

# HEALESVILLE CEMETERY

182 MT RIDDELL ROAD, HEALESVILLE 3777



The Greater Metropolitan  
Cemeteries Trust  
Lasting memories, peaceful places.



## ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT:

During 2015/2016 The Greater Metropolitan Cemetery Trust (GMCT) developed a series of short histories as part of its obligations under the Public Records Act 1973. The documents focus on the administrative history of each cemetery, providing a range information which may be useful to researchers, including a brief historical overview, timeline and bibliography. GMCT gratefully acknowledges the work of Dr Jan Penney and Sarah Hurley in the development of this document.

**Cemeteries are controlled by a Trust appointed by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the responsible Minister. The Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust is a Class A Trust and a body corporate with perpetual succession established by the Governor in Council pursuant to regulations under the *Cemeteries Act 1958* and updated within the *Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003*. The Trust is responsible for the maintenance of the cemetery, the handling of funds and the erection of monuments. Core services include interment in graves, interment in mausolea, interment of cremated remains, cremations, venue hire, hospitality, memorialisation, perpetual maintenance, archival cemetery and genealogical records and community events.**

From 1864 to August 1873 The Commissioner of Public Works and the Public Works Department were responsible for cemeteries including the appointment of Trustees and fees charged (VRG28). From 1873 to 1888 The Commissioner of Crown Lands and Survey and the Department of Crown Lands and Survey were responsible (VG18). In 1888 the Chief Secretary and his Department (VRG26) were in control of cemeteries, but in 1890 the Minister for Health and the Department of Public Health (VRG39) become responsible under the Public Health Act 1889 – 53 (Vic No:1044).<sup>1</sup> In 1944 the new Ministry of Health Act (1943) and the Cemeteries Act 1944 (5025) saw the Minister for Health and the Department of Health become the responsible entity.<sup>2</sup> On 1 January 2015 the Department of Health and Human Services was formed, integrating the Department of Health and the Department of Human Services Sport and Recreation.

In 2002 the government initiated a Report on the financial viability of Cemetery Trusts which raised a number of concerns over the viability, financial management and governance of some cemeteries.<sup>3</sup> In 2004 The Department of Human Services was advised of concerns related to probity at some cemeteries and the Auditor General completed a review which was reported to Parliament in May 2005.<sup>4</sup> As a result the Minister for Health requested the Auditor General to widen the Review to include all major cemeteries<sup>5</sup> Government then initiated a review of the major cemetery trusts under section 50 of the Public Services Act (relating largely to the governance and effectiveness of the cemetery sector as a whole) which was undertaken by the State Services Authority and tabled in Parliament in June 2007.<sup>6</sup>

In July 2008 the State Government announced reforms to the fourteen major metropolitan and regional Cemetery Trusts that report to Parliament.<sup>7</sup> Two major metropolitan Trusts were created, the Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust, and the Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust, three regional Class A Trusts and five other Trusts. Another major review of the five Class A Trusts was completed in May 2013 to ensure that the reforms were proceeding smoothly.<sup>8</sup>

Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust was formed in 2010 and assumed responsibility for twenty cemetery sites.<sup>9</sup>

**Healesville Cemetery** is administered by the State Government through an independent Trust Board, the Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust, Class A, established in 2010.<sup>10</sup>

Healesville Cemetery, opened in 1866, is a rural cemetery of 3.8 hectares situated in scenic surroundings at the foot of Mount Riddell. It contains graves and memorials as well as a section for Children and a special section for Natural Burials.

In 1839 Robert Hoddle, the official Surveyor, surveyed the area and reached the head of the Yarra River in 1844-5.<sup>11</sup> When gold was discovered at New Chum in 1856 a rudimentary track was built through the Healesville district to reach the mining sites.<sup>12</sup> Later gold discoveries at Woods Point encouraged the government to offer a prize for a better road through the hilly district and it allocated monies in 1863 for road building.<sup>13</sup> A year later the township was surveyed and named after Richard Heales, Premier of Victoria (1860-1861).<sup>14</sup> The first land sales were held in Collins Street Melbourne offices of Gemmel, McCaul and Company in June 1865.<sup>15</sup> The same year, in August, 1865, land was temporarily reserved for cemetery purposes at Healesville, county of Evelyn, township of Healesville, 11 acres 1 rood 6 perches.<sup>16</sup>

The township quickly acquired a post office with three deliveries each way per week,<sup>17</sup> a common school which later became State School 849,<sup>18</sup> and some 30 businesses.<sup>19</sup> The first burial in Healesville Cemetery was in 1866, on the 28 February, and the first Trustees named were Henry Clark and James C. Steel.<sup>20</sup> A year later Charles Walker, John Holland, J.T. Sullivan, Forrest Burns and Joseph Scott were also appointed trustees.<sup>21</sup> For some unknown reason, in July 1869, the Government accepted the resignation of all Trustees previously appointed.<sup>22</sup> Very quickly Henry Powell, Thomas Taylor, James Potter, Joseph Scott, Luke Flanagan, Patrick Lawlor, James Currie and Ewen Cameron were then named as Trustees of Healesville Cemetery.<sup>23</sup> From 1870 and over the next few years the annual accounts showed no income, which indicates no burials but notes a substantial loan of 60 pounds, probably for ground works such as roads and fencing.<sup>24</sup> In 1876 the original temporary reservation of 11 acres was converted to permanent for cemetery purposes, and the site was permanently reserved from sale.<sup>25, 26</sup>

