



**FRIENDS of  
BOLTON STREET  
MEMORIAL PARK INCORPORATED**  
PO BOX 12 426, WELLINGTON, 6144, NEW ZEALAND  
<http://www.boltoncemetery.org.nz>

NEWSLETTER No 70 NOVEMBER 2010

Editor: David Dunsheath

## OLD ROSES AND TOMBSTONES

A tour of the Bolton Street Memorial Park on Rose Day, 21 November, was organised in conjunction with the Wellington branch of *Heritage Roses New Zealand*. The group of about 20 rose enthusiasts were taken through the Easdale Street area of the cemetery where the magnificently profuse creamy Alberic Barbier is flourishing in the Caroline Head grave.

Friends volunteer Anne Parker has been planting roses in this



Alberic Barbier rose on the Head grave  
[Easdale St entrance] Photo: Kate Fortune



Francofurtana pre-1629 Gallica on the Kent grave  
[behind the chapel] Photo: Kate Fortune

section of the cemetery from cuttings taken from the area around the Jewish cemetery and other plants that she has bought. Recent plantings include the striking Damask rose Ispahan (Wright grave), several Gallicas (Tuscany Superb, Cardinal de Richelieu, Charles de Mills), and the heritage Rugosa, Blanc Double de Coubert (between the Simpson and Wildermoth graves).

In the upper cemetery, attention was drawn to the pale pink Cecile Brunner on the Duff grave (#17 on





Banksia Alba rambler rose on Robertson Grave [grid L10-06] - photo Judy Bale

Memorial Trail), and the wonderful Banksia Alba rambler (described as violet-scented) on the Robertson grave. This is a very old plant, not a recent cutting, and its sprawling growth has required the support of a purpose-built metal frame – arranged by WCC gardeners and funded by the Friends. Of particular interest in the Jewish cemetery is the viridiflora (small double green rosettes), now flowering in the Isaacs grave.

In the lower cemetery, behind the chapel, the tour group paused to admire the deep pink-mauve rose on the Sarah Ann KENT grave (*pictured on cover page*).

*Kate Fortune*

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## MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCES

As at the end of October 2010, current membership stands at 115 individuals, families and corporate members – still growing steadily.

Our finances continue to look very healthy, and we are delighted to acknowledge receipt of 300 postage-paid envelopes, from New Zealand Post's Community Post scheme. I am pleased to report that we have also received \$1,622 in donations so far this year.

*Kate Fortune*

## HIGHER STANDARDS OF GRAVE CONSERVATION

A turning point in the Memorial Park's recent history was the completion of the *Maintenance and Repair Guidelines for Graves and Memorials* in 2006. From these **Guidelines** flowed a decision that all repairs from now on would be completed to a higher conservation standard. We have reported from time to time about such repairs but this article provides a more comprehensive coverage of the various gravestones which have been repaired over the past four years. The Friends hold electronic records about repairs and we should like also to annotate the burial list on our website so that descendents can access such information easily.

**Decisions** about work to be done are taken jointly by the Friends and the Botanic Gardens staff after consultation about priorities. The first priority is safety to people, then the prevention of further damage to the memorials. Particular consideration is given to those which are of historic or aesthetic importance.

Most of the work described in this article has been undertaken by Kim Stops of *Headstone World* in Hastings who has particular expertise in repairing **headstones** of marble, granite and other stones. A photograph of Kim drilling into the base of a large marble cross is on the back page of our newsletter of June 07. In the year after completion of the Guidelines, Kim repaired gravestones of the following:



One of many challenges ahead  
*Photo: David Dunsheath*

Jamieson/Hutchinson, John Ballard, Widdop family, Robert Harding, Millward family, Lawson/Veitch, Emma Barnard, James Burns. He also reassembled or reinstated several of the **plaques** on the Goat Track, including Valentine, Blamey, Marianne Grant, Stewart and the Andrews twins. In addition he undertook the restoration of a **wooden cross** belonging to John Maitland.

In the financial year ending 2008, the graves mended (all **masonry** ones) were for: Jonas Woodward, William Levell, Fidge/Kinniburgh, Mary

Dutton (resetting an iron memorial), William Humphries, William Goodall, E M Anderson and Miriama Teira. Insurance from tree damage paid for five more; John Valentine, Norris Salmon, George Campion, James Taylor and SA Mitchell.

Another special restoration that year was the **Turnbull** Family tombstone which was relocated to a more appropriate place and paid for by the Friends of Turnbull Library. Over the same period a Masonic lodge organised and financed repairs to the large **Stafford/Tucker** memorial.

