Connecting cemeteries and monuments to the classroom: A powerful teaching and learning context for social sciences.

For the Historic Cemeteries Conservation Trust of New Zealand.

Abstract

The material culture found in New Zealand's historic cemeteries and memorials can be a valuable resource for classroom inquiry in the social sciences for primary and secondary students.

This paper explores a number of ways in which cemeteries and memorials can be an enriching and tangible resource for research in the social sciences classroom. Cemeteries and community memorials can (1) enhance our understanding of colonial and indigenous society especially when combined with written and visual sources, (2) allow students to investigate the impact of past events on different scales, (3) investigate changing trends in social attitudes and culture over time, (4) reveal much about past social and cultural attitudes and beliefs that underpin and add substance to current attitudes and beliefs, (5) investigate the issues involved in sustaining the material culture of the past.

The paper links these broader concepts to resources and practical classroom activities that are available on the Historic Cemeteries Conservation Trust NZ website and to ways they can be used with students to enhance understanding of our colonial and indigenous past and to changes in beliefs and customs over time to the present day.

Introduction

Historic cemeteries offer a fascinating subject that appeals to many people at a variety of levels. As time passes our old cemeteries become less a landscape for mourning and remembrance and more a source of emotive curiosity, a quiet or contemplative environment, or as invaluable evidence of past generations, their attitudes to life and death, and the social and belief structures of their communities (Mytum, 2000). Grave monuments erected by grieving relatives, friends or communities are frequently the only remaining records of the lives, beliefs, pursuits and tastes of most 19th and early 20th century inhabitants of New Zealand. While some may have left published or unpublished accounts, diaries, photographs and objects, from their daily lives, most have not. As a source of information about the past, the cemetery persistently remains one of the most neglected. Yet hidden in the stones with their aura of decay is a rich textual and visual record of individual and collective lives lived, archived in a unique form. To investigate our old cemeteries is not mere voyeurism of a morbid kind. It opens up to students a direct and accessible link to a significant proportion of the past population, the ordinary as well as the elite, allowing opportunities to learn about their lives and their deaths (Mytum, 2000).

This paper is designed to encourage teachers to consider the historic cemetery as (1) an invaluable teaching resource, (2) to use monuments and other public memorials as uniquely local starting points for individual or whole class research, (3) or to think about including a data gathering activity to enrich social studies and science units already taught. Most New Zealanders have burial grounds in their locality, which are of historical value. We encourage greater numbers of teachers and students to make better educational use of our cemeteries: To do so is to raise awareness of the value of this evidence for today and into the future and to gain support for local groups to develop a strong care and conservation ethic for our rich past.

Using the material culture of the 19th Century historic cemetery as a history study starter in the classroom.

The rich and varied material culture of New Zealand's 19th century cemeteries is a valuable resource for students' historical research. Cemetery monuments both individually and as a group have the potential to enhance our understanding of colonial and indigenous culture and society particularly when combined with written and visual sources. (Deed, S. 2006). The possibility of bringing archived written and visual historical resources directly into the classroom has been made possible with the wide range of local and national internet archives that can now be independently searched. Having students collect specific epitaph data on a cemetery visit and discovering more about the information collected using, cemetery databases, visual images on the Timeframes website or discovering the hidden story behind a headstone epitaph on the Papers Past website provides a powerful and engaging, learning experience for students of all ages. Data gathered in the cemetery can more often than not be followed up at school.

Figure 1: Shows some connections that can be made between headstone information and other archived media now readily available for student inquiry. Left: Memorial for Captain Garrard Captain of the Tararua in Barbadoes Street Cemetery Christchurch. Right: A newspaper story about Captain Garrard. Search out images on the Timeframes website

Epitaph reads
Francis George Garrard
Master of the S.S.Tararua
Who perished at the wreck of his vessel on the Otara reef
30th April 1881
Aged 29 years.

Captain Garrard was highly esteemed. He was the son of a revenue officer at Home, and had passed a very successful school and college career. He was a total abstainer and an experienced navigator, having been wrecked on more than one occasion, when his coolness and presence of mind proved of the greatest value in saving life and property. He was a young man (29), but had seen 15 years' service, and was a general favourite. His loss was deeply felt, especially by his bride elect, who was anxiously expecting his return. This lady was Miss Buckhurst, of Melbourne. The shock caused her a serious illness, and for some time she lay in an unconscious state. Captain Garrard is described by Mr J. C. Firth, of Auckland, as a fine example of a "light, active, courteous, lively young gallant; one of those who carry the flag of England across every sea, giving abundant promise that either in peace or war England may safely depend on her brave toilers of the sea."

