



FRIENDS of BOLTON STREET CEMETERY INCORPORATED

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

NEWSLETTER No 90 NOVEMBER 2020

Editor: Kate Fortune

SPRING ACTIVITY & REPAIRS IN THE CEMETERY

Priscilla Williams' detailed report on conservation and repairs (2019-20) appears in this issue; her article (pp.9-12) provides numerous examples of graves and memorials worth visiting when you are next in the Cemetery. *Below left: Tinney grave K16 05.*



And we introduce **Anne Phillips**, the latest recruit to the Friends' committee (*see p.4*), shown below at our November Working Bee.



*Far right: The upper photo shows the Kent grave E16 01 with its **Rosa x francofurtana** in full bloom. Heritage roses and daffodils are featured on p.8. Photos: Kate Fortune*

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ALBAN VINCENT KNAPP: A MAN WITH TWO GRAVES

Alban Vincent Knapp, a farrier and general blacksmith who lived in Arthur Street, was born about 1837 and died in Wellington on 14 October 1891 aged 53 years. He was an ardent member of the Ancient Order of Foresters and Shepherds, becoming 'Chief Ranger'. He was buried in plot 117.E of the Public (Sydney Street) Cemetery on 16 October. But on 10 July 1931 he was registered as being buried at Karori Cemetery in Section Public 2, plot 725W.

Indeed he was, because the 1928 map of the Public Cemetery shows that he was disinterred, and it is recorded that he was removed to Karori. But his original grave still exists and is shown on the modern map at grid reference L05 01.

I had previously assumed his removal to Karori had been in 1945, when a slip onto Bowen Street took out a whole row of graves between plots 76.E to 108.E, but the information on the date of his interment at Karori proves otherwise.

Alban Vincent Knapp's original grave is the last one in south-west trending row above Bowen Street of Compartment (or Block) E, ending at the boundary with the Jewish Cemetery. Its location is marked by low concrete walls that are still present. Another visible grave nearby has concrete walls and intact iron railings, and this one was the Jamieson family grave (M06 01), and between these two there is a patch of grass where the grave of J C Ward used to be. All three of these graves are empty, but only the Ward and Jamieson grave occupants were removed because of the 1945 slip, which had left them teetering on the edge of a yawning chasm. It was assumed that they were about to join the other fifteen or so graves in falling onto Bowen Street, but in fact they never did fall, and are still visible.



Left: The original grave for Alban Vincent Knapp is the walled plot on the left, with the empty plot for J C Ward next to it, and then the wrought-iron railings around the empty Jamieson grave.

The slip in 1945 started behind the Jamieson grave and swept away the path that had been below these graves.

The fifteen graves, some with multiple occupants, that collapsed onto Bowen Street were moved to their present location alongside the main path, Robertson Way, next to the former location of the Public Cemetery sexton's cottage. Twelve of these are visible graves and five are unmarked. Jamieson is now at grid J07 02 and J C Ward's headstone marks his new grave at grid J08 02.

So *why* was Alban Vincent Knapp moved to Karori in 1931, fourteen years *before* the slips occurred? The answer is connected to the formation of Bowen Street, which required cutting along and within the boundary of the Public Cemetery. Before the early 1930s Bowen St ended a short distance west from its intersection with The Terrace, and it was decided to extend it to Tinakori Road to improve access to Karori. The first proposal was going to require excavation into the Public Cemetery, and in 1928 a map was made to show the graves that would be affected. This map is the earliest we have of the Public Cemetery, and has proven invaluable since any earlier maps can no longer be found.

The 1928 map has a line drawn on it showing the extent of the proposed excavation, and the realisation that about half of the graves in the Public Cemetery would have to be removed alarmed the Council to the extent that they hastily modified their proposal, and came up with an alignment for Bowen St that would require the removal of only about three graves.

Construction began in the late 1920s using large, steam-powered excavating machines, and Bowen Street went through, cutting the cemetery off from Sydney Street, and rendering the name 'Sydney Street Cemetery' meaningless.