The cemetery was laid out into 6 sections allocated to the various denominations, a layout still in use in 1916 and by 1876 some 32 burials had been interred in their respective sections.<sup>27</sup> Records were patchy however the earliest Minute Book entry was for the 20th April, 1880.<sup>28</sup> An examination of the Minute Book in 1883 indicated that the Trust suspected something was wrong with the allocations of land to the various denominations and they attempted to remediate the situation.<sup>29</sup> The situation caused great, and ongoing, distress and in May 1884 The Trustees met with the Secretary for Lands.



At a later meeting (date unclear) Trustee Green produced a sketch plan and it was attached to the current Minute book and this plan was then in use for the next 45 years but the situation remained difficult and produced much correspondence between the Trust and the Lands and Titles Office.<sup>30</sup> This may have led to the resignations of Henry Clark and James Steel.<sup>31</sup> After a final visit to the Registrar of Titles in Melbourne in 1886 the matter seemed resolved.<sup>32</sup>

The creation of the Shire of Healesville in 1887 and the construction of the rail line brought more people into the region, the rail camps alone brought over 200 men and their families.<sup>33</sup> Once the rail link from Lilydale was connected in 1889 the region became well known as a tourist destination.<sup>34</sup> Maroondah Aqueduct opened in 1891 and this had supported many local and new workers.<sup>35</sup> Throughout the 1890s population increased and the cemetery Trust remained busy fencing the site and recording burials.<sup>36, 37, 38</sup> During the early 1900s the Trust grew crops on unused cemetery land and sold them for profit and the cemetery was kept in good condition.<sup>39</sup> Trees were planted, floods came and went, fencing was installed but some visitors were not happy with the level of maintenance.<sup>40</sup> Neither were some locals when the burning of debris damaged several graves and their plantings.<sup>41</sup>

In 1916 a major dispute arose over the allocations of land to the various denominations and the Trustees struggled to reach an acceptable compromise.<sup>42</sup> As a result the six Trustees were removed as Trustees of the Healesville Cemetery.<sup>43</sup> A week later the government appointed 8 Trustees, 2 for each of the major denominations<sup>44</sup> and the Secretary of 27 years' service threatened to resign in protest.<sup>45</sup> When the Trustees requested a levy from each denomination to improve maintenance the debates began again with several denominations refusing to donate leaving the Trust in an unfinancial position and causing burials to be refused until the matter of land allocations was resolved.<sup>46</sup>

The issue continued over the next three years pitting church against church and the public were kept informed through the local papers.<sup>47, 48, 49</sup> During the 1920s there were continued complaints about the lack of maintenance as the Trust struggled to extract funds from their churches and they finally appealed to the general public for help.<sup>50</sup> The local Council provided some assistance but the situation was very troubling.<sup>51</sup>

The 1930s brought some respite with donations from the public increasing but the issues of noxious weeds and overgrown graves remained a perennial problem.<sup>52</sup> And these issues remained contentious throughout the 1940s and 1950s with Council sometimes assisting but occasionally they were seen as the cause of the problem.<sup>53, 54</sup> Rancorous debates were often held through the pages of the local paper and Council and Trust were often at odds. With the population no longer increasing there were fewer burials and the Trust had to make do with limited income.<sup>55</sup>

The 1960s brought some respite and in 1968 the Hebrew section opened.<sup>56</sup> The Memorial Gates paid for by public subscription were formally opened in 1969 providing a pleasant entrance;<sup>57</sup> a new lawn section was laid out in 1974;<sup>58</sup> a Macedonian Orthodox section opened in 1983;<sup>59</sup> and a Greek Orthodox section opened in 1987;<sup>60</sup> while a Moslem section opened with one grave in 1988.<sup>61</sup>

The responsible local Council had changed over the years as amalgamations and divisions meant the cemetery sometimes fell within different boundaries but by 2001, when the cemetery underwent a major facelift costing \$140,000, the cost was shared equally between the Shire of Yarra Ranges and the Healesville Cemetery Trust.<sup>62</sup> This was the last time Council was involved as later that same year the Healesville Cemetery Trust was abolished and responsibility was transferred to the Trustees of the Lilydale Memorial Park and Cemetery.<sup>63</sup> Not everyone agreed with this course of action however the income from burials was no longer sufficient to allow the Trust to manage the grounds.

Lilydale Trust invested in Healesville Cemetery and replaced fencing in 2003,<sup>64</sup> undertook work on more fencing and gates in 2009; a new memorial garden was installed to cater for cremated remains and an area for natural burials set aside.<sup>65</sup> A year later, in 2010, after a series of reviews into cemetery trusts, the government established the Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust as a Class A Trust to manage one Trust amalgamating eight existing cemetery trusts into one Trust which included Lilydale cemetery and all those cemeteries under its management.<sup>66</sup> Again not everyone was comfortable with this outcome and the Lilydale Trust approached government not to be included within the new Trust however the request was refused.<sup>67</sup>

Since 2010 the Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust has managed Healesville Cemetery and the maintenance is now satisfactory.

