



FRIENDS OF MOUNT STREET CEMETERY -
ARCHDIOCESE OF WELLINGTON

June 2011

Issue 4

www.mountstreetcemetery.org.nz

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ISSN 2230-3286

Mount Street Cemetery Newsletter

Fundraiser

The Friends' logo, Sir Michael Fowler's ink and watercolour drawing of the Cemetery (above) is available as prints ready for framing, in A4 (\$10) and B5 (\$5) size.



We are grateful to all who have been able to help us at working bees, and for the support of our gardening work through specific volunteer groups working in the Cemetery. In 2010—and again in May (see photo right)—Bishop Viard College sent a large group of students to help weed and clean graves, and the British High Commission organised for a group of visiting British military to come to clean and weed around the graves of British regimental soldiers.

AGM an opportunity to review progress—President's Report

The second Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Friends of Mount Street Cemetery was held on 15 June, and provided an opportunity to review progress in the first year of operation.

Committee re-elected

The inaugural President and Committee were re-elected, with Karen Adair President, Ken Scadden Vice-President, Suzanne Sutton-Cummings (a descendant) Treasurer, and Committee members Michael Desmond (descendant), Vaughan Stagpoole (descendant), Priscilla Williams, Micaela Buckley, and Andrew Wilks and Kevin Brown *ex officio*, representing Victoria University and the Archdiocese, respectively.

The Archdiocese has continued to give us a lot of support as has Victoria University of Wellington. We have received valuable help and advice from the Wellington City Council, the Historic Places Trust, diplomatic missions, the Society of Mary, the Sisters of Mercy, descendants, and others interested in contributing to this important heritage project for Wellington.

Grant funding

The Friends first received a grant for \$6,000 from the Lion Foundation for an initial set of headstone repairs. Wellington City Council gave us a grant of \$2,160 to undertake a gradiometer survey on the main path of the Cemetery to identify any graves there. We then received

\$10,000 from the Community Trust of Wellington for more headstone repairs. A further grant of \$5,000 from Wellington City Council will be used to repair timber grave surrounds, which have been assessed as having a high heritage value. Finally we received \$8,890 from the NZ Lottery Grants Board for a gradiometer survey of the entire Cemetery.

A combination of this very generous financial assistance combined with what we have all been able to do as volunteers has contributed to the much improved appearance of the Cemetery. Applying for funding through grants will continue to be a focus in the coming years.

Cemetery appearance now much improved

In March we hosted for the second time a group from the BNZ on their 'Closed for Good' community work day (above). Challenge 2000 has also provided a lot of practical assistance to us throughout the year with various difficult gardening and maintenance tasks.

The Friends are also very grateful for the assistance that the Bark team provides, through the University, in terms of general maintenance and advice.





Friends' President Karen Adair assists Dr Bader with the archaeological survey

Archaeological survey of Cemetery now complete

In December last year, Dr Hans-Dieter Bader completed an archaeological survey of the entire Cemetery.

The survey enables the matching up of burial records and old maps of the Cemetery with the physical evidence of grave sites.

Using an instrument called a magnetic gradiometer (see photo), Dr Bader measured small underground magnetic

abnormalities that may be caused by human activity—such as metal objects (parts of coffins, iron fences etc.); graves, ditches etc. backfilled with topsoil; and building foundations, bricks, etc.

Findings

Dr Bader now estimates the total number of burials at around 950, a figure in broad agreement with the Friends' research of various records so far. Graves without "grave furniture" such as elaborate coffins are clearly visible to the gradiometer, and Dr Bader

queries whether there were specific areas for "paupers' graves".

Areas where infants and still-born babies are buried, of which there are likely to be quite a number, are sadly too small to be detected. A large burial building made of concrete and brick, demolished in the 1930s, was located at the southern end of the Cemetery.

The Friends are extremely grateful to the Lottery Grants Board for a grant to carry out the survey.



"Dr Bader estimates the total number of burials at around 950, a figure in broad agreement with the Friends' research of various records so far."

