



**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)

- 3.4.3 Mining
- 3.16 Struggling with remoteness, hardship and failure
- 5.1 Working in harsh conditions
- 8.14 Living in the country and rural settlements
- 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)

- 106 Workers (incl. Aboriginal, convict, indentured)
- 110 Resource exploitation and depletion
- 107 Settlements
- 111 Depression and boom
- 303 Mining
- 701 Other sub-theme - Women and children

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Menzies Cemetery contains distinctive examples of metal grave monuments specific to Menzies, erected between 1900 and 1939. (Criterion 1.1)

The place has a variety of monuments and other funerary fixtures, many of which display skill, artistry and craftsmanship in the disciplines of blacksmithing and stone masonry. (Criterion 1.2)

* 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 Robertson, 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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

Menzies Cemetery demonstrates associations with the earliest foundations and subsequent development of Menzies and the North Coolgardie Goldfields. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2 HISTORIC VALUE

Menzies Cemetery has the potential to yield information life on the goldfields of Western Australia, from 1895 to 1939. (Criteria 2.1 & 2.2)

Menzies Cemetery is associated with the prospectors, miners, businessmen, government officials and their families who risked their health and their lives to follow the lure of gold and the call of duty. The high incidence of deaths due to suicide, accidents, typhoid or alcohol, the relatively low average age of adults interred, and the high infant mortality, bear testimony to the dangers and difficulties of goldfields life. (Criterion 2.3)

11.3 SCIENTIFIC VALUE

Menzies Cemetery has the potential to yield information relating to the population of the area and life on the goldfields of Western Australia, including life expectancy, family size, religious affiliation, ethnicity, morbidity, genealogical and other biographical information. (Criterion 3.2)

11.4 SOCIAL VALUE

Menzies Cemetery is valued by the local community for its cultural, religious, personal and historical associations, demonstrated by its well-maintained appearance. (Criterion 4.1)

The cemetery contributes to the community's sense of place as a landmark and is a tangible reminder of the early history of the town and region. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1 RARITY

Menzies Cemetery is rare for the number of iron monuments making use of locally available materials and skills in the absence of traditional funerary fixtures. (Criterion 5.1)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Menzies Cemetery represents a history of the Menzies district during the foundation of its beginnings, through the form, materials, lettering, style, alignment and presentation of the cemetery. (Criterion 6.1)

12.3 CONDITION

The elements that comprise *Menzies Cemetery* are generally in fair condition, and for the most part are maintained. However, a number of headstones and surrounds are damaged.

12.4 INTEGRITY

Menzies Cemetery has retained a high degree of integrity. Although it no longer accepts burials it remains clearly identifiable as a cemetery.

12.5 AUTHENTICITY

The original structure, form and fabric of *Menzies Cemetery* remain intact, with no changes to any original fabric, except damage to headstones. *Menzies Cemetery* demonstrates a high degree of authenticity.

The stone wall and metal gate entry has some heritage significance, and the gazebo is of some significance.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Irene Sauman, Historian and Laura Gray, Heritage and Conservation Consultant, in March 2007 with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Menzies Cemetery comprises graves for burials between 1895 and 1939 with traditional headstones and distinctive metal grave markers, a metal entrance gate with stone walls either side, and a gazebo.

In 1894, gold was found in the Menzies area and the Lady Shenton and Florence mines were established. A mining camp developed in the vicinity of the mines as prospectors flocked to the area.¹ On 28 June 1895, the North Coolgardie goldfield was gazetted, encompassing the mining camps of Menzies and Goongarrie.² Menzies was declared a townsite on 16 August 1895, and became a municipality four months later, on 20 December.³ The town was named for Leslie Robert Menzies, one of two prospectors who took up the Lady Shenton lease in October 1894. Menzies, an American prospector who had already sought gold in America, Africa and New Zealand, came to Australia on behalf of a syndicate.⁴ Sir George Shenton, a wealthy and powerful Perth merchant, pastoralist and politician, was the leading member of this syndicate and profited significantly from the Menzies mines.⁵

A 50-acre site for a cemetery was surveyed outside the town boundary and was gazetted as Reserve 3348 on 14 August 1896.⁶ Under the Cemeteries Act, a Board was required to manage a cemetery, with burials to be registered and a plan of the layout kept up to date. In the Goldfields, a transient population made the function of a Cemetery Board difficult to maintain. The local Road Board often ended up acting as the responsible agency for the local Cemetery, but in many areas full records were not kept or, where authorities were short-lived, records were lost or destroyed.⁷

No early plans for *Menzies Cemetery* have survived, and the current Menzies General Cemetery Register, a copy of which is located in the Gazebo at *Menzies Cemetery*, is incomplete. The Register covers burials from November 1905 to September 1939, and excludes those for the earlier ten years. An online listing of burials at *Menzies Cemetery* covers the years 1895 to 1930. The two listings account for around 575 burials for the 45 years from 1895 to 1939. Some names are only recorded on one list during the overlap period so the number of burials could actually be slightly higher. Neither listing provides very much detail on cause of death. Twenty-three burials are recorded on the Cemetery Register for 1931-39, representing a different period of operation and a generally older demographic. These deaths are not included in the statistical analysis below,

¹ Webb, Martyn & Audrey, *Golden Destiny: The centenary history of Kalgoorlie-Boulder and the Eastern Goldfields of Western Australia*, City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder, 1996, p. 178.

