



**FRIENDS of
BOLTON STREET
MEMORIAL PARK INCORPORATED**
PO BOX 2336 WELLINGTON
<http://groups.msn.com/BoltonStCemetery>

NEWSLETTER No 60, NOVEMBER 2005 Editors: Nick Perrin & David Dunsheath

OPENING OF PARK EXTENSION

On Sunday 17 July, Deputy Mayor Alick Shaw opened the Easdale Street garden gifted to Bolton Street Memorial Park by the late Morva Williams. About fifty people, including Marian Hobbs, MP for Wellington Central, and Ian McKinnon, Councillor for Lambton Ward, gathered to listen to speakers outline the events that led to the opening of this park extension.

Morva's friend, Elizabeth Viggers, spoke about her memories of Morva's enthusiasm for the tropical plants and the birds that were attracted to the area by her plantings. Elizabeth together with the FoBSMP kindly donated a seat for the area in memory of Morva.



David Sole speaking at the opening ceremony. Photo: Neil Price, WCC

David Sole, Manager of the Botanic Gardens, talked about the plants in the garden and the work that was done by the Council staff and contractors to clear the site of weeds, build new fences, and upgrade the access path. Alick Shaw formally opened the park extension, remarking that it reminded him of the terraced garden at his

childhood home and the work involved in carting garden materials and plants up and down steps and slopes. The seat was unveiled before the group gathered at the Chapel for a warming hot drink. All agreed that the gifted garden is a wonderful new focus for the Park and provides a place for quiet contemplation among plants and birds, all a few metres from the busy motorway.

Many thanks to those Friends, plus members of the Masonic Lodge, who cleaned memorials and cleared vegetation in the vicinity. Thanks also to the Botanic Gardens staff for planning and assistance in preparations for the opening.

Judy Bale

SPRING FESTIVAL TOURS

Bolton St Memorial Park had one of its busiest nights ever on Thursday 29 September when 80 people tiptoed round the tombstones on the City Council's yearly Spring Festival Tours programme.

Clear calm weather was perfect for moonlight viewing of the monuments and gravestones. Groups of bobbing torch lights lit up the old inscriptions and dark corners. Adults, children, babies and a dog all enjoyed the tour. No ghosts were sighted but many old settlers were mentioned and remembered.

Also as part of the Spring Festival, a daytime tour on the previous Sunday was attended by 30 people.

Many thanks to our tour guides, John Daniels, Nick Perrin, Priscilla Williams, Judy Bale and Kate Fortune who volunteered their time and expert knowledge for guiding. Donations received will be used for grave restoration work in the Park.

Judy Bale

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Membership of the Friends has grown steadily to approximately 100, an increase of 12 % so far this financial year. This gives us a broader base to support our activities, and enables the committee to look ahead with confidence. We are delighted that more members are encouraging younger family members to become Friends, and pleased to welcome our first overseas member. We are especially grateful for the many donations that have been received, totalling \$1,965 in the seven months to October. The generosity of our membership is impressive.

We would like to make particular mention of the recent gesture of Diana Duff Staniland who chose to give a generous donation to the Friends in memory of her parents. They were well-known former City Councillor, Stewart Duff, and his wife, Isobel Roberta Duff, both of whose ashes are now interred in the Park.

Kate Fortune

“TWINS TAKEN” – CLARA AND ADA ANDREWS, 1876

Margaret Alington (1978) noted that in *“The Godwits Fly”* (1938), Robin Hyde fondly mentioned Bolton Street Cemetery and recorded that - “A tombstone marked with two tiny marble coffins, like pointed Chinese slippers, said ‘Twins Taken’.”

The grave she mentioned was that of nine-month old twins, Ada and Clara Andrews, both of whom died in February 1876. The grave was removed for the motorway in the late 1960s and the incised marble stone later reinstated on the Park boundary wall (grid reference F09 09).

Before the motorway excavation the grave had been prominent beside the main path along the boundary between the Public (Sydney St) Cemetery and the Church of England (Bolton Street) Cemetery. In fact, the grave was wrongly located on the Church of England side of the poorly defined boundary and recorded as such “plot 3711” (plot 11 in Block 37). However, it was also recorded in the Public Cemetery records as plot “73.R”. Since the twins’ burials have Public Cemetery Register numbers, they must have properly been non Church of England burials. A photograph of the grave taken by the Sexton, Mr Shotter, before the grave’s removal for the motorway, can be seen on the Alexander Turnbull Library web site (refer to <http://www.natlib.govt.nz/en/digital/index.html> and then select “Timeframes”).

The inscription on the left of the stone records “Clara Andrews, died Feb^y 10 1876, aged 9 months” and on the right, “Ada Andrews, died Feb^y 1876, aged 9 months”. Cemetery records reveal Ada died three days before Clara. Across the foot of the stone is “Twins Taken”.

At right angles between the above inscriptions is the partly legible outline of former lead lettering saying “S.P. Andrews MH---”. The remainder of this article explores who this might have been.

These letters would appear to indicate that S.P. Andrews was some sort of elected representative. However, there is no other reference to him/her elsewhere in the cemeteries’ burial or administrative records.