This substantial construction work had left a steep cut slope below the edge of the cemetery, and about ten years after the excavation, a period of heavy rain caused a major collapse of the face, destroying a line of graves along the top edge.

Maria Ann Knapp, widow of Alban Vincent Knapp died on 17 March 1931 at the age of 95, leaving behind a family that included a son also named Alban Vincent. No doubt the family would have originally intended to bury her with her husband in the family grave, but the earlier threat that this grave was amongst those that would have to be demolished for Bowen Street, and the fact that large-scale excavation had already begun below his grave no doubt induced them to reconsider. The decision was made to have Maria Ann buried at Karori Cemetery, and to have Alban Vincent removed to join her in the same grave. Alban Vincent's headstone was also removed, and an inscription for his widow was added to it.

In loving memory of
ALBAN VINCENT KNAPP who died Oct. 14, 1891, aged 53 years.
MARIA ANN, relict of the above, who died March 17, 1931, aged 95 years.
Thy Will O Lord Be Done

Story: Nick Perrin
Photos: Kate Fortune (p.2) and
Barbara Mulligan (p.3)

FRIENDS OF BOLTON STREET CEMETERY AGM NEWS

New Committee Member:

A new member who lives in Thorndon, **Dr Anne Phillips**, was elected to our committee at the AGM in July. Anne has a background in law and art history. She says that the Bolton Street Cemetery, as recorded by artists and photographers, reinforces her commitment to the history of Wellington. Her iwi affiliations are Ngaruahine (Taranaki) and Ngapuhi (North Auckland). Jenny Button has invited her to take on a role in expanding our community relationships, and Anne has agreed to assist us with liaison on bicultural matters in particular. We are delighted that she has become another regular volunteer at our Working Bees (*see photo on p.1*), and her enthusiasm will add value to many of our activities.

AGM entertainment: 'Two Taphophiles on Tour'

Following the business of the AGM, **Barbara Mulligan** and **Priscilla Williams** recounted highlights of their recent heritage cemeteries tour up the west coast of the North Island. An excellent selection of images accompanied their description of formal and informal approaches to cemetery management – all of it relevant to FoBSC.

UPDATE ON OUR BOLTON ST CEMETERY MUSEUM

As advised (Newsletter #88), we are planning improvements to the interior of the replica mortuary chapel on Bolton St now renamed *Bolton Street Cemetery Museum*.



In late October, we engaged the services of Lara Simmons (LRS Consulting) for the project to revamp the Museum's interpretive exhibition. Lara will begin by refining the design brief, and she has agreed to prepare detailed, costed estimates so that we can proceed in careful stages in line with what we want to achieve and what we can afford, through extra fundraising.

Lara Simmons is an independent heritage professional and interpretation specialist based in the Wellington region. Prior to starting her own company, Lara was a Senior Heritage Advisor for Wellington City Council, drafting an Interpretation Strategy for the council that sets out a set of values and principles to guide storytelling in the city. Her values-based approach champions Te Ao Māori perspectives and encourages storytelling through design.

Lara has contributed to interpretation and exhibition development for Auckland Museum, the Sisters of Compassion (Island Bay), and the Cape Leeuwin Lighthouse Visitor Centre (West Australia). Before she graduated with a Masters of Museum and Heritage Practices from Victoria University in 2018, Lara had a career in structural engineering spanning nearly two decades and including work on such significant landmarks as the Town Hall (Wellington), Arts Centre (Christchurch), Starbucks Roastery (Seattle) and Pike Place Market buildings (Seattle).

Story & photo: Kate Fortune

REPORT FROM THE WELLINGTON GARDEN MANAGER

David Sole's report to the Friends' AGM on 9 July 2020 noted that for many, Bolton Street Cemetery, Botanic Garden and Otari had become places of respite, exercise and contemplation during the Covid 19 Lockdowns. He also mentioned that the revision of the WCC Cemeteries Management Plan was under way.