From *THE TOLL OF THE SEA, Otago Witness , Issue 2387, 30 November 1899, Page 1 PAPERS PAST:* http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/

Search the Timeframes website for images of this or any disaster or major event that caught the public imagination of the times. http://www.natlib.govt.nz/collections/digital-collections/timeframes

Discovering a 'story in situ' on a headstone or memorial that can be followed up in the newspapers of the times is a uniquely different experience for students from that of reading about an event in a textbook. Headstones and memorials, chosen with care by distraught families, have the power to transport our minds to another time and allow us to emotionally connect, as the examples above do, to the hazards and preoccupations of a world past.

Cemeteries offer opportunity for various scales of historical research

Information contained at the cemetery can be applied to various scales of historical research – students investigations can centre on an individual or family, on a particular suburb, town or district, on a city or region or even the nation as a whole. Encourage older students to seek out information about an individual who may have contributed in some unique way to improving the lot of others, or to opening up our understanding of others in times past. Cemeteries are valuable sources for individual NCEA student inquiries into local history.

Younger students can investigate the ways pioneering individuals and families collectively contributed to the development of the local community. There is an example on the HCCTNZ website that was designed for Dunedin's Anderson's Bay School Year 5 and 6 students preparing for the schools' 150th anniversary celebrations[1]. It is presented as a group game. The purpose is to 'dig for' (students use a lucky dip) for well-known first-settlers at the local suburban cemetery and then find out as much information about them from street and place names, as well as local historical memoirs and other resources and prepare for a class or interclass quiz. Collectively each class involved puts together a more complete picture of the pioneer inhabitants than the students can achieve individually. This approach to bringing the past alive for students can be used to great effect in almost any local cemetery in New Zealand with historic connections to the local surrounding area.

[1] An example of a whole class investigation into the ways pioneering individuals and families contributed to the development of the local community is available at http://216.67.224.201/~cemeteri/HCCTNZEdResources/PeoplingNZ/FirstSettlers.pdf Although this example has been developed for Anderson's Bay School in Dunedin the idea can be adapted for any historic cemetery large or small.

Cemeteries offer opportunity for demographic studies on historic groups in the classroom.

Information contained at the cemetery can form the basis of a student inquiry into wider social and living conditions during the later 19th and early 20th centuries. Students can investigate a block of headstones recording names, ages, and date of deaths, from the epitaph information. Plotting the data collected into age bands by decade and time by decade reveals some interesting information about mortality in early New Zealand society especially where the cemetery headstones record the earliest days of the community[2]. Figure 4 shows the mortality for a block of 84 headstones in Dunedin's Southern Cemetery. Comparisons to similar data today leads students to inquire why so many children and young adults died and to investigate the causes of a high incidence of early death in colonial New Zealand.

Figure 2: Mortality information for Block 2P Anglican section Southern Cemetery Dunedin, plotted by age by decade and time of death by decade. This block is one of the first areas established in the cemetery.

AGE	Actual mortality information from readable headstone inscriptions for Block 2P Anglican Section, Southern Cemetery, Dunedin.														
90 - 100															
80 - 89						82	87/84	85				86		85	
70 - 79		79		71	72	75/71/75 75/71	75/77/72 /77	76/75			79				76/76
60 - 69		60		60			61/60	65							
50- 59		57		59/58/50	54	55/52	50/59								57
40 - 49	46		45												
30- 39	34	30/38/35	33	30			35						30		
20 - 29	27/25/23	25	29/29	26			20/25								
10 - 19		18/19/18													
1 – 9	5/4/2½/ 1½/1	2/3/4/6 /3	6	5/7/7											
0 - 1	6m	9m/2d/	7d	1½m											
YEAR	1850 - 1859	1860 - 1869	1870 -1879	1880-1889	1890 - 1899	1900 - 1909	1910 - 1919	1920 - 1929	1930 - 1939	1940 1949	1950 - 1959	1960 - 1969	1970 - 1979	1980 - 1989	1990 - 2000

1.
2.
3.

