



**HERITAGE  
COUNCIL**  
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## **REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES – ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION**

### **11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

#### **PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)**

- 4.5 Making settlements to serve rural Australia
- 8.8 Remembering the fallen
- 9.7.1 Dealing with human remains.
- 9.7.2 Mourning the dead.
- 9.7.3 Remembering the dead.

#### **HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)**

- 101 Immigration, emigration and refugees
- 107 Settlements
- 404 Community services and utilities
- 406 Religion
- 501 World wars and other wars
- 604 Local heroes and battlers
- 605 Famous and infamous people

#### **11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\***

*Northam Cemetery* contains many fine examples of monumental masonry, as well as complete clusters of monuments and surrounding railings that have strong aesthetic appeal. (Criterion 1.1)

*Northam Cemetery* contains markers covering a wide range of types from the finely crafted stonemason's work to naïve markers, many of which demonstrate high levels of craftsmanship. (Criterion 1.2)

Although simply laid out in a traditional manner, with sections of linear as well as block planting, its hillside location, collection of graves, and mature plantings make *Northam Cemetery* an important cultural landscape. (Criterion 1.3)

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\* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, R., Irving, R., Reynolds, P. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture. Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus and Roberston, North Ryde, 1989.

For consistency, all references to garden and landscape types and styles are taken from Ramsay, J. *Parks, Gardens and Special Trees: A Classification and Assessment Method for the Register of the National Estate*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

## **11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE**

*Northam Cemetery* is associated with the opening up of the Avon Valley for pastoral and agricultural purposes from the 1830s and in particular with the development of the Northam district since 1856. (Criterion 2.1)

*Northam Cemetery* has operated as a burial ground continuously from its establishment in 1856 to the present, in 2005. (Criterion 2.2)

Due to its long period of use, *Northam Cemetery* reflects the impact of local and world events on a local community, including the burials of pioneers, servicemen from two World Wars, and migrants from the post World War Two period. (Criterion 2.2)

As a result of migrant camps in the area the place has a particular concentration of the graves of migrants from the post World War Two period, together with graves of nineteenth century Chinese and Afghan immigrants. (Criterion 2.2)

*Northam Cemetery* contains the remains of seven generations of the local community and these represent people from various socio economic and ethnic backgrounds. They include prominent individuals and families such as the Throssells, Chidlows, and Byfields who have been significant in the history of the State, as well as convicts, farmers, labourers, midwives, nuns, migrants, suicides, children and stillborn and neo-natal babies. (Criterion 2.2 & 2.3)

## **11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE**

As a research site, *Northam Cemetery* has the potential to yield information on a range of topics, including the growth of the area and community as well as the impact of specific events such as epidemics, genealogical information, religious beliefs and burial customs, and the symbolism and changes to monumental architecture. (Criteria 3.1 & 3.2)

## **11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE**

*Northam Cemetery* has very high social significance, providing a physical memorial to the friends and family members of the seven generations of the Northam community buried there. The good standard of maintenance, extensive programs to identify and mark previously unmarked burials, such as stillborn and neo-natal babies, and the continuing development and improvement of the place are an indication of its high social value. (Criterion 4.1)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12. 1. RARITY**

*Northam Cemetery* is one of the oldest and longest serving public cemeteries in the State, having operated continuously from 1856 to the present, in 2005. (Criterion 5.1)

The Chinese section of *Northam Cemetery* is the only such section of this type in any cemetery located in the Avon Valley. (Criterion 5.1)

### **12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Northam Cemetery* represents a cemetery development type with a long period of continuity, having started in 1856 and remained in continuous use to the present. (Criterion 6.1)

*Northam Cemetery* represents burial practices across a range of religions and nationalities, a wide variety of monumental masonry and other means of marking burial sites since 1856. (Criterion 6.2)

### **12.3 CONDITION**

The maintenance of *Northam Cemetery* is an enormous undertaking and in general terms the place is very well maintained. Notwithstanding the effects of vandalism, soil erosion, the impact of the growth of mature trees, and the general attrition of time on the materials associated with the markers and railings, the place reflects its values well and maintenance practices have not detracted from its values.

### **12.4 INTEGRITY**

*Northam Cemetery* remains in use for its intended purpose and retains a high degree of integrity.

