HO219   395 MIDDLEBOROUGH ROAD, BOXHILL

Building:	Box Hill Cemetery		
Address:	395 Middleborough Road Box Hill	**Melway Map Ref:**	47 F/G10
Building Type:	Monuments and mausoleums	**Construction Dates:**	1873, 1929, 1935
Architects:	Ainsworth &Williams, Edwin Lutyen, Rodney Alsop & A. Bramwell Smith	**Builder:**	T.F Crabb

Image: Box Hill Cemetery.
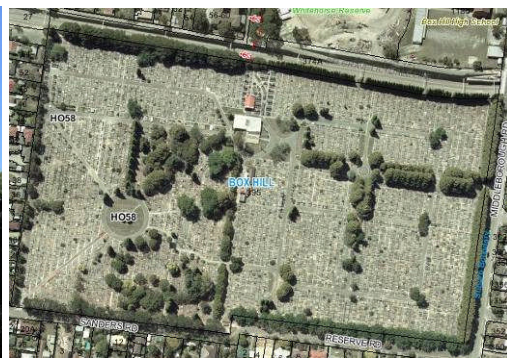Source: HLCD Pty Ltd, January 2009.

Image: Aerial View.
Source: City of Whitehorse, 2009.

History:

Box Hill Cemetery was developed in three main phases and these are reflected in its current layout.

In 1872, a committee was formed by a number of Box Hill residents to petition for a cemetery in Box Hill. In 1873, the Government responded by gazetting ten acres of land south of Whitehorse Road (separated from Whitehorse Road by a reserve), enabling the first burial of three week old child, Jessie Lavinia Smith. The committee formed a Cemetery Trust which specified the design and management of the cemetery. In 1874 the Trust stated that the roadways should be 33 feet wide and '*neatly trimmed with curvature of 9 inches*'.[51] In 1877, an additional two acres was gazetted by the Government for the Box Hill cemetery. In 1886, the cemetery was again extended to the north by three acres of gazetted land after the railway line was continued to Lilydale. This land was known originally as the Police Paddock (marked on a MMBW plan as 'the New Survey').[52] By this time, the cemetery contained fifteen acres in total. A wooden bridge was constructed over the railway line to connect the cemetery with Whitehorse Road and this access way was known as Cemetery Avenue. Other entry points to the cemetery included Rutland and Reserve Roads and Sanders Road. In the same year, 1886, two timber buildings were constructed, a

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[51] O.S. Green, *Box Hill Sketchbook*, Rigby Ltd, Melbourne, 1978, p.50.
[52] Ibid.

clergy room and ladies lounge. (These buildings are no longer extant).[53] This culminated the first phase of development.

The second phase of development started when a formal entry was constructed at the Whitehorse Road entrance of Cemetery Avenue in 1916 replacing an earlier fence and gate by Robert Sutton, a Box Hill pioneer, blacksmith and Cemetery Trustee. The formal entry was designed by architects Ainsworth and Williams, which is still extant. Two years later, gates were constructed at the Rutland Road entry, but these were removed and replaced in the 1960s. In 1919-20, a small shelter was built inside the Whitehorse Road gates and a little later another shelter and entry gates were built at the Sanders Road entrance. In 1923, an archway leading from Cemetery Avenue to the cemetery office was built. The archway included etchings of the trustees' names for the years 1872, 1922, 1948 and 1966. It has been altered considerably to incorporate cremation niches within the interior.[54]

In 1929, a Columbarium was constructed. A Columbarium is an underground vault that stores the ashes of the dead. Legislation was passed in Victoria, legalising cremations in 1903, however only ten percent of Victorians were being cremated by the 1930s. Architects Rodney Alsop and A. Bramwell Smith conceived the design, which is thought to represent a view of Galla Placida's tomb in Ravenna, Italy. The Health Department granted approval for the building in 1928, this building has since been included in the Heritage Overlay (HO58) and the Victorian Heritage Register (H2045).[55]

In 1935, an adjoining recreational reserve to the east of the cemetery was officially gazetted as an extension to the cemetery. This commenced the third and final major developmental phase of the Box Hill Cemetery. The land had been called New College ground and was initially used as a makeshift golf course, but as subdivisions started to occur nearby, such as Sweetland's paddocks and the east end of Albion Road paddocks, the golf club moved.[56] With no specific use for the recreational reserve, the Cemetery Trustees managed to obtain the reserve for an extension.[57]

