
Waking Albury's Dead

An Investigation into How
Tombstones and Epitaphs in the
Cemeteries at Albury, NSW, Reflect
Grief and Memorial Trends

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Memorialisation of the dead through epitaphs and mortuary symbolism has occurred for millennia. Still representative of the life and culture of not only the deceased, memorialisation is also demonstrative of cultural and socio-economic changes over time. By examining the cemeteries at Albury, New South Wales, it is possible to see examples of the changes that took place in Australia following the establishment of the town through to the present day. The Victorian 'cult of mourning', arising from Georgian traditions and modified to particularly Australian habits in the colony, emphasised public displays of grief. The dual processes of secularisation and World War I brought an end to public grief. Following World War II, death became taboo in Western society as medicine and bureaucracy moved death out of its traditional place in the home and into cemeteries styled as landscaped gardens. The work of psychiatrists in promoting the acceptance of grief in the late twentieth-century has allowed the public celebration and memorialisation of the dead to become culturally appropriate again. Rather than grand Victorian funerals, however, this memorialisation takes the form of more individual and customised gravestones, 'In Memoriam' notices in newspapers, and, in the case of those cremated whose remains are scattered rather than interred, no permanent memorial at all.

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Cemetery markers, most commonly gravestones and epitaphs, are demonstrative of broader cultural and socio-economic ideas about the grieving process. As an historical archive, monuments such as these provide insight as to how the experience of memorialising death has changed over time. The exploration of specifically Australian death culture has emerged as a relatively new field of study, with Australian social historians Allan Kellehear, Patricia Jalland, and Graeme Griffin producing pioneering works over the past two decades.¹ The change in death memorialisation from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century can be demonstrated within the burial places of a single community, as shown in this study of the Pioneer Cemetery, the Waugh Road Cemetery, and Glenmorus Gardens, the three primary cemeteries of Albury, New South Wales (NSW). Memorialisation techniques brought by primarily British settlers to Australia in the nineteenth century reflect Victorian burial traditions, and those traditions themselves were an extension of Georgian practices of the early nineteenth century. The elaborate Victorian monuments retain an open acceptance of death and mourning, despite evolving into a distinctively Australian form. However, changes are evident within both the grave monuments and epitaphs reflecting the call for austerity at end of the Victorian era, and the psychological impact of death during and immediately following World War I (WWI). The cemeteries and monuments of Albury are one way in which historical attitudes to grief, mourning, and death, in both the local community and worldwide, can be traced and critically examined.

Albury's initial cemetery, the Pioneer Cemetery, officially opened in 1861.² Prior to this, the white settlers of the town utilised the local Aboriginal burial site known as Yarra-wuddah.³ The Pioneer Cemetery is currently closed to new burials.⁴ The Waugh Road Cemetery opened circa 1945 and, having quickly exhausted its allocated space, closed in 1962.⁵ Glenmorus Gardens, a lawn cemetery also containing Albury's crematorium, opened in 1971 and is currently the primary burial site for the Albury region.⁶ Previous research published on the Pioneer Cemetery by the Albury & District Historical Society is referred to in this essay.⁷ That work, however, primarily focuses on biographical details of individuals interred in the cemetery, rather than examining the change in memorialisation practices over time.

Combined with mortuary symbolism, the epitaph is an important record of the deceased, usually chosen by the bereaved. It is a permanent testimony to the life of the deceased and, as observed by Albert Hamscher, 'create[s] a silent dialogue between the living and the deceased'.⁸ Beyond mere identification, epitaphs have long been used to convey laconic observations on life and death for the benefit of the reader.⁹ In particular, detailed epitaphs are significant sources of evidence concerning

1 Allan Kellehear, *Death and dying in Australia* (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2000); Patricia Jalland, *Australian ways of death: a social and cultural history 1840-1918* (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2002); Graeme M. Griffin and Des Tobin, *In the midst of life...the Australian response to death* (2nd ed) (Carlton South: Melbourne University Press, 1997).

2 Arthur Andrews, *The history of Albury: 1824 to 1895* (2nd ed) (Albury: Albury and District Historical Society, 1988), 6.

3 Griffin and Tobin, *In the midst of life*, 53.

4 Melissa Garro (staff member, AlburyCity), in discussion with the author, July 2014.

5 Douglas Hunter and Jan Hunter, *Albury Pioneer Cemetery: Digging into our past* (Albury: Albury and District Historical Society, 2012), 8.

6 *Ibid.*, 8.

7 *Ibid.*

8 Albert N. Hamscher, "Talking tombstones: History in the cemetery," *Magazine of History* 17(2) (2003): 40-45.

9 Mario Erasmo, "Epitaphs," in *Encyclopedia of death and the human experience*, ed. Clifton D. Bryant and Dennis L. Peck (Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, 2009), 414.

not only the deceased, but mortuary trends, socio-economic status, religious denomination, demographic, and other community-wide information.¹⁰ It is important to note that epitaphs are often decided upon in the initial stages of the grieving process, while the bereaved are themselves dealing with the physical and mental effects of grief.¹¹ The comfort of, and reliance upon, tradition and similarity to other epitaphs may guide the decision about specific text to be inscribed on a grave monument.¹² Epitaphs which disparage the deceased are uncommon, but not unknown.¹³

Standard gravestones in the Albury area from the opening of the Pioneer Cemetery include the name of the deceased, date of death, and either the date of birth or age at death. Of course, there are exceptions. A wooden, anthropomorphic-shaped marker carved only with a cross (Figure 1) and bounded by a fence is the last resting place of one unknown person. A child-sized grave bounded with a painted iron fence contains only a small statue of a cherub (Figure 2). A 1958 marker states 'The twin baby daughters of Helen and Keith Turner', while close by lies Sandra Smith, no dates.¹⁴ Typically, however, epitaphs from the Georgian era through to the WWI are more unreserved, often containing extended biographical details.¹⁵ The first burial in the Pioneer Cemetery is that of Dr John Crichton, Albury's first medical practitioner, who was relocated from The Sandhill when the Pioneer Cemetery opened.¹⁶ A monument, paid for by public subscription coordinated by a later doctor in the town, contains a lengthy and specific eulogy of Crichton: the details of his career are combined with the parable of the Good Samaritan and the command, from that parable, for the viewer to 'Go thou, and do likewise!'¹⁷ Members of the clergy are often noted as such on their stones.¹⁸ Uniquely, however, blacksmith John McEachern is memorialised by a fence decorated with miniature, movable smithing tools (Figure 3).