### **12.5 AUTHENTICITY**

Continual development and change is the nature of cemeteries and cultural material tends to continue to accumulate. The place contains authentic material from all stages of development and has suffered some fabric loss. Generally the place retains a high degree of authenticity.

### 13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Kristy Bizacca, Historian, and Philip Griffiths, Architect, in May 2005, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

The majority of the burial sites of historic value are contained within a line south of the lateral road above R.C. 'E' to R. C. 'K', M. F. 'E', M.E. 'EE', A.N. 'I', and A.N. 'H' and it is suggested that the curtilage be drawn at this lateral road line.

#### 13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

*Northam Cemetery* is a planned burial ground, with a wide variety of grave markers, roads, young and mature plantings, located on a hillside site that commenced development in 1856. It is planned on a series of blocks for burial plots, with one lateral access road and three normal access roads and contains burial sites with simple markers, fenced plots with markers, monumental stone work headstones, memorial gardens, a toilet block, shelters, a car park, and work shed.

Ensign Dale of 63<sup>rd</sup> Regiment led the first European expedition out east over the Darling Ranges in July 1830. In August Dale reached and named Mount Mackie, located between what was later known as York and Northam. His favourable reports of the open country and available water sources in the area led to further expeditions including one in which Dale accompanied Governor Stirling and a group of prominent citizens and businessmen in October 1830.<sup>1</sup>

The good reports from the expeditions and Stirling's confirmation of the quality of the district resulted in the immediate opening up of the Avon River area. The Lands and Surveys Department was responsible for creating the land grants and setting aside the townsites of York, Beverley and Northam. By December 1830, land had been granted in the vicinity of the Northam townsite.<sup>2</sup>

Although many applications for land were made as news spread on the potential of the district, settlement was slow due to problems with communication routes, conflicts with Aboriginal people and absentee landowners.<sup>3</sup> Of the 16 land grants made in Northam, only four were settled, with pastoralism being the first main industry. By 1836, the Clarkson Brothers were working their land at 'Wilberforce', Du Bois Agett at his property 'Springhill', and John Morrell at 'Morby Farm', which was located immediately north of the Northam townsite.<sup>4</sup> These settlers were followed by other families such as the Chidlows, the Heals, the Morgans and the Cookes.<sup>5</sup>

In 1836, Surveyor Alfred Hillman was sent to lay out the Northam townsite on the banks of the Avon River. Few blocks and streets were surveyed at the time and J. H. Monger was given special permission to erect the first building there, an inn, in 1844.<sup>6</sup> During this early period, the town had a village-type landscape with few scattered buildings.

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1 Garden, D. S., *Northam: An Avon Valley History*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1979, pp. 2 & 3.

2 Garden, op. cit., pp. 2 – 4.

3 Garden, op. cit., pp. 4 – 6.

4 Garden, op. cit., pp. 6 – 13.

5 Garden, op. cit., pp. 13 – 28.

6 Garden, op. cit., pp. 55 – 59.

One of the first actions of the Northam settlers was to meet to discuss the establishment of a church in the town. This meeting was held in August 1844 and chaired by C. R. Hinds. Those in attendance included W. Chidlow and Henry Wollaston. The group adopted Richard Morrell's plan for the construction of a church to accommodate up to 100 people and formed a committee to oversee its building. Hinds was nominated to petition the Governor for land for the proposed church and a block at the corner of Hawes and Chidlow Streets was chosen for the site.<sup>7</sup>

By the mid 1840s, the Hawes Street land had begun to be used as a cemetery and by 1848 six bodies had been interred. In 1849, the Colonial government was informed of this use of the site and, apparently concerned with it not being used for the intended purpose, chose another location for the town's cemetery.<sup>8</sup> This burial ground was located on the banks of the river on Peel Terrace.<sup>9</sup> It does not appear that this was ever used for a cemetery and the settlers are reported to have continued to use Hawes Street for burials.<sup>10</sup> It is possible that the Peel Terrace land was subject to river flooding and therefore not suitable for its intended purpose.

The Hawes Street cemetery was in operation up to the mid 1850s when, in 1856, another cemetery site was surveyed by F. T. Gregory on the road from Toodyay to Northam.<sup>11</sup> The cemetery originally comprised Northam Suburban Lots N47, N48, N49 and N50 and N28.<sup>12</sup> (This section is often referred to as the Pioneer Cemetery.)

