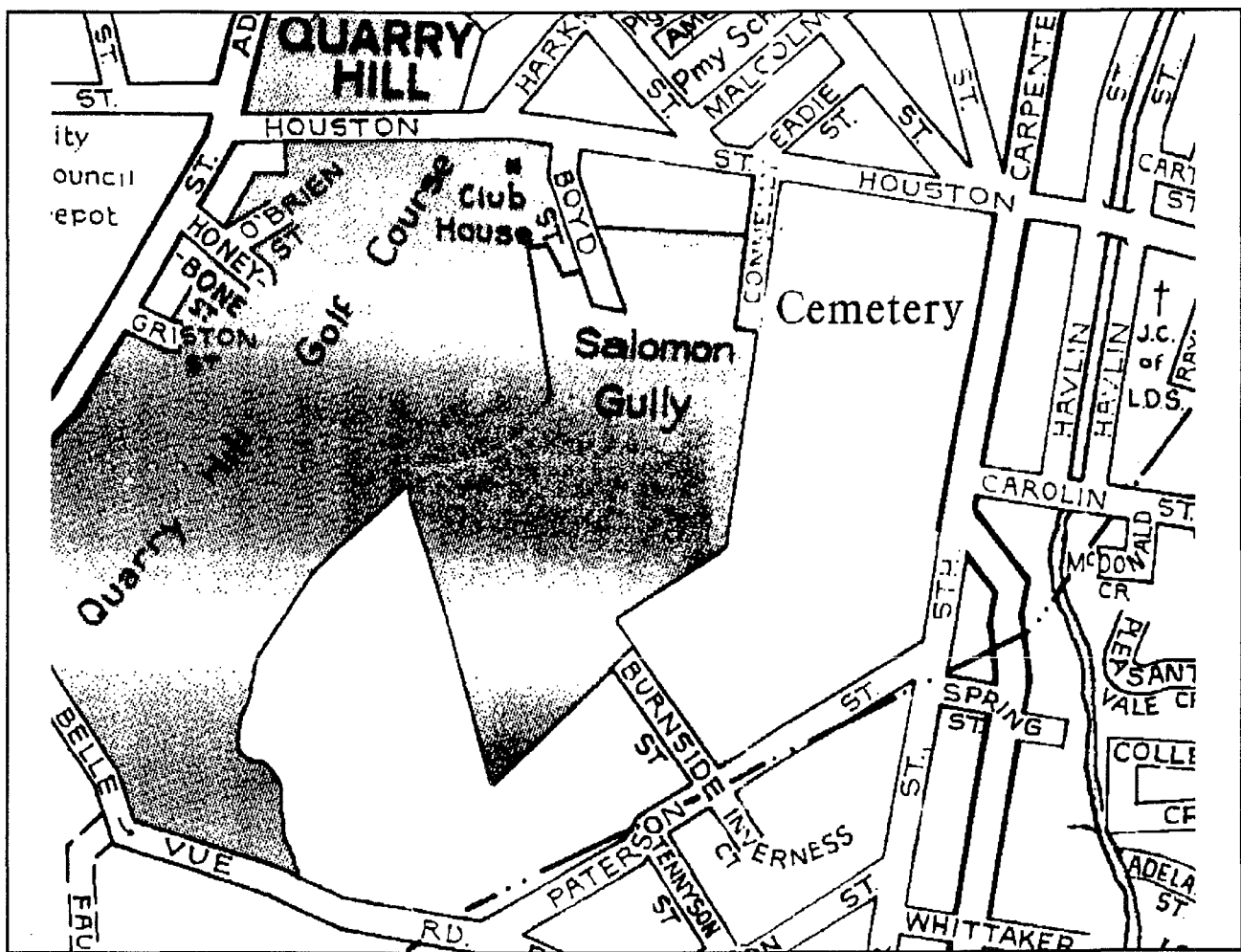


Bendigo General Cemetery (Back Creek)



3-56
(Derived from 'Bendigo & District Street & Tourist Map' (UBD, 4th edit.)

Bendigo General Cemetery (Back Creek)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

City of Bendigo

LOCATION/ADDRESS

Area bounded by Carpenter Street, Pattison Street, Burnside Street and Houston Street Bendigo, 3350

CADASTRAL INFORMATION

Crown Reserve Rs 3777, Parish of Sandhurst, County of Bendigo

TYPE of PLACE

Cemetery/Institutional Garden

SIGNIFICANCE

Bendigo General Cemetery, dating from 1875, continuously developed and still in use as a cemetery is of **regional** significance:

- * for its collection of trees and plants; these are typical of nineteenth century cemeteries in Victoria and demonstrate strong associational links with their cemetery setting and links with suppliers in Melbourne including von Mueller;
- * for its retention of a portion of its original vegetation;
- * for its collection of buildings and structures; these include representative examples of typical features such as the entrance gate, lodge, chapel, fencing, rotunda and headstones;
- * for its considerable aesthetic appeal derived from the undulating site, sense of enclosure and vistas both within the site, views out of the site and from the exterior into the site;
- * for its unique path system and its associations with fragrant flowers;
- * for its strong historical and social links with the City of Bendigo, exemplified by its early date of development, its long continuity of use for its original purpose, its links with the early development of the town and its prominence within the life and society of Bendigo¹.

