# HO39 – Truganina Cemetery, Bound by Widmark Road, Woods Road and Tanglewood Boulevard, Truganina

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| **Heritage Place:** Truganina Cemetery | **HO Reference:** HO39<br>**Date updated:** 15 October 2026 |

**Address:** Bound by Widmark Road, Woods Road and Tanglewood Boulevard, Truganina



Figure 1. Truganina Cemetery, Bound by Widmark Road, Woods Road and Tanglewood Boulevard, Truganina. *Source:* Extent Heritage Pty Ltd. 2025.

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| **Item Group:** Civic<br>**Item Type:** Cemetery | **Key Theme:** Building Community Life<br>**Key Sub-theme:** Preserving traditions and commemorating |
| **Designer:** N/A<br>**Builder:** N/A | **Construction:** 1865<br>**Style:** N/A |

**Significance Level:** Local

**Recommendation:** Retain tree controls. Retain solar energy system controls. Apply Aboriginal heritage place controls. Update place address.

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| Controls: | ○ | External paint controls | ○ | Internal alteration controls | ● | Tree controls (sugar gums (*Eucalyptus cladocalyx*)) |
| | ○ | Included on Victorian Heritage Register | ○ | Incorporated Plans | ○ | Outbuildings and fence not exempt |
| | ○ | Prohibited uses may be permitted | ● | Aboriginal Heritage Place | ● | Solar energy system controls |

## Curtilage




Figure 2. Aerial map showing the curtilage boundary of the Truganina Cemetery, Bound by Widmark Road, Woods Road and Tanglewood Boulevard, Truganina. *Basemap source*: Nearmap. 2025. Spatial data source: VicMap & Department of Transport and Planning

## HERCON Criteria Assessment

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| *A* | *Importance to the course, or pattern of our cultural or natural history* | Truganina Cemetery is of historical significance as a landmark of the early rural township of Truganina. The cemetery was a key component of the early development of the township, made possible following a donation of land by William Doherty. Its establishment reflects the growth of community infrastructure in the nineteenth century and contributes to understanding of the course of Wyndham's local history through patterns of settlement and land use. |
| *B* | *Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of our cultural or natural history* | Truganina Cemetery contains a collection of native flora and fauna that is significant at the national level as uncommon and endangered species. The remnant grasslands are particularly significant to the Bunurong people as a rare and valuable representation of Country as it was prior to colonisation, with agricultural practices damaging much of the native grasslands that once grew across the region. |
| *C* | *Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of our cultural or natural history* | The place does not meet this criterion. |
| *D* | *Important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural or natural places or environments* | Truganina Cemetery is of local significance as a representative example of an early cemetery in a suburban context. Truganina Cemetery is also demonstrative of a cemetery that has remained in use for over 100 years, with multiple generations of families interred, and is a longstanding landmark in the district. |
| *E* | *Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics* | The place does not meet this criterion. |
| *F* | *Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period* | The place does not meet this criterion. |
| *G* | *Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of the* | The place does not meet this criterion. |

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| | *continuing and developing cultural traditions* | |
| *H* | *Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in our history.* | The cemetery is of significance for its associations with a number of families prominent to the establishment of Truganina, with members of the Evans family, Leakes family and Robinson family interred at the site. The oldest surviving burial marked with a headstone is that of Elizabeth Robinson, buried in 1865, demonstrating the association between the cemetery and the early township of Truganina. |

# Statement of Significance - Truganina Cemetery, Bound by Widmark Road, Woods Road and Tanglewood Boulevard, Truganina

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| **Address:** Bound by Widmark Road, Woods Road and Tanglewood Boulevard, Truganina | **PS ref no:** HO39 |



Figure 3. Truganina Cemetery, Bound by Widmark Road, Woods Road and Tanglewood Boulevard, Truganina. *Source:* Extent Heritage Pty Ltd. 2025.

## What is significant?

The Truganina Cemetery, including graves dating from the 1860s-1980s, is significant. The three mature sugar gum trees (*Eucalyptys cladocalyx*) located in the centre of the reserve, as well as the recognised flora and fauna including Button Wrinkewort (*Rutidosis leptorhynchoides*), Golden Sun Moth (*Synemon plana*), Spiny Rice-flower (*Pimelea spinescens*), the Legless Lizard (*Pygopodidae*) and the Arching Flax-lily (*Dianella longifolia var. grandis),* are significant. Contemporary boundary fencing is not significant.

