

Coffs Harbour High School's Historic Cemetery GIS Project

Plans are well under way for the implementation of Coffs Harbour High School's second major GIS Project, following on from the national success of its Digger's Beach GIS Research Project.

Working in small groups as part of the project team the students will be involved in mapping all the grave sites and the surrounding roads, fence lines and other features which make up the cemetery site. They will use GPS (Global Positioning Satellite) equipment to carry this out. Once this is completed the files they create will then be used to create a digital multi-layered map of the cemetery using special GIS (Geographic Information Systems) software called ArcView.

At the same time the students will also gather data about each grave site from the head stone. This data will then be incorporated into the digital maps as layers of data which can be called up at any time.

The end result will be a specialised series of maps containing data about each grave site which can then be utilised by Council when people make enquiries about past loved ones who may be buried at the cemetery.

At present, Council only has hand written and sometimes inaccurate information about some of the grave sites. This project will provide Council with a valuable **“visual database”, in map form**, about every grave site in the cemetery.

The project will be a great learning experience for all the students involved. Not only will it provide the opportunity to learn about and use GPS and GIS technology (and the associated growth in career opportunities in this area) but it will also develop their skills in teamwork, leadership, literacy and problem solving.

A formal document will be produced by the students about their project, using PowerPoint software, and presented, along with the GIS maps and associated databases, to Council.

What a great experience for all those involved!!

Human Society & Its Environment Department
Coffs Harbour High School