



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

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Editor: David Dunsheath

HERITAGE CONSERVATION: WOODEN GRAVE SURROUNDS

An important part of heritage work within the Park is conservation of its dwindling number of wooden grave surrounds (e.g. fences and railings) that demonstrate interesting variations in 19th Century workmanship. Those that have survived form an integral part of associated graves and collectively contribute to the Park's overall ambience and aesthetics. Their condition ranges from fully intact to partial remnants. The vast majority have long since disappeared without record.

The challenge faced by the Friends and Wellington City Council (WCC) for these lower heritage items is to identify prioritised conservation techniques that balance good conservation practice with costs for optimum use of modest annual budgets.



Photo: Kate Fortune

The above discussion took place with Viv Rickard, Principal Heritage Advisor for WCC (3rd from left) beside the trial restoration of the Barnard grave (next to the Thorndon viewing deck). Others from left to right are Karen Adair and Priscilla Williams (Friends); Neil Christensen and David Sole (WCC); and Terry Brandon and David Dunsheath (Friends).

NATIONAL MONUMENTS AND WAR GRAVES

Following our AGM in June this year, Margaret Marks provided an insightful illustrated presentation on the management of national and military graves and monuments throughout New Zealand and also overseas. Her key conservation and maintenance role of Senior Advisor on National Monuments & War Graves for the Ministry of Culture & Heritage has evolved over 19 years.

At the hands-on level, Margaret visits NZ-located graves and monuments at 81 scattered sites during summer months, on a 2-yearly cycle. Much detective work has been required of her over the years to locate very remote and forgotten graves. Whilst on site she will check for damage and maintenance needs during long days within a tight itinerary. Armed with a maintenance kit she will tidy each grave from overgrowth and clean the inscription. For graves in need of more specialist conservation she will plan for appropriate conservation work to be done by appropriately skilled contractors within a modest annual budget.

Her prime mandate is to preserve for perpetuity the legibility of inscriptions on original war graves where feasible. If it is not possible to make the old inscriptions legible, plaques are placed on the grave giving the names and military details as it is a requirement that all war graves be named if possible.

The Ministry's inventory dates back to military casualties spanning the New Zealand Wars of 1840 to 1872, albeit with belated redress for some of the Maori casualties. A later change of criteria then included civilian casualties from military conflicts, an example of which is the Gillespie grave in the Bolton Street Memorial Park which commemorates a father and son killed in an attack in the Hutt Valley in April 1846. For World Wars 1 and 2 the criteria included 'in-forces' personnel who died from any cause, e.g. from training accidents, diseases and other reasons during defined periods extending a couple of years beyond the end of hostilities.

On behalf of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, Margaret also looks after Commonwealth graves and memorials to the missing from the two World Wars, in New Caledonia, Samoa, Tonga, Vanuatu and the Society Islands.

As well as the Gillespie grave, there are two other graves within the Memorial Park which fall under the care of the Ministry of Culture and Heritage. One commemorates Henry Middleton Blackburn, ensign in the 99th Regiment, who was killed at Horokiwi (Battle Hill) on 6 August 1846, aged 22. His body was reinterred in the main vault when the motorway was built but his headstone and footstone have been reinstated in the Anglican section of the lower cemetery. There are a number of other defence personnel buried in the park but none fall under the current definition used to designate war graves.

The other site cared for by the Ministry of Culture and Heritage is unusual as it has been so designated for historic reasons. This is the Wakefield grave site in the Lower Cemetery where three of the Wakefield brothers are buried – Daniel, Edward Gibbon, and William – as well as Daniel's infant daughter Selina. A fourth brother, Arthur, was killed in the Wairau affray in 1843. Edward Gibbon's tombstone describes the

important part he played in founding planned settlements in New Zealand. Just outside the park at the upper entrance is another national monument, the impressive memorial to former Prime Minister Richard Seddon.

David Dunsheath and Priscilla Williams

VIVIENNE BOGLE

We record with regret the recent death of Mrs Vivienne Bogle of Karori. She was among the early group of people to assist with the work of recording tombstones and historical research over the time that the Friends incorporated society was founded in 1977. In 1980 she joined the Friends' committee, serving as Treasurer then Secretary during the important formative years, and retiring in 1989. She continued however to be a loyal member of the Friends for the rest of her life and her long-running interest in the Society's work has been greatly appreciated.