Having dealt with the most pressing of the masonry repairs, we turned our attention to the **wooden memorials** in the park, almost all of which were in need of



conservation. For these a specialist conservator, Detlef Klein of Manawatu Museum Services was asked to provide specifications. Details of the work to be done took time to be agreed and thus funds allocated for FY 08/09 were under-expended. In the next financial year all the allocation was used to repair wooden memorials. These were headboards for Margaret Springgay, Elizabeth Pike, Percival Tinney (pictured), a cross for Adin Cockroft, plus two headboards and one cross for people unknown. One of the “unknown” headboards has been returned to the Goat Track (pictured on page 8) where it was found but the other two wooden “unknowns” are in storage, awaiting a decision on placement.



Detlef Klein reinstating Tinney headboard  
[Governors Way, K16-05] Photo: Kate Fortune

Refer also to ‘*Conservation Success for Wooden Memorials*’ (page 8).

For the **current financial**

**year** we have decided on a mix of masonry and wooden repairs. Four more wooden memorials are now with the conservator. A group of masonry repairs in the lower area have been identified and should be done in the next few months. The names of all these will be listed in a later newsletter when they are completed. So, apart from the occasional setback, such as the recent deliberate breakage of one marble cross, there is steady progress in repairing the broken or decaying memorials. The most challenging problems are the **sandstone** tombstones, many of which have delaminated beyond repair. Two important ones – for the Gillespie family and for John Balmer which are both on the heritage trail – are currently being considered by professional conservators.



Tinney headboard prior to restoration  
Photo: Judy Bale

**Fence surrounds** are of lower priority but also need to be considered. We have reported that work is now underway on the many and lovely old wooden fences. The iron work is a challenge which still seems out of our financial reach but we would like to feel we can at least preserve what we have without further losses if a modest low-cost solution can be found.

From time to time families approach us about repairs to their graves. We welcome these enquiries and also offers to assist with the funding.

*Priscilla Williams*

## **TOURS THROUGH THE PARK**

Several tours took place in the last four months with mainly a very good attendance by a variety of interest groups.

On Monday August 23, Kate Fortune and Nick Perrin took a group of 60 from St Francis de Sales school on a tour tailored for schools.

We arranged and publicised two “Tiptoe through the Tombstones” tours for Spring Festival with the help of Charmaine Scott from Wellington City Council. The first on Saturday September 18, guided by Nick, attracted 15 people which was a good response given the weather report for atrocious stormy conditions.

The second on September 25 was a huge success with our two guides, Priscilla Williams and John Daniels, overwhelmed by a crowd of 80. Publicity of the Park and the Spring Festival tours was very much accentuated by an article in the Wellingtonian featuring Nick and by inclusion of tour details in the WCC Spring Festival events advertising.

Nick also guided a small family group on September 19.

On 7 November a special tour was held to raise money for UNIFEM NZ (UN Women) with the focus on women of interest buried in the Park. There are in fact very few women of prominence, which reflects the social mores of the time. Other women led lives of interest or of domestic tragedy. Among graves noted were those of Mary Taylor who ran a shop with her cousin Ellen Taylor, a friend of Charlotte Bronte; Kate Mair, a portrait artist; and Mary Smith who ran the Fitzherbert Terrace school for girls together with Mary Swainson.

On Rose Day, November 21, Kate and Nick led an “Old Roses and Tombstones” tour for about 20 rose enthusiasts (refer to the front cover article). This was done in conjunction with Rosemary Patterson representing the Heritage Rose Society and who helped to establish the Pauatahanui Cemetery Rose Garden This was the first time the two societies have combined to emphasise two key elements in the Park, the burials and the Heritage Rose collection. It resulted in a very interesting tour which had wide appeal and will hopefully become a regular yearly Rose Day event.

Many thanks to our dedicated and superb guides who volunteer their time and knowledge. If you are interested in becoming a tour guide, would you please contact one of the committee.

*Judy Bale & Priscilla Williams*

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## **RADIO TOUR OF THE PARK**

At 12:15 pm on Sunday 4 December, the radio programme Spectrum will be ‘taking a tour’ of the memorial park together with three of the Friends. You can hear it on National Radio. The programme will be re-broadcast at 7:30 pm on Thursday 9 December, or you can of course download it from the internet.

