
Buchan South Avenue of Honour



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Location

Buchan South, EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE

Municipality

EAST GIPPSLAND SHIRE

Level of significance

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Heritage Listing

Vic. War Heritage Inventory

Hermes Number 126915

Property Number

Physical Description 1

Avenue. Not signed.

Historical Australian Themes

Remembering the fallen

Usage/Formal Usage

Commemoration

Veterans Description for Public

The Buchan South Avenue of Honour commemorates the veterans of Buchan and district who fought in World War 1. It is located in the village of Buchan South about 8km south of Buchan. The Avenue consists of two rows of English Oaks (*Quercus Robur*) planted in 1920. It formed the entrance to the Buchan South Public School (No. 3256) which was located on the site between 1896 and 1990.

In 2006 the site was gazetted as a Public Purposes Reserve and a committee of management appointed. Restoration and development of the memorial commenced in the same year. On Anzac Day 2007 the Avenue was re-dedicated to all veterans who served Australia in times of conflict.

As early as June 1915, the Victorian Minister of Public Instruction issued in the Education Gazette 'a notice in regard to the perpetuation within school buildings or in school-grounds of the memory of the old pupils who had enlisted'. In the first instance this took the form of honour rolls. With the conclusion of the war came an increase in interest manifested in the erection of war memorials. In 1919 the Director of Education issued an appeal to school committees and teachers saying 'more should be done to record their (soldiers') service and sacrifice'.

Buchan South certainly heeded the call. It is recorded that the school raised no less than 149 pounds 13 shillings and six pence for the War Relief Fund, a very large sum given the size of the school. The school created a very fine marble honour roll and Avenue of Honour both of which remain to this day.

The Buchan South Avenue of Honour has local and regional significance. Many descendants of those commemorated in the avenue still reside in the area. Ceremonies on Anzac Day and Remembrance Day each year are well attended by both locals and those from further afield with connections with Buchan and District.

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. The Eurack Avenue of Honour is the earliest known avenue of honour to be planted in Victoria and dates from May 1916.

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/>