Priscilla Williams

MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCES

As at the end of November 2011, our finances continue to look very healthy, helped by the generous sponsorship by ProCopy of our newsletter printing. I am delighted to report that the Friends have received \$1,887 in donations so far this year. Membership figures have declined slightly, however, now standing at 110 individuals, families and corporates.

Kate Fortune

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WHAT BECAME OF THE WALLACE FAMILY?

One of the saddest graves in the cemetery is that of the Wallace family which records the death of six children from scarlet fever in 1865. It is less well known that there is in fact a happy ending as one of the three children who survived this disaster became the founder of a prominent Wellington family. That family has provided us with some notes on the Wallace family, drawn from “*The New Zealand House of Harcourt*” by Edward M. Harcourt and “*The Streets of My City*” by F.L. Irvine-Smith.

24-year-old John Howard Wallace waded ashore from the “Aurora” to Petone Beach on 22 January 1840. His first action was to shoot a native pigeon, presumably from a keen desire for fresh poultry after the long sea voyage. In the 30 years that followed he displayed such energy and drive that he achieved a prime position in the community. In the “Daily Advertiser” of 17 January 1871 he was featured as being the proprietor of a land agency office and was also a merchant, auctioneer, general commission land and estate agent, stock and sharebroker, assessor, valuator and arbitrator. In the intervening years he had done much to earn his position as a leading citizen, a pioneer and a merchant. He erected the first Wellington wharf, at Thorndon off Bowen St, using a hogshead filled with stones to make the outer pier. He held office on the Town Board during the seven years of its existence, on the City Council and on the Provincial Council. He collaborated with one history of New Zealand and wrote another of his own. No less than three early Wellington streets are called after him – John, Howard and Wallace Streets.



The row of four Wallace monuments

Photos: David Dunsheath

In November 1848 John Howard Wallace married Sarah Ann(e) Denham, a widow, at St Peter’s church, Te Aro, this being one of the first weddings to take place at that church which had been opened in September 1848.

All seemed to be going well for the young family. He was a highly respected citizen, a successful business man and a great contributor towards the development of the new settlement. They produced a large family of ten children – six boys and four girls.

At some point he returned to England to bring out his parents, John and Elizabeth Wallace. John Wallace Senior, who died in Wellington in 1880 aged 92, was an



artist of some standing, known in England for his water colours. Both he and his wife Elizabeth, who died much earlier in 1855, are buried in the Wallace family plot in the cemetery [grid reference L14 19]. John Howard's younger brother, James Bruce Wallace, also came out to the colony. He was drowned in Wellington harbour on 23 July 1888 aged 70 and is also buried in the plot.

In 1865 tragedy struck. An epidemic of scarlet fever took six of the children in very short order – five in the space of nineteen days and the sixth some two and a half months later. Another of the children had died earlier in 1854 which left only three survivors in the family. One of these was born on 18 May during the height of the epidemic

and was named John Howard junior after his eldest brother who died the following day. With her mother being incapacitated, thirteen-year old Harriett, who was the only girl left in the family and also the eldest survivor, nursed her younger dying siblings.

John Howard Wallace lived long enough to see the Jubilee of the colonisation of Wellington. In the procession of 22 January 1890 he occupied a place in the first carriage of old identities.

He died the following year and his wife, Sarah Ann(e), died in 1898. They were the last to be buried in the Bolton St plot which thus has three generations and twelve family members in all. It has an unusual set of memorials, consisting of two iron plaques with inscriptions flanking a large marble tombstone on which is carved Longfellow's poem "*The Reaper*". The poem



was repainted recently and is a good example of Victorian sentimentality.



So what happened to the little girl who had to look after her brothers and sisters and see six of them die in such a short time? Seven years later, she married John Harcourt in St Paul's church on 3 September 1872 and thus founded one of Wellington's early families whose name is still well-known today in the city, both for real estate and for theatre and the arts. Priscilla Williams

BOTANIC GARDENS MANAGER'S REPORT TO THE AGM ON 21 JUNE 2011

At the beginning of last year's AGM I spoke of the impending return of the wooden crosses and headboards from Manawatu Museum Services. Shortly afterwards they were reinstated in the park. These are marvellous, if somewhat expensive, examples of the restorers 'art' which Detlef Klein spoke of last year. Our discussions continue to underline the difficulty in protecting as many memorials and graves as quickly as possible within the resources we collectively have available, yet reconcile this with defined yet interpretable principles of heritage restoration.