## How is it significant?

The Truganina Cemetery is of historical and representative significance to the City of Wyndham. The cemetery is of significance for its associations with prominent families residing in Truganina. The cemetery also contains flora and fauna that a rare in the municipality and at a national level.

## Why is it significant?

Truganina Cemetery is of historical significance as a landmark of the early rural township of Truganina. The cemetery was a key component of the early development of the township, made possible following a donation of land by William Doherty. Its establishment reflects the growth of community infrastructure in the nineteenth century and contributes to understanding the course of Wyndham's local history through patterns of settlement and land use (Criterion A).

Truganina Cemetery contains a collection of native flora and fauna that is significant at the national level as uncommon and endangered species. The remnant grasslands are particularly significant to the Bunurong people as a rare and valuable representation of Country as it was prior to colonisation, with agricultural practices damaging much of the grasslands that once grew across the region. (Criterion B).

Truganina Cemetery is of local significance as a representative example of an early cemetery in a suburban context. Truganina Cemetery is also demonstrative of a cemetery that has remained in use for over 100 years, with multiple generations of families interred, and is a longstanding landmark in the district (Criterion D).

The cemetery is of significance for its associations with a number of families prominent to the establishment of Truganina, with members of the Evans family, Leakes family and Robinson family interred at the site. The oldest surviving burial marked with a headstone is that of Elizabeth Robinson, buried in 1865, demonstrating the association between the cemetery and the early township of Truganina (Criterion H).

**Source:**

Truganina Cemetery citation, Extent Heritage Pty Ltd, 2026.

# Description

### *Bunurong Country*

The Truganina Cemetery is situated on the lands of the Bunurong peoples of the Kulin Nation, the Traditional Custodians of Country. Despite the effects of colonisation, including dispossession of land, the Traditional Custodians have maintained a continuing connection to land, waters and culture within the City of Wyndham.

Truganina Cemetery is significant to Bunurong peoples because it contains highly significant remnant grasslands. These grasslands have survived because the cemetery was spared the agricultural practices that damaged much of the plains grasslands that once grew across this part of Bunurong Country (BLCAC, 2026, 16)

For Bunurong peoples, this location is a particularly rare and valuable representation of Country as it was before colonisation (BLCAC, 2026, 16).

### *Physical Analysis*

*Parts of this description have been extracted from the 2010 Heritage Alliance citation for the site, supplemented with further physical analysis by Extent Heritage.*

The Truganina Cemetery is located near the original Truganina township, at the southern extent of Woods Road, which runs along the eastern boundary of the cemetery. It is surrounded by residential development on its northern and southern sides. To the east of the cemetery adjacent to Woods Road is a railway corridor.

The Truganina Cemetery Reserve is rectangular in plan, with a frontage of about 100 metres to Woods Road, a depth of approximately 160 metres, with a total area of four acres (1.62 hectares). It is understood that the fabric associated with some burials pre-dating 1969 were lost in a grassfire, which have not been reconstructed since. Loosely laid out in rows, the remaining historic graves are concentrated in the northeast and southeast corners of the reserve, as well as two small clusters along the northern boundary. More recent burials are located more centrally along the eastern side of the reserve, as well as centrally along the northern boundary. Running parallel with the fence line, outside the northern and southern boundaries of the cemetery reserve, are council-managed laneways, which are grassed and unpaved.

The graves are variously marked with tombstones and slabs of marble, granite and other stone, with some of the older ones retaining plinth blocks and iron railings. Amongst the local families represented are the Robinsons, the Evans, the Leakes and the Volants. The oldest surviving burial marked with a headstone is that of Elizabeth Robinson, buried in 1865. The modern graves are predominantly black marble, with gold or white inscriptions.

A contemporary cyclone wire, steel pipe fence and timber posts mark the eastern and northern boundary of the cemetery while the western and southern perimeter is fenced with a simple star picket and wire fence. On the eastern boundary, there is a vehicle entrance gate and pedestrian gate, also constructed from Cyclone wire, steel pipe and timber posts.