**Healesville Cemetery provides internments, vaults and memorial and commemoration**

**There are five graves related to war service (CWGC)**

**PARLIAMENTARY ACTS AND BILLS RELATING TO CEMETERIES**

- 1850 An Act for the Establishment and Regulation by Trustees of a General Cemetery Near the City of Melbourne - 1850 NSW 14, No: 19
- 1854 An Act for the Establishment and Management of Cemeteries in the Colony of Victoria 17 Vic, No: 12 (1854)
- 1864 An Act to Consolidate and Amend the Laws relating to Cemeteries - 27 Vic No: 201 20, April, 1864; "The Cemeteries Statute 1864"
- 1867 An act to Amend the Laws Relating to or Affecting Public Health - 31 Victoria No. 310
- 1880 The Cemeteries Statute Amendment Act 1880 - 44 Victoria No. 677
- 1889 The Public Health Act 1889 - 53 Victoria No. 1044 - section 14
- 1890 Cemeteries Act 1890, 10 July 1890, an Act to Consolidate the Laws relating to Cemeteries - 54 Vic No. 107; in operation on the 1 August, 1890
- 1903 Cremation Act 1903 - Act No. 1876
- 1904 Northern Suburbs Cemetery Act - 30 November 1904 No. 1952
- 1905 Amendment to the Act, No.3098
- 1909 Cemetery Act No. 2218
- 1915 Cemetery Act No. 2626
- 1928 Cemetery Act No. 3652
- 1930 Cemetery Act No. 3982
- 1931 Cemetery Act No. 4046
- 1944 Cemeteries Act No. 5025
- 1958 Cemeteries Act 1958 No. 6217
- 1970 Cemeteries Act 1970 (Coburg Public Cemetery)
- 1971 Cemeteries Act 1971, *Cemeteries* (Fawkner Crematorium and Memorial Park Act, Cemeteries Act 1958-Sect. 86)
- 1994 Cemeteries Act 1958, Rules and Regulations, Mausolea Approval

- 1995 Cemeteries (Incorporation of Trusts) Regulations, Version 010, Ser. No. 137, 14 May 1998
- 2003 The Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003 (initiated in August, 2003)
- 2005 Cemeteries and Crematoria Regulations No. 76/2005 (current)
- 2010 Amendment to the Cemeteries Act (2003) Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2003, Ver. 20 80/2003 1 March 2010, creation of Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust
- 2015 Cemeteries and Crematoria Regulations, Version 001, Ser. No.59, 27 June 2015

**REVIEWS OF CEMETERIES UNDER THE ACT**

- 2002 Department of Human Services, *Evaluation of the Financial Viability of Victoria's Cemetery Trusts and the Development of Fee Models*, (2002) prepared by RSM Bird Cameron, Melbourne (online)
- 2005 Auditor General Victoria, (May 2005) *Results of Special Reviews and Other Investigations, Cheltenham and Regional Cemeteries Trust, Review of Expenditure and Related Matters*
- 2006 Auditor General, (July 2006) *Review of Major Public Cemeteries*
- 2006 Department of Human Services, *Costing Study for Cemeteries and Crematoria*, (2006) prepared by Pitcher Partners, Melbourne (online)
- 2007 State Services Authority for the Auditor General, (2007) *Review of Cemetery Trusts*, State Services Authority Interim Report April 2007, Final Report June 2007
- 2013 Department of Health and Human Services, *Review of the Governance and Management of the Class A Cemetery Trusts* (2013), Melbourne