Summary of our knowledge so far:

The figure below is an aerial view of the Cemetery, showing in beige the existing memorials and grave markers, in bright pink the graves marked on O'Neill's 1878 map of the Cemetery, and in pale pink the additional burial locations, and other structures, identified in the archaeological survey. O'Neill was a surveyor, and the modern archaeological survey has shown his 1878 map to be very accurate. If you'd like further information about these findings, please contact Karen Adair.



President's Report from AGM [continued from page 1]

Aside from the weeding and gardening work, which is now visible when you visit the Cemetery, the Committee has put a lot of effort into consolidating burial records from multiple sources, undertaking research, and developing the web site.

Research & Records

With so much work to be done on the burial list and other research, a Research and Records sub-committee was convened in April 2010, with Ken Scadden the inaugural Convenor.

In 2011 it is convened by Micaela Buckley, and comprises some members of the full committee as well as Judy Hill and Hilda McDonnell.

The most pressing task is the burial list, and a preliminary

version was uploaded to the website in August 2010.

Burial list

Work on this is ongoing, to confirm further burials at Mount Street and exclude those at other early Catholic burial grounds in Wellington – although these records will also be made available in time. An inventory of extant memorials at Mount Street is ongoing—we are still discovering these with each working bee!

We also have 20th-century photographs and reports which assist in confirming burials and the right location for headstones found during the tidy-up of the Cemetery.

Mapping burial sites

The Cemetery maps have now been copied and

digitised (a key recommendation of the Conservation Plan), and uploaded to the website to assist descendants in locating burial sites. A composite map of the Cemetery will be prepared, and reconciled with the gradiometer surveys.

Military graves

There are also projects to research and identify all graves of military personnel, such as those of the 65th Regiment, and all marine/ mariner burials.

Descendants' info

A number of descendants have provided invaluable information and photographs of their ancestors, which with their permission will be published in time.

- Karen Adair, President



The priests' graves after a working bee in early 2010.

Below: The Cemetery c1930.
Alexander Turnbull Library,
ID: 1/2-060103-F



FRIENDS OF MOUNT STREET CEMETERY

The *Friends of Mount Street Cemetery* was established in 2010 to preserve, protect and enhance the heritage of the Mount Street Cemetery for the benefit of all. Consecrated in 1841 by Bishop Pompallier, the Mount Street Cemetery was the first Cemetery in Wellington for Catholic burials, and contains the graves of about 1000 Wellington pioneer settlers and tangata whenua.

You can become a member of the *Friends* now by payment of an annual subscription. Any additional donations are very welcome. As we are a registered charity, all donations of \$5 and over are tax-deductible. All funds received will be put towards the ongoing work of protecting, conserving and maintaining the Cemetery for the benefit of all.

By becoming a member:

- Your subscription/donation will help to preserve this important part of Wellington's heritage.
- You will be informed of the ongoing work through the *Friends'* newsletters.
- You can assist in the voluntary work, including research and working bees.
- You will learn more about this unique and precious area in the heart of Wellington.

Your financial support would be greatly appreciated for this important heritage project. Please direct any enquires you may have to: Karen Adair, President, Friends of Mount Street Cemetery,
Email: karen.adair@xtra.co.nz

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I would like to become a member/renew my membership of the *Friends of Mount Street Cemetery*.

Name:

Address:

Email:

Telephone:

Please indicate the type of membership for the year 1 April 2011 – 31 March 2012:

Individual	\$15
Family	\$20
Religious Order	\$40
Corporate	\$100
Donation	\$ _____ (Donations of \$5 and over are tax deductible)
TOTAL ENCLOSED	\$

Payment Options (Note: all payments will be receipted)

You may send a cheque made out to Friends of Mount Street Cemetery to:

Friends of Mount Street Cemetery
Archdiocese of Wellington
PO Box 1937
WELLINGTON 6140

You may pay directly to our bank account:

Friends of Mount Street Cemetery
03 1359 0335290-00 [Westpac]

(If you choose this option please indicate your name in the reference field and don't forget to email us with your address details so we can send you a receipt and keep you informed of progress with the project.)

If you have ancestors buried in the Cemetery please provide details if you have not already sent these to us

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