

Rangitikei District Council

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Cemetery Administration

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Related Legislation

Burial and Cremation Act 1964

Burial and Cremation (Removal of Monuments and Tables) Regulations 1967 NZS 9201
Chapter 14: 1972 Model General Bylaws

Cemeteries and Crematoria

Cremation Regulations 1939

New Zealand Master Monumental Masons Association Cemetery Planning Manual

General Information

Burial and Sale of Plots

You can arrange for a burial in any cemetery under the control of Rangitikei District Council.

Burial Plots

You can purchase burial plots from the Council at the current approved rate set out in the Annual Fees and Charges.

Provision for all Interments

You must have a burial warrant, completed by Council's Community Services staff, before the burial takes place.

Out of District Burials

You can arrange for a burial from outside the district at any cemetery under the control of Rangitikei District Council so long as the current approved 'out of district' fee (set out in the Annual Fees and Charges) is paid.

Notification of Intended Burials

Your funeral director needs to notify Council's Community Services staff at least one working day before the time fixed for the burial.

Hours of Funerals

Funerals are held between the hours of 8.00 am and 5.00 pm Monday to Friday and 8.00 am to 1.00 pm on Saturday. Only Council can vary these hours.

Sexton to Supervise Digging of Grave

Grave diggers/sextons employed by the cemetery contractor are the only people authorised to dig a grave or open the ground for burial in any part of any cemetery. Ratana Cemetery is the only exception to this rule where the township people dig the grave.

Sextons carry out their duties in accordance with the current Management of Parks and Reserve Contract District Wide.

Burial of Ashes

You can apply to the Council to place an urn of ashes. You will need to pay the current approved fee set out in the Annual Fees and Charges.

The sexton will dig the hole and can place the ashes. Alternatively, the family can dig the hole and place the ashes.

Fees

All cemetery fees are set out in Council's Fees and Charges book. The fees are reviewed each year.

Purchase of the Exclusive Right of Burial

- 1 You can arrange with the Council to purchase a plot for your exclusive use. You will need to pay the current plot fee.
- 2 If you lose the original purchase agreement document, you can ask the Community Services staff to issue a duplicate document at a cost of \$1.00.
- 3 You may sell the plot back to Council for the same price that you paid for it. The plot is then available for allocation in the usual way.
- 4 You must pay the purchase price of an exclusive plot with 6 months of the agreement date. If Council does not receive full payment within that period, then the agreement will lapse.

Keeping Graves in Order

Families are responsible for keeping graves tidy.

Keeping Cemetery in Order

As a purchaser/owner of a plot, you are responsible for keeping all kerbs, enclosures, tombstones, headstones and other monuments in proper order and a good state of repair.

The Burial and Cremations (Removal of Monuments and Tablets) Regulations 1967 provides for Council to remove any monuments, tablets and fences or erections where they are in a state of decay or disrepair, subject to section 9 of the Burial and Cremation Act 1964.

If there is no one available to make repairs or authorise removal, then Council will make a photographic record of the plot prior to removal and file this with the cemetery records.

Shrubs and Trees

Council staff or contractors may trim or remove shrubs in a cemetery at any time.

You need the permission of Council to plant a tree in a cemetery.

What Fees Cover

The fee you pay covers only the actual digging of the grave and the filling in after the burial.

Levelling

Where the plot is enclosed, all levelling is at the purchaser/owner's cost. You are responsible for meeting the requirements of the current Management of Parks and Reserves Contract District Wide.

You are responsible for removing all earth and rubbish not used for filling in the grave or for levelling to a place approved by the sexton. You must do this within 3 months of filling in the grave.

Vaults

If you have purchased the exclusive right of burial in any plot, you may seek permission from Council to excavate to the plot boundaries in order to construct a vault.

