration department, participants learn the basics of preservation, stone cleaning, repair, re-pointing, and more — everything needed to enter a field in the historic trades.

In spring 2023, the team focused their attention on the hillside vault of the Delafield family. Built in the Egyptian Revival style in marble and granite, it stands above Sylvan Water, Green-Wood's largest glacial pond. By using a historic mausoleum as their worksite, students encounter all the same restoration issues that they would with a larger historic building, but on a smaller scale. Over ten weeks, the trainees completely transformed the structure back to its former glory.

Participants also earn key OSHA certifications, which are critical credentials to enter a career in the historic trades. Perhaps most importantly, they come away with practical knowledge, experience, and the sense of accomplishment that comes from seeing a project through to the end.

Each year we finish up with a graduation ceremony in front of the completed mausoleum. Students are presented with their certificates while surrounded by friends and family. We were honored to be joined by a member of the Delafield family, Joseph Delafield, whose great, great, great grandfather commissioned the mausoleum in 1850.

*Green-Wood is tremendously grateful for the Pinkerton Foundation, the Delafield Family Foundation, the Achelis and Bodman Foundation, the New York Regional Economic Development Council, and the donors and members of Green-Wood for their support of Bridge to Crafts Careers.*



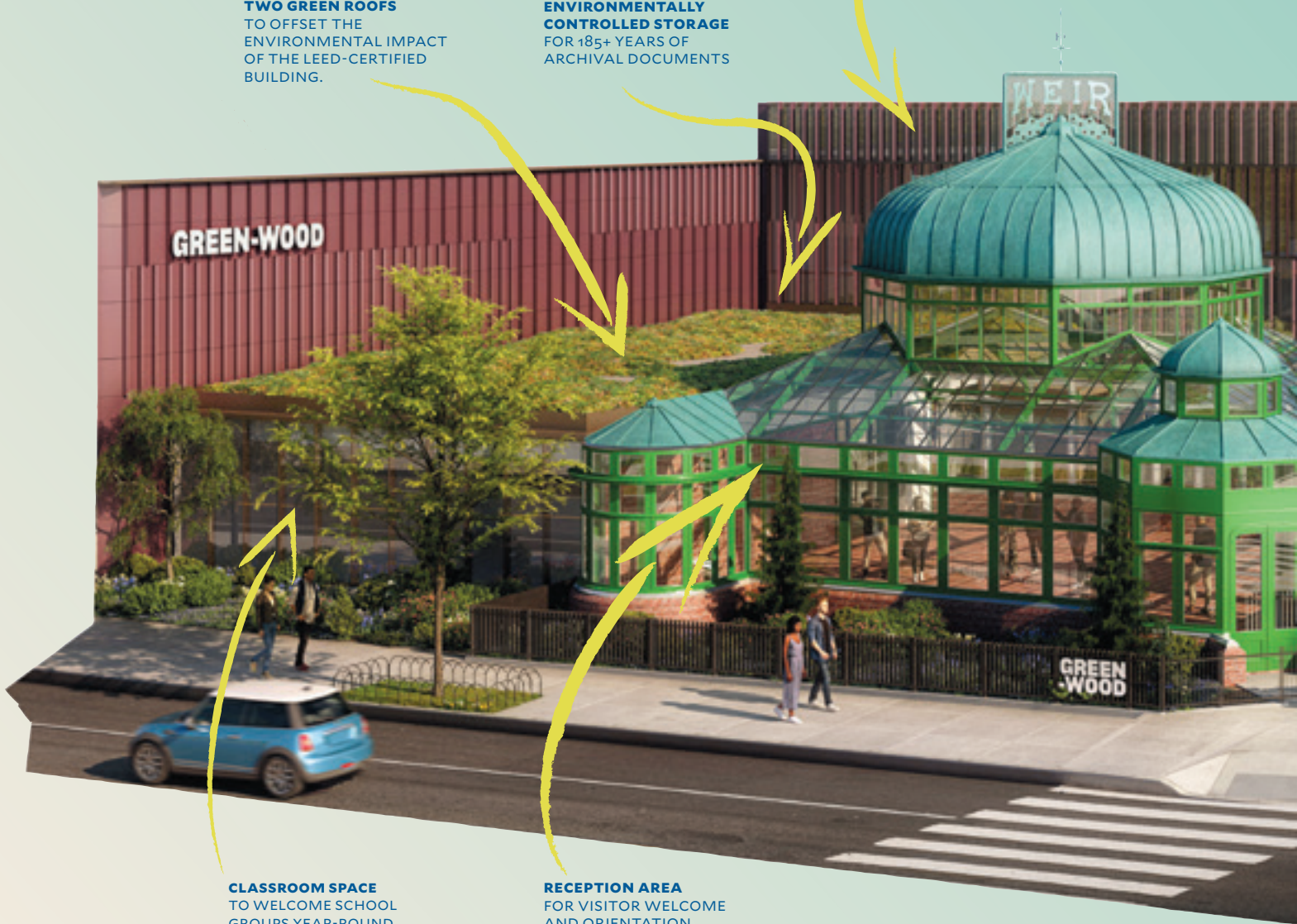
# USHERING IN A NEW ERA

*Green-Wood's Education & Welcome Center is Under Way!*

**TWO GREEN ROOFS**  
TO OFFSET THE  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT  
OF THE LEED-CERTIFIED  
BUILDING.

**ENVIRONMENTALLY  
CONTROLLED STORAGE**  
FOR 185+ YEARS OF  
ARCHIVAL DOCUMENTS

**STAFF OFFICES,** WHICH  
FREE UP SPACE ON  
THE CEMETERY GROUNDS  
FOR THE CREATION  
OF THOUSANDS OF  
INTERMENT OPTIONS.



**CLASSROOM SPACE**  
TO WELCOME SCHOOL  
GROUPS YEAR-ROUND.