When British settlers arrived in Australia they also brought their funerary traditions. Glennys Howarth explains the purpose of the funeral ritual as being important to enable humans, as social creatures, to adapt to the loss of a social being in their community; grave monuments are an extension of this ritual, providing, according to Patricia Jalland, a public shrine to define a site of future commemoration.¹⁹ Victorian public and prolonged displays of grief at both the funeral and in the grave monument were usual, encouraged by the Romantic movement at its height in the mid-nineteenth century.²⁰ The ostentatious displays and elaborate traditions of the Victorian era are sometimes referred to as the 'cult of mourning'. However, such displays are first seen in aristocratic funerals of the earlier Georgian era, and, as noted by Ruth Richardson, are not unusual for the

10 Lionel Gilbert, *A grave look at history* (Sydney: John Ferguson, 1980), 76-77.

11 Beverley Raphael, "Grief and loss in Australian society," in *Death and dying in Australia*, ed. Allan Kellehear (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2000), 116-29.

12 *Ibid.*

13 Erasmo, "Epitaphs."

14 Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for 'Twin Babies' Turner, Plan 8, Section Baby, Row F, Lot 28, all gravestones transcribed and photographed Elizabeth Morgan unless otherwise cited, July 31, 2014; Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for Sandra Margaret Smith, Plan 8, Section Baby, Row E, Lot 23, July 31, 2014.

15 Griffin and Tobin, *In the midst of life*, 93.

16 Hunter and Hunter, *Albury Pioneer Cemetery*, 42.

17 Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for John Crichton, Plan 1, Section COE, Row E, Lot 36, July 31, 2014; *The Bible*, Luke 10:29-37, King James Version (KJV); Hunter and Hunter, *Albury Pioneer Cemetery*, 42.

18 Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for Rev. Henry Elliot, Plan 1, Section COE, Row E, Lot 18, July 31, 2014.

19 Glennys Howarth, "Australian funerals," in *Death and dying in Australia*, ed. Allan Kellehear (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2000), 80-91; Jalland, *Australian ways of death*, 144.

20 Patricia Jalland, *Death in the Victorian family* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 4.

eighteenth century.²¹ The custom arose partially as a response to the theft of corpses; grave robbers sold the bodies of the recently deceased to medical training facilities.²² As this theft occurred at the height of the grieving period, mourners, already encouraged to express the extent of their grief, incorporated the need to secure the remains of the deceased into the funeral tradition, which in turn fuelled the elaborate funerary display.²³ Victorians, with a society rooted in religion and more focussed on social status than their Georgian predecessors, took the ostentatious funeral and expanded upon it; death and extensive funerary display provided a means of defining the social position of mourners.²⁴ The cost associated with these displays necessarily confined them to middle- and upper-classes. Encouraged by the emerging undertaking industry, the promotion of the style and expense of commercialised death rituals led to these customs eventually being adopted by lower classes in their attempt to emulate social superiors.²⁵ Even at the poorest level of society a funeral was important despite the cost; the British *Anatomy Act 1832* made provision for the use of paupers' bodies for medical training in order to halt the illegal trade of corpses, and families would indebt themselves to avoid such an outcome.²⁶

Elaborate funerary monuments typical of the Victorian period built upon their Georgian predecessors and were helped by the establishment of large extramural garden cemeteries to offset the public health concerns of urban cemeteries filling beyond capacity.²⁷ While the threat of bodysnatching was heightened in cemeteries outside the urban centre, the extra space provided in these sites allowed for the construction of elaborate monuments and tombs to protect the deceased.²⁸ The establishment of extramural cemeteries was delayed in Australia due to later expansion and abundance of space, however, all major cities, and Sydney especially, found it necessary to move their burial grounds at least once during their expansion.²⁹

The cemeteries at Albury conform to these precedents. The initial burial ground was moved to the current site of the Albury Pioneer Cemetery, established between the urban centres of Albury and the town of Black Range to the north (now Lavington, a suburb of Albury), and is today located in the middle of the city.³⁰ The threat of body snatching from the Pioneer Cemetery was not a concern in the settlement, and the Albury council and trustees of the cemetery were required to provide a permanent caretaker only to discourage the grazing of cows and pigs on the site.³¹ The Hore crypt, located within the Roman Catholic division, was most likely constructed for reasons of style and taste, due to lack of external threat in the Albury cemetery (Figure 4). Rediscovered in 2012 with only three brick courses and part of the structural arch above the entrance visible above ground,

21 Ruth Richardson, "Why was death so big in Victorian Britain?" in *Death, ritual and bereavement*, ed. Ralph Houlbrooke (London: Routledge, 1989), 105-117.

22 *Ibid.*

23 Jalland, *Death in the Victorian Family*, 4; Richardson, "Why was death so big."

24 Jalland, *Death in the Victorian Family*, 3; Richardson, "Why was death so big."

25 Howarth, "Australian funerals," 87; Robert Cecil, *The masks of death: Changing attitudes in the nineteenth century* (Lewes, Sussex: Book Guild, 1991), 65.

26 Cecil, *The masks of death*, 64-65.

27 Gilbert, *A grave look at history*, 32; Richardson, "Why was death so big"; Patricia Jalland, *Changing ways of death in twentieth-century Australia: War, medicine and the funeral business* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2006), 304.