Land ownership details and later plans of the Northam townsite indicate that the various Suburban Lots within the cemetery were granted to specific denominations for use as burial grounds. Suburban Lot N47 was allocated to the Roman Catholic Church, Suburban Lot N48 to the Congregationalists or Independents, Suburban Lot N50 to the Church Trustees, and Suburban Lot N28 to the Church of England.<sup>13</sup>

Although *Northam Cemetery* has been used for its intended purpose since its establishment in 1856, there is no evidence of marked graves from this early period. It is likely that these markers were constructed from timber and have therefore been lost overtime.<sup>14</sup> The earliest marked grave site in *Northam Cemetery* is that of Rebecca Eaton, who died in 1864. However, the existing headstone is not original and is said to have been erected in the early 1900s.<sup>15</sup> (The site inspection undertaken on 3 May 2004 confirms that there are a number of early graves but headstones, especially those associated with a family crypt, date from later time periods.<sup>16</sup>)

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7 Garden, op. cit., p. 60.

8 Garden, op. cit., p. 60; Northam Townsite Plan, c. 1862, WAS 235, Cons. 3868, Item 274, SRO.

9 Northam Townsite Plan c. 1862, WAS 235, Cons. 3868, Item 274, SRO.

10 Garden, op. cit., p. 60.

11 Garden, op. cit., p. 60; F. T. Gregory, Field Book 11, 1853 – 1856, p. 112, SRO.

12 F. T. Gregory, Field Book 11, 1853 – 1856, p. 112, SRO; Plan of Suburban Allotments Northam Townsite as marked out by F. T. Gregory, 1856, WAS 235, Cons. 3868, Item 275, SRO.

13 Details of land ownership from The Schedule, Northam Cemeteries Act 1944, <http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/statutes>, 27/4/2004; Plan of Northam Townsite, n.d. [c. 1896], WAS 235, Cons. 3868, Item 276, SRO.

14 Goodacre, J. (Northam Cemetery Caretaker) & National Trust Cemeteries Committee, 'Northam Cemetery (Pioneer Section)', National Trust of Australia (WA) classification documentation, 4/4/1993, u.p. [p. 3].

15 Ibid, u.p. [p. 3].

16 Site Inspection, 3/5/2004.

Information from the burial registers as well as the physical fabric at *Northam Cemetery* shows that the oldest surviving headstone in the place belongs to Abraham Morgan, who died in 1871.<sup>17</sup> Other early graves and headstones belong to members of pioneering families such as John T. Cooke (d. 1875) and William Chidlow (d. 1879).<sup>18</sup>

In 1879, Northam was declared a municipality. Not long after, it was recognised that a more efficient communication route was required to provide access to and from the district and in 1886, the Eastern Railway was extended from Spencer's Brook to West Northam. The railway was opened on 13 October in that year.<sup>19</sup>

After the discovery of gold in the Eastern Goldfields in the 1890s the Government soon determined that it was necessary to construct a railway to the goldfields. Northam was chosen over York as the head of the line. The Eastern Goldfields Railway was built to Southern Cross in 1894 and was extended as new fields were opened; for example, the line reached Kalgoorlie in 1896.<sup>20</sup> In 1897, the Government decided that a major railway yards and railway workshops would be established in the Northam town. Together, the economic prosperity and increased population as a result of the goldrushes, the town's part in the state railway network and its role as the main point of entry into the Eastern Goldfields transformed Northam from a village to a thriving centre.<sup>21</sup>

In c. 1896, Suburban Lot N28 was subdivided to create two smaller lots; Lot 97 and Lot 98.<sup>22</sup> Lot 97 was used as the cemetery for the Church of England and Lot 98 became the general cemetery.<sup>23</sup> At the same time this subdivision occurred, the boundaries of *Northam Cemetery* were resurveyed and realigned at Suburban Lots N47 and N48.<sup>24</sup>

As discussed above, the town of Northam was significantly impacted by its selection as the head of the railway to the Eastern Goldfields and its subsequent role as the main entry point to this district. The growth in population during this period is reflected in the increase of burials in *Northam Cemetery* from the late nineteenth century on.<sup>25</sup>

*Northam Cemetery* contains the graves of prominent members of both the Northam and wider communities such as members of the Chidlow, the Throssell, the Morrell, the Dempster, the Gregory, and the Byfield families. This includes the graves of well known individuals such as Captain James McLean Dempster (d. 1890), pioneer Frederick Morrell (d. 1899), J. T. Reilly, founder of *The Northam Advertiser*, and Hon. George Throssell (d. 1910), the second Premier of Western Australia.<sup>26</sup>

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17 See Young, J. (comp.), 'WA Cemetery Records', Battye Library, PR2640.