**RECEPTION AREA**  
FOR VISITOR WELCOME  
AND ORIENTATION

After years of planning and preparation, Green-Wood has officially kicked off the construction of its new center for education, public programs, and visitor orientation. The project combines the meticulously restored Weir Greenhouse (a former florist shop, built in 1895) with a new building that will create 20,000 square feet of additional space. The goal is to invite even more families, neighbors, and tourists to visit and enjoy Green-Wood throughout the year—and to make those visits even better!

All will be welcome to walk in, any day of the year, through a beautifully landscaped entrance pathway on 25th Street, just below Fifth Avenue. Visitors will be greeted in the lobby, where staff will be available to answer questions. Exhibition galleries will provide context for exploring the Cemetery grounds, including

fascinating background information on the Cemetery’s history and stories of many of Green-Wood’s illustrious permanent residents. Archival documents and objects from our historical collections will be on display—many of which have never been shared with the public. A classroom will provide space for public programs and school programs to take place year-round. A Center for Research will accommodate access to Green-Wood’s 185 years of institutional records. The sunny greenhouse space will offer even more information on Green-Wood’s past and present through dynamic displays and a massive map of the Cemetery.

**WHEN WILL IT OPEN?**

The grand opening is planned for late 2025. We’ll keep you posted on our progress along the way! For updates visit [www.green-wood.com/the-center](http://www.green-wood.com/the-center)

**GET INVOLVED!**

If you’d like to make a difference and become a part of this exciting project, we welcome your participation. We have many opportunities to contribute, including opportunities for naming.

Please contact Senior Vice President of Development and Programming, Lisa Alpert at [lisa\\_alpert@green-wood.com](mailto:lisa_alpert@green-wood.com)