28 Richardson, "Why was death so big."

29 Gilbert, *A grave look at history*, 15-16.

30 Allison Jess, "Lavington celebrates," *ABC Goulburn Murray*, June 17, 2009, <http://www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2009/06/16/2599489.htm>.

31 Hunter and Hunter, *Albury Pioneer Cemetery*, 7.

the crypt is unfinished and empty owing to disputes between the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches.³² John Hore wished to bury his Anglican wife in the tomb, however the Roman Catholic priest refused to bury a protestant in consecrated ground.³³ Legal proceedings determined that the tomb was on land owned by Hore, rather than the church.³⁴ Elizabeth Hore was interred by an Anglican priest, while the Roman Catholic priest delineated the area of the tomb as unconsecrated ground.³⁵ Consequently, when Hore himself died several months later he was also refused burial in the tomb because the ground was now unconsecrated.³⁶ Both Hores are now interred in the Anglican division of the cemetery, their twin red granite stones containing only the location of their deaths at their property *Ellerslie*, St Kilda, with no mention of any controversy.³⁷

Victorian-style symbolism is prominent in the Victorian and Edwardian graves of the Pioneer Cemetery. A shroud symbolising mourning decorates the Farmer gravestone and a shrouded urn, the traditional receptacle of ashes, is carved into the stone for William Edgcumbe (Figures 5, 6).³⁸ A modified version of the hymn *According to thy gracious word* appears on Edgcumbe's monument: 'I remember thee in all thy pain and all thy love for me and while there's breath in me remains I will remember thee'; additionally, Edgcumbe's grave is demonstrative of gravestones of all sizes and materials in the cemetery that clearly allow room for additional inscriptions to be added as family members are also interred in the plot.³⁹ A simple concrete stone with no ornamentation or extended epitaph for Frederick Spurr and George Spurr was also intended to include more names if necessary (Figure 7). A seashell-covered cross, representing fertility and resurrection, is placed on the concrete slab covering Gussie Pearsall and both a shrouded urn and pall cover the pillar erected to the Webb family (Figures 8 & 9).⁴⁰ Crosses are most prevalent in the Roman Catholic division in a variety of sizes and styles (Figure 10).

Larger monuments, such as that for Webb family, are more common for individuals. Emma Browne, 'A pioneer of Riverina', has a scroll-shaped altar.⁴¹ Elizabeth Mitchell, thought to be the first white female settler of the area, is memorialised by a black granite obelisk surrounded by iron fencing together with neighbouring plots containing her grandson and unknown others.⁴² The epitaph, taken from Proverbs 31:28, reflects her status as 'the mother of Albury': 'Her children arise and call her blessed'.⁴³ Several individuals have pillars topped with a large figure holding a cross such as for

32 Dirk HR Spennemann, *Rapid Survey of a Subterranean Structure at the Albury Pioneer Cemetery, Report to AlburyCity* (Albury: Institute for Land, Water and Society, Charles Sturt University, 2012), 5.

33 Hunter and Hunter, *Albury Pioneer Cemetery*, 53.

34 "The burial question again," *Maitland Weekly Mercury*, March 2, 1895, 14.

35 Hunter and Hunter, *Albury Pioneer Cemetery*, 53.

36 *Ibid.*

37 Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for John Hore, Plan 2, Section COE, Row N, Lot 23, August 28, 2014; Pioneer Cemetery, monumental inscription for Elizabeth Hore, Plan 2, Section COE, Row N, Lot 24, August 28, 2014.

38 Lionel A. Gilbert and William P. Driscoll, *History around us: An enquiry approach to local history* (Sydney, Hicks Smith & Sons, 1974), 65.

39 Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for William Edgcumbe, Plan 1, Section COE, Row K, Lot 31; "According to Thy Gracious Word," Hymnary.org, accessed September 3, 2014, http://www.hymnary.org/text/according_to_thy_gracious_word.

40 Gilbert, *A grave look at history*, 33.

41 Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for Emma K. Browne, Plan 1, Section COE, Row G, Lot 29, July 31, 2014.

42 Hunter and Hunter, *Albury Pioneer Cemetery*, 56.

43 *The Bible*, Prov. 31:28, KJV; Hunter and Hunter, *Albury Pioneer Cemetery*, 56; Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for Elizabeth Mitchell, Plan 3, Section COE, Row O, Lot 30, July 31, 2014.

Margaret Stewart, and John Burrows is remembered by a raised altar surrounded with ornate chain fencing (Figures 11, 12). There are two uniquely decorated graves in the Pioneer Cemetery: now-fading mosaic designs embellishing the concrete slabs of the Carkeek family grave (Figure 13), and blue ceramic tiles once bordered a grave marked only with a once-painted wooden cross and now unreadable tin marker (Figure 14).

Australia is far removed from the ‘cultural centres of England and Europe’, as Allan Kellehear argues.⁴⁴ Although British convicts and emigrants who settled in Australia also transported Victorian traditions, over time they morphed into a distinctly Australian version of funerary rituals.⁴⁵ In the first years of settlement funerals were simple affairs, with services read from *The Book of Common Prayer*, and as the colony grew in size and wealth so did funeral services and the attendant grave monuments.⁴⁶ Although Howarth states that undertakers would advise the bereaved on the funeral necessities appropriate to their social status, she and others also state that the funeral industry had a vested interest in encouraging impressive displays.⁴⁷ Graeme Griffin and Des Tobin demonstrate that palls, pallbearers, feathermen, mutes, and horse-drawn hearses were common at funerals, concluding that the importation of Victorian ritual provided ‘the comfort of familiar tradition to the strangeness of death in Australia’.⁴⁸ Jalland argues, however, that Australian rituals never matched the extravagance of the British, ‘despite powerful efforts at imitation in the cities, encouraged by the undertaking business’.⁴⁹