Even without analysis, changing mortality rates can be clearly seen in this raw data taken from cemetery headstone inscriptions. Students can investigate the possible reasons for the deaths of so many children (highlighted by circle 2.) and so many young adults (1.) especially prior to the 1890s. Block 2P also shows the age at death of young men mentioned in WW1 commemorations on established family headstones during the decade 1910 – 1919. (3.) [3]

These trends tend to be similar across different socio-economic sections of the historic cemetery providing you can select areas of the cemetery for each study group that include the earliest possible burials. Information from burial records are likely to provide more precise data if these records can be obtained, as many children were buried in unmarked plots or buried in plots of relatives, friends or employers who had plot space available. The possibilities for deeper statistical analysis and causal exploration by senior school students for NCEA are obvious. For younger students and interesting study emerges when different groups collect data from different parts of a larger cemetery, then share their data and draw comparisons.

Cause of death is usually not recorded on our headstones unless that death was accidental. Occasionally students will encounter a headstone that records a number of children from one family who have died within a short space of time. In instances such as this headstone at Cromwell Old Cemetery the sadness and anguish is palpable even across the widening space of time between the original event and today. Encourage students to investigate why

[2] Idea adapted from Sagazio (1992).
[3] The Mortality teaching unit is accessible at http://216.67.224.201/~cemeteri/HCCTNZEdResources/Mortality/GenericMortalityUnit.pdf Worksheets and templates are also available for use. Visit http://cemeteries.org.nz/ and click on "Teaching Resources".

such deaths may have occurred by having them investigate water supply and links to typhoid, means of effluent and garbage disposal, methods of cooking and food storage, establishment of medical services, child care and immunisation in the local area.

Figure 3: Two memorials showing evidence of epidemics. Left: The Sutherland Memorial in the Palmerston Cemetery (East Otago) tells the story of the untimely deaths of the four Sutherland children who are likely to have died from a Scarlet Fever epidemic that was rampant at the time. Right: The Scally Memorial in the Old Cromwell Cemetery (Central Otago) tells a story of family anguish in the presence of a virulent typhoid epidemic. Many of our historic cemeteries contain evidence of such epidemics that can be explored by students who can compare how they were managed in the past and today.

Erected to the Memory of

William Sutherland
Died 6th April 1871
Aged 6 years and 8 months
Davidina Sutherland
Died 6th April 1871
Aged 5 years 6 months
John Sutherland
Died 6th April 1871
Aged 3 years 4 months
Henrietta Margaret Sutherland
Died 21st April 1871
Aged 1 year
John Sutherland
Died 15th July 1905
Aged 76 years
Ann wife of above
Died 30th Oct 1911
Aged 76 years

Sacred to the Memory of the beloved children of Daniel and Ellen Scally

Matilda Margaret Scally Died 30th April 1873
Aged 11months 3 days **John Scally**
Died 27th March 1874 Aged 7 yrs 3 months
Mary Scally
Died 2nd April 1874
Aged 5 yrs 2 months **Sarah Scally**
Died 7th April 1874
Aged 6 yrs 3 months
Daniel Scally
Died 7th April 1874
Aged 3 yrs 7 months
Ellen Scally their mother Died 1st April 1875
Aged 29
In death as in life united.
Suffer little children to come unto me. Forbid them not for such is the kingdom of heaven.

Epidemics of contagious diseases; scarlet fever, measles, and typhoid, were a fact of life. How these epidemics were viewed, how people dealt with them and how they affected and changed people's lives offers interesting avenues of exploration for students[4].

Many urban students live close to historic quarantine stations. If a visit can be arranged to one then there is a unique context for study in the offing for your students. Even if a visit cannot be arranged, local newspapers articles now available at Papers Past <*http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/*> featured interesting tales about some of the more unfortunate ships with contagious diseases aboard and immigrants who never managed to reach our shores that provide a window to attitudes and beliefs of the day first-hand.