**OTHER QUESTIONS?**

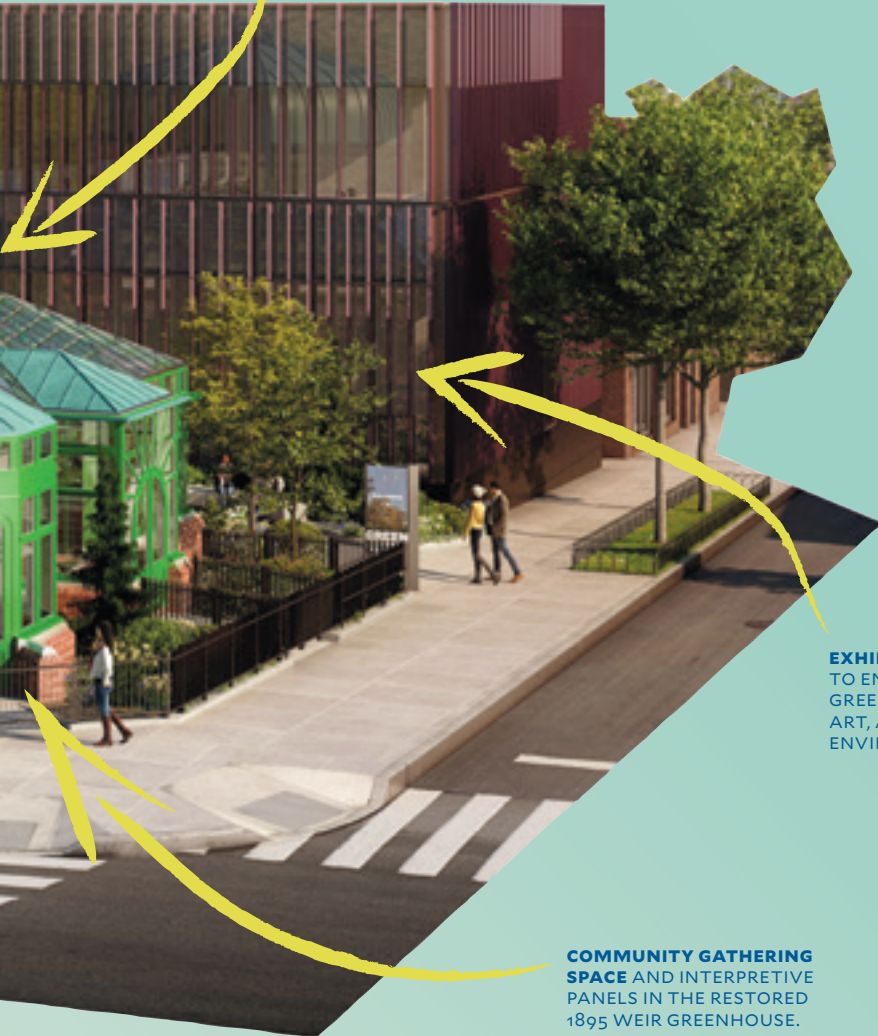
Email [contactus@green-wood.com](mailto:contactus@green-wood.com)

*The Education & Welcome Center is made possible with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the NYS Regional Economic Development Council, the NYS Council on the Arts, the NYS Assembly, the NYS Senate, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs, the Office of the Mayor, the Office of the Brooklyn Borough President, the NYC City Council, private foundations, and individual donors.*

**THE CENTER FOR RESEARCH, A NEW HOME FOR ARCHIVES AND HISTORY AT GREEN-WOOD.**

**EXHIBITION GALLERIES TO ENGAGE VISITORS WITH GREEN-WOOD’S HISTORY, ART, AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.**

**COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACE AND INTERPRETIVE PANELS IN THE RESTORED 1895 WEIR GREENHOUSE.**



*“A project like this doesn’t just happen. It’s the concerted effort of the entire community working together, putting forth their vision, putting forth their dreams, but also hearing from the community and hearing what they need and what they want”*

**Laurie Cumbo**

Commissioner of the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs

# BREAKING GROUND

On the morning of Tuesday, May 23rd, 2023, a crowd of over 100 fans, guests, staff, project contributors, and trustees gathered beside the newly restored Weir Greenhouse to celebrate the start of construction on the Education & Welcome Center. Green-Wood President Richard J. Moylan, Chair Peter Davidson, and Senior Vice Presidents Lisa Alpert and Eric Barna were joined by Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso; Commissioner of the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs Laurie Cumbo; Executive Director of the New York State Council on the Arts, Mara Manus; and District 38 NYC Council Member Alexa Avilés. With hard hats and shovels, the group ceremonially broke ground on the site, with Green-Wood’s towering Gothic Arch serving as backdrop.





Myles Davis



Theodore Muth

NATURE + THE ENVIRONMENT

# ENVIRONMENTAL INSIGHTS

## *Green-Wood Welcomes its First-Ever Research Fellows*

Green-Wood's vast greenspace, set in the middle of New York City, presents unique opportunities for research in the natural environment. In 2022, this potential inspired the creation of our Environmental Research Fellowship. The program accepts applications from early-career researchers in Urban-Environmental Studies.

