

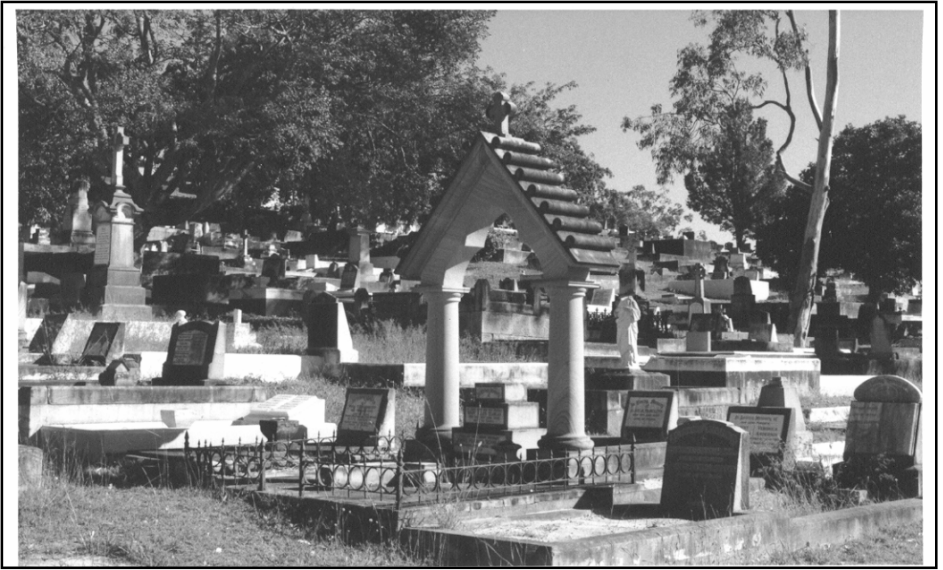


Restoration ♦ Respect ♦ Responsibility

VOLUME No 3 ISSUE No 1 MARCH 2005



In this issue: Lady Tina Middleton



WHO WE ARE

The Friends of Balmoral Cemetery Inc is a growing band of committed volunteers who are working to protect and preserve Balmoral Cemetery, an important part of Brisbane's history and which opened around 1874. The Friends' motto of "Restoration, Respect, Responsibility" serves as a reminder that we can all play a part in protecting our heritage in our own small way.

On 28 July 2001, an interim committee of the Friends of Balmoral Cemetery was endorsed at a community meeting chaired by then Councillor for Morningside, Sharon Humphreys. This public meeting was well attended by the local community, many of whom became FOBC's first members.

In 2003 FOBC developed its constitution and was incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act.

We are an independent, not-for-profit incorporated association and we work closely with the Brisbane City Council on matters relating to Balmoral Cemetery.

WHAT WE DO

The Balmoral Cemetery is an important community resource as well as a place of respect. In a way, it's a bit like an open-air museum! Some of our area's earliest written history and monumental artwork can be found there.

FOBC works to improve the overall appearance of the site through clean ups, tree pruning, rubbish removal and some restoration work. We are also working hard to document the history of the cemetery and prepare heritage trails, school activities and genealogical services.

Visit us on the web at www.balmoralcemetery.com

GET INVOLVED!

The Friends of Balmoral Cemetery Inc is a voluntary organisation and we invite local community members to become involved. For more information about the Friends, or to join, please:

Write to: PO Box 330, Morningside Q 4170

Telephone: 07 3395 7916

Email: bettysinden@bigpond.com

Our meetings are held on the second Wednesday of every month from 7:30pm, at the Morningside Services Club, Wynnum Rd, Morningside. Members and observers are welcome to attend.

Acknowledgements

We extend our thanks to FOBC photographer Neville Bulley, and Elizabeth Smith who provided us with the photographs for this issue of the FOBC Newsletter. We extend our thanks to FOBC member Elizabeth Smith and Secretary Betty Sinden for the Research.

Lady Tina Middleton

Here is a brief look at the life of Elizabeth Middleton, nee Elizabeth Rosalie Okeden Pockley who was known as Tina. She was born in the south west of Queensland in Roma, a town which at the time considered to be a far-flung outpost of the British Empire.

Tina was born on 22nd July 1909 at Roma Downs, her father's sheep station. Tina's mother was the former Rosalie Gertrude Parry-Okeden who had married Harry Richardson Pockley. Rosalie was born in Charleville where her father, W E Parry-Okeden, was police magistrate.