18 Young, op. cit..

19 Higham, G. J., 'Over the Range', Australian Railway Historical Society, WA Division, 1968, pp. 4 – 6.

20 Higham, 'Over the Range', op. cit., pp. 4 – 6; Higham, G. J., *One Hundred Years of Railways in Western Australia 1871 – 1971*, Australian Railway Historical Society (W.A Division Inc.), Perth, 1971, p. 8.

21 Garden, op. cit., pp. 138, 150 – 151; Higham, 'Over the Range', op. cit., pp. 4 – 6, 18 – 19.

22 G. W. Leeming, Field Book 31, 1896, p. 23, SRO.

23 Plan of Northam Townsite, n.d. [c. 1896], WAS 235, Cons. 3868, Item 276, SRO.

24 G. W. Leeming, Field Book 31, 1896, p. 23, SRO.

25 See Young, op. cit..

26 Young, op. cit.; Goodacre & National Trust Cemeteries Committee, op. cit., u.p. [pp. 1 – 2]; Site Inspection, 3/5/2004; Conversation between Mrs. Jan Goodacre & K. Bizzaca, 12/5/2004.

A pine tree located in the Church of England section of *Northam Cemetery* was planted in 1897 on the grave site of 12 month-old Hubert (or Harold) Bartlett-Day. For many years, the pine tree was thought to have been planted at the burial for 13 month old Pansy Clifton Throssell (d. 1887), daughter of Hon. George Throssell, and it was known for some time as 'Little Pansy's Tree'. (The grave of Pansy Clifton Throssell is located adjacent to the pine tree.)<sup>27</sup> The pine tree is situated in a row of trees running north-south, which for many years have marked the boundary between the Methodist and Church of England burial areas.<sup>28</sup>

Besides the prominent members of society, *Northam Cemetery* holds the remains of people from various walks of life like convicts, farmers, blacksmiths, midwives and children. In the Catholic section of the cemetery there are two crypts marking the final resting place of nuns associated with Northam's St Joseph's Convent. Interestingly, *Northam Cemetery* also incorporates the graves of early migrants such as the Afghan camel drivers and Chinese market gardeners and labourers.<sup>29</sup>

The burials of Chinese people date from the turn of the twentieth century and are located in a distinct line to the west of the Catholic section. These provide a glimpse into the life of these migrants as well as their contact with Europeans. For example, buried at Northam are Ah How Ada Lottie aged 3 years old and Ah Lum Lily aged 4 months. Lottie was the daughter of unmarried couple Charles Ah How and Florance Harford, and Lily the daughter of James Ah Lum and Katherine Latchford.<sup>30</sup>

On 3 February 1911, Reserve 13238 was created for cemetery purposes.<sup>31</sup> This was located to the north of the existing cemetery on land formerly owned by R. Purkis.<sup>32</sup> Further resurveying was done to the original cemetery at the western and southern boundaries and resulted in the surrendering of portion of Lot N47 to the Crown and the creation of Lot 240 at the western-most end of the place.<sup>33</sup>

In April 1912, a Board was appointed to control and manage the public cemetery at Reserve 13238. Those on the Board were C. B. Douglas, Cecil Throssell, R. Fullerton, J. T. Reilly, C. K. Stewart, T. A. Harrison, W. J. Higgs and G. H. Whiteford.<sup>34</sup> The public cemetery was expanded to include Reserve 9497 in 1924.<sup>35</sup>

On 12 October 1944, the *Northam Cemeteries Act* was proclaimed. This saw the revesting of Lots N48, 49, 50, Sub-lot 90 and Avon Location 20511 to the Crown and their becoming part of Reserve 13238. The lands were vested for use as a

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27 O'Brien Planning Consultants, 'Municipal Heritage Inventory for the Town and Shire of Northam', 1998; Young, op. cit.; Site Inspection, 3 May 2004.

