
The Macdonald Valley is an important centre of early settlement in New South Wales. Visited by Governor Phillip as early as 1790 it was initially known as the "First Branch" of the Hawkesbury.

The Valley contains a remarkable collection of historic cemeteries. There are fourteen known grave and cemetery sites within the Valley. This driving trail highlights seven of these sites which are recorded as heritage items by Hawkesbury City Council and which are readily visible from adjoining public roads.

The cemeteries document many generations of pioneer families, the properties they first settled, their close knit relationship, on going settlement, and the continuing presence of their descendents in the Valley. The cemeteries provide a direct historical record of the Valley for over 160 years and include monuments and ironwork which display a high degree of artistic accomplishment and the talents and skills of local craftsmen.

What Cemeteries can you enter?

The St Albans New General Cemetery, Macdonald General Cemetery and St Albans Old General Cemetery are under the care control and management of Hawkesbury City Council and may be entered during daylight hours.

All other sites on this trail are in private ownership. Please respect the privacy of the residents of these properties and do not enter their land without the permission of the owner.

Road Safety and Driving Tips

Much of the roadways within the Valley are unsealed. For the benefit of residents and fellow drivers please drive in a manner so as to minimise the creation of dust.

Some of the sites are in locations where the road pavement is narrow and sight distances may be limited. If you wish to stop to view a site please ensure that you park in a safe location and, where possible, walk on the road verges in preference to the roadway.

Sites

St Joseph's Roman Catholic Cemetery (Map Ref: A)

This cemetery is located to the south east of the St Joseph's church ruins on the western side of St Albans Road, 10km from the Webbs Creek Ferry crossing (9.7km south of St Albans Bridge). The cemetery contains a total of 30 monuments

mostly of Georgian style with semicircular tops and incised scripts in several lettering styles. The cemetery documents the history of the Catholic community of St Albans, Books Ferry and Central Macdonald for over 130 years during the 19th and 20th centuries. It is an important component of the environs of the church and an appropriate setting for the dramatic ruin of the church.

St Jude Anglican Church Cemetery (Map Ref: B)

A small rural cemetery containing 5 monuments located on the western side of St Albans Road 12.8km from the Webbs Creek Ferry crossing (6.9km south of St Albans Bridge). Graves are situated to the north and west of the church. The use of the cemetery was for a very limited period (1883 - 1902). The present church building was constructed in 1918 to replace an earlier building and is now used as a private residence.

Lone grave of John Anthony Fernance Junior (Map Ref: C)

Located on the western side of Upper Macdonald Road, 2.8km north of St Albans Bridge. This small single grave is located just beyond the tree line on a gently sloping spur west of the main house. John Anthony Fernance Junior (d 1894) was the son of John Anthony Fernance senior and Mary Green who both arrived in 1814. John Anthony junior married Elizabeth Thompson.

Bailey Family Cemetery on "The Glen" (Map Ref: D)

Located on the eastern side of Wollombi Road, 2.2km north of St Albans. This cemetery contains 12 monuments including the earliest known grave in the Valley, that of William Bailey (1826). The cemetery illustrates several facets of 19th century Valley life, perhaps most clearly the isolation of the farms from official cemeteries and the attachment of families to one another and to their land.

St Albans New General Cemetery (Map Ref: E)

Located on the eastern side of Wollombi Road 1.4km north of St Albans. Dedicated in 1869 this cemetery records the continuous presence of the descendants of the early pioneer families in the Valley up to the present and charts developments in local funerary art, taste and style. The cemetery contains a wide range of monument types and styles used throughout the local

area, including some outstanding examples of the elaborate wrought ironwork found in several cemeteries in the Macdonald Valley. Families in the cemetery include: Bailey, Chapman, Fleming, Jurd, Sternbeck, Thompson, and Walters.

St Albans Old General Cemetery (Map Ref: F)

Located on the western side of Settlers Road approximately 3.3km south of St Albans (17km north of the Wisemans Ferry crossing). The cemetery was established during the 1820s although several sections (General and Roman Catholic) were washed away by successive severe floods. Monuments are predominantly 19th century sandstone headstones commonly semicircular topped and of simple Georgian style. These monuments feature elegant Roman, Italic and Copperplate scripts. The cemetery records the principal pioneers and pioneering families of the Valley including Sternbeck, Thompson and Bailey. The cemetery documents the initial close knit pioneer community its descendents and their relationships during the 19th and 20th centuries.

General Cemetery on the Macdonald (Map Ref: G)

Located at Central Macdonald on the western side of Settlers Road 2.6km south of Wrights Creek Road (10.7km north of the Wisemans Ferry crossing). Dedicated in 1871, the cemetery contains 12 graves including members of several of the Valleys pioneer family such as Morris, Books, Rose and Thompson. The cemetery is particularly notable in the context of the Valley for the survival of a wide range of traditional grave plantings. The cemetery also includes examples of the characteristic, well executed forged ironwork found in several of the Macdonald Valley cemeteries.

Acknowledgements

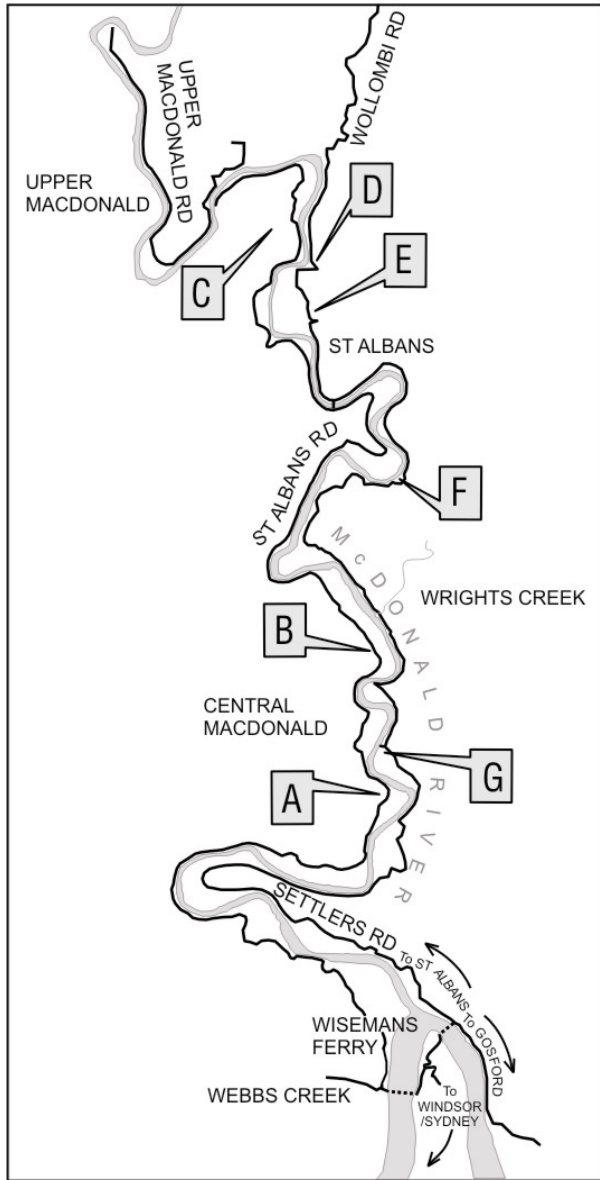
Information contained in this brochure is sourced from "Macdonald River Valley Colo River Valley Cemeteries Study" prepared for Hawkesbury City Council by Godden Mackay Pty Ltd 1991. Jeanette Bell provided additional information regarding John Anthony Fernance Junior.

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Macdonald Valley Historic Cemeteries Driving Trail



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