

**Lake Marma Reserve**

**Lake Street, Murtoa**

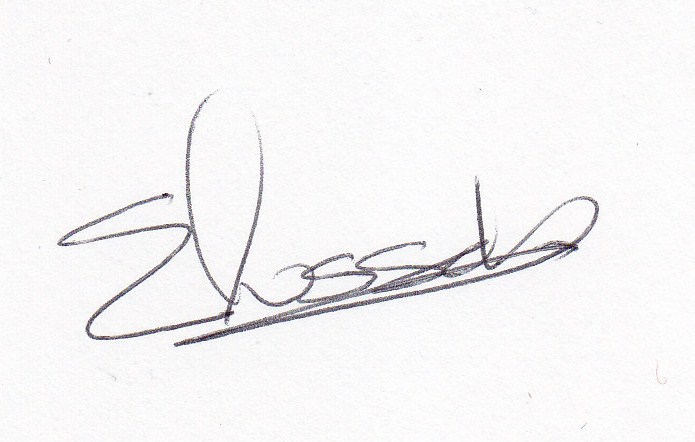
**Heritage Council Registrations Committee**

**Hearing – 21 May 2013**

**Members – Ms Emma Russell (Chair), Mr Jon Hickman, Mr Lindsay Merritt**

# Decision of the Heritage Council

After considering a recommendation and the submissions and conducting a hearing into those submissions, pursuant to Section 42(1)(d)(i) the Heritage Council has refused to register the place and refers the recommendation and submissions to the Yarriambiack Shire Council for consideration for an amendment to the Yarriambiack Planning Scheme.



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| **Emma Russell (Chair)** |  | **Jon Hickman** |  | **Lindsay Merritt** |

**Decision Date – 15 August 2013**

**APPEARANCES**

**Executive Director, Heritage Victoria**

Mr John Hawker, Heritage Officer (Horticulture) and Dr Kerry Jordan, Heritage Officer (Architectural History) appeared on behalf of the Executive Director.

**Committee of Management**

Mr Scott Finnigan, a member of the Lake Marma Reserve Committee of Management (‘the Committee of Management’), appeared on behalf of that body.

**National Trust**

Ms Anna Foley appeared on behalf of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) (‘National Trust’). She called Mr John Fordham, Aborist, as an expert witness.

**Other parties that appeared**

Mr Stephen Rabl, Mr Jack Slattery (in his own right and on behalf of Ms Pamela Kosch), Mr Leslie Pendergast, Mr Leigh Hammerton and Mr Andrew Clark appeared.

**Written submissions**

Thirty-two written submissions both objecting to and in support of the Executive Director’s recommendation were received from the following bodies and individuals:

Patricia Adler

Peter Adler

B Buckley

Ivy Cameron

Lola Cowie

Simone Coutts

John Delahunty

Gillian Elliot

Paul Gerdiz

David and Jeanette Grigg

Joel Guy

Bill Lindsay

Denis Lindsay

Lynette Lindsay

Murtoa Progress Association

Murtoa RSL Sub-branch

Betty Pendergast

Leslie Pendergast

John Petering

Lorna Petering

Francis Pickering

Jack Slattery

David and Alison Sudholz

Janice Turvey

T T Turvey

Brian Wills

Yarriambiack Shire Council.

**Introduction/background**

## The Place

1. Lake Marma Reserve is a public park in the town of Murtoa. Around the lake are avenues of about 400 mature sugar gums (*Eucalyptus cladocalyx*). The Reserve also contains a 1920 World War I Memorial Arch & Gate, a 1907 band rotunda and the 1895 Sprott Fountain.
2. The Memorial Entrance Gates, Fountain and Band Rotunda at the Lake Marma Public Park are included in Heritage Overlay HO38 in the Yarriambiack Planning Scheme. The draft ‘Yarriambiack Shire Heritage Study Stage 1’ (2012) recommended that this overlay be extended to apply to the entire Lake Marma Reserve.

## Nominations

1. A nomination for the inclusion of Lake Marma Reserve and Rabl Park in the Victorian Heritage Register (‘the Register’) was accepted by the Executive Director in August 2007.