## Healesville Cemetery Timeline

		1866	1 October - Common School was established which later became state school 849 <sup>80</sup>
1837	Robert Hoddle, Surveyor, surveyed the area along the Yarra River from Dight's Falls to Warrandyte <sup>68</sup>	1866	Over 30 business were operating in the township at this time <sup>81</sup>
1837	The three Ryrie brothers, Phillip, William and Donald, were the earliest European settlers travelling from Monaro in south eastern New South Wales with a large herd of cattle. They settled on 43,000 acres they called "Yering" in the Yarra Valley. The land was bounded on the north by the Yarra River. Their homestead and stockyards overlooked the Yarra flood plain, called by them Yering Station which later became the site of Chateau Yering <sup>69</sup>	1866	28 February – first burial in Healesville Cemetery <sup>82</sup>
		1866	25 June - Henry Clark and James C. Steel named as Trustees for Healesville Cemetery <sup>83</sup>
		1867	10 December – Trustees Charles Walker, John Holland, J.T. Sullivan, Forrest Burns and Joseph Scott appointed trustees for the land set aside to become Healesville Cemetery <sup>84</sup>
1839	Robert Hoddle, Surveyor, continued surveying up to McMahon's Creek and reached the head of the river in 1844-5 <sup>70</sup>	1867	Healesville area was compared to Switzerland for its beauty and began attracting tourists <sup>85</sup>
1856	Gold was discovered at New Chum and a rudimentary track was built through Healesville to reach the mining sites <sup>71</sup>	1869	9 July – Government accepted the resignation of all Trustees previously appointed <sup>86</sup>
1861	Gold was discovered at Woods Point and the rough track leading to the mining area ran through the region now known as Healesville <sup>72</sup>	1869	17 September – Government appointed Henry Powell, Thomas Taylor, James Potter, Joseph Scott, Luke Flanagan, Patrick Lawlor, James Currie and Ewen Cameron as Trustees of Healesville Cemetery <sup>87</sup>
1863	Government had offered a reward of 100 pounds for an improved track to Woods Point, and then determined that the new track (which also ran through Healesville) was a great improvement and allocated monies for road building <sup>73</sup>	1873	Common School became State School 849 <sup>88</sup>
1864	Land surveyed in Healesville area by George MacDonald of the Department of Lands and Survey and the township was named after Richard Heales, Premier of Victoria (1860-1861) <sup>74</sup>	1874	17 July – Trustees William Allen and Robert Carter appointed in place of J. Currie and H. Powell who had both left the district <sup>89</sup>
1864	First hotel in Healesville, the Healesville Hotel, opened with a license held by John Holland of Chum Creek <sup>75</sup>	1875	Trustees tabled the annual accounts from 1870 to 1875 which showed that there was a government loan of 60 pounds outstanding in 1870 of which 55 pounds had been expended on works; nil income and expenditure in 1871, nil income and expenditure in 1872; nil income and expenditure in 1873 and not until 1874 was there a recorded income, that year it was 1 pound 10 shilling <sup>90</sup>
1865	The settlement at nearby Chums Creek was a major stopping and restocking place for those travelling to the goldfields at Woods Point and the new road on higher ground road, known as the Yarra Track, passed through Healesville <sup>76</sup>	1875	Post Office re-opens in its own building with Mary Cameron as the Post Mistress <sup>91</sup>
1865	1 May – Post Office opened with Mr James Poole as the postmaster with three deliveries each way per week <sup>77</sup>	1876	17 March – original temporary reservation of 11 acres converted to permanent for cemetery purposes <sup>92</sup>
1865	June – first land sales of Healesville Township held in Collins Street Melbourne offices of Gemmel, McCaul and Company <sup>78</sup>	1876	1 May – 32 burials already recorded as being on the cemetery land <sup>93</sup>
1865	28 August - Land temporarily reserved for cemetery purposes at Healesville, county of Evelyn, township of Healesville, 11 acres 1 rood 6 perches <sup>79</sup>	1876	5 May - Site permanently reserved from sale as it was Gazetted for cemetery purposes <sup>94</sup>
		1870	Before 1 April the cemetery had been laid out into 6 sections allocated to the various denominations, a layout still in use in 1916 and the 32 original burials had been interred in their respective sections <sup>95</sup>

1880	9 April - Trustees Frederick Narraway, John Holland, John Morrison and Edward Henley appointed Trustees (over land temporarily reserved on 28 August 1865) in place of T. Taylor and R. Allen (resigned) H. Cameron (deceased) and L. Flanagan (left district) <sup>96</sup>	1889	Railway reached Healesville on a link from Lilydale and this increased its potential for settlement as well as enabling the growing interest in tourism which ranged from bushwalkers to those looking for peaceful mountain scenery <sup>110</sup>
1880	20 April – earliest Minute Book entry <sup>97</sup>	1890	Timber court house constructed by H.N. Hainer to a design by Public Works department architect J.T. Kelleher (VHR H1171)
1881	Healesville was still a small town of 100 inhabitants with coach transport to Melbourne 3 times a week <sup>98</sup>	1891	Maroondah Aqueduct opened, the building of which had supported many local and new workers and tourism numbers increased <sup>111</sup>
1882	Trustees Henry Clark and J.C. Steel appointed in place of J.R. Walker and J. Morrison (resigned) (over land temporarily reserved on 28 August 1865) <sup>99</sup>	1894	May - Tenders advertised for cemetery fencing along the south side <sup>112</sup>
1883	Three additional Trustees were appointed, Robert Allen (Jnr), John Wilson and John Green (over land temporarily reserved on 28 August 1865) <sup>100</sup>	1894	Balance sheet of Cemetery Trust for 1894 published in local paper in January 1896 (from the Government Gazette notices) noted that the Trustees were John Holland, William Carter and Robert Allen and the income for that year from burials was 28 pounds 8 shilling plus other sundry income and left a balance of 64 pound 5 shilling and 7 pence after salaries, labour for graves dug, loan repaid etc. <sup>113</sup>
1883	7 December – an examination of the Minute Book at a later date seems to indicate that the Trust suspected something was wrong with the allocations of land to denominations <sup>101</sup>	1898	Statement of Accounts tabled and reported in local paper as having received fees for graves of 5 pounds 10 shilling and with a balance of 26 pounds 10 shilling and 6 pence noted by the Trustees John Holland, J. Wilson in 1898 while in 1899 fees of 28 pounds 10 shillings were noted under the same Trustees <sup>114</sup>
1884	27 May – Trust began to take steps to remediate the problem <sup>102</sup>	1902	Rail station was constructed for the Victoria Railways by F.E. Shillabeer and later listed on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H1567)
1884	27 May - Minutes of Trust meeting show that Trustees were aware that the internal plan of the cemetery did not match the Crown Grant plan and took steps to rectify the matter. Trustees Green and Holland were deputized to meet with the Secretary for Lands. At a later meeting (date unclear) Trustee Green produced a sketch plan and it was attached to the current Minute book and this plan was then in use for the next 45 years <sup>103</sup>	1903	Population of the district was 1903 while 800 people lived in town which now had churches, schools, courts and hotels. Tourism via train, was a major industry supporting many guesthouses but there are also had orchards, vegetable crops, timber and other industries <sup>115</sup>
1886	Correspondence continues between the Trustees and the Lands and Titles Office over the discrepancy in land allocation to the denominations <sup>104</sup>	1904	Trustees held their annual meeting (present Mr Green, Mr Carter and Mr Allen) and discussed the Secretary's report (Secretary J. Cornish) which referred to crops being grown on unused cemetery land and sold for profit and noted the cemetery was in good condition <sup>116</sup>
1886	June - Trustees Henry Clark and James Steel resign as Trustees <sup>105</sup>	1904	Major floods damaged rail line and roads in the area <sup>117</sup>
1886	23 July – Trustee and Secretary Mr. Clark reported on his visit to the Registrar of Titles in Melbourne. The result in not minuted but given the status quo was held for so long it is assumed the results were satisfactory and seem to relate to the allocations to the various denominations <sup>106</sup>	1904	At a meeting of Healesville Shire Council, Cr Cornish moved to request that the Council install a turnstile between the recreation reserve (Queens Park) and the cemetery <sup>118</sup>
1887	30 September - Shire of Healesville created <sup>107</sup>	1905	Local paper reported that a meeting was held to nominate a new cemetery Trustee to replace John Holland (deceased) <sup>119</sup>
1887	Three railway camps established to work on the new rail line which brought over 200 men into the district <sup>108</sup>		
1888	Grand Hotel built to cater for growing tourism trade <sup>109</sup>		

