



*Old Midhirst Cemetery*

*New Midhirst Cemetery*



# Midhirst Cemetery

**Kent Tce**

**1880**

<b>Use:</b>	Cemetery	<b>Historic Value:</b>	4 out of 5
<b>Materials:</b>	-	<b>Architectural Value:</b>	2 out of 4
<b>NZHPT Registered:</b>	Not registered	<b>Technical Value:</b>	1 out of 2
<b>Legal Description:</b>	Pt DP359 & Pt Sec 3 BlkXIII Huiroa SD - Bal at 11980/124-	<b>Symbolic Value:</b>	2 out of 3
		<b>Rarity Value:</b>	- out of 2
		<b>Townscape Value:</b>	1 out of 2
		<b>Group Value:</b>	- out of 2
		<b>Overall Heritage Value:</b>	<b>10 out of 20</b>



Before 1880, the closest cemeteries to the Stratford District were Hawera and Inglewood. This meant that usually, when people died, they were buried in their backyards. The first record of this happening in Midhirst was in 1880, when an Austrian woman died.

Obviously, the idea of having a local cemetery was well received, and so in late 1880 Mr. Clegg (the Midhirst postmaster and chairman of the Manganui Road Board) interviewed Mr. A.C. Fookes (the land developer) on the possibility of land for the cemetery. Mr. Fookes conceded, and gifted an acre of land to the Midhirst Cemetery Trustees.

At first, the Midhirst cemetery served those as far away as Ngaere, Stratford, and Waipuku. However, the large distances, over bad roads, still meant that many rural children who died were buried on the farms. The first recorded burial at Midhirst was Cecelia Luders, who died on the 18th of December 1882. Many of the deaths that are recorded at this cemetery are due to the great flu epidemic that struck in 1918, and there are many records of very young children that were buried at this cemetery.



In a Midhirst Cemetery Board meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 1933, a report was given stating that the County Engineer had finished his survey for a new portion of cemetery, and that the sections had been ploughed and harrowed, with new grass growing, ready for its opening. At

STEAD Ernest J	11days	1903
STECKLE George J S	1	1898
STEVENS Charles T	1	1896
STEVENS Vera M J	75	1921
STREET Percy	2mths	1902
SUMMERS Emma	3wks	1889
TAYLOR Dorothy M	65	1936
TAYLOR Emma	6	1929
TAYLOR Frederick G	87	1926
TAYLOR Norman H	64	1904
TAYLOR Reginald C	7wks	1913
TECOFSKY Lewis D S	2mths	1930
TEMPERO Aldwin T	11mths	1917
TEMPERO Margaret G	70	1932
TERRY Albert F	72	1936
THOMAS Annie	2	1894
THOMAS George H	66	1935
TOMLINSON Charles	68	1926
TOMLINSON Elizabeth	64	1910
TREVES Frank	53	1903
TUCKER Clara A	35	1916
UHLENBERG Annie	5mths	1915
UHLENBERG Catherine M	67	1927
UHLENBERG Francisca	13	1922
UHLENBERG Frank	5mths	1904
UHLENBERG Frank	68	1915
UHLENBERG Frank	19	1901

the next meeting in May 1935, sections for the new cemetery were reserved for Roman Catholics, and it was resolved that the plots would be sold only in continuous order. By October that year, all the work on the entrance gates had been completed, at a cost of just over £33. (See *above photo*).

The first known burial at the new Midhirst Cemetery was Douglas Herbert Belk who died on the 16<sup>th</sup> of August, 1934. The last recorded burial at the old portion of the cemetery, however, was not until November 1956, when Anthony Potroz passed away.

In 1996 the old portion of the Midhirst Cemetery was officially closed by the Stratford District Council, with a memorial listing all those who had been buried in the cemetery being erected in the following year. (A *small section of this is seen in the photo on the left*).

## Bibliography

Stratford District Centenary 1878-1978  
 Midhirst School and Districts Centennial 1880-1980  
 Council Records