We should consider ourselves very lucky that as yet, and hopefully for the future that we remain spared of the widespread damage as suffered by the Christchurch heritage cemeteries in the earthquakes. To all intents and purposes these will be irreparable in the face of compelling priorities of a significant part of the population to simply live in stable warm dry serviced houses. The residents of Wellington are very fortunate to have the records gathered, held and maintained by the Friends in the event of a similar catastrophe in Wellington.

After a huge amount of work by the BG staff the Tree Plan is now available for comment. This covers approximately 1800 trees throughout Bolton Street and the Botanic Garden and assesses the condition of the tree, what actions need to be taken and what it will be replaced with – if it is to be replaced, should it need to be removed. The Management Guidelines for Bolton Street helped inform the decisions for the Park. The plan will be put out for consultation and we look forward to hearing back comments from the Friends



*New path from Goat Track to
Trustees Loop*

The Combined Management Plan 2002 is scheduled for review in 2012. While it is unlikely that there will be a full review there is an opportunity to update the plan. In establishing the Memorandum of Understanding between the Friends and Council it is clear that there are some anomalies which need to be addressed. The nature of the 'wild area' of the park is changing so between us we should be looking ahead to understand what the future priorities are and the resources that will be required to support those priorities.

In the coming year our main operational priority is to be the delivery of our core services – ensuring that high quality visitor experiences are retained so that at the very least we can hold our levels of service throughout the gardens cluster. We will also be working with the Friends and Trust groups to look at ways of promoting their activities and assist with recruitment into the groups. The Spring Festival will be prominent in the city again this year as we link the Botanic

Garden and Bolton Street with the City and particularly with Lambton Quay and the Cable Car as part of the Rugby World Cup celebrations

Our capital programme for the 11/12 year includes further restorations identified along with the Friends, establishing whether or not we can connect the Goat Path with Trustees Crescent and, if possible, to do so.

Across the other gardens The Treehouse will be the prime focus of attention in the Botanic Garden both for refurbishment and new interpretation, the Otari Curator's house will begin the process of being included in the garden with a flat being retained at the rear of the house and the front developed for public use.



New path from Trustees Loop to Powles Path

Again I take great pleasure on behalf of the Council and the Botanic Gardens staff in extending my thanks to the Friends for your continuing work programmes in the Park, your volunteer management and the vigour with which you advocate for the Park.

We look forward to sharing the next year with you.

David Sole, Manager, Botanic Gardens of Wellington

Continued from back cover

On November 2 we guided a group of pupils from Lake Rotoiti School near Nelson. They were very interested in the various materials that the grave markers were made from and noted the number of young people and children buried in the Park. Also in November members of the Otari Probus Club toured the cemetery and as part of WCC Outdoor Festival there was "a walk with History".

Another event on our regular calendar was a tour during Rose Week in the Botanic Gardens titled "Roses and Tombstones". This tour featured both the graves and the extensive Heritage Rose collection in the cemetery and explored the relationship between the two.

Many thanks to the guides who continue to give their time to the tour programme. The donations from these tours go towards our maintenance work and we welcome any enquiries from groups who would like to have a tour.

Judy Bale, Tours Organiser

TOMBSTONES, ROSES AND OTHER TOURS

From September to December this year we have been busy with a variety of tours. The first two were in conjunction with the WCC Spring Festival and both titled



“Tiptoe Through the Tombstones”. These tours are run regularly each year but they are weather-dependent so the variable Spring climate meant that the turnout for one of these was disappointingly low.

In October the cemetery was included on two historical tours about Wellington’s Anglican heritage organised by the Wellington branch of the Historic Places Trust. Each tour attracted a full bus load of members and was divided into three groups with a guide each. They

Rotoiti School tour

Photo: Judv Bale

covered Anglican areas in the lower cemetery including the Chapel, the Wakefield graves, the Selwyn Oak, the sexton’s cottage and the Gillespie grave. Only 30 minutes was allotted for each tour so the guides were kept very busy juggling groups and locations. For the first time, entry to the historic sexton’s cottage, one of the oldest residential buildings in Wellington (1857), was included on the tours. This cottage is not normally open to the public.



Otari Probus Club tour led by Kate Fortune (3rd from left)

Photo: Margaret Farrell

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