

# R.I.P

## Rookwood In Profile

*Newsletter of FRIENDS OF ROOKWOOD Inc. Volume 29 Number 3*

### FIRST RIP NEWSLETTER



The peace and tranquillity of the historic No1 Anglican cemetery at Rookwood.

Dear Friends,

Drumroll.....Voila.....Here it is.....The first edition of our new quarterly newsletter. We hope you'll enjoy it - and pass it on to your friends and family to read too! Many thanks to those who contributed items for this issue. Everyone is welcome to write articles or send in news items for the newsletter. Our aim is to develop a vehicle for communication between the staff of cemetery trusts, the many volunteer groups now working at Rookwood and our friends off-site. The newsletter is designed to inform, educate and keep you in touch with what is going on around Rookwood Necropolis and to encourage others to get involved.

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The above article is the front page from the 1st newsletter produced by THE FRIENDS OF ROOKWOOD in October, 1994. This year marks the 30th anniversary of RIP newsletter. Many a story has been written over those years providing members with much of interest to read.



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This is the 30th anniversary of the first Rookwood In Profile (RIP) newsletter. It was printed in October 1994 and has been produced every quarter since then.

This newsletter is the 29th edition...

Many interesting stories about events and stories of some of our "permanent residents" have been included over the years.

The present format might be changing but we'll still remain as a source of information about the Friends of Rookwood.

The Members' meeting will be held on **Saturday 21st Sept at 2pm in the meeting rooms behind RNLN office.**

As well as light refreshments, there will be a presentation called "Flowers, Garden & Symbolism"—I'm sure you will find it very interesting.

Teresa Ciaglia is leaving us at the end of September. She will be sadly missed....

For over 11 years, Teresa has worked tirelessly for the Friends of Rookwood in administering the functions of preparing, co-editing and printing the RIP, printing tour information, paying our insurance and posting out various items to members. Teresa acts as ex-officio at the Friends of Rookwood Annual General Meeting.

We will remember her dedication and her happy smile and laughter...

*Robyn Hawes, President*

## GEORGE McRAE



A new inscription plaque for George McRae monument was recently installed



As per the planned works, the lean on the front kerb was corrected; landscaped the grounds to reduce differential fall; tidied the site; installed a concrete sloper; completed lettering as agreed with traditional hand layout, cutting and lead lettering and installed plaque on sloper.

## OTHER RESTORATIONS

The Frazer Mausoleum plaques have now been re-installed. Sach Killam has completed re-attaching all, of the smaller broken pieces of the sarcophagi and the plaques, and have removed the majority of the concretions on the sarcophagi (which was more successful than anticipated: they are going to look much closer to new than expected, without any damage or alterations required)!

There is one more day of mortarwork to do and then will be ready for the final internal de-salination and cleaning works which Matthew Johnson will be leading. A further one or two days of final cleaning of the sarcophagi while Matthew will be leading landscaping works in the surrounding area.

MMP are looking at a date in October for the opening of the Frazer Mausoleum.

As well, safety repairs in the Old Presbyterian area—we have made good progress on leaning and unsealed monuments and those at higher risk.

Article by Sach Killam

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# ROOKWOOD NEWS

## A Rose By Someone Else's Name



One of the hundreds of old rose varieties found at Rookwood.  
This is thought to be Lorraine Lee, an Australian bred Allstaire Clarke rose.

For rose enthusiasts Rookwood is a wonderland of sometimes hidden and often mysterious treasures.

Members of the Heritage Rose Society are particularly interested in old rose varieties which have survived at Rookwood for almost a century or, in some cases, even longer.

"Many of the roses found at Rookwood seem to appear nowhere else. Experts visiting from overseas have not seen them in their countries. Many of these roses are unique" said Barbara May who regularly visits the roses at Rookwood.

"If we can't identify a rose we name it after the person whose grave we find it on."

Despite a concerted effort over the past few years to conserve Rookwood's botanical heritage, many roses have been lost in over-enthusiastic 'cleaning-up' operations.

"The list of roses that have disappeared even in the last 5 years is pages long," said Barbara.

Damage from whippersnippers, nonselective herbicide spraying and burning off has caused the

demise of roses which otherwise have survived quite happily at Rookwood for decades.

"Many of the old varieties even resent pruning," said Barbara. "Generally speaking they are best left to their own devices and need very little attention unlike their modern counterparts".

To help protect the roses which are left at Rookwood, Barbara and her friends spend one day a week walking methodically amongst the headstones, identifying, recording and mapping the location of each rose, one by one, grave by grave.

Members of the Heritage Rose Society aim to conserve and propagate old and rare varieties. Twice yearly they meet at Rookwood to check up on the cemetery roses, take cuttings, and enjoy a picnic lunch in the cemetery grounds.