² *West Australian Government Gazette*, 28 June 1895, p. 894.

³ *West Australian Government Gazette*, 16 August 1895, p. 1358 & 20 December 1895, p. 1963.

⁴ Landgate history of country town names 'Menzies' www.landgate.wa.gov.au/corporate.nsf/web/History+of+Country+Town+Names (accessed 18 Dec 2007)

⁵ Stannage, C.T., *The People of Perth*, Perth City Council, 1979, pp.217-18.

⁶ Landgate Reserve Enquiry, Reserve 3348.

⁷ Dept of Local Government file, Menzies Cemetery, SROWA, WAS 1 CONS 5274, Item 53-825, 1953-1980.

partly because only thirteen of them have an age at death provided and of those that do, the average is over 50.⁸

Menzies Cemetery suffered from a problem not uncommon to cemeteries in the region: the rock hard nature of the ground. In September 1898, an editorial in the *North Coolgardie Herald*, and several letters from residents, complained of the fact that graves were not being dug deep enough, resulting in only 2ft to 2ft 6in (600-615mm) of soil over the top of the coffin, which 'was not sufficient to exclude the vapors and malodors of the tomb being exhaled'.⁹ The rock had to be blasted and preparing a grave could take two men the best part of a day while the coffin waited in the shade for interment. There were calls for a new cemetery site to be established, or at least for several grave sites to always be available in advance. As *Menzies Cemetery* continued to be used it is thought that the latter suggestion must have been taken up. The same situation at Leonora resulted in a new cemetery being established on softer soil.¹⁰

The earliest burials at *Menzies Cemetery* were: George Sitz (36), November 1895; Sydney Burdett (26), December 1895; and George Gulvin (24), December 1895. The stories behind the graves and memorials in *Menzies Cemetery* present a microcosm of the history of the district. Life in the goldfields of Western Australia was harsh. The hot, arid environment, the dangers and vicariousness of the mining industry and the limits of medical treatment in the pre-antibiotic period all took a heavy toll.

Epidemics of typhoid were common in the camps and towns where sanitary conditions were primitive. Records of government departments contain reports of illness and death of employees in the goldfields, and newspaper reports attest to the illnesses of Post Office officials at Menzies in 1895 and 1896.¹¹ Post office employee William Johnson (22), died of typhoid on 18 April 1896, and police constable Lionel Bradley, followed on 26 April, age 30. Another who succumbed to the typhoid outbreak around this time was Councillor Frederick Devas (29 February 1896), owner of the White House hotel.¹² Postal officials, teachers and police constables are among those whose graves occupy *Menzies Cemetery*.

Enteric fever, typhoid and peritonitis were related causes of death. Enteric fever is an inflammation of the bowel in association with a fever, of which typhoid is an example. The results are ulceration and sometimes perforation of the bowel, with resulting peritonitis and death. The cause of typhoid or enteric fever is inadequate sewage disposal and primitive hygiene, which were common camp

⁸ Menzies General Cemetery Register, 1905-39, located in the Cemetery Gazebo; Menzies Cemetery online listing, 1895-1930, <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~westaust/Menzies>.

⁹ *North Coolgardie Herald*, 21 Sept 1898, editorial, quoted in Pat & Brenda Rodgers (comp), *No sign of the time: a collection of stories of the Menzies district*, Shire of Menzies & Hesperian Press, Carlisle, 1992, pp. 70-72.

¹⁰ *North Coolgardie Herald*, 21 Sept 1898, op cit; Gray, Laura & Sauman, Irene, *Conservation plan for three pioneer cemeteries in the Shire of Leonora*, for Shire of Leonora, 2006.

¹¹ Education Dept file, Menzies, establishment of school, correspondence June 1897, SROWA, WAS 24 CONS 1497, Item 1896/3900 (on microfilm); Police Dept file, Increase in strength at Leonora, Correspondence 19 Jan 1901 from Constable Topliss, SROWA, WAS 76 CONS 430 Item 1904/4915.

