

R.I.P

Rookwood In Profile

Newsletter of FRIENDS OF ROOKWOOD Inc. Volume 29 Number 2

HELPING HANDS

Pictures from the Past



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The inclement weather has again hindered our tour days and activities, with the rain and soggy grounds.

Our bee keeper, Norm Webb & son Ashley, were once again very successful at the 2024 Royal Easter Show in the National Honey Competition.

They were the winners of the National Honey Show Most Successful Exhibitor in Honey classes 13 to 30 (excluding native) and the winners of a Ribbon for Most Successful Exhibitor in Small Producers classes— most Successful Exhibitor in classes 36-45.



They gained 5 first places: 5 second places and 2 third places...

Congratulations to you both!

This year the Friends of Rookwood have contributed to the restoration of the graves of William Arnott in the Old Wesleyan section and baby Jeff Bay in the Anglican section.

Robyn Hawes, President

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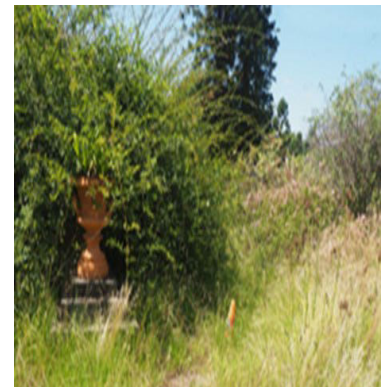
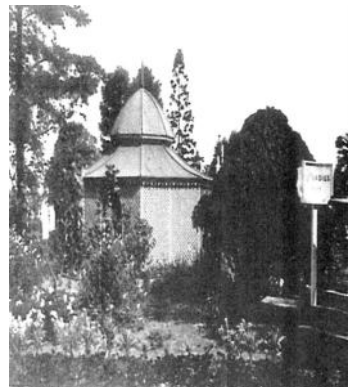
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ROSES AT BB GARDEN

BB Garden in the Anglican section, was totally overgrown since COVID19 and with time, weeds and grasses were slashed to see what lay beneath. It was a daunting task with many of the roses full of dead wood. It took several gardening days of pruning and cutting to see any potential of recovery of the roses. Normally in the hot summer we usually do not see the roses in full bloom, as we do not work during these months. But last Summer we kept gardening and saw the beauty of the roses in full bloom, cataloging what colours and plants were in the garden and their location as well. As I live in walking distance to the cemetery, I decided to photograph each rose and map them. See below...



Photos below show before & after pictures of BB Garden- The original building of the 1800's on the left being a "Ladies Only" rest room and on the right current garden



Article by Marion Allen

ROOKWOOD NEWS

ROOKWOOD OVER THE YEARS

In its heyday, Rookwood Necropolis rivalled the Sydney Botanic Gardens as one of the most elegant grand Victorian gardenesque style gardens in the colony of NSW. By the 1920's 100 gardeners were employed at Rookwood.

150 years ago, the new public cemetery, then known as HASLEM'S CREEK, was laid out as a magnificent English park designed as a dignified setting for the elaborate funerary customs of the day. The lavish grounds displayed every possible form of decoration. There were rosaries, shrubberies and flower-beds, shady summer houses, gazebos, ponds with fountains, statues, goldfish, ducks and swans...

One of the "permanent residents", Charles Moore, was superintendent of Sydney's Botanic Gardens from 1848-1896. He was engaged in the design of the new garden cemetery and Rookwood became a repository for many of the newly introduced exotic plant species, as well as native trees.

Move forward to the 1930's and the Depression years, witnessed a decline in staff members, however a nurse and propagation shed were still maintained on site.

The onset of WW11 had a crippling effect on manpower and the cemetery was almost entirely neglected. Managers had great difficulty getting enough labour to dig sufficient graves for the week's burials, let alone workers to maintain the gardens. It took one man an average of 6 to 8 hours to hand dig a grave.

From 1981-1988, the Society of Australian Genealogists, conducted a project to transcribe the monuments in the much overgrown cemetery. Some of the volunteers participating desired to help tidy up a small area in the Old Anglican section.

