

CAROLINE HASTINGS (1865-1871)

Caroline Hastings was six years old when she passed away on 12 January 1871. Her father, William Hastings, was a miner on the goldfields of Warrandyte.

Unlike many miners, William was quite successful on the goldfields and he raised a large family in Warrandyte in the timber cottage he built around 1873, which remains standing. It is believed he and his wife had 12 children and by the time he died in 1892, eight of his children and his wife had predeceased him. Many died of tuberculosis or consumption as it was called at the time, which was a common disease, sometimes related to living in crowded conditions. The timber cottage was not very large for so many family members.

Sadly drowning was a common cause of death around Warrandyte at the time, as newspaper reports of local deaths showed. The Yarra River runs quite fast at this location with many deep holes and snags. In the early days, few people could swim and bathers were often swept away by the current or fell into deep holes.

Caroline's death also demonstrates that in these times, even quite young children had to complete their often arduous chores to keep the household going. With no running water available for washing or cooking, all household needs had to be fetched from the river.

The family memorial for little Caroline Hastings is the oldest memorial in the cemetery but the date inscribed is incorrect as the Coroner's Inquest clearly stated she drowned on 12th January 1871, not 1873. The memorial may have been placed after her death or repaired at a later date.

With the assistance of the Warrandyte Historical Society.



Find out more

Baird, D. *Digging into History: goldmining at Warrandyte*, (2007)

Miller, J & Buckland, I. *The Yarra Miner* (1988)

Polley, V. *Wonderful Warrandyte: a portrait*, (2014)



DR JAN PENNEY BA, DIP ED, PHD

Jan is a professional historian who has worked across the fields of heritage, education and tourism. She has taught at several universities, including Monash University where she delivered the master of public history course. She is also a former Chair of the Heritage Council of Victoria. Jan was appointed to The Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust in 2010.



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