

CEMETERIES AND CREMATORIA

additional areas acquired or being acquired at Williamstown and Fawkner would provide for burials as follows:

Table 72
FACILITIES FOR EARTH BURIALS, 1951

District	Cemeteries	Area in acres	Grave sites available	
Central	Melbourne	106		10,000
Western	Footscray	24	8,500	11,900
	Willmstown	30	3,400	
Northern	Fawkner	284	600	8,629
	Preston	23	8,029	
Eastern	Box Hill	29	6,731	7,431
	Burwood	14½	700	
Southern	Spring Vale	400	204,000	226,025
	Sandringham			
	/Cheltenham	30	19,500	
	Oakleigh	4½	2,500	
	St. Kilda	20	25	
			Total	263,985

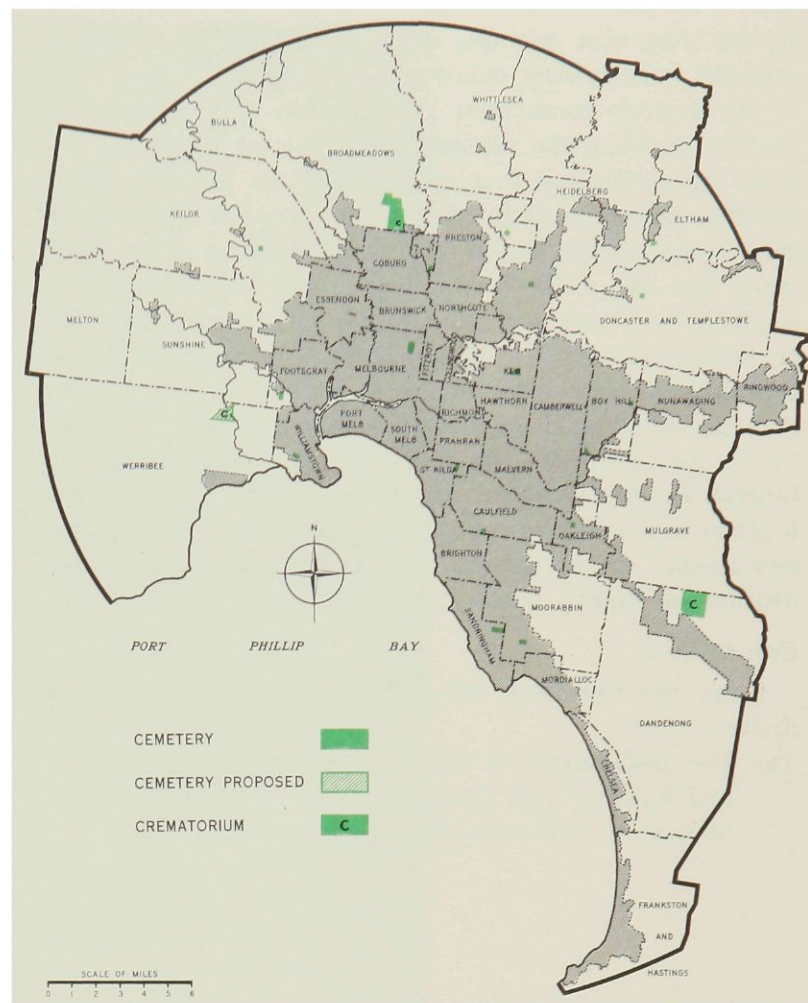
Existing Facilities for Cremation

At the present time Spring Vale and Fawkner are handling cremations for the whole State, although cremations from country sources account for less than 10% of all cremations carried out in the metropolitan area. It is proposed to construct a further crematorium on the new Williamstown site which could provide for Geelong and other country areas to the west as well as for the western metropolitan suburbs.

Spring Vale can now handle about 3,000 cremations each year and Fawkner about 1,500. By installing additional chapels at both places it is estimated that Spring Vale could handle at least 6,000 and Fawkner 4,000 annually, that is, a total of 10,000 cremations each year, or about one-third of the total deaths to be anticipated yearly when the population reaches 2,500,000.

Table 73
CAPACITY OF EXISTING CEMETERIES FOR EARTH BURIALS

District	Approx. number requiring burials over 50 years	Additional burials which could be provided for after allowing for cremation
Western	76,800	200,000
Central and Northern	180,000	300,000
Eastern	139,200	15,000
Southern	204,000	400,000
Total	600,000	915,000



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General Considerations

Although in the aggregate the existing facilities and those proposed at Williamstown and Fawkner are adequate for the total needs over the next 50 years, additional factors must be considered, namely:

- The convenience of the public attending funerals.
- The convenience of relatives and friends visiting graves.
- The effect on traffic.

With regard to the first two there is a divergence of opinion among the various authorities. Some claim that a number of smaller cemeteries in closer proximity to the residential area would prove of greater convenience to the public. Others claim that additional cemeteries and crematoria are socially unnecessary and economically unsound, and contend that in actual fact, the matter of distance and convenience has been overstressed. It is claimed that the practice of visiting graves is declining and the first year after death the average would probably not exceed two visits a year.

From the planning viewpoint the effect on traffic is of importance. The Authorities at Spring Vale claim that they handle up to 28 cremations and 12 earth burials in the six hours between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m., excluding the period 12 noon to 1 p.m., i.e., a peak rate of 40 funerals in 6 hours

or one every nine minutes, although average daily rates are normally considerably below this at present. About 95% of the funerals come from the direction of Melbourne, so that by doubling the number of chapels at Spring Vale it could be anticipated that at peak periods there would be one funeral coming from Melbourne every five minutes, and most of the vehicles would return the same way. This would mean that one traffic lane in each direction on a highway which is now busy and will become increasingly so, would be largely devoted to funeral traffic. Despite the cost of providing and operating crematoria, it would be much less than providing road capacity for such a volume of traffic. From the viewpoint of traffic, undue concentration of funerals in one location is undesirable. Additional cemetery facilities in the eastern suburbs will not only prove of greater convenience to the public, but will have the advantage of distributing funeral traffic over a wider road network.

Conclusions

From the foregoing the following conclusions may be drawn:

- (a) The installation of additional chapels at Spring Vale and Fawkner and the erection of the proposed crematorium at Williamstown would provide facilities for

the cremation of 50% of the total deaths likely to occur in the next 50 years.

- (b) With the proposed Williamstown site (even assuming that only about one-third of the area is suitable for burials) and with the acquisition of the additional area proposed at Fawkner, the total facilities for earth burial in the metropolitan area will be approximately 50% in excess of the needs of the next 50 years.
- (c) As additional facilities are needed in the north to provide for the future needs of the central and northern suburbs, the acquisition of additional area adjoining the existing Fawkner Cemetery is advisable, particularly as the geological formation of the area proposed to be acquired is favourable for the purpose.
- (d) Spring Vale has adequate facilities for the anticipated needs of both the southern and eastern districts for burial and cremation for over 50 years.
- (e) The facilities now existing for burial in the eastern suburbs are sufficient to provide for only the number of earth burials anticipated within the area during the next 10 years. From the viewpoint of public convenience and traffic distribution an additional cemetery site would seem desirable in this area.

A suburban infant welfare centre





Heatherton Sanatorium. Nurses' home