



“Show me the manner in which a nation or country care for its dead, and I will measure with mathematical exactness the tender sympathies of its people, their respect for the laws of the land and their loyalty to high ideals.”

William Gladstone
1809 – 1898

Thank you

The Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust and the Friends of Coburg Cemetery wish to thank the many individuals, relatives and organisations for their contributions made towards this community project.

The heritage walk signage will be updated on a regular basis as new images and information emerges.

Should you wish to enquire about future developments please email enquiries@gmct.com.au

Working together to preserve our history.



**The Greater Metropolitan
Cemeteries Trust**
Lasting memories, peaceful places.

Coburg Cemetery

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Coburg Cemetery Heritage Walk



Welcome to the Coburg Cemetery Heritage Walk

Cemeteries are an important part of our culture and our heritage. They offer an invaluable insight into the past and provide a sense of community and expression.

Coburg Cemetery, like most, tells a unique and personal story of the pioneers who laid the foundation stones of the district. Coburg's penal settlement is well documented in the many memorials to Pentridge Governors and warders. The Chinese who farmed the market gardens along the banks of the Merri Creek have their burial ground at the cemetery. Early settlers who opened up land in the district are commemorated with impressive monuments. However, the most predominant theme running through the cemetery is that of the area's working class.

Take a step back in time and discover the forgotten stories of the people buried here. You will meet political leaders, sportsmen, heroes, villains and victims of disaster.

We welcome you on your journey of discovery into the past as you immerse yourself in their interesting life stories.



History of the Cemetery

- 1859** A public meeting is held and Trustees are elected for the 'General Cemetery Pentridge'.
- 1860** The surveyed site, comprising of 14.5 acres, is gazetted and divided into six compartments to reflect the denominational composition of the community – plus a compartment for 'strangers'.
- 1875** Now known as Coburg Cemetery, the first recorded burial is that of Margaret Sullivan, a nineteen year old who died of consumption.
- 1886** An internal Health Department report expresses concern about the need for better drainage, which is later rectified.
- 1912** A Salvation Army representative, Robert Lord, is nominated as a Trustee. Objections are raised from the existing Trustees which leads to the Crown Solicitor providing a legal opinion that this organisation could be regarded as a legal denomination.
- 1918** Anti-German feelings emerge within the community. An anonymous letter is sent to the Trustees about why a German gardener was employed and 'something should be done.' No action was taken.
- 1918-9** The influenza epidemic has a dramatic impact on health. Schools are closed and the cemetery is opened on Sundays to cope with demand. A total of 11,552 Australians die from this epidemic.
- 1920's** Significant upgrades are made to the cemetery to include bricklaying of pathways, water service extensions, new picket fences and front entrance gates.
- 1937** Sewer works are completed.
- 1964** The unused cemetery lodge is replaced with the new lawn section.
- 1964** Controversy erupts as the late Trustees are challenged by the Master of Stone Masons Association for the limited number of licences available for stone masons. Corruption is alleged.
- 1967** The late Trustees attempt to ban taking of photographs within the cemetery.
- 1968** The lawn section of the cemetery is renamed 'Pine Ridge' Memorial Park.
- 1969** The Monumental Stone Masons Association place a ban on the cemetery forcing the State Government to remove the late Trustees. Their responsibilities are transferred to the Fawkner Trustees.
- 2010** The Greater Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust (the GMCT) is formed and the cemetery is managed by this Trust.
- 2011** Upgrades are made to the cemetery to include a new front fence, refurbishment of front entrance gates and the removal of retired vegetation posing a threat to old monuments. The Friends of Coburg Cemetery is established and a partnership is formed with the GMCT.
- 2012** A visitor's rotunda is built and the heritage walk is developed by members of the friends group and the trust.

1. **David Edward McGrath**
Murdered police constable
RC C 187
2. **Captain William Ambrose Cull**
ANZAC and author
RC D 573
3. **Sir Alexander George Wales**
Politician and Lord Mayor of Melbourne
COE P 1023
4. **Chinese Heritage**
5. **Said Ahmed Shah**
Hawker and religious leader
Other Denominations Plot 6
6. **Montague Dare**
Businessman and developer
COE A 25
7. **Casamento Family**
Fruiterers
RC R 5X
8. **Charles Web Gilbert**
Sculptor
COE R13
9. **Anketell Family**
William Anketell
Farmer and magistrate
Thomas Anketell
Murdered bank manager
COE P 3
10. **Joseph Hannan**
Political leader
RC A 513
11. **Anna Teresa Brennan**
Lawyer and equal rights advocate
RC A 685
12. **James Smith**
Pentridge warder
RC A 659
13. **The Spry Family**
Carriers
MET A 1
14. **William Murray**
Victim of SS Dandenong steamer disaster
PRS P 239
15. **Maggie and Annie Tucker**
Victims of Sunshine rail disaster
MET A 333
16. **George Arthur Keartland**
Naturalist and ornithologist
MET P699
17. **Laurence Cohen**
Political leader
PRS P 511
18. **Albert (Nuts) Renny**
Jockey
RC F 36
19. **Archibald Stewart**
Political leader
PRS D 18
20. **Walter Henry (Dick) Lee**
Collingwood footballer
PRS D 276
21. **William Guthrie Spence**
Lay preacher and politician
PRS DD 12
22. **John Daniel (Snowy)**
Cutmore
Criminal and gangland enforcer
RC F 378
23. **John and Catherine Curtin**
Parents of Prime Minister John Curtin
RC F 717
24. **John Paul Sennitt**
Ice and ice cream manufacturer
MET B 62
25. **James Francis (Jock) McHale**
Collingwood footballer and coach
RC F 813
26. **Isaac Mattson**
Eureka Stockade rebel
PRS B 95
27. **Friend Holness**
Metropolitan Fire Brigade firefighter
BAP OA 52
28. **James Roberts Jewell**
Butcher and politician
COE P 775
29. **Abel Greenwood**
Businessman and Shire President
COE P 573
30. **Frederick William Buzaglio**
Municipal administrator
COE P 581