



Friends of Waikumete

Newsletter December 2011

Barry Shaw

Our Honorary Life Member, A former journalist Henderson Community Board member, researcher, promoter and a leader of many Cemetery Walks.

Died 22 August 2011, aged 82 years

Barry was a community stalwart.

He had a gift for telling stories and saw the cemetery as a place full of stories.

Barry made meetings have vibrance and life. He wanted to make the world a better place.

I heard him talk about the three Victoria Cross recipients buried in Waikumete. Their V.C. Insignia were pointed out on their plaques. I enjoyed listening as he related their great deeds.

He felt a great injustice had been done to Private James Douglas Stark better known as Starkie who was stripped of his VC just as quickly as he won it on the battlefield in France during World War One.

Here is Barry's opinion piece written in a Western Leader Column in April 2004.

Starkie, whose life inspired the novel "Passport to Hell" by Robin Hyde, was born in New Zealand in 1898 to a Delaware Indian father and a mother of Spanish descent. The rebellious youth was in and out of penal institutions until he was enlisted aged 17. His army service was marred by similar behaviour and he is said to have been court martialled nine times. If witnesses are to be believed there is no doubt Starkie fully deserved the Victoria Cross for his bravery at Armentieres in July 1916. But because he was sentenced to five years prison for striking an officer, no award was made. Instead, the sentence was wiped in recognition of Private Stark's bravery. He was considered a scallywag, unfit to be a VC.

When the Victoria Cross was instituted in 1856, the warrant said it was to be awarded "regardless of rank, long service, wounds or any other circumstances or conditions save the merit of bravery which alone should establish sufficient claim to the honour". It is scandalous that Starkie whose only crime was to be an outrageous rebel but certainly no villain, is in a grave with no VC on his headstone and it is an injustice that cries out to be put right.



"I see the cemetery as more than a graveyard. Rather a place that respects the dead and welcomes the living."

Barry Shaw, 1998

A new Waikumete Cemetery management plan will be published soon. It will look at which new areas could be used at the cemetery as well as the future use of some historic buildings such as the sexton's cottage. The existing management plan has come to the end of its life. Decisions need to be made for the future.

Daniel Sales, manager of Waikumete Cemetery, said the cemetery has a five to eight year capacity left depending on funeral numbers.

The cemetery now stretches over almost 108 hectares and contains the remains of more than 70,000 people. There is about 33 hectares of undeveloped scrub and bushland within its boundaries that could be used. This could extend capacity by another 30-40 years. Unique ecological areas will also need protecting!

The Friends of Waikumete will be following the management plan with interest.





On 19 December 1886

The first church service was held in the chapel. In March, we celebrated the first burial.

We would like to thank everyone who helped and supported this memorable event.

125 years on, so much has changed since the first traditional cemetery was set out. Below are three structures that represent how we are meeting needs of diverse Cultures and religions.



Places of Interest



The Hindu Prayer House is to be found on the road to the North Lawn area. The immediate Hindu family will say prayers at this setting before the main service for their loved one.

The entrance to the Urupa where mourners gather to be called upon the sacred ground.



The Muslim cemetery has olive trees surrounding it. Prayers are said under cover from the sun before going on to the burial site. Taps have been placed for the cleansing ritual after burial.



Spectacular views at the Millennium marker placed by the Friends. East Berm, take the Public path.



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Walks

Kathleen Kingswood

Newsletter

Noeline Erceg

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Glen Eden
Waitakere City

Walks Programme 2012

Wildflower and Infamous <i>Recommended Adults only</i>	Saturday 3rd December 5pm
Pioneers & Croatian Settlers	Saturday 4 th February 5pm
Murderers and Victims	Saturday 3 rd March 5pm
Soldiers	Saturday 4 th April 5pm

ADOPT A GRAVE TO TEND

On the third Saturday of the month
Meet by the Chapel in the Oaks, 9am
Weather permitting

Need: Appropriate clothing e.g. Sunhat
Brush, bucket, any helpful spade, broom,
Volunteers will be welcome

Next dates: 17 December, 21 January



The Cremation Gardens will become "Gardens" where Ornaments and glass jars will not be permitted. Only monumental mason vases will be allowed. The RSA wish the same to be applied in the soldiers area. Structures placed at graves must be low and able to be removed for mowing.