Some well-known Victorian historical figures have been buried at Box Hill Cemetery. These include, Sir William Angliss (a businessman/philanthropist), Edouard Borovansky (who significantly contributed to the creation of the national Australian Ballet), Cyril Callister (inventor of Vegemite), CJ Dennis (poet), Joy Hester (artist), Frank Hyett (unionist), Sidney Myer (a businessman/philanthropist), Harold Crofton Sleigh (ship owner), and Sir George Tallis (manager director of JC Williamson).[58]

A monumental memorial was erected for Sidney Myer in 1939, designed by British architect, Sir Edwin Lutyen in association with local architects Yuncken, Freeman Bros, Griffiths & Simpson. (The Myer memorial is included in the Heritage Overlay (HO58) and registered on the Victorian Heritage Register (H2045).[59] Other notable memorials include Herbert Del Cott c.1958, Robert Campbell Edwards c.1946, Georgine Gadsen c.1943, the Mirabella memorial c.1920 and the Syme Memorial c.1930.

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[53] Helen Lardner Conservation and Design, *National Trust of Australia (Victoria) Classification Report Box Hill Cemetery*, n.d., p. 4.

[54] Ibid., p.4.

[55] Heritage Victoria, 'Statement of Significance' in *Box Hill Cemetery Columbarium and Myer Memorial*, Victorian Heritage Registration number H2045, www.heritage.vic.gov.au accessed November 2008

[56] Andrew Lemon, *Box Hill*, Lothian, Melbourne, 1978, p.129.

[57] Green, op.cit., p. 50.

[58] Lardner, op.cit., p.4; Marjorie Morgan, *Box Hill Cemetery Walk: Pause for Reflection*, Box Hill City Council and Box Hill City Historical Society, 1985, pp.4-6.

[59] Andrew Ward & Associates, *City of Box Hill Heritage and Conservation Study,* vol. 2, July 1990, pp. 55-58.

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The main cemetery entrance from Whitehorse Road was later closed to ease traffic issues and to divert pedestrians away from the railway line, which is located adjacent to the cemetery.[60] As fewer burials were occurring, a new main entrance was established in Middleborough Road in 1979. The redundant Cemetery Avenue land was then transferred to the City of Box Hill which became part of the recreational reserve, which had separated the cemetery from Whitehorse Road.[61]

Description:

The physical development of the Box Hill Cemetery is most legible by the different stylistic designs of the cemetery layout and plantings.

The Whitehorse Road entrance to the north of the cemetery is flanked by four substantial square stone posts with simple decorative design on the capitals. The gate has a double vehicle entrance with two pedestrian entrances either side of the double gateway. The gates are defined by a green painted decorative wrought iron fence and gates. Inside the entrance, is a horse trough donated by Annis and George Bills, and a shelter. The 1919-20 shelter has been modified. It has stucco walls and a terracotta tiled roof. The front has been enclosed to form what may be a storage shed. The avenue traditionally connected Whitehorse Road to the cemetery, but this has been blocked by the lowering of the railway line.

The new entrance from Middleborough Road is flanked by an avenue of established trees. The path continues in the westerly direction which leads to the cemetery office at the centre of the cemetery complex. The new cemetery office is a recently constructed brick and concrete building located on Centre Drive.

The 'Pavilion', located over Cemetery Avenue, is a structure dating from 1923 which demonstrates an Interwar architectural style with Spanish mission influences. An arch at each end of the structure enables vehicles to drive through. Both elevations are of painted stucco with decorative brick arches, curved parapets and corner pillars. It was built with large boxed in timber beams and appears to have been open on all sides. The later brick infill detracts from the character and design of the building. The archway also contains engravings of Cemetery Trustee names from the periods 1872-1922, 1948 and 1966. The pitched roof is of terracotta tiling and has three Dutch gables to each slope. It is likely that the area surrounding the archway would have been lawn, but has been utilised for recent Italian monuments or headstones. There is a partial circular driveway around this building with links to other driveways within the cemetery.

Immediately south is the mausoleum that was constructed in two phases in c. 2000, and further south again is the current office building.

The earliest gazetted area by the Government for the cemetery takes up the south-west corner and is defined by the former main entrance (Whitehorse Road axis to Reserve Road), diagonal axis and north-western and south-western plantings along the pathways.[62] The axis of the entrance way would have provided views to the Whitehorse Road gates in the north, the office, archway and south west to the Columbarium.

