Introduction

Literature Review:

This is not the first academic work on the development and redevelopment of burial places. There exists a significant body of literature on the topic. This is not even the first study of on this issue in a Tasmanian context, but it is the first to focus in detail on a program of burial place redevelopment that occurred during a roughly thirty year period (1931-1963) in Launceston. This thesis then attempts to place that program in a wider historical context. It also endeavours to address the questions that naturally arise when attempting to account for how different the outcomes of the approaches to change were in Launceston, a provincial city, than those that took place in Hobart and in other capital cities across Australia.

*The Victorian Celebration of Death* by James Curl Stevens provides a thorough insight into the origins and development of practices surrounding death (funerals, ornamentation, burial, mourning) through the Victorian era.\(^1\) This has direct implications for both the British and the Australian colonial experience. *Changing Ways of Death in Twentieth-Century Australia: War, Medicine and the Funeral Business* by Pat Jalland, is a natural extension of the previous work as it charts how cultural attitudes to death changed in Australia following the trauma of World War One.\(^2\) A proper understanding of attitudes to death and how they change over time is crucial to accounting for the different forms burial places were to adopt in Australia over two hundred years or more, but also the nature and extent of the redevelopments being studied.

There have been a number of academic articles on the subject of the physical dimension of burial through history and the evolution of ideas that influenced it over time. *The Landscape of the English Cemetery* an article by Brent Elliott, provides some insight into the way in which the physical form of cemeteries came to reflect the desires and views of the living more than the deceased. These were reflected in both the layout and plantings of individual cemeteries throughout and beyond the Victorian

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1 J. S. Curl, *The Victorian Celebration of Death* (Gloucestershire, 2000).
period.³ Chris McConville in his paper ‘Cities of the dead: the new cemeteries of the nineteenth-century’, covers many of the same ideas but most importantly discusses the importance to the living of the symbolism often inherent in the masonry work found in cemeteries of the Victorian age.⁴ On a national level a crucial retrospective article on the importance of cemetery conservation in Australia is ‘Cemeteries Their Value, Abuse and Conservation’ by James Semple Kerr, published in 1983. In his article, Kerr points to the great cultural shift in the recognition of cemeteries as “open air museums”. He looks in detail at how cemeteries can be seen to be irreplaceable and unique stores for various types of cultural heritage.⁵ The importance of rural cemeteries as reserves for endangered native plants in Australia has been the subject of research by the Department of Environment, Sport and Territories.⁶ The Practice Note prepared by the Tasmanian Heritage Council, relating to the regulation of listed cemeteries in the state, is an indication of the current official philosophy relating to approaching cemeteries as example of cultural heritage.⁷

Specific historical studies of individual burial places across Australia have provided excellent comparative material. Historian Grace Karskens has contributed greatly to the development of an understanding of the role, meaning and treatment of burial places in Sydney. She has published two seminal articles on the subject of old Sydney burial grounds and their redevelopment in 1998 and 2003. In the first article she examines the history of the old Sydney burial ground in depth by placing the cultural habits relating to death and burial of those who occupied it in the context of the early colonial and pre-Victorian period. The history of this ancestor of all Australian burial places set a precedent for the erasure of cemeteries in many urban locations that, to an extent, continued into modern times. The differences and similarities between the redevelopment of the earliest colonial burial ground provides a revealing contrast to the Launceston experience as it helps to show how attitudes to burial places have

changed as cultural attitudes to death have altered over time. 8 The latter article has in one sense provided a model for this thesis in that it examines the history and redevelopment of a select set of early burial grounds in a particular city and contrasts and compares their treatment. This article shows how attitudes to both death and burial places have continued to evolve over time, making some stark comparisons between four redevelopments that took place over a period of 150 years. 9

There have been a number of studies of mainland burial places outside of Sydney, which also provides comparative material. The Old Melbourne Cemetery 1837-1922 by Marjorie Morgan provides some striking similarities and differences with the history of urban burial places in Launceston and their respective redevelopments. 10 The End of the Road by Robert Nichol is an exhaustive study of the history of burial places in South Australia. This work demonstrates that the history of burial can reveal a great deal about the nature of the societies they serve. Significantly for this thesis, the histories of the burial places it details also reveal multiple examples of a natural “life-cycle”, involving a rise and a decline that was by such factors as urban pressure, emotional attachment and profitability. 11 Lisa Murray, in her article published in 2003, was the first to fully articulate this idea. 12

In his article ‘God’s Neglected Acres’ published in 1993, Stefan Petrow pondered the reasons for the neglect and subsequent widespread redevelopment of burial grounds in Hobart. He proposed numerous theories: it was a conscious effort to banish thoughts of death, prevent disease, the relocation of relatives prevented any support, the urban locations were by their nature not fitting resting places for the dead, bereavement periods were becoming shorter, there was a desire to erase the convict stain. He also noted that little was known about the company which established the first general

10 M. Morgan, The Old Melbourne Cemetery 1837-1922 (Oakleigh 1982).
11 R. Nichol, The End of the Road (St. Leonards, 1994).
A wide range of resources and data have been utilised in the compilation of this thesis. In order to contribute to the literature on this topic, it has been necessary to adopt a wide approach. While traditional sources have still been incorporated (drawing upon the aforementioned historiography and more traditional types of primary materials), some alternative primary materials have been used, which serve to give some insight into the concerns of the living at the time. It is hoped that these personal accounts can help to further broaden the conclusions that can be made. In this methodological discussion the primary source material had been divided into three categories for selective analysis: written sources (specifically letters and newspaper articles), oral accounts and visual material (photographic images and maps).

The official, written sources that have been utilised have been quite abundant and diverse. Parliamentary Statute volumes and the Journals and Papers of State Parliament have provided the legal framework to place my study in legislative context. The minutes and Committee Reports of the Launceston City Council have also been integral to reconstructing and interpreting the events being studied. The current regulations for dealing with the conservation of burial places established by the Tasmanian Heritage Council have provided an insight into the current official philosophy. It is the extensive utilisation of letters to the Launceston City Council on the subject of the urban burial places of Launceston, which may require some analysis. Leon Edel once referred to the use of letters in history as a “socially acceptable form of eavesdropping”. While the content in a few instances reflect strongly held emotions, all were written to a public authority to express an opinion on a public issue, in the knowledge (or at least hope) that they would be widely read by more persons than just the Town Clerk. Some of the letters used in the thesis were

actually read out to a public assembly at the Town Hall in Launceston in 1944, endowing them with an even stronger public nature. In a methodological sense, the central concern should be that these primary documents should be allowed to speak for themselves without editorial interference of any kind. Every attempt has been made to portray the sentiments accurately and in their proper context – even when sustained communication over a number of years made some sentiments directly contradictory. They have been central to uncovering attitudes and have also contributed to the goal of creating a wider study.

Newspaper sources have also neatly complemented the official records and letters, though it can be argued that their use should be closely monitored for inaccuracy and bias. Lucy Maynard Salmon conducted the definitive analysis of this historical source across two volumes published in 1923. In the first volume, Salmon’s contention was that historians related to newspapers not as a source of news, but rather as “a picture of contemporary life”. The second investigated the restrictions placed on the press by external authority, specifically by governments. The debate on their validity has continued over the decades. William Taft noted that, while they were useful sources, they possessed a diverse nature and they needed to be approached with scepticism. He also argued that news columns were best used in conjunction with other material. More recently in 1993, Jerry W. Knudson lamented the fact that too many historians relate to newspapers as sources of factual information. He argued that they were far from infallible and that they should more accurately be considered as more of a reflection of what was thought to be happening at a particular time. He explains this

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15 These included those of F. F. Fairthorne, The Reverend A. E. West and E. Button. Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (QVM) LCC3 6/3.8 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1944-1945), minutes of meeting held at Town Hall, 16 February 1944, Town Clerk to various interested parties, 24 February 1944. Examiner 17 February 1944.

16 This is evident in the correspondence of the Button siblings, who in 1933 encourage the Council to follow the example of St. David’s Park in regards to the General Cemetery, and then contradict themselves in 1944 by stating that they did not care for that sort of treatment, noting they would rather see the site converted into a recreation area. This is a strong reminder that I am dealing with the legacy of human beings who are often inconsistent or at least change markedly over time. QVM LCC3 6/3.5 Cemeteries - Charles Street (1930-1933), E. Button to Town Clerk, 26 August 1933 and QVM LCC3 6/3.8 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1944-1945), E. Button to Town Clerk, 14 February 1944.


18 W. H. Taft, Newspapers as Tools for Historians (Columbia, 1970), p. 48. Taft actually states in regards to this “historical tool” that “…Not only must news columns be studied, but also the comments, letters, essays, pictures, advertisements, and the miscellany.”

as largely being due to the “sins of commission and omission”. It is necessary then to 
recognise then that editorial bias and censorship can both potentially compromise the 
integrity of this particular source type. In relation to the treatment of the issue of 
cemetery redevelopment by the local press between 1930 and 1960, it is clear that 
they were largely in favour of the trend and saw it as both necessary and 
progressive. 20 There was almost no attention given at all to the views of those who 
objected, probably because they were a very small minority rather than any active 
program of omission. The emphasis placed on letters to the Launceston Council 
during the period has been partly an attempt to uncover those lost voices.

Another source of lost voices come from the interviews, which have been conducted 
with select individuals, all connected in some way to specific Tasmanian cemeteries. 
As with many histories, oral history has been used in this instance to complement 
conventional sources of evidence. 21 The most apparent benefit is that it allows 
historians to document the history of the “common people” and therefore create a 
“history from below”. Ronald J. Grele has observed that historians are increasingly 
using the oral history interview, although many still have doubts about the reliability 
and value of the practice. 22 Despite the fact that before the invention of the alphabet 
all history was oral, it is often ranked below written records. He identifies three 
central criticisms: standards of interviewing, preparation standards and historical 
methodology. The last criticism is the most concerning and attention must be first 
drawn to the fact that interviewees are not statistically representative of the population 
but chosen because they “typify historical processes”. Furthermore it must be 
recognised that due to the active role of the historian-interviewer, the resultant 
“conversational narrative” is inherently a joint activity. This factor has been fully 
braced and, although a prepared set of approved questions were available, 
interviews were allowed to take on a more organic structure, encouraging the

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20 A typical example can be found in a story on the terra forming of Ockerby Gardens in *Mercury*, 17 
February 1949. The redevelopment is described as “…an example of how a desolate and uncared-for 
cemetery… can be made into one of the city’s beauty spots…”. The aforementioned story published in 
the same on the 7 February 1951, goes on to applaud the transformation of the general cemetery, which 
is described as an “eyesore”, and welcomes the imminent demise of the Presbyterian and Catholic 
burial grounds. It is said a debt is owed to the new Superintendent of Reserves Mr. F. R. Dowse who in 
5 short years in the role had made “remarkable progress”.

21 L. Douglas and P. Spearritt, “Talking History: The Use of Oral Sources” in G. Osbourne and W. F. 

22 R. J. Grele, ‘Movement Without Aim: Methodological and Theoretical Problems in Oral History’ in 
interviewees to explore tangential issues they felt were important. This often led to the discovery of some further unsuspected insight that an interviewee was able to offer which had not been anticipated.

The problems associated with the reliability of memory and methodological responses to counter the issue, must also be recognised. During the interview process there was an attempt to boost the “evidentiary value” of the testimony collected. Sherna Berger Gluck argues that while long-term memory can be more reliable than short-term memory, it can be beneficial to immerse the subject in materials that help the retrieval process, such as maps, photos and various written documents. The possibility of bias is a more challenging methodological factor and I can only acknowledge this as a potential factor, although I have correlated all testimony with available evidence and would argue that the presence of the aforementioned subject materials during the interview has possibly discouraged exaggeration and the less likely scenario of fabrication.

Photography and maps have proved to be another valuable source of information as much of the fabric of the burial sites has been destroyed. Images obtained from the State Library and Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery collections, statute books, as well as the local newspapers, have offered an insight into the spatial and visual nature of the burial grounds. Like oral history, photography as a primary source in historical research has not gained full professional recognition. As Carolyn Keyes Adenaike has noted “photographs constitute a largely untapped, new, and immensely valuable body of evidence for a wide variety of historical phenomena”. Most of these images are part of collections and they have for the best part been previously

23 For a list of the standard interview questionnaire used during the interviews please see Appendix C.
26 C. K. Adenaike, ‘Contextualizing and Decontextualizing African Historical Photographs’, History in Africa, Vol. 23 (1996), pp. 430-432. According to Adenaike, in attempting to match photographic evidence to other types of evidence (including written and oral account), the resulting disparity between what was supposed to have been and what actually was, can be illuminating.
placed in an historical context. However, some have been donated from private collections and they are disconnected from the historical narrative. As Adenaike explains, “no amount of supplementary research, interpretation or description can replace lost contextual data”. A further methodological consideration is the process of interpreting visual images. Beatrix Heintze has observed there is a constant danger of over interpretation. Some concern stems from her awareness that, the simple act of photography itself (due to the interaction between photographer and subject) have influenced the nature of the image.

In the process of compiling the thesis the relevant sites discussed both in Hobart and Launceston, have been inspected and photographed in order to study their current condition. This also includes the successor to the Launceston urban burial places, Carr Villa Memorial Park, which acted as a depository for all those headstones removed by residents or deemed of sufficient heritage value to be preserved. The use of all these images facilitates a better understanding of the neglected state of these sites before redevelopment, and reinforces the idea that as objects associated with death, they were not well documented and largely ignored. The comparative photographic studies located in Appendix B, also emphasise the current aesthetic desolation of the selected sites.

Maps as a source of historical evidence also present some methodological problems – most connected with their accuracy – however this study is concerned with analysing motives and results in relation to wider historical trends and small disparities in the measurement of space will not infringe on its accuracy. The maps utilised in this

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27 For instance, the image of the Catholic Cemetery in the background of a photo of renovation work to Howick Street included later in the thesis, belongs to a collection of images taken by the City Engineer’s Department of Launceston (QVM: 1990:P:1200, see p. 31) and its context can be fully understood. Alternatively, the origin of the image of Michael Fahey’s grave in the same cemetery is unclear and may have been part of a family collection. While it gives us unique insight into the former nature of the site, its context is uncertain and difficult to date and infer wider meaning (LSC/PP B&W Neg. 281/00. From the Collections of the Launceston Library, State Library of Tasmania, see p. 50).

thesis were all devised after the British Government introduced more stringent standards for cartography.\(^{29}\)

The central aim of this thesis then, is to document and explain the near total erasure of the urban burial places in Launceston. While much of the initial reading focused on cultural attitudes to death and remembrance, it soon became clear that the topic was as much about the needs and desires of the living as it was about the dead. Attitudes to modernity, urbaneness, urban planning and recreation were all instrumental in determining the shape of the redevelopment process. In order to recognise that fact, it has been necessary to review three core issues: the historical development of burial places as a concept, the evolution of cultural attitudes to death and the dead in Australian society and the specific approaches to the redevelopment of burial places in Launceston. The thesis will first attempt to place the Launceston experience within an imperial, national and state context. Then the general fate of the Launceston urban burial places will be examined in close detail with particular emphasis on the Charles Street general cemetery, the High Street Presbyterian burial ground and the Connaught Crescent, Roman Catholic burial ground, which were all converted under special legislative powers granted by State Parliament to the Launceston City Council.

\(^{29}\) J. B. Harley, ‘The Evaluation of Early Map: Towards a Methodology’, *Imago Mundi*, Vol. 22 (1968), pp. 62-74. Harley argues the case for the recognition of the importance of maps as historical sources. He also importantly notes (p. 73) that early in the nineteenth-century the newly formed map making agencies in Britain (the Hydrographic Office and the Ordnance Survey) were established “to cast a critical eye over their own work”. The Ordnance Survey established a specific committee in 1807 to assess published charts. This date predates the settlement of Launceston. The earliest map consulted for this thesis was one prepared in 1823.
Chapter One: Burial Places in Imperial, National and Regional Context

Figure 1. Intramural Burials in a London Churchyard. From The Lady’s Newspaper, 16 September 1845, p. 145. Reproduced in The Victorian Celebration of Death by J. S. Curl (Gloucestershire, 2000), p. 114.