- 1 Before construction, you must submit your plans and specifications for the work to Council for its approval. You may not commence work until Council gives you approval in writing.
- 2 Vaults must be lined with masonry, concrete, stone or other approved material. Entrances must be securely fastened. All work must be done to Council's satisfaction.
- 3 You must give the sexton a duplicate key to each vault.
- 4 Coffins for vaults must be lined with an agreed thickness of lead or other approved materials. They must be firmly and securely sealed. Coffins that are not lined may be laid in vaults but they must be completely encased in concrete to prevent the escape of offensive odours.
- 5 The person constructing the vault must provide all materials, labour and tools for the construction and excavation.
- 6 As the purchaser/owner, you are responsible for keeping the vault in proper order and in a good state of repair. The Council may give you 3 months' notice by registered mail to repair the vault. If you fail to make these repairs, Council may stop any further interments in the vault until the repairs have been done. Alternatively, Council may arrange to carry out the repairs and recover the costs from you.
- 7 You are responsible for removing all earth and rubbish when excavating the vault to a place approved by the sexton. You must do this within 3 months of completing the excavation.

Deposit of Materials

If you or your contractor is erecting or repairing a headstone, monument, fence or vault in a cemetery, you must ensure that all tools and materials are removed.

If you are mixing mortar, you must use a proper mixing board. You may not mix mortar on any roadway or footpath in the cemetery.

Vehicles

You may only take a vehicle into a cemetery between the hours of sunrise and sunset.

- 1 Your vehicle must stay on the sealed roads and you must not drive on grassed areas.
- 2 The maximum speed is 24 km per hour unless indicated otherwise.
- 3 All vehicles, other than hearses, must give right of way to a funeral procession.

Removal of Fences, Headstones, Plants, etc

Any person or monumental mason must have the permission of Council before any kerb, headstone, monument or tablet can be removed from a grave in a cemetery.

No one will remove or take any vase, wreath, flower or any other thing from a cemetery without Council authority. However, Council may remove any neglected or broken materials of this nature.

Misconduct

Violence or improper behaviour preventing, interrupting or delaying a funeral service is not permitted.

Soliciting of Orders

Advertising or soliciting for cemetery work is not permitted in a cemetery.

Photographs

The funeral director must give consent for commercial photographs to be taken.

Interment Charges: Poor Persons

If you are applying for an interment for a deceased poor person, you must provide Council with a signed certificate. This certificate must state that the deceased person has not left sufficient funds to pay the current approved charges. It must also state that relatives and friends are unable to pay the charges.

Deceased Servicemen

Where a deceased serviceman is disinterred and reinterred in the RSA section of the cemetery, the fee is paid by the War Graves branch of the Department of Internal Affairs. The fee charged is reviewed by Council and the Department from time to time.

Disinterment

If you are applying for a disinterment, Council will carry this out in accordance with sections 51 and 55 of the Burial and Cremation Act 1964. You will need to pay the current approved fee set out in the Annual Fees and Charges.

Berm and Lawn Cemeteries

Interments

Council has set aside ground for the purposes of a memorial park (berm, garden or lawn cemetery) where interments can be made. These areas are shown on a map prepared by Council.

You may only erect headstones. If you wish to plant trees, shrubs or flowers you must seek approval from Council before they are planted. You are not permitted to place kerbings anywhere within such a cemetery.

Purchase of Plots

You can purchase a plot from the Council at the current approved rate. The number of plots that can be sold at one time is at the discretion of Council.

Erection of Memorials

Council will construct a concrete berm, wide enough to maintain stability, at ground level or below as required. The width of the berm will range from 650 mm if below ground set on solid subsoil to 1 m if flush with the surface on which base or platform foundation work for all memorials will be placed.

The cost of the platform is included in the purchase price of the plot.

- 1 Any such tablet or plaque must only be placed on the concrete berm provided.
- 2 The concrete-based work for all memorials will not be higher than 150 mm above the highest point of the concrete berm or ground level, whichever is the higher. The depth (front to back) will be 650 mm. You can request insets for flower containers.
- 3 There must be a space of 150 mm in front of and behind the memorial foundation base on surface berms or platforms.
- 4 The erected memorial at the head of plot may not be wider than one metre in the case of a single plot. In the case of a double width (family plot), the maximum width is 2 m.
- 5 The maximum height of an erected memorial at the head of any plot is 1 m.
- 6 All memorials must complete with sound engineering principles. They must be visually acceptable to Council. You will need to submit your memorial plans to Council for approval. You must have received approval before you erect the memorial.