28 Conversation between Mrs. Jan Goodacre & K. Bizzaca, 12/5/2004.

29 Goodacre & National Trust Cemeteries Committee, op. cit., u.p. [pp. 2 - 3]; Site Inspection, 3/5/2004.

30 Young, op. cit.. Mrs. Goodacre said that she asked a visiting professor from Asia to visit the cemetery to look at the graves. He told her that one of the graves was that of an official from the then reigning Emperor's court. (Conversation between Mrs. Jan Goodacre & K. Bizzaca, 12/5/2004.) Note: the Chinese notation has been used for these grave markers, with the surname of the children written before their given names.

31 *Government Gazette*, 3/2/1911.

32 Plan of Northam Townsite, n.d. [c. 1896], WAS 235, Cons. 3868, Item 276, SRO; Northam Townsite Plan, c. 1856 – 1911, WAS 235, Cons. 3868, Item 273, SRO.

33 Northam Townsite Plan, c. 1856 – 1911, WAS 235, Cons. 3868, Item 273, SRO.

34 *Government Gazette*, 4/4/1912.

35 *Government Gazette*, 31/10/1924.

public cemetery and were placed under the control of the Northam Road Board (now Shire of Northam).<sup>36</sup>

World events such as World War One, World War Two and subsequent wars are also reflected in the graves at this cemetery. This includes a number of memorials to local men killed in action while serving overseas such as Lance Corporal Alfred J. Marshall of 27<sup>th</sup> Battalion A.I.F. who was killed somewhere in France in August 1918.<sup>37</sup>

Like other towns located in the State and in Australia as a whole, Northam was impacted by the Federal Government's post World War Two immigration program. Part of the Government's post war development plans, this program resulted in massive numbers of immigrants arriving in Australia as part of the Displaced Persons Scheme, from Britain, and from southern and eastern Europe.<sup>38</sup> As part of the Displaced Persons Scheme, *Northam Army Camp* was taken over as a Reception and Training Centre by the Department of Immigration and another centre - Holden Camp - was also established at Northam. Northam was seen as a strategic location as it was located at the head of the railway line and the men at the camps could travel to different areas of the state for employment.<sup>39</sup>

The two camps collectively operated from 1949 to 1963 and during this time approximately 24,000 immigrants arrived at Northam.<sup>40</sup> The history of these camps as well as the decision of a number of migrant families to stay on in the Northam area is reflected at *Northam Cemetery* where the Catholic section and General Cemetery area show a marked increase of graves of people from different ethnic backgrounds.<sup>41</sup>

In June 1960, works were proposed to *Northam Cemetery*. These included the laying of water to the place, the bitumenising of the entrance, and possibly the gravelling of drives.<sup>42</sup> This maintenance appears to have been part of a program of upgrades to the cemetery as a newspaper article goes on to state:

People visiting the cemetery cannot fail to notice its much more cared-for aspect. Spreading limbs of trees that have [sic] become a danger to tombstones are lopped, a large gum tree removed and the whole cemetery assuming a much tidier appearance.<sup>43</sup>

This work was done under the supervision of cemetery caretaker George Wedlock.<sup>44</sup>

The grounds of *Northam Cemetery* were increased twice in 1975 through the addition of land from Avon Location 28496. The first was in January, and the

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<sup>36</sup> Northam Cemeteries Act 1944, <http://www.slp.wa.gov.au/statutes>, 27/4/2004; *Government Gazette*, 12/10/1945.

<sup>37</sup> Young, op. cit..

<sup>38</sup> Bizzaca, K., 'The Good Neighbour Council and Postwar Immigration in Western Australia 1949-1955', Honours Thesis, 1995, Introduction; Peters, N., 'Arriving in the Lucky Country', in Gregory, J. (ed.), *On the Homefront: Western Australia and World War Two*, UWA Press, 1996, pp. 258.

<sup>39</sup> Georgiou, N. & Loreck, J., Northam Army Camp, HCWA assessment documentation, 2000, pp. 8 – 9.

<sup>40</sup> Northam Army Camp, op. cit., pp. 8 – 9.

<sup>41</sup> Site Inspection, 3/5/2004.

<sup>42</sup> *Northam Advertiser*, 10/6/1960.