Three mature gums trees are centrally aligned down the length of the cemetery reserve, and eight juvenile gums line its western boundary. One mature gum tree is positioned centrally along the northern perimeter. The mature gums were associated with other gum trees that formerly lined Woods Road and the other sites associated with the Truganina Township. The mature trees adjacent to the ARP Hall (HO125) also remain as evidence of this street planting. Nationally significant flora and fauna have been found within the cemetery reserve, the reserve to its west and the Council-managed tracks to the north and south of the cemetery. These specimens include Button Wrinkewort (*Rutidosis leptorhynchoides*), Golden Sun Moth (*Synemon plana*), Spiny Rice-flower (*Pimelea spinescens*), the Legless Lizard (*Pygopodidae*) and the Arching Flax-lily (*Dianella longifolia var. grandis*) (DEPI 2013, 3).

### *Alterations and Additions*

- Numerous eucalypt trees located within the cemetery have since been lost since the 1950s.
- The front gate to the cemetery has been changed within the last decade, replacing the earlier iron vehicle gate and V-shaped pedestrian entryway with metal bar and Cyclone wire gates with ornamental curved wire detailing on top of the gates.
- Modern graves and tombstones continue to densify the burial pattern within the cemetery, infilling space between clusters of historic burials.

*The cemetery retains a number of early graves that remain intact along side more contemporary graves which are in a good condition. The overall integrity of the cemetery is fair.*

**** Denotes element that does not contribute to the cultural significance of the place.***

## History

Truganina Cemetery, located on Bound by Widmark Road, Woods Road and Tanglewood Boulevard, Truganina, is situated on the lands of the Bunurong peoples of the Kulin Nation, the Traditional Custodians of Country. Despite the effects of colonisation, including dispossession of land, the Traditional Custodians have maintained a continuing connection to land, waters and culture within the City of Wyndham.

Truganina Cemetery is significant to Bunurong peoples because it contains highly significant remnant grasslands. These grasslands have survived because the cemetery was spared the agricultural practices that damaged much of the plains grasslands that once grew across this part of Bunurong Country. For Bunurong peoples, this location is a particularly rare and valuable representation of Country as it was before colonisation (BLCAC 2026, 16).

### *Place History*

In the early decades of the Truganina settlement, the considerable distance of the township from Melbourne Cemetery meant that the remains of the deceased were generally buried in the paddocks of their pastoral holdings (Green 1936, 5). Samual and Henry Cropley, buried on "Mayfarm," are amongst the only informal burials to have been recorded, most others having been lost from collective memory since (Green 1936, 5).

In 1865, William Doherty volunteered a portion of his pastoral landholding, being Allotment 6 of Section 15, for use as a public cemetery. On 25 September 1865, the Truganina Cemetery was officially gazetted, with Robert Faragher, Thomas Haynes, William Leake, Thomas Maher, and John Robinson as the trustees (The Argus 1865, 7). The cemetery remained under the management of the Truganina Cemetery Trust until 1982, when it was transferred to the municipal Council. In 1997, the Wyndham Cemeteries Trust was established to manage both the Truganina and Werribee Cemeteries. This was later amalgamated into the Melbourne Cemeteries Trust in 2010 (PROV 2010).

