



*Sunshine railway disaster*

# Maggie and Annie Tucker

## *Victims of the Sunshine rail disaster*

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Late on the evening of Monday 20 April 1908 the unthinkable happened at Sunshine Railway Station: an Easter special train from Bendigo crashed into the rear of a train from Ballarat. It was Easter Monday. Over eleven hundred people were packed into the trains, returning from visiting friends and family. Almost all the victims (44 dead, 431 injured) were on board the Ballarat train, which was just leaving the station when the crash occurred.

The scene was chaotic. It was dark and the rescuers had no lights or equipment. Several carriages caught alight. Relief trains, medical and fire fighting crews did not arrive until after midnight, over an hour after the crash. In the meantime, a temporary morgue had been set up at Spencer Street Station where relatives and friends began the grizzly task of identifying their loved ones. Among those searching were Sidney Tucker of Dandenong and his two sons.

Tucker's wife, fifty year old Margaret, and their eighteen year old daughter Annie had been on board the Ballarat train. They were returning from an Easter visit to friends at Scarsdale and Ballarat. An early report had not listed Annie amongst the dead, so Tucker and his sons frantically searched the improvised morgue at Spencer Street then the hospital. Finally, they found her the next morning in the City Morgue. They had not recognised her the night before because blood had turned her usually black hair red. Both she and her mother had been killed instantly.

The funeral of Margaret and Annie Tucker left Brunswick, the home suburb of Margaret's mother, at 4pm on Wednesday 22 April 1908. A large crowd attended. They were buried in the Methodist section of Coburg Cemetery. Twenty-six years later, Sidney Tucker was buried in the same grave.

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Cemeteries Trust**  
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The above information is based on research conducted in 2011-2012 and is presented in good faith by the Friends of Coburg Cemetery. Should family members wish to upgrade existing monuments within this cemetery please email [enquiries@gmct.com.au](mailto:enquiries@gmct.com.au)