Britain and The Changing Concept of the Burial Places:

Until the nineteenth-century, burials in Britain occurred in Church graveyards and after the 1660s, in denominational burial grounds. It was common to disinter as burial grounds filled up and transfer the bones to ossuaries. As the population increased, however, the span of time between burial and disinterment began to shorten.¹ During the seventeenth-century a thousand cartloads of bones were removed from the charnel house at St. Paul’s Cathedral. The conservative ethic of laissez-faire also contributed to a lack of planning in relation to the disposal of the dead. In a world where people were expected to fend for themselves to a very great degree, it seemed natural that self-regulation could apply to an industry that today, is heavily regulated.²

Gradual reform was the response to many of the social problems related to the overcrowding of cemeteries during the first half of the nineteenth-century. Following a parliamentary select committee report in 1840, member of the House of Commons W. A. Mackinnon was able to persuade the House to commission a specific report on the dangers of burial grounds within urban areas. One of the leading campaigners for reform on the issue of public health, Edwin Chadwick, was charged with the responsibility for producing this report. In the course of his duties he sought input from a number of sources including ministers, undertakers, doctors and such organizations as benefit societies and burial clubs. Chadwick made two key recommendations: bring burial places under municipal control and standardise funeral ceremonies and rites. His reports lead to the formation of the National Society for the Abolition of Burials in Towns in 1845.3

Chadwick’s report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Classes of Great Britain and a Supplementary Report in the Results of a Special Inquiry into the Practice of Interment in Towns, all submitted to parliament in 1843, identified several main concerns. One of the issues highlighted by the reports was the belief that the gases and liquids produced by decomposing bodies in badly drained and overcrowded burial grounds were a cause of contamination. Chadwick subsequently published On the Laying Out, Planning and Managing of Cemeteries, and the Improvements of Church Yards in 1843. Chadwick drew attention to the need for consideration to be given to drainage and design. Chadwick’s relevant conclusions were that, existing Church burial grounds should be closed and that experts lay out natural cemeteries.4 As McConville put it:

Members of parliament were sickened by descriptions of corpses loaded sixteen or twenty deep into the one plot, of coffins poking through the surface after heavy rains, of putrid liquid flowing from graveyards out onto pavements and even into nearby housing.5

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3 ibid., pp. 37, 109-110.
4 ibid., pp. 86-87, 119, 121-122.
5 McConville, op. cit., p. 41.
The passage of the *Burial Acts* in 1850 and 1852 made it compulsory for local authorities to establish extramural burial places. Parliament therefore established burial boards to facilitate and regulate the new public and private cemeteries.6

John Claudius Loudon, a landscape designer, published in 1843, what was considered at the time to be the definitive work on the topic, *Principles of Landscape Gardening applied to Public Cemeteries*. Loudon wanted cemeteries to be both efficient and beautiful. It was Loudon’s belief that the cemetery landscape should take on a unique character that was instantly recognisable, beautiful and easily facilitated burials. His vision dominated the Victorian age, and insisted that the cemetery should be a work of art. Plantings were largely coniferous and the grounds were typically terraced. Brent Elliott has identified that by the 1870s there was some reaction against this movement for art over nature. The reliance on conifers came to be seen as excessively gloomy and there was a decided attempt to apply broader gardening trends and institute more deciduous plantings. From the 1870s plantings became brighter. As cemeteries developed into the twentieth-century there was an additional trend towards purple foliage, often demonstrated in the plantings of copper beech and purple plum. This change in landscape theory to the establishment of a ‘garden cemetery’ was also epitomised by the adoption of such ornamental features as flowerbeds, rock gardens and movable decorative flower tubs. There was also a tendency for the sake of practicality to return to more regular grid-patterns, although the new crematoria rose gardens retained the geometric spiral patterns. Furthermore, crematorium gardens often utilised elements of traditional Japanese gardens (model lakes, small bridges, weeping willows and marginal planting).7

At the same time, the surviving intramural burial grounds of London were starting to be seen as an eyesore and a collective barrier to progress. In 1882, the Metropolitan Public Garden Association (founded by Reginald Brabazon, 12th Earl of Meath) was established in London with the aim to increase the amount of open space in the city. By 1895, 320 burial places had been converted to gardens. This Association openly courted public opinion and its main philosophical foundations were that there was no

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7 ibid., pp. 13-14.
value in funerary art and architecture, clearing burial grounds was necessary in order to increase the amount of recreational space and that the poor should not be encouraged to spend money on commemorating their dead.  

Australia was to follow the British developmental path in relation to burial places, although the earliest colonial examples embodied the same planning flaws as their contemporary counterparts in the mother country. As in Britain, during the Victorian age they became much more dynamic in relation to their design and the services they provided. Australia was to inherit the denominational tensions as well. In a new country, many minority denominations insisted on establishing their own burial places, which were formally freed from domination by the established Anglican Church following the passage of The Church Act of 1836.

Australia - Attitudes to Death and Burial Places:

During the Georgian period, at the time of initial European colonisation of the Australian continent, death was an accepted, ever-present feature of life. This is reflected in the surviving gravestones of the period, which where carved in simple shapes and adorned with the minimum amount of ornamentation. This may in part be attributed to what Grace Karskens has called a traditional “stoicism”, which was necessary for people in an age before universal medical coverage and effective medical technologies were evident. Karskens quotes an early colonial epitaph as an example of this kind of passive and pragmatic acceptance of fate:

Do not regret your loss tho’ it will be felt severe, and when you pass this place do not come crying here.

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8 Curl. *op. cit.*, pp. 177-179.
11 *ibid.*, p. 55.
13 G. Karskens, ‘Death was in his Face: Dying, Burial and Remembrance in Early Sydney’, *Labour History*, 74 (May 1998), p. 35.
Traditionally grave markers were more about leaving a testament to the achievements, rank and pedigree of an individual than marking the exact position of remains. Due in part to the economic changes of the late eighteenth-century, which in turn created an increase in individualism, there was a boom in the purchase of burial monuments. Grave markers in this period often took the form of flat slabs, often only marked with initials and basic dates. The primary purpose was to seal the plot and discourage disturbance as the burial places had begun to be seen as family property in perpetuity.14

Georgian fatalism gradually gave way to Victorian melancholy. This “cult of melancholy” had its roots in the rise of the graveyard poets who sentimentalised death. These included Robert Blair, Thomas Gray and Edward Young. This trend was to extend right up through the Edwardian era and was sometimes best manifested in the memorial notices placed in newspapers:

It was hard to part with my dear son,
For sudden was the call,
But God knows best when we should go,
For death comes to us all.

The face I loved is now laid low,
The fond true heart is still,
The hand that once I clasped in mine
Now lies in death cold chill.15

This new sentimentality was also reflected in the gothic revival architecture of the age.16

Society gradually became more secular from the 1880s on. Part of this was due to the scientific and intellectual movements of the age. The bloodshed of World War One marked the beginning of what has been called a culture of “death denial” in Australian

15 Wellington Times, 4 October 1901.
society. It has been estimated that every second family in Australia was lost a family member as a result of that war. That added to the fact that 25,000 of the 60,000 dead have no known graves at all contributed to a further upsurge in secularism amongst the working classes and the adoption of a new social model for dealing with death. A quick, silent, understated death became more socially acceptable manner of passing and public expressions of grief, even in the form of inscriptions on headstones, became far more restrained. This cultural change then had huge implications for the treatment of burial places and the remains of the dead.

The fate of the first permanent European instigated burial ground in Australia, the original Sydney burial ground and its successor on Devonshire Street, reflected radically changing attitudes to death and the dead between 1860 and 1900. Grace Karskens has observed that in early Sydney, death was ever-present. The dead remained at home for a time and wakes were common. Inscriptions, in typical Georgian style, tended to focus on rank and achievements rather than matters of salvation. The burial ground, positioned on George Street at the outskirts of old Sydney Town, was the principal graveyard of the colony from 1793 to 1820. The Sydney Municipal Council was incorporated in 1842 and required a suitable location to build a town hall. The neglected site of the old Sydney burial ground seemed ideal as it was well positioned in relation to the markets and the wharves at Darling Harbour. The first attempt to redevelop the site failed. There were two basic types of objection: religious and health orientated. Myths associated with ‘miasmas’ that had resulted from removal of medieval burial grounds in England, contributed to popular health concerns.

The debate resurfaced a couple of decades later. There was much less opposition to the redevelopment and the Council was granted the land by an act of parliament in 1869. By that time the cemetery had become so neglected it was a magnet for anti-

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17 Jalland, op. cit., pp. 4, 41-42. Jalland has further noted that the cultural pendulum has begun to swing back the opposite way in the past 30 years. A greater acceptance of death has lead to a wider understanding of it as a natural part of life. People are once more allowed to die at home surrounded by relatives and friends. Most importantly it is once more acceptable to publicly grieve and express that grief. Jalland in part attributes this to the qualities of a new generation which by and large had grown up free from the constraints of war. See pp. 277, 365 for more details.


social behaviour at night and grazing animals during the day. Although the dominant
cultural view of the age was that cemeteries should be preserved and respected, Lisa
Murray has concluded that, paradoxically, even to the overtly sentimental Victorians,
this did not seem to apply to ground holding the long-dead, who were beyond living
memory. Any practical concerns were limited to health matters relating to the process
of collective exhumation itself. Karskens has pointed out that the main concern
seemed to be that the dead had no place in a modern city:

…they were part of an increasingly irrelevant past, a hindrance to
development, they depressed property values and should be moved out. If this was done carefully and ‘respectfully’ there could be no objection.

More than two thousand remains were removed from the cemetery in April 1869 in a
single day. Ironically, despite the breadth of the social standing of many of the
inhabitants, all the bones were jumbled together and placed in a mass grave at
Rookwood Cemetery where a memorial was placed over the spot. No names were
listed. Karskens has claimed that the remains of the earliest inhabitants of the colony
were extracted and disposed of as if they were “a sort of by-product of city progress”. It
was hardly a respectful or complete process as bones, vaults and coffins have
continued to be discovered in the general area until the present day.

Karskens contrasts the old Sydney burial ground debacle with the Devonshire Street
cemetery redevelopment three decades later. The burial ground had been opened in
1820 as a replacement for the old burial ground. It was segregated of course, along
denominational lines into several units. After the opening of the Rookwood Necropolis, in the late 1860s, burials were restricted. The Devonshire Street burial
ground was officially closed in 1888. There were 30,000 bodies interred in the
cemetery and around 4,000 monuments. The valuable land was identified as being an
ideal location for a much needed railway terminus that otherwise might have had to
have been located at the Northern end of Hyde Park. The mass exhumations were

21 Karskens, ‘Raising the dead: attitudes to European human remains in the Sydney region c. 1840-
carried out in 1901 by the Public Works Department of New South Wales and were conducted in a much more respectful and efficient manner in this instance as each body and its memorial were kept together and transported on a specially designed train-line to new sites at Rookwood and other extramural cemeteries. Karskens explains that the change in attitude can be attributed to the rise in the concept of the ‘colonial pioneer’ and an associated appreciation for their monuments as worthwhile material heritage. Founding members of the Royal Australian Historical Society transcribed the headstones and photographed the cemetery prior to the redevelopment. There was no debate on spiritual or health matters relating to the process as one might expect with an increasingly secular and individualistic population.22

Tasmania’s Approaches to the Redevelopment of Burial Places:

Throughout the later half of the nineteenth-century, the urban burial grounds of Hobart began to fall further into disrepair. A special Commission was formed in 1898 to investigate the state of Hobart’s closed burial grounds and the findings were published in 1902. Only the Jewish Burial Ground in Harrington Street was found by the City Health Officer to be in an acceptable condition.23 In the remaining burial grounds, the tombs often smelt as tombs began to disintegrate and the ground in places was so hard that it had been difficult to dig graves to the appropriate depth. The Local Government Act of 1906 provided municipalities with the ability to take over cemetery trusts. The Roman Catholic Church’s burial ground in Barrack Street was the first to be redeveloped voluntarily into a training college and tennis court in 1910.24 This seemed to set a precedent for similar redevelopments and soon the Hobart City Council decided that something needed to be done about the principal eyesore in the heart of the city: St. David’s burial ground.

St. David’s Burial Ground and its treatment by the Hobart Corporation was to prove a model for future burial ground redevelopments in both a practical and legislative

22 ibid., p. 43.
After some protracted negotiations, the Hobart Corporation paid 12,000 pounds compensation to the Anglican Diocesan Council. The passage of the *St. David’s Burial Ground Vesting and Improvement Act* formally transferred control to the Council and prescribed provisions under which remains could be transferred to other cemeteries. The site was then redeveloped into one of the earliest pioneer parks in 1926. Then Superintendent of Reserves for Hobart, L. J. Lipscombe, was responsible for the redevelopment. Around eight hundred and ninety headstones were removed and either placed around the walls of the park or removed to other cemeteries. By 1943, the Launceston City Council were considering ways of dealing with the neglected Charles Street Cemetery and a letter was addressed to the Hobart Council asking for a report on the steps taken that “resulted in such a delightful Park being established.”

An article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* on Saturday, 15 June 1929, hailed the St. David’s redevelopment as being a great asset to the city. Clearly this type of treatment was seen as a fitting way to balance the desires of the living to enjoy pleasant recreational areas in a major city while at the same time ‘preserving’ the material heritage in the form of the tombs and headstones as both a record and a tourist attraction. While there is recognition of the fact that these memorials are a unique record of and testimony to the lives of pioneers, there was no acknowledgment that the crude redevelopment had erased the complete heritage value of the site, destroying much of the fabric and original layout of the cemetery, which today is recognised as having only ‘representative significance’. Interestingly, there was a follow up article in the same newspaper twenty-six years later on the topic of St. David’s Park but the emphasis had changed slightly. While it is still hailed as a fitting way to pay tribute to the early pioneers of Australia’s second oldest city, emphasis was being placed on the importance of the inscriptions as the true source of cultural heritage.

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25 *ibid.*, pp. 155-156. Petrow’s article provides a detailed legislative history reflecting the development of colonial and state government policy towards cemeteries throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.


27 QVM LCC3 6/3.7 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1941-1943), Town Clerk to Town Clerk HCC, 16 November 1943 and Town Clerk HCC to Town Clerk, 23 November 1943.


30 *Sydney Morning Herald*, 8 January 1955.
There were some contemporary dissenting voices during the redevelopment phase in Hobart. One of the main causes was the curious fact that redevelopment of burial grounds in Hobart tended to be more openly intrusive than in Launceston. In April 1940, Treasurer Dwyer-Gray called for action to preserve the monument to William Race Allison, former member of both houses of state parliament and other historic figures. He was “disgusted to find that tombstones in the Albuera Street cemetery had been used as paving stones” and that “it was an act of desecration”. It was the memorials of the elite that were his priority. Concern with such myopic preservation did not reflect any understanding of the wider heritage value of such sites.

The pioneer park model proved to be an enduring one but one that in the long term became equated with cultural vandalism. Disturbance of monuments often leads to irreparable damage. Within a few decades the headstones arranged around the boundaries of St. David’s Park became overgrown and in many instances eroded to

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31 The same year that St. David’s cemetery was redeveloped, 1926, the St. George’s burial ground was turned over to the crown and redeveloped as a playground for the Alburea Street School. There was no attempt to memorialise any of those interred in that cemetery at the time. An archaeological report prepared by Austral Archaeology Pty Ltd in February 2006 indicated how little concern was paid to the preservation of the fabric of the cemetery during the redevelopment. Both a retaining wall and the nearby access ramp were found to be composed of headstones and grave borders. Most disturbing of all were the fragments of skeletal material found throughout the site indicating that they had belonged to graves, which had obviously been violated when the ground was first levelled around 1928 and many truckloads of soil were taken away. D. Parham et. al., Albuera Street Primary School (Wall Record, Salvage of Monuments, Investigation of Burials) prepared by Austral Archaeology Pty. Ltd. February 2006, pp. 3-16. As a schoolboy, historical researcher, genealogist and Curator of the Penitentiary Chapel Museum, Brian Rieusset remembers the accidental uncovering of numerous graves during the extensions to the science block at St. Virgil’s College by a bulldozer. The college was built on the site of the old Barrack Street Catholic Cemetery. The intrusive nature of redevelopment in Hobart has continued into this century. More bodies were disturbed during further work on the site a few years ago. Interview with Brian Rieusset, Hobart, 25 June 2006. Fifty-one graves were disturbed at the Harrigton Street Jewish cemetery site during the construction of new structures in 2002. They were relocated to the Jewish section of Cornelian Bay Cemetery. See P. Elias, ‘Records of Jewish Deaths in Tasmania 1804-1954. A Consolidated List’ in P. and E. Elias (eds.), A Few from Afar: Jewish Lives in Tasmania from 1804 (Hobart, 2003), p. 224.

32 Mercury, 24 April 1940.

33 This sentiment is epitomised by Robert Nichol’s study of the Lobethal Lutheran cemetery, South Australia, the headstones were removed from their sites and placed back to back in cement. Not only were important inscriptions at the bottom of the stones lost, but also the culturally significant rear inscriptions – which were a unique feature of German memorials. R. Nichol, The End of the Road (St. Leonards, 1994), pp. 381, 365. It is further reinforced by Grace Karskens’ case study of the treatment of the Point Frederick cemetery (near Gosford, central coast). While seventy-five of the most impressive headstones were retained, the rest were simply bulldozed. Although a memorial was raised listing the names of the four hundred and ninety seven known burials in the cemetery, the headstones were arranged into “modern subdivision patterns” which totally obliterated the original character of the cemetery. (Karskens, ‘Raising the dead: attitudes to European human remains in the Sydney region c. 1840-2000’, Historic Environment, V. 17, No. 1 (2003), pp. 44-45).
the point that the inscriptions were no longer legible. In addition to this, military headstones had been removed to Anglesea Barracks. The removal of the monuments from their original positions had not only separated them from the remains of the people whose lives they were a testimony, but had also erased any “representative significance” the site possessed. In 1970, the Superintendent of Reserves M. Tokarczyk attempted to prevent further damage to the headstones by grouping them together (presumably to prevent extensive weathering) and bedding them down on an incline. It could be argued then that not only has the park come to epitomise the problems associated with the realisation of the pioneer park model, it also symbolises the minimalist conservation standards evident in Australian society in the early twentieth-century.