Some of the key points of the year were:

- Successful completion of the repairs programme, with all credit to the Friends and Karl Noldan plus a great team of contractors.
- Very disappointing removal of a *Chamaecyparis* tree that had framed the Robertson Path and the view so well for many years until it suffered from attacks by kaka. The native pink pine *Libocedrus bidwillii* was being trialled as a replacement, since native trees seemed to show some resistance to kaka.
- Concern about the disturbing and possibly irrecoverable damage done to several granite headstones in both Bolton St & Karori cemeteries by the well-intentioned but ill-advised and ill-equipped New Zealand Remembrance Army.
- An update on the Cemetery data capture project being conducted by contractor Lisa Carruthers. She was on track to complete the project in about six weeks.
- Recruitment was under way for two Curator roles, after Stuart Allen's departure overseas and James Jones's transfer to the infrastructure assets team.
- Warm gratitude for the Friends' never-ending support for the Cemetery and for the Gardens Team.

[Summary & photo: Kate Fortune]

COMMITTEE CONTACTS 2020 – 21

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WORKING BEES IN THE SPRING

We have held two very successful working bees since the disruption caused by Covid-19. The period in lockdown followed by stormy weather during Winter meant that there was a lot of tidying up to be done throughout the cemetery, especially necessary as tours for the Spring Festival and for Heritage Week were due in October. We therefore called the first working bee, on 13 September, a 'Spring Cleaning' session. With a very good turnout of volunteers we were able to range across the whole cemetery picking up rubbish and tidying and weeding graves.

The next session was on 1 November and again we had a good turnout, plus beautiful weather with plenty of warm sunshine and very little wind. It seemed summer had arrived, even if only for a day! We concentrated on the area around Strang, Lyon and Hart paths, sweeping and weeding graves. The most exciting aspect of this was uncovering a grave on Hart Path that had long been obscured by dirt and vegetation. There was no obvious indication of a grave beside the path, but the cemetery map shows one there (H10 02) and the burial list identifies Elsie Ellen ANDREWS who died in March 1890. The *Papers Past* website has the death notice, reporting that Elsie Ellen was the 12-month-old daughter of David and Fanny Andrews. It seems likely that the grave was quite small. During the working bee we removed foliage and dirt and uncovered two wooden posts, a section of chain and some concrete edging. It would seem that the grave probably had four timber corner posts with linking chains but there was no indication of a memorial with an inscription.



Before and after photographs of the Andrews grave: both are taken from the Hart Path, showing (above) the thick vegetation that covered all signs of the concrete edging (front right) and the two wooden corner posts we found lying flat at the bottom edge.

We also did some work in the lower cemetery, coincidentally on another grave commemorating a child called Elsie. This is a tiny grave for 9-month-old Lily Elsie Mary OLIVER, but this time there is a memorial with a simple inscription:

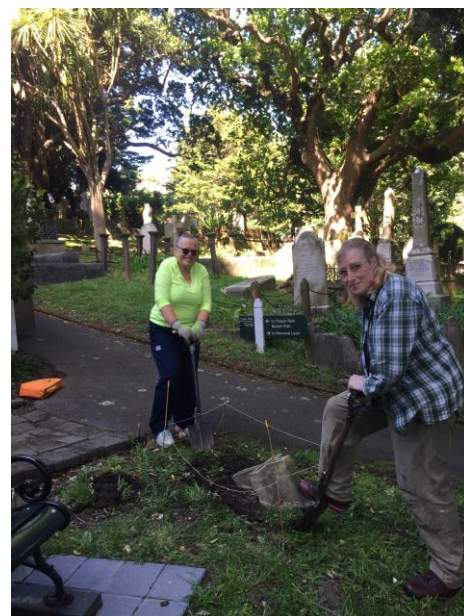
OLIVER, Our Elsie, died 13 April 1891

Surrounded by grass, it was the grave surrounds that were missing. Our task – just as with the Monk grave described in Newsletter #88 – was to remove the grass and create an edged border with bricks.