- 7 You may only use granite, or a similar suitable material approved by Council, for a memorial. If you wish to use any other type of material, you must seek council approval before you erect the memorial.
- 8 All concrete will be finished in grey/white cement. No coloured cements may be added or used.
- 9 As a purchaser/owner of a plot, you are responsible for keeping the memorial in proper order and a good state of repair.
- 10 The Burial and Cremations (Removal of Monuments and Tablets) Regulations 1967 provides for Council to remove any memorials where they are in a state of decay or disrepair.

If there is no one available to make repairs or authorise removal, then Council will make a photographic record of the plot prior to removal and file this with the cemetery records.

Vaults and Brick or Walled In Graves

You may only build vaults or brick or walled-in graves above ground in an area of the memorial park cemetery set aside for that purpose by Council. These vaults and graves are subject to engineering standards and be visually acceptable to Council.

You may erect a statue within a memorial park cemetery subject to any conditions imposed by Council.

Vases or Containers

All vases and containers for flowers must be put in the insets in the base on which the memorial is placed.

Plaque Lawn Cemeteries

Interpretation

A Plaque Lawn Cemetery is a cemetery where the surface is laid down as a grass lawn. Headstones may not project above the ground. Council must declare this as a Plaque Lawn Cemetery. An example is the RSA cemetery.

Structures, Plaques and Tablets on Plots

In any Council plaque lawn cemetery, you need to know the following

- 1 You may not erect any kerb, railing, fence, building or other structure on or around any single plot.
- 2 You may not construct or place a tombstone, headstone, monument or structure on any plot in such a manner that any part of it will project above ground level.
- 3 You must obtain permission from Council before you install or place a memorial plaque, memorial tablet or anything else on a plot. Anything you install or place is subject to the following conditions:
 - 3.1 Your memorial tablet or plaque must be made from a permanent material approved by Council.
 - 3.2 Council must approve the size, the position and the installation of your memorial tablet or plaque.
 - 3.3 You must put all letters and names of persons buried in each plot on one tablet or plaque.
 - 3.4 You will need to pay the Council the current approved fee set out in the Annual Fees and Charges.
 - 3.5 Any such tablet or plaque must only be placed on the concrete berm provided.

Plot Dimensions

The dimensions of plots will be determined by Council.

Wreaths

You may not plant anything on any plot. However, following an interment, a wreath or floral tribute may be placed on a plot. This must be removed after a period of 4 weeks following the interment.

Special Receptacle for Flowers

After the 2 days following interment, you may only place flowers and foliage on a plot. These must be put in a special receptacle provided for that purpose. The sexton may remove such floral tributes 5 days after the latest interment in that plot.

- 1 You need to install the receptacle for flowers on the side nearest the head of the plot adjoining the tablet or plaque.
- 2 You must ensure that every part of the receptacle is 50 mm or more below the level of the adjoining ground surface.
- 3 The sexton will remove damaged receptacles and receptacles not of a type approved by Council. The sexton will also remove dead flowers and foliage.

Dimensions of Headstones and Bases

New lawn berms	Single	1,200 mm x 600 mm
Bases	Single	820 mm x 350 mm x 130 mm
Bases	Double	1,820 mm x 450 mm x 130 mm
Headstone	Single	760 mm x 1,000 mm high
Headstone	Double	1,760 mm x 1,000 mm high
Crematorium lawn berms	Single	600 mm wide x 380 mm deep
Bases	Single	600 mm wide x 230 mm deep x 100 mm high
	Double	1,200 mm wide x 230 mm deep x 100 mm high
Crematorium headstone	Single	405 mm wide x 330 mm high x 75 mm thick
	Double	900 mm wide x 330 mm high x 75 mm thick
Children's lawn berm		900 mm x 600 mm
Bases	Single	750 mm wide x 450 mm deep x 130 mm high
Headstone	Single	700 mm wide x 1,000 mm high x 75 mm thick
RSA lawn berms	Single	900 mm x 600 mm
All bases are poured as doubles back to back		
Bronze plaques	Single	225 mm x 375 mm