Examining the historical development of the concept of burial places, changes in attitudes to them and death, and approaches to their redevelopment in London, Sydney and Hobart, allows the Launceston experience to be placed in a wider context. However, the redevelopment process in Launceston was not to embrace the emerging pioneer park movement and instead embarked on its own unique course.

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34 Brandenburg, op. cit., p. 13.
35 Tasmanian Heritage Council, op. cit., p. 3. Practice Note No. 11, Section A: The Significance of Cemeteries, Section 4: “Cemeteries, as with all cultural places, have evolved in their design since European settlement and reflect the contemporary developments in architectural and landscape style.”
36 Brandenburg, op. cit., p. 13.
Chapter Two: The Changing Concept of the Burial Place in Launceston

Figure 2. View of High Street, Presbyterian Cemetery, Launceston, 1922. Taken by J. W. King.¹ QVM:1991:P:1613. From the Collections of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston.

Now that the context for the program of redevelopment of the urban burial places in early twentieth-century Australian society has been established, it is necessary to apply the same methodology to the program of redevelopment that occurred in Launceston between 1931 and 1963. The history of burial places in Launceston reflects a wider trend: in a gradual and uneven manner, general cemeteries replaced the original denominational burial grounds. Like London, Sydney and Hobart, Launceston also had a long history of redeveloping burial places. Furthermore the

¹Examiner, 8 February 1922, reported the aerial survey of Launceston by J. W. King and Captain F. G. Huxley.
phase of redevelopment in Launceston was to coincide with the peak of a distinctly apathetic period in relation to the preservation of burial places as cultural heritage.  

Estimates vary as to how many burial places were established within the city of Launceston. Local researcher Patricia O’Toole, in 1985, placed the figure at as many as nineteen. These sites covered every major denomination evident in colonial Launceston society. The original burial ground in Launceston was, of course, Anglican. It was first situated on Windmill Hill at the corner of York and High Streets at least by 1811. The site, marked on the 1826 map of Launceston as the “old burying ground”, may have been closed when the area assigned was exhausted. There were probably around one hundred and sixty Anglican interments at the site. The site for the new burying ground, situated on a bank, then at the outskirts of the town, looking out over the North Esk was selected at the latest by 1826. While the original site was cleared and houses built there, there were seemingly no exhumations. Local historian, Karl von Stieglitz, observed in 1950 that the oldest gravestone in the Anglican burial ground was that belonging to John Tildesley, who it recorded passed away on 26 June 1811 at the tender age of ten. Its age suggested that it had been transferred to the new site when the old burial ground was cleared. An entry in the interment book against this person’s name stated “to tombstone only” – suggesting that the body was not

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2 For a full breakdown on the historical stages of attitudes and treatment to burial places please refer to Appendix D.

3 *Examiner*, 9 January 1985, p. 3.

4 1826 Map of Launceston held at Local Studies Library, State Library of Tasmania, Launceston. Also noted in M. Sargent, *Cemeteries*, August 2005, information pamphlet, State Library of Tasmania, Launceston Library, p. 2. The original burial ground may have closed as early as 1823 as a map of Launceston prepared that year by G. W. Evans has the seven acres in front of the planned Anglican Church marked as a proposed burial ground. It is not known if this area was ever used for that purpose but it later became known as Prince’s Square.


6 There is mounting evidence to suggest that this took place as early as 1823. While Henry Button in *Flotsam and Jetsam* (Launceston, 1909), p. 63, suggests that the transition occurred sometime around 1826, a reference to the consecration in *Hobart Town Gazette*, 8 March 1823, makes it is clear that the Reverend Samuel Marsden was consecrating new burial grounds in the colony that February. If he consecrated the new burying ground in Launceston, this would have made it both available and desirable for burials from that time. Researcher Ben Ashman in his unpublished project on the Cypress Street Cemetery, points to another reference to the consecration of the burial ground in 1823 in *Cornwall Chronicle* on the 9 April 1842 and using the burial records of St. John’s Church, estimates that George Reibey and Thomas Hodgetts, who were both buried by Reverend Youl on 30 October 1823, and George Reynolds on 31 October 1823, were probably among the very first people to be interred in the burial ground.
transferred as well.\(^7\) There are rumours that bodies were disturbed when the public pool was built a little further up Windmill Hill sometime between 1950 and 1952.\(^8\)

From the very beginnings of settlement in Tasmania, burial places were not sacrosanct places and the fabric of the sites was recycled. Mary Lavinia Whitfield, in a letter published in the *Examiner* during 1968 concerning her childhood residence, 6 York Street, revealed that it had been one of the houses built on the site. Though originally built for a Colonel Hutchins of the 40\(^{th}\) Regiment, the house had been in the possession of her family for a number of generations. She reported that her Mother could remember stacked monuments in the area and that there was a general belief that the cellar of the property had originally been a vault. Furthermore, her Father had told her that the hearth in the breakfast room on the ground floor was a gravestone.\(^9\)

The burial ground then came to be situated on what was called Goderich Street, but was later fittingly renamed Cypress Street, to avoid confusion with a street of the same name in Invermay.\(^10\) This site, like others established in colonial times, was merely a disposal area for bodies and offered none of the facilities that were to be provided by cemeteries in the near future. As the Charles Street General Cemetery was being established, the lack of planning in the design of the Anglican burial ground was increasingly evident. There was a damning report on the state of the road featured in the *Examiner* during 1843.\(^11\) While the area chosen was perhaps not adequately drained, it could obviously have been considered charming as at the time the site at Cypress Street closed, it was being described as a beauty spot.\(^12\)

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\(^9\) *Examiner*, 24 October 1968.

\(^10\) In the ancient world the cypress was a symbol of death. J. Morris and D. Morris, *History in Our Streets: The Origins of Launceston Street Names* (Launceston, 1988), p. 213.

\(^11\) *Examiner*, 23 September 1843. The article relates: “Not one shovelful of either metal or gravel has ever been bestowed for the purpose of abating this intolerable nuisance, so that foot mourners…generally reach the grave in a state much easier to conceive than describe.” There is a reference to hearse bogging incident at the time of “Mr. Reiby’s interment” which if it refers to George Reibey who died in 1823, may have been included in order to reinforce the long-term nature of the drainage problem. It may also then, serve to confirm Ben Ashman’s theory concerning the earlier inception of the burial ground, although Ashman also recognised that the Reibeys had a large family plot there.

\(^12\) *Weekly Courier*, 12 December 1928. Also, amateur historian, W. H. MacFarlane noted the large number of prominent citizens buried there including the Reverend John Youl, Richard Dry and Thomas Henty. See Rev. W. H. McFarlane, ‘History in Tombstones’, undated typescript, *General Cemeteries File*, QVM.
Established perhaps as early as the Goderich Street burial ground, the Connaught Crescent burial ground serviced the Roman Catholics of the local population. There were complaints that the local Roman Catholic burial site was already being neglected in 1840. An area of the burial ground had been converted into garden and sown with beans, peas, cabbages and the like. When a Launceston Council Sub-committee charged with investigating the possibility of taking over the disused burial grounds in the city wrote to the Church of the Apostles in early 1924 asking for particulars, The Most Reverend William Barry wrote back explaining the lack of deed and estimating nil income and considerable expense to put the cemetery in order. Both Barry and The Most Reverend Patrick Delaney, the Archbishop of Hobart were the official trustees of the burial ground.

The Presbyterian burial ground, situated on High Street, was granted to the Church around 1835. The Council wrote to the St. Andrews Church concerning the burial ground in 1924. The honorary secretary of the trustee board, J. Connor, informed the Council that a caretaker was paid small amounts from private sources to maintain certain graves. In addition to this the board were aware of a number of small investments, the interest from which were devoted to the upkeep of certain plots.

There was a steady succession of small Jewish burial grounds in Launceston throughout the nineteenth-century. The earliest Jewish burial ground was situated below the Anglican one near the intersection of York and High Streets. Henry Button also referred to that being exchanged for a small piece of ground on the corner of High and Balfour Streets. A Jewish hotel-keeper, Henry Davis subsequently granted

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13 As the early colonial administration did not actually service Churches with actual deeds for their grants it proved impossible by 1947 for either the trustees, the Launceston Council or the Lands Department to determine exactly when it had been established. Unlike the Presbyterian burial ground, there is no date listed in the 1947 vesting and improvement legislation, Tasmania, Parliament, *Tasmanian Statutes 1826-1959 Vol. 7*(Hobart, 1960), p. 166.

14 *Launceston Courier*, 14 December 1840, p. 2.

15 Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (QVM) Launceston City Council Correspondence Files (Cemeteries General 1924-1925) 6/1.2, Rev. William Barry to Town Clerk, 3 April 1924.


17 QVM Launceston City Council Correspondence Files (Cemeteries General 1924-1925) 6/1.2, J. Connor to Town Clerk, 25 August 1924.

18 Button, *Flotsam and Jetsam* (Launceston, 1909), p. 63. The High and Balfour Street Jewish burial ground is referred to in an article about the demolition of 56 High Street on p. 11 of *Examiner*, 8 May
some land to the local Jewish community on 24 October 1836.\(^\text{19}\) A survey of Launceston completed in 1878 lists an area off York Street and near the end of Eleanor Street as the “Jews’ burial place”.\(^\text{20}\) The last exclusive Jewish burial ground to be established in Launceston was purchased by the Jewish community in the mid-forties.\(^\text{21}\) The Jewish population rapidly declined over the following decades. Burials continued in the South Street burial ground for a number of decades. The last known burial there was that of Maurice Nathan, who died on the 16 September 1893.\(^\text{22}\) The burial ground became understandably quite neglected in the absence of a viable Jewish community.\(^\text{23}\) Its condition was a blatant contrast to the well-maintained Jewish burial ground in central Hobart, which had the benefit of servicing a thriving Jewish community.\(^\text{24}\) By the 1920s the land around the surviving twenty headstones was serving as a grazing ground for the horses and fowls of the neighbourhood. Following the appointment of Harry Joseph and Sim Crawcour, as new trustees of the synagogue and burial ground in 1925, the burial ground was cleaned up and the

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\textit{20} Photocopy of Title and contents of a Survey Diagram 9/12 Launceston dated 14 November 1878, General Cemeteries File, QVM and Illustrated Tasmanian Mail, 9 March 1927.

\textit{21} Cornwall Chronicle, 6 July 1844, reported that the Jewish community would need to apply for land to use as a cemetery as the current site was private property. This is cited in Goldman and Cohen, ‘The History of the Launceston Hebrew Congregation: Part 1’ in P. and E. Elias (eds.), \texti{A Few from Afar: Jewish Lives in Tasmania from 1804} (Hobart, 2003), p. 54.

\textit{22} There were never more than one hundred and fifty Jews living in Launceston, their numbers peaking around 1856-1857. The synagogue was closed in 1871 as there were insufficient males living in the city to form an eligible community. Rabbi L. M. Goldman, ‘The History of the Launceston Hebrew Congregation: Part 2’ in P. and E. Elias (eds.), \textit{A Few from Afar: Jewish Lives in Tasmania from 1804} (Hobart, 2003), p. 111, 114.

\textit{23} There were a few individuals who ensured the survival of the synagogue and the burial ground, at least until redevelopment, particularly Miss Elizabeth Fall and Mrs. Catherine Hartnoll of Evandale. After the death of the trustees, Miss Fall was authorised by the Sydney congregation to collect all rents to organise ongoing maintenance. Goldman, ‘The History of the Launceston Hebrew Congregation: Part 2’ in P. and E. Elias (eds.), \textit{A Few from Afar: Jewish Lives in Tasmania from 1804} (Hobart, 2003), pp. 112-113.

\textit{24} The parliamentary report on the closed cemeteries of Hobart ordered by the Legislative Council, “Closed Cemeteries, Hobart”, Paper No. 65, published in \textit{Journal and Printed Papers of the Parliament of Tasmania, Vol. XLVII 1902} (Hobart 1903), p. 3 contains this description of the Harrington Street cemetery: “…the Jew’s Cemetery, Patrick-street…. stood out in marked contrast to those already visited by the Committee. No effort has been spared to keep ever sacred the memories of those buried there. Tombstones are well cared for, and the ground presents the appearance of a beautiful soft green lawn…”
synagogue leased to the Masonic Lodge in 1927. The new trustees received financial help from Miss Elizabeth Fall and Mrs. Catherine Hartnoll of Evandale, ensuring that the area was properly fenced and the headstones attended to.\(^{25}\) Over the next decade the burial ground declined further as only twelve headstones remained in 1938.\(^{26}\)

One of the most obscure independent burial places in Launceston was the Quaker Cemetery situated in Pedder Street. John Lawson may have originally donated the land to the Society of Friends otherwise known as the Quakers.\(^{27}\) According to their faith, their cemeteries tend to have fewer monuments, and those that exist follow a uniform, basic pattern.\(^{28}\) The Pedder Street burial ground serviced a small community of Quakers. Active monthly meetings were held between 4 January 1844 and 30 July 1851, until declining numbers made the community unviable.\(^{29}\) The last known burial, Susannah Wellington, was interred there in April 1851.\(^{30}\) The suggested period of use and the restricted size of the community would account for the humble description of the cemetery in Pedder Street given by the Superintendent of Reserves in January 1931. Evaluating possible uses the land might serve in a report to the Council, he noted that it had been used for several graves at the Southern end only and only one possessed a headstone. The property consisted of an area that occupied a frontage of seventy-eight feet by a depth of one hundred and fifty feet. A local pensioner had

\(^{25}\) Noted in *Illustrated Tasmanian Mail*, 9 March 1927. They were the daughters of Thomas Fall and Elizabeth Russell. Eliza originally belonged to the Jewish community of Sheerness, Kent, England. Both daughters lived at Evandale and were buried with their Mother in the Jewish section of Cornelian Bay Cemetery. The increasing neglect over the next two decades may have been due to the deaths of the Fall sisters (Elizabeth in 1931 and Catherine in 1935). See H. Fixel, J. Acton and A. Elias, ‘The Fall Family of Evandale’ in P. and E. Elias (eds.), *A Few from Afar: Jewish Lives in Tasmania from 1804* (Hobart, 2003), pp. 117-123.

\(^{26}\) *Examiner*, 8 February 2004.

\(^{27}\) Photocopy of a Map No. 4, Launceston, indicating the location of the Quaker Cemetery in Pedder Street, held in *General Cemeteries File*, Local Studies Library, State Library of Tasmania, Launceston.

\(^{28}\) G. Stock, ‘Quaker burial: doctrine and practice’ in M. Cox (ed.) *Grave Concerns: Death and Burial in England 1700-1850* (York, 1998), pp. 129-138 and *The Religious Society of Friends, Quaker Faith and Practice* (Warwick, 1995), sections 15.17-15.20. According to their beliefs before 1850 it was forbidden to mark any graves. The burial ground would not have been consecrated as all land is considered ‘holy ground’. Numbers are used to represent the months as the names of some months are considered to be pagan in origin. They do not feel it is necessary to orientate graves in an East-West pattern and their funerals follow no rigid format. They find the use of public cemeteries acceptable and as they are a denomination of an open nature, it is not unusual to find people who are not Quakers buried in their burial grounds.