Cemeteries transmit symbolic and literal statements about past cultures, identity and place

Historic cemeteries reveal much about the importance of culture and place for past communities and tell much about dominant cultures and groups that occupied specific landscapes in times past. While much of past has been 'reworked', 'erased' or 'written over' in or more populous towns and cities this is often not the case with cemeteries. The value of the historic cemetery as is gradually being raised in the consciousness of 21st century New Zealanders. As issues such as identity and heritage assume greater importance in pakeha culture the cemetery is becoming appreciated after being ignored for too long for the insights we gain about what people of the past thought, felt and did, and what they though was important.

Culture and place: Use of the historic cemetery as an educational resource can enrich our cultural understanding of historic groups for whom so little can remain today in written form. Visiting a local cemetery can reveal much about the contributions of leaders, individuals and groups and their connections with particular places. Figures 4a and 4b below show examples of headstones from two quite different cultural groups that have had an important place in the growth and development of Otago and beyond.

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[4]An epidemics resource is available at http://216.67.224.201/~cemeteri/HCCTNZEdResources/Mortality/Epidemics.pdf Other background resources are worth exploring including the Otago Quarantine Station resource which provides a readily accessible database of the number and cause of deaths occurring on specific ships arriving at Port Chalmers between 1863 and 1880 that teachers may find useful. Visit http://216.67.224.201/~cemeteri/HCCTNZEdResources/Mortality/QuarantineIsland.pdf

Figure 4a: Headstones in the Chinese section of Dunedin's Southern Cemetery.

This photograph illustrates the Chinese section of Dunedin's Southern Cemetery

The headstone for Yuet Sheer Long who is buried in Dunedin's Southern Cemetery Chinese section.

A modern reconstruction of Mun Goon's headstone. The original has sustained too much damage to be repaired

Headstones in the Chinese section of Dunedin's Southern Cemetery tell of many Chinese sojourner gold seekers who came to Otago and who endured incredible hardships and cultural and physical isolation. Many of these headstones now provide the only record that exists today of men from Poon Yue province in Southern China who were never able to return to their families and homelands. When combined with Genealogy Society transcripts and translations the data from these headstones tell a unique demographic story. The story can be rounded out with original resources and secondary resources many of which are available online[5].

Figure 4b: Headstones of pioneers and colliery workers – Old Kaitangata Cemetery South Otago.

Old Kaitangata Cemetery: The headstones catalogue the families who collected in the area in early days of the south Otago settlement and include information about the mine accidents that have been a hazard of those working and living there.

This headstone commemorates John Molloy and his two sons John (15) and Edward (13) killed in the 1879 explosion.

Headstone commemorating Samuel Coulter another of the 34 miners who were to lose their lives in the disaster.

While some headstones speak of what was achieved and what was valued within different communities. Others offer literal statements such as 'killed by a fall of rock' or as in Figure 4b above "killed in the Kaitangata Explosion Feb 21st 1879" that not only say much about what community members may have done on a daily basis, but can open our eyes today to the realities and the hazards involved in the social and working conditions at the time. Imagine the difficulties experienced by the remaining dependents of the Molloy family that involved the loss of not one but three incomes[6].

Our cemeteries attest to a culture of memorialisation that reached a high point in the late Victorian and Edwardian years. Wealth and status were important to many historical groups and this was not only marked in the houses one lived in but the size, and position of the plots and memorials erected over the plots where one was buried. Accordingly our historic cemeteries can vary greatly in the way they look and feel to us today. While wealth and

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[5] The Chinese Goldseekers teaching unit is available from http://216.67.224.201/~cemeteri/HCCTNZEdResources/PeoplingNZ/The Chinese Goldseekers.pdf

[6] Some events lend themselves well to student projects. A photo story of the Kaitangata mining disaster is available at http://216.67.224.201/~cemeteri/HCCTNZEdResources/Projects/Kaitangata.pdf Other photo stories are also available.

importance are ostentatiously displayed in many areas of Dunedin's Northern and Southern cemeteries with aspiring obelisks and towering columns an altogether different look is commonly achieved elsewhere. Nevertheless or smaller cemeteries contain some interesting areas of study for primary and secondary students

Cemeteries offer insight into the religious beliefs and religious composition of historical groups.