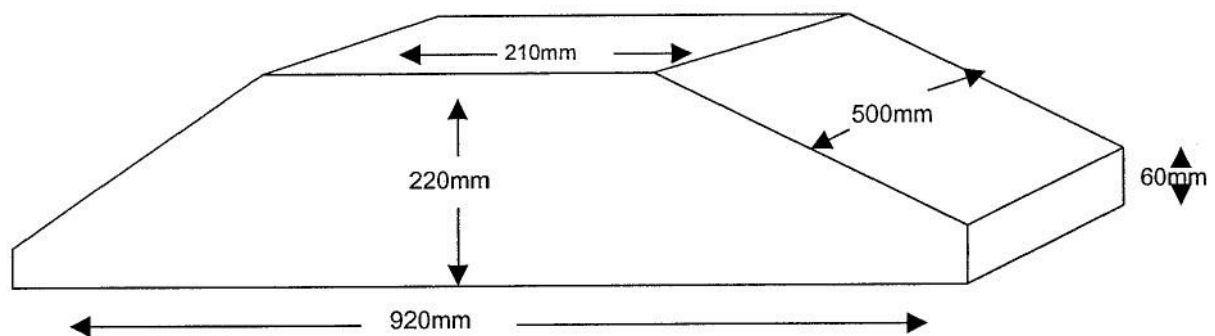
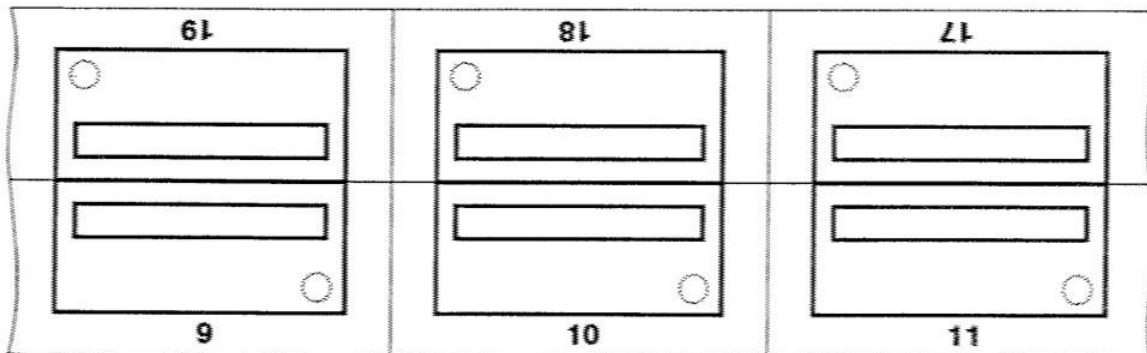
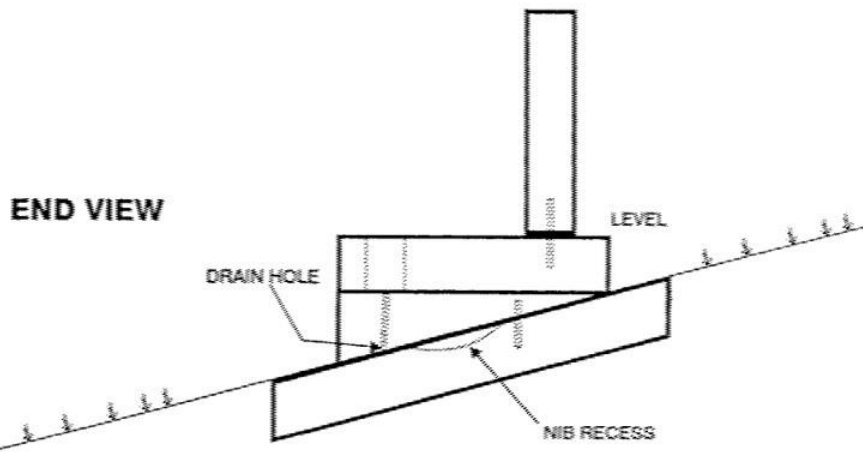
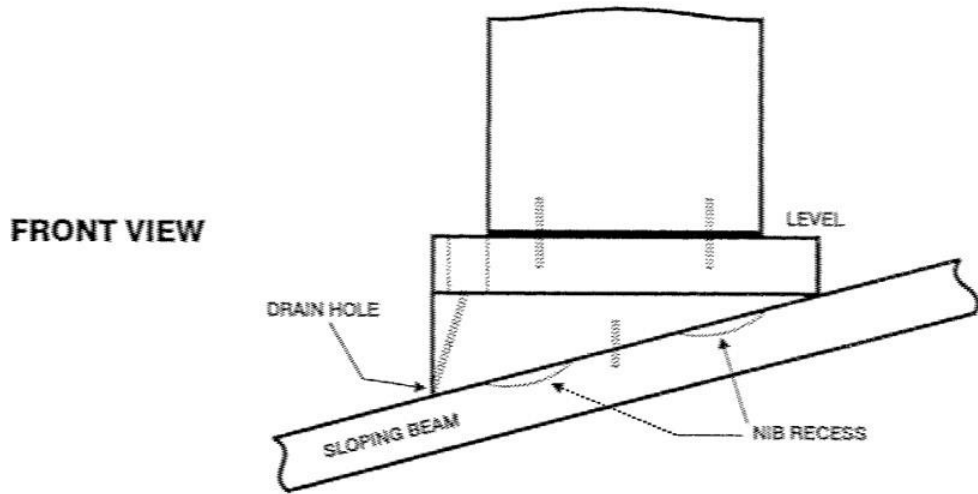


