Spirit of Living Water
Garden Grand Opening April 22
2 to 4 PM

Calvary Cemetery’s newest cremation garden is now complete and ready for inspection and celebration! Some inurnments have already taken place and bronze plaques installed. The flowers and trees are blooming and the fountains and falls are providing their wonderful sights and sounds to all who linger. We’ll take this opportunity to celebrate Earth Day, thank all those who have helped create this sacred space and remember our dear departed. Come and enjoy it during our two hour open house featuring live music, light refreshments, and a souvenier of the occasion. The event will feature a dove release at 3:30 PM.

GRASS SEEDING PROCEDURES HAVE BEGUN

The early break in the weather means the Calvary Maintenance Staff is on the move. One of our Spring season priorities is to make certain that the approximate 250 burials that took place from late fall through winter receive their grass seed application. We use a “hydro-seeding” process which is a spray on mixture of seed, pin mulch, fertilizer, and water. The green dye in the mix will soon fade turning into a gray color and rough texture.

IMPORTANT: PLEASE BE PATIENT. This is a very potent mix. Do not attempt to rake away or pluck away the mulch as you see new grass popping through. You will uproot tender grass plants already growing underneath. The mulch will dissolve over time revealing a beautiful new stand of grass. There is no need to report to the Calvary office that these recent burials need to be seeded as they are accounted for in our standard operating procedures. It usually takes around 5 weeks to catch up on our fall/winter burials. However, if any other older grave needs attention in any way; you may report that to our office. A work order will be created and we will make necessary repairs as soon as possible.

Have a GREAT SPRING! Rick Meade, Superintendent

“Mr. Titanic” Philip Zenni Remembered on 100 Year Anniversary of Tragic Maritime Accident

Historic St Henry’s Memorial Chapel Bell to Toll 100 Times on April 15 Honoring the Victims and Celebrating the Survivors

There is a Titanic survivor buried here named Philip Zenni. His descendants live here in Dayton. Zenni was originally from Lebanon, where his name was Fahim Leeni. Like the names of so many other immigrants, his name was Anglicized by a well-meaning entry officer at Ellis Island. Zenni had left his wife and young son in his native country and sent for them after he reached Dayton, Ohio.

Twenty two year old Zenni boarded the Titanic in Cherbourg, France as a third class passenger. The rooms for third class passengers were located very close to the bottom of the boat. Zenni somehow managed to make his way up to the top deck and get into lifeboat number six. The passengers in the lifeboat rowed for two miles, floating for two hours as the Titanic sank and were finally saved by the Carpathia around 5 a.m.

After surviving the sinking of Titanic, he continued on to his destination of Dayton, Ohio where he lived out his life. Zenni toured around Ohio retelling stories of his adventure on the Titanic. These tours led to his nickname of “Mr. Titanic.” There is some speculation he was on the same lifeboat as Margaret “Unsinkable Molly” Brown. He was first employed as a machinist at Platt Iron Works in Dayton but later worked in the confectionery business. He was married to Elsie and had four children (1 son and 3 daughters) Zenni passed away in 1927 from pneumonia, a complication of typhoid fever.

Zenni’s great grandson, Tom Heiser, lives in the Dayton area and will be joining us, accompanied by his family, on this day to honor the anniversary. Calvary will be host a luncheon for the family and they will assist in ringing the chapel bells 100 times, one ring for each year.

Family contributed photo of Philip Zenni, aka “Mr. Titanic”
Partnership with Liapis Landscaping for Grounds Keeping Helps Meet Calvary Goals for Cemetery Maintenance

One of the things that sets Calvary Cemetery apart from others is the commitment to have all 110 acres of grass in the cemetery mowed at least once a week on a continual basis throughout the growing season. (The other 90 acres of ground are undeveloped forest) This has been especially important with the early arrival of warm weather this spring. To meet this ambitious goal, Calvary supplements its maintenance crew with outside services.

This year, Liapis Landscaping has been chosen as our contractor. This partnership has allowed Liapis to invest in state of the art propane fueled mowers and other equipment to do an efficient, quieter and more eco friendly job. Another great plus is Phil Liapis’ willingness to use the Catholic Social Services Refugee Employment program. Among those working at Calvary are former inhabitants of countries like Ethiopia and Eritrea (an African nation across from Saudi Arabia).

Early Aviator Bernard “Benny” Whelan Among Our Distinguished UD Alumni

Bernard “Benny” Whelan graduated from St. Mary’s Institute in 1908. Upon graduation he began a career in business in the Sales Department of the National Cash Register Company. In 1910 he was inspired to become a pilot by the sight of the Wright Brothers planes flying over Huffman Prairie.

He made his dreams come true and became one of the original 119 pilots trained by Orville and Wilbur Wright at Huffman Field. He broke altitude records for Dayton-Wright. In 1913 he became a licensed pilot, the 247th license ever issued. He served as a civilian signal corps instructor for the federal government training pilot for combat in WWI before he established and operated a company that purchased and sold aircraft and also carried passengers.

Whalen was also the owner and founder of United Technology, the parent corporation of United Aircraft. Through United Technology, Colonel E. A. Deeds, executive of Pratt and Whitney, requested that he become a test pilot for the new aircraft company. He also served as Col. Deeds’ personal pilot. He then was a General Manager of Vought-Sikorsky, Division of United Aircraft until he retired in 1958. While at the company, he had many different duties, ranging from test pilot to vice president.

Among his other accomplishments he was a key player in the development and use of helicopters. Whelan was the president of the Early Birds, an organization of pilots from the first thirteen years of powered flight. Whelan died in 1983 at the age of 93.

BERNARD L. WHELAN
1890-1983