## Recommendation of the Executive Director

1. On 18 January 2013, the Executive Director recommended that the Lake Marma Reserve be included in the Register. The Executive Director made a separate recommendation that Rabl Park not be included in the Register.
2. Thirty-two submissions were received in response to the Executive Director’s recommendation in relation to Lake Marma Reserve. Twenty-seven Submissions objected to the recommendation and five were in support.
3. As submissions objecting to the Executive Director’s recommendation to include the Lake Marma Reserve were received, pursuant to s41(6) of the *Heritage Act* *1995* (‘the Heritage Act’), a hearing was required to be held.

**Site Inspection**

1. The Committee undertook a site inspection on 20 May 2013 accompanied by the Hearings Officer.

## Preliminary Matters

*Late material*

1. Prior to the hearing, parties were provided with three opportunities to make submissions to the Committee. ‘Submissions’ in response to the recommendation of the Executive Director were due by 19 March 2013, ‘Initial Submissions’ to the Heritage Council were due on 23 April 2013 and ‘Submissions in Reply’ to the Heritage Council were due on 14 May 2013.
2. A number of parties put to the Committee that late Submissions in response to the recommendation of the Executive Director should not be considered.
3. The Committee notes that copies of the late submissions were circulated and that all parties had opportunities to comment upon the issues raised. In the Committee’s view, their consideration of the late material will not disadvantage any party. Furthermore, it is the Committee’s intention to be as informed as possible in registration matters. The late material will assist in this regard, and the Committee has determined to consider it.
4. An updated table of Victorian Heritage Database search results was tabled by the Trust and circulated to all parties.

*Submissions relating to matters other than cultural heritage significance*

1. Section 38(3) of the Heritage Act states that ‘a submission must relate only to the issue of whether or not a place or object is of cultural heritage significance or to any recommendations under section 33 in relation to the place or object’.
2. The Executive Director noted that many submissions did not address the cultural heritage significance of the place. The Committee of Management submitted that for this reason, some Submissions should not be considered.
3. In reaching its decision the Committee has considered only those matters outlined in s38 of the Heritage Act.

*Evidence of Mr Fordham*

1. The Committee noted that Mr Fordham’s report incorrectly described the orientation of the Lake Marma Reserve and his descriptions of parts of the place were 90 degrees from the correct compass point.

**Issues**

1. This section is not intended to be a complete record of submissions that were made to the Committee. It is a summary of what the Committee considers to be the key issues, followed by an explanation of the position the Committee takes on each issue.
2. Any reference to Criteria refers to the ‘Heritage Council Criteria for Assessment of Places of Cultural Heritage Significance’ (see Attachment 1 to this report).

**Summary of issues**

1. The Executive Director held that the place is worthy of inclusion in the Register and satisfies Criteria A, E and H.
2. The National Trust, Mr Hammerton and Mr Clark made submissions in support of the Executive Director’s recommendation. Mr Hammerton submitted that the place also satisfies Criterion B. Mr Clark submitted that the place also satisfies Criteria B and G.
3. The Committee of Management, Mr Rabl, Mr Slattery, Ms Kosch and Mr Pendergast opposed the Executive Director’s recommendation.

## Criterion A - Importance to the course, or pattern of Victoria’s cultural history

1. The parties disputed the place’s level of historical significance.

*Submissions and evidence*

1. The Executive Director provided the following summary of the history of the place:

The water provided by Lake Marma was partly responsible for the settlement and development of the town of Murtoa. The town was surveyed in 1873 and a reserve for a Public Park and Garden around the lake is shown on the subdivision plan.

Until the twentieth century exotic evergreen and deciduous trees such as elms, planes, oaks and poplars were the most common choice for park and street plantings in Victoria, but these were never suitable for the harsh conditions of north-west Victoria and this preference began to change in the late nineteenth century. Some planting of inappropriate European trees around Lake Marma began c1880, but planting was taken over in 1888 by the newly formed Progress Association, under its president Dr H Rabl.

