

# GRAVE CONCERNS

The Newsletter of  
The Friends of Linwood Cemetery  
*Bringing Linwood Cemetery Alive!*

Issue 1, January 2011



## Happy New Year from the Chair

First of all, I would like to welcome all the new Friends of Linwood Cemetery and thank all those who have helped over the last year or more. Welcome also to Helen, our newest Trustee.

A special thank you from me to our Secretary, Alexandra, who has taken on a lions's share of the work including producing this first edition of 'Grave Concerns' and keeping our web site up-to-date with information about what we are doing.

Things may not have happened as fast as we would like in the Cemetery but there is no doubt that things are improving and we have various projects planned for the coming year, as well as our usual activities.



I look forward to catching up with everyone over this next year and hope that it will not be just work but some socialising as well. Please watch our website for updates on forthcoming activities.

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**The Friends of Linwood Cemetery Charitable Trust**  
*Working towards the enhancement and preservation of the  
historic Linwood Cemetery through active community involvement.*

c/- 45 Rudds Road, Christchurch 8062, New Zealand ☎ +64 3 381 4171

[www.linwoodcemetery.org.nz](http://www.linwoodcemetery.org.nz) ✉ [info@linwoodcemetery.org.nz](mailto:info@linwoodcemetery.org.nz).

## Board of Trustees

The Friends of Linwood Cemetery is a Charitable Trust governed by a Board of Trustees. Four members of the current Board have been running the Trust since 1996 when the Friend's status changed from a working group which got together to tidy and garden the cemetery.

The Trustees are an unassuming bunch of voluntary grafters who have been consistently loyal to the improvement of the cemetery:

**Judy McCaw** relentlessly gardens the nearly 4-acre site, weeding, planting and tidying week in, week out.



**Anne Holloway**, formerly the Secretary, has taken on the role of Chair. Anne's pragmatic leadership skills have been appreciated most at times when it would be easy to buy into our passion for the cemetery and her delicious scones are becoming a regular reward following an event.

**Jenny Goldsworthy** has held the Treasurer's post for many years. What was originally a fairly simple task is growing and she's great at embracing new learning. Jenny keeps our feet on the ground and our money in the account!

**Craig Cormack** has been a loyal and valuable member too. His contributions are very wise. Often 'the women' can wander in their thinking and Craig just sums it up succinctly in a short phrase, making the rest of us wonder why we couldn't have thought like that in the first place! Craig also

made the wonderful collage which attracts so much attention as a poster and thought up our by-line *Bringing Linwood Cemetery Alive!*

**Alexandra Gilbert** is the Secretary and just pulls everything together and keeps it moving between meetings.

We were all sad that Linda Rutland, one of the pioneers of The Friends, had to leave the Board of Trustees in November, due to an overload of other commitments. To acknowledge her incredible contribution and loyalty to the Friends we have made her a Life-Time Honorary Friend. Just like the cemetery, we don't let anyone go easily!



Linda Rutland with Bob Todd,  
Chair Hagley / Ferrymead  
Community Board at the Open  
Gates Ceremony, Sept 2009

We also lost the valuable services of our Archivist Linda Rimmer a year ago, due to family commitments. She has left a huge gap which will take some time to be filled.

As our work grows and our focus changes, we are going to need more help at a decision making level. We are very lucky to have **Helen Munro** join us as a Trustee in November and Tony Krsinic and Ba'haa Elmohandes are awaiting formal approval to join the Board.

In anticipation of the growth of the Board of Trustees, and welcoming in new people, we are in the process of finalising a Trustees Handbook containing key policies and procedures to flesh out our Trust Document and lay down Job Descriptions.

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We would welcome to hearing from you if you are interested in supporting us at a decision-making level, or maybe you have an area of expertise that you could donate to us. We particularly need people to add data to our website and garden the cemetery.

## Friends Register

We have a growing number of people interested in Linwood Cemetery, either because they have ancestors buried there, see the area as valuable greenspace, or just have a general interest in Christchurch heritage. We have always welcomed this contact with open arms, but as funding gets more difficult to source, we have to develop our own income.

The general public have been very kind in giving us small donations, but we also want to receive and evaluate people's views of the cemetery's future so we can be better advocates for those buried there.

