

Her Worship the Mayor

Cr Verlin

Dear Cr Verlin

The History Group of the Friends of the Ballarat Botanical Gardens has had discussions with the Council Heritage ^{Office} ~~adviser~~, Ms ^{FAITH} ~~Savar~~, concerning the grave of James Russell Thomson. This generous benefactor of the City, a bachelor, has no descendants to care for his grave. During research at the Public records Office of Victoria correspondence has been noted between the Trustees of Thomson's Estate, Noble Wilson, that following the transfer of 10 pounds from the estate, the City of Ballarat undertook responsibility for the care of the grave and several subsequent letters indicate that this did occur. In the absence of any indication otherwise It would appear that the City still bears responsibility for its upkeep. Several items require attention to restore the grave to a reasonable condition, appropriate for the resting place of a man who generously gave the famous statues to the City.

Enclosed herewith are copies of the correspondence referred to, also photos of the present condition of the grave, items requiring attention and an estimate of costs involved. A suitable plaque indicating the importance of the gentleman's place in the history of Ballarat is also envisaged.

In view of this it has been suggested that I write to you to ask if the City would be prepared to continue its perceived ongoing responsibility for the maintenance of the grave. The Friends have in the past, organised walks in the cemetery in association with other groups and intend to continue to do so, visiting the graves of ^{at Ballarat Botanical Gardens} benefactors to the Gardens. With the restoration of the Stoddart grave under way, upgrading the condition of the Thomson grave will enhance the value of the project.

Yours sincerely.