We're proud to present our two inaugural research fellows and their projects.

**Myles Davis**, M.A. candidate in Ecology, Evolution, and Environmental Biology at Columbia University, studied the population, dispersal patterns, and habitat ranges of raccoons in City greenspaces. For his project, "Mesocarnivore Distributions Across NYC Greenspaces," Davis set up 40 wildlife cameras across Green-Wood and captured tens of thousands of images of nocturnal raccoon activity. His data provides insight into how landscape design, environmental resources like tree canopy cover and proximity to water bodies, and anthropogenic resources like trash and wildlife feeding, influence their distribution.

**Theodore Muth**, a biology professor at Brooklyn College and the CUNY Graduate Center, with a team of graduate students, examined the impact of land use and human influence on the diversity of soil bacteria with "Disturbed and Diverse: Soil Microbial Communities of Green-Wood Cemetery." Professor Muth and his team collected soil samples from areas across the Cemetery that are managed differently (conventional lawns, meadows, and woodlots) and analyzed and compared the microorganisms within them. Over the course of his project, Muth conducted DNA sequencing on 1,087 taxa of soil bacteria at Green-Wood!

*Applications for the Annual Research Fellowship open at the end of each year.*





# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A GRAVEDIGGER

Through death education programming, Green-Wood serves as a vibrant hub for engaging discussions on the themes of mortality and grief. We've explored diverse perspectives on these topics, bringing in funeral directors, philosophers, academics, and more. But we don't have to look far for deathcare experts at the Cemetery. In an evening panel, we brought together four employees with a combined 100 years of experience in the field: Frank Morelli, Gus Padilla, Frank Bernadini, and William Borowski.

The curator of Green-Wood's death education programming, Gabrielle Gatto, moderated the conversation, asking, "Do you look at death differently since working here?" and "What safety measures must be taken when preparing someone's final resting place?" Gatto guided the conversation from the practical to the philosophical, eliciting a holistic view of what it takes to work on the frontlines at a cemetery.

Each panelist shared both the technical and emotional aspects of their jobs. They told stories about serving families who lost loved ones during 9/11. They talked about how being frontline workers during the COVID-19 pandemic affected their day-to-day work, their mental health, and their outlooks on mortality. Morelli, who worked as a gravedigger for years and is now the Manager of Facilities, has been at Green-Wood for over 35 years. He related that his views on death changed when he became a father.

*"I deeply admire the dedication of all of our deathcare workers. Their unwavering support for families and each other fosters an incredible sense of community within Green-Wood."*

**Gabrielle Gatto**

Green-Wood's coordinator of public programs and death educator

Attendees were bursting with genuine fascination and a deep respect for the work these men perform, day-in and day-out. Tears and laughter were shared. The evening underscored that when we're talking about death we're really talking about life, and these panelists gave us a rare glimpse into their world which touches both every day.

*For upcoming programs in death education, go to [green-wood.com/death-education](https://green-wood.com/death-education)*

**Above, left to right: Frank Morelli (36 years at Green-Wood), Gus Padilla (20 years at Green-Wood), Frank Bernadini (39 years at Green-Wood) and William Borowski (1 year at Green-Wood)**

Book a tour at  
[green-wood.com/  
 calendar](https://green-wood.com/calendar).



# HOP ABOARD THE HISTORIC TROLLEY!

At 478 acres, there's a lot of ground to cover at Green-Wood! Fortunately, traversing those hills and valleys is a breeze on board one of our historic trolley tours (offered year-round!). Sit back and take in the grandeur of elaborate monuments and mausoleums as our knowledgeable guides give you the inside scoop on the Cemetery's most fascinating spots. Hear captivating tales of the famous — and even infamous — figures that count among Green-Wood's permanent residents.

There's lots to choose from. The "Discover Green-Wood" tour, offered Saturdays year-round, is the perfect introduction to all the most talked-about memorials, historic figures, and architectural features of the Cemetery. Looking to dive a little deeper? Check out a themed tour, like "Baseball Greats," "Gay Green-Wood," or "Crime and Catastrophe." We can't wait to welcome you aboard!