Harry Pockley was the son of a sailor, Robert Pockley, who was a famous Port Jackson harbour master. Tina was overseas when her father died in 1926.

Tina was the fourth of five children, Robert, David, Dorothy and Ruth. She had a warm personality and was loved by everyone, especially her father.

Her childhood at Roma Downs was happy and carefree. Governesses educated her and her siblings until they were old enough to go away to school, Tina to New England Girls School, Armidale. Here she learnt to correctly use a knife and fork, wear a hat with style, converse with grace and charm, but not how to spell. Throughout her life, her letters often needed translating because of that 'ladylike' education.

Tina's love of travel began in 1927 when she was eighteen. Her early tours to Singapore, Colombo and Thursday Island were by cruise ship. In 1928 she travelled to Europe and North Africa, not returning to Australia until 1950. In 1930, Tina was in Berne, Switzerland where she met George Middleton.

George Humphrey Middleton was born in 1910, the son of an English father and a French mother and much of his childhood was spent in Paris. He was educated in Kent and Oxford and spent time in Spain and Germany after university. He was an accomplished linguist and spoke several languages. His career in the British diplomatic service took him and Tina around the world and back again many times. He was knighted for his service in the Queen's New Year Honours list in 1958.

When George was appointed to Concepcion, he contacted Tina asking her to marry him in Buenos Aires. They were married on the 29th October 1934 in St Johns Proccathedral. As she had no family with her, a British government official gave Tina away.

In 1936 George was transferred to New York where they spent the next few years. Tina's family visited and her mother stayed for a few months.

Tina and George were then in Oxford before going to Poland in 1939. In Oxford, Tina spent time with the family, recalling her dancing days with brother David, when they pirouetted around and through the cloisters of Oxford University.

When Germany invaded Poland on the 1st September 1939, Tina and George were in Lwow when the air raids began. Tina commented 'It is utterly horrible and shocking to realise that the people in these planes are actually trying to kill one. I remember thinking all the time – they really must stop this'.

When pro-British crowds surrounded the consulate Tina was

photographing them when an overly officious police officer arrested her on suspicion of being a German spy. On the same evening, a local missionary visited and as Tina said, 'He talked to me for the good of my soul, told me I should be proud and honoured if I was chosen to be martyred'. When the missionary left Lwow, Tina's comment was 'The missionary left me the honour and the glory of being martyred'.

On leaving the country, she and some refugees and officials spent six hours at the Romanian frontier with a customs officer dressed something like an admiral of the navy who insisted they drink champagne and brandy between stamping each passport.

'Between every bottle', Tina said, 'he would shout, "God save the King" and then he'd kiss my hand

and stamp a passport. We would then cry, "Long live Romania!" and buy another bottle'. Soon, passport or no passport, friend and enemy alike, they were all too full of champagne to care.

By the 17th September, George and Tina were on their way to Bucharest. There, Tina said 'All I want to do is sleep for a week, waking at intervals to eat and have hot baths, I am so dirty'.

After Poland, George continued diplomatic work in Romania, Transylvania and Genoa, Italy. When Mussolini was preparing to have Italy join the axis powers, it was decided that Tina should return to Britain.



Tina arrived in Paris but stayed too long and was almost trapped by the German advance. She made her way by truck to meet a relative of George's who was a French general in charge of the district. His advice was that she should go to St Malo, and she arrived the day before the Germans captured the town. Tina managed to get passage on a troopship returning to Britain.

In 1940, George was posted to the Portuguese-controlled Madeira Islands off the northwest coast of Africa. Tina was acting as liaison officer for the civil population of Gibraltar, who had been evacuated there. She helped in the hospital where the patients included hundreds of men rescued from rafts and small boats, victims of the fleet of German submarines.

Tina was 'trained' for hospital work there. She said, 'A person gave me an orange and a syringe and sort of showed me how to give an injection. I closed my eyes and poked the needle into the orange and hoped I would never have to do that to a person. Other than that, there was no training. We just did it'.



In 1944, George was appointed to the post of second secretary to the Ambassador in Washington DC. Once again, Rosalie, Dorothy and Ruth joined them. They crossed the Pacific Ocean in the middle of the War in the Pacific, unscathed.

Tina set out to tour the United States once hostilities had settled, and saw 26 of the 48 states that then made up the nation. She made dear and lasting friendships, and kept up correspondence with Americans she met on those trips into her old age until her eyesight stopped her. Tina drove herself in a series of cars. She loved cars and driving all her life. One of the trips she made was in a Packard convertible, and she always spoke about the car as though it had been a friend rather than a vehicle.

