

The Historic Cemeteries Conservation Trust of New Zealand

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Education Project

Early in 2009 this project was brought to a successful conclusion. Ann Trewern finalized the modules for use by teachers and these were uploaded to our website. This resource was promoted to teachers and the general public and the response has been very encouraging. Ann is to be congratulated on her excellent work. And we are also indebted to Ian Stevens and Gillian McFarlane of Dunedin Teachers College for their guidance.

TVNZ's CloseUp team spent some two hours on March 5, 2009, filming in the Southern Cemetery with us and Bayfield High School students and their teacher Chris Homer. This resulted in a 4.5 minute slot in the nationwide programme on Wednesday March 18, which we have now placed up on our website for general viewing. We thank Bayfield High School's Chris Homer and his students for their great enthusiasm and support in developing this resource.

Invercargill

The tomb of John Turnbull Thomson, Surveyor, has been in need of repair for many years. This year we commissioned local monumental masons to inspect, specify the work needed, and tender a price to bring it up to standard. We were successful in securing funding for the work from David Hall-Jones of the well-known Invercargill family, who also owns Surveyor Thomson Wines, and we are pleased to say that the repair work has commenced.

Naseby

Funds were raised and 10 badly eroded base stones have been replaced with granite bases and the historic headstones re-erected.

Southland District Council

During the year SDC completed a condition survey of all their cemeteries and this will form the basis for a conservation work programme.

City of London to reclaim graves!

Daily Mail, Saturday, November 15, 2008

Opened graves will have four tiers of coffins

By **Steve Doughty**
Social Affairs Correspondent

OLD graves will be dug up to make room for more bodies from next year.

As many as four coffins will be piled into one grave to make the best use of space in cemeteries, during the pilot schemes.

Officials have been considering how to go ahead with trials of multi-occupation graves since new rules were proposed last year.

The schemes will represent the first time that human remains will have been disturbed to allow more burials since the middle of the 19th century.

Some families could live to see the tombs of deceased relatives to whom they were close being opened up.

The City of London is one of the authorities which wants to take part. It hopes to use graves for new burials in Manor Park cemetery, in East London.

Cemetery director Ian Hussein said: 'We are running out of room, it's as simple as that, unless they introduce legislation to allow re-use.'

'It is primarily about space but we also need to make sure that people have the option of an affordable

burial in close proximity to their residence.'

The technique ministers wish to use is called 'lift and deepen'. Coffins buried at the traditional depth of 6ft are removed and then reburied 10ft down. This allows three coffins to be placed on top.

The plans would give councils the right to open graves after 100 years if there are no family objections.

But the scheme did not include instructions on how much effort local authorities should make to

trace families. Where space problems are 'severe', tombs may be opened after 75 years. In such cases relatives who knew the deceased are likely to be alive.

The paper, published last year, said that public consultation 'would merely flush out opposition' and added that there is 'a substantial minority entirely averse to re-use, especially from the general public'.

The rules will apply to municipal cemeteries and those that were privately-owned when they were

planned during the boom in Victorian cemetery-building in the 1850s and 60s.

Then, a law was passed allowing municipal cemeteries to be built to take the burden off churchyards.

The latest proposals will not affect churchyards under the control of Church of England parishes.

The Ministry of Justice said: 'We are currently reviewing next steps and expect to announce our plans in the New Year.'

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Grave danger: Tombs in a cemetery in East London have been earmarked possibly to be re-used

Water erosion of marble plaques Bishops Tomb Southern Cemetery

Regular rain-water rivulets running off what is a large 'roofline' have caused deep erosion of the marble plaques on the sides of the Bishops' Tomb in Dunedin's Southern Cemetery, as can be seen from the vertical grooves in the photograph. Bad cleaning practices in the past have allowed horizontal wipe-lines to encourage lichen in the score marks. Proving that marble is a stone which needs careful placement and cleaning and can be subject to serious erosion if placed incorrectly.



Larnach's Tomb, Dunedin's Northern Cemetery



Much work has gone into investigation, inspection and preparation of accurate specification and costing of the work required for the conservation of the tomb, even helped out by Dunedin Fire Brigade's turntable ladder. The best estimate is some \$350,000. After our well-received presentation to the Council's Public Forum asking for support in funding the tomb restoration we were asked to apply to the DCC Heritage Fund and were very pleased to subsequently be granted \$40,000. The McKay Bequest administered by the Local Branch Committee of NZ Historic Places Trust has also promised \$5,000. With this great support we can now begin fundraising in earnest.

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