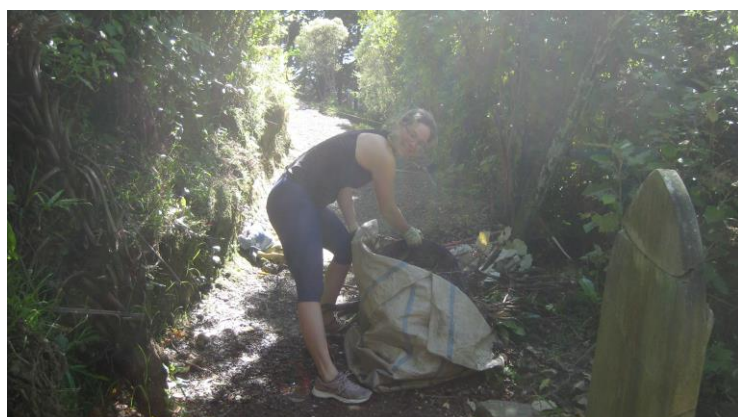
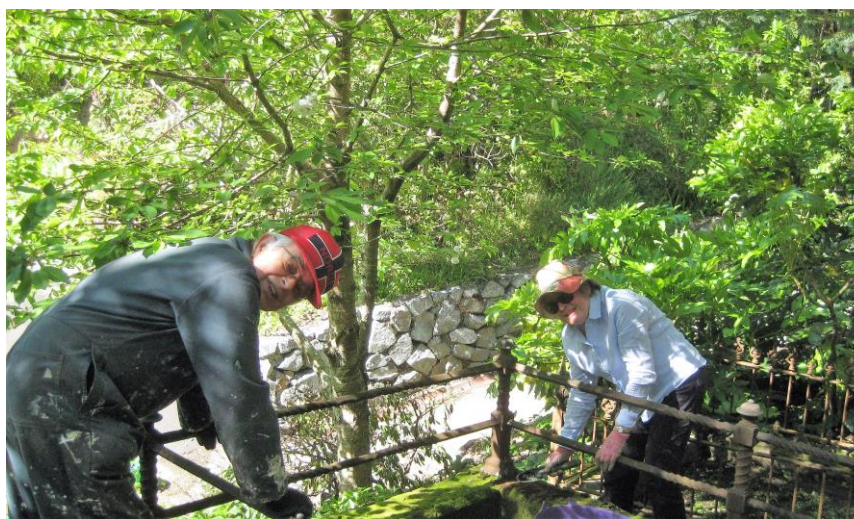
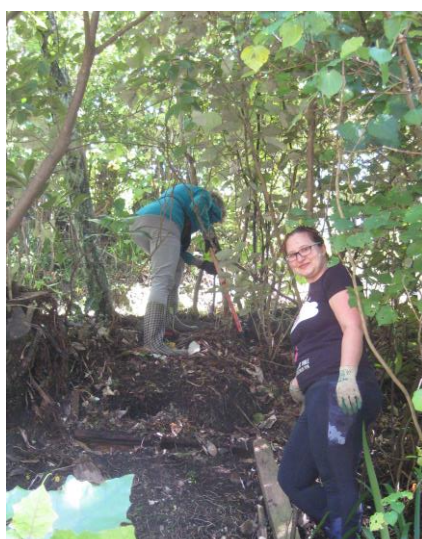
The last working bee for 2020 is scheduled for 29 November. Let's hope for another beautiful day, lots of helpers and some more exciting developments.

Jennifer Robinson

Photos: Jennifer Robinson & Kate Fortune



*Above: The Oliver grave: before and after with its new brick edging; and the digging that achieved this result.
Below: More scenes from the two Working Bees*



PLANTING IN THE BOLTON ST CEMETERY

Friends will have noted the outstanding display of **Spring daffodils** in the cemetery this year. Their strong colours and long flowering period are one of first indicators that the new gardening year is with us. Previous years' plantings have thickened up to create colourful bunches, in particular within the profile of the Sexton's Cottage and under surrounding trees: very welcoming to visitors walking up from the city this year.



The first daffs to flower each year are on the main path beside the Allen grave (L09-07). Alas, this year they proved irresistible to someone and simply disappeared overnight, much to my disappointment. Look out for them next year.