1949 saw Tina and George holidaying in Cannes. Tina loved George's father and also got along with his father's second wife, Gabrielle. This was one of the last occasions when Tina and George holidayed together.

In the late 1940's, Tina decided that, if Agatha Christie and Ngaio Marsh could write murder mysteries, so could she. The result was the novel, *Murder in Mid-Atlantic*, which was taken up and published by Hammond and Hammond. As a pseudonym, Tina borrowed the name Elizabeth Antill from another branch of the Pockley family. She continued with the penname but newspaper and magazine pieces at the time acknowledged her as a crime writer and wife of a diplomat under her real name. Her identity was no secret. The British royalties from her contract were unlikely to bring her wealth on the published price of eight shillings and sixpence.

Murder in Mid-Atlantic received generally warm reviews and Hammond and Hammond happily published Tina's next book, *Death on the Barrier Reef*, in 1952. Reviews this time were far more laudatory.

1950 was the year when Tina returned to Brisbane for the first time in twenty-two years. Her mother and sister, Ruth, accompanied her on this trip home.



The Courier-Mail the paper, was ecstatic to have Tina home in Brisbane. In an article about a single person, could combine skills and attributes as diverse as diplomacy, writing detective novels, participating in a recent war, world travelling and knowledge of the world's high society. As a bonus, Tina was a member of the influential Queensland pioneering family, the Parry-Okedens. The three women were then living at a Margate beach

house that had been built many years before by W E Parry-Okeden and *The Redcliffe Herald* was able to get a few Tina stories into print, too.

The reason for Tina's return was that her mother was critically ill with cancer. The sisters cared for their mother until her death in December 1950, aged seventy-four years. George Middleton came to Brisbane to attend her funeral. Rosalie was buried in the Parry-Okeden plot at the Balmoral Cemetery with her father and grandfather. She had asked that she not be laid to rest with her husband, Harry, who is in a separate plot in Balmoral, but not too far away.

When George was posted to Tehran in Persia, later Iran, Tina was very taken with the King of Kings, His Imperial Majesty, Shah of Persia. The Shah's father started life as an illiterate mule driver but ended his life sitting on the Peacock Throne of Persia, wealthy beyond belief.

Relations with Britain were severed and the Middleton's were again on the move. Leaving Tehran, the trip from Persia took twelve days journey through Iraq, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon with George and Tina finally arriving back in London.

It was around this time that their marriage foundered but Tina stayed on to protect George's career. To all appearances, they were the very talented rising diplomat and his vivacious and charming wife. Tina took her role as a diplomat's wife very seriously and always spoke of it as her 'job'. In India she was the one who undertook to learn family histories, like that of His Highness the Maharaja of Sikkim. Tina was always meticulous about knowing the ins and outs, the feuds and family connections, which members of Indian society were talking to whom and who was not. For all the highly placed people with whom she came into contact, she learned the rigid rules about who could be spoken about, who was never to be mentioned, who had what interests and, what she enjoyed the most, all the scandals. She was obviously very good at her 'job'.

Like many women, she fell under the spell of the hero of India's independence, Pandit Nehru. Tina carefully maintained her apparent delight in and enthusiasm for all the social functions she was expected to attend. A major event in 1953 was the Hunt party conquest of Mt Everest and a reception was held for them at which Tina presided.

Whenever Tina was asked which, of all the countries she knew and had lived in, would she choose to be 'home', she always answered 'India'. From their arrival there until her death, it was to India that her thoughts turned.

Tina was busy as ever during George's posting in the Persian Gulf. She was regularly photographed by local and foreign press agencies visiting child welfare clinics, and opening trade schools she once hosted a luncheon for the Admiral of the Fleet, Earl Mountbatten.

After the Persian Gulf posting, George and Tina were again in

Argentina and then George was given a posting in 1964 as Ambassador to the United Arab Republic, his embassy in Cairo.

The end of George's diplomatic reign in Cairo was also the end of his marriage. Tina decided enough was enough and headed home to Brisbane



where she bought a house in Hamilton. From there, she applied through her London solicitor for a divorce from George on the grounds of adultery. The court decided the marriage had broken down irretrievably and the divorce certificate was issued on 22nd October 1971.

George had a reputation for being mean with money and it is sad that he was parsimonious to the end. Tina had to resort again to the courts to get anything like a satisfactory living allowance from George after their divorce.