<sup>43</sup> *Northam Advertiser*, 10/6/1960.

<sup>44</sup> *Northam Advertiser*, 10/6/1960.



second in March; the former resulted in the cemetery comprising 6.0706 hectares.<sup>45</sup>

The niche wall and the toilet block had been erected at *Northam Cemetery* by the mid 1980s. The toilet block is located on a stillborn babies' burial section.<sup>46</sup>

The early 1990s saw plans for the construction of a bypass to redirect east-west traffic from the central Northam townsite gain increasing momentum. Although a number of routes were considered, the Main Roads Department favoured Route 6 that proposed the resumption of part of the pioneer section of the cemetery and the Aboriginal Reserve on either side of Katrine Road for the creation of a four lane highway. This was cause for much concern among members of the Northam community, including Mrs. Jan Goodacre, a historian, who was at the time the caretaker of *Northam Cemetery*.<sup>47</sup> Not only was there the concern that the heavy traffic using the bypass would have a considerable impact on the cemetery because of its location on a sand hill, but:

Should route 6 go ahead, it is proposed to close the existing entry and exit roads of the cemetery from Katrine Road. The portion where the new entry is planned is the site where suicides were buried. In early cemeteries this group of people were considered sinners, and were never buried with the rest of the people. Only one grave has a surround but none are marked on the plans of the cemetery. The only proof that burials of suicides took places [sic] in this area is in talking with the older members of our community who have verified this.<sup>48</sup>

It was eventually determined that the route of the bypass (Route 9) would pass west of the cemetery and to the north of the Northam townsite and main residential areas. The bypass was opened in May 2002.<sup>49</sup>

As caretaker of *Northam Cemetery*, Mrs. Goodacre was responsible for the implementation of a number of significant programs to the place in the early to mid 1990s. Headstones and surrounds and the cemetery grounds were restored, and she also encouraged descendants like Doug Morgan (descendant of Abraham Morgan) to take an interest in preserving their families' graves.<sup>50</sup>

A visit to the goldfields by local councilors and council staff resulted in the suggestion that all graves within the cemetery should be marked by plaques. Mrs. Goodacre carried out the massive task of research necessary for the project, and the plaques were installed and paid for by the Shire of Northam.<sup>51</sup>

During the research, Mrs. Goodacre took a strong interest in the burials of children and stillborn and neo-natal babies. It was at her instigation and as a result of her labour that a number of memorial gardens were subsequently established in *Northam Cemetery*. The first was the Children's Garden of Remembrance which was created in 1993. Planted and built by Mrs. Goodacre, the garden is in memory to the 1,250 unmarked graves of children who died prior to 1950. The grave of 3 year old Lila Shah, the daughter of an Afghan hawker,

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45 *Government Gazette*, 31/1/1975; *Government Gazette*, 14/3/1975.

46 Conversation between Mrs. Jan Goodacre & K. Bizzaca, 12/5/2004.

47 Goodacre & National Trust Cemeteries Committee, op. cit., u.p. [Appendix]; *The Avon Valley Advocate and The Northam Advertiser*, 13/4/1993.

48 Goodacre & National Trust Cemeteries Committee, op. cit., u.p. [Appendix]. It should be noted that *Northam Cemetery* had already been impacted by road works in its vicinity with the loss of the first row of graves. It is not known when this occurred. (Goodacre & National Trust Cemeteries Committee, op. cit., u.p. [p. 3].)

49 Information provided by Phil Griffiths, 11/5/2004.

50 Conversation between Mrs. Jan Goodacre & K. Bizzaca, 12/5/2004.

51 Conversation between Mrs. Jan Goodacre & K. Bizzaca, 12/5/2004.

who died of diphtheria in 1916, was chosen as the site of the memorial as a symbol of the multicultural history of the Northam area. Her grave faces Mecca.<sup>52</sup>

Also located within the Children's Garden is a drinking fountain in honour of Mrs. Goodacre's contribution to the community and the cemetery. This was donated and erected by Purslowe Monumental Masons on 5 December 1993.<sup>53</sup>

In 1994, a multi-denominational burial service was held at Eden Park. Eden Park is the resting place for neo-natal and stillborn babies, who died between 1950 and 1975. The name tags to identify the children's graves in this section were provided by the Northam Rotary Club.<sup>54</sup>