Two Victorian-style funerals held at the Pioneer Cemetery are noted in local press: James Singleton and Robert Wilkinson.⁵⁰ Singleton, buried in 1880, was a Superintendent in the NSW Police Force, and his funeral was attended by both police and members of the Albury Masonic Lodge, of which Singleton was a member; the procession contained ‘more than 40 buggies’ and ‘was accompanied by many pedestrians’.⁵¹ In their biographical sketch of Singleton, Douglas Hunter and Jan Hunter state that Singleton established a Masonic Lodge in Collingwood, however the published history of that Lodge contains no mention of him.⁵² Robert Wilkinson was a local coachbuilder and draper, and his 1907 funeral contained a mix of buggies, motor cars, and walkers.⁵³ A record of each man who attended the funeral was published in the local paper, the list including town councillors, members of the local Oddfellows society and the town band, as well as members of other organisations and committees Wilkinson was associated with.⁵⁴

Although, as noted, differences in social class can be indicated by the size and style of the grave monument, in the case of the Albury cemeteries the differences in epitaphs provide less clear-cut

44 Kellehear, *Death and dying in Australia*, 3.

45 Griffin and Tobin, *In the midst of life*, 156.

46 *Ibid.*, 122, 156.

47 Howarth, “Australian funerals,” 82, 87; Jalland, *Australian ways of death*, 305; Griffin and Tobin, *In the midst of life*, 168.

48 Griffin and Tobin, *In the midst of life*, 157, 159-160, 163.

49 Jalland, *Australian ways of death*, 305.

50 “News of the week,” *Gundagai Times*, September 21, 1880; “Funeral of the Late Ald. Wilkinson,” *Border Morning Mail*, July 13, 1907.

51 Hunter and Hunter, *Albury Pioneer Cemetery*, 34.

52 Hunter and Hunter, *Albury Pioneer Cemetery*, 34; Combermere Lodge, *History of Combermere Lodge* (Ivanhoe: Combermere Lodge, 2013).

53 Hunter and Hunter, *Albury Pioneer Cemetery*, 21.

54 “Funeral of the Late Ald. Wilkinson.”

distinctions. The result is a fairly homogenous blend of 'standard' religious-based phrases, the most common of which being 'Requiescat in pace' or variations thereof. Religious text appears frequently: Albert Foard's 1889 upright Gothic-style slab includes lyrics from the hymn *Rock of Ages* as well as a warning to the reader, 'Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow, for what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away'; the 1865 small shield erected for Clara and Hannah Muncey offers a consolation to parents, 'suffer little children to come unto me'.⁵⁵ However, epitaphs referencing religion do not constitute a large percentage of all epitaphs in the Pioneer and Waugh Road cemeteries.⁵⁶ This may be indicative of Albury's removal in both time and distance from the heavy religious sentiments found in Victorian Britain epitaphs.

Certainly, the end of the Victorian era brought about a change in the way death was celebrated and commemorated in Australia. The cost of maintaining the perception of social status through elaborate funerals and monuments could be 'ruinously expensive', however, calls for reform of funeral practice were made with only moderate success until the commencement of WWI; Jalland concludes that some were reluctant to abandon the Victorian tradition which 'demonstrated affection and honour for the deceased'.⁵⁷ In conjunction with the growing popularity of cremation and the increasing success of medical treatment in specialised facilities, both WWI and the immediately following influenza epidemic combined to eliminate Victorian tradition.⁵⁸ The substantial proportion of Australians killed in WWI and the inability to bury those bodies in Australia led to a significant change in the way grieving and memorialisation took place in the war years.⁵⁹ The influenza epidemic, although milder in Australia due to both quarantine controls and diminished virulence by the time the disease reached Australian shores, immediately followed WWI and produced a further 15,000 dead.⁶⁰ The years 1914-19 contained an excess of death that Australians, along with the Western world, retreated from; the expensive and public funerals that had once been tradition were abandoned as people began to view grieving as unnecessary, inconvenient, indulgent, and even immoral.⁶¹ Although a similar number of graves with epitaphs were erected in the periods 1901-20 and 1921-40 in the Pioneer Cemetery, the number of epitaphs with religious text for the latter period fell from fifty-six to twenty-seven per cent.⁶² This may be explained by Jalland's assessment that WWI required families to create new secular and heterodox grieving rituals in a time when conventional rituals and faith were challenged.⁶³ Secularisation, the decline of religious belief, activities, and institutions within a society, had slowly increased in Australia from the later nineteenth century, and Protestantism suffered further in WWI as

55 *The Bible*, James 4:14, Luke 18:16, KJV; Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for Albert Alfred William Foard, Plan 1, Section COE, Row C, Lot 20, July 31, 2014; Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for Hannah Muncey and Clara Muncey, Plan 1, Section COE, Row H, Lot 21, July 31, 2014; P.P. Bliss, Ira David Sankey, James McGranahan and George C. Stebbins, *Gospel hymns consolidated: embracing volumes no. 1, 2, 3 and 4, without duplicates, for use in gospel meetings and other religious services* (New York and Cincinnati: Biglow & Main and John Church & Co, 1883), 85.

56 See Appendix 2.

57 Griffin and Tobin, *In the midst of life*, 166; Jalland, *Australian ways of death*, 115.

58 Griffin and Tobin, *In the midst of life*, 168.

59 K. S. Inglis, *Sacred places: War memorials in the Australian landscape* (Carlton: Melbourne University Press, 2005), 97.

60 Alfred W. Crosby, *America's forgotten pandemic: The influenza of 1918* (2nd ed.) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 234; Peter Curson and Kevin McCracken, "An Australian perspective of the 1918-1919 influenza pandemic," *NSW Public Health Bulletin* 17(7-8) (2006): 103-107, doi:10.1071/NB06025.