Once retired, Tina kept herself busy playing bridge, which she did well, and playing the stock market, which she had done adroitly for years, and gardening. Her travel bug was still active and she toured within Australia and overseas whenever the chance arose. In 1990, she went to south-east Asia which she had never seen.

From her house, Tina moved into a unit in Hamilton and began the sad task of unravelling her life. There were attempts to give some of her collected art to museums and art galleries but few things were taken.

As she aged and with her eyesight failing badly, Tina finally admitted she could no longer adequately care for herself and decided she should enter a retirement home. Because she could no longer drive, other family members took her looking for the perfect last home where she hoped she would be happy. She finally settled on a retirement village at Durack in Brisbane.

Although there were upheavals and increasingly strident demands that troubled her family and friends in her last years, there were times when the Tina of old still delighted them. The wit and sophistication, the sometimes unnerving honesty and the radical views, and her charm, were always on show at any social function. To the end, Tina was the life of any party.

Tina died of stroke on the 3rd June 1997. Her ashes were placed in the Pockley plot where lie the body and ashes of her father Harry Pockley, her brother David Pockley and David's wife Hilda in Balmoral Cemetery. George died in 1998, eight months after Tina.

Thanks to FOBC member Elizabeth Smith for the Lady Tina Middleton story.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Betty, Kelvin and Friends

I am writing to you to express my appreciation of your efforts and those of the Camp Hill Police, Sharon Humphreys, Kevin Rudd and 'a local resident' to apprehend those responsible for damaging my grandmother Mary Little's grave in Balmoral Cemetery on 21 January and to initiate repairs to the memorial on the gravesite.

Robert and Mary Little's eldest son Francis William (b.1881) became a member of the 1st Australian Imperial Force in July 1915, serving in Australia until discharged on 23 December 1915. He re-enlisted in the AIF on 9 January 1917 and was allotted Army no. 6568. He served overseas in England, Belgium and France with the 7th Australian Training Battalion, 26th Australian Infantry Battalion. He was killed in France in the Battle of the Somme on September 2nd 1918.

Francis William has no known grave but his name is inscribed on the Villiers-Bretonneux, wall which is 16 kms east of Amiens on the straight main road to St Quentin.

His name is also inscribed on the honour board of Toowoomba Grammar School as an Old Boy killed in action in the Great War 1914-18.

Mary Little was the mother of my mother Ellen Margaret who married my father Geoffrey Ward in 1915. As an officer in the 15th Battalion AIF he left for France in 1917. Also in France then was Ellen Margaret's other brother Edward Michael Little who was a private in the 9th Battalion AIF.

Edward Michael had previously been in the Gallipoli landing, was wounded in May 1915, and suffered from dysentery on many occasions. His unit arrived in France late in 1916 and after service in the field he embarked for Australia in October 1918.

Edward Michael was a broken man when he returned to Australia where he tried to make a life with a wife and family on the land—which was not very successful. He died in 1945 in Brisbane.

My father also came back to Australia in 1919—otherwise there would not have been Brian born 1920, Patricia born 1924 or Valerie born 1927! He became a successful business man but more importantly, he was an active member of Legacy from 1928, including being president in 1936-37, until his death in 1979.

After reading this short extract from my family records you will be able to imagine perhaps what *my* mother and her sisters and brothers must have gone through while their men were experiencing war under horrific conditions so far away from Australia.

When Mary Little died in 1907 she was a widow—her police sergeant husband having died in Toowoomba in 1894—so it must have been the idea of her daughters and the other family members to suitably honour their brother Francis William with a memorial stone fixed to their mother's grave. Francis had no family himself as he had not married.

And THAT is why I feel so grateful that someone has made sure that that memorial is still there after the despicable act of vandalism by some youths who have never had to go halfway around the world to fight for their country's freedom.

Once again please accept my grateful thanks.

Yours sincerely

(Mrs) Patricia L Ryan nee Ward.

Have you some interesting information you would like to share with our readers?

Maybe you have an interesting bit of local history, or perhaps you just like the articles that we publish in our news letter.

We would love to hear from you.

Why not write to the Editor:-

Letters to the Editor

PO Box 330,

Morningside Qld 4170

Telephone: 07 3395 7916

Email: bettysinden@bigpond.com



FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH

Many people are taking up the challenge of family history research, and most of us who have started down this track have found it is a very steep learning curve. Hopefully the members of our group, through this magazine, will try to make your learning curve not quite as steep as ours.