¹² Menzies Cemetery online listing, op cit; *Menzies Miner*, 6 Jan 1896, reported that the postal authorities had paid for two funerals in the town; Education Dept file, Menzies, establishment of school, correspondence June 1897, SROWA, WAS 24 CONS 1497, Item 1896/3900; Police Dept file, Increase in strength at Leonora, SROWA, WAS 76 CONS 430 Item 1904/4915; Rodgers, Pat & Brenda, *No sign of the times*, op cit, p. 14.

conditions on the goldfields.¹³ The first outbreak of typhoid at Menzies occurred in 1895, and Mayor Henry Gregory, with his councillors and the local police officers, conducted an inspection of the town and the camps and ordered cesspits, backyards and bush areas used as toilets to be immediately cleaned up. Funds were raised for a sealed-pan sanitary system, but in 1896 another outbreak caused the deaths of at least 28 people. In total some 105 burials in *Menzies Cemetery* between 1895 and 1905 were a result of typhoid, representing around 19% of the total burials.¹⁴

For the recorded burials covering 1895 to 1930, a sad, and rather startling, statistic is that 43% are for children under the age of fifteen, with over two-thirds of those, some 160, being for infants aged one year or less.¹⁵ The statistics for infant deaths in Australia were 85 in 1,000 in 1904, so the 160 infant burials at *Menzies Cemetery* would need to represent 1,880 births over the 35 years of the Cemetery operation, or one birth a week average. This birth rate is highly unlikely to have been achieved in a population that had dropped to 1,000 by 1910 and was dominated by single males.¹⁷ The only conclusion that can be drawn is that the infant mortality rate on the goldfields was higher than the national average.

Of the 85 burials for children aged one to fourteen, the graves of Mabel Smith (nine), Cyril Halberts (eight) and Jack Hogan (seven) represent the diphtheria outbreak in October 1910, while twelve year old Joseph Smith died during the outbreak of the same disease in March 1911.¹⁸

The 15-59 age group accounts for 266 burials, or 50% of the total. Of these, 61 are female and 205 are male. Of the female deaths, 33 (54%) were under 40, and 23 (37%) were less than 30 years of age. By comparison, burials of the elderly represent the smallest number of graves in *Menzies Cemetery*, with 50 burials for the 60 to 90 age group. The oldest resident of the place is 90-year-old Irish-born Catherine May, and there are another two graves for people in their early 80s. Although life expectancy in Western Australia during this period was relatively low, this is still a small number of elderly burials.

The generally younger demographic reflected the physical nature of mining, which required men in their prime working years, along with the number of male deaths in the 15-59 age group illustrates the dangers of mining but is also indicative of the much larger percentage of men than women in the goldfield population.

The high cost of living and a general lack of good nutrition was also a factor affecting everyone. The lack of a nutritious diet is documented in surviving correspondence from government employees in the goldfields, which testify to its effect on their health and their ability to do their job. In 1897, Menzies

13 Coate, Kevin & Yvonne, *More Lonely graves of Western Australia*, Hesperian Press, Carlisle, 2000, Appendix 3, pp. 465-72.

14 Strickland, Barry, *Golden quest discovery trail guide book*, Golden Quest Trails Assoc., Kalgoorlie, 2003, Site 7, Menzies Cemetery.

15 Menzies Cemetery online listing, op cit.

17 Menzies Cemetery online listing, op cit; Appleyard, R. T. 'Western Australia: Economic and demographic growth, 1850-1914', in Stannage, C. T. (ed) *A New History of Western Australia*, UWA Press, Perth, 1981, pp. 227-33.

18 Menzies School Journal, 1902-20, SROWA, Acc 2268/1; Menzies Cemetery online listing, op cit.

schoolteacher Marion Kilkelly considered that she might have to give up teaching as her 'strength was failing through lack of proper food'.¹⁹ The cost of living in Menzies was estimated at £3 a week, and her salary was only £140 a year (including a £20 accommodation allowance).²⁰ In 1901, Police Constable Topliss requested temporary transfer from Leonora police station to a position on the coast in order to rebuild his health as 'my constitution has completely run down and requires some nourishment which cannot be obtained on the Fields to build it up again'. The situation had not changed forty years later when, in 1943, Constable Buscomb was cultivating a vegetable garden at the Leonora station. He considered the garden 'absolutely essential... due to high cost and scarcity of vegetables'. When his family later became ill he blamed it on the lack of fresh vegetables resulting from the destruction of his garden by stray stock after a storm damaged the garden fence.²¹

Poor nutrition adversely affected the health of women during pregnancy, contributing to the poor outcome for both mother and baby, while leaving growing children more vulnerable to illness.