This year's new planting on the bank at the top of the motorway bridge flowered strongly. It will take them a little while to establish themselves but they will be thicker next year and in following years they will be spectacular. Their position in light shade means they will provide an ongoing September welcome to the upper cemetery. All daffs planted in light shade can be expected to clump up if their foliage is left to mature and not mown as soon as they start to look a little straggly. Best left till after Christmas.

Above: The new daffodil planting at the top of the Denis McGrath overbridge

Look out for our roses, particularly our **Heritage rose collection** in November. For walkers and city workers using the main pathway through the cemetery the following notable roses can be spotted along the main Robertson Path in the upper cemetery:

1. **'Fantin-Latour'**: Named after the impressionist painter, this is an early planting in the cemetery. Its subtle pink flowers can be seen in the **Twentyman** grave (G03 03) in front of the Harry Holland memorial. At its best it is spectacular, and I am hoping that the removal of some trees in the surrounding area will provide this rose with the half-day of full sun that brings out the best in all roses.
2. ***Rosa banksiae alba***: In the **Robertson** grave (L10 06), this is our earliest rose – planted in 1906. Really spectacular in November, it flowers only once a year, but what a flowering! Look for it a short distance along the Banksia Rose Path.
3. **'Sarah Van Fleet'**: A lovely heritage rose and one that particularly responds to growing new foliage if its lower branches are 'scraped' with a wire brush at the time of pruning. Many heritage roses respond to this treatment but 'Sarah' does this particularly well. See it on the left at the start of the Banksia Rose Path.
4. **'Archiduc Joseph'**: Some of these wonderful roses have been transplanted by Council staff recently. Those planted on the eastern-facing slope of the cemetery flower spectacularly for up to *nine* months! A fine example of their unique colour can be seen from the main path behind the **Barraclough** grave (J07 09).

While enjoying the heritage roses in the cemetery, please note that in 1900, the records showed more than 360 Heritage roses in what was then promoted as the Bolton Street Cemetery International Heritage Rose Collection with its own Curator. There are now less than 65 roses: a testimony to the destructive power of the modern weed-eater?

Karl Bale

CONSERVATION AND REPAIRS

A really impressive amount of work was completed in the financial year July 2019 to June 2020. Although the Covid-19 Lockdown dominated the final quarter, most repair work had been completed before the pandemic arrived in New Zealand.

Two large marble headstones near the Easdale St entrance were restored by Kim Stops of Headstone World in Hastings. (Kim, the primary restorer of our heritage memorials for more than a decade, has now retired.) **BOOTH** B12-21 had been broken in half so was pinned together, then it and the neighbouring **MEREDITH** B12-20 were given new cast concrete bases (*shown below left*) and turned to face the path to be more easily



read. The Meredith family tombstone is of Anzac interest, commemorating Andrew LAVIN, Gunner 32nd Reinforcements NZ Field Artillery, killed in action on the Somme in March 1918 just 9 days after joining the battle and 4 days short of his 21st birthday. (See Newsletter #84, Nov 2017.) This is his maternal grandparents' tombstone; his grandmother is buried here with both her husbands, and both sides of the family are mentioned.

Simon Lewis, 'The Tombstone Doctor' of Havelock North, has now taken over most of the restoration projects. Working down from the Seddon entrance he completed more cast-iron fence repairs including two prominent ones at each side of the main path – **KEY** G03 02 and **TWENTYMAN** G03 03, and also Isaac **PHILLIPS** K05 01 in the nearby Jewish section. Below the Lookout, a set of wrought-iron railings in poor condition, **SINCLAIR** was gradually restored to full stability. *The Sinclair grave L06 01 is shown above.*



There were inevitably a few breakages during the year. A distinctive headstone **BRITTAIN** J08-15 had fallen off its base and needed to be more securely fastened by dowels. This unusual memorial is a large piece of marble with a scroll commemorating the four young sons of Henry and Emily Brittain, three of whom died in their infancy. The small marble headstone of Lizzie **CREIGHTON** N10 08 on Woodward Path was broken into three pieces so was refastened and the old lead lettering was rebaten. Lead lettering work was also done on the Foster **GORING** grave K15 02 on the lower lawn.

