RESTORATION OF HISTORIC BERKELEY CEMETERY:

There had been agitation in the district for some considerable time to have the historic Berkeley Cemetery cleaned up, to make it look like a cemetery and to show that we appreciate the great work of our pioneers.

When president of the Illawarra Historical Society in 1973, I, together with our present Lord Mayor Frank Arkell, endeavoured to get the City Council, which is responsible for public cemeteries, to take over Berkeley. But it was found to be church property. There are a dozen such cemeteries, and if the Council took over Berkeley it would have to take over the lot.

It had, through lack of funds, been a most neglected burying ground. To my knowledge, nothing had been done for many years. But a practicable programme was worked out by the Rev. Jim Hall of All Saints’ Church, Figtree (the parish which administers the cemetery), and myself, and over several week-ends working parties from the church cleared the lantana, blackberries, trees and fence-high grass, and brought the cemetery into order again.

It was formerly the burial-ground of the Jenkins family, whose ancestor received one of the first grants in Illawarra in January 1817. Some ten or a dozen of them are interred there. Besides the Jenkinses there are other names of historic interest, such as the Burgess, Massey and Dennis families from the Berkeley district, the Chapman and Duxbury families of Unanderra, Dr. Wade, Dr. Harry Lee, whose family lived at “Little Milton,” and Mrs. Lee. Also buried there is a former member of this Society, Mr. Arthur Evans, an industrialist and leader of Church of England activities in the district.

—J. R. MAYNES.