61 Griffin and Tobin, *In the midst of life*, 168-170; Jalland, *Australian ways of death*, 305.

62 See Appendix 2.

63 Jalland, *Australian ways of death*, 314.

churches and clergymen were unable to provide the comfort of faith to both soldiers and families.⁶⁴ The proliferation of WWI monuments throughout Australia served as ‘empty tombs’ for grieving communities, with memorial services held at those sites.⁶⁵

The Albury cemeteries contain several gravestones erected to men killed in WWI. A gravestone for Sergeant Eric Drummond notes that he was killed in action at Mont Saint-Quentin, France.⁶⁶ The Returned and Services League (RSL) erected gravestones for both men killed in action and ex-servicemen who did not have family to memorialise them.⁶⁷ Reminiscent of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstones in both local and international cemeteries, they contain only the Australian Imperial Force insignia, service number and rank, and a cross unless the deceased was known to be not Christian.⁶⁸ This simplicity was followed by bereaved memorialising ex-servicemen in the years following WWI with personal additions: Private Leonard Wilson was a ‘Loving husband & father’, Private James Sheehan, a founder of the RSL in NSW and its first secretary, was ‘An Anzac’.⁶⁹ The impact of the WWI is not seen in epitaphs beyond those of servicemen. Ross Smith’s 1936 epitaph from Robert Burns’ *Man was made to mourn: A dirge*, ‘Man’s inhumanity to man Makes countless thousands mourn!’ could be interpreted as a response to the war, but may simply be a reflection of his cause of death as a result of being injured by another boy at school.⁷⁰

The post-war years also see a rise in foreign-language epitaphs in the Albury cemeteries as the Bonegilla Migrant Camp, initially part of the Bonegilla military camp, received displaced European migrants from 1947 and financially assisted migrants from 1951.⁷¹ The presence of migrants doubled the population of Albury and its Victorian border town Wodonga, and the migrant camp provided an expansion of the Albury economy as citizens were employed by the camp.⁷² Foreign-language epitaphs do not differ in sentiment from their English counterparts, but many are indicative of the foreign origins of the deceased: Berty Calkovičs’ inscription specifically states he was Latvian, the Dihood family plot states their birthplaces in Lebanon, Rosanda Bašić’s memorial is entirely in Croatian.⁷³ This is not unique to post-war migrants, however. The late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century memorials to the Horan family state their origins in County Tipperary, Ireland,

64 Bryan R. Wilson, “Secularization,” in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, ed. Lindsay Jones (2nd ed.) (Detroit: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005), 8124; Jalland, *Australian ways of death*, 311-312.

65 Griffin and Tobin, *In the midst of life*, 97.

66 Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for Eric Drummond, Plan 6, Section PRES, Row B, Lot 27, transcribed and photographed Fiona Baker, August 28, 2014.

67 Hunter and Hunter, *Albury Pioneer Cemetery*, 4.

68 Commonwealth War Graves Commission, *About the Commonwealth War Graves Commission* (Berkshire: Commonwealth War Graves Commission, n.d.).

69 Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for Leonard A Wilson, Plan 4, Section CATH, Row AA, Lot 28, August 28, 2014; Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for James Sheehan, Plan 4, Section CATH, Row P, Lot 17, August 28, 2014; “Obituary,” *Albury Banner and Wodonga Express*, August 18, 1937, 46.

70 Robert Burns, “Man was made to mourn: A dirge,” *RobertBurns.org*, accessed September 3, 2014, <http://www.robertburns.org/works/55.shtml>; Waugh Road Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for Ross Smith, Plan 13, Section AA, Row H, Lot 7, transcribed and photographed Fiona Baker, August 28, 2014; “Inquest into boy’s death,” *Albury Banner and Wodonga Express*, March 5, 1937.

71 “Where it all began,” Bonegilla Migrant Experience, accessed September 3, 2014, <http://www.bonegilla.org.au/history/whereitallbegan.asp>.

72 *Ibid.*

73 Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for Berty Calkovičs, Plan 8, Section STLL, Row A, Lot 18; Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for Katrina Dihood, Joseph Dihood and Assad Dihood, Plan 4, Section CATH, Row E, Lot 4, August 28, 2014; Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for Rosanda Bašić, Plan 5, Section BABY, Row C, Lot 13, July 31, 2014.

and the Greek and English translations of Psalm 103:2, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits', was inscribed on the gravestone of Myros Andronicos in 2002, honouring the Greek heritage of that family.⁷⁴ 'Rest in peace' is still the prevailing sentiment on most gravestones in the post-war years.

Attitudes towards death and memorialisation shifted dramatically with the rise of secularism following WWI, combined with a simultaneous fear and rejection of death.⁷⁵ Death and its attendant bureaucracy became the province of medicine and law as religious influence declined and scientific research reasoned away God as an explanation for death.⁷⁶ Kellehear explains:

Death was no longer simply a result of the 'wages of sin', but was also caused by a 'heart attack', an 'accident', or a 'birth defect', for example. Disasters were not simply 'acts of God'; they were also potentially preventable.⁷⁷

Griffin argues that death became taboo in Western culture not simply as a result of secularisation, but also as the consequence of both the Industrial and 'ecological' revolutions: the superiority of technological production strengthens the influence of youth and vigour, while denying the value of aging.⁷⁸ He concludes: 'Death, then, becomes an embarrassment to be banished'.⁷⁹ As the process of dying shifted from the home to the hospital, the taboo surrounding death increased due to the lack of experience families had with death in the later-twentieth century combined with the continued growth of the funeral industry.⁸⁰ Where the undertaking business encouraged Victorian exhibitionism, it now encouraged the private nature of death in society by providing professional services to prevent personal exposure to death and the dead, perpetuating a society that lacks experience in how to cope with matters relating to death, but retaining the language of funeral 'homes' or 'parlours' as a nod to previous customs.⁸¹

Secularisation has accompanied the rise of cremation in Australia: the need for the burial of the body in order to be resurrected as in the Christian tradition had become unnecessary for those who left the church, and in 1964 the Catholic Church removed its ban on cremation while continuing to encourage burials.⁸² From the Second World War (WWII), individual grave plots have become more prevalent rather than interring multiple individuals in the same place with their memorialisation on the same stone. The rise of the 'individual' grave, with space for up to two people, rather than the 'family' plot is a reflection of the changing nature of families in the post-war years: the 'nuclear family' with a smaller number of children, combined with a growing rejection of death, led to, in Julie Rugg's words, 'the immediate "audience" for the memorial [being] other family members

74 *The Bible*, Psalms 103:2, KJV; Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for John Horan and Mary Horan, Plan 4, Section CATH, Row H, Lot 6, August 28, 2014; Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for Thomas Lonergan Horan, Plan 4, Section CATH, Row H, Lot 7, August 28, 2014; Waugh Road Cemetery, Albury, monumental inscription for Myros Nicholas Andronicos, Plan 18, Section 9A, Row H, Lot 22, August 28, 2014.