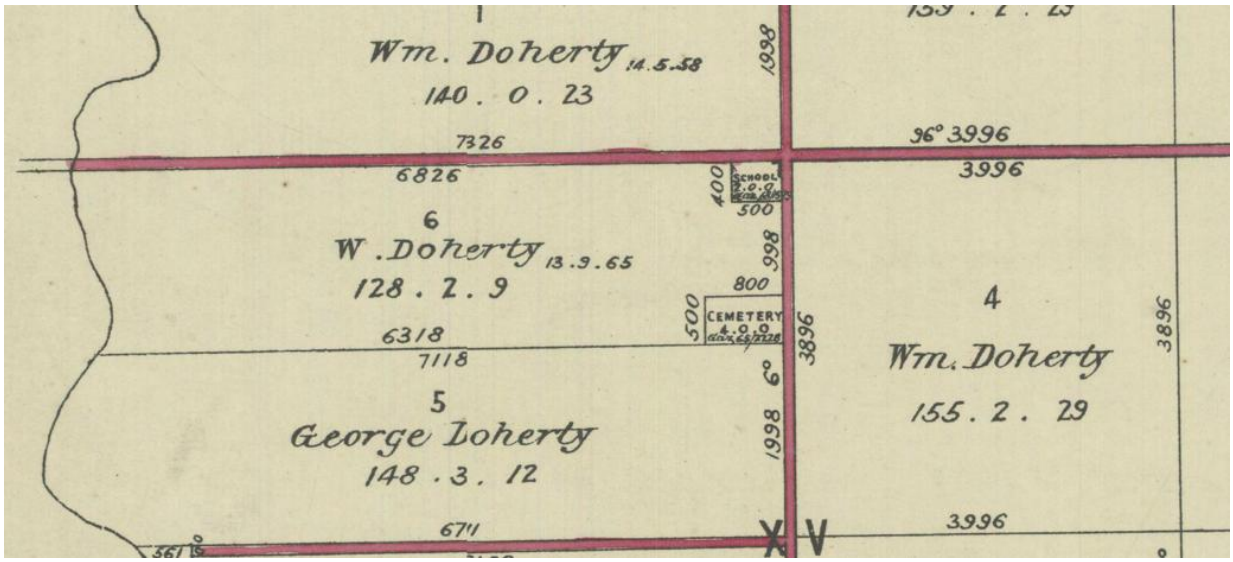



Figure 4. Map illustrating portion of land designated as the Truganina Cemetery from the land owned by William Doherty. *Source:* J. Noone. 1880. 'Truganina County of Bourke.' Photo-lithographed Parish Map.

Department of Lands and Survey Melbourne. State Library of Victoria. https://find.slv.vic.gov.au/permalink/61SLV_INST/1sev8ar/alma9921233263607636

It has been claimed that the first burial took place in October of 1865, prior to the formalisation of the cemetery (Green 1936, 5), however the identity of the deceased is unclear, and no headstone remains. The first burial after gazettal of the cemetery, and the oldest surviving headstone, is that of Elizabeth Robinson, the four-month-old daughter of John and Margaret Robinson who was buried in 1866 (Smith 2016, 41). Burials within the cemetery remained consistently infrequent from the cemetery's establishment, with typically up to two burials per annum.




Figure 5. Headstone of the Robinson Family, including Elizabeth Robinson, died in 1866. *Source:* Extent Heritage 2024.

The mature sugar gum trees (*Eucalyptus cladocalyx*) present at the site today were also recorded in 1957. At this time, the row of trees was described as comprising "8 eucalypt trees in the centre and 12 eucalypts irregularly spread around the perimeter" of the cemetery (Heritage Alliance 2013, xxxi).

