



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE OLD CEMETERIES SOCIETY
OF VICTORIA, PUBLISHED SIX TIMES PER YEAR

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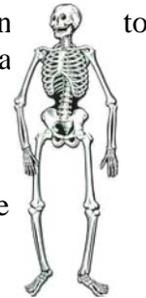
November-December 2016

Volunteers Needed

Hallowe'en Patrols at Ross Bay Cemetery on October 28, 29 and 31

The patrols are a unique opportunity to experience Ross Bay Cemetery at night and to deter vandalism. The patrol dates have not been finalized but a will be sent to all members as soon the dates are confirmed by the City Parks Department. We do our patrols in two shifts, 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. and 10 p.m. to 12 midnight.

If you are able to help please leave your name and preferred shift time by e telephone with Gudrun Leys at gmleys@gmail.com or 250 590-5850 or oldcem@pacificcoast.net or phone 250-598-8870.



Sunday, October 30th Ghost Walk in Ross Bay Cemetery

We need volunteers to act as pilots to direct patrons on the tour, and to help with refreshments and the sales table. Please contact gbyudens@shaw.ca or 383-4873.

John Adams is organizing the story tellers and the tour route. This is his proposal: "The plan is to have 10 speakers in costume, each at a grave. There will be one route only. Starting time will be 2:00 p.m. As groups of 15 gather they will be taken by a pilot to one of the locations, but won't actually begin until 2:00 p.m. It will be a shotgun start, with everyone starting at the same time at all 10 locations. The pilots will walk the group to the next speaker, as they have done in the past. I can walk the pilots around the route at 1:30 p.m."

We'll start at Stannard Avenue and finish at the caretaker's shed. Gerry Buydens will organize the pilots and refreshment people. Contact Gerry at 250-383-4873 or gbyudens@shaw.ca if you are able to be a pilot. We'll meet before 1:30 p.m. in Fairfield Plaza.



Tree Planting at Government House

A tree will be planted at Government House in honour of Eileen Edgar. Her sister, Pat Edgar will be in attendance. The volunteer group known as the "Government House Woodlanders", of which Eileen was a member, will be planting Eileen's tree on Thursday October 20th, at 10 a.m., and anyone may come. Our group starts work on Thursdays at 10a.m., and we'll be planting the tree down in the woodlands, not up in the formal

gardens. The tree is a native pine and is coming from a nursery up-island. Old Cemeteries Society members are welcome and they should park down in the lower parking Lot. Let Gerry Buydens know if you need a map- gmbuydens@shaw.ca or 250-383-4873.

Cleaning Report

Sharon Welsh

This year we have been working on Section T and will likely continue in this area next year. The Broom Patrol, consisting of Linda Boone, Sharon Welsh and Pat Lydon, provided elbow grease as well as a boost to morale!

Our last cleaning bee of the year will be held on Saturday, October 15th, weather permitting.



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Vandalism at the Chinese Cemetery

On October 1st Oak Bay Police advised the society that a person or persons unknown had sprayed paint on some of the structures at the Chinese Cemetery. The police have no suspects and do not believe the incident was racially motivated. City councillor Charlayne Thornton-Joe visited the cemetery and noted necessary refurbishment, including rust on the gate. The graffiti has since been professionally removed.



Nellie Cashman Marker Installed

This photo shows Wilf Bruch, past president of the Old Cemeteries Society, and me, setting the new Nellie Cashman marker beside the east road in the Ross Bay Cemetery, some 50 feet from her gravesite. The marker will help to identify the area of her grave, which is quite a distance from the pathway. It lies beside the large burial site of the Sisters of St. Ann. Some eighty nuns are buried in this beautiful location.

Patrick Lydon



The Nellie Cashman Centennial Fund has now grown to seven hundred dollars and I anticipate a substantial donation from the Vancouver Island Placer Miner Association (VIPMA) in October, as that agency has taken a great interest in the history of women in mining and Nellie Cashman is the focus of their investigations at this time.

The Old Cemetery Society has established an ad hoc committee to review the specifications of the new centennial stone and the following members have been appointed - Gerry Buydens, Sharon Welsh, and Patrick Lydon, acting chair. A small booklet entitled *Angel in Victoria* is in production as we speak, and this has been edited by Donna Chaytor, Treasurer of VIPMA and Patrick Lydon. We hope to distribute this free booklet around the city and in North America in an effort to publicize the efforts to put a new gravestone on Nellie's grave. Page | 3

The story is basically the same as the Times Colonist article "Victoria's other Nellie" which was published in the Islander Section of the Times Colonist on the 24th of July 2016, but it is more detailed and has some wonderful photos as well. We hope to raise three thousand dollars for the project and we expect to have a third of that sum by the end of October. A new book entitled "Gold Rush Queen" by local author Thora Kerr Illing, has caused a great buzz of interest in Nellie Cashman, as this is one of the best accounts of the complex life of "the miner's angel," and captures all the great exploits and achievements, that have made our Nellie so famous. It is a great buy for less than \$20, and Thora Kerr Illing has been elected the honorary president of "The Friends of Nellie Cashman Club" as a result of this excellent publication. Watch this space for more news!