\(^{30}\) *Cornwall Chronicle*, 23 April 1851.
been using the Northern end as a garden indicating that it had not been in use for some time.31

Launceston’s first true general cemetery was opened on 29 July 1841. The Reverend John West and his associates of the Independent Congregational Church purchased the land. As dissenters they had recognised a need for such a facility, which challenged the monopolistic practices of the established church that could claim the right to bury people in their burial grounds and charge a fee. The establishment of the general cemetery meant that burial could be achieved solely for the price of a plot. The cemetery demonstrated changing ideas in relation to the nature of burial places: the cemetery layout incorporated a mixture of colonial grids and geometric spiral patterns that were in vogue in the Victorian age.32

During the early phase of settlement in Launceston, burial had been an integrated process.33 By the time the prisoners’ burial ground was established in 1845, the policy of segregation had been adopted. This burial ground was in use for almost thirty years and it is believed that more than three hundred convicts were buried there.34 Being such a late development in the history of transportation, this segregation may have been influenced by the rising anti-transportation movement: a growing free settler, or at least freeborn population, who were not keen to share their burial places with the convict class. Therefore, while the “stigma of convictism” cannot be clearly

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31 Report by Superintendent of Reserves to Launceston City Council, 14 January 1931, General Cemeteries File, QVM.
32 As documented by a map of the cemetery held in the Charles Street Cemetery File at the Local Studies Library, State Library of Tasmania, Launceston.
33 Both Lynette Ross in her Honours thesis Death and Burial at Port Arthur and Richard Tuffin in his paper ‘Buried in Common, unmarked graves up to six bodies deep’: Burying the myth of convict death and burial, have continued to contest the minimal and gothic burial myths associated with convict burials. Ross has argued that even in a place of secondary punishment prisoners were given the benefit of a simple coffin, service and individual burial plot. L. Ross, Death and Burial at Port Arthur 1830-1877, unpublished Honours Thesis, UTAS, 1995, pp. 35-37. Tuffin has completed an extensive study of convict burial in Van Diemen’s Land and found that a high percentage took place in pre-existing parish cemeteries and the cost was either met by the state or their individual masters. R. Tuffin ‘Buried in common, unmarked graves up to six bodies deep’: Burying the myth of convict death and burial, lecture delivered at the Asylum, Port Arthur Historic Site, 24 May 2006.
34 In 1845 the Controller General of Convicts in Launceston, Matthew Forster, applied to Governor Wilmot to establish a prisoners’ burial ground. At first a site along Patterson Plains Road (now Elphin Road) and between Lawrence Street and Lyttleton Streets was considered and approved. It is not understood why, but this area was not used and instead a more remote place was found on Peel Street for the purpose the following year. I. Mead, ‘Launceston’s Convict Burial Ground’, October 1958, typescript, Convict Cemetery File, Launceston Local Studies Library.
demonstrated as having had an influence in the redevelopment process, it did influence the structure of burial places.\footnote{35 Henry Reynolds refers to the rise of the transportation movement and describes the enduring nature of the stigma of convictism in his article, ‘That Hated Stain’. He explains that although the effects of the transportation system lingered for many generations after the convict system officially ceased in Tasmania, in the popular imagination during the nineteenth-century there was a belief in the existence of a criminal class to which all convicts belonged. Reynolds argued in his article that many emancipists suffered from various forms of discrimination. Their skills were often undervalued and they were often unemployed. The colonial government treated them with suspicion, monitoring them closely, keeping the majority disenfranchised and further controlling them through the passage of strict employment laws. There was in short, a considerable stigma attached to either being a convict or being a descendant of one. The destruction of anything associated with the transportation system them was seen as a positive development. For instance, Reynolds notes that the destruction of the penitentiary in Port Arthur in 1897 was in part seen as being symbolic of a release from the “spell of convictism”. H. Reynolds, ‘That Hated Stain’, \textit{Historical Studies} Vol. 14, No. 53 (1968), pp. 19-31. The history of Port Arthur’s Isle of the Dead is a revealing template for changing attitudes to convict burial. Regulations regarding strict segregation and the situation of monuments on convict graves varied. Archaeologist Richard Lord found eight headstones extant on the Isle of the Dead marking the graves of convicts on both high and low ground. R. Lord, \textit{The Isle of the Dead, Port Arthur: inscriptions on the headstones and historical background of the cemetery at the Port Arthur penal establishment, 1830-1877} (Taroona, 1985), p. 2.} 

The main reason the Launceston General Cemetery, as well as the various denominational burial grounds, struggled to remain economically viable was the closure of all the burial grounds within the limits of the city on 31 December 1905. This was achieved by the passage of \textit{The Cemeteries Amendment Act, 1902}. This became feasible through the establishment of a new general cemetery at the Carr Villa estate on the outskirts of the city.\footnote{Hobart Gazette, 19 September 1905, pp. 864-865.} \footnote{Tasmania, Parliament, “A Bill to further amend \textit{The Cemeteries Act, 1865}”, Bill No. 13, \textit{Journals and Printed Papers of the Parliament of Tasmania 1902}, Vol. XLVI (Hobart 1903). Later referred to as \textit{Act 2 Edward VII, No. 9}.} \footnote{QVM Launceston City Council Correspondence Files (Cemeteries General 1924-1925) 6/1.2, Town Clerk to Secretary for Public Health, 4 October 1927. \footnote{In the middle of 1929 reports of illegal burials in the cemetery had reached the Council and an investigation was launched. The Council wrote to Undertaker Mr. C. T. Finney to inform him that it was their intention to enforce the provisions of the Act. The General Cemeteries file 1928-1929, includes the letters relating to the incident but also an obituary clipping of a Violet Priscilla Coates who passed away on 7 July that year and a smaller piece of paper with a list of surnames written on it:} It allowed for relatives of those already interred or those possessing some previous right of burial to be buried up to 31 December 1925, twenty years after their official closure.\footnote{QVM Launceston City Council Correspondence Files (Cemeteries General 1924-1925) 6/1.2, Secretary of Public Health to Town Clerk, 6 October 1927.} After that date it was still possible to achieve burial in an urban burial place if one applied to the Director of Public Health. This was made possible by the passage of \textit{The Public Health Act, 1903}.\footnote{In the middle of 1929 reports of illegal burials in the cemetery had reached the Council and an investigation was launched. The Council wrote to Undertaker Mr. C. T. Finney to inform him that it was their intention to enforce the provisions of the Act. The General Cemeteries file 1928-1929, includes the letters relating to the incident but also an obituary clipping of a Violet Priscilla Coates who passed away on 7 July that year and a smaller piece of paper with a list of surnames written on it:} However, there is evidence of some illegal burials after 1925.\footnote{In the middle of 1929 reports of illegal burials in the cemetery had reached the Council and an investigation was launched. The Council wrote to Undertaker Mr. C. T. Finney to inform him that it was their intention to enforce the provisions of the Act. The General Cemeteries file 1928-1929, includes the letters relating to the incident but also an obituary clipping of a Violet Priscilla Coates who passed away on 7 July that year and a smaller piece of paper with a list of surnames written on it:}
Health concerns were a prime factor in influencing conceptual changes surrounding cemeteries around the turn of last century. The new General Cemetery, situated on the former Carr Villa estate was reasonably isolated from the major population areas of the settlement, which was seen as the preferred option when establishing a new cemetery. Following the approval of a Government loan of 3000 pounds, work began on the establishment of the new general cemetery in 1902. Carr Villa House was demolished, an initial five acres cleared, the ground ploughed and levelled, a sexton’s house and mortuary chapel built and initially one thousand trees and shrubs and an additional thousand hedge plants were planted. The changes in the early operation of the cemetery reflect increasing secularisation in society. The original graves faced East-West but this was soon changed to the familiar North-South pattern - which was quite revolutionary at the time.

The design of the cemetery also reflected the increasing focus on aesthetics and services. By 1920 ten more acres were cleared and more roads were laid out in gentle, geometric pattern that are more reminiscent of the Victorian age, although within those, the plots themselves conform to a traditional grid formula. Like others being established in Australia at the time, it offered a diverse range of services. The Council also built a tearoom at the site for the public. The original layout was soon altered in 1922 to allow for a more economical use of the land. Public toilets were added to the

Smith, Hartnell, Jones, Robinson, Cooks and Coates. This suggests that these were the surnames of the people illegally interred in the cemetery after the 31 December 1925. The Council also took the step of writing to the a Mr. Frederick Lester of the Trustee Board alerting him to the fact that illegal burials had occurred and that they should prevent any more or the Council would take action. There was a prompt reply written from Mr. Lester less than four days later, advising the Council that permission had not been granted for any burials and that the matter would be brought before the board. See QVM Launceston City Council Correspondence Files (Cemeteries General 1928-1929) 6/1.4, Town Clerk to Mr. C. T. Finney, 17 July 1929 and QVM Launceston City Council Correspondence Files (Cemeteries General 1928-1929) 6/1.4, Town Clerk to Mr. F. Lester, 24 July 1929 & F. Lester to Town Clerk, 28 July 1929.
site in 1925. A tramline was laid to Carr Villa in 1928.\textsuperscript{41} A crematorium was finally established between 1937-1938, with the first cremation occurring in February 1939.\textsuperscript{42}

By 1930 then, the urban burial places of Launceston had been made redundant in a practical sense by law and the innovation of a new General Cemetery.

\textsuperscript{41} This very brief history of Carr Villa Memorial Park is derived from three documents: M. Roberts, \textit{The History of Carr Villa as a Cemetery from 1901 to 1963 Based on details in Launceston City Corporation Annual Reports}, January 1988, held in the General Cemeteries File at the Launceston Local Studies Library, State Library of Tasmania, Launceston; I. Campbell, \textit{An Institution For All Time, A Centenary of History of Carr Villa Memorial Park and Crematorium, 1905-2005}, op. cit.; a pamphlet on the history of Carr Villa Memorial Park also prepared by Ian Campbell in 2002, held in the General Cemeteries File at the Launceston Local Studies Library, State Library of Tasmania, Launceston.

\textsuperscript{42} This was the cremation of John Arnot Stenhouse on 25 February 1939. R. Nichol, \textit{This Grave and Burning Question: A Centenary History of Cremation in Australia} (Clearview, 2003), p. 280. Cremation arrived comparatively late in Tasmania compared with the mainland. Despite the passage of the \textit{Cremation Act 1905}, it wasn’t until 1912 that the Cremation Society of Tasmania was formed in Launceston. The Society petitioned the city council for a site to be reserved at Carr Villa for a crematorium and it obliged, although the Society failed to raise the funds and the reservation expired after two years. A second society was formed in 1929 and at first, they were also frustrated by financial and moral opposition. Alexander Clark, a leading and third generation Tasmanian undertaker, succeeded with the help of the new Tasmanian Cremation Society in establishing the first crematorium in the state at Hobart which opened on 19 May 1936. He then turned his attentions to Launceston. However the LCC were determined to establish and operate their own enterprise. For a detailed study of cremation in Tasmania see chapters 12 (pp. 164-174) and 16 (pp. 268-282).
Chapter Three: Launceston - Attitudes to Death and Burial Places

Figure 3. Howick Street Road Works, Launceston, 1941. Taken by City Engineer’s Department. QVM: 1990:P:1200. From the Collections of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston. This picture offers one of the only views known to exist of the Connaught Crescent, Roman Catholic Cemetery.

It is clear then, that in the first half of the twentieth-century, the carnage of two world wars, changing demographics and increasing secularism all helped to create a society in Australia that hid and denied death at every opportunity.¹ The movement towards redevelopment may have been motivated by a desire to off-load a financial burden in most cases, but there may have also have been a genuine belief that neglected burial grounds did not pay proper reverence to the departed as was sometimes argued. It is apparent, though, that in mainstream society, many were uncomfortable with the constant reminder of mortality that burial places represented – which must have

seemed all the more distasteful and abhorrent with the extent of decline in certain cemeteries.\(^2\)

Church complicity in the redevelopment process was to emerge as a constant theme throughout the period leading up to the redevelopment of the various denominational burial grounds. The main motivating factor behind both the Catholic and Presbyterian churches was obviously economic in nature, although they claimed to act in the interests of their congregation. When the Council had written to the trustees of the Anglican, Presbyterian and Catholic burial grounds informing them that a sub-committee had been formed to investigate the future care and control of the burial grounds and therefore requested basic information such as Trustee details, particulars of deeds and titles to land and estimated income and expenditure after closure, there was a scramble to comply.\(^3\) A hasty reply from The Most Reverend William Barry of the Church of Apostles dated 3 April 1924 informed the council that the trustees were willing to enter into any plan in order to meet the wishes of the council.\(^4\) Barry’s successor, W. A. Upton, later wrote to the Council in May 1945 claiming that transferring ownership in order to facilitate transformation into a park would result in greater reverence being shown to the dead.\(^5\) The Presbyterian Minister, F. S. Souter went so far as claiming in 1944 that the present Scottish community had no relatives in the burial ground, so they had no obligation towards it and it would be unfair to expect them to support two.\(^6\)

The trustees of the High Street burial ground were equally eager for the Council to assume ownership of the burial ground. The trustees even had an interview with the

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\(^2\) The parliamentary report on the closed cemeteries of Hobart ordered by the Legislative Council, "Closed Cemeteries, Hobart", Paper No. 65, published in Journal and Printed Papers of the Parliament of Tasmania, Vol. XLVII 1902 (Hobart 1903), p. 4 contains this description of St. David’s Burial Ground: “A considerable number of the vaults, which were built with brick, have fallen in exposing the coffins, and the sight of a milch cow and horse sporting themselves amongst the tombstones and fallen-in vaults is not such as to make one feel “God’s Acre” is a place of rest.”

\(^3\) Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (QVM) LCC3 6/1.2 Cemeteries General (1924-1925), Town Clerk to Mr. A Greig secretary Scotch Cemetery, Mr. George Crane secretary Church of England Cemetery, The Secretary Roman Catholic Cemetery, 11 February 1924 and 28 March 1924.

\(^4\) QVM LCC3 6/1.2 Cemeteries General (1924-1925), Rev. William Barry to Town Clerk, 3 April 1924.

\(^5\) QVM LCC3 6/1.8 Cemeteries General (1944-1945), Rev. Dean W. A. Upton to Town Clerk, 28 August 1945.

\(^6\) QVM LCC3 6/1.11 Scotch and Roman Catholic Cemeteries (1944-1950), F. S. Souter to Town Clerk, 30 October 1944.
Mayor to discuss the matter on 9 February 1930. It was no doubt a disappointment to the Catholic and Presbyterian trustees when the ‘Special Committee on Taking over of Disused Cemeteries within the City’ finally decided on 13 July 1931 to recommend that no further action be taken. The Scotch cemetery trustees continued to lobby extremely hard for the Launceston City Council to assume control of the High Street cemetery over the next two decades. Even later that year, the trustees (which were actually by this time a sub-committee of the Board of Management of the St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church) attempted to demonstrate how cheaply the site could be maintained. In 1933, the Clerk of the State Assembly of the Presbytery, M. McQueen, wrote to the Council citing the example of the Presbyterian burial ground in Hobart. The economic advantages of selling the land and the possibilities of redevelopment were pointed out. The Clerk even referred to the redevelopment of the old Melbourne cemetery into a market place. The Council still refused. Another deputation to the Council in 1935, lead to the recommendation to contact the State Government for funds. Minister for Lands and Works, T. H. Davies responded to McQueen by explaining that “there are hundreds of neglected cemeteries in this state and if the Government creates a precedent by improving one all would have a claim.” A copy of this response was forwarded to the City Council with a venomous post-script reminding them that the reason there were no maintenance funds available was because they closed it to all future burials and the potential revenue lost from the sale of plots had been diverted to Carr Villa, and therefore into the hands of the Town Council itself. There was of course again the usual letter informing Mr. McQueen that the Council still declined the offer to take it over.

The relationship between the Council and the Board of St. Andrews was to eventually break down completely over the following decade. There were a series of meetings between the Whole Council Committee of the City Council, The Minister for Lands

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7 QVM LCC3 6/1.5 Cemeteries General (1930-1933), J. Peter, Secretary, Board of Management of St. Andrews to Town Clerk, 28 February 1931.
8 Archives Office of Tasmania (AOT) AB392/1/43 LCC Minutes of Committee Meetings, 13 July 1931.
9 QVM LCC3 6/1.5 Cemeteries General (1930-1933), J. Peter, Secretary, Board of Management of St. Andrews to Town Clerk, 7 August 1931.
10 QVM LCC3 6/1.5 Cemeteries General (1930-1933), M. McQueen, Clerk of State Presbytery to Town Clerk, October, 1933 and Town Clerk to Clerk of State Presbytery, 19 October 1933.
11 QVM LCC3 6/1.6 Cemeteries General (1934-1936), Town Clerk to M. McQueen, Clerk of State Presbytery, 18 September, 1935 and T. H. Davies, Minister for Lands and Works to M. McQueen, Clerk of State Presbytery, 18 October 1935 and M. McQueen, Clerk of State Presbytery to Town Clerk, 17 February, 1936 and Town Clerk to M. McQueen, 26 February 1936.
and Works and the Board of St. Andrews in May 1938 concerning the state of the cemetery. The Minister did make the offer of contributing 1/3 of the cost of a new fence to cut down on the vandalism if the Council and the trustees contributed the rest. Council simply claimed it did not have the power to expend money for that purpose. Relations appear to have remained frosty from that point on. When the Town Clerk contacted the Board of Management at St. Andrews concerning maintenance in 1946, the Council received a tart reply back stating that the Board was not responsible for the maintenance of the cemetery as it did not represent the old trust which was no longer in existence.

