
Talbot Soldiers Memorial Park



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Location

Heales Street TALBOT, CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE

Municipality

CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE

Level of significance

-

Heritage Listing

Vic. War Heritage Inventory

Hermes Number 156886

Property Number

Veterans Description for Public

The Talbot Soldier's Memorial Park, on Heales Street, contains memorials dedicated to the Boer War (1899-1902), First World War (1914-18) and Second World War (1939-45). The park is one manifestation of the numerous forms of soldier's memorials which appeared in Australia following participation in wars. Avenues of honour or memorials were the main responses and the idea of a park as a memorial was not commonly adopted. However, in common with avenues of honour the park uses trees as a symbol of new life and growth. The park also forms an appropriately landscaped buffer between Camp Street and Heales Street and the more recent development in Landsdowne Street.

Originally the park was set aside as a market reserve. Thomas Couchman, the acting District Surveyor favoured a six and half acre site south of the present Presbyterian Church for the market but the council still pressed for the preferred site in Heales Street. This finally received support from Clement Hodgkinson, Assistant Commissioner of Lands and Survey who recommended the reservation of 2 acres 3 roods 16 perches on 29 April 1862. On 30th November 1866, the council moved that suitable buildings and yards be erected on the market reserve as soon as possible to enable the conduct of a weekly market of animals and produce, although these plans were shelved in June 1868. The construction of the Fire Brigade Engine House (q.v.) in 1873 encroached on the site and a year later the council gave A. Campbell permission to erect a blacksmith's shop on the market reserve.

In 1881 the council decided to install a pitched drain through the reserve along the watercourse which led from Ballarat Street to Back Creek. After the cessation of hostilities in the First World War, the idea of converting the old market reserve into a memorial park with an avenue of honour was raised. A local committee was formed and at a public meeting on 7 May 1919, the idea was adopted:

"It is expected that the cost of the planting of each tree will be about 10s 6d, and if you are desirous of donating a tree in memory of a soldier, or of joining with others in doing so, donations will be thankfully received by any of the officers. As time is limited for planting, we would be obliged by a reply for our next meeting on 4th June."

A.R. Outtrim M.P. officiated at the opening in mid 1919 and by April 1920 the Crown Lands and Survey Officer commented '[the site] has recently been enclosed with a substantial fence and avenues of trees planted ... with ornamental trees at a cost of 130 pounds as a memorial to soldiers of the district'. The market reservation was revoked by the state government on 13th July 1920 and the site re-reserved as a 'public park' in 1923. Regulations were gazetted in May 1924 which prohibited unauthorised musical performances, public betting, sport, lighting fires and spitting amongst other strictures. At this time the secretary of the committee of management wrote to the Secretary for Lands. 'There are no buildings at present on the reserve but it has been suggested that a small kiosk or summer house might be constructed some day when funds are available.' However, this wish did not apparently come to fruition.

This park comprises two distinct sections. The first, a small enclosure on Heales Street, is used as a picnic area and has concrete seats and tables. The second and far larger component comprises gently sloping ground with paved watercourse (presumably the one installed in 1881) and a fine collection of trees.

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/>