75 Jalland, *Changing ways of death*, 370.

76 Kellehear, *Death and dying in Australia*, 4.

77 *Ibid.*, 4-5.

78 Graeme M. Griffin, "Defining Australian death: Religion and the state," in *Death and dying in Australia*, ed. Allan Kellehear (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2000), 50.

79 *Ibid.*

80 Griffin, "Defining Australian death," 49; Kellehear, *Death and dying*, 10.

81 Kellehear, *Death and dying*, 10; Griffin, "Defining Australian death," 49.

82 Jalland, *Changing ways of death*, 319, 328-329; Robert Nicol, *This grave and burning question: A centenary of history of cremation in Australia* (Adelaide: Adelaide Cemeteries Authority, 2003), 299.

rather than the wider community'.⁸³ The establishment in the 1950s of landscaped lawn cemeteries in Australia, designed to be a combination of cost-effective interment and maintenance and the provision of a 'domestic garden nature', as Rugg terms it, intended to be reflective of the family home highlighting the new private nature of the grave, have changed the way the deceased are memorialised.⁸⁴ The migrant community continued the tradition of large monuments as a way of maintaining their European traditions as well as demonstrating their success in Australia, but for the majority of interments in Albury large monuments have been replaced with bronze plaques set level with the ground, with limited space for memorialising text (Figure 15).⁸⁵

The pioneering work of psychiatrists in the later twentieth century has allowed grief and the important role of death in society to be re-examined, leading to a more individual approach to the memorialisation of the deceased.⁸⁶ Elisabeth Kübler-Ross's *On Death and Dying* was a revolutionary new approach to grief, pioneering the Kübler-Ross model, more commonly known as 'the five stages of grief': denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.⁸⁷ This model was predicated on Kübler-Ross's work with terminally ill patients. Beverly Raphael built on the initial achievement and acceptance of Kübler-Ross's success with her Australian-focussed work, applying psychological theory to Australian circumstances.⁸⁸ Through the work of these and other psychiatrists, death and grief have become acceptable in Australian society in the twenty-first century. The use of images, as in the Victorian era, continue to represent the deceased. Several plaques contain the Australian Aboriginal Flag recognising the deceased's Aboriginal heritage; similarly, Charles Callow has the triskelion of the Flag of the Isle of Man (Figures 16, 17). Gordan Strang's gravestone is reflective of many who were Australian Rules Football fans (Figure 18). Other images are less obvious reflections of the individual. It could be inferred from musical notes and a saxophone that Noel Ritchie was a musician and the purple of Miriam Clark's plaque may have been a favourite colour (Figures 19 & 20). Photographs may be inlaid, as for Manuel Lopes, or images of the deceased produced in relief on the plaque, as for Cornelis Bosland and Maria Bosland (Figures 21 & 22).

The text on these plaques, as on the majority of modern epitaphs, focuses on placing the individual in a 'family narrative': the cremated remains of Paul Nibbs, 'Loving father of Elizabeth and Fiona', are in the same rockery garden plot as Ronald Nibbs, 'Loving father of Ronald & Paul (dec.) & Garry', and Claire Morgan, 'Beloved daughter of Ashley and Elizabeth'.⁸⁹ The wording of these three epitaphs taken together allows the viewer to understand how these three individuals relate to each other. This family narrative can be extended to step-family and in-laws, as in the plaque not yet installed for Kelvin Roberts, described as a 'much loved father and father-in-law', 'step-pop', and 'great-grandfather'.⁹⁰ At other times, there may be no indication to the viewer of the relationship between graves, as in the case of Barbara Groch and Kylie McGrath, buried together in February 1975 (Figure 23). Jalland observes that this shift towards acceptance of death does not

83 Julie Rugg, "Lawn cemeteries: The emergence of a new landscape of death," *Urban History* 33(2) (2006): 213-33, doi:10.1017/S0963926806003786.

84 Jalland, *Changing ways of death*, 328; Rugg, "Lawn cemeteries."

85 Robert Nicol, "Australian burial customs," in *Death and dying in Australia*, ed. Allan Kellehear (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2000), 92-104; Raphael, 'Grief and loss'.

86 Jalland, *Changing ways of death*, 352-355.

87 Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, *On Death and Dying* (Hoboken: Taylor & Francis, 1973).

88 Beverley Raphael, *The anatomy of bereavement: a handbook for the caring professions* (London: Hutchinson Education, 1984).

89 Glenmorus Gardens, Albury, monumental inscription for Paul Anthony Nibbs, Ronald Nibbs and Claire Ashley Morgan, Plan 7, Section 7, Rockery 3, Lot 10, August 28, 2014.