An especially pleasing repair was on the significant **WALLACE** graves L14-19 in the lower cemetery which commemorate the tragic death of six children. A sheet in one of the iron graves had been broken, so Simon made a replacement, 'rusted' it and repainted the inscription.

The really challenging work for us is to match the many odd pieces in the storage shed to their original memorials, using old photos when we have them. This is often by sheer luck, such as **MILNER** L09 06, right by the shed, where an urn being examined was seen to fit exactly to its broken top. A distinctive mace-like finial was sourced to the **QUANCE** grave K09 23. A rose granite urn, found in the Karori stream at Otari, had a distinctive engraved pattern so could be matched with confidence to the **BELL** tombstone G16 04 behind the museum. As part of the 'collar' was missing, Simon had to achieve a delicate reconstruction.

A descendant of David Robertson, the original public sexton, wanted to improve the condition of the **ROBERTSON** family grave L10 06 off Robertson Path (named after David). Simon was commissioned to stabilise two railings and repair two sides; it does not look perfect but now has a more cared-for appearance. At the same time we opened up the old path alongside it, naming it Banksia Rose Path after the rose (*Rosa banksiae alba*) planted in the Robertson grave in 1906 when David's widow Mary died. Also in this grave are their two sons, one of their daughters and a grandson. Until her death Mary lived in the old public sexton's cottage, which was then demolished. This small two-bedroomed cottage somehow managed to accommodate a family of nine children. We thank John Bedkoher from Auckland for his ongoing interest in this grave.

We have also been able to achieve more work on our fragile but significant wooden grave markers and railings. The existing railings for Adin **COCKROFT**'s grave B12 15 near Easdale St were given to Chris Logan of Outsiders Landscaping. He fashioned five new posts, repaired the top and bottom rails, re-attached the loose pickets and re-installed the structure around the wooden cross that had earlier been restored.

Possibly our most unusual timber railings are in the lower cemetery N15 09 at the corner of Robertson Way and Governors' Way. These picket tops are shaped as Scotch thistles and one remaining corner finial was also carved as a Scotch thistle. Our records were not clear on who was buried here, but it was, apparently, someone from Scotland. A careful search of all burials recorded for this area fortunately produced one clear contender – Stewart Alfred **LINDSAY**, a six-month-old child who died in 1890. His father was Alfred Lindsay, a bootmaker born in Edinburgh who migrated with his parents to NZ in 1867. Babies' graves are often unmarked so the unusual picket fence is more remarkable than the absence of a permanent grave marker. The child's parents later moved away from Wellington, but his grandparents (also buried in the cemetery) are in a separate grave (**LINDSAY** P11 09).

To create new finials we were delighted to have a *pro bono* offer from Dr Michael Harrison, who has taken up wood carving in his retirement. This highly skilled job is described below, and we are thrilled with the result. Simon has developed the use of Metalex to 'age' new woodwork in the cemetery (including two unknowns in the

Memorial Garden). Over time the new timber will fade and match the grey/green of old wood.

Thistle-shaped finials: Michael Harrison reveals trade secrets

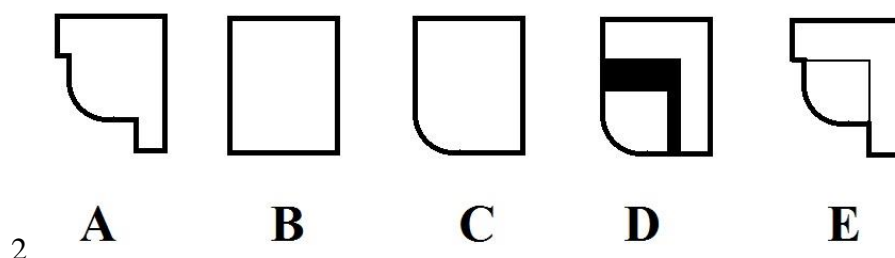
Having been invited to help restore the corner-post decorations on an old grave with a totara picket fence around it, I decided to make four new finials from the last remaining finial given to me as a pattern: a large thistle shape (200mm high, 160mm diameter, *see right*).