"Our picnics raise a few eyebrows but the old garden cemetery was originally designed, among other things, as a place to picnic."

This article also was included in the first RIP of Oct, 1994. As Spring is around the corner, felt it was appropriate to include.



## **Hello Friends of Rookwood**

This year has been moving quickly. The Helping Hands team have been busy pruning, weeding and also planting new heritage roses in the two rose gardens that we tend—

The Friends' rose garden in the Old Wesleyan area and the BB section rose garden in the Old Anglican.

We also ventured down into Anglican sections GG and H, at the northern end of the cemetery, to tidy up graves in that area. It's not somewhere we often go, and so that makes a nice change for us. The wet weather over June and July made access quite a challenge across the cemetery, and in August it was still quite damp underfoot in these two sections.

As ever, we have been removing overgrowth, cleaning gutters and removing weeds around the graves and tombs at the top of the Serpentine canal. Further down the Serpentine, the Rookwood General Cemetery grounds team have been busy dead-heading agapanthus (to the delight of the Helping Hands, as this is decidedly not a favourite of ours!), as well as mulching on both sides of the canal.

Unfortunately, a couple of members of our happy band have had various injuries to deal with. Carolyn has had ongoing shoulder pain, while Geoff had significant shoulder surgery in June. In other words, the team is short-handed at the moment, meaning that we are looking for help more than ever.

So 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! As a volunteer, you are not obliged to stay for the whole time or turn up every gardening day. We will be grateful for any help or suggestions you can provide.

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

**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](mailto:geoff.bovard@gmail.com)**



Tending the roses at BB garden



Laurie & Luke tidying up at BB Rose garden



Serpentine canal and borders following clean out by RGC grounds team

Article & photos by Geoff Bovard

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# 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.

Light refreshments will be served.

Presentation of "Flowers, Garden & Symbolism" - highlighting interesting stories.

## Rookwood Heritage Tour

A general introductory tour of some of the heritage areas of Rookwood.

## Murder & Mayhem Tour

A tour with stories about hangings, victims of rape, murder, robbery and misadventure. Hear about bank robbers and the bravery of those killed in the execution of their duties. The Blue Mountains murders, the Mount Rennie case, foolhardy fishermen drowning in bad weather are just some of the hair-raising accounts described on this tour.

## Military Tour

Hear the tales of those who, many times, put their own lives at risk so we could live a better one. Rookwood has many humble heroes and heroines and they led amazing lives that need to be heard.

## 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.***

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](mailto:friends_of_rookwood@hotmail.com)**

**Website: [www.friendsofrookwoodinc.org.au](http://www.friendsofrookwoodinc.org.au)**

**Or find us on Facebook**



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# CEMETERY NEWS

## *Catholic Cemeteries + Crematoria*

### Serpentine Canal Renovations

Rookwood Catholic Cemetery has been in the process of progressively renovating the historic serpentine canal that is located through Mortuary 1 and Mortuary 2.

The narrow canal originally constructed between 1874 and 1882 required renovation in areas of the cemetery where the original brickwork had become unstable.

The canal provides important cemetery drainage and is also a historic feature overall. The heritage canal is 1.7 metres deep and lined with hand-made bricks.

The meandering canal connects three shallow ponds with smaller channels with decorative plantings and points of interest dotted along the way.

The sections that have most recently been renovated are in Mortuary 2, running from Barnet Ave through to Gilroy St.

Catholic Cemeteries and Crematoria are proud to have completed the works with a government grant to provide essential upgrades to this significant landmark of Rookwood Necropolis.

*Story by Mark Hamilton and Jo Davenport*





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## *Metropolitan Memorial Parks*

### **Revival of Frazer Mausoleum: A rare glimpse into history**

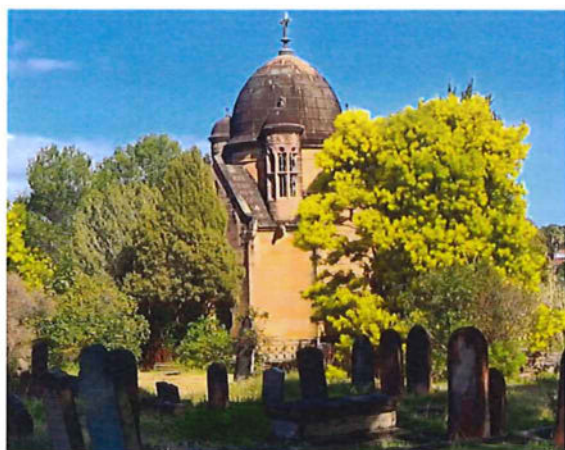
After decades of decay, the iconic Frazer Mausoleum in Rookwood Cemetery is set to reopen its doors to the public on Tuesday, 22 October. This stunning example of Pyrmont sandstone architecture, built in 1894, has undergone major restorations to reclaim its former glory.

