

Family History - Cemetery Records

Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) holds a selection of records about cemeteries, including some records created by cemetery trusts. As well as cemetery trusts, who are responsible for the administration of individual cemeteries, a range of government agencies have had a role in the regulation of cemeteries in Victoria. Prior to the proclamation of the Cemeteries Statute 1864, the administration of cemeteries had been governed by an 1850 New South Wales Act for the establishment and regulation by Trustees of a General Cemetery near the City of Melbourne, and by the provisions of an 1854 Act for the Establishment and Management of Cemeteries in the Colony of Victoria.

The main agencies involved in the regulation of cemeteries since 1864 include; the Public Works Department ([VA 669](#)), the Department of Crown Lands and Survey ([VA 538](#)) the Chief Secretary's Department ([VA 475](#)), the Department of Public Health ([VA 2904](#)) and successive health departments, and local councils ([VRG 12](#)).

Records created by local government about cemeteries can often be found in Town Clerk or inwards correspondence series, and also in committee minutes. Contents of correspondence series vary but can contain correspondence, photographs, newspaper clippings and plans of proposed cemeteries. For more information about the history of the administration of cemeteries in Victoria and related records see the entries for [VF 28 Cemeteries](#) and [VRG 5 Cemeteries](#) on PROV's online catalogue.

Locating a Burial

Most of the records about cemeteries held by PROV relate to the general administration of cemeteries. If the records about the burial you are researching are not held by PROV you may find the following resources of assistance.

Cemetery Trusts

Most of the records about individual cemeteries and burials in Victoria are held by the cemetery trust responsible for its administration. For a comprehensive list of cemetery trusts in Victoria see the website of the Crematoria and Cemeteries Program: www.health.vic.gov.au/cemeteries.

Indexes to Burials

A range of indexes to registers and headstones can be accessed at genealogical societies and libraries. Here is a select list of Victorian online cemetery indexes and Australian cemetery gateways:

Altona Memorial Park (Williamstown and Altona) www.mempark.com.au

Bendigo Cemetery Trust (Bendigo District) www.bencemtrust.com.au

Fawkner Memorial Park (Fawkner and Coburg) www.fcmp.com.au

Geelong Cemetery Trust (Geelong District) www.gct.net.au

The Necropolis (Springvale and St Kilda) www.necropolis.com.au

Cyndi's List (Australia and overseas) www.cyndislist.com/austnz.htm

Cora Web (Australia) www.coraweb.com.au/cemetaus.htm

Australian Cemeteries www.australiancemeteries.com

Main Agencies and Series at PROV relating to Cemeteries

[VA 2663](#) Greta Public Cemetery Trust

[VPRS 7213](#) Cash Books 1870 - 1984

[VPRS 7214](#) Minute Book 1869 - 1985

[VPRS 7116](#) Register of Burials 1871 - 1984

[VPRS 7115](#) Index to Burials c.1970

[VA 4789 Oakleigh General Cemetery Trust](#)

[VPRS 15810](#) Register of Burials 1880 - 1959

[VA 871 Oakleigh II \(Borough 1891-1924\) Town \(1924-1927\) City \(1927-1994\)](#)

[VPRS 15809](#) Registrar's Certificates for Undertakers 1929 - 1942

[VA 4779 Melbourne Old Cemetery Trust](#)

[VPRS 9581](#) Outward Letter Books – Old Melbourne Cemetery 1877 - 1910

[VPRS 15670](#) Minute and Letter Book 1864 - 1885

[VA 4780 Melbourne General Cemetery \(New\) Trust](#)

[VPRS 16047](#) Agenda Papers for Meetings 1851 - 1979

[VPRS 16048](#) Minutes of Meetings c.1852 - 1979

[VPRS 16049](#) Inward Correspondence 1849 - ?1906

[VPRS 16051](#) Outward Correspondence c.1851 - ?1920

[VPRS 16052](#) General Subject Correspondence Files, Manager and Secretary ?1904 - ?1971

[VPRS 16050](#) Monthly Statistics on Burials for Males and Females c.1881 - ?1911

[VPRS 9587](#) Numerical List of Exhumations - Old Melbourne Cemetery 1920 - 1922

[VPRS 9588](#) Notes on Exhumations - Old Melbourne Cemetery 1920 - 1922

[VA 511 Melbourne City Council](#)

[VPRS 9583](#) Alphabetical Register of Burials - Old Melbourne Cemetery 1866 - 1920 and [VPRS 9582](#) Plans of Old Melbourne Cemetery 1873. These two series are available on microfiche in PROV Reading Rooms and some libraries and genealogical societies.

