

# Clearing the way for St Lelia's to yield up secrets

by Marie Hobbins

THE first phase of a restoration project for one of the city's oldest cemeteries commenced this week.

St Lelia's cemetery in Kileely, not only

dates back to pre Famine days but there are grounds to believe it was also the site of a Round Tower, according to Denis Leonard, director of Limerick Civic Trust, which is directing the restoration work.

Mr Leonard told the Limerick Post that from a reading of an old map in the city museum, there is a very strong likelihood that the remains of a round tower are located on the grounds of St Lelia's.

"Work on the graveyard will initially span a 12-month period and our first step will be to concentrate on surface clearance. We've been in touch with the

National Monuments department of the Board of Works, and we also have an archaeologist lined up to conduct a survey, once the surface clearance work is completed.

"When completed, his recommendations on how to proceed will be forwarded to the National Monuments. We could have blazed a trail with this but we want to do a very thorough job and see exactly what we can discover about its history".

Cllr Michael Hourigan, who first

raised the issue of having the historic cemetery restored and who, on behalf of Limerick City Council, recruited the assistance of the Civic Trust in carrying out the work, is delighted that the project is now getting underway.

"I'm particularly pleased that we have the expertise and guidance of the Civic Trust - their record speaks for itself in its deliverance of so many first class restoration works throughout the city. St Lelia's cemetery still commands huge respect and

affection from the local people and it is steeped in local history but who knows what

additional historic revelations the restoration project may uncover," he said.



St Lelia's Cemetery in Kileely is undergoing a restoration project.

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