We now have a **Register of Friends**. We started out calling it membership, but were advised to change the name so it didn't give the impression that members can vote on Trust business.

The joining fee is deliberately low so access is available to as many people as possible. It will also give the opportunity for those who can afford it, to add a donation to help fund our work.

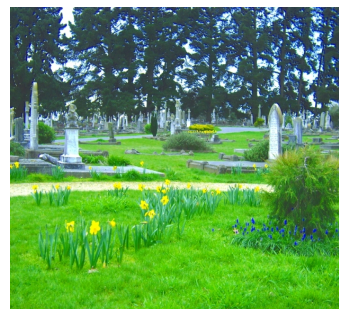
Our Register of Friends is still small, but has grown by 70% this year.

Please think of future generations. We need them to continue our work. Contact us, or visit our website, for more details about the benefits of joining our Register of Friends. An application form is attached to this newsletter.

## The Cemetery

As Trustees come in contact with more of the people who visit the cemetery, there is an overwhelming response of "Much, much better than it used to look." It is clear that Linwood Cemetery is now regarded as a much loved, valued and essential greenspace for the local community.

Judy, our Head Gardener spends every bit of spare time she can in the cemetery ensuring noxious weeds are dealt with and the green space has all year round colour and interest. It really is up to Judy that the cemetery looks as good as it does and is such a pleasant place to walk though and we hope to get more volunteers +to help her as soon as possible.



The City Council Greenspace Unit has finished re-chipping the main pathways, making them more visible and looking cared

for. They also donated 1,000 bulbs for us to plant in April for spring colour.

The block marker project still needs a bit more attention in some areas but generally, they help with plot location.

The Trustees are hoping to have a combined meeting with the Greenspace and Heritage Units of the City Council to agree ways forward. This has been postponed mainly due to the earthquake.

## Public Enquiries

We have been kindly supported by publications allowing us to contribute articles and photographs about the cemetery and our work so we can generate

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more public interest, and added the Trust to any relevant database or listing we can find! The *Christchurch Mail, Touchstone* (the Methodist Church newspaper) and Age Concern's *Keeping On* have generated the most interest. Around 20 people this year have contacted us in person to find out about the location or condition of their ancestor's grave(s).

## Website

Our website was created 2 years ago and we are getting an average of 167 visits to the site per month - 5 to 6 visits a day!. The highest number of visits have co-incided with articles being published about us (August/September) and the Earthquake (September / October).

The website is really one of the best places to find out about us, the work we are doing, when you can join us at one of our events and (eventually) a 'living' entry of each of the plots. This will enable people to 'donate' reminiscences, research, links to other sites and photos about each person buried in the cemetery. Hopefully it will also enable us to monitor the deterioration or improvement of a grave plot. As there's around 20,000 people resting there; "She's pretty big job!"

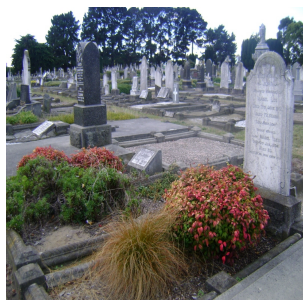
The main benefit of using a website is that information can grow, whereas a book is stuck in time and errors can't easily be changed. We can also have different points of view regarding the contribution a person made to the development of Christchurch.

Most people (43.6%) find us via the Christchurch Library site - a link added in the past 6 months. Just over 26% find us via *Google* and the other 30.4% from a wide-ranging number of other ways.

Another benefit we have found, is that people from

overseas - to date from 18 countries - are able to connect with Linwood Cemetery from wherever in the world they are. Visitors to the site from NZ make up 66%, Australia - 14%, USA - 8%, UK - 6%, Canada 2%, the rest - 4%.

Overseas visitors have told us they have deliberately included Christchurch in their NZ stay to visit the cemetery for genealogical research.



We are confident that we will see a significant increase in the amount of interest in the cemetery during the Rugby World Cup 2011. Over the next

few months we will be seeing what we can do to support visitors who contact us at that time.

After many years of frustration and struggle to get the cemetery looking its best we have had a nourishing year. The responses to our funding applications, publicity, website and events has been really heart-warming. Thank you to our supporters.

If you know of ways we can further promote the Friends, please don't hesitate to contact us. Get involved!