Rabl was a friend of Ferdinand von Mueller, the first Victorian Government Botanist, who encouraged the use of native species and is thought to have advised Rabl to plant sugar gums in the Reserve. These were indigenous to South Australia but had been grown in the Western District since at least the 1870s. They were considered to be a ‘useful deodorising agent’ and hence to prevent disease, as well as being hardy and attractive trees. It is not certain when the sugar gums at Lake Marma were first planted, but it is thought that the first ones were grown from seed by Rabl and planted c1890. Early photos confirm that by 1900 the sugar gums were already quite mature. In the early twentieth century Murtoa was notable for this ‘charming oasis of trees and vegetation amid the monotonous surrounding landscape’.[[1]](#footnote-1)

1. The Executive Director submitted that Lake Marma Reserve is historically significant for its mass planting of sugar gums (*Eucalyptus cladocalyx*), one of the earliest known examples of a mass planting of Australian native trees in a public park in Victoria. In the National Trust’s view, this is the first known designed mass planting of native trees in Victoria. Ms Foley pointed out that there are no other single-species mass plantings of sugar gums within a public park included on the Register.
2. Mr Clark submitted that the sugar gums are an early example of Australian natives incorporated into formal European park design principles. Mr Clark agreed with the Executive Director that the place is significant as the oldest recorded surviving example of intact sugar gums in a massed planting in a public park in Victoria.
3. Aborist Mr Fordham supported the place’s inclusion in the Register in relation to the tree planting on the basis that the early date and extent of the planting of native trees has few parallels in Victoria. In his view, the reserve is significant to Victoria as the earliest known use of mass native plantings as a park planting in Victoria. Mr Fordham was not aware of another mass planting of one species in the same style elsewhere in Victoria which formed a seemingly solid block of vegetation. In his view, the three rows of trees tapering off to one row is most unusual.
4. The Executive Director argued that the sugar gums demonstrate the significant change in the choice of trees planted in Victorian parks and streets at the end of the nineteenth century from a preference for exotic deciduous species to Australian natives. The Executive Director argued that the plantings reflect the increasing sense of nationalism in Victoria as the move towards Federation gathered pace, and the growing appreciation of all things Australian, including the aesthetic qualities of native trees.
5. According to the Trust, Lake Marma Reserve has a clear association with this change. The Trust agreed with the Executive Director that the trend towards the use of native species in public parks represents the beginning of a noticeable change in the evolution of the design of Victoria’s public parks.
6. The Executive Director submitted that according to the *Cyclopedia of Victoria* the sugar gum had been chosen at Murtoa as it ‘was found a most useful deodorising agent’.[[2]](#footnote-2) It was submitted that this reflected the contemporary view that disease spread by the ‘miasma’ given out by stagnant water could be prevented by the planting of trees. As well as this public health concern the plantings were also motivated, according to the Executive Director, by the desire for civic improvement, storm water and effluent management, and the civilising and cooling influence of trees in this harsh landscape.
7. Mr Clark submitted a considerable amount of information about the nineteenth century use of eucalypts as a hygienic response to the public health issues of cholera, malaria and typhoid fever in the context of the now disproved miasma theory of disease.
8. Mr Hammerton submitted that the Lake Marma plantations are possibly the largest and most aesthetic employment of native trees in the years preceding Federation. He submitted that Lake Marma itself is historically significant for the collection of relics that were exposed when the lake recently dried up, including a 250 metre long section of a c1840s buloak log fence and an 1880s dam wall. Mr Hammerton submitted that the historical values of Lake Marma alone and its association with early Wimmera history satisfy Criterion A.
9. The Committee of Management submitted that there is no basis for finding that the planting of sugar gums has any importance to Victoria’s cultural history. Mr Finnigan argued that there is no evidence of a nexus between the planting and nationalism or the growing appreciation of all things Australian. He argued that the reasons the sugar gums were chosen was the harsh environment of Murtoa. While noting that they were hearsay, Mr Finnigan referred to comments made Dr Siegfried Rabl in April 1967 that ‘[the trees] served their purpose, they improved the drainage around the streets when there were no gutters, no main roads and everything was mud in the winter time’.[[3]](#footnote-3)
10. Mr Slattery submitted that the planting of sugar gums in the Lake Marma Reserve followed a pattern of tree planting across the majority of the State. He submitted that many avenues and plantings of sugar gums can be found in the Western District and country Victoria. Ms Kosch submitted that the stands of sugar gums in the Lake Marma Reserve are not unique to Murtoa and can be found in many towns in the Wimmera.
11. Mr Slattery argued that the reason that sugar gums were popular in the 19th and 20th centuries was that they are easily propagated and grow quickly for use as fuel, construction or fence posts.
12. A number of submitters noted that the sugar gum is not indigenous to Victoria. The Executive Director submitted that whether or not the sugar gum is indigenous to the Murtoa area is not important in this case.