1907	Contract let by Upper Ranges Shire Council to install 15 chains of fencing to enclose the western unfenced section <sup>120</sup>	1916	23 October - Messrs. Crowley, Lalor, Carter, Allen, Potter and Tevlin were removed as Trustees of the Healesville Cemetery, probably as a result of this dispute <sup>131</sup>
1907	September – tenders were invited to lease about 3 acres of cemetery land for grazing <sup>121</sup>	1916	1 November - Governor in Council appointed only church representatives to the Trust rather than local businessmen as before so Mr Thomas Crowley and Mr John H. Long (Church of England); Mr Michael Tevlin and Mr Michael Sheehan (Roman Catholic), Mr William Smith and Mr William Dawborn (Presbyterian) and Mr Henry Ruddle and Mr Frederick Jolliffe (Methodist) to be Trustees <sup>132</sup>
1908	Local Paper reports on Upper Ranges Shire Council minutes that the cemetery fencing was now completed and that the council proposed to plant a number of ornamental trees indicating that the council accepted some responsibility in addition to that of the Trustees <sup>122</sup>	1916	1 December – Minutes from 24 November meeting reported the removal of the old Trustees and the appointment of the new. It was also reported that the Trustees had requested the Secretary from the Department of Health send a surveyor to assist with the Methodist allocation issue as a matter of urgency. The Secretary of 27 years, Mr Cornish, then resigned in protest at the removal of the former Trustees but was requested to hold over his resignation for a period <sup>133</sup>
1908	Public Meeting held to elect a Trustee to replace Mr. W.A. Burnside (resigned) <sup>123</sup>	1916	23 December – New Trustees decided to request that each denomination contribute 2 pounds towards the maintenance funds so the Trust would not record a debit balance and that the Secretary be asked to defer his resignation for 3 months. The Methodist Church, on reflection, decided to maintain its original allocation <sup>134</sup>
1908	July – noted in local paper that some 200 trees had been received from the state nursery and 31 had been planted in the Healesville cemetery <sup>124</sup>	1917	February – Meeting recorded a tense situation as the accounts remained in debt requiring a loan as only the Roman Catholic Church had responded to the request for a donation. The Church of England declined to contribute and the Presbyterian and Methodist churches had not replied. A request for a burial in the Methodist section was refused owing to the uncertainty and a letter sent to the Department of Health stressed the urgency of the surveyor's report <sup>135</sup>
1909	Long letter from a visitor to the local paper noting that the state of the Healesville Cemetery was disgraceful and badly neglected and suggested something should be done about it <sup>125</sup>	1917	May – the situation continued to deteriorate although the surveyors plan was completed and accepted; the Secretary demanded his resignation be accepted as he was ashamed at the state of the cemetery owing to the inaction of the Trustees. The Church of England again refused to make a donation and the other two churches refused to reply. A decision was made to advertise for a new Secretary <sup>136</sup>
1909	Major flooding in the district <sup>126</sup>	1918	6 July – Mr Tevlin had evidently levelled a charge again previous Secretary Cornish which he answered in the local paper going through the original arguments once again <sup>137</sup>
1913	Letter from a local person complaining that the burning of debris done recently by the Trustees has damaged several graves and their plantings, including those of his parents <sup>127</sup>		
1916	2 June - Joint meeting was called of the Cemetery Trustees and the major religious denominations to discuss the areas allocated to the various denominations as the current plan was not in accordance with the Crown Grant allocations to denominations. An agreement was reached to re-arrange the boundaries of the denominations and add some area for the Salvation Army and it was decided to have some representatives of each denomination on the Trust Board in future <sup>128</sup>		
1916	27 June – the Trust received a number of angry letters about the re-allocation of lands between the Church of England portion and the Methodist portion from the Trustees of the Methodist Church, and others requesting the re-allocation be revoked. The Trust replied it was unable to do so and the Crown Grant allocation must stand and that the agreement had been reached in a spirit of reconciliation <sup>129</sup>		
1916	9 September – correspondence to the Trust from the public and churches continued on this matter of boundaries and it was decided to refer all correspondence to the Board of Health <sup>130</sup>		



