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# Lilydale Cemetery



B5985 Lilydale Cemetery

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## Location

120 Victoria Road,, LILYDALE VIC 3140 - Property No B5985

## Municipality

YARRA RANGES SHIRE

## Level of significance

State

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO204

## Heritage Listing

National Trust

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - July 4, 2005

What is significant? Lilydale Cemetery is a large, elevated, rectangular cemetery designed in a simple grid system and located on the edge of the township. It contains a notable collection of memorials and funerary art demonstrating a range of styles and the different periods of burial. The two most historically and architecturally important memorials are of the Mitchell family. Dame Nellie Melba's monument is a pedestal designed in a typically restrained style by leading British architect Sir Edwin Lutyens. David Mitchell's tomb is of a grander scale. It is a marble Doric temple with four columns with an entablature. The designer is unknown. The plantings and landscape value are also of interest.

How is it significant? The Lilydale Cemetery is significant for architectural, historic and landscape reasons at a state level.

Why is it significant? The Lilydale Cemetery is architecturally and historically significant as an early rural cemetery (1861), which contains the graves of many pioneer families and well-known district people, most notably Dame Nellie Melba, who achieved international renown, and Melba's father David Mitchell, a prominent building contractor, and including the artists Ernest Buckmaster and William Blamire Young. The Melba monument was designed by leading architect Sir Edwin Lutyens, considered the leading English 'Edwardian' architect. It is one of the few examples of Lutyens' work in Australia. The monument of David Mitchell is a stone Doric temple with four columns and entablature.

The Lilydale Cemetery has significant plantings and landscape value. The use of dark evergreen coniferous species with narrow crowns is symbolic with death and nineteenth century cemetery landscapes. The Bhutan Cypress, Italian Cypress, Funeral Cypress and Bunya Bunya Pine have grown into fine mature trees and the hill top location displaying the vertical crowns is of great landscape value. The retention of several remnant Blackwoods, also evergreen and dark green foliage, complements the cemetery landscape, and shows the original flora of the site. The shrubbery plantings are typical cemetery species. The English Box hedge and the two clipped Rosemary bushes at the Melba Memorial are a significant component of the 1933 Lutyens designed memorial.

Classified: 27/06/2005

Hermes Number 71562

Property Number

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## Physical Description 1

Lilydale Cemetery is a large cemetery located on the edge of the township, on a high site with views to the Dandenong Ranges. The cemetery is rectangular in shape, and has been developed using a grid pattern. There are distinct denominational sections. Paths throughout the cemetery vary, with gravel and concrete predominating. There is a notable collection of memorials and funerary art demonstrating a range of styles and the different periods of burial. Dame Nellie Melba's monument is a pedestal designed in a typically restrained style by leading British architect Sir Edwin Lutyens. David Mitchell's tomb is of a grander scale. It is a marble Doric temple with four columns with an entablature. The designer is unknown. The two monuments are surrounded by mature vegetation, consisting of cypress hedges, roses and trees.

The cemetery landscape is dominated by a variety of conifers. In Sections RC1, P1 and P2 are several remnant Blackwoods (*Acacia melanoxylon*). Later plantings from the 1970s include several Australian native species and a few exotics.

The major planting is an avenue of mixed Bhutan Cypress (*Cupressus torulosa*) and Italian Cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens*) planted along the central north-south road, a group of 3 Funeral Cypress (*Chamaecyparis funebris*), planted within the grave of Isaac Rourke 1866, Anne 1885, and Dennis 1887, and 3 Italian Cypress and a Pencil Cypress and Bhutan Cypress in CE2, a towering and outstanding Bunya Bunya Pine (*Araucaria bidwillii*), planted within the grave of Patrick Smith 1874, on the west side (RC2), and a single Bhutan Cypress in the north east corner (N E Lawn). Until recently c2004 there was a very large Monterey Cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*) in Section B1. In 1980 there was a Monterey Cypress hedge along the north boundary (now mixed Australian natives, mostly *Eucalyptus leucoxylon* and *E. sideroxylon* and a few wattles). [A cypress hedge may have originally surrounded the cemetery].

Other plants of historical value include:

*Platycladus orientalis* x2 CE1

*Cupressus sempervirens* x2 & *Cupressus sempervirens* 'Stricta' CE1

*Cupressus sempervirens* 'Stricta' & *Cupressus torulosa* CE2

*Viburnum tinus* CE2

*Buxus sempervirens* hedge, & *Rosmarinus officinalis* x2 clipped ball, Melba Memorial P2

Camellia japonica B1 (north of Bunya Bunya Pine)

Most of the recent cemetery planting contributes little heritage value to the cemetery. A pair of Cupressus sempervirens 'Swane's Golden' frame the Robert Trowthe gates 1955-77, and scattered throughout and along roadways, and along the boundary, are several species of Eucalyptus, Corymbia, Hakea, Melaleuca, Acacia, Callistemon, and exotic plants including , Fraxinus, Salix, Betula, Liquidamber, Juniperus, Thuja, and Coleonema

## **Intactness**

The cemetery is in generally good condition and is well maintained throughout. There have been only minor modifications. A number of gaps suggest that the more dilapidated memorials may have been removed in the past. A few monuments require more active maintenance, as do some paths. Some of the trees have declined because of their age. There was a proposal to build a mausoleum in the cemetery but the Shire of Yarra Ranges refused a permit.

*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/>*