Lisa Murray has argued that, while in Australian society there is a common belief that graves should be considered sacred and that their condition reflects the strength or degree of loyalty for memory for the deceased, in practice beyond the life span of immediate relatives the collective attitude is more ambivalent. A letter of complaint from a Mrs. Lily M. Woodgate to the Council, regarding the locking of the Anglican cemetery at Cypress Street emphasises two things: firstly there was a common misconception from at least the 1930s and on that the City Council was responsible for all the burial grounds in the city, and secondly that it is more likely that immediate relatives with an emotional attachment to a grave will advocate on its behalf. She mentions having complained in the past to the caretaker about the pumpkins growing on her family plot. This philosophy can be directly contrasted with his response that “…they would not hurt.” Her parents grave is referred to as “..our hallowed spot…” and adds that “… I do not suppose they would hurt those who lie underneath, but it hurts us to see pumpkins on our grave…”

12 QVM LCC3 6/1.7 Cemeteries General (1938-1941), Record of Meetings between the Whole Council Committee and the Board of St. Andrews, 2, 9 and 16 May 1938.
13 QVM LCC3 6/1.9 Cemeteries General (1946-1947), W. S. C. Brown, Secretary of the Presbyterian Church Board to Town Clerk, undated but received late February 1946.
15 QVM LCC3 6/1.5 Cemeteries General (1930-1933), Lily M. Woodgate to Town Clerk, 6 January 1930. The caretaker may be the Mr. Crane who lived with his wife in the cottage on site, mentioned in the article ‘The Garden of Proserpine’ by E. H. published in Illustrated Tasmanian Mail, 12 December 1928. He appears to have been a true character and W. McGowan, then Superintendent of Reserves reported being “allowed” to examine the records of the cemetery while attempting to resolve an inquiry concerning the location of burial of a lost relative of a client of the Office of the Curator of the Estates of Deceased Persons in 1933, QVM LCC3 6/1.5 Cemeteries General (1930-1933), W. McGowan, Superintendent of Reserves to Town Clerk, 21 August 1933.
Some attitudes towards the urban burial grounds were clearly based on practical health concerns. A resident of Glen Dhu, Raymond J. Marsh, complained to the Council in early 1948 about an exhumation that took place near his home at the Catholic site, without him being notified. He added that he had a wife and three children. The Town Clerk wrote and explained that the City Inspector was only informed of the exhumation that very morning and that legally Armitage and Armitage (the undertaking firm responsible) were only obliged to seek the consent of the Department of Public Health. They assured Mr. Marsh that once the burial ground was converted to a park there would be no more cause for complaint. This incident does indicate that there were real fears of disease amongst the local population.

Religious beliefs appear to have shaped attitudes to the death and the dead. Even today, Quakers are not sentimental in relation to burial grounds. Their official policy is outlined in their current book *Faith and Practice*: in respect of disused burial grounds, when there is no longer an adjacent meeting house, sale is to be considered with some limited regard to its future use. At the public meeting to publicly test attitudes to the redevelopment of Charles Street cemetery, one of the very few proposed amendments was suggested by a Mr. R. T. Docking, who thought that the cemetery should be left as it was until 1960. The amendment was defeated and the reasoning behind it not explained, but it may have been connected to beliefs associated with how long it takes for human remains to totally decompose.

Michael Dell, a descendant of prominent early citizen, John Dell, (who was interred in the Cypress Street burial ground), related to an estimated nineteen people interred in the Charles Street Cemetery and a practicing Baptist, explained that his attitude towards human remains was determined by the doctrines of his faith. In relation to
death and burial, “to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord” and therefore remains are given basic respect and visited occasionally. He also added that he and his family have only ever visited the graves they buried, indicating that there had to be an immediate emotional attachment to warrant visitation. Many at the time, noted in letters to the Council that, while they were in favour of the redevelopments, they did not believe that bodies should be disturbed or sport played above them – and many of these emanated from religious convictions. One former resident, A. V. Hills noted that:

The time comes to everything and to all mankind, to move on, and that time has now fully come for the surface removal of the Charles Street cemetery… I should feel sorry if any attempt were made to remove any of the dust to Carr Villa through a sentiment… I see that when a body is committed to the earth, it cannot be separated, only by a Resurrection, which God reserves to Himself the right and power… As I tarry there… I shall bring remembrance… knowing all things are the same as they were for the real cemetery is under the surface, not above it.

While this sort of reasoning may in some cases have been a case of rationalising the redevelopment, it was in the main a reflection of a widely and deeply held belief system that persists to the present day.

The written objections of Gunn family descendant and local resident, Beatrice Arndell Scott, were both prolific and at times very personal. At best her letters were deeply.

city’s first centenarian and was in receipt of a pension for more than half a century. His hundredth birthday was celebrated on 5 November 1863 and he passed away in Launceston on 2 March 1866. An article in Cornwall Chronicle, 21 June 1865 is a contemporary retrospective article. Delma Crane’s biography John Dell Founding Father of Launceston (Victoria, 1987) notes that he was the sergeant in charge of the party that first landed at Launceston on 21 March 1806, which had previously been reported in several late nineteenth and early twentieth-century sources. Anne Bartlett published two articles in Examiner on 25 March and 1 April 2006, challenging his presence on the landing party, that he was ever a sergeant in the Army and the fact that he attained the age of one hundred and two years. Using various sources she argues that he was in Parramatta at the time of the landing, that he was never more than a private and also estimates that he may have in fact been born around 1867-8.

20 Interview with Michael Dell, St. Leonards, 27 May 2006.
21 QVM LCC3 6/3.8 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1944-1945), Rev. A. E. West to Town Clerk, undated but received February 1944.
22 QVM LCC3 6/3.8 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1944-1945), A. V. Hills to Town Clerk, 6 March 1944.
philosophical and at worst they degenerated into distracted rants. Regardless of this, Beatrice is perhaps the best example of what might be classed as a ‘modern voice’ throughout the debate from the 1930s to the 1950s. While her objections were clearly rooted in her Christian beliefs, they also revealed a genuine belief in the heritage value of cemeteries. Her objections cannot be dismissed as being purely self-interested as any suggestion that they might have been prompted by a sudden sense of impending danger can be rejected by the fact that they predate the redevelopment of the Charles Street Cemetery. While she clearly championed the cause of the preservation of her own family monuments, her concerns extended to all monuments in all cemeteries.

It’s a perfect disgrace to Launceston and especially to the Scotch Churches to have their fine old Pioneers lying in such a wilderness, because the Hobart people have lost all respect for their dead, it’s no reason why Launceston should follow them, it makes me shudder to see all the headstones placed round the fence in St. David’s Park instead of standing in their original places.23

She went to great lengths writing to the Minister for Lands and Works, the Premier and even the Governor himself.24 She did meet the Mayor in the middle of her campaign but there are no notes that exist from the meeting.25 She felt specifically that the Presbyterian Church had betrayed the memory of those which had helped to establish it in Launceston.26 She was disgusted when the Reverend Merritt in 1944 expressed his preference for the St. David’s model – which she attributed to him not having any relatives in the burial ground in question; to her this was no excuse.27 The nature of her objections were based on moral, aesthetic as well as economic arguments: “Of course if the Council had not stopped the burials some years ago,

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23 QVM LCC3 6/1.6 Cemeteries General (1934-1936), Beatrice Arndell Scott to Town Clerk, 18 September 1935.
24 QVM LCC3 6/1.8 Cemeteries General (1944-1945), Governor Sir Ernest Clark to Town Clerk, 11 April 1944 and QVM LCC3 6/1.11 Scotch and Roman Catholic Cemeteries (1944-1950), Beatrice Arndell Scott to Town Clerk, 10 February 1948.
25 QVM LCC3 6/1.8 Cemeteries General (1944-1945), Town Clerk to Beatrice Arndell Scott, 28 September 1944.
26 QVM LCC3 6/1.7 Cemeteries General (1938-1941), Beatrice Arndell Scott to Town Clerk, 2 May 1941.
27 QVM LCC3 6/1.8 Cemeteries General (1944-1945), Beatrice Arndell Scott to Town Clerk, 14 September 1944.
people could have been buried there for many years to come, and so to bring in revenue for repairs etc.”\textsuperscript{28} She also deeply resented any suggestion that her family did not own the plots their ancestors had paid for and thought any usurpation of that right to be “robbery”.\textsuperscript{29}

The Council seemed to be as incapable of understanding her views as much as she did theirs, but to its credit it was very patient with her. It expressed deep sympathy with her when she wrote to inform them that her family graves had been vandalised.\textsuperscript{30} She did exhibit signs of conspiratorial thinking, suggesting that the Council had deliberately not informed her of a meeting at the Town Hall between Aldermen and a delegation of the Scotch Community. Of them, Beatrice declared, “…none of us know who they are.”\textsuperscript{31} Only once did the Council betray any sense of frustration with the now clearly infamous Miss Scott, following a particularly extreme series of letters wherein she had likened the Mayor to Hitler and the present arrangement to that of a dictatorship. She exclaimed “Down with the Dictators and the Nationalisation of Sacred graves”, and accused the Council of “aggression and communism”. The Town Clerk seems to have been authorised to inform her that they expected no more correspondence and considered the matter to be closed – although they were still corresponding with R. M. Gunn on the same issue at the time.\textsuperscript{32} Her behaviour had become increasingly erratic following the death of her Mother in 1945. Of her Mother she reflected: “My Mother and I visited these graves every week, walking there and back, until she was nearly 87… It’s 4 years this week since she passed away and I have tried to do what was her dying wish, save her graves and care for them.”\textsuperscript{33} She did write to the Council again on occasion and even at one point sent the Council a
collection of poems concerning war graves, which she claimed proved that she was not the only one who loved graves and paid homage to the dead.\textsuperscript{34}

In complete contrast to the views of Beatrice Scott are those of a Mr. E. Button and his sister, descendants of the aforementioned W. S. Button. In a letter to the Council in 1933 he told them that he liked the St. David’s model of treatment and in regards to the Charles Street Cemetery that he was only interested in his parents graves, the rest of the Button section being taken up by relatives “…we never knew…”. He wrote again to the Council in 1944 when redevelopment was imminent and told the Council that both he and his sister were not interested in exhuming remains as they “…would expect that dust has returned to dust…” and that they were also not interested in retaining the stones.\textsuperscript{35} Consequently, due to this apathetic attitude, no headstones from the Charles Street Cemetery, belonging to members of the Button family, appear to have survived.\textsuperscript{36}

The opinions of Superintendent of Reserves, Frederick Dowse, contrast again with those of Beatrice Scott. When the Council was petitioned by the descendants of the Gunn family to retain their monuments at the High Street site, the Council requested Dowse to give his opinion. His subsequent report illustrates the lack of any appreciation for the value of the material heritage associated with cemeteries. In regards to the obelisk of Lt. William Gunn and family he wrote:

\begin{quote}
This memorial is not a very imposing structure, and my firm belief is it would be a mistake to allow it to remain, it would not be suitable in any modern scheme of landscape treatment… There are a number of memorials in this cemetery larger and more pretentious and if a precedent is established in this direction it would be difficult to discriminate should further requests of a similar nature be received.\textsuperscript{37}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{34} QVM LCC3 6/1.13 Cemeteries - Charles Street (1930-1933), Beatrice Arndell Scott to Town Clerk, 8 January 1952.
\textsuperscript{35} QVM LCC3 6/3.5 Cemeteries - Charles Street (1930-1933), E. Button to Town Clerk, 26 August 1933 and QVM LCC3 6/3.8 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1944-1945), E. Button to Town Clerk, 14 February 1944.
\textsuperscript{36} Carr Villa Memorial Park Kings Meadows: List of Headstones moved to Carr Villa from other Launceston Cemeteries, held at the Local Studies Library, State Library of Tasmania, Launceston.
\textsuperscript{37} QVM LCC3 6/1.9 Cemeteries – General (1946-1947), F. R. Dowse to Town Clerk, 31 October 1947.
This somewhat pragmatic and superficial approach to cemeteries in general as just trouble waiting to be removed was reflected in the attitude of the press of the period as well. In a report on the transformation of the Charles Street Cemetery into Ockerby Gardens the process was described as “An example of how a desolate and uncared-for cemetery… can be made into one of the city’s beauty spots…”\(^\text{38}\) In one of her more perceptive comments, Beatrice Scott – who on occasion was known to have clashed with Mr. Dowse – contested this philosophy with a very modern sentiment, stating that parks are not worthy without monuments and that they do not obstruct the view, but make it.\(^\text{39}\) Miss Scott’s views seem ahead of their time, as it would be another three decades before the mainstream attitudes towards burial places would alter, viewing them instead as examples of cultural heritage which need to be preserved.\(^\text{40}\)

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{gunn_family_monuments_carr_villa_memorial_park_launceston_2006}
\caption{Gunn family Monuments, Carr Villa Memorial Park, Launceston, 2006.}
\end{figure}

\(^{38}\) \textit{Mercury}, 17 February 1949.

\(^{39}\) QVM LCC3 6/1.11 Scotch and Roman Catholic Cemeteries (1944-1950), Beatrice Arndell Scott to Town Clerk, 20 June 1950.

\(^{40}\) A. W. Goodman, “The Redevelopment of Launceston’s Old Cemeteries”, \textit{Australian Parks}, Vol. 9, No. 1 (August 1972), p. 15. Even in 1972, this article written by the current Superintendent of Reserves in Launceston gives the impression that there is no sense of cultural loss through the redevelopment of burial places and that the process has only stopped because they have run out of burial grounds to bulldoze.
Chapter Four: Launceston’s Approaches to the Redevelopment of Burial Places

Figure 5. Charles Street Cemetery, Launceston, during the redevelopment into Ockerby Gardens, 1945. LSC/PF B&W Neg. 65/99. From the Collections of the Launceston Library, State Library of Tasmania.

During the busiest period of the redevelopment of the burial places from the mid-fourties to the mid-fifties, Launceston was recovering from what historian John Reynolds referred to as the “unhappy years”. Between 1928 and 1933 the estimated value of the city’s trade (exports plus imports) had fallen by around 30%. This also coincided with the great flood of 1929. In early April, 3,000 people had to be relocated, 1,000 houses were damaged, wharves were covered with mud and the sewer mains were blocked. Most of the civic leaders on the council were hard-nosed, businessmen who had experienced the depression of the 1890s in their youth, yet were infamous for their paternalistic attitude to the poor and their deep conservatism.1 Geoffrey Finney, Launceston Undertaker, remembered that following the war, Launceston remained a very “Churchified city” under the rule of strict Methodists such as Aldermen Hollingsworth, Pitt and Ockerby. He also remembered leading a

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1 J. Reynolds, Launceston: History of an Australian City (Launceston 1969), pp.165-170. Reynolds seems to be using the word conservatism to apply to more than just a general dislike of any sort of challenge to established values or the status quo, but also an active policy of defending their own regime and the “cultural values” that it was based upon, sometimes to the detriment of others.
deputation to the Mayor in 1946 to get the city council to unlock the swings and maypoles at the Gorge as the civic authorities felt that not only should not there be any Sunday sport, but children should not be able to use playground equipment on the Sabbath. After the war, the Council felt that more leisure facilities were needed for the returning service men and their growing families. It is probably also relevant that a general memo for the Works Committee in 1946 commented that one advantage of pushing ahead with the redevelopment program was that it would help to “…relieve the position in the absorption of the labour from the National Service Office and returned ex-service men…”.

The first two burial places to be redeveloped in Launceston during the twentieth-century, almost vanished without comment. The transfer and redevelopment of the Pedder Street burial ground seems to have passed without comment in the local press but there was some negotiation between the lawyers for the Society of Friends and the City Council. The Society wanted indemnity against any costs associated with the removal and reburial of any remains from the site, if there were to be any requests of that nature. The Council would only accept the offer to take over the land if it was transferred unconditionally. The Society then relented and the transfer occurred without any such undertaking from the Council – which probably indicates that there were no exhumations from the site. Today there is a residential house situated on the land. This process was an example of the Society’s general pragmatic and unsentimental approach to burial places.

Although the Jewish burial ground in South Street had been tidied and fenced a few years previously, the trustees decided to offer it unconditionally to the City Council in May 1938. It was immediately identified by Alderman Ockerby as a possible site for a children’s playground in a “thickly populated area”. The fact that the finance

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2 Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (QVM) 1994 OH A, B, C and D. Interview with Geoffrey William Finney, Funeral Director conducted by Jill Cassidy and transcribed by Wendy Devlin.
3 Reynolds, op. cit., p. 182.
4 QVM LCC3 6/3.8 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1945-1947), Memo for the Works Committee, 28 February 1946.
5 For a linear record of the process of burial place redevelopment in Launceston up to 2002, please see Appendix E.
6 QVM LCC3 25/1.5 Land and Properties – General (1930-1933), Series of Correspondence between Town Clerk and Ritchie and Parker Alfred Green and Co, 20 June, 7 August, 15 August, 28 October 1931.
committee of the Council agreed to pay the cost of transfer of the land may suggest that maintaining it was becoming a financial burden the trustees were no longer willing or able to accept. Childhood resident, Mrs. Shirley Stevens (nee Wing) remembers that the metal railings surrounding a grave near the far corner of the South Street for instance were very rusted. The actual burial ground occupied a rectangular section of the area and was fenced around prior to redevelopment. Access was gained from the open area running parallel with the burial ground known locally as “The Paddock” and not from South Street. The playground was established at an estimated cost of only £30 after a plan was made of the graves in the burial ground and the headstones were uprooted. Mrs. Stevens remembered that they were all leant against the fence between the burial ground and her home at 11 South Street for a number of years. It is believed that the headstones were actually taken to Carr Villa, but the Jewish community has not been able find any trace of them. The park was subsequently named Monash Reserve after General Sir John Monash. True to its name, air raid trenches were dug in the reserve during the Second World War, but they appeared to have been deliberately dug outside the area that was once devoted to the burial ground. This arrangement reveals that the Council were conscious probably of both public sentiment and health risks inherent in disturbing human remains.