- 1919 10 March – local paper reported that the Council moved to allocate 150 pounds for work at the cemetery which was described as being a disgrace but another councilor moved an amendment to consider these works together with a number of other works<sup>138</sup>
- 1919 26 April – letter to local paper from previous Secretary Cornish suggesting that if the religious denominations now running the cemetery could not keep it maintained it might be prudent to vest it in the local Council as they could then expend the Returned Servicemen's funds on the cemetery as planned<sup>139</sup>
- 1920 Letter to local paper complained about the grounds of the cemetery being littered with barbed wire, broken glass old boxes and rubbish whilst graves are sunken and uncared for – the writer called for a caretaker to be installed<sup>140</sup>
- 1920 Advertisement for new Secretary to the Cemetery Trust placed in local papers which noted preference would be given to a returned soldier<sup>141</sup>
- 1920 September – a meeting of the local RSL determined to write to the Cemetery Trust complaining that although two returned soldiers had applied for the position of Secretary a person, not a servicemen, had been appointed and that they wished to register their "emphatic protest" Complaints continued in the local paper for some time over this issue.<sup>142</sup>
- 1921 January - letter to the local paper noted that the cemetery was looking better and that the man employed was doing his job well but more work was needed from the owners of graves to keep them tidy<sup>143</sup>
- 1921 August – more public complaints<sup>144</sup>
- 1921 October – the new Secretary, Mr Phillips, responded to the letter of complaint by suggesting people could contact him and make suggestions as to how to clean up the cemetery given the Trust had little in the way of funds available<sup>145</sup>
- 1921 December – lengthy letter to the editor stated that some donations had been received as a result of the previous letter in the paper and again requested assistance and donations as well as stating that no government grant was received and that each family was responsible for the upkeep of their graves. Trustees were 2 representatives from each of the major religions, Church of England, Roman Catholic, Methodist and Presbyterian<sup>146</sup>
- 1922 January – letter to the editor suggested that the letting of tenders at the Healesville Cemetery were not dealt with transparently (results not published in the paper) and this was a cause of people being unwilling to contribute monies<sup>147</sup>
- 1922 June – the cemetery continued to occupy the letters to the editor column with one commenting that he had visited recently and seen local people handling the burning of rubbish and weeding and suggested that each grave owner should contribute 5 shilling rather than leaving the work up to one or two families<sup>148</sup>
- 1922 September – Trustees decide that graves must be kept in order and advertised that families should contact the Secretary to arrange to have graves attended regularly (although it is unclear how this is to be funded)<sup>149</sup>
- 1923 January - Thomas Starr elected Chairman of the Cemetery Trust for the year coming<sup>150</sup>
- 1923 June – a reward of 2 pounds was offered by the Trustees for information about the unruly children smashing glass cases and destroying shrubs and wreaths at the local cemetery which would lead to a conviction for committing willful damage in sacred grounds<sup>151</sup>
- 1924 Tenders called for fencing at the cemetery<sup>152</sup>
- 1926 Bushfires in the area<sup>153</sup>
- 1927 Maroondah Dam completed which meant that many long term workers and their families left the district<sup>154</sup>
- 1928 Improvements in conditions at the cemetery received notice in the local paper with some 25 pounds allocated to clearing up the grounds (Mr Campbell Chair)<sup>155</sup>
- 1929 Letter to local paper asked who had lit the recent fire at the cemetery that destroyed grave fencing, flowers and name plates and caused considerable damage which also asked who was going to pay for the repairs<sup>156</sup>
- 1930s Growing popularity of car clubs and related outings brought more tourists along the scenic roads but visitors arriving by train dropped dramatically<sup>157</sup>
- 1930 1 July - meeting of Trustees discussed notification from the Inspector of Noxious Weeds (bulbs and blackberries) but decided to deal with these issues in season. Minutes also record efforts by the Trustees to insist that relatives remove the noxious weeds from their family's graves<sup>158</sup>
- 1932 November – the Chair, Mr. James Tatham, called for public support via donations of 1 pound each to allow the Trust to access an Employment Grant of 20 pounds (to be matched by Trust and public funds) so that the noxious weed (Watsonias) could be eradicated from the cemetery<sup>159</sup>