90 Glenmorus Gardens, Albury, monumental inscription for Kelvin John Roberts, Plan 3, Section 3, Row BBB, Lot 24, August 28, 2014.

signal a return to Victorian mourning, rather, society is 'creating new rituals and adapting older practices to suit the needs of a diverse but largely secular society'.⁹¹ One of these new rituals is the use of 'In Memoriam' notices in newspapers: Jalland's research shows that from 1980 onwards, 'In Memoriam' and 'Death' notices have gained traction as an acceptably public form of grief and memorialisation, especially as the remains of some cremated individuals are now scattered rather than interred leaving them unmemorialised in traditional ways.⁹²

The investigation of grave monuments and epitaphs in Albury demonstrates the shifting nature of death and memorialisation from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century. The Victorian 'cult of mourning' embraced and romanticised death. Post-Victorian sentiment and the psychological impact of WWI led to the call for austerity, reflecting public opinion that ostentatious funerals were indulgent and unnecessary. Post-Second World War internalisation of grief and mourning combined with the rejection of the concept of death. Secularisation and the rise of the lawn cemetery demonstrate the private nature of grieving and death, far removed from Victorian grandiosity. It is towards the end of the twentieth century, with the work of psychiatrists Elisabeth Kübler-Ross and Beverley Raphael, both in Australia and internationally, that public grieving and death culture became once again appropriate in Australian society. The work of social historian Patricia Jalland indicates that 'In Memoriam' and 'Death' notices in newspapers have become the acceptable form of public grieving, and research into these notices for Albury indicates that nationwide trends are applicable to the region.

91 Jalland, *Changing ways of death*, 371.

92 Wilson, "Secularization," 415; Jalland, *Changing ways of death*, 365-369; Nicol, *This grave and burning question*, 314.

Appendix 1 – Images

All photographs from Elizabeth Morgan, personal collection, unless otherwise cited

Figure 1 – Photograph of a wooden cross marking an unknown grave. Pioneer Cemetery, Albury July 31, 2014.



Figure 3 – Photograph of detail from the grave fence of John McEachern. Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, Plan 6, Section PRES, Row I, Lot 30, July 31, 2014.



Figure 2 – Photograph of a grave marked only with a statue of a cherub. Pioneer Cemetery, Albury July 31, 2014.



Figure 4 – Photograph of the remains of the Hore crypt. Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, Section CATH, August 28, 2014.



Figure 5 – Photograph of the gravestone of Thomas Charles Farmer, Mary C. Farmer, Frederick C. Farmer, Alfred H. Farmer, Charles F. Farmer, Annie Theresa Farmer and Thomas Pryor Farmer. Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, Plan 1, Section COE, Row G, Lot 6, July 31, 2014.



Figure 6 – Photograph of the gravestone of William Edgcumbe. Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, Plan 1, Section COE, Row K, Lot 31, July 31, 2014.



Figure 7 – Photograph of the grave of Frederick W. Spurr and George Harry Spurr. Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, Plan 1, Section COE, Row H, Lot 20, July 31, 2014.



Figure 8 – Photograph of the grave of Gussie Pearsall. Pioneer Cemetery, Albury Plan 1, Section COE, Row O, Lot 9, July 31, 2014.



Figure 9 – Detail of the gravestone of Annie Webb, John C. Webb and Alfred A. Webb. Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, Plan 1, Section COE, Row R, Lot 26, July 31, 2014.

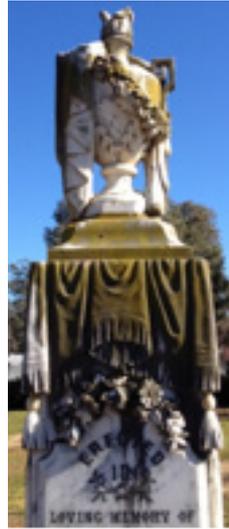


Figure 12 – Photograph of the grave of John Burrows, Eliza Augusta Burrows and Henry Hague. Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, Plan 6, Section METH, Row C, Lot 12, July 31, 2014.



Figure 10 – Photograph of a variety of crosses ornamenting gravestones. Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, Section CATH, August 28, 2014.

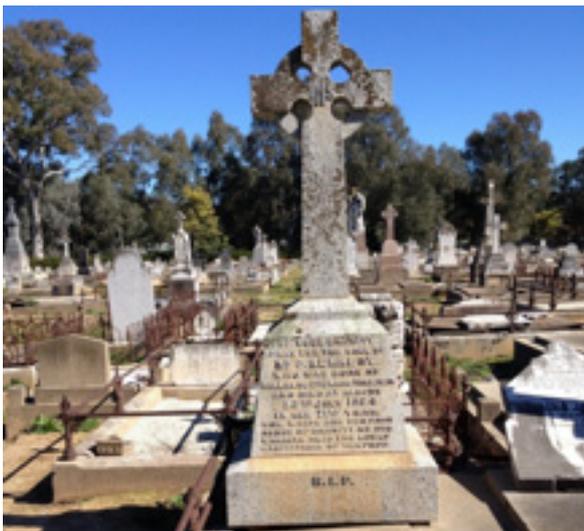


Figure 13 – Detail of the grave of William Carkeek, Rebecca Sarah Carkeek and John C. Carkeek. Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, Plan 2, Section COE, Row M, Lot 27, August 28, 2014.



Figure 14 – Photograph of unknown grave with blue ceramic tiles. Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, Section CATH, August 28, 2014.

Figure 11 – Photograph of the gravestone of Margaret Stewart. Pioneer Cemetery, Albury, Plan 4, Section CATH, Row S, Lot 18, July 31, 2014.



Figure 15 – Photograph of large black granite monuments. Waugh Road Cemetery, Albury, Plan 18, Section 9A, Row F, Lot 6-9, August 28, 2014.



Figure 16 – Photograph of the gravestone for John Willoughby. Waugh Road Cemetery, Albury, Plan 17, Section 9, Row G, Lot 19, August 28, 2014.

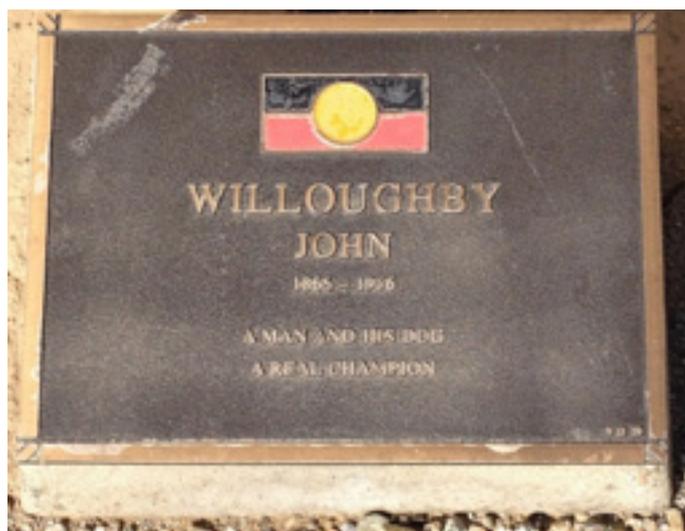


Figure 17 – Photograph of the gravestone for Charles Noris Callow. Waugh Road Cemetery, Albury, Plan 15A, Section AF, Row B, Lot 10, August 28, 2014.



