

**CHINESE BURNING TOWERS, BENDIGO CEMETERY MONUMENT  
CARPENTER STREET, QUARRY HILL**

**SURVEY DATE: 1991-2**

**PLANNING SCHEME NUMBER: 18**

**STUDY GRADING: A**

**CONSTRUCTION DATE: 1862c**

**FIRST OWNER : BENDIGO CHINESE COMMUNITY?**



**CITATION:**

**History**

At both White Hills and Bendigo cemeteries there are brick towers in which offerings were burned by the Chinese as part of their burial rites. In the days before these towers were erected a spark from the offerings started a grass fire which damaged the wooden 'gravestones.' Possibly this event led to the building of the burning towers<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Butcher & Flanders p.155

**BENDIGO & EAGLEHAWK HERITAGE STUDY-SIGNIFICANT SITES  
GRAEME BUTLER & ASSOCIATES**

Other theories suggest that the practice started at White Hills Cemetery in c1862 when the sexton's young daughter was fatally burnt as a result of burning incense or igniting crackers during such a ceremony<sup>1</sup>.

The diminutive and densely packed headstones of the Chinese gravestones near the towers are of interest<sup>2</sup>.

### **Description**

The tower is hexagonal, constructed from tuck-pointed brick on a basalt plinth, has two circular openings for insertion of the incense and is around four metres high. Two dog-toothed string-courses are used<sup>3</sup> with terra-cotta brackets, as ornament and the whole is roofed with galvanised sheet metal with a flue at the apex.

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<sup>1</sup> Bendigo Friends of Bendigo Cemeteries tour April 1992 cites Garrett grave  
<sup>2</sup> Butcher & Flanders p.155  
<sup>3</sup> HBC file FN8512231