

Cemetery has culture for the living

Events on tap at Woodlawn

BY SONDRA WOLFER

LIVE IT UP at Woodlawn Cemetery.

The borough's historic final resting place — and one of its more unusual tourist stops — is in the midst of its spring program of outdoor concerts, walking tours and lectures.

"This is a beautiful place that shouldn't be only for burials but should be used as a celebration for the living," said Brian Sahd, executive director of Friends of the Woodlawn Cemetery, which organizes the events.

Sahd said events at the 400-acre burial ground draw people who may not think to visit a cemetery for a dose of nature, history or culture.

"I'm still amazed that the perception is this is just a cemetery. It's so much more than that. It needs to be shared and experienced," Sahd said.

On Sunday, music lovers who want to spend a beautiful day visiting the jazz pioneers can take the Friends of Woodlawn walking tour of the final resting places of the Jazz Greats of Woodlawn Cemetery.

From the dawn of the Jazz Age until today, hundreds of celebrated jazz musicians have been memorialized at Woodlawn, including W.C. Handy, Coleman Hawkins, William (Sonny) Greer, Charles (Cootie) Will-

iams, King Oliver, Milt Jackson and Florence Mills. Duke Ellington, Lionel Hampton, Illinois Jacquet, Miles Davis and Max Roach can be found in Woodlawn's famous "jazz corner."

On May 2, a concert by Irish folk singer Mary Courtney follows a tour of the resting places of prominent Irish men and women, including George M. Cohan, Victor Herbert and Chauncey Olcott.

A spring walking tour May 16 will focus on the memorial park's landscape just as the cherry blossoms, dogwoods and magnolias come into full bloom.

The gravesites of famous and infamous Bronxites will be visited during the Asleep in the Bronx walking tour May 23.

On June 6, there will be an outdoor Latin Jazz and Salsa concert, featuring songs made famous by Celia Cruz, who is buried at the cemetery.

The Lost at Sea tour on June 13 focuses on famous people with connections to the sea who are buried at Woodlawn, including Herman Melville, Capt. John Tallman and Adm. David Farragut.

Free end-of-life planning seminars are also being offered tomorrow, May 19 and June 16.

Reservations are recommended. Admission fees are \$10 per person, \$5 for seniors and students. For more information, call (718) 920-1470.



The Jazz Greats of Woodlawn Cemetery tour, which winds past graves for legends such as Illinois Jacquet, Miles Davis (far left) and Coleman Hawkins (left), kicks off on Sunday.