With the virtual passing away of all members of the board of trustees and the official banning of all urban interments, the Council assumed ownership of the Charles Street Cemetery. Claude James MHA tabled a bill entitled The Launceston (Charles Street) General Cemetery Act aimed at legalising the agreement between the trustees and

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7 Examiner, 31 May 1938.
8 Interview with Shirley Stevens (nee Wing), Newnham, 22 August 2006. The grave she referred to was probably that of Simon Selig and it is listed on the survey map made of the cemetery and surrounding park before it was redeveloped. The map is contained in the Jewish Cemetery File, Launceston Local Studies Library, State Library of Tasmania, Launceston.
9 Examiner, 17 April 1940.
10 Interview with Shirley Stevens, op. cit.
13 Interview with Shirley Stevens, op. cit. Mrs. Stevens remembers that there were six to eight of them at the back end of the reserve running North/South, they all had sloping ramp style access at both ends and reached a depth of about six feet.
City Council in 1925. The Town Clerk also wrote to the surviving Trustee Mr. C. Nickalls to request that all books and documents be transferred to the Council. The Mayor at the time outlined the intention of the Council to use the site to create a park in the long-term and assured residents that the graves would not be interfered with and relatives would be welcome to remove any of the stones. There is a revealing two-paged, typed report filed in the general correspondence records for 1930, which describes the treatment and cost of redeveloping the Queenborough Cemetery and the St. David’s burial ground in Hobart, as well as the present state of the Catholic and Scotch sites in Launceston. The former is described as being in good order, while the Scotch burial ground, it admits, was in a bad state. This attests to the fact that the Council was in 1930, already genuinely considering assuming control of at least those two burial places.

The ongoing costs associated with maintaining the old General Cemetery contributed to the decision to redevelop the site. One of their first acts was to sell off the site housing the mortuary fronting on Charles Street and another next to it that fronted onto Howick Street in 1926 and evict the old caretaker who was living in the old building on the Charles Street block. Some initial improvement work was done: the fences were repaired and a particular tree that had been causing some damage to graves was also removed. There are indications that while the Council inherited a site which had been neglected, that it did little overall to improve the situation, preferring to encourage relatives to pay annual fees to cover maintenance costs. Perhaps owing to the depression, the Council initially retreated from its policy of

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14 *Examiner*, 29 September 1925.
15 QVM LCC3 6/3.2 Cemeteries - Charles Street (1924-1925), Town Clerk to Mr. C. Nickalls, 9 February 1926.
16 *Examiner*, 29 September 1925.
17 QVM LCC3 25/1.5 Land and Properties – General (1930-1933), two-page report on converted burial grounds in Hobart and state of “disused” burial grounds in Launceston, undated.
18 QVM LCC3 6/3.2 Cemeteries - Charles Street (1924-1925), Town Clerk to Northern Business Agency, 6 May 1926, Town Clerk to W. McGowan, Superintendent of Reserves, 20 May 1926.
19 QVM LCC3 6/3.2 Cemeteries - Charles Street (1924-1925), Town Clerk to W. McGowan, Superintendent of Reserves, 29 May 1926.
20 Rather amusingly a certain Mr. F. Fairthorne of St. John Street wrote to the LCC on the 3 November 1938 wanting to know what was meant by the word “maintenance”. The Town Clerk replied explaining that it referred to clearing weeds and generally keeping the plots tidy and not attending to the tombstones themselves. QVM LCC3 6/3.6 Cemeteries - Charles Street (1934-1938), F. Fairthorne to Town Clerk, 3 November 1938 and Town Clerk to F. Fairthorne, November 1938.
redevelopment, noting in 1933, that it had no intention of treating the cemetery in a similar manner to St. David's in Hobart.\textsuperscript{21}

Once Council property, the burial sites were a constant burden to it. A petition was presented in April 1932 on the General Cemetery from residents demanding that something be done about the Pine Trees, which shed needles onto gardens and into the spouting of roofs.\textsuperscript{22} Complaints about vandalism in all the urban cemeteries were to become numerous and to their credit the Council meticulously passed on complaints to the police and followed the progress of each incident. The iron railings to be found surrounding many Victorian and Edwardian graves in the urban cemeteries were a temptation for youths during the depression as they could be easily sold.\textsuperscript{23} Perceived fire hazards caused by over-growth in burial grounds were a steady form of complaint.\textsuperscript{24} Complaints extended to all the cemeteries, as often residents simply assumed the Council were responsible for all of the sites regardless of the true legal situation.\textsuperscript{25} The Council eventually had a complaint forwarded to them by the office of the Minister for Agriculture concerning rampant growth of gorse bush in the High Street cemetery. The Town Clerk had to notify the Minister that the cemetery was not yet Council property.\textsuperscript{26}

\textsuperscript{21} QVM LCC3 6/3.5 Cemeteries - Charles Street (1930-1933), Town Clerk to Mr. E. Button, 30 August 1933.
\textsuperscript{22} QVM LCC3 6/3.5 Cemeteries - Charles Street (1930-1933), Petition from residents of Howick Street to Town Clerk, 13 April 1932.
\textsuperscript{23} A typical example is the damage done to the grave of Miss B. Fairbroker's parents in the old general cemetery in 1927. The Council wrote to the resident, as it did in most cases, to inform her that the youths responsible had been caught, prosecuted and one sent to a reformatory school. The motivation for the crime was clearly noted as being the value of the iron. QVM LCC3 6/3.2 Cemeteries - Charles Street (1924-1925), Town Clerk to B. Fairbroker, 16 September 1927.
\textsuperscript{24} A complaint from factory owner W. J. M. Merry is a typical example of how gorse and blackberry growth in the Catholic burial ground was a cause of concern for residents right up to redevelopment. QVM LCC3 6/1.9 Cemeteries General (1946-1947), W. J. M. Merry to Town Clerk, 6 December 1947. The Council was still receiving complaints about the Roman Catholic cemetery in the 1954 and 1955, particularly about the issue of the potential fire hazard. In fact a petition was forwarded with roughly 40 signatures from concerned residents, but the Council explained that it simply did not have the money that financial year and that it would be cleaned up as soon as possible. QVM LCC3 6/1.15 Cemeteries General (1954-1955), W. J. Merry and Sons Pty. Ltd. To Town Clerk, 21 January 1954 & Residential Petition forwarded to Town Clerk, 20 May 1955 & Town Clerk to Various Petitioners, 16 June 1955.
\textsuperscript{25} This is best illustrated by a complaint about the state of the Isolation Hospital Cemetery on Quarantine Road, which the Town Clerk had to point out was actually situated in the St. Leonards municipality. QVM LCC3 6/1.5 Cemeteries General (1930-1933), Town Clerk to L. J. Harvey, 29 June 1931.
\textsuperscript{26} QVM LCC3 6/1.9 Cemeteries General (1946-1947), Office of the Minister for Agriculture to Town Clerk, 20 February 1946. There is a pencil note on it indicating a planned response explaining the situation and an intention to pass it on to the Presbyterian Church.
The final trigger in relation to the old General Cemetery was the invitation from a disgusted resident, F. F. Fairthorne, for the Council to come and inspect its condition firsthand. His letter written to the Council in early November 1943, which also related to the extent of vandalism in the cemetery and an inquiry relating to a family grave, invited the Aldermen to come and view the site as he felt that “...they will be amazed and disgusted to see the damage done. It was certainly distressing and amazing to view the general condition of the cemetery this afternoon...”. The Council promptly informed him that they had contacted the police and that a committee had been arranged to visit and inspect the cemetery the following Monday afternoon.\textsuperscript{27} The Council also then wrote to the Hobart City Council to ask if they could inform them of the steps taken to redevelop St. David’s Park, to which their Town Clerk did respond with a detailed account of the redevelopment process.\textsuperscript{28} The Council were then able to reply to Mr. Fairthorne late in November, informing him that it was the view of the Works Committee that the cemetery would continue to deteriorate and that they were considering the question of redeveloping the site into a park.\textsuperscript{29} Indeed, a meeting of the Works Committee on 29 November 1943 resolved to recommend to the Council that Parliamentary authority be sought to redevelop the park into a public garden reserve. The Council adopted this decision on 7 December 1943. It was reported the next day in the \textit{Examiner}, which indicated that Mayor J. F. Ockerby had actually proposed that the matter be held over till the first meeting of the new Council, as this was the first he had heard of the current proposal.\textsuperscript{30}

Perhaps sensing the heightened level of public interest in the issue, the Council resolved to hold a public meeting at the Town Hall on Wednesday 16 February 1944. A record of attendance indicates that about seventy people attended the meeting, letters from various interested parties were read out and, when the issue was voted on, only six voted against the idea. Concerned resident Mrs. Peter Pike forwarded the

\begin{footnotes}{\textsuperscript{27}} QVM LCC3 6/3.7 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1941-1943), F. F. Fairthorne to Town Clerk, 2 November 1943 and Town Clerk to F. F. Fairthorne, 9 November 1943.

\textsuperscript{28} QVM LCC3 6/3.7 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1941-1943), Town Clerk to Town Clerk, Hobart Corporation, 16 November 1943 and Town Clerk, Hobart Corporation to Town Clerk, 23 November 1943.

\textsuperscript{29} QVM LCC3 6/3.7 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1941-1943), Town Clerk to F. F. Fairthorne, 25 November 1943.

\textsuperscript{30} QVM LCC3 6/3.7 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1941-1943), Report of the Works Committee, 29 November 1943 and AOT AB392/1/52, same and \textit{Examiner}, 8 December 1943.
motion Mr. C. G. Mold, seconded it. There was a report in the Examiner and a letter was sent out to all those who had demonstrated an interest in the matter, informing them of the decision and what their rights in regards to exhumations and the removal of monuments would be.\footnote{QVM LCC3 6/3.8 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1944-1945), minutes of meeting held at Town Hall, 16 February 1944, Town Clerk to various interested parties, 24 February 1944. Examiner, 17 February 1944.} Although there was disagreement on the actual approach to take, there appeared to be a general consensus that the site needed to be redeveloped.

Basic concerns with matters of hygiene were crucial in precipitating change. One of the letters read out at the public meeting was one from F. F. Fairthorne. He informed the Council that, while he had mentioned the vandalism that occurred in the old General Cemetery, he forgot to draw their attention to the “desperate love making” that was often going on, adding that “…This I saw for myself when I visited the cemetery…” He continued to add in a tongue in cheek manner that it was a “grave business” which might warrant the attention of the police.\footnote{QVM LCC3 6/3.7 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1941-1943), F. F. Fairthorne to Town Clerk, 1 December 1943.} Stray dogs became an issue in the cemetery as they dug in the soil and messed the areas in other ways.\footnote{QVM LCC3 6/3.6 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1941-1943), Peter P. Pike to Town Clerk, 5 March 1934.} Some of the only vaults to be found in the city were located at the High Street burial ground and they were a prime targets for vandals. In May 1944 the Corbett family vault was broken into and five coffins were exposed to the public eye. The City Inspector informed The Council, but they passed the issue on to the Director of Public Health. Inspector T. Orr subsequently reported to the Council that school age hooligans had opened and defiled with filth several of the coffins. Although the last interment had been made in 1911 and risk was minimal, he found it highly offensive from a moral point of view and had contacted Reverend Merritt of the Presbyterian Church. Although he interestingly accepted no responsibility, he had the vault resealed at his own expense.\footnote{QVM LCC3 6/3.8 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1944-1945), City Inspector to Town Clerk, 11 May 1944 and Town Clerk to Secretary for the Department of Public Health, 15 June 1944 and T. Orr, Inspector, Department of Public Health to Town Clerk, 22 June 1944.} This event and others like it passed into the folklore of the city. As a schoolboy at the time, Michael Dell could remember visiting an open vault:
The High Street one I remember well. Because of this story of when I was at East Launceston Primary School, there was a rumour that one of the crypts was broken open and I remember actually going up there after school and actually going into this room and one of the very few crypts in Launceston actually… there were coffins on the shelves…

The extent of the neglect and the behaviour it encouraged seemed to feed the underlying unease people held during the period for anything associated with death and helped to determine popular views concerning the continued existence of the burial grounds in the centre of the city.

The Launceston Corporation (Charles Street Cemetery Improvement) Bill, 1944 was submitted to parliament by Alderman J. F. Ockerby, who was also an MHA. It passed on 27 April 1944 and the work was set to begin a year from that date. The Act set out the rights and obligations of the Council and determined the process through which relatives could apply to the Council to arrange exhumations and removal of memorials. Influenced by the methodology of the Hobart program of redevelopment, the Act specified that a survey be made of all headstones and lodged at the Town Hall. Relatives of those interred in the cemetery officially had twelve months to apply to exhume remains and/or move monuments and the Council was obliged to provide land free of charge at Carr Villa. Areas at Carr Villa were designated “Pioneer” sections and relatives could choose to have them placed there. The headstones that were not claimed were taken to Carr Villa and stacked in the nearby scrub in case a claim was made at a later date.

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35 Interview with Michael Dell, St. Leonards, 27 May 2006. There was a request from the Town Clerk to the Superintendent of Reserves to repair a hole in the side of the Robertson Vault on the 21 July 1949. The difference in procedure in this instance would relate to the fact that the site was now Council property - QVM LCC3 6/1.11 Scotch and Roman Catholic Cemeteries (1944-1950), memo from Town Clerk to Superintendent of Reserves, 21 July 1949.
36 QVM LCC3 6/3.8 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1944-1945), Town Clerk to Clerk of the House of Assembly, 4 April 1944.
38 Carr Villa Memorial Park Kings Meadows: List of Headstones moved to Carr Villa from other Launceston Cemeteries, held at the Local Studies Library, State Library of Tasmania, Launceston. Area D2 was set aside in the General section and an area within A6 was reserved for transferred Catholic remains and headstones.
39 They were still there in 1951 as monumental mason J. A. Dunn asked the Council if he could purchase what remained of them in order to turn them into grindstones. The Superintendent of Carr
The City Council then finally relented and resolved to take over the two remaining urban burial grounds and redeveloped them in the same manner as it had the old General Cemetery.\(^{40}\) The Launceston Corporation (Scotch and Roman Catholic Cemeteries Improvement) Act, 1947, introduced into parliament by J. L. Madden MHA, not only officially vested the two church burial grounds in the care of the Council but also legitimised their intended redevelopment into parks. Furthermore, the Act used the same process as the Charles Street Act to regulate exhumations and the right to claim and move headstones.\(^{41}\) The process called for the same type of survey as that which had occurred in relation to the Charles Street Cemetery but it would not prove to be as easy. The Reverend F. S. Souter of St. Andrews was contacted, although it was acknowledged that there was no trust in existence. The Secretary of the Board of Management wrote back informing the Council that they were only able to locate their normal burial records, which could be lodged at the Council along with a simple plan of the site, on the condition that they could continue to have open access to them.\(^{42}\) Information regarding the Catholic burial ground, proved to be a true challenge to obtain. The Very Reverend Dean W. A. Upton informed them that he was “…pleased to hear the Council had taken over the Glen Dhu Cemetery…” but he was unable to locate any records. Upton contacted a Mr. M. Butler of Claremont, who once worked as a sexton at the cemetery, to see if he knew who held the records for the burial ground. He wrote back explaining that he was not aware that they kept any at all but mentioned two other possible candidates and then

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\(^{40}\) The Works Committee resolved to recommend that the Scotch burial ground would be taken over and converted on the 4 December 1944 and the same was decided of the Roman Catholic burial ground on the 6 August 1945. It was decided at the later meeting that they were to be dealt with in that order, Charles Street, High Street and Connaught Crescent as finances allowed. Archives Office of Tasmania (AOT) AB392/1/52 and AOT AB392/1/53.


\(^{42}\) QVM LCC3 6/1.11 Scotch and Roman Catholic Cemeteries (1944-1950), Town Clerk to Rev. F. S. Souter, 15 May 1947 and D. J. Rae, Secretary of the Presbyterian Church Board to Town Clerk, 27 August 1947.
offered to help next time he was in Launceston, as he had a clear recollection of where most of the graves were. Not surprisingly, nothing was ever recovered.43

Figure 6. Grave of Michael Fahey and view of Catholic Cemetery, Connaught Crescent, Launceston. LSC/PF B&W Neg. 281/00. From the Collections of the Launceston Library, State Library of Tasmania.

