HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: COLERAINE CEMETERY

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Lower Hilgay Road COLERAINE

STUDY NUMBER: 145 **HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:**
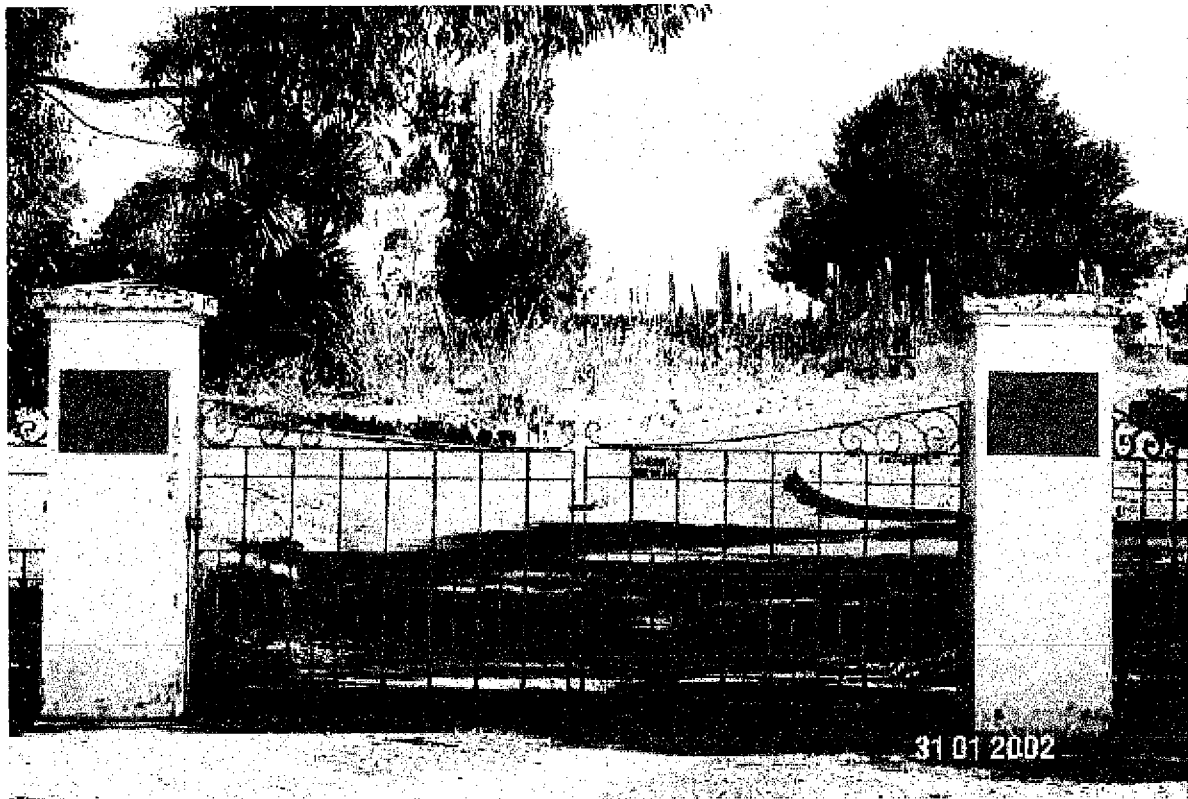
PRECINCT: outside

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

 SECTION: A **PARISH:** PARISH OF COLERAINE

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 430 C-26, approximately 2 kilometres south west of the township of Coleraine, on Lower Hilgay Road.

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local

Coleraine Cemetery, Lower Hilgay Road, Coleraine. Memorial Gates and Cemetery Entrance

Image Date: 31/01/02

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All the surviving graves, monuments, fences, etc, plantings and the whole of the cemetery reserve.

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Coleraine Cemetery is situated on a steeply sloping site overlooking Bryan's Creek, approximately 2 kilometres south west of the township of Coleraine, on Lower Hilgay Road. The layout is typical of 19th century cemeteries, with a picturesque, park-like setting, evoking an atmosphere of dignity and repose. The graves are approached through an entrance of ornamental gates, via a principal access road laid out in a serpentine pattern, with several secondary paths which wind up the hillside in a picturesque manner. The cemetery has been planted with several tree species which were typically used for funerary settings in the period, including Cupressus and Pinus.

The graves are grouped in the traditional manner, according to religious denomination. The headstones record the resting place of a large number of the pioneering individuals and families of the region. These include the well-known names McConochie, Trangmar, Payne, Kaine, Lesser, Silvester and Swan.

The Cemetery retains a high degree of integrity, and is maintained in good condition.