*Priscilla Williams*

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## BOTANIC GARDENS MANAGER'S REPORT TO AGM MAY 2010

I am looking forward to seeing the wooden headboards about to be reinstated in the park after their removal and treatment. The work on these headboards reflects the importance of the long view of the significance of our heritage artefacts and the stories they tell of our city, our country and our people.

What the stories are less inclined to tell is about the dedication of the Friends to the Park and to its values. On behalf of Council I would once again like to thank you for your contribution to both the Park's and the City's heritage.

Councils across the region and the country find themselves under increasing pressure to respond to demands for services especially in the social sector. It is unlikely that we could deliver our outcomes each year without the support of the Friends. Across the board contributions through volunteerism will become increasingly important in the coming years. I have discussed with the other Friends and Trust Groups, very informally, that Council's resources for capital development will become increasingly restricted and that, in line with major gardens around the world, that we start to consider the possibilities of establishing endowment funds to support the development objectives of the Friends and the Council. I note that the updating of the constitution embodies that possibility well. It is my view that an increasingly important part of my role will be strengthening relationship building in order to foster philanthropy. The Friends and Trust groups will become important partners in developing these.

It has been an interesting year with a difficult visitor season as a result of the financial crisis and weather patterns that seem to have slipped a month or more. The symptomatic declining of our application for NZCT funding for the Spring Festival has had an impact on our operational budget. While we are able to hold our levels of service we are struggling to improve them. In the coming year there will be increased operational focus on the heritage roses and working to try to extend their season. Photographs of the roses shown during a careers presentation to students yesterday reinforced to me just how special this collection is.

We have identified a programme of work restoration for three wooden crosses and 4 grave restorations which we will discuss with the Friends committee and hope to get underway early in the new financial year. There will be replanting within the enclosure of the Seddon memorial after discussion with the family. This is likely to be simplified to a *Camellia sasanqua* hedge which will be more in keeping with the formality of the structure.

Staffing of the Rose garden team has been relatively stable this year with Kirsten Lowe being appointed to cover Michelle Finlay's gardener position. Michelle has returned part time from parental leave to work in the main gardens.

Across the Botanic Gardens cluster the major projects for the coming year are the completion of the Botanic Garden nursery replacement, additional interpretation for Otari, design work in anticipation of reconfiguration of the Otari Curator's house in

2011/12 and the Truby King house will be receiving a long overdue face lift with a new coat of paint

Thank you for your contribution again this year, especially for the many hours the committee puts in, the working bees, your advocacy for the Mount Street Cemetery and the rose frames which we hope will be signed off in the next few days for manufacture.

*David Sole, Manager, Botanic Gardens of Wellington*



New rose frame in Sexton's Cottage garden.

*Photo: David Dunsheath*

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## COMMITTEE CONTACTS 2010-11

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## CONSERVATION SUCCESS FOR WOODEN MEMORIALS



'Unknown' restoration  
[Goat Track, F09-15]  
Photo: David Dunsheath

Our guest speaker at the 2010 AGM was Detlef Klein, a leading conservation expert who has owned Palmerston North based Manawatu Museum Services since 2005. With wide experience in heritage conservation, Detlef applies a rational scientific approach to each project, looking at ways to prevent further damage and deterioration over future decades. He is keenly aware that harmful intervention may disfigure heritage memorials.

In Bolton Street Memorial Park, he has used his knowledge and expertise to restore 5 wooden (totara) headboards and 2 wooden crosses (listed on page 4) dating back 150 years – solid above ground but with rotted bases.

Using the principle of minimum intervention to existing original material, the rotted, lower part of each memorial was carefully removed. This arrested further spread of rot and created a robust surface for gluing to a custom-milled 'headboard extension' made of tanalised radiata pine. Each extension, situated above ground, is connected to a new concrete footing using fibre reinforced polymer rods that also extend upwards into the headboard. The latter material will have superior corrosion resistance in damp, ground level conditions throughout the project's design life of several decades.

Two exceptions to a non-intervention approach were made to decorative features for the purpose of visual completeness. An upper section of framing was replicated on the Tinney headboard (pictured on page 4) and two turned finials were added to the Springgay headboard.

Surfaces originally painted, carved or embellished in other ways, were not restored. This is because without exception the original surfaces had deteriorated beyond recognition. The Pike headboard (pictured) had its original lettering previously restored, obliterating or upsetting original letter style and text position as well as changing the original paint colours. The original text has largely disappeared and significant powdery remnants of the previously restored paint surface remains to be left as-is.

*Kate Fortune & David Dunsheath*



Pike restoration  
[Carr Path, K14-01]  
Photo: David Dunsheath