
Beeac Avenue of Honour



44994 AVENUE OF
HONOUR

Location

Coulstone Street and Wallace Street BEEAC, Colac Otway Shire

Municipality

COLAC OTWAY SHIRE

Level of significance

-

Heritage Overlay Numbers

Heritage Listing

Vic. War Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 1, 2003

The Beeac Avenue of Honour is a World War I memorial planted in 1917 and comprising two convergent avenues of 36 *Ulmus x hollandica* (Dutch Elm) on Wallace and Coulston Streets, in excellent condition. The Beeac Avenue of Honour is of historic and aesthetic importance to the Shire of Colac Otway. The Beeac Avenue of Honour is historically important for its commemoration of the wartime service and sacrifices of the Beeac community, illustrating the impact of the war on local communities. The Beeac Avenue of Honour is of historic importance through association with the local community and for demonstrating the affect the 'Great War' had on rural districts. The Beeac Avenue of Honour is of aesthetic importance in providing a valuable contribution to the township's streetscape.

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| Heritage Study/Consultant | Colac Otway - Colac Otway Heritage Study, Mary Sheehan & Associates, 2003; |
| Construction dates | 1917, |
| Hermes Number | 125793 |
| Property Number | |

Historical Australian Themes

Memorials & Monuments (9.3)

Physical Description 1

No. of trees: 36 Est. Age: 83 yrs (pl. c1917)
Ht: 8m Canopy: 8m
Trunk Circumference: 1.m
Spacing (Distance between trunks): 5m

The Avenue of Honour at Beeac comprises two converging avenues of *Ulmus x hollandica** (Dutch Elm), including 14 trees along Wallace Street (between Main and Coulston Streets) and 22 trees in Coulston Street (between Wallace and Lang Streets). The trees are in excellent condition.

A further planting of note is the avenue on the main street of Beeac, comprising some 30 *Cupressus macrocarpa* (Monterey Cypress), inconsistently spaced and pruned but remaining a strong landscape element, and potentially being connected with the Avenue of Honour planting. However, this has not been confirmed within the limits of the Study.

*Species should be confirmed when in leaf.

Physical Conditions

Excellent

Integrity

Substantially intact

Veterans Description for Public

The Beeac Avenue of Honour was planted in 1917 to commemorate the First World War. It comprises of two convergent avenues of thirty-six Dutch Elms (*Ulmus x hollandica*) on Wallace and Coulston Streets. The trees are approximately 8.0 m in height and trunk circumference is 1.0 m. The spacing between each tree is 5.0 m. The Beeac Avenue of Honour is important for its commemoration of the wartime service and sacrifices of the Beeac community, demonstrating the impact of the war on local communities.

In Australia, commemorative trees have been planted in public spaces since the late nineteenth century. Arbor Days were held regularly in most Victorian State Schools during the late 1800s and early 1900s, and numerous trees were planted in parks in Melbourne and throughout Victoria to mark the visits of important and famous people.

This tradition of commemorative planting was continued in 1901 when at the end of the Boer War trees were often planted for each soldier of the district who was killed in South Africa. These plantings, however, rarely consisted of more than two or three trees in each town.

During and after the First World War avenues of honour consisting of trees lining significant streets became a popular form of commemoration. They represented a new egalitarian approach to the commemoration of soldiers where rank was not a consideration: each tree symbolises a person.

Avenues of honour are a uniquely Australian phenomenon. Australians, and in particular Victorians, embraced the idea of planting them more enthusiastically than any other country in the world. The Eurack Avenue of Honour is the earliest known avenue of honour in Victoria with planting commencing in May 1916.

By the time of the Second World War avenues of honour had declined in popularity as a means of commemoration. Today it is estimated that over 300 avenues of honour have been planted in Victoria to commemorate service personnel since 1901.

This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>