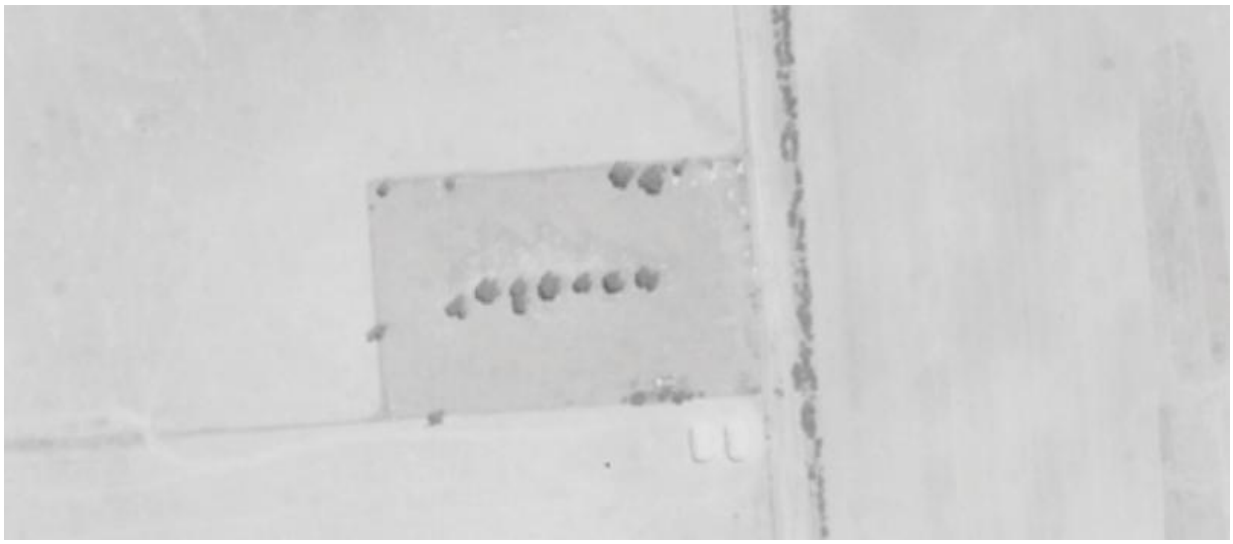


Figure 6. 1951 aerial depicting the Truganina Cemetery prior to the 1969 grassfire. Gum trees are extant within the photograph, as well as burials clustered around the cemetery's eastern and northern extents. *Source:* Landata. 1951. 'Melbourne and Metropolitan Project No.2.' Digital Photograph.

The 1969 grassfires that devastated the Wyndham region destroyed the Truganina Cemetery Burial Register documents, as well as numerous headstones and details of the cemetery layout and those interred have been lost. Extensive historical research has recently been undertaken to bridge this knowledge gap where possible, utilising surviving headstone inscriptions, newspaper articles, family documents and other published notices (Smith 2016).

As the population of Truganina has grown since the late 1990s, burials within the cemetery have become more frequent, creating a patchwork of historic and modern burial sites.

In 2013, nationally significant flora and fauna was identified within and north of the cemetery. While land conservation has been successful within the cemetery itself, the area north of the cemetery commenced residential development from 2021 and much of this native fauna has been lost.



Figure 7. Truganina Cemetery in 1989. *Source:* Werribee District Historical Society archives. 1989.

## Comparative Analysis

Truganina Cemetery has limited comparisons within the municipality with its most direct comparisons being to other cemeteries including Werribee Cemetery. Truganina is also comparable to examples outside of the municipality which include examples of remnant landscapes and mature plantings due to the lack of disturbance of the land. Truganina Cemetery is comparable to the following places:

**Werribee Cemetery (HO77)**

Truganina Cemetery is comparable to Werribee Cemetery as an example of an early rural cemetery, also opening in 1865, with many prominent early residents interred. Similar to Truganina, Werribee Cemetery remains in use today and has a combination of historic and contemporary graves, some with large, adorned headstones. Truganina Cemetery has a greater number of large headstones with the early traditions continuing through the present day and is more unique with its collection of rare native flora and fauna.

**Broadford Cemetery (HO329, Mitchell Shire)**

Truganina Cemetery is comparable to Broadford Cemetery as an example of an early rural cemetery established in the mid-nineteenth century containing early settlers and multiple generations of families. The cemetery is noted for its remnant mature plantings, similar to the existing conditions of Truganina Cemetery. Truganina Cemetery offers a more unique range of native plantings including rare flora and fauna.

## References


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## Images

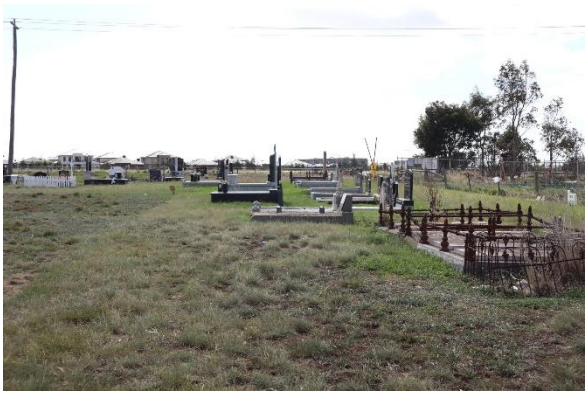


Figure 8. View looking east of the south east corner of the cemetery, depicting a mixture of historic and modern graves. *Source:* Extent Heritage Pty Ltd. 2025.



Figure 9. Historic graves associated with early settlers of Truganina. View looking east of the northeast corner of the cemetery. *Source:* Extent Heritage Pty Ltd. 2025.



Figure 10. Council-owned easement on the northern side of the cemetery. *Source:* Extent Heritage Pty Ltd. 2025.



Figure 11. Eucalypts and nationally significant flora. *Source:* Extent Heritage Pty Ltd. 2025.