The mausoleum's history is as fascinating as its architecture. Once the final resting place of seven members of the Frazer family, it was abandoned in 1974 and suffered from vandalism and neglect. However, thanks to the tireless efforts of the cemetery's heritage restoration team and the invaluable support and funding from the Friends of Rookwood and the NSW Government, the mausoleum has been restored to its original splendour.

The reopening ceremony offers a unique opportunity to explore the mausoleum and hear its history from those involved in the restorations.

Join us on Tuesday, 22 October 2024 at Frazer Mausoleum for an engaging program featuring speeches, history videos, tours, and talks.

Tickets are limited, so don't miss out on this unique event! Register here: <https://bit.ly/46YLX4L>



Article by Natasha West

## **ROOKWOOD NECROPOLIS**

### **LAND MANAGER**

The Rookwood Necropolis Land Manager (RNLM) will cease trading as of 1st October, 2024, with a joint management model between Metropolitan Memorial Parks (MMP) (the former Rookwood General Cemetery) and Catholic Cemeteries + Crematoria (CCC) maintaining the cemetery.

RNLM infrastructure management along with other cemetery operations will be shared between the two operators.

RNLM has managed the site for over 100 years from being known as the JOINT COMMITTEE NECROPOLIS TRUST to ROOKWOOD NECROPOLIS TRUST and finally ROOKWOOD NECROPOLIS LAND MANAGER. But despite name changes it's role never changed.

Many projects over the years have been undertaken—the development of LOT 10, road upgrades, the 5 year capital works project in Rookwood cemetery between 2014-2019 a HUGE feat for RNLM in record time and within budget involved 8 projects of which the construction of SHEEHY Ave gate, new bus shelters and boundary fencing were part of it just to name a few....

Management would like to thank the many personnel who worked for RNLM over the years be it staff or contractors for all their time, effort and dedication in making Rookwood the place it is today.

### **R.I.P.—ROOKWOOD IN PROFILE**

Edited by Robyn Hawes & Teresa Ciaglia

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**Friends of Rookwood**

**PO Box 66**

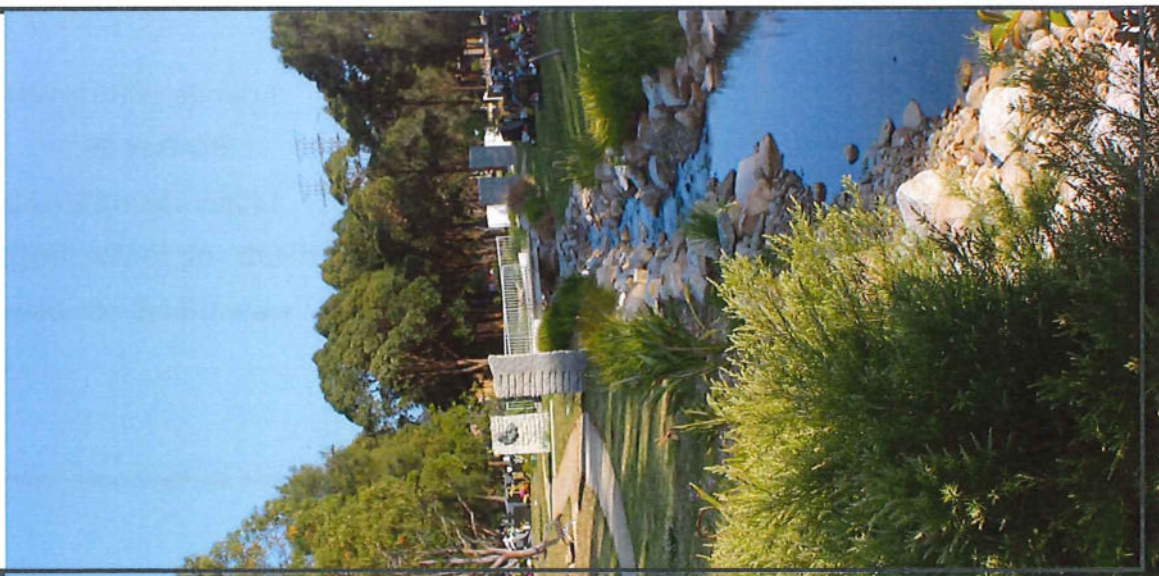
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# ROOKWOOD-

## 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](mailto:friends_of_rookwood@hotmail.com)

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