Sourcing some totara was achieved with sections of recycled totara pillars or roof beams. And the finials were not too difficult to turn after some experimentation. The dowelled end was 1" diameter – to match precisely the holes in the corner posts.

The next task, requiring a bit of thought, was the missing cap; they have a very shallow pyramidal shape with a flat top to fit the base of the finial. After I set my bench-saw to cut the sides at the correct angle, I did this with two cuts so that I wasn't doing the 70mm cut in one go. That worked well.

The final bit, four sections of beading to go around the post below the cap, required more thought. The profile of the beading, *see picture 2A*, was not the same as the few router bits I have so it was a matter of fabrication. The 30mm x 40mm x 200mm lengths of wood were first passed by the router to round one edge (2C). Cuts were then made in the wood to extract this curved section (2D) taking out as much wood as necessary so that the piece with the curved profile could be slid into the corner of the resulting L shaped timber (2E).



This was all glued together and the result was very satisfactory. The replacement of the finials has been completed and I was pleased, and surprised, how easily they fitted.

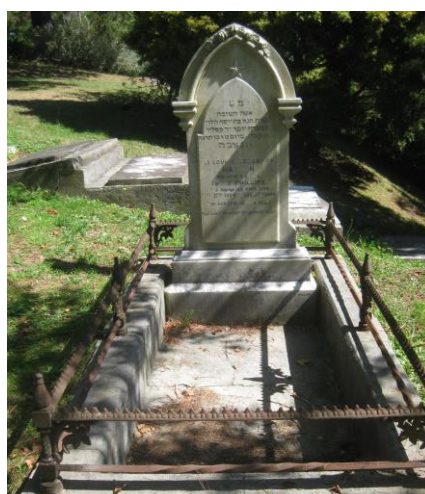
[Edited summary of an article Michael wrote for the Woodworkers Guild newsletter.]

There was a challenge of a totally different sort relating to a prominent and elegant wooden grave marker in the **TINNEY** family grave K16 05, prominently located on Governors' Way. Its painted inscription had been lost and sadly we had no record of it, so needed to work out who had been buried in this grave. We had three Tinneys listed – William (recorded as dying in 1845), Lucy and Percival. The family wanted to name the two original Tinneys on the grave marker – William who died in 1889 and his wife Lucy. After a great deal of research over several months we concluded that the earlier 1845 William was a mistake but that even with his removal there were nine family members in the grave. Early BDM and burial records had numerous mistakes, especially because transcribing by hand the unusual surname of Tinney clearly challenged the writers. We found family members under the names of Lenny, Jinney, Twiney and Tunney. We are grateful to the Tinney family descendants for their patience while we worked through this interesting exercise and for their willingness to accommodate all nine family names on the memorial. The end result (*shown on p.1*) was achieved by Simon who designed, carved and painted the lettering, using an appropriate Victorian style. Some conservationists dislike the practice of putting new

lettering on old markers but it is worth noting that all tombstones, under current New Zealand legislation, belong to the families and if they wish to have names restored we are happy to accept that decision while ensuring that it is faithful both to the actual burials and to the style of the period.

WEBSTER L14 11 on Carr Path was a similar project, another very attractive wooden marker, but with the important difference that its inscription was still faintly visible. We did not want to lose this bit of heritage, so Simon carved and repainted it, immaculately following the design and various fonts used. Our photographs show the before and after but it is well worth studying the marker when you are next in the cemetery – and taking a look at the other repairs done through this very busy year.

Story: Priscilla Williams, photos: Kate Fortune



*Top row: Lindsay grave with new finials;
Phillips grave with ironwork repaired;
Bell urn re-attached to top of memorial.
Middle: 'Before' photos of Cockcroft and
Webster.
Bottom: Cockcroft and Webster
completed; and the new panel attached
to one of the Wallace memorials.*