## Successes - funding

This year we were able to secure funding for operational costs, for which we are extremely grateful, from

- CCC Small Grants Fund
- COGS
- NZ Post
- BP

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## Successes - events

### Working Bees

We have held 4 Working Bees since January 2010, reflecting the needs of the seasons. Everyone is invited and we always include opportunities to meet each person's physical ability,. Weeding and litter picking are a 'dead cert', or just come along to meet some of the Trustees!

- February - removing pine tree seedlings and needles from grave plots
- April - bulb planting
- June - part of *Kid's Fest* activities
- November - mulching and tidying the main car park area.

Each Working Bee is reported on our website in more detail and illustrated with photos. The next Working Bee will be held on **Saturday 19th March 2011** from 10am-noon.

### Children's Holiday Programmes

We were blown away by the response to our first *Kid's Fest* winter holiday programme activity in July. We ran two sessions and had no idea how many people would be interested - we thought maybe 3 or 4 families at a



session. We ended up with 24 people attending and a waiting list of a further 19 **families!** The session had children

tidy grave plots and learning about aspects of the cemetery. We were able to give away goodie bags with amazing items donated by the City Library and the CCC Graffiti "Off the Wall" project which the kids were chuffed by, and for which we are very grateful. Following this success we are hoping to regularly link in with CCC Holiday Programmes run out of the Bromley Community Centre and have asked to run *Kid's Fest* activities in July 2011.

### Heritage Week - October

The Family History Section of the Central Library invited us to join them during one of their events. We were in good company alongside the NZ Genealogical Society and National Archives and hope to be invited back again this year.

### Neighbourhood Week - November



Another of Richard Greenaway's informative tours and a delicious sausage sizzle marked CCC Neighbourhood Week in Linwood Cemetery. Ruth Dyson MP

impressed us all by serving everyone present. More details on our website.

## 2011 and beyond

### Short term goals

- continue to tidy, garden and act as self-appointed guardians of Linwood Cemetery,
- ensure operational funding for the 2011/2012 financial year,
- continue to publicise the work of The Friends, expand the Register of Friends and stimulate independent income,
- prepare for having an increased presence in the cemetery during the Rugby World Cup,
- meet with the City Council Greenspace and Heritage Units to agree targets, processes and revise the *Linwood Cemetery Conservation Plan*.

### Medium to long term goals

- support restoration of the Peacock Vault and further identified projects,

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- establish the Peacock Vault Restoration Fund,
- publicise and support the CCC restoration plan.
- complete the grave plot register on the website.

## Did you know?

### Linwood Cemetery

- was originally outside the City,
- opened in 1884,
- is nearly 4 acres,
- has just under 18,000 plots,
- has over 20,000 people buried in it,
- was built with a tram line going into it,
- needs more Friends to help preserve it.

## How to get involved!

- Pick up after yourself, your dog and other people. Put rubbish in the car park bins or take it home.
- Report graffiti (03 941 8666) / 0800 VANDAL.
- Weed and tidy areas you visit.
- If you have ancestors in the cemetery, visit them often and tidy their plot.
- Come to our Working Bees.
- Take home a bag of pine needles to mulch your garden.
- Share information about your ancestors on our website.
- Ask us about restoring your ancestor's grave.
- Become a member of The Friends of Linwood Cemetery.
- Give The Friends of Linwood Cemetery a donation.

## Headline in US newspaper

## Typhoon Rips Through Cemetery; Hundreds Dead

## Key dates 2011

(Contact us for details or check out our website in case of cancellations)

## Board Meetings

1st Wednesday of each month except January  
9.15-10.30am at Linwood Service Centre.

Observers always welcome.

## Next Working Bee

Saturday 19th March from 10am-noon.



## Community Fairs

Bromley Community Fair

- Saturday 5th March 11am-2pm

Richmond Community Gala

- Saturday 12th March 12-4pm

Woolston Gala

- Saturday 26th March

## Holiday Programmes

*Kids Fest* Saturday 19th July- Friday 29th July 2011.

Dates to be confirmed.

## Our next issue

Issue 2 of Grave Concerns is scheduled for July 2011 to report on the end of our financial year. If you have any questions, would like to contribute suggestions or content to our newsletter, please contact us.



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