# WALKING THE PERIMETER PATH

*A Conversation with  
Artist in Residence Rowan Renee*

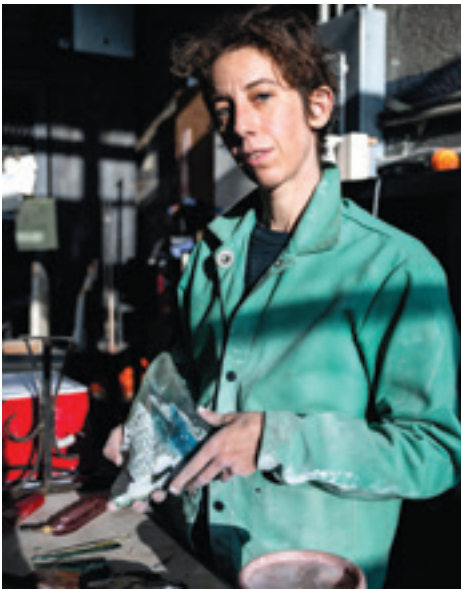
Rowan Renee's work was inspired by the Cemetery—its extensive history and its natural and built environments. Their installation, *The Perimeter Path*, opened in the Historic Chapel in June 2023.

#### WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO APPLY FOR GREEN-WOOD'S ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM?

As a research-based artist, my work often develops in relation to a specific place, archive, or narrative. Green-Wood has so many possibilities for in-depth research—from the landscape and monuments to the extensive burial records and the lives of the people interred there.

#### YOUR WORK DEALT LARGELY WITH THE PUBLIC LOTS, HOW DID YOU COME TO FOCUS ON THEM?

I began by exploring and getting to know the landscape. I went for long walks and found myself drawn to the areas along the fence-line, where I noticed the character of the landscape and monuments to be different. Stones are sparsely placed, smaller, and more uniform, with some set off-kilter at strange angles. I wanted to learn the story of these sections of the Cemetery that are literally at the margins.



### WHAT SHOULD VISITORS KNOW ABOUT THE PUBLIC LOTS?

Although Green-Wood is often associated with the burial of wealthy and prominent individuals, over one-third of the interments are in these public lots, which offered lower-cost options for burial. In 1895, a single grave in a public lot cost \$31 for an adult, whereas a private, family lot could range from \$160-\$1200. The lots were laid out with a greater density leaving no room for

foundations, which made the headstones less stable and more prone to damage. And because it was the family's responsibility to pay for a monument, some families never purchased one. I was compelled by the idea that there were people in unmarked graves at Green-Wood and began reflecting on how disparities of race and class play out in death as well as in life.

### CAN YOU TELL ME A BIT ABOUT THE INSPIRATION BEHIND *THE PERIMETER PATH*? WHAT MESSAGE OR THEME DOES YOUR INSTALLATION AIM TO CONVEY?

My work often channels art-making as a means to care for and repair the past. In *The Perimeter Path*, I was inspired by the tremendous amount of care-work that goes into maintaining the Cemetery—and the memorials to those interred within it. I saw my role as an artist and as a monument-maker for those who did not have memorials. I hope the installation conveys the tension between memory and loss—that it is possible to get a sense of someone's life even from very fragmentary details about them, and yet the partial account we can put together likely does not fully represent them. There is a significant amount of loss through time.

### HOW DID YOU CHOOSE THE MATERIALS AND ELEMENTS USED IN YOUR ARTWORK, AND WHAT SIGNIFICANCE DO THEY HOLD?

All of the materials in *The Perimeter Path* are site-specific and help tell the story. The marble, as well as some of the glass, was sourced from Green-Wood's decommissioned Receiving Tomb. The shape of the installation—an eighteen-foot circle that rises upward—references the perimeter fence and front gates of the Cemetery, as well as the circular design

of some large, family lots. Other components reference the repair work done by Cemetery staff. Fragments of welded metal are actually “bending jigs” that were used by Green-Wood's retired ironworker for repairing decorative iron fencing. The cement urns were made using molds from the restoration department. The round stones throughout the exhibition were collected at Green-Wood with the help of many volunteers. Rounded by the glacier that once sat on top of the Cemetery, they reference the scale of geological time, and also the practice of leaving stones at a burial site as a token of remembrance.