Resistance was virtually non-existent in relation to the Catholic burial ground and as discussed, limited but loud in regards to the Presbyterian burial ground. Still, there were some examples of interested bodies who contacted the Council for information about the redevelopments, which may have influenced the outcomes in limited ways. The Scenery Preservation Board expressed concern about the preservation of the tombstones of the more notable people interred in the Presbyterian burial ground, particularly Lt. William Gunn and Ronald Campbell Gunn.44 The SPB began to lobby descendants and a R. M. Gunn of Epping, forwarded a letter from the Preservation Board to the Council, adding, a little sarcastically, that “as I fancy you will not hear of

43 QVM LCC3 6/1.11 Scotch and Roman Catholic Cemeteries (1944-1950), Town Clerk to Rev. W. A. Upton, 15 May 1947 and Rev. W. A. Upton to Town Clerk, 5 June 1947 and same, 27 August 1947, M. Butler to Town Clerk, 16 September 1947.
44 QVM LCC3 6/1.9 Cemeteries General (1946-1947), M. S. R. Sharland, Secretary of the Scenery Preservation Board to Town Clerk, 8 December 1947.
it from Mr. Dowse…” as some damage had already evidently been done. 45 Secretary of the Board, Mr. M. S. R. Sharland, was critical of the removal of those headstones specifically and was quoted in the Examiner as stating that they should be preserved. 46 The Council had enlisted the services of the Director of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in 1947 – partially in response to badgering from Beatrice Scott – in ascertaining exactly how notable these people had been. N. J. B. Plomley replied, noting of the Gunns and James Scott that they were all “noteworthy figures in Tasmania’s history”. 47 Mary Lavinia Whitfield, former resident and now Secretary of the Society of Australian Genealogists, wrote on 24 June 1944 to ensure that inscriptions on the old tombstones were being recorded. She was assured that such records were being made and were stored at the Town Hall, available for inspection, free of charge. 48

Figure 7. View of the D2 General Pioneers Section at Carr Villa Memorial Park, Launceston, 2006. The Monuments are arranged in a fixed grid pattern and in this section, are a mixture of monuments from several redeveloped burial places.

46 Examiner, 1 and 3 October 1949.
47 QVM LCC3 6/1.9 Cemeteries General (1946-1947), Town Clerk to N. J. B. Plomley, Director of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, 16 October 1947 and Same to Town Clerk, 25 October 1947. The Gunn family monuments were preserved in Section D2, Carr Villa Memorial Park.
48 QVM LCC3 6/3.8 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1944-1945), Mary Lavinia Whitfield, Secretary of Society of Australian Genealogists to Town Clerk, 24 June 1944 and Town Clerk to Mary Lavinia Whitfield etc, 6 July 1944.
It still took some time for the redevelopments to be completed and gradually their approach to redevelopment began to change.\(^49\) The Scotch site redevelopment finally began in 1951. To their credit the Council was still offering to provide free plots at Carr Villa for those that might wish to transfer the remains and headstones of the interred.\(^50\) The redevelopments were partly sold on the basis of promises made concerning the attractive recreational areas that would be established in the place of the old burial grounds.\(^51\) In fact, without exception all the areas seem quite open and desolate, despite being well maintained.\(^52\) As mentioned previously, there was some concern that the redeveloped burial grounds should not be used for sport and this was reflected in the legislation, as they were to be reserved only for quiet recreation.

Between 1956 and 1963, the former Catholic burial ground became known as St.

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\(^49\) The Council was still receiving complaints about the Roman Catholic cemetery in the 1954 and 1955, particularly about the issue of the potential fire hazard. In fact a petition was forwarded with roughly forty signatures from concerned residents, but the Council explained that it simply did not have the money that financial year and that it would be cleaned up as soon as possible. QVM&AG LCC3 6/1.15 Cemeteries General (1954-1955), W. J. Merry and Sons Pty. Ltd. to Town Clerk, 21 January 1954; Residential Petition forwarded to Town Clerk, 20 May 1955; Town Clerk to Various Petitioners, 16 June 1955.

\(^50\) Examiner, 3 March 1951.

\(^51\) An example of this is an undated clipping from Examiner entitled ‘Utility is Keynote of New Parks’, held in the Charles Street Cemetery File, Local Studies Library, State Library of Tasmania, Launceston.

\(^52\) See Appendix B, Comparative Photography. Despite the neglected nature of some of the cemeteries shown, a comparative photographic study is revealing: the green desolate wastelands, occasionally broken by children’s playground equipment, seem to justify Miss Scott’s sentiments about monuments not obstructing the view, but making it.
Patrick’s Gardens.\textsuperscript{53} Then the Council reneged on its assurance. In 1963 an amendment was made to the 1947 Act, allowing the Council to redevelop the Connaught Crescent site into a bowling green and parking site.\textsuperscript{54} The Coats Patons’ Bowls Club and a children’s playground called Merrys Lane Park were then established there.\textsuperscript{55}

While the treatment of the Cypress Street burial ground was not meted out by the Council, it was to prove to be just as extreme. The Church of England Synod at Hobart on 17 September 1953, made the decision to license the burial ground to Broadland House School for redevelopment into a school park. Under the church constitution the site could not be sold or leased and this decision allowed the Broadland House to redevelop the area for its own purposes. There were three conditions placed on the deal by the Church Advocate, Mr. D. M. Chambers: the headstones had to be moved to suitable positions and looked after, Broadland House School were responsible for any maintenance costs to the land and no headstone would be removed until reasonable notice had been given to any relatives who might hold objections.\textsuperscript{56} This decision demonstrated that the Anglican Church were determined not to be lumbered by the burden of maintenance costs to a burial ground which could no longer generate income and needed to find a way around their own constitution to smooth the way for a complete transfer and possible monetary compensation at a later date. A letter to the Editor in the \textit{Examiner} noted that, by early 1959, many headstones (far from being moved to suitable locations and looked after) had been thrown together in an untidy heap. After further negotiations, the land was fully sold to the school and redeveloped into a sports ground. Some headstones were removed to Carr Villa or offered back to relatives for reuse, but most eventually seemed to have vanished. There were some exhumations as well to the new general

\textsuperscript{55} A. W. Goodman, ‘The Redevelopment of Launceston’s Old Cemeteries’, \textit{Australian Parks} Vol. 9, No. 1 (August 1972), p. 15. The playground is probably named after the Merry family who ran a Furniture making factory at 26a Connaught Street near the old Catholic burial ground and were long concerned about the fire hazard potential associated with the site before redevelopment. See again QVM LCC3 6/1.9 Cemeteries General (1946-1947), W. J. M. Merry to Town Clerk, 6 December 1947 and QVM LCC3 6/1.15 Cemeteries General (1954-1955), W. J. Merry and Sons Pty. Ltd. to Town Clerk, 21 January 1954.
\textsuperscript{56} \textit{Examiner}, 18 September 1953.
cemetery. When W. H. MacFarlane wrote an extensive piece on colonial burial places published in the *Examiner* in February 1961, he had to report on the burial ground in the past-tense noting that “two or three years back before the present work was begun, one saw row upon row of stone memorials linking with the misty past”.

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Conclusion

The Changing Concept of the Burial Place:

The history of burial places in Launceston did not reflect a totally linear course of development. By the foundation of settlement the practice of locating burial grounds on the peripheries of established settlements had already taken root.\(^1\) By 1931, the six

\(^1\) An inspection of the Aerial Survey Map of Launceston, 1922, Appendix A, reflects the practice as the early cemeteries all ring the core of the original settlement. The haphazard location of burial grounds in early Sydney, three of which may have even predated the “original” cemetery (1793-1820) by four years, was therefore avoided. Johnson and Sainty note the absence of regulations governing burials from the outset of settlement in Sydney. Scant sources suggest the existence of early burial sites. The first may have been at the proposed Church Yard for St. Phillips Church. Behind the original Military Barracks, the coffin of a child was uncovered there around 1910, at the junction of Clarence and York Street when the roads were being reformed. There may have been another burial ground at Campbell’s Ridge, Dawes’ Point for seamen and marines. The earliest surviving Australian headstone was uncovered there in the 1870’s, that of George Graves of the *Sirius* who died in 1787. The arrival of the Second Fleet in 1790 may have required hasty burials, which might have occurred on the North Shore. There were a total of forty-five burials and eighteen executions before the consecration of the original burial ground. That site may have been chosen simply on the basis that it was the farm of Captain John Shea who chose to be buried away from the settlement in 1789. K. A. Johnson and M. R. Sainty, *Sydney Burial Ground 1819-1901 (Elizabeth and Devonshire Streets) and History of Sydney’s Early Cemeteries from 1788* (Sydney, 2001), pp. 1-13.
burial places due for redevelopment were considered intramural mostly due to
unavoidable urban expansion over a century. Unlike Sydney and Melbourne,
Launceston’s shift towards the adoption of the more dynamic concept of the modern
cemetery was an uneven process. The establishment of the denominational Quaker
and Jewish burial grounds occurred after the opening of the first General Cemetery in
Launceston. Even Carr Villa Memorial Park was not initially the full realisation of a
secular, dynamic approach to burial places, being originally quite denominational in
design and ordering the earliest burials East-West. Gradually Carr Villa was to
follow the example of such mainland cemeteries as Fawkner Cemetery in Melbourne.

The concept of what a burial place could be had begun to rapidly expand by 1900. It
was no longer just simply a plot of land set aside for disposing human bodies. Burial
grounds had been supplanted by cemeteries, which were dynamic, considered places,
fulfilling a range of services both practical and personal. During the Victorian era the
attractive physical character of the new, remote facilities had become an integral part
of their perceived value as the best examples provided a reassuring environment for
those beset by grief. In contrast, the neglected intramural burial places must have
appeared to progressives in 1931, as nothing more than aesthetic blights. By

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2 While the General Cemetery was opened in 1841, the Quaker and last Jewish burial grounds were
both opened in the mid-forties. See Appendix E.

3 In fact some of the original space allotted to certain denominations had to be re-allocated as
consumption of area was found to be considerably disproportionate. See a pamphlet on the history of
Carr Villa Memorial Park prepared by Ian Campbell in 2002, held in the General Cemeteries File at the
Launceston Local Studies Library, State Library of Tasmania, Launceston.

4 Fawkner Cemetery was also presented to Adelaide as the idyllic burial place of the future. In terms of
services it offered a tearoom, flower shop and the grounds were extensively landscaped. Perpetual
maintenance accounts were also available. R. Nichol, *At the End of the Road* (St. Leonards, 1994), p.
270.

5 B. Elliott, ‘The Landscape of the English Cemetery’, *Landscape Design: Journal of the Landscape

6 This is a reference to the “onslaught of vitalism” which Michael Roe argues particularly dominated
the era between 1890 and 1914, rather than the more political, “American progressivism”. The latter
was best embodied by Theodore Roosevelt, and evolved in part to combat traditional conservatism.
Very much an energized form of romanticism, progressivism in the former sense was essentially a
mixture of rationalism and mysticism. The enemies were “classicism, determinism, formalism,
positivism, materialism and mechanism”. Within that framework the “creator-reformer” could tap into
the subjective (“the emotional, the psychic, the inexpressible yearning-for-life”) and harness them for
the benefit of all. The overall movement was probably most influenced by philosopher Henri-Louis
Bergson and pervaded the work of a diverse range of thinkers including T. H. Huxley and even Albert
Lucia, 1984), pp. 1-2. The term “progressive would continue to reverberate throughout the first half of
the century and played a role in this debate as well, being used to describe the overall character of the
city and its leaders who advocated a gentle, reform agenda wherein the city was moulded into a vibrant
“city of gardens”, fitted out with all the modern conveniences and emphasising the importance of space
and the aesthetic. Clearly, disused burial places were not a valued part of this overall scheme. The term
officially closing the urban cemeteries in 1905, the individual burial grounds and the first general cemetery were deprived of their only viable income source. Taking this factor into consideration, along with increased urban pressure and growing awareness of potential health concerns, neglect and a corresponding decline in overall condition were probably inevitable.\textsuperscript{7}

\textbf{Attitudes to Death and Burial Places:}

Popular conceptions of death also had a direct impact on the treatment of the urban burial places in Launceston. The cult of ‘death denial’ was very strong leading up to the period of redevelopment and in fact it may have undergone an added upsurge following the carnage of the Second World War. The cultural pendulum was not to swing back in favour of a policy which embraced death as an integral part of life until about 1980, as a new generation emerged, which had grown up in an age of relative peace and prosperity.\textsuperscript{8}

Before the Charles Street cemetery was redeveloped the number of graves properly maintained could be counted on two hands. Once the deceased passed largely from living memory and surviving relatives moved away, there were few voices to speak in their defence. The dead become faceless masses with little or no identity or importance. The letters of the Reverend West and the Buttons best typify a sense of apathy and indifference.\textsuperscript{9}

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even appeared in the correspondence between the St. Andrew’s Board and the LCC: “It is now urged upon the Council of our progressive city of Launceston that this question be formed. Can the city afford to let this historic and sacred place fall into utter disrepair?” Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery (QVM) LCC3 6/1.7 Cemeteries General (1938-1941), D. J. Rae to Town Clerk, 4 April 1938. \textsuperscript{7} Lisa Murray, in her article, ‘Remembered/Forgotten? Cemetery Landscapes in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries’, \textit{Historic Environment}, Vol. 17, No. 1(2003), p. 52, was the first to fully articulate the idea of a natural life-cycle for burial places: ‘When cemeteries are ‘active’… The monuments within the cemetery are visited and cared for. The graves are ‘remembered’. As time elapses, cemeteries fill up. …It becomes more crowded… relatives who tended the graves die or move away… the cemetery then enters into a phase of neglect. It is ‘forgotten’. This however passes and a new generation becomes interested in the cemetery…’.


\textsuperscript{9} The most relevant examples of this mindset being: QVM LCC3 6/3.8 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1944-1945), Rev. A. E. West to Town Clerk, undated but received February 1944; QVM LCC3 6/3.5 Cemeteries - Charles Street (1930-1933), E. Button to Town Clerk, 26 August 1933; QVM LCC3 6/3.8 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1944-1945), E. Button to Town Clerk, 14 February 1944.
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The basic Christian tenet that the soul passes on and that earthly remains are just an empty casing for the being that has been, perhaps helped to justify the practical attitude to these cemeteries. Although this was one of the arguments best employed by the Churches who were just as unwilling to spend funds on the sites as the Council, it was possibly a concern that was, on occasion, genuine. A popular term for burial places following the Victorian age was ‘God’s acre’. Some found the sight of smashed crypts, leaning headstones and desecrated coffins difficult to reconcile with notions of a respectful resting place.  

**Approaches to the Redevelopment of Burial Places:**

In addition to the influence of the development of the concept of the burial place and evolving attitudes to death in Australian society, the critical factor in determining an official approach to the problem of the urban burial places in Launceston, may have been tied to its particular sense of identity. Henry Reynolds has argued that as a city, Launceston “always had the pretensions to be more than a country town.” It is Reynolds’ view that the city always sought to be an advanced, modern city, incorporating all the modern advances in basic services such as sewerage, gas and electricity at the earliest opportunity. While it has always remained a regional city, the fact that it has long aspired to be the ‘Northern Capital’ of the state may have influenced its approach to the problem of inner city cemeteries between 1931 and 1963. They were collectively seen as an unwanted blight on the landscape and it was felt that they certainly had no place in a city that saw itself as essentially modern. Perhaps significantly one of the titles given to the city during this period was that of the ‘city of gardens’. By 1951 there were no less than twenty-eight parks and reserves already established in the city of Launceston. This was more than was needed in a practical sense and serves to emphasise that there was an official policy to developing surplus recreational space, perhaps as part of an ongoing campaign to make the city as ‘progressive’ as possible.

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12 *Mercury*, 7 February 1951.
There is no definite evidence that a desire to wipe away the convict past played any official part in the redevelopment process in question, although the stigma did influence the structure of burial places. This does not mean that a collective desire to wipe away the past was not a factor in the process, but due to the nature of the concern it was unlikely to have been articulated. This impetus might have been most influential in encouraging a general lack of regard for preserving monuments of the past. There was always an unease about the convict past in Australian society. Stefan Petrow, in his article referring to the urban cemeteries of Hobart, quoted a newspaper article, which referred to them as being examples of being “dominated by the dead hand of the Bad Old Past.”13

Health concerns in relation to the urban burial grounds were probably not as great in Launceston as they had been in Hobart, but they did play a part in influencing public sentiment. There was concern over the broken crypts at the Scotch burial ground and the exhumations, which regularly took place following the official closure of all intramural burial places in Launceston. Launceston’s expansion was gradual but definite between 1840 and 1925 when the Council assumed control of the Charles Street General Cemetery, and urban pressure had become evident.14 An inherent fear of ‘miasmas’ was certainly secondary to aesthetic concerns.15

The intensity of the burials in the particular sites, the lack of records and the general sensitivity meant that full-scale redevelopment was never going to be an option.16 It would have been quite costly – if perhaps impossible given the poor record keeping of certain cemeteries in the Launceston area – to remove all the bodies and allow alternative use of the land, although that has not prevented widespread disturbance of

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14 This unease is best evidenced by QVM LCC3 6/1.10 Cemeteries General (1948-1949), Raymond J. Marsh to Town Clerk, 4 February 1948 and Town Clerk to Raymond J. Marsh, 3 March 1948.
16 The Catholic burial ground was the worst maintained in this regard, although records pertaining to all were virtually non-existent and now rely on surveys taken at the time of redevelopment. See QVM LCC3 6/1.11 Scotch and Roman Catholic Cemeteries (1944-1950), Town Clerk to Rev. W. A. Upton, 15 May 1947 and Rev. W. A. Upton to Town Clerk, 5 June 1947 and same, 27 August 1947, M. Butler to Town Clerk, 16 September 1947.
human remains in the Hobart area. The majority of bodies interred in the urban burial places of Launceston, were allowed to remain where they were as the burial grounds were redeveloped into places of quiet recreation, which, during the period of the baby boom following the Second World War, became very popular.