*Discussion and conclusion*

1. The Committee finds that Criterion A is not satisfied. The Committee is not convinced that mass plantings of single native species is a custom or movement of any importance to the course or pattern of Victoria’s history.
2. The Committee agrees with the Committee of Management that no evidence has been produced of a causal relationship between emerging nationalism/love of all things Australian and the planting of native trees at the Lake Marma Reserve. The Committee was convinced by submissions that the trees were planted for their performance in the harsh environment in the Wimmera and their purported health benefits.

## Criterion B - Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria’s cultural history

1. Mr Clark submitted that the sugar gums are a rare surviving early example of Australian natives incorporated into formal European park design principles.
2. Mr Hammerton submitted that there are very few pioneering mass plantings of native eucalypts for beautification purposes in Victoria and that this is probably the best and oldest example.

*Discussion and conclusion*

1. The Committee finds that Criterion B is not satisfied. The Committee was not convinced that sufficient research has been undertaken into the existence of other early examples or the importance of mass plantings of Australian natives in public parks in Victoria.

## Criterion E - Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics

1. The parties disputed the place’s level of aesthetic significance.

*Submissions and evidence*

1. The Executive Director submitted that Lake Marma Reserve is aesthetically significant for the linear regularly-spaced plantings of sugar gums, which have resulted in one of the most impressive groupings of native trees in a public park in Victoria.
2. The Executive Director argued that Lake Marma has been recognised since about 1900 as a place of natural beauty in the Wimmera area, largely because of the sugar gums. It was submitted that the closely-spaced trunks and high overarching branches of the tall trees, together with the attractiveness of their bark, has resulted in a landscape which has been a popular subject for artists and photographers for over a century.
3. Mr Clark submitted that the planting is aesthetically significant for its massed presentation of a single species of native trees in a designed landscape. He also argued that the trunks and branches produce a rarely found cathedral-like atmosphere. He described the trees as breathtaking in their scale and argued that their sheer height distinguishes the Lake Marma Reserve. He also noted their close proximity to each other, their regular and linear planting, the ample water of the lake and a benign environment as aesthetically significant.
4. Mr Clark submitted that the linear, regularly spaced plantings mimic the formality of continental parks and produce vistas and avenues that ‘delight the eye and soothe the soul’. He submitted that the sugar gums at Lake Marma have been a subject for artists, photographers and songsmiths for 100 years.
5. Mr Hammerton submitted that many of Murtoa’s well-known promotional photographs are of the lake. He submitted that the sugar gums are unique in their extended and closely planted rows with walking tracks between the many long avenues and that they are the most impressive avenues of any trees in the Wimmera.
6. David and Jeanette Grigg submitted that the Lake Marma Reserve has ‘an ambience’ not seen in many rural communities in Victoria. They and Mr Hammerton also submitted that the dieback reported by some submitters is actually damage caused by flocks of Corellas (a type of white cockatoo).
7. The Committee of Management submitted that there is no objective evidence that the place has high aesthetic values. Mr Finnigan argued that being a popular subject for photographers and artists does not in and of itself establish the aesthetic character of a place. He pointed out that no examples have been provided of artists or photographers who have used the Lake Marma Reserve as a subject. In his view, it is not the trees but the lake that is the most aesthetically pleasing aspect of the place.
8. Mr Slattery argued that the aesthetics of the trees has rapidly diminished due to their age and is continuing to deteriorate. He submitted that the trees have previously been pruned back to stumps of one to two metres high as part of a drought relief employment program. He argued that as the trees were overplanted they have crowded each other and have not been able to fully develop. He argued that there are more aesthetically pleasing plantings of sugar gums in existence, such as the one to the south of Rupanyup.
9. Mr Pendergast submitted that not only do sugar gums grow abundantly in the Wimmera, but that the aesthetic value of these examples has diminished greatly due to years of drought. Ms Kosch agreed, arguing that their aesthetics have also been diminished due to die back, severe pollarding and the death of some trees.
10. The Murtoa Progress Association submitted that the sugar gums are in the latter stages of their lives, most of the avenues are not complete, have been pollarded or contain dead trees. The Association submitted that their condition does not make them a good example of mass planting worthy of preservation. It was submitted that avenues of sugar gums, some in far better condition such as that at Rupanyup, are a common feature of the Wimmera.
11. A number of written submissions also argued that the trees do not have sufficient aesthetic significance to warrant inclusion in the Register.