Helping Hands was formed to restore such areas which later this group became part of THE FRIENDS OF ROOKWOOD.

This once beautiful place with its ponds and fountains, is at last beginning to take on some of its former glory. Many of the original roses planted on graves so many years ago still bloom each season, owing to the work being done by Helping Hands over the years. The design of the former gardens and carriage ways can be seen taking shape once more.



Circa 1900's—gravediggers/gardeners



Surveyors

Article by Robyn Hawes

HELPING HANDS HAPPENINGS



Hello Friends of Rookwood

Helping Hands team have been busy removing overgrowth, cleaning gutters and removing weeds in March and April of this year. We've worked extensively at Frazer Mausoleum in preparation for its reopening later in the year. The roses in the BB Rose Garden have also seen some attention from us, and are looking much better. This area looks much tidier having been mown. With the start of the tours in March, we've also been spending some time cleaning up in Section 1 of Old Anglican. Lastly, we did a tidy-up around the Elephant House, somewhere we haven't been for a long time.

For the next few weeks, we will be continuing to work in the area around the Frazer Mausoleum, as well as in those Old Anglican sections visited by tours.

If you are interested to help us for a couple of hours on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month between March and November (weather permitting), you would be very welcome. Just bring a few tools (gloves, garden spade, pruning shears) and lots of enthusiasm. Bring a hat, sun lotion, insect repellent, appropriate clothing, sturdy footwear, something to sit on and some lunch. It isn't hard work, but you can put in as much effort as you want!

Our Gardening Days for the rest of 2024 are as follows, conditions permitting:

Saturday 11th & 25th May

Saturday 8th & 22nd June

Saturday 13th & 27th July

Saturday 10th & 24th August

Saturday 14th & 28th September

Saturday 12th & 26th October

Saturday 9th & 23rd November

We meet at 9:30am in the Village Green carpark opposite All Souls Chapel in Hawthorne Ave. If you are running late, ring Geoff on 0419 296 267.

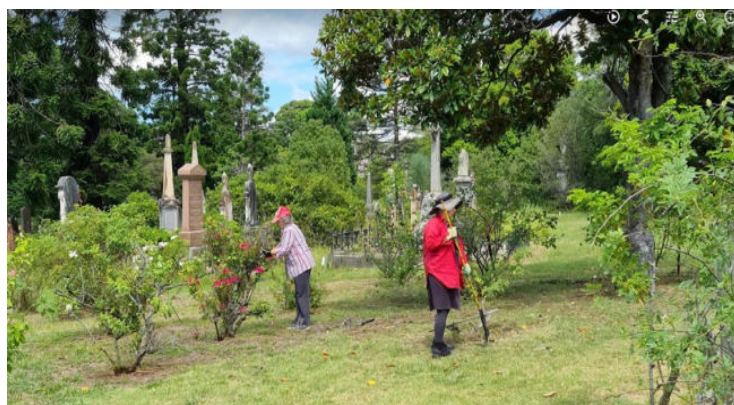
Enjoy the weather, the sounds of nature and open air of Rookwood. We break for lunch at midday then work for an hour or two after lunch depending on the weather. At quitting time we gather for a coffee and enjoy a chance to socialise.

If you need any more information or have suggestions contact:

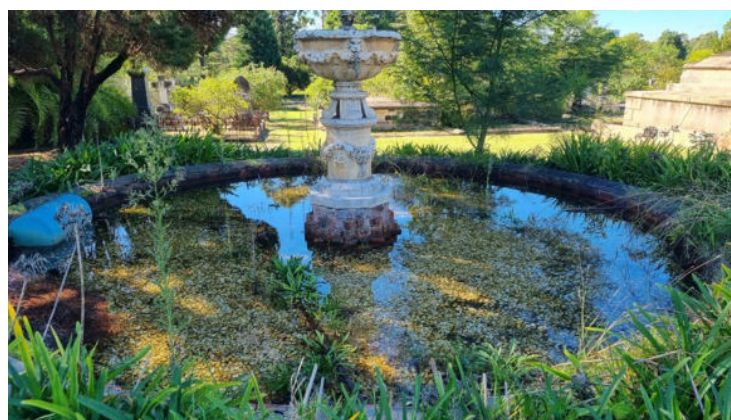
Geoff Bovard email: geoff.bovard@gmail.com