Illustration Appendix



BACK TO BACK MEMORIALS, BASE TO BEAM LAYOUT

OPTIONS BASES BUTTED AT ENDS
BASES NOT BUTTED AT REAR OF MEMORIAL

Headstone Installation Standard

Prepared by the New Zealand Master Monumental Masons' Association (Inc.) 1999



General Guide for Inspection of Memorial Installations

Note: The use of a permit or approval system for installation of new memorials or removal of memorials for additional work is recommended. This assists inspection procedures and ensures proposed installations conform with the bylaws or regulations of local authorities and other cemetery owners.

Explanation

Concrete beam shall mean the beam for setting memorials and bases on.

Memorials, headstone or plaque shall mean the same.

Upright headstone shall mean erected vertical on base.

A base normally is placed for upright memorials. It may be of plastered concrete, granite or marble. A sub base of plastered concrete is used on sloping or uneven beams for levelling up purposes.

- 1 All memorial headstones or plaques shall be erected level and plumb in both directions in accordance with standard trade practice. See illustration.
- 2 All memorial bases shall line up in adjacent rows both horizontally and diagonally according to the layout. See illustration.
- 3 Where a concrete base is installed for a memorial, it should be poured or set on beam with nib recess cut in beam or dowelled to prevent side or end movement, particularly where the beam is laid on a sloping lawn.
- 4 Where a granite or marble base or plinth is installed, it shall be pinned to beam or where beam is not at true level, to the concrete sub base established for this purpose.
- 5 It is normal practice to provide a vase hole in the granite, marble or concrete base. Often two vase recesses are provided. A drainage outlet 8-12 mm in diameter is to be provided from the hole to side or lowest point of base or base fixing mortar to allow excess water from vase to drain away. Failure to provide a drain will allow moisture within the base or mortar to build up, weakening the adhesive quality to