In this same year Mrs. Goodacre created Melissa's Fairy Garden and J. W. Purslowe Memorial Garden with assistance from Purslowe Funeral Homes, Purslowe Monumental Masons and the Northam Garden Centre.<sup>55</sup> She also planted the lawn cemetery with money personally awarded to her by the Year of the Family.<sup>56</sup>

Since the early 1990s, the Northam Cemetery Liaison Committee has been responsible for the passing of two bylaws to protect the pioneer section of *Northam Cemetery*. One of these was 'to ensure that the graves within the cemetery would not be subject to the twenty five years tenure lease, which governs most cemeteries'.<sup>57</sup> The second states that no new monuments can be built in the pioneer section and all have to be in-keeping with the early memorial stonework.<sup>58</sup>

In 2005, *Northam Cemetery* continues to be used for the purpose for which it was originally established in 1856. A caretaker is still employed by the Shire to maintain the place and the Liaison Committee helps with its management.

Plans are currently in place for the construction of a new crematorium to the north-east of Melissa's Fairy Garden.<sup>59</sup>

## 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Northam Cemetery* is a planned burial ground, with a wide variety of grave markers, roads, young and mature plantings, located on a hillside site that commenced development in 1856. It is planned on a series of blocks for burial plots, with one lateral access road and three normal access roads and contains burial sites with simple markers, fenced plots with markers, monumental stone work headstones, memorial gardens, a toilet block, shelters, a car park, and work shed.

*Northam Cemetery* is located on the Katrine Road, north of the railway and Avon River, about three kilometres out of the centre of the town by road. It is set on the north side of the road in topography that slopes up sharply from the road. From the elevated cemetery land, there is a view of the equestrian park to the south, the Avon River, and back to the town.

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52 Conversation between Mrs. Jan Goodacre & K. Bizzaca, 12/5/2004; Site Inspection, 3/5/2004.

53 Site Inspection, 3/5/2004.

54 O'Brien Planning Consultants, 'Municipal Heritage Inventory for the Town and Shire of Northam', 1998; Conversation between Mrs. Jan Goodacre & K. Bizzaca, 12/5/2004.

55 Site Inspection, 3/5/2004.

56 Conversation between Mrs. Jan Goodacre & K. Bizzaca, 12/5/2004.

57 Goodacre & National Trust Cemeteries Committee, op. cit., u.p. [p. 3.].

58 Conversation between Mrs. Jan Goodacre & K. Bizzaca, 12/5/2004.

59 Conversation between Mrs. Jan Goodacre & K. Bizzaca, 12/5/2004.

The basic layout is arranged around three roads that run off the Katrine Road, an entrance road to the west, an exit road at the centre and a second exit road to the east. A lateral road connects all three roads together about half way along the north-south axis of the cemetery. Roads are curbed and bitumenised. Most of the graves and markers are laid out along an axis normal to the three roads, with the Christian and most other markers facing to the north-east. Chinese markers near the western side of the cemetery face south-west.

The older markers are located south of the lateral road. North of the lateral road there are more recent burials, a commemorative plaque wall, toilet block, large expanse of car park, and off to the west a discreetly located Colorbond clad work shed. Apart from the conventionally laid out burial sites, there are two commemorative gardens.

Plantings are not dense and consist of some isolated tree plantings, such as the old Monterey Pine (*Pinus radiata*), and lines of planting comprising Cypresses (*Cupressus* spp.), Golden Pencil Pines (*Cupressus* CV *Swane's Golden*), Camphor Laurels (*Cinnamomum camphora*), and Brachychitons (*Brachychiton* spp.). Other plantings that are generally informal include Peppermint Trees (*Agonis flexuosa*), Paper Barks (*Melaleuca* sp), Bottle Brush (*Callistemon* spp.) and Victorian Tea Tree. New tree plantings include Jacaranda (*Jacaranda mimosifolia*). In the memorial gardens shrub planting is also used including Bookleaf Cypress (*Thuja* spp.). The ground is left bare, with no significant areas of grasses or ground covers.