Newly cleaned gutters at Frazer Mausoleum, by Luke



Carolyn and Helen tending the roses at BB Rose garden



Friends of Rookwood Fountain with water in it, after rain, Section 1, Old Anglican

Article & photos by Geoff Bovard

TOURS

MEMBERS MEETING 2024

The Members meeting will be held on Saturday 21st September at 2pm, in meeting room behind RNLM office on Hawthorne Ave, Rookwood. More details regarding this meeting will follow in next RIP.

Irish Tour

Almost a quarter of the convicts sent to Australia came from Ireland. Some political prisoners were sent here without a trial, many others were petty thieves. Immigrants followed, some to escape the ravages of the potato famine or to join the would-be fortune makers on the goldfields, others just seeking a better life for their families. Many of these people and their descendants have left their mark; tradesmen, religious leaders and bushrangers are among their number.

Jewish Tour

The History of the Jewish peoples in Australia began with the First Fleet. Monuments here in the Jewish section dating from 1867 join monuments re-interred from Devonshire St. Cemetery and then others from nearby Raphael's Burial Ground. These record the names of convicts and settlers. Some with rags to riches stories others not so fortunate. One is a convict who became the First Police Detective— another who has a beach named after him. The impressive Harris monument stands tall, its design and symbolism differ greatly from today's monuments. Stories of Rabbis, synagogues, businessmen and a boating tragedy. A proud heritage of a community who made an important contribution to Australian society.

Railway Walk

The graves of the first train drivers (Sixsmith & Twiss); the first guard (Robinson) and the Hudson family are visited. Hear stories of the workers and some of the accidents that occurred in the early days of the NSW Railways. Funerals of the humble and the great travelled by train, from the Mortuary Station, Regent Street, Redfern, to the beautiful sandstone Mortuary Station which once stood in Necropolis Circuit. Until its closure in 1948, the railway was a major part of the cemetery's infrastructure, extending over 3kms with four stations.

TOURS FOR 2024

10am—12:30pm

All these tours are walking tours and depart from the grassed area near St Michael the Archangel Chapel (on the left, just off Necropolis Drive). Enter the cemetery via the gate at the corner of Victoria and East Streets, Lidcombe

Our tours are all separate tours and are subject to change without notice.

2 June	10 am	Irish tour 
7 July	10 am	Jewish Tour 
4 August	10 am	Railway Walk 
1 September	10 am	Rookwood Heritage
6 October	10 am	Murder and Mayhem
3 November	10 am	Military

Cost: (all tours) \$15 per person. Members \$10 per person.

For information & bookings ring Julie 0419 986 589

All money raised is used to help with restoration projects within the cemetery.

Please bring a friend along and enjoy your tour.

Email: friends_of_rookwood@hotmail.com

Website: www.friendsofrookwoodinc.org.au

Or find us on Facebook

CEMETERY NEWS

Rookwood Catholic Cemetery

Sinking of HMAS Kuttabul

This year marks the 82nd anniversary of the submarine attack in Sydney Harbour on the night of the 31st May, 1942. This was the first attack by the Japanese navy on the east coast of Australia.

After the outbreak of World War II, HMAS Kuttabul was requisitioned by the Royal Australian Navy and moored at the Garden Island naval base. The ship provided accommodation for Allied naval personnel awaiting transfer to their ships.

On 31 May 1942, three Japanese midget submarines entered the harbour with the intention of attacking Allied warships. There were more than 35 British, New Zealanders, Dutch and Australian sailors either asleep or lounging on the passenger decks of the HMAS Kuttabul.

Only one of the submarines was able to fire its torpedoes but missed its intended target, the heavy cruiser USS Chicago. The torpedo struck the seabed underneath HMAS Kuttabul, and the explosion broke the vessel in two and sank her.

The attack killed nineteen Royal Australian Navy and two Royal British Navy sailors and wounded another ten sailors. It took several days for the bodies of the sailors to be recovered.