The 'content' (artefacts) of cemeteries can be seen as a material expression of social and cultural values. Understanding the meanings underpinning Victorian and Edwardian symbolism is a study in itself and recognising symbols, texts and meaning on headstones offers interesting avenues of exploration for students as well. Students can record their local cemetery symbolism and investigate the hidden messages and meanings behind these symbols that meant so much and tell us so much about the strongly held beliefs of some historic groups. For Victorians these symbols were also a part of popular culture and featured on postcards and jewellery as well as headstones. There is information available on the Internet generally and on the HCCTNZ website to help with identifying symbols and understanding their hidden meanings[7].

Figure 5: Symbols with embedded meaning were common in late 19th century and early 20th century. These examples show matching symbols from postcards and headstones. These two examples, one of the anchor and one of the cross show different representations of deep religious faith.

Above: Post card with anchor and roses. Right Anchors featuring on headstones were widely used as a symbol of faith.

Above: Post card featuring women clinging to a cross.Right: a similar scene can be seen on this headstone.

Important also for many historic groups were the strongly held Christian beliefs and faith in the resurrection. Many symbols and texts appear on headstones that attest to the hope of rejoining loved ones in the afterlife, or hopes expressed in being adjudged well at the Day of Judgement. Students can collect data on types of motifs that were commonly used and when. Data gathered can be as simple a comparison as religious and non-religious symbols or it can be much more detailed[8].

Figure 6: Illustrates several types of epithets commonly found in our historic cemeteries. 1. Fate, 2. Mortality of man, 3.The day of Judgement and the Resurrection.

1.

2.

Mourn not for me my comrades dear
I am not dead but sleeping here
My end you know, my grave you see
Prepare yourself to follow me.

Northern Cemetery Dunedin

3. A few short years of evil past,
We reach this happy shore,
Where death divided friends at last,
Shall meet to part no more.
Oh may we stand before the lamb,
When Earth and seas are fled,
And hear the judge pronounce our name
With blessings on our heads.

Mitchell Grave Northern Cemetery Dunedin

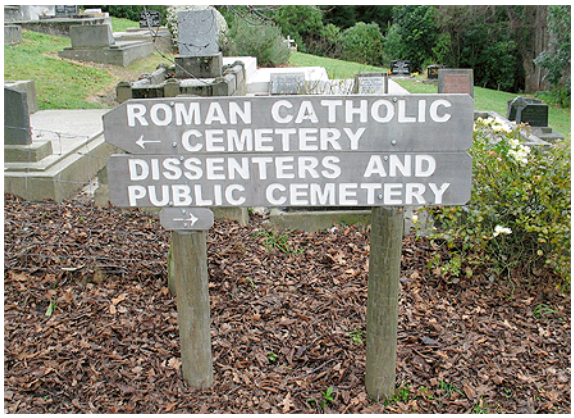
[7] A number of visual identification resources are available for teachers interested in having students investigate cemetery symbolism. These are available from http://216.67.224.201/~cemeteri/HCCTNZEdResources/Memorials.html

[8] More about epitaphs can be found in the fact sheet set available at http://216.67.224.201/~cemeteri/HCCTNZEdResources/Memorials/Epitaphs.pdf

Epitaphs were often included for edification and contemplation. Students can collect data on the popularity of introductory terms, “Sacred to the memory of” or “ In Loving Memory of” or “In remembrance of,” recording when these were used and plotting results by decade. Epithets often appear at the foot of the information on a headstone and these can also be classified. Again data gathered can be as simple a comparison as religious and non- religious epithets or the comparisons can be more finely nuanced depending on the age group.

Areas of cemeteries were commonly divided into separate areas based on religious beliefs. Catholic and protestant religious groups were clearly differentiated in almost all cemeteries and in some places occupy quite separate cemeteries. Preparing trails for students within a particular section or charting the type and extent of symbolism between different religious section of the cemetery may be an appropriate study in larger cemeteries, where different areas for different groups have been set aside.

Figure 7: Signage showing the religious differentiations at Akaroa Cemetery still evident today. Dissenters and public cemetery means anyone not of Church of England faith.



Cemeteries offer insight into the ethnic composition of historical groups.

Many of New Zealand’s oldest cemeteries were not only organised into different areas based on religious affiliations but also many offered separate areas for the burials of non-Christians. Separate Jewish and Chinese sections can be found at Dunedin’s Southern Cemetery. Combined with other resources can make interesting investigations for students[9]. Separate Chinese sections are also found in several goldfields cemeteries in Otago and Westland. Later cemeteries such as Dunedin’s Northern Cemetery tend to be more inclusive of different ethic groups and religious affiliations.

