



13 January 2012

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Community memorial restoration projects completed at eight Darling Downs cemeteries

Community memorial restoration projects have been completed at eight cemeteries in the Darling Downs region thanks to \$30,000 in funding from the Bligh Government's Community Memorials Restoration Program.

Minister for Government Services Simon Finn and Member for Toowoomba North Kerry Shine said the Bligh Government had provided \$15,000 towards a project to install directional maps at eight cemeteries, which was matched by \$15,000 from the Toowoomba Regional Council.

The eight cemeteries were:

- Drayton and Toowoomba Cemetery;
- Crows Nest Cemetery;
- Pittsworth Cemetery;
- Greenmount Cemetery;
- Clifton Cemetery;
- Cabarlah Cemetery;
- Millmerran Cemetery;
- Goombungee Cemetery.

Mr Finn said the State Government had also allocated an additional \$15,000 – which was again matched by the Council – for the Drayton and Toowoomba Cemetery to repair some of its graves as well as sort, clean and store burial keys.

"The Community Memorials Restoration Program plays an instrumental role in helping to restore local history," Mr Finn said.

"It's important that communities preserve their unique historical markers for future generations and I am delighted that the State Government was able to contribute to both of these projects," he said.

Mr Shine said the directional maps would ensure visitors could easily find what they were looking for at each of the eight cemeteries.

"The new directional maps detail the layout of burial plots and make it much easier for visitors to locate the gravesites of ancestors and loved ones," he said.

Mr Shine said the second project at Drayton and Toowoomba Cemetery involved the sorting of thousands of burial keys, which are heritage listed grave markers that correspond with the Cemetery Register records and are used to identify the grave site of individuals.

"As a result of this project, 12 keys of significant individuals buried in the cemetery were repositioned at their respective burial sites," he said.

"The remainder of the heritage listed Toowoomba Cemetery burial keys were removed from the cemetery grounds to assist in their preservation.

"The keys have been carefully cleaned and placed undercover, in specially-made racks to help preserve them into the future."

Mr Finn said in the 2011-12 financial year more than 50 restoration projects across Queensland would benefit from the Community Memorials Restoration Program grants totalling just over \$500,000 in funding.

“Of the projects, almost half relate to cemetery restoration or burial records and the remainder or funding has been allocated to war memorials and important community icons.”

“Since the program commenced in 2004-05 more than \$3.5 million has been committed towards restoring and repairing 350 memorials or icons, restoring historical grave sites and digitising historical cemetery records,” he said.

“It has been vital that we have kept the ball rolling on this program to assist as many Queensland communities as possible to preserve their unique and rich historical markers for future generations.”

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