Accidents in the mines, illnesses caused by working underground in dusty conditions, suicide, and heavy alcohol consumption and related illnesses were the main causes of death among the miners. Men died under a fall of rock and earth, by mechanical failure, carelessness, negligence of fellow workers, or the inherent dangers of explosives. Thirteen burials at *Menzies Cemetery* are recorded as a result of mine accidents. This is possibly under recorded due to lack of detail, given that there were six such deaths recorded in the three pioneer cemeteries in the Shire of Leonora among a total of 172 burials for 1897 to 1915.²² One grave at *Menzies Cemetery* has the remains of two men, Frank Keating (24) and Patrick Stokes (31) who died on 14 August 1903 in the same event at the Queensland Mine.²³ Among the others who died as a result of a mine accident are: Andrew Vafiopulous (23) at Gladstone Mine, Comet Vale on 6 January 1911; Giacomo (James) Tagliaferri (52), 25 September 1916; and, Giovanni Menegola (35), 8 June 1918. Tagliaferri and Menegola are among the five burials listed for Italian born residents up to 1930, and there were another four recorded in the 1930s during the resurgence of mining at that time.²⁴

Miners were more likely to succumb to diseases affecting the lungs, which were a common result of working in the cramped and dusty conditions underground. Dust in the lungs caused scarring, and severe scarring of the lungs could cause heart failure because of the resistance to blood flow, and also made the body susceptible to other lung complaints such as phthisis, tuberculosis and pneumonia. Drinking was a particularly popular occupation in the 'work hard play hard' world of miners, and there were always a large number of hotels in the mining towns, these often being the first business to open at a new find. With men greatly outnumbering women on the fields, life could be very lonely. Mateship, shared dangers, failures, success, loneliness, aimlessness, heat and thirst were all dealt with by a drink or two. Where lack of clean water was often

19 Education Dept file, Menzies, establishment of school, SROWA, WAS 24 CONS 1497, Item 1896/3900.

20 Education Dept file, Item 1896/3900 op cit.

21 Police general file, Increase in strength at Leonora, SROWA, WAS 76 CONS 430 Item 1904/4915 & Leonora police station buildings, requirements, Item 1939/3289 Vol. 2.

22 Gray Sauman, *Three pioneer cemeteries*, op cit; Menzies Cemetery online listing, op cit.

23 Menzies Cemetery online listing, op cit.

24 Menzies General Cemetery Register, op cit; Menzies Cemetery online listing, op cit.

the cause of death in the goldfields, so too was excessive consumption of alcohol. Another common cause of death was heat stroke, or heat apoplexy, the likelihood of which was increased by too much alcohol and too little water.²⁵

Only one death by thirst is recorded for the burials in Menzies Cemetery. Frederick Murray, a 51-year-old American from Connecticut, died on 31 December 1901 in the bush near Canegrass.²⁶

There are at least three Aboriginal males buried in *Menzies Cemetery*: Francis Davis was 12 years old when he died on 1 January 1896 at West Menzies; Tommy Wheelbarrow, 16, died on 4 October 1896 and 40-year-old Tom Valentine, who died 11 February 1900, is recorded as being from New South Wales. None of their graves are marked. A newspaper report of his death stated that Valentine was believed to have travelled with explorer Ernest Giles. The Aboriginal companion on Giles' 1875 journey from South Australia to Western Australia was a boy in his mid-teens named Tommy Oldham whose family was at Youldeh (Ooldea), South Australia. Tommy Valentine was the right age and may have changed his name. There are also several unnamed Aborigines recorded in the Cemetery Register, buried in their respective denominational sections as Anglican or Presbyterian.²⁷

Sherar, an Indian from the Punjab who was working in Menzies as a cook, died on 7 February 1901 aged 45. Afghan camel driver Abdul Hadji died on 26 November 1901 at the age of 35.²⁸ Although his death was not reported in the local newspaper, the fatal shooting on 16 November 1903 of Goolam Mahomet Meer was. Meer was a 28-year-old contractor from Peshawar, India, who had been in the district for seven years and owned a number of camels and several horse teams. He carted timber and water for the mines and quartz for the batteries. He and two of his employees, Goolam and Ishmael, were shot in the head by another Afghan, Minoor (Meernoor) who came to Meer's camp in the Pictou Valley in an agitated state of mind because some of his camels were missing. Both Goolam and Ishmael survived and identified the culprit. Minoor had some time previously been acquitted in the Menzies Court of being of unsound mind. He was arrested two days later by Menzies police.²⁹

Goolam Meer was buried two days after his death, as his grave was not ready on the following day 'due to the hard sinking'. His coffin was conveyed to *Menzies Cemetery* on the shoulders of some of his countrymen, 'of whom a considerable number were present'.³⁵

Residents of the Pictou Valley district, who missed Meer's funeral, wrote a letter to the *North Coolgardie Herald* explaining how Meer had endeared himself to

25 Coate, Kevin & Yvonne, op cit.

26 Menzies Cemetery online listing, op cit.

27 ibid; *North Coolgardie Herald & Menzies Miner*, 13 Feb 1900, p. 2; Dutton, Geoffrey, *Australia's Last Explorer: Ernest Giles*, London, Faber, 1970, pp. 106-12; Menzies General Cemetery Register, op cit.