1932	November – a reader identified the weed as a type of Watsonias which quickly can reach weed status and get out of control and supported the donation concept to eradicate this weed from “God’s Acre” <sup>160</sup>	1947	Local paper reported a letter from a concerned citizen over the lack of maintenance at the Healesville cemetery due to lack of funds amongst other complaints and suggestions <sup>176</sup>
1932	13 December – Mr Campbell appointed Secretary on a salary of 10 pounds per annum <sup>161</sup>	1950	Close co-operation with the Shire of Healesville is suggested by the Trustees requesting the use of a council grader to clear paths and the meeting with the Shire Engineer to discuss the new road deviation <sup>177</sup>
1933	January – Trust publically thanked the population for the donations received of 13 pound 5 shilling which together with Trust funds and the grant funds have allowed a total of over 52 pounds to be expended on removing the Watsonias plants allowing the cemetery to appear in much better condition <sup>162</sup>	1951	May - Letter to the Editor reminds locals that there is another cemetery (Healesville Cemetery) which requires attention equally if not more so that the Aboriginal cemetery at Coranderrk which was receiving considerable attention at that time <sup>178</sup>
1934	Healesville Cemetery Trust Minutes reported that a total of 582 burials had been recorded up to date <sup>163</sup>	1951	2 June - Conditions at the Healesville Cemetery was described as deplorable by local councilors (mentioning the Watsonias) who determined to offer assistance to the Trustees as their current income was insufficient to maintain the site <sup>179</sup>
1934	Healesville Sanctuary, a major tourism attraction, opened <sup>164</sup>	1951	9 June – fiery letter to the local paper castigates the councilors for their criticism of the cemetery Trustees who do the best they have with little income and reminds the council that the most needed item is the new fence long promised by council and the removal of debris from the new road which council placed through the cemetery and mentioning excised land <sup>180</sup>
1935	Nomination of Mr W.H. Little accepted by Public Health Department as recorded in the Minutes <sup>165</sup>	1951	16 June – open Letter in the local paper defended the criticism and stated that the cemetery has long been overgrown with watsonia and weeds and insists the Trustees do not have access to the income required to maintain the cemetery and has not for many years <sup>181</sup>
1936	Mr Baines appointed Secretary of the Trust <sup>166</sup>	1951	23 June – letter from the Trust Chairman stated that a gentlemen’s agreement was reached with local council to excise a piece of cemetery land for council purposes and that the agreed upon fence has not been erected nor has the area been cleared as promised by Council <sup>182</sup>
1936	September – letter from a regular visitor congratulating the Trust on the removal of the dreaded Watsonias but suggesting that older graves were still overgrown and that someone should look after them <sup>167</sup>	1951	5 December – Trust meeting revolved around attempts to raise funds by allowing grazing with a fee of 1 shilling per week; selling of pine logs to local timber mills; requesting that the local Council erect a new fence to the wishes of the Trust and a letter of complaint be sent noting the Council’s unwillingness to resolve the issues <sup>183</sup>
1937	July – Trust advertised that the position of Secretary was vacant and applications should be sent to Chairman Mr G. Hill <sup>168</sup>	1951	22 December - Council reports that 40 pounds has been made available to complete the new cemetery fence <sup>184</sup>
1939	13 January - Black Saturday bushfires devastated Healesville <sup>169</sup>		
1930/40s	Healesville Cemetery Trust cease meeting twice a year and often only meet annually as fewer burials were occurring <sup>170</sup>		
1940	May – Council inquired what the cost would be of cemetery land (as well as dismantling and re-erecting the Barak Monument) in the Healesville Cemetery <sup>171</sup> This promptly set off a public dispute as the memorial to the celebrated Aboriginal elder was placed in the township not to be moved and the criticism was severe that the Council should consider wasting this money when ratepayers could not get footpaths repaired, even though the Trust was prepared to accept the monument if the land was paid for <sup>172</sup>		
1940	New Presbyterian section developed <sup>173</sup>		
1941	Local paper again criticized the cemetery’s deplorable condition noting few attended a meeting to try and sort out issues. <sup>174</sup> Each public donation was noted with the name and the amount published <sup>175</sup>		

