



**Friends of Bolton Street**  
**Memorial Park**  
**FRIENDS of**  
**BOLTON STREET**  
**MEMORIAL PARK INCORPORATED**  
**PO BOX 2336 WELLINGTON**

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**NEWSLETTER No 43**

**MAY 1997**

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**NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**8pm Monday 26 May 1997**  
**at St Andrews on The Terrace**  
**(in lounge, entry right-hand side of church)**

**AGENDA**

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of 1996 Annual General Meeting (copies available at the meeting)
3. Matters arising from the minutes
4. Chairperson's report
5. Treasurer's report and financial statement
6. WCC Parks & Recreation Report
7. Election of committee
8. Election of auditor
9. General Business
10. Address by guest speaker

**Guest Speaker - ISOBEL GABITES - wayfinding and interpretation consultant.**

"Presenting the park to the public" - proposals for interpretation of the memorial park, including signage, pamphlets, maps and displays.

Isobel was contracted by the City Council to produce a report for a proposed major overhaul of interpretive material for the Memorial Park, and has established a sound overall philosophy which will be of major benefit to users. Her findings will be presented for discussion.

Plans for the proposed redevelopment of the upper (Kinross St/Anderson Park) entrance, which is complementary to Isobel's work, will also be available for viewing. This redevelopment is connected to the proposals to redevelop the area from the entrance to Anderson park and the Lady Norwood Rose Garden, to the Kinross St exit.

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### THE PARNELL STONE

When Samuel Duncan Parnell, carpenter, said to be the originator of the eight hour working day, died on 17 December 1890, a body of working men decided to form an association called the Parnell Memorial Committee. The objective of the committee: To perpetuate the memory of Samuel Duncan Parnell, the eight hour working day pioneer.

In 1892, the committee commissioned a local architect, William Crichton, to design a drinking fountain to be erected in front of the new public library on the corner of Wakefield and Mercer Streets. The base of the fountain was to be of Timaru blue stone while the upper portion was to consist of a white Italian marble slab bearing a suitable inscription and surrounded by ornamental pillars. The design was said to be in harmony with the architecture of the building and to reflect every credit upon Mr Crichton. The plans were laid before the city council by Messrs W H Potter, W McGill and W Crichton in 1892, although the library was not erected until 1893.

In 1908 the fountain was repaired by the City Council for £15 -6-0 (\$30.60) and at the date of the demolition of the library in 1942 the fountain was not in working order and the memorial was reported to be dilapidated. The marble slab with the bronze plaque of Parnell was transferred to Trades Hall.

In 1993 the marble slab was transferred to the Bolton Street Memorial Chapel.

Parnell met with some opposition to his eight hour working day when the normal working hours were 12 to 14 hours per day. Mr St Hill RM met Parnell and told him he had heard of his eight hour day introduction, and told him that Captain Daniell was due to arrive on the Adelaide, and he would be a large employer of labour and he would soon put a stop to this racket. The captain's reactions have not been recorded.

James Petherick, who arrived on the Aurora, while employed by the New Zealand Company at Petone began to agitate for shorter hours. He was working from sunrise to sunset. He records that he became unpopular with his foreman and was soon dismissed.

It is difficult to ascertain the standard wage rate but it would appear that 3/- (30 cents) was the eight hour rate and 5/- (50 cents) was the 12 to 14 hour rate, as the eight hour day was not universally accepted. At the last Labour Day (1996) as far as the writer could ascertain, no mention was made of Parnell, or of the eight hour day.

When Parnell died on 17 December 1890, he left an estate with a gross value of £956-3-1, (\$1,912.31). He bequeathed his residence in Cambridge Terrace (Volume 12 Folio 267) to Margaret Beck (she may have been his housekeeper and was his next door neighbour), wife of William Beck, tailor, of Wellington, for her sole and separate use. To Ovid Norgrove of Wellington, carpenter's apprentice, he bequeathed his tools, carpenter's implements and any wood in his carpenter's shop valued at £10 (\$20). He left numerous small bequests with residuary beneficiaries equally:

James Bronger of Makara, farmer

Isabella Kane of Napier, widow

Mrs Rankin of Sloan St, Chelsea, London, widow of his late nephew Samuel.

Parnell was buried in the Public (Sydney St) Cemetery, now part of Bolton Street Memorial Park. There was no religious service, but a socialistic ceremony was performed at the grave side by Mr John Chantrey Harris. His plot number is 118.G (Grid N08 06 on the modern map).

In 1848 Parnell bought 35 acres of Section 36, Karori Road and kept a diary of farm activities. In view of the fact that we are constantly being reminded of the "Big One", his description of the 1848 earthquake may be of interest:-

"Monday 16 October (1848) a severe earthquake at twenty minutes to two a.m. lasted several minutes. Did a deal of damage and other parts. Several slight shocks during the day.

"Tuesday 17th. During the day one severe shock this afternoon at twenty five minutes to four. Destroyed all brick buildings in Wellington. Continued more or less all night and-

"Wednesday 18th. Several smart shocks.

"Thursday 19th between 4-5 in the morning the most severe shock I have felt, the earth vibrating all day with rumbling noises incessantly.

"Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday -shocks at intervals.

"Tuesday 24th a severe shock about 2 in the afternoon. At night we had them very quick indeed."

The National Earthquake Information Centre rates the intensity of the strongest shock at 7.1 Richter magnitude scale. Parnell makes no reference in his 1855 diary to the 1855 earthquake.

A complete biography of Samuel Duncan Parnell is in the National Biography c New Zealand.

-A.W. McCormick

Acknowledgments:

Helen McDonnell of the Wellington Public Library

Evening Post 6 July 1892

Stockade 12 No 17 1984

National Earthquake Information Centre



## THE BOLTON STREET MAP BOOK

The "Map Book" is an historical document kept in the fire-proof vault at the Karori sexton's office. A poor photocopy is in the Turnbull Library, and I have been provided with a new photocopy for checking purposes. It was compiled about 1939-1940 from the existing records with checking and photography of the graves and headstones as they then were. It is, unfortunately, very incomplete, but still remains the most recent attempt at a full compilation of the three cemeteries comprised in the Bolton Street Memorial Park before the modern map (B217) and its index, and our present work.

There are maps of each cemetery block with a list of the names and dates of the occupants of the plots in each block. In some cases these are followed by photographs and more comprehensive details, including notes on the removal of fences, laying flat of headstones and (rarely) total elimination of all traces of an unidentifiable grave. The "Map Book" draws heavily on the 1928 Map of the Public Cemetery, and the undated but known to be pre 1889 map of the Church of England Cemetery, and repeats many of the errors in these documents, but also corrects some as a result of field checking.

The "Map Book" records that, on 25 July 1939 'clean-up' work started, and continued until 22 September 1939, during which 39 graves were either removed completely, or had their fences removed and headstones re-erected or laid flat. These were all on the main path. Between December 1939 and July 1941 another 16 graves were worked on, making a total of 55 graves having been removed completely or having fences removed. It appears that most of this work was undertaken in an effort to improve the appearance of the cemeteries for the 1940 New Zealand Centennial celebrations.

Coverage in the "Map Book" is quite comprehensive in areas close to the main path, which were the areas most affected by the "clean-up" operations. It includes photographs of the graves that were removed completely, or had their fences removed and headstones re-erected or laid flat. For instance, there are photographs of the grave of Ellen Taylor (plot 9, block 33), who died in 1851 (cousin of Mary Taylor and Waring Taylor), which had a wooden picket fence and a large tree growing in the middle of the plot. The fence and tree were removed in July-August 1939, and her headstone laid flat on a concrete bed, and it remains that way today. It can be found on Map B217 at K15 07.

Unfortunately, not all of the graves totally obliterated were unidentifiable. (Not that I am in favour of the removal of any traces of graves, anonymous or not). For instance, there used to be two visible graves on the left of the path immediately inside the Bolton St entrance next to the sexton's cottage (plots 2 and 3 of block 2). I have since found that one of these is the grave of William Edward King, dating from 28 February 1886. This area is now a patch of smooth grass, and no-one standing there would realise that there are in fact graves there. (The location of these graves is between D15 14 and D15 15 on Map B217).

Despite its shortcomings, the "Map Book" has proved to be a valuable source of information for the burial list project, providing confirmation of names, dates and locations on some cases, and corrections and filling in of gaps in other cases, and a gratifying number of previously unlocated burials can now be correlated with particular plots.

Nick Perrin

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### SHOTTER'S DISINTERMENT DIARY

Another very useful document which I have been using in the burial list project is entitled "Diary of Disinterments, Bolton Street Cemetery, 15 November 1968 to 24 October 1972", by P.J.E. Shotter, City Sexton. It records plot number (if known), and the numbers of remains and ashes from each plot, where they went (most to mass grave, a few to Karori and very few to Makara), and the number of "Unknown"s. Note that in very few cases were names recorded, but other data on jewellery and other objects were noted.

In order to check these data against the burial list database, I entered them into another database and sorted them into order of plot number. I then checked these against the burial list database to tally the numbers removed from particular graves compared with the burial list information about those graves, and tried to establish the exact excavation boundaries for the motorway. The new database also allows a more accurate count of the numbers involved than was possible previously.

It appears that the "official" tally of 3693 disinterments is an under-estimate, as the Shotter database reveals 3816 plus 85 ashes. 39% of all burials were moved to make way for the motorway, and of these, I claim I can account for 3120 and 83

ashes, leaving 696 and 2 ashes still unidentified. This has resulted in the approximate halving of the numbers of Shotter's "Unknown"s. It will be impossible to do much better than this, as nearly 36% of the recorded burials have no known plot.

We are now as close as we are ever likely to get to a complete list of names of those who were moved for the motorway. Before such a list could be compiled, it was necessary to compile and check a unified list from all the available records, establish the excavation boundary lines, and generate a list of all those recorded as having been buried between those lines. This has taken several years of work by many volunteers, and the full burial list will be a valuable resource for genealogists and historians for years to come.

Nick Perrin

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## **COMMITTEE FOR 1997-98**

We are seeking new people willing to serve on the committee, particularly for the positions of Treasurer and Secretary.