The Columbarium is positioned in a central circle in the earliest part of the cemetery. It is at the centre of the diagonal axis with paths radiating from the centre. It was

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[60] Lardner, op.cit., p.4.
[61] Plaque on former Whitehorse Road entrance to the cemetery.
[62] Andrew Ward & Associates, *City of Box Hill Heritage and Conservation Study,* vol. 1, July 1990, pp. 140-142.

designed visually as a focal point and is approached through 'Byzantine type pergolas' on each of the four axial paths. The building has a Greek Cross plan with Spanish tiled gable roofs and has an octagonal tower with a central bronzed dome. The entry porch faces northeast and has bronze doors. The interior proportions are influenced by the Byzantine style, however the exterior of the building is contrary to that, and appears Mediterranean in style. The interior space was once highly decorative; however it has been painted over, but is still slightly visible behind the paint.

The second gazettal of three acres is in north-west corner of the cemetery. A central east-west pathway exists in this block of land which does not relate to the pathways of the first gazetted cemetery area.

The gate located at the Sanders Road entrance has a 1920s shelter nearby. The shelter is timber framed with terracotta tiles and beaded boards.

An undated National Trust Classification report on the Box Hill Cemetery refers to a large bell relocated from the local fire brigade. This bell is extant on site and still used. It has a stamp stating 'Limited Sheffield 1886, Patent Cast Steel'.[63]

The area of land from the third phase of development and gazetted in 1935 is particularly distinctive and representative of its period. The path layout is geometrical in approach with a central grouping of six large plots designated by religious denominations. There are pathways to entrances on Middleborough Road (east boundary) and Reserve Road (south boundary) and two paths that join up with the central entry axis from the Middleborough Road entrance, and one path from the Reserve Road entrance.

Plantings:

The Cemetery Avenue from Whitehorse Road has lined plantings of Canary Island Date Palms (*Phoenix canariensis*), five specimens of Canary Island Pine (*Pinus canariensis*), Monterey Pine (*P. radiata*), some other pine species and Smooth Arizona Cypress (*Cupressus glabra*). The cemetery boundary plantings along the railway line date from the 19th Century period and include Smooth Arizona Cypress on the north boundary to the west, and to the east are 1930s boundary plantings of Bhutan Cypress (*C. torulosa*).[64]

The 1930s plantings of Brush Box (*Lophostemon confertus*) around the Columbarium formally impacted on the clear views of the buildings and pergolas. An avenue of Golden Monterey Cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa 'Horizontalis Aurea'*) originally led the visitor to the Columbarium.[65]

In 2009, Tree Dimensions completed a significant tree study of the Box Hill and Burwood cemeteries for the City of Whitehorse. The study identified that Box Hill Cemetery contains some of the finest and most continuous rows of Cypress Trees of any cemetery in metropolitan Melbourne.[66] The study also identified individual trees of significance.[67]

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[63] Lardner, op.cit,, p.7.
[64] Ibid., p.6.
[65] Ibid., p.6.
[66] Galwey, D. & Sorrell, C. (Tree Dimensions), *Significant Tree Study City of Whitehorse, Box Hill Cemetery and Burwood Cemetery,* June 2009, p.6.
[67] Ibid. p.9.

Comparative Examples:

The examples discussed may demonstrate similar aspects of heritage significance to the City of Whitehorse. Those already in the Schedule to the Heritage Overlay in the Whitehorse Planning Scheme have a HO number. Others are drawn from *Final Heritage Assessments Report*, HLCD Pty Ltd, 2010 and *Whitehorse Heritage Review 2001, Places of Potential Cultural Heritage Significance,* Ward, 2001 which both include properties being reviewed by Council for potential future inclusion in the Heritage Overlay. In some cases where the use of the property is significant, comparisons may be made with places which are not recommended for heritage protection but provide a historical context for analysis.

The only other cemetery in the City of Whitehorse is Burwood Cemetery. It is a much earlier cemetery, established in 1857. Like Box Hill, the Burwood Cemetery was extended from its original 5 acre site to its current size in 1935. As with Box Hill Cemetery, the Burwood Cemetery also demonstrates the 1930s development in cemetery layout. In this case however it also responds directly to the triangular shape of the land. The original Victorian style of the first 5 acre portion is less legible in the layout and plantings than the Box Hill example.

The Box Hill Cemetery is larger than the Burwood Cemetery and the phases of developments have stronger evidence and legibility in the landscape and plantings, layout and building fabric of the cemetery. The Box Hill Cemetery is also distinguished by the memorials of prominent people and the significant Columbarium.

Significance:

What is significant?
Box Hill Cemetery located at 395 Middleborough Road, Box Hill and the original cemetery gates located on Whitehorse Road.

How is it significant?
Box Hill Cemetery is of historical, aesthetic and social significance to the City of Whitehorse.

