

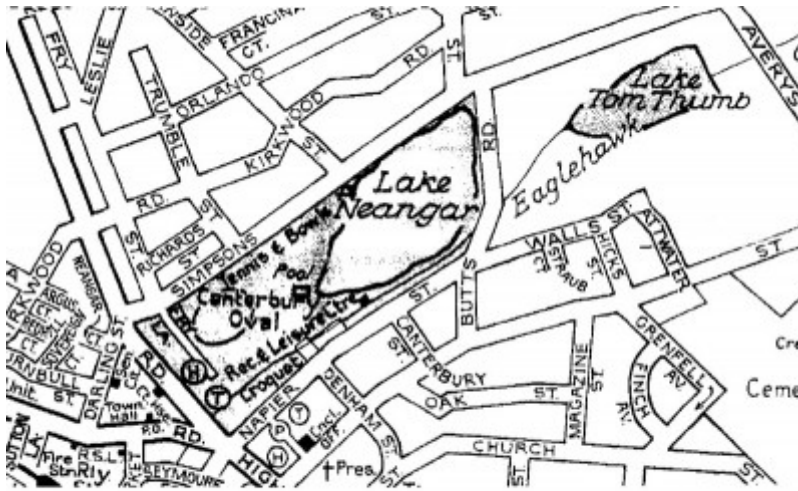
Canterbury Gardens Precinct



In the Park at Eaglehawk



On the Lake at Eaglehawk



Eaglehawk Public Gardens (Canterbury Park) and Lakes

Location

SIMPSON'S ROAD EAGLEHAWK, GREATER BENDIGO CITY

Municipality

GREATER BENDIGO CITY

Level of significance

Included in Heritage Overlay

Heritage Overlay Numbers

Heritage Listing

Greater Bendigo City

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

Canterbury Park and associated landscape including Lake Neangar and the public park now known as Lake Tom Thumb, dating from c.1860, temporarily reserved in 1870 and continuously maintained as a public garden and recreation reserve is of regional significance:

- as a reserve for significant exotic and native species, in particular the commemorative trees and shrubs;
- for its role in providing passive and active recreation so citizens of Bendigo, Eaglehawk and neighbouring areas;
- for its pivotal role in the social activities of the local community

(AHC Criteria A3, A4, B2, E1, G1)

Elements of significance

A number of elements are of significance and include:

Canterbury Gardens

- storm water channel running along eastern side of Canterbury Gardens under Butts Road and along the eastern side of Lakes Neangar and Tom Thumb. This is the storm water/sludge channel shown on the earliest maps of the reserve;
- memorial gates on High Street (1912);
- eagles at main entrance, High Street (date unknown but at least pre 1960s judging from photographs) remounted on new brick piers c 1990;
- reconstructed fountain, originally the gift of former mayor Mr Kirkwood, 1882;
- mature plantings including *Araucaria cunninghamii*, *Cedrus deodara*, *Quercus ? robur*, *Ulmus x hollandica* (numerous), *Pinus Caneriensis* (numerous) and *Eucalyptus cladocalyx* (numerous).

Lake Tom Thumb

- artificial lake created on public park reservation in 1981.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Greater Bendigo - Eaglehawk & Bendigo Heritage Study, Graeme Butler & Associates, 1993;
Other Names	Former Eaglehawk Public Gardens and Lakes,
Hermes Number	161914
Property Number	

Physical Description 1

The current park layout is not very altered from that shown in the 1896 plan although some of the detail has been removed. The main entrance on Sailor's Gully Road is as indicated although the nursery, conservatory and aviary have long since disappeared as has the rotunda. The former gates on Napier Street have been removed but an entrance remains.

The oval and grandstand has been retained in the western section of the site called the Canterbury Oval. The 'new bowling green' on Simpsons Road is still there today but the Bowling Club adjacent to the entrance to the park from Napier Street is now a croquet green and tennis courts. A photograph c 1920s titled "The New Pagoda in Canterbury Park, Eaglehawk" is mysteriously the only record of this shelter which is quite different to that described as the 'rotunda'. Its location is unknown. A sound shell was constructed in 1977 on the eastern side of the main path in the section of park near the entrance from High Street.

As one enters the park from High Street a major path winds through the formal park from an entrance at the side on High Street. The path winds around the recently reconstructed fountain (marked 'The gift of ex Mayor Kirkwood, 1882') and towards the central circular beds of dahlias. The paths in this section have been altered from the more sinuous ones shown in early aerial photographs of the site. From here the intensive exotic horticultural nature of the gardens are reduced to merge into the recreational focus of the reserve where there is a public swimming pool, Lake Neangar and various sporting facilities and public facilities. In recent years, large areas of the reserve have been lost to providing asphalt surfaced carparking adjacent to the sporting facilities. An access road has been constructed off Simpsons Road, south of Burnside Street.

One of the most marked changes is the alteration of the land north of Butts Road to form what is now known as Lake Tom Thumb. This section of land is marked on the 1896 plan as 'Public Park Extension' with the appended handwritten comment 'Virgin State' indicating it was probably uncleared bush. Lake Tom Thumb was constructed by J.W & P.M Brook in the period March to May, 1981.

The Canterbury Park is notable for its collection and display of dahlias with the annual Dahlia Festival a distinctive local horticultural event. The only other public display of a collection of dahlia cultivars in the state is at the Portland Botanic Gardens. The gardens are also notable for the collection of trees and shrubs planted by various celebrities dating from 1975 as part of the Eaglehawk Dahlia and Arts Festivals including Don Dunstan (1984) and RJ Hamer (1975).

Apart from the water based activities, active recreational sports were part of the earliest developments in the park from the 1870s onwards. Clubs formed included cricket, football, athletics, rowing, bowling and croquet. Popular sports also included cycling and greyhound racing.

Ian Wild notes that a cycling track ran around the football ground but when cycling waned it was removed to make the playing ground larger. Greyhound racing also became very popular particularly on Saturday evenings.

Planting and landscaping on the east side of Lake Neangar along Napier Street was carried out as part of Victoria's sesquicentenary.

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/>