28 Menzies Cemetery online listing, op. cit.

29 Menzies Cemetery online listing, op. cit.; *North Coolgardie Herald & Menzies Miner*, 17-19 Nov 1903, p. 2.

35 *North Coolgardie Herald & Menzies Miner*, 19 Nov 1903, p. 2.

everyone 'by his simple unaffected courtesy, kindness of heart' and willingness to help his fellow man, including Minoor, to whom he had shown great consideration. Goolam Meer was 'interred in the division of the cemetery set aside for Afghans'.³⁶ Because the Afghan graves predate the surviving Cemetery Register and are not marked, or at least not legibly, it has not been possible to identify the location of this section of *Menzies Cemetery*.

Many graves at *Menzies Cemetery* have no associated family members, indicative of the transient nature of the goldfields. In some cases, though, family relationships can be noted, with the four stillborn Commons babies (1902, 1903, 1910 & 1911) being one example.³⁷

The grave markers in *Menzies Cemetery* are of two distinct types: stone and metal. The carving on the stone markers is still readable in many cases, despite considerable weathering and a number of broken stones, but the painted words on the metal markers have long since weathered away. Many graves have a numbered metal plate on a spike, which is embedded in the ground at the foot of the grave. Each of the four known sections of *Menzies Cemetery*, namely Anglican, Catholic, Methodist and Presbyterian, are numbered separately and the numbered graves can be identified from the Cemetery Register.

There was no stonemason at Menzies and headstones had to come from Kalgoorlie. That there are approximately 70 headstones in *Menzies Cemetery*, some elaborate, is testimony to the wealth of the goldfields. For those who wanted to provide a memorial for a grave but could not afford a headstone, the local blacksmiths were available to make up a marker. The metal markers in *Menzies Cemetery* comprise full size headstones, several 'cradle' style markers, which would likely mark the grave of an infant, and simple round or square metal 'vases' to hold a floral display.

From 1900 to at least 1910, there were four or five blacksmiths working at Menzies who would have been able to make up a grave marker. By 1920, there were only two blacksmiths in the town, and by 1925 only one, John Allen. Allen (also Allan) was originally in partnership with Amis Bradshaw as Allan & Bradshaw. They were first recorded at Menzies in 1900. Bradshaw's wife, Priscilla, died aged 29 in June 1900, from heart failure 'superventing upon enteric fever'. She left two young children. By 1904, Bradshaw was no longer entered in the Post Office Directory for Menzies and Allen was operating on his own. He was still working as a smith in 1942.³⁸ Allen was also the undertaker at Menzies from at least 1908 until 1930.³⁹

The last known recorded burial at *Menzies Cemetery* was in 1939.⁴⁰ Annual reports by the Government Inspector of Municipalities covering 1952-53 to 1960-61 confirmed that there were no transactions for *Menzies Cemetery* during that period, while correspondence on 14 October 1970 stated that the place was in a well-kept, clean condition. In 1969, many records were removed from the Shire office and taken to Perth, following which, the Shire Clerk was unable to provide any information for the several enquiries received each year regarding cemetery records from people tracing their family history. In 1980, the Shire set about

36 *ibid*; Menzies Cemetery online listing gives Meer's place of origin as Peshawar, India.

37 Menzies Cemetery online listing, *op. cit.*

38 *Wise's Post Office Directory, 1897-1944; North Coolgardie Herald & Menzies Miner*, 30 June 1900, p. 2.

39 Menzies General Cemetery Register, *op. cit.*

40 Menzies General Cemetery Register, *op. cit.*

tracing the location of the records that had been removed.⁴¹ One Cemetery Register was found and information on other burials was collected and made available for research.

Tourism to the Goldfields grew with the availability of comfortable four-wheel drive vehicles, and *Menzies Cemetery* became one of 25 interpretive historic sites on the Golden Quest Discovery Trail, which is a self-drive adventure through the West Australian goldfields from Coolgardie to Laverton.⁴²

In 2003, to enhance *Menzies Cemetery* as a site on the Golden Quest trail, the Shire of Menzies constructed metal entrance gates with flanking stone walls and erected a gazebo, which houses the lists of names of those interred. The entrance statement, including the design, involved Shire employees and residents. The gates were constructed in Kalgoorlie by Built By Geoff Fencing.⁴³

In 2004, Reserve 3348's purpose was changed to 'historical cemetery site'.⁴⁴

In 2007, *Menzies Cemetery* is no longer used for burials but is a well-maintained historical feature of the Menzies district.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Menzies Cemetery comprises graves with traditional headstones and distinctive metal grave markers, a metal entrance gate with stone walls either side, and a gazebo.