HISTORY:

The passing of the English Metropolitan Internments Act which granted that the Board of Health in London was to provide burial grounds seems to have influenced legislation in the Australian colonies. Cemeteries were usually developed in association with particular denominational churches or as a result of public meetings of concerned citizens. "In 1854, an 'Act for the Establishment and Management of Cemeteries in the Colony of Victoria' was passed by the Victorian Government forming the basis of cemetery management as we know it today. The Government had the power to appoint and remove trustees and lend or pay money for the establishment of cemeteries. The trustees were charged with the responsibilities to construct structures and avenues; impose rules and regulations to manage and protect the cemeteries; allow ministers of religion free access and religious denominations to build mortuary chapels; have the right to veto and remove inappropriate vaults and monuments; and to keep accounts and statements (Sagazio, 13)"

The passing of the 'Municipal Institutions Establishment Act' in 1854 became the basis of Victoria's local government. Local councils were given control over amenities including roads, bridges, streets, sanitation and public health. The 'Public Health Act' was also passed in 1854 and it was envisaged that local councils would also have the responsibility for management of public cemeteries. "Under the provisions of the Public Health Act 1889 the Minister for Health and the Department of Public Health became responsible for the management of cemeteries and the responsibility has remained within the Health portfolio since that time (Sagazio, 15)."

Most small suburban and country cemeteries were simple in layout with graves in straight lines in either a grid or a design of winding paths. The latter was an influence from English cemetery design, particularly from John Claudius Loudon, and to a lesser extent American cemetery design, from such landscape garden designers as Calvert and Vaux. Plantings were typically those with a funereal iconography such as Cupressus funebris, C. sempervirens, various Pinus species, Laurels, Yews and Junipers. Their common quality was their evergreen and sombre foliage. In special cases trees, shrubs or minor plants were planted with specific association for the deceased. Cemeteries were subdivided into sections according to the major Christian denominations. In rare cases, such as at Coleraine, there were also sections for non-Christians, such as the Jews.

The Coleraine cemetery was established on land that was originally part of the pre-emptive right, Hilgay Station, owned by Arthur Pilleau, and later by Alfred Arden. Lower Hilgay Road was formerly the primary access road to Hilgay Station, and each evening Pilleau's staff would ride down to close the gates of the cemetery. The land is divided into two parts, one purchased in 1922 and the other in 1927, although there was already a Cemetery on this land well before that time. It is not known when the Coleraine Cemetery was first Gazetted, but it is likely that it was shortly after the township of Coleraine was surveyed in the 1850s. The earliest marked graves date back to the late 1840s, and give the names of the earliest residents of the Coleraine

HERITAGE PLACE

township. Many of these names are the same as those on the modern graves, showing the continuation of early pioneers in Coleraine.

The site continues to be used as a public burial ground today.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

Theme 9: Marking the phases of life
9.7 Dying
9.7.1 Dealing with human remains
9.7.3 Remembering the dead

CONDITION:

The cemetery is well maintained, and the overall condition of the graveyard is excellent.

INTEGRITY:

high degree of integrity

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

What is significant?
The Coleraine Public Cemetery is located approximately 2.5 kilometers to the south west of the Town, on Lower Hilgay Road. This road was previously the access road to Hilgay Station, and the land was once part of Hilgay Station also owned by pastoralist, Arthur Pilleau. It is Coleraine's only Public Cemetery, although there are several large pastoral runs in the area which had private burials. The earliest burials date from the early 1840s, and continue to current burials. The layout is typical of 19th century cemeteries, with a picturesque, park-like setting, evoking an atmosphere of dignity and repose. The graves are approached through an entrance of ornamental gates, via a principal access road laid out in a serpentine pattern, with several secondary paths which wind up the hillside in a picturesque manner. The cemetery has been planted with several tree species which were typically used for funerary settings in the period, including species of Cupressus and Pinus. The Cemetery is in good condition generally, and retains an high degree of integrity.

How is it significant?
The Coleraine Cemetery is of historical, social and architectural significance to the district of Coleraine and the Southern Grampians Shire.

What is significant?
The Coleraine Cemetery is of historical significance as an enduring record of those who have lived and died in the community, as a reflection of passing phases, ways of life and death, particular events, and as documentary evidence.

The Coleraine Cemetery is of social significance for reflecting the customs and tastes of the community, for reflecting different religious values, and for reflecting different economic and social status. It is also important as a place of passive recreation.

The Coleriane Cemetery is of architectural significance for its range of tombstones, memorials and iconography reflecting the aesthetics of different periods and groups within the community. It is also of interest for its overall design and position within the broader landscape. The plantings of conifers, particularly Cupressus and Pinus species enhances the funereal aesthetic of the location.

COMPARISON:

178 Balmoral Cemetery, Cemetery Road, Balmoral
074 Tarrayoukyan Cemetery, Tarrayoukyan Rd, Tarrayoukyan

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ASSESSED BY: AEN   **ASSESSMENT DATE:**   26-Apr-03

EXISTING LISTINGS:

HERITAGE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Include in VHR ☐ Include in RNE ☑ Include in Local Planning Scheme ☑

No Recommendations for Inclusions ☐

REFERENCES:

Author	Title	Year	Page
Celestina Sagazio, ed.	Cemeteries, Our Heritage	1992	13 & 15
Departments of Lands and Survey	Parish of Coleraine	1956	