*Discussion and conclusion*

1. The Committee finds that Criterion E is not satisfied as the plantings at Lake Marma Reserve are not of such a high level of aesthetic significance as to warrant inclusion in the Register.
2. The Committee finds that the health and condition of the trees have impacted upon their aesthetic significance and the evidence submitted to show aesthetic significance was inconclusive. Ultimately, the Committee was not convinced that the place’s aesthetic values are of significance to the State of Victoria

## 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 their continuing and developing cultural traditions

*Submissions and evidence*

1. Mr Clark submitted that there is an enduring and continuous involvement in and association with these sugar gums that transcends the generations.

*Discussion and conclusion*

1. The Committee finds that Criterion G is not satisfied. The Committee agrees with Mr Clark that the place has social values, but only to the communities of the Wimmera and not at a state level.

## Criterion H - Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria’s history

1. The parties disputed the significance of the place’s association with Baron Ferdinand von Mueller.

*Submissions and evidence*

1. The Executive Director submitted that Lake Marma Reserve is significant for its association with Baron Ferdinand von Mueller, the first Victorian Government Botanist. According to the Executive Director, von Mueller was a strong advocate for the use of native species in park and street plantings in Victoria, partly as a measure to combat malaria and other public health problems. In the Executive Director’s view, the plantings of sugar gums at the Lake Marma Reserve demonstrate the influence of von Mueller on the landscapes of Victoria.
2. The Executive Director submitted that the trees at Lake Marma Reserve were planted by the Murtoa Progress Association from c1890 under the influence of the first president of the Association, Dr Heinrich Rabl. Citing a talk given in Murtoa in April 1967 by Rabl’s son, Dr Siegfried Rabl, the Executive Director submitted that Rabl senior met von Mueller at a medical congress in 1888.[[4]](#footnote-4) According to the Executive Director, Rabl family history indicates that von Mueller advised Rabl to plant sugar gums from South Australia, and Rabl germinated seeds at home and transplanted them into pots for planting out around the lake.[[5]](#footnote-5)
3. The Trust submitted that the place is an outstanding example of the far-reaching influence of von Mueller.
4. Mr Hammerton submitted that the Lake Marma Reserve plantings result from the guidance of von Mueller and are a lasting legacy of his preference for native trees over exotics, which were still the first choice for most contemporaneous public gardens.
5. The Committee of Management submitted that this criterion cannot be considered to be satisfied as the relationship between the planting of the sugar gums and von Mueller is too remote and does not have the necessary proximity to establish a special connection with his life and works.
6. The Committee of Management again pointed out that the comments made by Dr Siegfried Rabl in 1967, and relied upon by the Executive Director, are hearsay and that there is no reliable evidence to link the planting of the trees to von Mueller. It was submitted that there is no information to establish that the planting of the trees was anything but the result of the good intentions of a local doctor. For this reason, the Committee of Management were of the view that the place is only of local significance.
7. Mr Slattery submitted that the only relevant association in relation to this criterion is that with the Murtoa Progress Association, who fostered the planting of the trees and that that association is only of importance to Murtoa.
8. The Murtoa Progress Association submitted that the association of von Mueller with the plantings is not substantiated. They pointed out that the Executive Director herself noted that ‘Rabl was a friend of Ferdinand von Mueller, the first Victorian Government Botanist, who encouraged the use of native species and is thought to have advised Rabl to plant sugar gums in the Reserve’ Committee’s emphasis].[[6]](#footnote-6)
9. Mr Pendergast queried the significance of the connection with von Mueller given that it may only be due to his advice that the trees were planted.