1952	Conditions were still disgraceful according to a recent visitor who proposed a working bee to tidy the place up and get rid of the blackberries, weedy grasses and snakes but the Trust meeting in August a few months later reported that the cemetery grounds were in good order <sup>185</sup>	1997	Scale of Fees tabled citing Mathew Schultz, Faye Bates and Alice Harris as Trustees <sup>203</sup>
1953	Healesville Cemetery Trust received a bequest of 1,000 pounds from the estate of Mr J.H. Connell and decided to invest it with the State Electricity Commission for a 20 year period despite numerous complaints over the poor maintenance at the cemetery <sup>186</sup>	2001	August - cemetery underwent a major facelift costing \$140,000 shared equally between Shire of Yarra Ranges and the Healesville Cemetery Trust <sup>204</sup>
1955	Local newspaper reported constant vandalism to the graves in the much neglected cemetery <sup>187</sup>	2001	Healesville Cemetery Trust abolished and responsibility transferred to the Trustees of the Lilydale Memorial Park and Cemetery <sup>205</sup>
1958	18 June – Yarra Glen district added to Shire of Healesville <sup>188</sup>	2002	Government commissioned a report on the viability of Cemetery Trusts which discovered that there were concerns over viability, financial management and governance at a number of cemetery trusts <sup>206</sup>
1962	Healesville ringed by bushfires <sup>189</sup>	2003	Annual Report of the Lilydale Memorial Park and Cemetery Trust (including Healesville Cemetery) tabled in Parliament and it notes Healesville Cemetery had acquired a substantial new fence <sup>207</sup>
1968	Hebrew section opened <sup>190</sup>	2003	Burials declined in favour of cremations for the first time in this district <sup>208</sup>
1969	15 June – Memorial Gates, paid for by public subscription, were formally opened <sup>191</sup>	2004	The Department of Human Services was advised of concerns related to probity at the Cheltenham and Regional Cemeteries Trust which instigated a review by the Auditor General <sup>209</sup>
1969	August - Keith Heritage appointed Trustee as an additional Trustee <sup>192</sup>	2005	Annual Report of the Lilydale Memorial Park and Cemetery Trust (including Healesville Cemetery) tabled in Parliament <sup>210</sup>
1970	Trustees decided to open up new ground in the cemetery in a dryer location owing to the inclement weather which had made grave digging difficult <sup>193</sup>	2005	Findings of Auditor General's Review were reported to Parliament in May 2005 <sup>211</sup>
1974	Two new Trustees appointed, Mr Harris and Mr Mills <sup>194</sup>	2006	Following this Review The Auditor General completed a review of thirteen major Cemetery Trusts which was printed in July 2006 and raised a number of concerns over financial probity and governance issues <sup>212</sup>
1974	10 August – last set of Minutes in Minute book recorded the new lawn section was to be laid out <sup>195</sup>	2007	July - Government then decided to initiate a larger review of the fourteen major cemetery trusts in the state resulting in an Interim Report in tabled in Parliament on July 2007 <sup>213</sup>
1981	Scale of Fees tabled citing Trustees J. Mills, W.P. Harris and E. Donovan as Trustees <sup>196</sup>	2008	July 2008, the State Government announced reforms to the 14 major metropolitan and regional Cemetery Trusts that report to Parliament under the Financial Management Act 1994 <sup>214</sup>
1983	Macedonian Orthodox section opened <sup>197</sup>	2009	Bushfire again threatened the region and houses to the north were lost and people were stranded to the south of the town <sup>215</sup>
1985	Warren Nicholls, Robert Postelwaite and Billie Mills appointed as Trustees <sup>198</sup>	2009	Redevelopment of fence and gates at Healesville Cemetery provided a more significant entry and alleviates drainage problems. A new memorial garden was also installed to cater for cremated remains and an area for natural burials set aside <sup>216</sup>
1987	Greek Orthodox section opened <sup>199</sup>		
1988	Moslem section opened with one grave in 1988 <sup>200</sup>		
1995	Shire of Healesville split and absorbed into Shires of Nillumbik, Yarra Ranges and Murrindindi <sup>201</sup>		
1997	3 August meeting – Election of new Trustees, Beatrice Hart, Matt Schultz and Faye Bates to replace retiring members Billie Mills, Robert Postlethwaite and Alvie Bergin and Bill Harris (deceased). Meeting also discussed the installation of some new roads and lawn area plus the need for a Healesville Cemetery Trust Seal <sup>202</sup>		

- 2010 Two major metropolitan Trusts were created as a result of the reviews, the Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust and the Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust plus three regional Class Trusts and five other Trusts.<sup>217</sup>
- 2010 1 March 2010 Establishment of Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust as a Class A Trust under an amendment to the Act (2003) to manage one Trust after the consolidation of eight existing cemetery trusts into one. These include locations in Altona, Williamstown, Anderson's Creek, Fawkner, Keilor, Lilydale, Preston, Templestowe and Wyndham. Greater Metropolitan Cemetery Trust is granted responsibility for Lilydale cemeteries, including Healesville Cemetery<sup>218</sup>
- 2010 1 March- First meeting of the Greater Metropolitan Cemetery Trust<sup>219</sup>
- 2011 Government releases a discussion paper "Victoria's Cemeteries and Crematoria: Options for Legislative Change"<sup>220</sup>
- 2013 A review of the five Class A Trusts was completed in May 2013 to ensure that the reforms were proceeding smoothly.<sup>221</sup> While some minor changes were recommended on the whole the government was satisfied the reforms had succeeded.
- 2015 New Regulations to the Cemetery and Crematoria Act released<sup>222</sup>

## Healesville Cemetery Name Changes

- 1865 *Healesville Cemetery* - 28 August - Land temporarily reserved for cemetery purposes at Healesville, county of Evelyn, township of Healesville, 11 acres 1 rood 6 perches<sup>223</sup>
- 2010 *Healesville Cemetery – Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust*<sup>224</sup>

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See also Lilydale Cemetery Files CEM 297 (var)

### ARCHIVES – HEALTH DEPARTMENT ARCHIVE

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## ARCHIVES – HEALESVILLE AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY, LOCAL HISTORY RESOURCE CENTRE

3 hanging files

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