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Winter 2011

Welcome... to the latest newsletter of the Friends of Hyde Park Cemetery. Here you'll find information on the progress that we've made over the past few months and on events organised by the Friends, along with news items that, we hope, will interest you.

Do please let us know if you'd like information on any other topics.

Heritage Circuit

We mentioned, in the previous newsletter, about having secured funding from 'Living Streets' to establish a Heritage Circuit around Hyde Park Cemetery.

We've now taken delivery of the marker posts, which are to be installed at 20 points of interest around the perimeter of the site, and the accompanying full colour leaflet is in preparation. The Friends propose to launch the Heritage Circuit in May 2011, to coincide with both National Walking Month and Local & Community History Month.

Watch out for further details.

Another Grassroots Grant

We are delighted to announce that a recent application for further funding from Doncaster Central Development Trust, under its Grassroots Grants scheme, has been successful. As well as paying for some of the Friends' ongoing administrative costs, the grant enables us to buy a range of gardening tools, which we shall use during our Working Mornings. We are very grateful to DCDT for their ongoing support.

More Funding Coming Soon?

The Friends' positive relationship with 'Living Streets', the charity that stands up for pedestrians, has opened up the possibility of more funding becoming available. 'Fitter for Walking' is a project designed to improve the environment and get people out walking. Via Living Streets, we are hoping to tap into Doncaster MBC's 'Fitter for Walking' budget to provide additional benches in the cemetery and also have gates made and fixed at the New Street entrance. We hope to have some good news on this matter shortly.

AGM Date Fixed

The 2011 Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Hyde Park Cemetery will take place on Monday 6 June at St James' Church Hall, St Sepulchre Gate West, Doncaster, DN1 3AQ. It will commence at 7pm.

This year's AGM is later than in previous years, allowing us to present audited accounts for the most recent financial year (ending 31 March 2011). We also hope that the lighter evening will encourage as many people as possible to attend.

As well as the formal business of the meeting, we shall hear a presentation by Elizabeth Hardcastle, Yorkshire Living Churchyards Project Officer from the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust. This presentation will throw new light on a very important aspect of Hyde Park Cemetery.

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Summer Outing: Doncaster

Town Centre Heritage Walk

Provisional arrangements have been made for the Friends to enjoy a guided Heritage Walk around Doncaster's town centre on a summer evening.

The walk, led by staff from the Tourist Information Centre, will explore the fascinating history of the town, which was home to the great majority of Hyde Park Cemetery's occupants.

It is likely that the walk, at a cost of £3 per person, will take place in July, starting at 6pm, and will last about 90 minutes. Attendees will then have the option to stay on afterwards for an informal social gathering. More information next time.

THANK YOU to Geoff Bennett for copying this newsletter for distribution by post.

WILDLIFE AREA BEGUN

The Friends have joined forces with the 'Eco Warrior' pupils from Hexthorpe Primary School, to enhance the cemetery's attractiveness to wildlife. Amongst other facilities, the pupils are designing a layout for bird nesting and bat boxes. The first box has already been installed on a tree, in the copse of the cemetery's Section C. Many more nesting boxes are expected to follow over the forthcoming weeks and months.

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Working Mornings Going From Strength to Strength

The monthly Working Mornings are opportunities for the Friends to make a very positive contribution towards the upkeep of the cemetery. We are able to carry out those tasks that supplement the work done by the Council's grounds maintenance team and, through those 'little extras', change the way that visitors perceive the site.

Attendance at the three most recent Working Mornings has totaled more than the six previous sessions, enabling really good progress to be made.

Why not come along and take part? The Working Mornings always take place on the second Saturday of the month, between 9:30 am and 12 noon. Forthcoming dates are 12 March and 9 April.

Please wear the sort of clothing that you might wear for gardening.

Stained Glass Fragment Found

At one of the recent Working Mornings, the Friends were clearing the overgrown and untidy area surrounding the former chapels when a fragment of stained glass was found. It was lying adjacent to the northern window of the north chapel. Little is known about the windows in the chapels, but records do indicate that there was a stained glass window which commemorated James Alexander, one of the cemetery's original Commissioners.

An initial approach has been made to Doncaster Museum & Art Gallery, to try to discover more about the fragment. We intend to have the artefact examined at the Museum in the near future, in the hope that we can learn more about its origins. In the meantime, if any reader has information about the chapels' windows, please get in touch.

Colour at Christmas

Around Christmas 2010, it was noticeable how many colourful wreaths had been placed on graves. Although there are usually a few wreaths here and there during the festive season, the large number present this time was quite striking. We hope that the improvements that are happening at the cemetery are encouraging more visitors and leading to this very evocative display.

Website Popularity Increasing

The Friends' presence on the internet is a vital part of our strategy to provide information to as many people as possible. There is no better way to reach people all around the world, as has been shown on several occasions already, with enquiries coming from several countries outside the UK.

During the second half of 2010 visits to our website were up by 4% on the first half of the year. In February 2011 the site received 16% more visitors than in the same month last year.

Go to **www.fohpc.org.uk** and check it out for yourself!

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Encouraging Signs

As a way of encouraging even more people to keep in touch with the Friends' activities, via the FoHPC website, we have used some of the income generated by last year's guided walks to pay for two new signs in the cemetery. The signs, one on the Lodge and one of the north chapel, display our website address to the many pedestrians who pass through the site.

Keeping In Touch

Are We Addressing You Correctly?

To keep our administration costs down, we would like to send out newsletters by email to as many of our members as possible. If you received this newsletter by post but would be happy for us to use email in future, please send your email address to:

richardbell.fohpc@btinternet.com

If you wish to continue to receive newsletters by post, but we haven't got your address quite right, please let us know.

If you used to receive your newsletter by email, but this one arrived by post, perhaps you've changed your email address and forgotten to let us know.

For any matter related to the Friends of Hyde Park Cemetery, you can contact Richard Bell by the following methods:

Telephone: **07777-688438**

Email: **richardbell.fohpc@btinternet.com**