*Discussion and conclusion*

1. The Committee finds that Criterion H is not satisfied.
2. The Committee accepts the evidence of von Mueller’s connection to the place; however, the Committee believes the connection is too tenuous and the evidence too circumstantial to confirm a special association between the plantings and von Mueller.

**Conclusion**

1. The Committee finds that the Lake Marma Reserve does not reach the threshold for State significance in relation to any of the Heritage Council’s criteria for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register and refers the recommendation and submissions to Yarriambiack Shire Council for consideration for an amendment to the Yarriambiack Planning Scheme.
2. The Statement of Significance has been amended by the Committee to reflect their decision (Attachment 2).



**ATTACHMENT 1**

**HERITAGE COUNCIL CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT OF PLACES OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGIFICANCE**

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| CRITERION A | Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria’s cultural history. |
| CRITERION B | Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria’s cultural history. |
| CRITERION C | Potential to yield information that will contribute to an understanding of Victoria’s cultural history. |
| CRITERION D | Importance in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a class of cultural places or objects. |
| CRITERION E | Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics. |
| CRITERION F | Importance in demonstrating a high degree of creative or technical achievement at a particular period. |
| 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 their continuing and developing cultural traditions. |
| CRITERION H | Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria’s history. |

**These were adopted by the Heritage Council at its meeting on 7 August 2008, and replace the previous criteria adopted by the Heritage Council on 6 March 1997.**



**ATTACHMENT 2**

**Statement of Significance**

***~~What is significant?~~***

Lake Marma Reserve is located in the town of Murtoa in the Wimmera region. Around Lake Marma are impressive avenues of about 400 sugar gums (*Eucalyptus cladocalyx*) which were planted from about 1890. The Reserve also contains a 1920 World War I Memorial Arch & Gate, a 1907 band rotunda and the 1895 Sprott Fountain.

*History Summary*

The water provided by Lake Marma was partly responsible for the settlement and development of the town of Murtoa. The town was surveyed in 1873 and a reserve for a Public Park and Garden around the lake is shown on the subdivision plan. Until the twentieth century exotic evergreen and deciduous trees such as elms, planes, oaks and poplars were the most common choice for park and street plantings in Victoria, but these were never suitable for the harsh conditions of north-west Victoria and this preference began to change in the late nineteenth century. Some planting of ~~inappropriate~~ European trees around Lake Marma began c1880, but planting was taken over in 1888 by the newly formed Murtoa Progress Association, under its president Dr Heinrich Rabl. Rabl was a friend of Ferdinand von Mueller, the first Victorian Government Botanist, who encouraged the use of native species and is thought to have advised Rabl to plant sugar gums in the Reserve. These ~~were~~ are indigenous to South Australia but had been grown in the Western District since at least the 1870s. They were considered ~~to be~~ a 'useful deodorising agent' and hence likely to prevent disease, as well as being hardy and attractive trees. It is not certain when the sugar gums at Lake Marma were first planted, but it is thought that the first ~~ones~~ were grown from seed by Rabl and planted c1890. Early photos confirm that by 1900 the sugar gums were already quite mature. In the early twentieth century Murtoa was noted~~able~~ for ~~this 'charming oasis of~~its trees and vegetation amid the monotonous surrounding landscape~~'~~.