Figure 7: Shows views over two separately designated areas for non-Christian burials at Dunedin’s Southern Cemetery.

View over Jewish Section.

View over Chinese Section.

Many other headstone inscriptions state where incumbents may have come from or been born. For example a headstone may state “Native of Orkney” or ‘Born in Edinburgh.’ Yet others may utilise symbols to show origins such as a rose (from England) or a thistle (from Scotland).

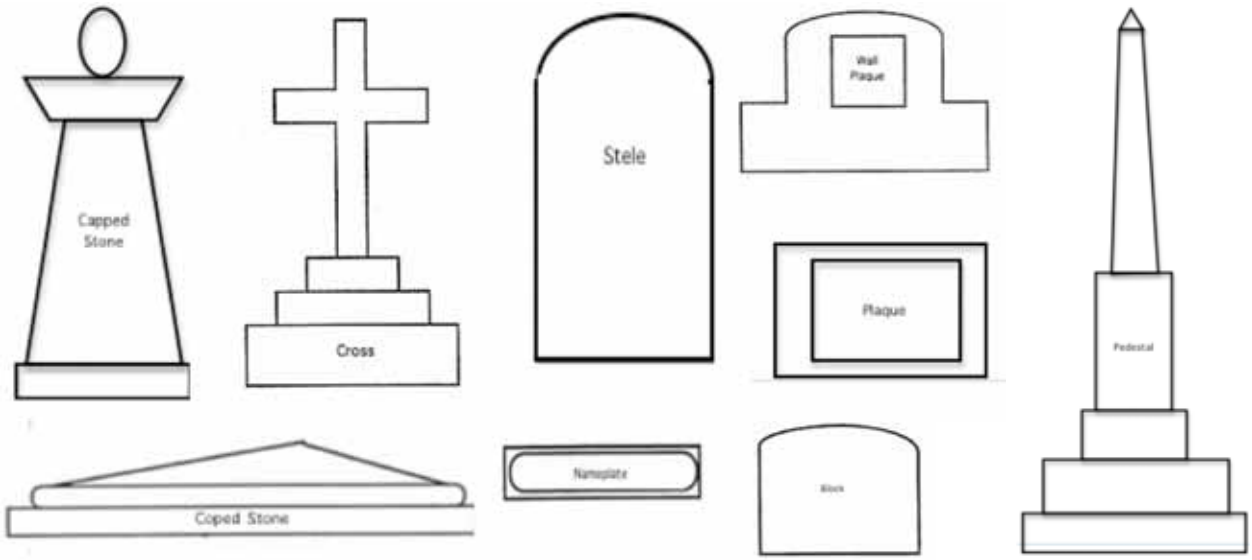
[9] Teachers are encouraged to consider having students explore other cultural groups where these exist in local cemeteries. Some urban cemeteries have separate Jewish sections. A unit that investigates Dunedin’s early Jewish community can be found at http://216.67.224.201/~cemeteri/HCCTNZEdResources/PeoplingNZ.html

Cemeteries offer perspectives on changing culture, beliefs and attitudes in New Zealand

One of the most noticeable features of any cemetery is the variety of memorial types to be seen. The combination of variety with a degree of standardisation means that gravestones offer an opportunity for classification. Have students look at the forms of memorials and chart their popularity over time. Today, when we visit many cemeteries where there is evidence of sustained use over time, we can readily trace the changes that have occurred and this can provide a simple and useful analysis for students. Have students investigate changing memorial types in their local cemetery. Younger students can seek out and photograph a headstone from each decade in a designated area and compare and describe changes as in Figure 8 below while older students could undertake a more detailed data collection using the categories illustrated in Figure 9 below (Edgar, 1995). [10]

Figure 8: Illustrates changing trends in monument styles by decade at a small long-term use cemetery.

Figure 9: Another form of analysis is to record the numbers of headstones in the following shape categories and the dates by decade when they were first erected.