Located approximately 2 km north-west, on the outskirts, of the Menzies townsite, *Menzies Cemetery* is accessed via a winding gravel track off the Menzies to Lake Ballard road. The access track arrives at the entrance to the Cemetery where curved stone walls flank the double powder coated metal grille entry gates and surround. The remainder of the Cemetery is fenced with open wire fencing and timber posts. There is a gravelled parking area extending some 100 metres each side of the entry, parallel with the boundary fences. Inside the gates on the right (east) there is an interpretive plaque associated with the Golden Quest heritage trail.

The Cemetery site is flat red earth. It is predominantly natural environment that has been cleared in an approximately 100 metre wide expanse east and west parallel with the south boundary and directly north where a Gazebo is located half way along the thoroughfare. Remnant native bushland, mostly low profile, encroaches on the outer edges of the cleared area, and there are some larger eucalypts towards the front and in the Anglican quadrant. Signage at the Gazebo informs that the Cemetery comprises four quadrants of various denominations. A box at the Gazebo also contains copies of the Burial Register for the Cemetery. The Catholic quadrant is the southwest corner (left of entry) and north up the west side of the thoroughfare; the Anglican quadrant is the southeast corner (right of entry) and north up the east side of the thoroughfare; the Methodists area is to the northwest; and, the Presbyterian area to the northeast. It seems that although the Catholic and Anglican areas spread laterally to the west and east respectively, the Methodist and Presbyterian areas are confined to the edges of the north-south thoroughfare, at the north end (from the Gazebo north).

41 Menzies cemetery file, SROWA, WAS 1 CONS 5274 Item 53-825, 1953-1980.

42 Strickland, *Golden Quest*, op cit; website for Bloke 2002 - the journey, www.abc.net.au/bloke/journ.

43 Information provided by Shire of Menzies Customer Service Officer, Carol McAllen.

44 Landgate Reserve Enquiry, Reserve 3348.

The incomplete Cemetery Register together with an online listing of burials at *Menzies Cemetery* give a figure of 575 burials for the 45 years from 1895 to 1939. Some names are only recorded on one list during the overlap period so the number of burials could actually be slightly higher.

Many graves throughout the Cemetery are mere mounds of earth. There are also a considerable number of graves with cast iron marker numbers at the foot of the grave sites. There is no apparent reference to inform of the name associated with the number.

Each of the denominational quadrants have a number of traditional stone headstones, predominantly forming a cross. A variety of metal palisades and grave surrounds are also evident. There are also a variety of metal grave markers in a range of unique styles and detailing at *Menzies Cemetery*.

The stone walls and gate entry are of no heritage significance.

Catholic quadrant

Left of the entry (west) is the Catholic section of the cemetery. The majority of marked graves in this section have stone headstones and many have metal grave surrounds.

The graves sites are located in a few groupings that each have some parallel rows on an east-west alignment, with the graves aligned north-south with headstones at the north end.

Along the west side of the thoroughfare, north from the west section to the Gazebo, there are predominantly metal grave markers, and a number of grave identifiers with metal number markers. The grave sites are located in a row parallel with the north-south thoroughfare, with graves aligned east-west with head markers at the west end.

The identifiable headstones within the Catholic quadrant include: James Bell (1896), John Coffey (1921), four members of the Spalholtz family on one monument (Andy 1898, Raymond 1898, Henry 1917, Bernard 1918), Frederick Milton (1897), Alice O'Meagher (1897), Alexander Grant (1900), Frederick Flack (1899), Joseph Cock (1899), Vina Berryman (1898), Webster, Edward Merrett (1897), Florence Bingham (1897), Martin Epis, Eugene Cogan (1902), Dorothy Schmidt (1920) Phyllis Sawyer (1926), and a single headstone for Frank Keating & Patrick Stokes (1903).

There are several iron palisades in a variety of simple designs with loop tops. Metal head frames include several decorative cast iron grave head markers, and flat steel markers, none of which identify the respective grave.

Anglican quadrant

Right of the entry (east) is the Anglican section of the Cemetery. The majority of marked graves in this section have stone headstones and many have metal grave surrounds.

The graves sites are roughly aligned in three rows parallel on an east-west alignment, with the graves aligned north-south with headstones on the north end. Along the east side of the thoroughfare, north from the east section to the Gazebo, there are predominantly metal grave markers, and a number of grave identifiers with metal number markers. The gravesites are located in a row parallel with the north-south thoroughfare, with east-west graves with head markers at the east.

