

**Submission  
No 48**

## **INQUIRY INTO FUNERAL INDUSTRY**

**Organisation:**

**Name:** Mr George Scott

**Telephone:**

**Date Received:** 1/07/2005

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**Theme:**

**Summary**

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29 June 2005

Standing Committee on Social Issues  
Legislative Assembly  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Sir

**RE: ENQUIRY INTO THE FUNERAL INDUSTRY**

When my father passed away, he was buried into the Presbyterian Section Number 10 at Botany Cemetery. I purchased graves 5H2 and 5H3.

My late wife occupies the one next to my father and both graves were kerbed by Gibbs & Juke, monumental masons.

Some years on my mother passed away and I was unable to afford the extra cost of removing the top slab so she was placed in another part of the cemetery - on the main road close to the kiosk and her service was conducted by Bolands of Maroubra. I wrote to Botany Cemetery informing them that I had three relatives in three separate graves and requested the number of my mothers' grave.

Her reply was prompt and they informed me that I had made an error and that my mother had been placed with my father and nowhere near the area I had stated.

My wife remained in the car in Military Road but was able to see me and the graveside service. Presbyterian 10 Section is out of sight from Military Road.

I was unable to get satisfaction from the cemetery and approached Mascot Police. They refused to assist and referred me back to the cemetery. Why was this? Why could they do nothing?

I have been in dispute with the cemetery for years, always they claim she is in with my father and Bolands records agree with them, when the records should not.

The cemetery claim that I was so distressed at the passing of my mother that I lost track of where I was standing.

I am considered a hard person. The time for tears had long passed as my mother passed into Alzheimer's - lost the ability to form words or recognise me.

I approached the manager of Gibbs & Juke. He inspected the graves with me and said he had not raised the slab and that the damage to the top of the slab was strange as removal usually damages the opposite corners.

He went on to say that he would have received a written work order from the cemetery and did not.

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I was never able to convince them and they ignored the presence of my wife or that Presbyterian 10 was out of her sight.

I believe in my own mind that they put a coffin in with my father with my mothers' details on the plaque.

They wanted \$1,000 to dig down to the top coffin, remove the plaque and show it to me. I refused to pay. They reduced it to \$500 and eventually no fee provided I agreed to stop my complaints.

I think they are very clever people, cunning, like lavatory rats. I have virtually given up now.

Janine Cotter of ABC 4 Corners made an approach on my behalf spoke with a Mr Pappas and got nowhere.

Cemetery manager, Greg Skelton, was to be provided to show me my errors. We never met and he has left the job.

Much of Botany Cemetery has been put aside for the Catholic faith - why is that so?

When I said I would employ a private investigator the response was immediate.

I placed my mothers funeral notice in 'The Daily Telegraph'. It never appeared. Cancelled by someone.

Corruption in the funeral industry cannot continue without allegiance with a cemetery. There must have been earlier complaints suggesting that those in office get their 'cut' as well.

I was going to write that you were not to be offended by my anger, but frankly I don't care if you are. When you complete your investigation there will be a lull before the rats emerge once again.

I might be forgiven in suggesting that the business of corruption in funerals will never die out.

If my mothers' final resting place is ever located I would appreciate being informed.

On a recent visit to Botany, my first for some five years as I don't believe in talking to graves, I noticed that the whole line of headstones in the area into which my mothers coffin was lowered, were gone and the area concreted over. God above would know what secrets lay below, or a few cemetery rats.

I might call that the 'sucker bait' area to get \$1,000 from an unsuspecting relative who was a sole mourner - no doubt the line of head stones have been moved to another part of the cemetery.

The manager of Gibbs & Juke would have an abundance of information on dirty deeds, why don't you ask him?

I'll close now and wait for prosecutions that at this time resemble a pipe dream.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'George Scott', with a stylized flourish underneath.

George Scott