[VPRS 9589](#) Index of Names on Gravestones - Old Melbourne Cemetery 1917 - 1920

[VPRS 9591](#) Record of Significant Graves - Old Melbourne Cemetery 1917 - 1922

[VPRS 9592](#) Inscriptions on Gravestones - Old Melbourne Cemetery 1917 - 1920

[VPRS 9590](#) Exhumations from Old Melbourne Cemetery reinterred at Melbourne and Fawkner 1920-1922

[VA 3010 Walhalla Cemetery Trust](#)

[VPRS 8077](#) Cemetery Trust Records, Miscellaneous stray records 1899-1982

[VA 684 Warringal Cemetery Trust \(Heidelberg\)](#)

[VPRS 3783](#) Public grave receipt books (used between 1890 and 1969)

[VA 4383 Welchman's Reef Cemetery Trust](#)

[VPRS 12916](#) Register of Burials (1870 – 1952) and Minutes of Meetings (1889 - 1937)

[VA 863 Pentridge Prison](#)

[VPRS 4834](#) Melbourne General Cemetery Grave Register (prisoner burials). 1894 - 1924 This series includes names and burial dates of female prisoners, and occasional entries about stillborn children.

[VA 475 Chief Secretary](#)

Chief Secretary's correspondence contains correspondence from cemetery trusts to the Chief Secretary. To begin your research, consult the indexes ([VPRS 1411](#)) and registers ([VPRS 3994](#)) of correspondence to and from the Chief Secretary. Please note, the Chief Secretary was responsible for cemetery trusts for the period 1888 - 1890 only.

[VA 865 Department of the Treasurer](#)

[VPRS 12164](#) Register of Loans to Cemeteries 1909 - 1927

The applications for loans can be located in [VPRS 1207](#) Treasurers Inward Registered Correspondence.

[VA 669 Public Works Department](#)

[VPRS 987](#) Cemeteries, Outward Letter Book 1865 - 1873

[VA 538](#) Department of Crown Lands and Survey

[VPRS 242](#) Crown Reserves Correspondence. To access this Series consult the Crown Lands and Survey microfiche index (VPRS 7312) by parish/town order to identify records of Crown land set aside for cemetery reserves. The index, available in PROV Reading Rooms, will indicate the cemetery, and details of the, unit, file number and date range of the file to be ordered from VPRS 242.

[VPRS 81](#) Land Grants for Special Purposes 1843 - 1875

[VPRS 14146](#) Register of Grants for Special Purposes (Grants without Purchase) 1842 - 1890 leads to

[VPRS 14148](#) Special Deeds Books 1851 - 1960

[VPRS 8168](#) Historic Plan Collection

Plans show the layout of cemeteries, including land forms, boundaries and the denominational divisions of general cemeteries (1841 - 1861). To access the plans consult [VPRS 8164](#) Register of Historic Plan Collection (1802 - 1963) available on microfiche in PROV Reading Rooms. The index states the plan, number, location, date and surveyor's name. The Historic Plan Collection can be viewed on microfiche [VPRS 15899](#) in the Victorian Archives Centre Reading Room.

Accessing the Records

Records can be ordered through PROV's online catalogue for viewing at the Victorian Archives Centre Reading Room. See [PROVguide 20 Searching for Records Online](#) and [PROVguide 21 Ordering Records](#) for information.

For detailed descriptions of the records mentioned in this *PROVguide* click on the hyperlinked entries if you are looking at this *PROVguide* online. You can also do a **Find by Number** search, available from the Searching menu, on PROV's online catalogue using the VRG, VA, or VPRS number provided.

Records on Microfiche

PROV holds a range of records related to cemeteries on microfiche and microfilm. These records are available in PROV reading rooms and do not have to be ordered. See PROV's guides to [Microfilm, Microfiche and Online Resources at the Victorian Archives Centre](#), and [Microfilm, Microfiche and Online Resources at the Ballarat Archives Centre](#) for more information.

Further Information

For more information about researching cemeteries in Victoria the following publication may be of assistance:

Sagazio, Celestina (ed.), 1992, *Cemeteries: Our Heritage*, National Trust of Australia (Victoria), Melbourne.