- beam and creating an unpleasant build-up of mould and efflorescence (powdery substance) around the base.
- 6 All upright memorials and bases are to be securely pinned or dowelled to avoid tipping by vandalism or accident. See illustration. The requirements of the Health & Safety in Employment Act 1992 must not be compromised.
 - 7 Dowelling must consist of metal, resistant to atmospheric corrosion, such as copper alloy or stainless steel. Fibre rod described as high tensile FRP rod 12.75 mm in diameter, identified as yellow in colour with a fine green stripe is also acceptable. The use of tortured or mild steel rod, galvanised pipe or rod or other sub-standard fibre rod products is unacceptable. Refer to NZ Standard 4242: 1995 (Headstones and Cemetery Monuments) Ch 2.6, page 10.
 - 8 For memorials up to 900 mm high, dowelling shall not be less than 10 mm in diameter and 140 mm in length with dowel penetration being in equal part with each structural element (being the memorial and base or beam). For memorials 900 mm to 1,000 mm high, dowelling shall not be less than 12 mm in diameter or 200 mm in length. Dowelling for memorials larger than 1,200 mm shall be determined by design engineer calculations. Refer NZ Standard 4242: 1995 Ch 3.4, page 14.
 - 9 All concrete work for memorial bases shall be performed to sound construction practice and consist of not less than 5 parts of clean shingle and sand to one part of cement. Water used in the mix shall be of drinkable quality. The use of lightweight scoria aggregate mix is also acceptable.
 - 10 All plaster shall be mixed in the proportions of 1 1/2 - 3 parts clean sharp sand to one part cement with plasticiser added if desired. Water used in the mix shall be of drinkable quality.
 - 11 All plaster used in memorial base or grave surround work, shall be applied uniformly and smoothed with a steel or wooden float finish or sponge texture according to the trade practice in the area. The finish shall be even with no trowel or float marks visible.
 - 12 Where an arris is formed on edges it shall be at 45 degrees with the chamfer even along the entire length of the plasterwork. All corners and checks shall be properly squared. The joints between memorial and base and base and ground beam shall be washed or wiped clean of surplus plaster residue. Joints shall be finished true and even with memorial and flushed level with ground beam.
 - 13 Where base or grave surround has been constructed for some time, there will usually be some biological growth and moss. This is to be cleaned off before memorial installation and plaster finish is undertaken to promote good adhesion. Standard cleaning methods include wire brush scrubbing, water blasting or chemical cleaning.
 - 14 All work sites shall be left clean and tidy and free of surplus construction residue to avoid environmental breach in terms of the Resource Management Act 1991.

Additional Comment

Bases or sub bases poured in situ on the beam will provide for sound adhesion. Circumstances, however, do not always allow for this to be done.

Vase holes should be encouraged in memorial bases to provide for secure floral tribute attachment and to displace glass and other temporary receptacles. The recess should be in the base rather than direct in the lawn beam to prevent untidy weed or grass growth through the vase hole.

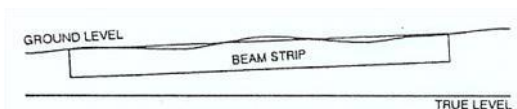
Suitable public signage is recommended for cemeteries, specifying the regulations which apply to a particular cemetery, including memorial permit requirements and lawn restoration standards.

Concrete Beam Standard for Headstones

General Specification Guide for construction of Continuous Concrete Beams for Memorial Headstones and Plaques

Note: If the following procedures are applied, this will provide a base for sound professional memorial installations and improved aesthetic appearances in cemeteries.

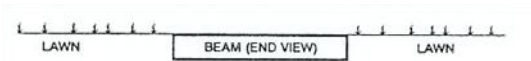
- 1 Concrete shall be a minimum strength of 17.5 MPA if supplied ready mixed, or if mixed on site should consist of 5 parts of clean shingle and sand (builders mix) to one part of cement. A powered concrete mixer is to be used for on-site work.
- 2 Boxing shall consist of clean timber, free of cracks, splits or large knots to avoid failure. Timber shall be straight and free of buckles with top edge true and level. Boxing shall be pegged at regular intervals to avoid bulging during concrete pouring.
- 3 Boxing should be installed so that it is level for the entire length of beam. Level can mean exactly level where ground is true or contour level where ground is sloping or undulating. Generally the level should follow the average fall of the area as illustrated in the sketch below.



Ripples or twists in final levels must be avoided

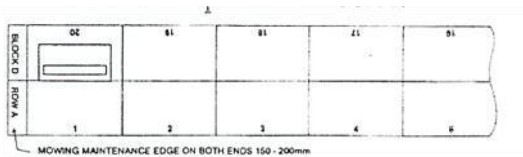
- 4 Where ground level is inconsistent, high spots should be taken off and low spots back filled with a compacted hard fill material, before installing boxing.
- 5 A minimum excavation depth of 100 mm is to be made below ground level with the objective of finished beam surface being at ground level. Earth between beams can then be trimmed and/or levelled up by fill, to create a pleasant even lawn for mowing maintenance purposes.
- 6 Beam strips shall be poured at a minimum concrete thickness of 100 mm. Where damp, soft or sandy soil conditions prevail, beams should be poured at an extra depth or as professional advice dictates on local inspection. The beam strips shall be reinforced with HRC 665 mesh, overlapped and tied at joins according to sound construction practice.
- 7 The mesh shall be supported one third up from ground level with approved packing blocks at specified intervals. Earth surface shall be free of any loose debris before concrete is poured.