There is a former politician to whom this inscription could apply, namely Samuel Paul Andrews, 1836?-1916 (birth year uncertain) who appears in Volume 2 of the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* as “Plasterer, politician, businessman”. He stood unsuccessfully for the Canterbury Provincial Council in 1867, having arrived in New Zealand in 1864 from the Isle of Wight via ten years in Australia. However, he was later co-opted by the Provincial Council to a Select Committee on unemployment and then elected to the Council in 1872 and again in 1874, to become the first workingman elected to public office.

As an elected Council member he was entitled to use “MLC” after his name. The letters on the headstone of the Andrews twins have been previously interpreted as “MHLC”, which does not seem to have a direct relationship.

In 1874 Samuel Andrews married Elizabeth Ann Gahagan in Christchurch and three sons and two daughters are recorded from the marriage. In 1875 he stood in the

general election as Member of Parliament for the City of Christchurch, but “the working-men’s vote was split by Jerningham Wakefield and Andrews was not elected” (Bohan, updated 2005). However, he was successful in 1879 and thereafter became eligible to use “MHR” after his name in addition to “MLC”.

I surmise that the twin’s inscription referred to “MHRLC” but this does not appear to have been a standard abbreviation of the day. Besides, his entitlement to use “MHR” came three years after the twins died. Despite being a working man, he was no liberal in his attitudes. Bohan records – “...Nor once he was elected did Andrews regularly support Grey. He declared his independence during his maiden speech and soon achieved notoriety as the House’s most talkative member, and, along with Richard Seddon, its chief time waster. He was not re-elected in 1881 and failed again when he stood for Sydenham in an 1886 by-election.”

Andrews became a Christchurch City Councillor from 1884 to 1887, and then concentrated on business and social work. He died in 1916 in Christchurch.

To date I have not been able to determine a possible relationship between Samuel P Andrews and the Andrews twins. Nor have I been able to determine why he and his wife were in Wellington in February 1876. Perhaps the abolishment of the Provincial Councils that year and his recent failure to be elected for national office prompted a visit to Wellington.

References-

Alington, Margaret, 1978, *Unquiet Earth - A History of the Bolton Street Cemetery*

Bohan, Edmund, ‘Andrews, Samuel Paul 1836? – 1916.’ *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography*, updated 7 July 2005. See website: <http://www.dnzb.govt.nz/> .

Nick Perrin

2005 AGM

In a break with tradition it has been decided to delay publication of the AGM minutes until the newsletter that precedes the following AGM. Your newly elected committee is:

Priscilla Williams (Chair): tel 977 4667, priscilla.williams@paradise.net.nz

Diana Marsh (Minutes Secretary): tel 499 8860, francis.diana@xtra.co.nz

Kate Fortune (Treasurer & Membership Secretary):

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Judy Bale (Tours coordinator): tel 499 8588, sommerfields@paradise.net.nz

Terry Brandon: tel 471 1483, terrybrandon@xtra.co.nz

Anne Brosnahan: tel 472 1333

John Daniels: tel 938 7971, jr.daniels@xtra.co.nz

David Dunsheath: tel 472 8405, symbian@xtra.co.nz

Nick Perrin: tel 472 3767, n.perrin@xtra.co.nz

JONATHAN MANE-WHEOKI – GUEST SPEAKER

This year our Annual General Meeting speaker was Jonathan Mane-Wheoki, Director of Art and Visual Culture at Te Papa.

Jonathan gave a most illuminating talk on the historical and artistic origins of 19th century English (and hence early New Zealand) religious buildings and practices. Going back to Medieval, Renaissance, and later times, Jonathan showed how many of these influences reappeared in the 19th century. People then were trying to recreate some of what they saw as the lost piety and simplicity of earlier religious eras.

One of the principal themes of the Victorian era was the revival of Gothic church architecture. Here this resulted in the creation of Old Saint Paul's, an outstanding piece of Gothic Revival architecture and one which is probably unique in world terms because of its large scale timber construction. Other lesser church buildings, such as those erected by missionaries in the North before 1840, reflected some of the same ecclesiastical and architectural values.

Jonathan noted the importance of Pugin, the 19th Century architect who ardently supported medieval styles of church architecture and funerary sculpture, rather than the previously prevalent neo-classical style. These ideas were taken up by the Cambridge Camden Society, and found expression in its publication "Instrumenta Ecclesiastica". Bishop Selwyn, the first Anglican Bishop of New Zealand, was an admirer of Pugin and a member of the CCS. He and his chaplains brought to New Zealand the ideas which shaped the colony's early church architecture and memorials.

Bolton Street Cemetery illustrates these influences very clearly. Many of the gravestones and monuments display the same Gothic Revival and other motifs translated from Victorian England to the new colony after 1840. Once again we were reminded of what a precious historical and aesthetic resource we have in the cemetery.

We are most grateful to Jonathan for his enlightening address.

John Daniels

WORKING BEES

Two working bees have been held this year to clear graves and clean gravestones. The first, in July, tackled the area leading to the newly opened park extension (refer to cover article). It opened up the view as well as exposing gravestones that previously had been smothered by earth and vegetation.