Contributions to The Nellie Cashman Fund may be made out to the Old Cemeteries Society and mailed to the Old Cemeteries Society, Box 50004, RPO Fairfield Plaza, Victoria. BC. V8S 5L8. The Old Cemeteries Society is a registered charitable organisation and Tax Receipts are available for donations. Please note on your cheque that the donation is for the NCF. (Nellie Cashman Fund).

A Dying Trade

From the National Post

Concerned that their trade is under threat from cremations and other after-death options, eighteen two-man teams of gravediggers recently competed in Hungary to see which of them would advance to a regional championship to be held in Slovakia.

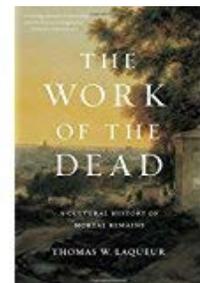
Teams were judged on their speed and also on the look of the finished grave mounds. Some teams extended their interpretation of style to their outfits; they wore white shirts, ties, and elegant vests, while others were in overalls. All contestants had shovels, rakes, axes and pickaxes to dig graves 0.8 metres wide by two metres long by 1.6 metres deep (2 feet 7 inches by 6 feet 6 inches by 5 feet 3 inches.)

The fastest time to dig a grave was just over 34 minutes. There was a short rest and then the dirt was shoveled back into the grave and the grave topped with a burial mound. "We take special pride in the burial mounds, on which we place the flowers and wreaths at the end of the funeral" said one contestant.

History's Ghosts

A Book Review

The Greek philosopher Diogenes said that when he died his body should be tossed over the city walls for beasts to scavenge. Why he or anyone else care what became of his corpse? In *The Work of the Dead*, acclaimed cultural historian Thomas Laqueur examines why humanity has universally rejected Diogenes's argument. No culture has been indifferent to mortal remains. Even in our supposedly disenchanted scientific age, the dead body still matters- for individuals, communities, and nations.



The Vaults of Asterline

Pat Lydon

I submit this composition as a Halloween project and I dedicate the presentation to our beautiful Ross Bay Cemetery, which is one of the finest jewels in the crown of the City of Victoria. I am the author and it is a fictitious story but there is an historical account of a similar incident to the Blake family in Galway, Ireland, many years ago.

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The night was bright, the mist was slight,
The bell had just struck one.
The graveyard trees, moaned in the
breeze,
The moon, the sky did run.
When o'er the wall, that stood so tall,
Two men were seen to climb.
They looked about, then both set out,
For the Vaults of Asterline.

For ten score year, were buried here,
The nobles of that crest.
But two months past, the very last,
The Duke was laid to rest.
Twas duly said, that all the dead,
Were decked with jewelry fine.
A prize of gold, the tomb did hold,
In the vaults of Asterline.

With faces wan, they quickly ran,
Across the holy ground.
Where headstones grey, on dead men lay,
Until the tomb they found.
Before the vault, they both did halt,
And eyed its ancient lines,
For twas their job, they'd come to rob,
The vaults of Asterline.

With crow-bars three, they tried to free,
The slab that marked the door.
An hour had passed, before at last,
It crashed onto the floor.
The tomb within, was black as sin,
And the smell was that of lime.

By lantern light, the thieves caught sight,
Of the vaults of Asterline.

The tombs were laid, in line arrayed,
Each one was made of stone.
The thieves were fast to choose the last,
Their jackets off were thrown.
And the crowbars crashed, and the mallets
smashed,
That stone to powder fine.
Before them lay, in fine array,
The Duke of Asterline.
There was still a trace, of the noble face,
On the flesh so dried and grey.
But a fungus growth, above the throat,
Had the jawbone ate away.
There were still some strands, on his
folded hands,
Of the skin that served its time.
And the signet ring, gift from the King,
To the Duke of Asterline.

No time to waste, they stole in haste,
The cross and chain of gold.
But the signet ring, to the flesh did cling,
Would not release its hold.
With a woeful curse, the more perverse,
Performed his base design,
With a powerful twist, tore the rotting wrist,
From the Duke of Asterline.

Now to this day, the people say,
They were woke up in their bed.
By the thunder crash, of a lightning flash,

That near awoke the dead.
And 'tis thought by all, both old and
small,
That God hath sent this sign,
To show his wrath, at what hath hath,
To the Duke of Asterline.

And deep within, the tomb, the din,
Was heard by both these knaves,
But in their greed, they paid no heed,
As they opened up the graves.
When the rafters groan, 'neath the roof of
stone,

Was final warning sign.
Ere the vault crashed in, on the two
within,
The vaults of Asterline.

As daylight broke, the scene bespoke,
The violence of the night.
Beneath the mound, the two were found,
Their deed was brought to light.
The local shame, was turned to fame,
When they rebuilt the shrine.
May the nobles rest, beneath their Crest,
In the vaults of Asterline