- 8 All water used for mixing of concrete shall be of drinkable quality.
- 9 When pouring beam, concrete shall be compacted according to standard trade practice and immediately screeded, also to acceptable practice. Concrete should not be poured where inclement weather conditions prevail or are predicted.
- 10 Final finishing, including floating and trowelling, is to provide for a true and level surface and clean edge with boxing as illustrated in the sketch below. Standard practices to assist curing, including, protection from premature drying and ambient weather temperatures, are to be applied.

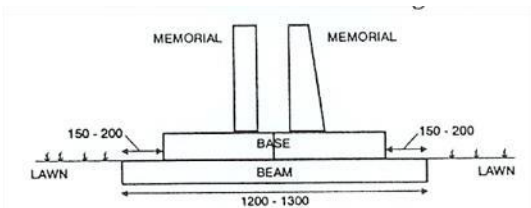


Desired finish after removal of boxing

- 11 Each plot shall be marked off in accordance with the standard measurement applied in the cemetery and plots individually numbered by neatly pressing dies into the semi set concrete. Beam or row number shall be inserted as required or directed by cemetery authority. Marking off plots shall be done by accurate measurement and string line with impression in setting concrete to be made by clean steel rod not more than 6mm in diameter as per sketch below.



- 12 Mowing strips or maintenance edge is to be allowed for and provided in the lawn beam as per sketch below. (Reference to size is random only as these vary from cemetery to cemetery as does memorial base width and depth). Local measurements are to be sourced and confirmed before boxing is laid.



The minimum acceptable width for mowing maintenance edge is 150 mm. However as larger mowing units are now in frequent operation, a width of 200 mm is recommended to avoid memorial damage.

- 13 Where continuous beams are not used in a cemetery, separate concrete foundations for individual memorials are to be poured using the same principles listed above. Where a flat memorial plaque is to be installed, it is recommended the base be poured so that finished work, including plaque, is slightly below true ground level. The purpose being to avoid damage to both memorial and mower.

Explanation

Reference to concrete beam or memorial beam shall mean the same.

Memorial shall mean upright headstone or flat or sloping plaque.

Memorial base may be concrete, granite or marble and will support an upright memorial.

Memorial base may be either concrete, granite or marble and will support an upright memorial.

Recommendation

Ground for commission to lawn cemetery, should be graded, levelled and prepared to final lawn finish, prior to the excavation, boxing and pouring of concrete beams.

Expansion joints should be cut or placed in concrete beam every 4 to 5 plots to avoid major cracking.

Burial and Cremation of Poor Persons

Section 49 of the Burial and Cremation Act 1964 provides for the burial and cremation of poor persons as follows-

- 1 A local authority having the control and management of a cemetery and any person or body of persons (including a local authority) having the control and management of a crematorium may, and upon an order signed by a Justice shall, permit the body of any poor person, and of any person from any hospital, penal institution, or other public institution, on the request of the person in charge of such institution, to be buried in the cemetery or cremated in the crematorium free of charge:

Provided that every Justice, before signing any such order, shall satisfy himself that the deceased person has not left sufficient means to pay the charge, and that his relatives and friends are unable to pay the same.

- 2 If any person is known or believed to have belonged to any particular religious denomination, he shall be buried in the portion of the cemetery (if any) set apart for that denomination.

Cf 1908, No 19, s 25; 1950, No 42, s 3

Brookers Statutes (c) Brooker's Limited

Current Query: (Headings Legislation Title, cemetery) Annotated to 2000 No 33 and SR 2000/184 (10/2000) Page 1 03/04/01 10:35:48

Schedule for Burial of Poor Person

Rangitikei District Council
Private Bag 1102
Marton 4741

Dear Sir/Madam

Burial of _____

I _____, of _____ being _____

of the deceased do hereby declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the above named deceased did not leave any assets available for, or make provision for the purchase of a cemetery plot. Furthermore, I am not in a financial position to arrange for the purchase of a cemetery plot. This certificate is issued according to the Section 49 Burial and Cremations Act 1964.

Signed _____

Address _____

Witness _____

To the best of my knowledge and belief, the above statement is correct.

Justice of the Peace

Dated _____