HISTORY

Notes taken from RS 3777 and BCC records:

22.03.1857 Council records contain the original tracing prepared by the District Surveyor of the survey plan for the Cemetery No.3 Back Creek which totalled 20 acres. The plan shows clearly delineated areas for various denominations eg. Chinese 0.2.39, Church of England 3.0.15, Society of Friends 0.2.4. The site was located to the north of Dog Gully and an unmarked road (Carpenter Street) runs along the eastern boundary.

22.10.57 The plan was attached to a letter submitted by the President of the Board of Land and Works as the proposed subdivision of the general cemetery. It was noted that this cemetery had been reworked because of gold workings encroaching on the original reservation and the writer (David ?Marne) requested the trustees of the original reservation transfer to the proposed. The surveyor R Larritt notes on 02.11.57 that the Trustees were informed of the proposal.

31.08.61 On 19.8.61 land was temporarily reserved from sale and gazetted on 31.08.61.

25.09.63 Trustees appointed and gazetted 25.09.63

1870 Plants including Robinia seedlings and 72 other unidentified species were sent by von Mueller from the Botanic Gardens, Melbourne².

25.06.1873 Letter from B & S Johnston, nurserymen, Preston, informing council that their order for three cases of plants for the Back Creek Cemetery had been forwarded³

1874 Notes that the original site was not gazetted only the extension.

¹ AHC Criteria A3, A4, B2, C2, D2, E1, G1
² S Maroske, Mueller Correspondence Project, pers comm, July, 1992
³ BCC, Box 11, Item 20

16.07.74 Letter from Mining Department and gold lease application 3330 in land to the west of the original cemetery reserve.

1874 Section of land revoked on 02.10.74

18.01.75 28a.10r.10p. permanently reserved on 18.01.75, gazetted 22.01.75 and known as 'Back Creek'

29.01.75 14a.0r.8p addition temporarily reserved and gazetted 29.01.75

31.10.1928 G G Birch requested to survey an extension to the cemetery. 19a.1r.21p addition temporarily reserved and gazetted 31.10.28

05.06.40 7a.2r.10p addition temporarily reserved and gazetted 05.06.40

1941 Area totalled 69a.0r.9.5p

1947 2a.2r.12p excised and gazetted 02.07.47; re-reserved for rubbish depot

19.10.72 The *Bendigo Advertiser* carried an article about the Quarry Hill Golf Course Committee which wanted the bushland at the back of the cemetery but the Bendigo Field Naturalists objected as they considered this part of the reserve contained the "best examples of wax flowers in the district" and should become a park.

1980A semi-rectangular area totalling 6.5ha along Connelly Street was revoked from the cemetery to be re-reserved as a native plant reserve.

DESCRIPTION:

Bendigo General Cemetery extends over approximately 28 acres, the majority of which is utilized. The undulating site is located along the Back Creek (Carpenter Street) and extends west up the hill where the reserve for native plants was part of the original cemetery reserve. The formal path layout extends throughout the north and south of the site, much of the southern section still undeveloped. The cemetery is located to the south of the main civic centre of the town and commands views in the east to nearby forested hills. The main entry from Carpenter Street and facing west is the original entry and contains gate and fence. Major structures are the lodge just within the Carpenter Street gates and to the south the chapel to the north west of the lodge and facing the entry and the decorative octagonal rotunda, restored in the past decade. The path layout is a complex arrangement of sinuous bitumen paths looping from the central path off Carpenter Street and from there throughout the site including the southern section. Much of the present layout can be compared to the 1857 survey plan for integrity such as the entrance off Carpenter Street and the southern path loop defining the Independents. The paths form boundaries of denominational compartments and the central western section is occupied by a large section of Chinese graves and associated burning towers. The cemetery contains important examples of headstones demonstrating a range of styles and the different periods of burial.

Planting in the cemetery consists of a backdrop of *Eucalyptus spp.* on Quarry Hill with some individual specimens throughout the grounds as well as Cypress, *Cedrus deodara*, *Magnolia grandiflora* near the chapel, *Washingtonia filifera* and a carob, *Ceratonia siliqua*. However the grounds do not contain anywhere near the collection of rare and mature exotic trees as at the White Hills or Eaglehawk cemeteries. It seems that a different and possibly unique planting style was the development of walks dating from c1870s? identified by iron markers each bearing the name of a fragrant flower both native and exotic. Walks still visible are the wallflower, primrose, violet, geranium, boronia, aster, marigold, wattle and columbine paths.

OWNERSHIP

Borough of Eaglehawk

EXISTING DESIGNATIONS

Peter Watts Gardens study - not listed.

National Trust of Australia (Victoria) Register of Significant Trees - none listed.