[10] The memorialisation teaching unit is available at http://216.67.224.201/~cemeteri/HCCTNZEdResources/Memorials.html

Changes in monument styles may also be used to infer meaning with respect to social and political structures. Smaller headstones, more uniformity and less individualism in types of memorials can be attributed to changing beliefs about memorialisation and a move towards a more egalitarian society that was apparent in New Zealand from the 1920s onwards.

The impact of the first World War is marked on our cemeteries, both in the numbers of memorials to men on family headstones who did not return and the repercussions that a national grieving process ultimately had on simplifying styles of memorialisation. Both topics are of great interest to the social science students.

If your school has a WW1 roll of honour board or memorial archway consider having students establish a heritage trail for your wider school community that makes connections between the men listed on the honour boards, community memorials and local cemetery headstones. The outpouring of collective public feeling resulting in community war memorials being erected around the country reveals much about power, social status and ideology as well as gender and race (McLean & Philips, 1990) making for an interesting study for older students.

Younger students can find out much about these men from online databases, from local museum holdings or from local history groups; where they were posted, where they fought, and where they are buried. Not only can students connect to the Gallipoli battles, and those of the Western Front, including Passchendaele and Ypres, but often these headstones will refer to little known or largely forgotten theatres of war such as New Zealand's involvement in Samoa, the Imperial Camel Corps in Palestine or WW1 or 2 torpedoed navy vessels.

Figure 10: A selection of memorial; headstones commemorating action during New Zealand's involvement during the two world wars.

Trooper John Wood. Killed in Action at Damascus 1917. Imperial Camel Corps

Preston Logan Killed in Action Gallipoli May 1914. Auckland Mounted Rifles

Coll Boyd McDonald (Cadet) killed when the training ship S.S. Aparima was torpedoed in the English Channel in 1917.

Ian Grant Killed on H.M.S Achilles during the battle with Graf Spee at the River Plate in 1939.

An interesting study for students is to collate data for and analyse the numbers of men who served in various military units based on the insignia on the headstones of returned servicemen. Students can find out about the insignia of different units and where they served, comparing the numbers who served under each insignia and the various armed forces and considering the differences that can be observed between the two World Wars[11].

Figure 11: Example from a portion of a data collation sheet for students studying CWGC headstones in a returned servicemen's section of the cemetery.

Symbol (Insignia)	Meaning & Tally	Symbol (Insignia)	Meaning & Tally	Symbol (Insignia)	Meaning & Tally
					

[11] The teaching unit Using school and community war memorials is available at http://216.67.224.201/~cemeteri/HCCTNZEdResources/WarMemorials/UsingWarMemorials.pdf

Maintaining cemetery heritage

Other forms of cemetery interpretation and analysis are possible that make connections with materials science and the technology curriculum. Have students gather data about the types of materials that are most commonly used for headstones. Strangely this has changed little over time except that technological advances have seen greater use of harder granite stone in more recent times that has been impossible in the past. Have students analyse the materials used against decade to illuminate changing trends in the use of various stones, wood, metal and concrete.

Figure 12: Trends can be seen in the types of materials used for headstones in historic cemeteries.

Limestone and sandstone *Marble* *Granite* *Slate* *Other eg wood*

Studies of the types of materials used can involve the science teacher. The cemetery abounds in opportunities for students to study earth science and see first hand a range of chemical and physical weathering processes[12] that affect various stone types. Set up trails or encourage students to identify a conservation action project.

Raising the public consciousness of the value of New Zealand cemetery heritage through education

Cemeteries can and do provide compelling resources for social science investigations each containing hundreds of individual monuments and associated material artefacts such as symbols, and texts which are still visible and which can tell us so much about the past lives of individuals, groups and communities.

While these are sites that are important to a wide range of people in the local community it remains a sad fact that many of the historical, and anthropological aspects of their value are not as widely perceived or appreciated as they could be. Through communicating these aspects, individuals and communities may come to appreciate them and protect them, which in turn can reduce vandalism and degradation (Mytum, 2007).

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Mytum, Harold. (2000). *Analysing historic graveyards. Practical Handbook in Archaeology 15.* York: Council for British Archaeology. Reprinted in 2008.

[12] A number of resources are available for teachers interested in exploring a science and conservation action project in the cemetery at http://216.67.224.201/~cemeteri/HCCTNZEdResources/Conservation.html Resources include a teaching unit, and photostory resources.

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