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# Murtoa Avenue of Honour

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## Location

Murtoa, YARRIAMBIACK SHIRE

## Municipality

YARRIAMBIACK SHIRE

## Level of significance

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## Heritage Listing

Vic. War Heritage Inventory

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - February 1, 2008

Local

Hermes Number 126766

Property Number

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## Physical Description 1

Avenue.

## Historical Australian Themes

Remembering the fallen

## Usage/Former Usage

Commemoration

## Veterans Description for Public

Further research is required on the Murtoa Avenue of Honour regarding which conflict it commemorates.

At the 1902 Annual General Meeting of the Murtoa Progress Association it was reported that among the 533 trees planted in 1901 were 28 kurrajongs]. The kurrajongs were planted in Comyn Street and are looked after by the residents of that street who also donated the trees. A further 28 trees were planted the following year. A postcard postmarked 1903 shows the avenue of young trees in tree guards along Comyn Street.

The avenue of 49 Kurrajongs planted in 1901-02 is located along Comyn Street between the Wimmera Highway and McDonald Street. There are 28 trees along the north side and 21 trees along the south side. A tree measured on the north side, at the intersection of McDonald Street has a trunk circumference (1.4m above ground level) of 1.92m, height 11m and canopy spread 13m. The trunk circumference ranges in size from 1.09m to 1.92m.

Most of the trees are in good condition, exhibiting single trunks and spreading crowns. Some trees on the northern side in the western half have been subjected to powerline clearance. The construction of aerial bundle cables has now reduced the need for severe pruning, except to four trees at the western end where the powerlines are still mounted on cross-arms.

The Kurrajong avenue is historically significant as being the earliest known Kurrajong planting in Victoria, and being amongst the earliest surviving street tree plantings using an Australian native species.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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