The identifiable headstones within the Anglican quadrant include: Gerald Acraman (1901), John Cunningham (1908), Samuel Duncan (1902), Priscilla Bradshaw (1900), Emma Schmidt (1901), Thomas Lysacht (1901), Thomas Cummins (1902), Albert Maggetti (1901), Harriet Maggetti (1904), Eardley Shields (1901) Julia O'Donoghue (1901), Dennis King (1900), Ralph Smith (1902), and Gladys Wells (1898).

The markers include that for the grave of John Cunningham, which consists of a vertical detailed boxed element with curled tin detailing, the remnants of a glazed frontage and the number '1908' embossed in tin. Another unidentified grave features a metal casket style element intricately detailed in flat tin floral and decorative details.

Presbyterian quadrant

Directly north of the entry and immediately north of the gazebo, on the east side is the Presbyterian section of the Cemetery. The majority of marked graves in this section have metal grave surrounds. The grave sites are located in a row parallel with the north-south thoroughfare, with graves aligned east-west with head markers at the east end.

The identifiable headstones within the Presbyterian quadrant include: Donald Macdonald (1903).

One of the unidentified grave markers is a round flat tin element on a cast iron stand.

Methodist quadrant

Directly north of the entry and immediately north of the Gazebo, on the west side is the Methodist section of the Cemetery. The majority of marked graves in this section have metal grave surrounds. The grave sites are located in a row parallel with the north-south thoroughfare, with graves aligned east-west with head markers at the west end.

The identifiable headstones within the Methodist quadrant include: Mervyn (1915) & Raymond Beldon(1914).

The unreadable metal grave markers in this area include a small flat metal rectangle with intricate flowers fashioned from metal, and a rectangular box with the front cover featuring a number of circular openings with filigree and detailed edging.

Gazebo

The Gazebo is a timber structural element with five sides supported by square timber posts, with an additional central post. The faceted roof is clad with painted corrugated iron. There are two timber benches in the Gazebo, and a hinge-topped box is fixed to the central post. The box contains a copy of the Burial Register.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

Studies of male deaths on the American frontier have shown that early deaths are correlated with a disproportionate ratio of men to women in a given community. This ratio is, in turn, correlated with the harshness of the environment and the

distance from a settled region.⁴⁵ In Western Australia in 1901, there were 158 men for every 100 women, compared to 101 for Victoria. In 1899-1903, Western Australia's mortality rate from violence was 207 per 100,000 males, more than double South Australia's 99 per 100,000.⁴⁶

During the peak gold rush years of the 1890s, 8% of accidental deaths in Western Australia were the result of thirst and sunstroke, 19% by drowning, 11% from burns, and 42% from complications from fractures. In early stages of a gold rush, accidents tended to be due to 'ignorance or carelessness, such as men falling down shafts, claims collapsing, and winding gear breaking'. Later stages of mining developments meant that deaths were a result of explosions, inadequate ventilation and flooding.⁴⁷

Pub culture was at the centre of social life in rural areas, and more so when males outnumbered females. Alcohol related deaths are difficult to determine, since excessive drinking can lead to violence, which would be recorded as the primary cause of death. Anecdotal evidence from individual deaths suggests that alcohol played a significant role in deaths from violence, and may be a large contributing factor in outback suicides.⁴⁸

There are eight goldfields cemeteries listed on the HCWA database with only *Original Coolgardie Pioneer Cemetery* and *New Coolgardie Pioneer Cemetery* entered in the Register, both with minimal documentation. *Church and Cemetery, Gwalla* represents an earlier copper and lead mining district near Northampton, covering the period between 1858 and 1868.⁴⁹

Original Coolgardie Pioneer Cemetery (1892-94) has 32 burials, and contains two intact headstones, some small stone markers, a memorial, and cast iron railings. *New Coolgardie Pioneer Cemetery* (1894) has headstones and cast iron railings. Commissioned in 1894, it has over 3,000 graves, more than a quarter of which were for a child under the age of five. A large number of the graves were unmarked from the start, with the identities of many unrecorded with the rush of prospectors. The graves of several Afghan camel drivers are located at the rear of the cemetery. Both Coolgardie cemeteries are entered in the Register of the National Estate.⁵⁰

The oldest pioneer cemetery in the State is the *East Perth Cemetery*, where there were between 9,000 and 10,000 burials before the cemetery was closed to burials in July 1899.⁵¹

Other pioneer cemeteries in Western Australia date from various periods depending on when the particular area was settled. St John's Pioneer Cemetery, York (1853) has approximately 69 burials recorded; *Greenough Walkaway Pioneer Cemeteries* (1857-1963), over 890 burials; Mt Brown Cemetery, York (1869-1990) over 400 burials; St Peter's Church Cemetery, Gilgering (1860) over 300 burials; St Paul's Church Cemetery, Edwards Crossing (1863-1972), 26

45 Jalland, Patricia, *Australian Ways of Death: A Social and Cultural History 1840-1918*, South Melbourne, Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 263.