Rookwood Cemetery is the resting place of 18 of the 21 sailors killed in this wartime tragedy, eleven in the Anglican Naval section, five in the Catholic Naval section and two at the Sydney War Cemetery.

The sailors interred in the Catholic Naval section are; Leslie William Bland (20 years old) Able Seaman, from Paddington; John Edward Gannon (35 years old), Stoker, from Unanderra; Leonard Walter Howroyd (26 years old), Petty Officer, from Penrith, who wouldn't have been on board that night but swapped duty so he could meet his wife the next day; Thomas Joseph Watson, (24 years old), Stoker II Class, from Haberfield and Kenneth Francis Killeen (20 years old), Stoker II Class, from Sunshine, Victoria. On hearing the news, his pregnant mother went into shock and early labour, sadly both mother and baby died.

On 1 January 1943, the naval depot at Garden Island was commissioned as HMAS Kuttabul to commemorate the 21 men killed during the Sydney Harbour attack.

This midget submarine's fate was unknown until 2006, when amateur scuba divers discovered the wreck off Sydney's northern beaches.

We remember the brave men and women who have served our country and made the ultimate sacrifice for peace.



Story by Jo Davenport

Rookwood General Cemetery

Merchant Navy

On Sunday, 14 April, Metropolitan Memorial Parks hosted the 59th Annual Merchant Navy Commemoration at Rookwood General Cemetery.

Since 1947, The Merchant Navy War Memorial has served as a place of remembrance for the Australian Merchant Mariners who gave their lives in service of our nation. For more than 50 years, the Merchant Navy War Memorial Fund has held this annual commemoration as a testament to their enduring legacy.

We at Metropolitan Memorial Parks have been honoured to be a part of this tradition, providing logistical and event support. This year's commemoration was particularly special, as attendees gathered not only to remember fallen heroes, but to unveil an important project that honours their sacrifice.

As an everlasting symbol of respect, Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley, Governor of NSW, unveiled a plaque bearing the names of the 862 Australian Merchant Mariners who lost their lives in the World Wars.

This special plaque provides a tangible way to ensure that these brave men and women are never forgotten. As future generations visit the site, they will learn about the sacrifices made by the Merchant Navy, and the vital role they played in our nation's history.

The names etched on the plaque represent fathers, sons, brothers, friends – individuals who answered the call of duty, and we were honoured to partner with the Merchant Navy War Memorial Fund on this significant project.



Story by Crystal Lindsay

ROOKWOOD NECROPOLIS LAND MANAGER

The Rookwood Necropolis Land Manager (RNLM) continues maintaining the operations of Rookwood cemetery.

As the end of financial year nears, tenders are in place for bushland regeneration as part of Rookwood's plan of management reporting.

R.I.P.—ROOKWOOD IN PROFILE

Edited by Robyn Hawes & Teresa Ciaglia

Published by the Friends of Rookwood Inc.

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ROOKWOOD-

a part of Australia's

history.



Rookwood Necropolis Trust
PO Box 2059
Homebush West NSW 2140

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Please complete the application details below. **Note:** Our membership year is based on a financial year – there are no pro-rata membership rates.

I / We wish to join the Friends of Rookwood Inc.

Title _____ First Name _____

Last Name _____

Address _____

Contact Phone No: _____

Email address: _____

Please note that your email address will be used for notices about meetings, Friends' activities and the quarterly newsletter.

SCHEDULE OF MEMBERSHIP FEES

	1 year	
Individual	\$20.00	
Household	\$25.00	
Corporate	\$30.00	
MEMBERSHIP TOTAL	\$	
DONATION (Most welcome)	\$	
TOTAL	\$	

Please circle your method of payment.

Cash - Cheque/Money Order* - Direct Deposit

*Cheques/money orders should be made payable to:

Friends of Rookwood Inc and posted to PO Box 66 Lidcombe NSW 1825

Direct Deposit details#: Westpac, Miranda -

BSB No. 032-059 Account No. 259785

or scan this page and email to friends_of_rookwood@hotmail.com

#For direct deposit, please add your name for verification.