*Description Summary*

Lake Marma Reserve ~~is notable for the~~ contains mass plantings of sugar gums around Lake Marma, in broad avenues and as borders. The trees are of varying sizes, with the largest 30 metres tall ~~and~~ with a trunk circumference~~s~~ of over three~~3~~ metres. There are walking tracks around the lake and along the avenues between the tree rows. There has been some pollarding, removal of trees and replanting in some areas. Structures in the Reserve include the 1895 Sprott fountain, a rustic moulded concrete structure of the sort popular as garden ornaments in Britain since the eighteenth century. The 1907 timber band rotunda has plaques on it commemorating Queen Victoria (died 1901), King Edward VII (died 1910) and Earl Kitchener (died 1916). The Memorial Gate is a rendered triple-arched concrete structure surmounted by a marble statue of a soldier. It terminates the vista along the main street of the town and forms an impressive main entrance to the Reserve. It is inscribed with the names of local residents who served in various wars.

**~~How is it significant?~~**

~~Lake Marma Reserve satisfies the following criteria for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:~~

~~Criterion A Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history~~

~~Criterion E Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics~~

**~~Criterion H Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria's history~~**

**~~Why is it significant?~~**

Lake Marma Reserve is significant at the local level ~~the State level~~ for the following reasons:

Lake Marma Reserve is of local historical significance for its association with the early history of Murtoa, and of the work of the Murtoa Progress Association, founded in 1888. (Criterion A)

~~Lake Marma Reserve is historically significant for its mass planting of sugar gums (Eucalyptus cladocalyx), which is one of the earliest known examples of a mass planting of Australian native trees in a public park in Victoria. The sugar gums demonstrate the significant change which occurred at the end of the nineteenth century in the choice of trees planted in Victorian parks and streets, from a preference for exotic deciduous species to Australian natives. This reflects an increasing sense of nationalism in Victoria as the move towards Federation gathered pace, and with this a growing appreciation of all things Australian. (Criterion A)~~

Lake Marma Reserve is of local aesthetic~~ally~~ significance~~t~~ for the linear regular plantings of sugar gums~~, which have resulted in one of the most impressive groupings of native trees in a public park in Victoria~~. The closely-spaced trunks and high overarching branches of the tall trees, together with the attractiveness of their bark, has resulted in a landscape which has been a ~~popular~~ subject for artists and photographers for over a century. (Criterion E)

~~Lake Marma Reserve is significant for its association with Baron Ferdinand von Mueller, who was a strong advocate for the use of native species in park and street plantings in Victoria, partly as a measure to combat malaria and other public health problems. He also supported the growth of native species for their commercial value and was responsible for exporting eucalyptus seeds around the world. The plantings of sugar gums at Lake Marma are a demonstration of the influence of von Mueller on the landscapes of Victoria. (Criterion H)~~

Lake Marma Reserve is of local social significance as an important recreational facility for residents of Murtoa since the nineteenth century. (Criterion G)

Lake Marma Reserve is locally significant for its association with the first president of the Murtoa Progress Association, Dr Heinrich Rabl, a friend of Baron von Mueller who is thought to have advised on the planting of sugar gums at Lake Marma in the 1880s. (Criterion H)

1. Heritage Victoria, ‘Assessment of Cultural Heritage Significance & Executive Director Recommendation to the Heritage Council – Lake Marma Reserve’, 18 January 2013, p4. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. James Smith, *Cyclopedia of Victoria*, Melbourne 1905, p229. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Dr Siegfried Rabl, talk at combined guild afternoon hosted by Murtoa Catholic Women's Guild, April 1967 [see [home.vicnet.net.au/~murtoa/rabltalk.htm](http://home.vicnet.net.au/~murtoa/rabltalk.htm)]. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Dr Siegfried Rabl talk at combined guild afternoon hosted by Murtoa Catholic Women's Guild, April 1967. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Heritage Victoria, ‘Assessment of Cultural Heritage Significance & Executive Director Recommendation to the Heritage Council – Lake Marma Reserve’, p9. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Heritage Victoria, ‘Assessment of Cultural Heritage Significance & Executive Director Recommendation to the Heritage Council – Lake Marma Reserve’, p4. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)