**Final Reflections:**

The essential unease associated with redeveloping burial places is not fully reflected through the use of traditional, official sources. The use of letters from participants has allowed a more comprehensive analysis of the extent and types of concerns that influenced action and resistance. During the decades of the program of redevelopment, the majority appeared to be satisfied with superficial change, although there was a consistent attitude that human remains should be left alone. There were very few objections raised at the time on the grounds of preservation of heritage. Interviews with older people who possess memories and direct connections with the specific burial places have provided, both a valuable first-hand insight into the process, and a revealing contrast with letters from the period. Mainstream attitudes towards the dead and the wider issue of burial places as cultural heritage have changed. Combined with analysis of the most recent controversy concerning the use

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18 *Mercury*, 24 April 1940.
20 QVM LCC3 6/3.8 Cemeteries – Charles Street (1944-1945), Rev. A. E. West to Town Clerk, undated but received February 1944. This is the best example of this sentiment being articulated.
21 There have been at least two threats to then unlisted cemeteries in Launceston area since the construction of the Bowling Green on the old Catholic cemetery site in 1964. The first was a proposal in 1971 by Superintendent of Carr Villa Abel Reeve, to convert the old section of the cemetery (A, B, C, D, E and F) into recreational land as part of a scheme to establish a Secondary College nearby. Only the war graves section was to be preserved. The plan was rejected. (See I. Campbell, Pamphlet on the history of the cemetery held in the General Cemeteries File at the Launceston Local Studies Library, State Library of Tasmania, Launceston and LCC 24 City Architects Dept 1945-74 plan no. 1879B). The construction of a helipad for the nearby Launceston General Hospital created a “fierce debate” beginning in 1998. The Friends of Ockerby Gardens action group was formed to lobby against the proposal. A very polarised and sometimes emotive debate followed. State Parliament passed the *Ockerby Gardens Act 1999* which empowered the Council to construct the heli-pad on the condition that they did not damage the cultural value of the site. The Council subsequently approved the plan in December 2000. A Public Resource Planning Commission Hearing was then called in May 2001 and while approval was given, it was recommended that shielded light-cables be buried no deeper than 600mm rather than the regulation 1200mm (see *Examiner*, 28 May 1998, 5 July 1999, 18 December 2000, 12 March 2001, 18 May 2001 and 11 July 2001).
of burial places in Launceston, the heli-pad crisis, it is clear that there is a mixture of regret and even blame evident in local, mainstream thought. The Launceston City Council has been accused in a variety of ways of reneging on its promise to only use the sites for quiet recreation and many hold them accountable for an irreversible loss of cultural heritage.\textsuperscript{22}

Current views on conservation of burial places are radically different to those dominating public policy in the middle of last century. James Semple Kerr noted that the crucial change in collective attitudes towards cemeteries as heritage began to change by the 1980s. He wrote in 1983, that “…we appear to have passed the low-point of community indifference.” In the past he noted that the lack of a conservation ethic in relation to cemeteries could be attributed to “…a failure to understand the value to our community.” In referring to them as “open air museums”, he infers that they are a record of planning, iconography, stylistic development as well as storehouses of craft skills related to work in stone, iron and timber. Their very nature as public facilities has also contributed to a rise in the general level of appreciation for them, as they are free to access and enjoy.\textsuperscript{23} The regulations set down in the Tasmanian Heritage Council’s \textit{Practice Note 11} in 2004 make an interesting comparison to the treatment of the old urban cemeteries of Launceston and others like them.\textsuperscript{24} The guidelines explicitly state that all burial places are unique and even if not covered by heritage listing, are likely to have historic, cultural heritage significance.

\textsuperscript{22} These sentiments are illustrated by a number of public statements that were made during the heli-pad crisis. Patricia Ratcliff, local historian, in relation to the redevelopment of the Charles Street General Cemetery makes reference to it being “passed to the people of Launceston with promises of fountains, trees and retaining walls” in a Letter to the Editor published in \textit{Examiner}, 5 June 1998. Opponents of the proposal argued generally that the construction of a heli-pad would further compromise the sacred nature of the site, \textit{Examiner}, 1 May 1999. Descendant of the second Mayor of Launceston, Gordon Sutton, observed that “there isn’t even a memorial to say that it is a cemetery”, \textit{Examiner}, 6 March 2001. Rosemary Moorhouse, of Friends of Ockerby Gardens, was quoted saying that “neither the council nor the Government would contemplate a helipad if headstones were still there”. \textit{Examiner} 18 May 2001.


\textsuperscript{24} Tasmanian Heritage Council, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 1-4. These regulations are heavily influenced by the Burra Charter (the Australian National Heritage Charter). This had its roots in the Venice Charter adopted by the International Council on Monuments and Sites in 1966. It was adapted to Australian conditions and adopted by the National Trust of Australia as the fundamental guidelines for cemetery conservation in 1981. It was revised in 1999. Two of the essential concepts adopted by the Tasmanian Heritage Council have been derived from this charter: do a little as possible but as much as necessary and wherever possible treatments should be reversible. See \url{http://www.nsw.nationaltrust.org.au/cemscharters.html} and \url{www.icomos.org/docs/burra_charter.html} for full details.
At the official level at least, heritage had replaced development, although it is still secular in nature.

Future treatment of rural cemeteries attached to country churches in Tasmania, which are gradually being sold off by the various denominations as congregations dwindle, is a concern. The future of those sites that are not heritage-listed is uncertain and, although the Tasmanian Heritage Council advises that its regulations be applied to all cemeteries, there is no guarantee or legal necessity that they will be adhered to. On reflection, Pete Seeger’s lyrics from ‘Where Have All the Flowers Gone’ seem curiously apt:

Where have all the graveyards gone?
Long time passing
Where have all the graveyards gone?
Long time ago
Where have all the graveyards gone?
Covered with flowers every one
When will we ever learn?
When will we ever learn?25

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Appendix A

Aerial Map of Burial Places 1922

Figure 10. Aerial Survey of Launceston, 1922. Taken by H. W. King. *QVM: 1999:P:1606. From the Collections of the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston.* This composite image provides the only known collective image of all of the urban burial places in Launceston before their redevelopment:

1. Cypress Street, Anglican Burial Ground
2. Connaught Crescent, Catholic Burial Ground
3. High Street, Presbyterian Burial Ground
4. Charles Street, General Cemetery
5. Pedder Street, Quaker Burial Ground
6. South Street, Jewish Burial Ground
Appendix B

Comparative Photography

Figure 11. Charles Street General Cemetery, Launceston, looking towards Charles Street entrance near the Mortuary, circa 1880. LSC/PF B and W Neg. 68/99. From the Collections of the Launceston Library, State Library of Tasmania.

Figure 12. Ockerby Gardens (formerly Charles Street General Cemetery), Launceston, 2006.
Figure 13. Jewish Cemetery, South Street, Invermay, Launceston, 1927. Illustrated Tasmanian Mail, 9 March 1927.

Figure 14. Monash Reserve, South Street (formerly Jewish Burial Ground), 2006.
Figure 15. Presbyterian Burial Ground, High Street, Launceston, 1951. *Mercury, 3 March 1951.*

Figure 16. St. Andrew’s Gardens, High Street (formerly Presbyterian Burial Ground), 2006.
Appendix C

Oral Interviews Questionnaire

1. What relationship do you have to the people interred in the said cemetery? (ie. names and exact relationships described).

2. How did you first learn of the redevelopment process and how did you feel at the time? Did you agree with the proposed development?

3. What was your impression of the cemetery prior to redevelopment? (ie how well maintained had it been in your opinion? Has it become an eyesore? Was it well laid out?)

4. How often did you visit the cemetery in question before it was redeveloped?

5. Do you ever visit the location of the cemetery now? What do you think of when you are there now?

6. What value do cemeteries have other than just as places in which to store the remains of the dead?

7. Unlike some Hobart cemeteries, the headstones were disposed of during the redevelopment. What type of memorial-work – if any - should have been preserved in the cemetery in question?

8. Do you think a cemetery is a sacrosanct place or just like any other that should be prone to pressures for redevelopment after a certain length of time? Why?

9. Do you sometimes wish that the cemetery still existed in its original form? If so, why?

10. How would you feel if somebody was to redevelop a cemetery into which you had been interred, in a century’s time?
Appendix D

*The Historical Stages of the Redevelopment of Burial Places*¹

1. **Intense Intramural and Denominational Burial (1788-1840’s):**
   This period is typified by intense intramural burial and a preoccupation with denominational rights. By the middle of this period (even before the reform program heralded by Sir Edwin Chadwick) it was becoming more common to situate burial places on the periphery of any settlement, particularly in the developing colonies. There was little regard shown to burial sites and attitudes tended to be very pragmatic. The mainstream attitude to the dead and burial places tended to be contemptuous and even fearful.

2. **The Victorian Romantic Period and the rise of the General Cemetery (1840’s – 1900):**
   Chadwick’s reforms and Loudon’s emphasis on the aesthetic lead in part to the establishment of the new concept of the general cemetery. These tended to be increasingly secular places, situated in isolated settings, laid-out in aesthetically pleasing ways, offering a diverse range of services. This period also coincided with, and was in part encouraged by, a rise in a romantic approach to death and burial. The first General Cemetery in Launceston is an excellent example of an approach to establishing a burial place in this period. Still the Victorian attitude to the long dead remained callous.

3. **The Beginnings of the Heritage Movement, Death Denial and the Pioneer Park Compromise (1900 – 1980):**
   This extended phase coincided with both an upsurge of interest in burial places, more specifically monuments, as cultural heritage as well as a distinct “death denying” trend. The beginnings of an appreciation of the heritage value of burial places was linked to the genesis of the “pioneer legend”, that is the long dead were beginning to be considered to be the founders of the nation. A decided emphasis

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on monuments and a practical, non-emotional attitude towards bodies was typical of this period. The Launceston phase of redevelopment falls into this period.
Hobart proved to be more typical of wider trends though, embracing the pioneer park model and still retaining a practical attitude towards human remains – the dead were hardly ever considered during the process of redeveloping a burial place. Launceston certainly experienced the death denial phase exacerbated by two World Wars, but remained emotionally attached to its dead to an extent (the civic authorities took care to assure residents and relatives that these sites would only be used as places of recreation) therefore insisting that remains were not desecrated. The pioneer park model was rejected in Launceston, despite being a favoured method of compromise throughout Australia to satisfy the minority who were concerned with the cultural impact of such processes.

As the culture of death denial declined and concerns with cultural heritage strengthened, a new phase in relation to the treatment of burial places began. This became formalised in the 1990s as a more professional and standardised heritage system emerged to regulate impacts on these sites of “social significance”. The pioneer park model appears to most now to have been nothing short of cultural vandalism. Every part of a site, its entire fabric is imbued with value, even the space it occupies. This current period is further characterised by the decided resumed focus on the importance of the body. While in the first two phases, the body was seen as something unclean and a nuisance, it was now something to be treated as being not only scientifically valuable but also, worthy of reverence. Remains when uncovered are often treated to religious blessings and careful reburial.
Appendix E

Timeline of Burial Place Redevelopment in Launceston

Historical Background:

1811 The first permanent burial ground in Launceston is established on Windmill Hill. There were possibly one hundred and sixty interments in this site. While predominantly Anglican, the lower end at least is used by Launceston’s growing Jewish population.

1823? Originally proposed to be situated at what is now Prince’s Square, a site is selected on Goderich Street (later Cypress Street) for a new Anglican burial ground. This was achieved at the latest by 1826. It is possible that the Catholic burial ground on Connaught Crescent was established around this period. There is evidence that some monuments were transferred to the new Anglican burial ground from the old one when part of the area was sub-divided for residential purposes. The site of the Jewish section is exchanged for a plot of land on the corner of High and Balfour Streets. David Solomon builds a house on the site sometime before 1855. The Solomon family moved to Launceston in 1826.

1832 Jewish Hotel-Keeper, Henry Davis, petitions Governor Arthur for a grant of land for the purposes of establishing a burial ground for Jews in Launceston.

1835 A burial ground is granted to the Presbyterian Church. The land is situated on a steep hillside.

1836 Henry Davis donates a plot of land off York Street and near the end of Eleanor Street for use as a burial ground. It is still
marked as the “Jew’s Burial Place” on a survey of Launceston conducted in 1878.

1841 Launceston’s first General Cemetery is opened on 29 July. It was established on land purchased by the Independent Congregational Church and is run by a board of trustee on a non-profit basis.

1845 The Prisoner’s burial ground is established on Peel Street. Previously all convicts were buried in the ordinary denominational grounds in Launceston. At first a site along Patterson Plains Road (now Elphin Road) and between Lawrence Street and Lyttleton Streets was considered and approved by Governor Wilmot, but for some unknown reason this area was not used. This burial ground was in use for almost thirty years and it is believed that more than three hundred convicts were buried there, of all denominations.

1844 The Cornwall Chronicle reports that the Jews will need to apply for land to use as a burial ground as their current site is private property. The South Street site is secured around this time. The Launceston Jewish population declines over the following decades and the last known burial at the South Street site occurs in 1893. It is during the mid-1840s that an active Quaker community is established in Launceston and John Lawson donates a plot of land in Pedder Street for use as a burial ground.

1851 The last known interment in the Pedder Street burial ground, Susannah Wellington, occurs in April. That is the same year that declining numbers make the community in Launceston unviable and meetings cease.
1902 *The Cemeteries Amendment Act, 1902* is passed by state parliament facilitating the closure of intramural burial places. Work begins on the establishment of a new General Cemetery at the Carr Villa Estate.

1905 The new General cemetery, Carr Villa Memorial Park officially opens with the first interment being that of John Doran on 1 August. On 31 December, all burial places within the limits of the city of Launceston are officially closed. Relatives and those possessing some previous right of burial retain their rights for only for another twenty years.

1925 The Launceston city council assumes control of the old General Cemetery through the *The Launceston (Charles Street) General Cemetery Act*. There is only one surviving trustee, a Mr. C. Nickalls.

**Redevelopment Phase:**

1931 The Society of Friends transfers control of the Pedder Street burial ground to the council. While there are clearly several graves, there is only one headstone in the burial ground.

1938 The trustees of the South Street Jewish burial ground transfer ownership to the city council. It is immediately recognised by Alderman Ockerby as a potential site for a children’s playground.

1943 The city council resolves to redevelop the Charles Street general cemetery into a place of quiet recreation in December.

1944 A meeting is held at the Town Hall on 16 February where the fate of the Charles Street site is discussed. The public are overwhelmingly in favour of the proposal. *The Launceston*
Corporation (Charles Street Cemetery Improvement) Bill, 1944 is passed by state parliament on 27 April. Relatives officially have a year to arrange transferral of remains and/or monuments before the process begins. The decision to take over the very dilapidated High Street, Prebyterian burial ground is made by the city council in December.

1945 The city council further decides to assume control of the Connaught Crescent, Roman Catholic burial ground in August. It is further decided that the subsequent vesting and improvement Act will be based on the Charles Street Act and will cover both the High Street and the Connaught Crescent sites and that they will be redeveloped in that order.

1947 The Launceston Corporation (Scotch and Roman Catholic Cemeteries Improvement) Act, 1947 is passed by state parliament.

1951 The redevelopment of the High Street burial ground commences.

1953 The Church of England Synod at Hobart decides to licence the Cypress Street site to Broadland House School, allowing them to redevelop it into a school park. This action circumvented the church constitution, which prohibited it from selling or leasing the site. There is an arrangement that relatives are to be given reasonable notice before monuments are removed and they are to relocated and cared for. By 1959 many of the monuments have been thrown together in a heap and damaged beyond repair.

1956 The Connaught Crescent burial ground is redeveloped into St. Patrick’s Gardens.
1963 An amendment is made to the 1947 Act allowing the city council to redevelop the Connaught Crescent site into a Bowling Green and parking lot.

Post-redevelopment Phase:

1971 Superintendent of Carr Villa Abel Reeve proposes to convert the old section of the cemetery (A, B, C, D, E and F) into recreational land as part of a scheme to establish a Secondary College nearby. Only the war graves section is to be preserved. The plan is rejected by the city council.

1998 The proposed construction of a helipad for the nearby Launceston General Hospital creates a “fierce debate”. The Friends of Ockerby Gardens action group is formed. An emotive public debate follows.

1999 State Parliament passes the Ockerby Gardens Act 1999 which empowers the Council to construct the heli-pad on the condition that they do not damage the cultural value of the site.

2000 Despite fierce opposition, the city council subsequently approves the plan in December.

2001 A Public Resource Planning Commission Hearing is called in May and, while approval is given, it is recommended that shielded light-cables be buried no deeper than 600mm rather than the regulation 1200mm to avoid disturbing the remains.

2002 The Heli-pad is constructed. Much to the annoyance of the National Trust, the Tasmanian Heritage Council only grants provisional listing once the work has begun, assigning an archaeologist to monitor the process.
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