The general arrangement from east to west in the southern part of the cemetery is Presbyterian to the east of the east road, then Presbyterian and Salvation Army to the west of it, then Anglican to the east of the next road and to the west. Further to the west is a section of Methodist plots, and then small groups of Seventh Day Adventist, Non Denominational, Jehovah Witness, and Roman Catholic. Then to the west of the west road, the groupings are Roman Catholic, with a small number of Chinese markers on the far western side. The northern part of the cemetery comprises more recent burial plots of Anglican, Lutheran, Methodist and Roman Catholic burial plots, a large car park and in the far north-western corner a general section. Other less formal sections include the Children's Garden of Remembrance and Eden Park for stillborn babies.

The graves are marked in a variety of ways from traditional kerbs or cast iron railings or fences around plots with simple headstones, to angels, figures on columns, urns, with more recent graves for middle European people including photographs. Part of the work done in more recent times includes simple markers for many children's burial plots in all main sections of the cemetery. The grave markers are mostly made by stonemasons, but there are some rustic graves markers, possibly made by family members.

The children's garden of remembrance on the western side of the site comprises a paved area with plantings, a small shade shelter, and a low brick wall around the western side of the garden, with a commemorative plaque, dedicated to the 1,250 children buried in unmarked graves. The focus of the garden is a cast iron fence and marker for Lila Shah, who died in 1916. The plantings are mainly based around a cypress theme.

Another informal memorial garden is located on the eastern side and this is known as Melissa's Fairy Garden and the J. W. Purslowe Memorial Garden. This area is based on a roughly circular plan defined by paving slabs and pine log fences, with rockeries, native plantings and various children's fairy tale figures.

The small toilet block is made of face brickwork with a flat roof and louvred windows. It has no particular style characteristics. The adjacent memorial wall is similarly designed as a simple shelter, with bronze plaques fitted to the interior faces of the structure.

The cemetery continues to evolve in the manner of any cemetery that is still in use. Historic burials are respected and in reasonable order.

The maintenance of the cemetery is a large task and the place is generally in good order, with an enormous effort having been put into identifying and making previously unmarked graves. Some graves have been vandalized and some have simply deteriorated or been affected by root activity, erosion or collapsing coffins. Overall the place is in fair to good condition.

### 13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

There are 19 cemeteries entered into the State Register of Heritage Places. Four of these date from the 1830 to 1870 period, but only 3 served as public cemeteries.

*East Perth Cemetery* was designated as a burial ground on early plans of Perth from 1829. The place operated as a cemetery up to 1899. Since this time, a number of sections of the original cemetery have been lost due to adjacent development including the Chinese and portion of the Jewish sections.

Like East Perth Cemetery, *Old Busselton Cemetery* was shown on early plans of the townsite dated 1839 and 1840. It was used as a burial ground up to 1932.

*Albany Memorial Park Cemetery* is one of the longest serving colonial cemeteries operating from 1840 to 1959. Although the place is officially closed, relatives may still apply to be interred in the burial ground.

In the Wheatbelt region itself, there are a number of cemeteries that date from the colonial period. Those in use include *Toodyay Public Cemetery*, which dates from 1866 and continues to operate, and *Old Cemetery Site, York*, which was used as a burial ground from 1847 to 1890.

In comparison to the cemeteries briefly described above, *Northam Cemetery* is the oldest and longest serving public cemetery and has been operating continuously for nearly 150 years.

The Chinese section of *Northam Cemetery* is the only such section of this type in any cemetery located in the Avon Valley. The cemetery at York also holds Chinese graves, but these are scattered among other denominational sections.

### 13.4 KEY REFERENCES

Conversation between Mrs. Jan Goodacre & K. Bizzaca, 12/5/2004

Goodacre, J. (Northam Cemetery Caretaker) & National Trust Cemeteries Committee, 'Northam Cemetery (Pioneer Section)', National Trust of Australia (WA) classification documentation, 4/4/1993

### 13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Mrs. Jan Goodacre informed the consultant that a chapel had been located at the Katrine Road (south) end of the Church of England section of *Northam Cemetery*. Information about this building and also further details about grave locations from the research by Mrs. Goodacre should be incorporated into any conservation plan based for the place.

Research for this assessment was unable to determine whether Aboriginal

persons were also buried at the place. Records accessed did not indicate a separate section for Aboriginal use. It appears that if Aboriginal persons were buried at the place, their graves are unmarked. It is also likely that Aboriginal children are buried in the unmarked stillborn, infants and children's burial areas.