Why is it significant?
The Box Hill Cemetery is of historical significance to the City of Whitehorse as an example of a locally initiated and developed municipal cemetery. The Box Hill Cemetery Trust responded to the burial needs and cemetery requirements of the local residents in the early stages of Box Hill's development as a rural township. The extension to the cemetery in the late 1880s and again in 1935 reflects the development of the area from a rural township to a more populous suburb of Melbourne. The Box Hill Cemetery and physical fabric demonstrates the changes of burial practices from the 1870s including the introduction of crematoriums and deposit vaults for ashes in the 1920s. (Criteria A & B)

The Box Hill Cemetery is of historical and aesthetic significance for its differing layouts and plantings, which reflect the different phases of development as further land was acquired. These reflect the stylistic preferences of the day; from the Victorian style used at the inception of the cemetery to the 1930s Interwar modern – demonstrating changes for these periods by specific landscape plantings and design, architectural design and material and planning of the cemetery layout. The Victorian period contrasts from the 1930s period by its diagonal axes and entrance axis, whereas the 1930s period layout is geometric with north-south and east-west pathways. (Criterion D)

The Box Hill Cemetery is of aesthetic significance for its landmark qualities within the area. The plantings along the railway line and the Cemetery Avenue, which link between the cemetery and Whitehorse Road, are significant landmarks indicating the

location of the cemetery to the wider area. The Box Hill Cemetery is of aesthetic significance for a number of architecturally designed monuments and memorials related to key community members who are buried at the cemetery. The Columbarium and Sidney Myer Memorial are two examples of architecturally designed structures that are of state significance (partially for their aesthetic qualities) and listed in both the Heritage Overlay (HO58) and on the Victorian Heritage Register (H2045). (Criterion E)

The Box Hill Cemetery is of social significance as a place collectively utilised by different religious denominations and non-religious groups for religious, spiritual, symbolic and/or social events related to the burial of the dead as the final resting place for people in the community. (Criterion G)

Box Hill Cemetery is of social significance for its associations with prominent members of the community who are buried in the cemetery including Sidney Myer, Sir William Angliss and Joy Hester. (Criterion H)
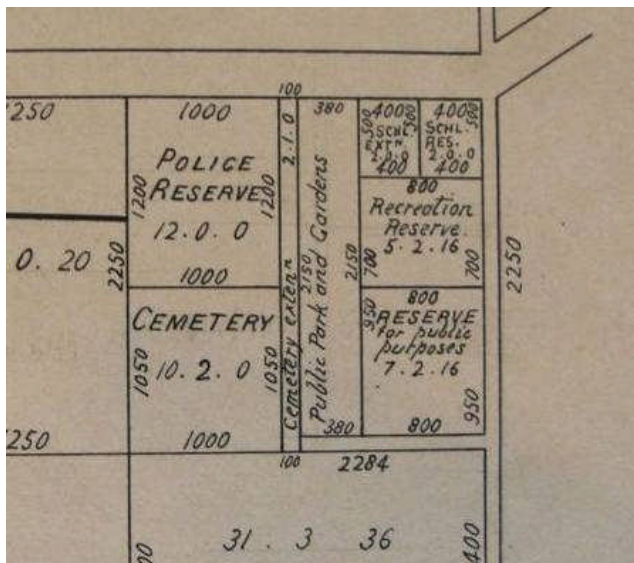
Historical Images:

Image: undated and untitled Land Survey plan c.1870s, showing 10 acres allotment for cemetery, 2 acre extension to cemetery and public reserves in the vicinity of the cemetery.
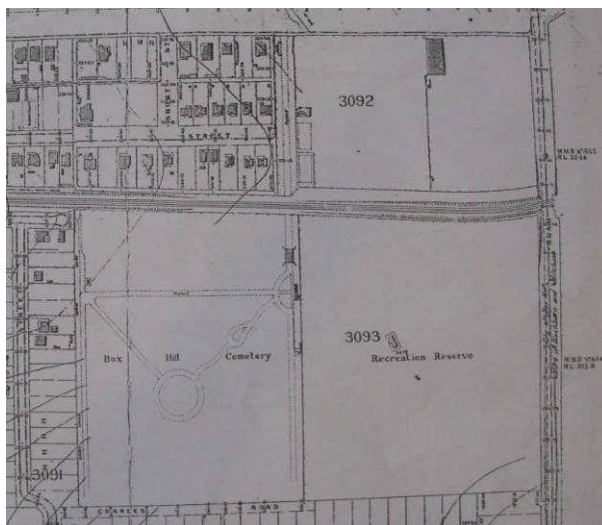Source: State Library of Victoria, Maps Collection 820 bje 1880-? (Box Hill).

Image: MMBW Plan, Municipality of Box Hill, Scale 160 feet to 1 inch, late 1920s.
Source: Box Hill Historical Society.