46 *ibid*, pp. 264-65.

47 *ibid*, p. 279.

48 *ibid*, pp. 281-82.

49 HCWA database and assessment documentation.

50 HCWA database and assessment documentation.

51 Richards, Oline, *East Perth Cemetery Landscape Conservation Study*, June 1991, p. 1.

burials; *Carnarvon Pioneer Cemetery* (1884-1973) over 1,000 burials; *Green Hills Cemetery*, 25 kms from York on the Quairading Road (1894-1979), 29 burials.⁵²

Most of these cemeteries are not comparable with *Menzies Cemetery*, as Menzies population was large for a short period of time, and the consequent use of the cemetery was also brief. Cemeteries in the Goldfields generally cover a short period of use and span a concentrated number of years. The Airport Road Cemetery, Leonora was gazetted on 26 November 1897 with an area of ten acres. There were approximately 40 burials with three surviving headstones, one being of metal for a Catholic burial. The Airport Road Cemetery was abandoned in 1902 because the ground was 'like stone'. The current Leonora Cemetery (Reserve 7827) was gazetted on 21 March 1902.⁵³

There are two cemeteries at Malcolm (where there is no longer a town). The Old Malcolm Salt Lake Cemetery (Reserve 4083), located adjacent to Lake Raeside was gazetted on 15 October 1897 with an area of five acres. There were about 117 burials in this cemetery, with four surviving headstones. This site was superseded in 1910 by the establishment of the Malcolm Kookynie Road Cemetery (Reserve 13149), gazetted on 25 November 1910 with an area of five acres. There were fifteen burials at this cemetery. Four headstones survive representing five of the burials – one being for a double grave. The last burial in this Cemetery was in 1915. After this date, burials took place in the current Leonora Cemetery.⁵⁴

Croydon Cemetery, Queensland, is similar to Menzies, revealing 'a fairly high death rate in Croydon, especially among the young' and the use of three-dimensional 'vases' as grave markers in the absence of headstones. The material used in headstones is varied and includes polished granite, marble, sandstone, sheet metal, cast iron, concrete and tiles. There is also extensive use of soldered sheet metal grave markers. These were often three dimensional and filled with ceramic floral displays protected by glass panels. Queensland's Heritage Register notes that 'this practice appears to be confined to this cemetery'.⁵⁵

Broken Hill, New South Wales, contains metal grave monuments, produced by R. J. Hooper's Foundry in Railway Town and also Kitley & Lintern and H. Wormald. There are also larger monumental metal grave markers, one of which in the Catholic Section was produced by Tonkin of Blende Street, Broken Hill. The use of cast or wrought iron fencing was a result of the numerous iron foundries operating in Broken Hill in the early 20th century.⁵⁶

Menzies Cemetery is a fine example of a Goldfields cemetery, no longer used, with a significant number of surviving headstones and other grave markers. Of particular significance is the number of ornamental metal grave monuments, which is comparable with Croydon and Broken Hill cemeteries, but the scale of which otherwise appears to be unique in Western Australia.

52 Richardson, Jim, *A Look at Six Pioneer Cemeteries in Western Australia*, [J. A. Richardson, Maida Vale, 1993?]; *Greenough Pioneer Cemeteries*, Shire of Greenough, WA Conservation Plan, National Trust of Australia (WA), Perth, 1998.

53 Gray & Sauman, *Three pioneer cemeteries*, op cit.

54 Gray & Sauman, *Three pioneer cemeteries*, op cit.

55 <http://www.epa.qld.gov.au>, accessed 13 January 2009.

56 Croydon Cemetery heritage assessment, 602376, Julia Creek Road, Croydon Shire, Queensland, 4871; McDougall & Vines, Heritage & Conservation Consultants, *Draft Interpretation Strategy: Broken Hill Cemetery, Rakow Street, Broken Hill*, February 2007.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

No key references.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research is needed on Western Australian cemeteries in general, to determine the nature of the fabric of the remaining monuments, their condition, etc. Some of this has been published online by amateur genealogists, but a more systematic survey would be invaluable.

Research using the Menzies Miner (1896-1901), North Coolgardie Herald and Menzies Times (1896-1898), North Coolgardie Herald and Miners Daily News (1898-1904) and North Coolgardie Herald (1904-11) may provide further information on causes of death and inquest details for mine accidents.