Figure 18 – Photograph of the gravestone of Gordon James Strang. Glenmorus Gardens, Albury, Plan 11G, Section 11G, Row C, Lot 18, photographed by Fiona Baker, August 28, 2014, personal collection.



Figure 19 – Photograph of the gravestone of Noel James Ritchie. Glenmorus Gardens, Albury, Plan 3 Section 3, Row BBB, Lot 34, August 28, 2014.



Figure 20 – Photograph of the gravestone of Miriam Beth Clark. Glenmorus Gardens, Albury Plan 3, Section 3, Row BBB, Lot 8, August 28, 2014.



Figure 21 – Photograph of the memorial plaque for Manuel Gomes Lopes. Glenmorus Gardens, Albury , Plan 5, Section 5, Rock WATERCOURSE ROCK South, Lot 4, photographed by Fiona Baker, August 28, 2014, personal collection.

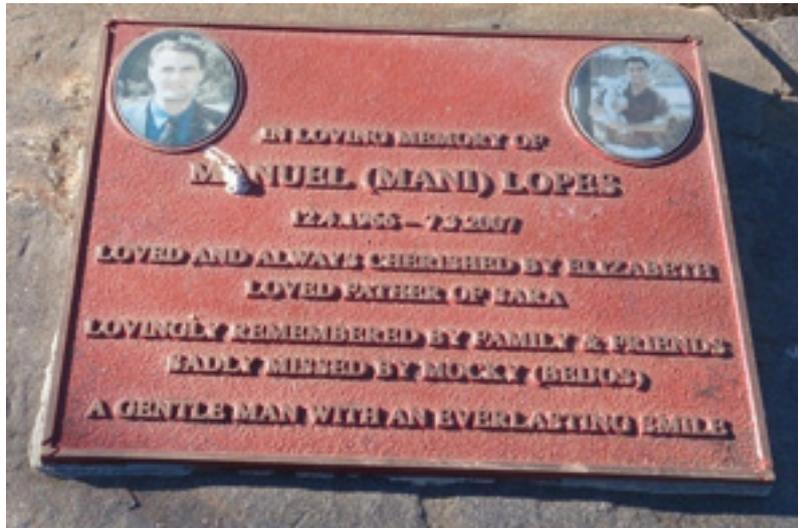


Figure 22 – Photograph of the gravestones of Cornelis Alphonsus Bosland and Maria Bosland. Glenmorus Gardens, Albury, Plan 11G, Section 11G, Row D, Lot 8, photographed by Fiona Baker, August 28, 2014, personal collection.

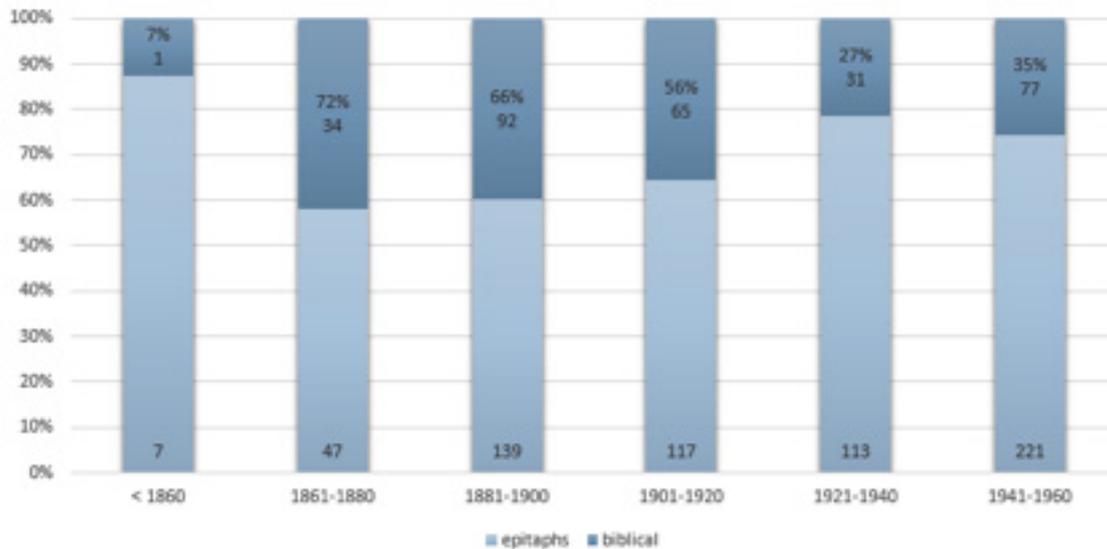


Figure 23 – Photograph of the gravestones of Barbara Joy Groch and Kylie Louise McGrath. Waugh Road Cemetery, Albury, Plan 18B, Section BABY, Row J, Lot 17-18, August 28, 2014.



Appendix 2 - Charts

Percentage of religious-based epitaphs between <1860 and 1960 in the Albury Pioneer Cemetery and Waugh Road Cemetery.



'Epitaph' was defined as any text on the gravestone beyond the name and date of birth and death of the deceased, except the text 'rest in peace' and variations thereof as that phrase occurred on most gravestones. 'Biblical' in this survey was taken to mean any text on a gravestone that referred to God, Jesus, heaven, angels, the afterlife, or text quoted from the Bible, prayers or hymns.