The second working bee in early November, concentrated on the area between the Seddon Memorial and the Reserves Path near the top of the Park. Headstones were gently cleaned and vegetation clearing was limited to growth within the graves and immediately adjacent access to them. From this work inscriptions can once again be read.

There is clearly a need for working bees on a regular basis as there is no current provision in the Council's workforce for clearing and cleaning these important historic gravestones. The latter are gradually being destroyed through lack of maintenance and haphazard growth of vegetation.

Committee members have done the bulk of this work to date. However, the Committee is aware of members who would be willing and able to assist, some of whom were contacted before the last working bee. The resulting extra pairs of hands were very welcome.

If you are interested in participating in future working bees, please contact the Membership Secretary, Kate Fortune (ph: 970 0024; email: kate.fortune@paradise.net.nz). We will then notify you of the timing of future working bees, which we hope to hold every few months. They are usually for two hours on a weekend morning. The work is immensely rewarding, as the results are immediately obvious. This is a great way to meet new people and learn more about the history of the Park. No skills are needed except for enthusiasm.

Priscilla Williams

WEBSITES OF INTEREST

Bolton Street Memorial Park:

<http://groups.msn.com/BoltonStCemetery>

<http://www.wellington.govt.nz/services/gardens>

Other websites:

Historic Cemeteries Conservation Trust of New Zealand

<http://www.cemeteries.org.nz>

Dunedin's Northern Cemetery

<http://www.southernheritage.org.nz/northerncemetery/home.html>

SUBMISSIONS FOR FUNDS FROM THE PLIMMER BEQUEST

Earlier this year the Wellington City Council invited the public to submit proposals for funding from the Plimmer Bequest. This fund is spent on beautifying the bays, beaches or reserves around Wellington. Projects submitted must be one-off items, be on publicly accessible land, benefit the citizens of Wellington, and be large and unlikely to be alternatively funded by Wellington City Council.

Charles Plimmer, who died in 1930, bequeathed to Wellington the income from his residual estate. He was the seventh child of John Plimmer, one of the most prominent merchants in early Wellington. John Plimmer and several members of his family are buried in the Bolton Street Memorial Park. Existing gravestones of the Plimmer family can be seen along the Powles Path.

The Committee of the Friends of Bolton Street Memorial Park decided to put forward two proposals for funding as described below. A total of 98 proposals were received by the City Council, which are still being assessed. The Strategy and Policy Committee will consider in December, a report of initial recommendations.

One of the Friends' submissions is for the **enhancement of the Denis McGrath footbridge**, which provides the only link between the two parts of the Park separated by the motorway in the 1970s. This utilitarian footbridge is a severe compromise to a previously proposed piazza of much grander scale and width, which had been intended to create a park landscape seamlessly linking the upper and lower areas. The current bridge is of narrow design and raw concrete construction and lacks any aesthetic attributes to integrate with its Park surrounds.

The Committee's suggestion is to improve the visual appearance of the pedestrian bridge to set it more appropriately within the context of its surrounding historic Victorian park areas. New features might include the installation of ceramic tiles to the sides reflecting the historic memorials or Victorian planting, wrought iron railings, appropriate lighting, improved flooring, perhaps even a canopy. The design and materials for enhancements should reflect contemporary practices and artistic skills.

Our other proposal is for **enhancement of the historic Common Grave** and surrounding area in the lower part of the Park. Some 3,700 people are buried in this vault, making it probably the largest grave in New Zealand. These men, women and children are all pioneers of early Wellington and represent the beginning of the city's history. The vault lies beneath a lawn with its outline faintly marked in bricks set flush within the grass for easy mowing. Visitors walk across the top of the vault oblivious to its existence and significance. The initial design was apparently (and inappropriately) intended as an area for the performing arts. The adjacent steps, designed to form an amphitheatre, are impracticable, dangerous and unused.

The Committee's proposal is for a permanent memorial structure above the existing vault of the mass grave. For example, a perimeter wall with infill could create a flat-topped area above the vault together with suitable tile and railing ornamentation,

plantings such as roses and quality signage, all in keeping with the Victorian cemetery. A redesign of the surrounding area is suggested to make it more attractive when viewed both from above and below. Adjacent large steps should be more sympathetically redesigned. Noise and visual screening from the motorway would significantly enhance the area. A water feature would emphasise the area's importance.

Priscilla Williams

SCHOOL TOUR

On Tuesday 11th October, guides Kate and Priscilla took a party of 34 visitors from Broadgreen Intermediate School, Nelson, on a tour of the Park.

This was a test run for a tour formulated for a younger age group, with a quiz sheet distributed at the end to reinforce the information that had been learnt about the Park.

The pupils were interested in some of the notable burials, the history of the formation of the Park, and the interesting memorials. One comment made at the site of John Fergusson (J14 04, R) was, "How sad that his family went back to England and left him here all alone". Kate and Priscilla reported a well-behaved group with plenty of adult support and all enjoyed the tour very much.

Kate Fortune



Broadgreen Intermediate School group at the Bolton Street Chapel. *Photo: Kate Fortune*