The question could reasonably be asked what is the link between our group, Friends of Balmoral Cemetery and family history research?

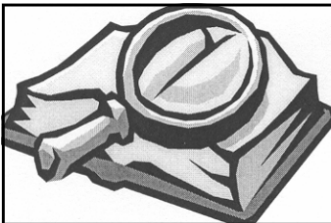
The link is names and dates of which the average cemetery has many! Cemeteries are a wealth of historic information, but the real problem is tracking this information and this is how our group has a link with family history. We are compiling details of historic graves at Balmoral Cemetery. You may have relatives buried at this cemetery or there may be people of the same name that at first pass are not connected with your family but after a few years of research there is a link from the distant past.

So, back to family history research, where do you start?

The first place to commence your quest is with family members, particularly older members of the family. These people will prove a good starting position. This then leads you to cemetery records to check information that the relatives have provided. Once you have few names you can start requesting information from Births, Deaths and Marriages registrars. A lot of churches have Parish Registers that contain information relating to Births, Baptisms, Marriages and Burials. Another source of information is telephone directories, where you have lists of people with the same name. You can write to these people, and whilst they won't all reply you will be able to piece together some parts of the jigsaw puzzle that is your ancestry. The National War Memorial, National Archives and state archives are all valuable resources for family research.

Please note that the John Oxley Library genealogy resources are temporarily located at Cannon Hill.

There are many resources out there that can all help you fit the pieces of the jigsaw together and I am going to endeavour to provide a few hints and resources that just may help you with your quest to discover your ancestors.



Robert Hanley

Friends of Balmoral Cemetery Inc
PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2004

The Friends of Balmoral Cemetery Inc continued to go from strength to strength over the past twelve months.

Our executive committee works tirelessly to further the aims and objectives of the organisation. We welcomed Shelley Steele as our new Vice-President in 2004, and together with Secretary Betty Sinden, Treasurer Sue Speed and myself, we have been coordinating FOBC's activities and raising the profile of the group.

Our membership has grown to over 50 people – a tremendous achievement! Thank you to our members, one and all, for their support.

Continued media coverage of our activities through the South East Advertiser and The Courier-Mail have highlighted our successes. As well, FOBC continues to liaise with local history groups in South East Queensland and some of our research has been donated to the State Library of Queensland.

The regular FOBC newsletter continues to be well received by the community and is a popular local publication.

And FOBC is visible in the community, with stalls at local fairs and fetes, and a strong presence at the Queensland Association of Local and Family History Groups Local History Fair which was held at the Mt Gravatt Showgrounds.

2004 saw the possibilities associated for a local museum being established in Morningside. FOBC inc. will monitor the progress on this issue and keep the community informed in the future journals articles as we progress into 2005.

My other aim as President of FOBC Inc. in 2005 is to see grant assisted heritage trails in the cemetery and to establish processes and systems to ensure that where possible damaged graves are restored in Balmoral Cemetery

My thanks to the FOBC executive committee, members, local elected representatives and the community for their strong support for the work of the Friends of Balmoral Cemetery.

Editorial Note

Are you undertaking family research? Are you looking for information about a long lost relative? Perhaps one of our readers has that elusive clue.

Do you have some local pioneers in your family that you would like to share with our readers or some interesting local history you would like to tell us about? Why not write an article for our newsletter?

We are always looking for interesting pieces of local history to broaden our knowledge of the past. We are not concerned if they are short snippets or long feature articles.

When preparing articles please type the article with double space lines using Arial 10—12, Courier 10—12 or Times New Roman 10-12. Please quote all references sighted and include contact details so that we can get in touch if we have any questions.

We are happy for you to include photographs with your article.

Please forward all articles, letters to the editor or any other correspondence to:

The Secretary,

Friends of Balmoral Cemetery Inc

PO Box 330,

Morningside Qld 4170

Telephone: 07 3395 7916

Email: bettyinden@bigpond.com

From FOBC's Words of Wisdom, heritage trail.

The only one of its kind, a wooden grave marker in the cemetery, in Section 3,

The wooden grave marker is a basic anthropomorphic design, that is, a stylized representation of the head and shoulders of a human figure from the mid Victorian period.

The inscription is illegible. One of our members, Julie, chalk rubbed the marker and revealed the following inscription:

To the memory of our little boy
Harold James Doyle
Died March 22 1894 11 months
also
Jane Kirby
Our records indicate Jane Kirby was his mother,
Date of her burial 12 December 1936 Aged 75