### YOUR WORK HAS OFTEN DRAWN ON ARCHIVAL MATERIALS. HOW WERE YOU ABLE TO UTILIZE GREEN-WOOD'S INSTITUTIONAL RECORDS IN YOUR WORK?

During my first few months at Green-Wood I spent a lot of time just exploring the archives. I was drawn to the handwritten burial ledger books that date back to the 1800s. The giant, cloth-bound tomes look like they should be in a museum, but they are still in active use. There's something very moving about reading the burial record of someone who passed away more than a century ago and knowing that the person who hand wrote it is also long gone. Ultimately, I used these records to develop biographies of a dozen people interred in unmarked graves in two specific public lots. This research has been archived on my website ([rowanrenee.com](http://rowanrenee.com)). In addition, images of the burial records, as well as Green-Wood's archival photographs documenting damage to monuments, made their way into the installation in the form of fused glass.

### WHAT IS YOUR ARTISTIC PROCESS LIKE, AND WAS THAT ANY DIFFERENT CONSIDERING THE UNCONVENTIONAL SPACE OF THE CEMETERY?

I think of myself as the visual equivalent of a novelist. My projects are typically driven by research—both in terms of content and material—and take months or years to develop. I let the environment where I'm working guide me. This leads me to experiment with new media. At Green-Wood, I taught myself to carve marble for the first time, which made sense for a project about memorialization and monuments. So, I think the unconventional environment was actually a perfect fit for my process and gave me opportunities to explore and learn. I think I will look back at this residency as a very special time.

*The Perimeter Path was made possible with support from the New York State Council on the Arts.*



# PRESERVING THE PAST, PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

*Summer Interns Gain Hands-On Experience*

Each summer, Green-Wood offers an outstanding educational opportunity for teens and young adults, ages 16–24. The idea is to present a hands-on, multi-disciplinary internship that opens the eyes of these young people to possible career directions and areas of study.

Like Green-Wood itself, the internship offers exposure to many different themes, including horticulture and green careers, urban history, restoration and preservation, deathcare, history of public health, archives study, and more.

In summer 2023, Green-Wood's twenty-five interns had the opportunity to learn firsthand how our historic cemetery strives to both honor our past while remaining forward-thinking and ready for the future.

The six-week program was divided into units. First, the interns focused on historic preservation. Director of Restoration and Preservation Neela Wickremesinghe chose public lot 11189 as their worksite. This lot, which dates back to 1865, is one of Green-Wood's many public lots that offered



affordable options for burial. Typically, the gravestones families placed on graves in these public lots were small or sometimes nonexistent. And without the stone foundations found in private lots, monuments sometimes fall and sink beneath the earth over time. The interns used Green-Wood's archival maps to identify the underground locations of the monuments. Together with Neela and her team, they painstakingly raised 90 monuments from below ground. Each stone was cleaned, repaired if needed, and reset, preserving its integrity for years to come.

Green-Wood's horticulture team walked the interns through how they maintain a healthy ecosystem in this massive, historic greenspace. Caring for our arboretum of over 8,000 trees and shrubs is key. Students mulched, weeded, and watered 70 young trees, all the while learning the importance of our urban forest in fostering a climate-resilient city. This lesson was also driven home when students collected debris and waste from around the Cemetery, learning about the harmful effects pollutants have on wildlife and the environment.

Interns had open and honest conversations with Theresa Wozunk and MariaGrace Villano, memorial counselors at Green-Wood, about the Cemetery's core business of working with grieving families and

honoring their wishes for memorialization. They talked about how memorialization options have changed over time. They discussed rituals that families and communities practice at the time of a death. Funeral Director Amy Cunningham spoke about green burial options that reduce the environmental impact of interment. Green-Wood's death educator Gabrielle Gatto invited them to share their thoughts and feelings on death, dying, and grief, emphasizing the importance of open communications about these topics.

To learn about the many kinds of work it takes to maintain a historic cemetery with a vast landscape and 185 years of history is a unique opportunity for anyone. Through our annual summer internship program, we are especially proud to give our interns a new lens on Green-Wood and their own futures.

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