



**HERITAGE  
COUNCIL**  
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

Permanent Entry

Assessment Documentation

### 11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in November 1996 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

#### PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 7.7.3 Going to war
- 8.1.3 Developing public parks and gardens
- 8.5.1 Preserving traditions and group memories
- 8.7 Honouring achievement
- 8.8 Remembering the fallen
- 8.9 Commemorating significant events

#### HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 405 Sport, recreation & entertainment
- 501 World Wars & other wars
- 601 Aboriginal people
- 604 Local heroes & battlers

#### 11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE\*

*Soldiers' Park, Collie* is valued for its picturesque parkland setting, which includes the Commemorative Arch and Gates entry on the west corner, leading into the Honour Avenue lined with mature Camphor Laurel Trees to the formal layout of the War Memorial, in the broader grassed park with Pepper Trees bounding the Collie River embankment and interspersed along both street frontages, with various other mature plantings including Camphor Laurel, Box Trees and Eucalypts. (Criterion 1.1)

The Commemorative Arch and Gates demonstrate architectural design in the Inter-War Free Classical style. (Criterion 1.2)

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\* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, R., Irving, R., Reynolds, P. *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture. Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus and Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.  
For consistency, all references to garden and landscape types and styles are taken from Ramsay, J. Parks, *Gardens and Special Trees: A Classification and Assessment Method for the Register of the National Estate*, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

*Soldiers' Park, Collie* contributes to the townscape and character of Collie, as a centrally located landscaped park. (Criterion 1.4)

*Soldiers' Park, Collie* is an important memorial and meeting place that makes a significant contribution to the Collie community's sense of place as a passive commemoration of those who served during times of war and conflict. (Criterion 1.4)

## **11.2 HISTORIC VALUE**

*Soldiers' Park, Collie* is one of numerous War Memorials established in rural towns in Western Australia in the years immediately following the end of World War One and demonstrates Australia's domestic response to this war and later conflicts. (Criterion 2.1)

*Soldiers' Park, Collie* has been the focus of Anzac Day services in Collie from 1922 to the present (2007), with additional memorials to specific events and peoples added later, including the Memorial Rose Gardens (1990) and the Memorial to Aboriginal Servicemen (2000). (Criterion 2.2)

*Soldiers' Park, Collie* has associations with families of the many local residents who served and died during World Wars One and Two and other conflicts, to whom the memorials pay tribute. (Criterion 2.3)

The Memorial Rose Gardens commemorates Captain Martin O'Meara, who was awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions at Pozieres in 1916, and Private Ken Sketchley, who died in 1950 as the first Australian soldier killed in the Korean War. (Criterion 2.3)

The Memorial to Aboriginal Servicemen commemorates the contribution of Aboriginal servicemen to the defence of Australia. (Criterion 2.3)

*Soldiers' Park, Collie* is associated with local architect Walter Dobson Pusey who designed both the War Memorial and Commemorative Arch and Gates. (Criterion 2.3)

The Commemorative Arch and Gates, erected in 1930, mark the centenary of European settlement in Western Australia. (Criterion 2.3)

## **11.3 SCIENTIFIC VALUE**

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## **11.4 SOCIAL VALUE**

*Soldiers' Park, Collie* has social significance for the Collie community as the focus of Anzac Day services in Collie from 1922 to the present (2007). (Criterion 4.1)

*Soldiers' Park, Collie* serves as a reminder of Collie, Western Australia's and Australia's involvement in World Wars One and Two, and the Korean conflict, thus contributing to Australian national identity and demonstrating to those who participate in wars that they will not be forgotten. It is part of a national recognition of the sacrifices of participants in wars. (Criterion 4.1)

## **12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE**

### **12.1 RARITY**

The Memorial to Aboriginal Servicemen is rare in the State and also nationally. (Criterion 5.1)

The Commemorative Arch and Gates demonstrate an unusual form and design of a War Memorial in Western Australia. (Criterion 5.1)

*Soldiers' Park, Collie* is unusual for the number of memorial forms located together in one Memorial Park, being: an obelisk, rose gardens, an honour avenue, a Memorial to Aboriginal Servicemen, and memorial gates. (Criterion 5.1)

The Commemorative Arch and Gates are an uncommon example of a war memorial erected in conjunction with the centenary of European settlement in Western Australia. (Criterion 5.2)

## **12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS**

*Soldiers' Park, Collie* is a good representative example of a War Memorial in a picturesque parkland setting in a regional town. (Criterion 6.1)

## **12.3 CONDITION**

*Soldiers' Park, Collie* is in good condition and is obviously maintained on a regular basis.

## **12.4 INTEGRITY**

*Soldiers' Park, Collie* has retained a high degree of integrity as a War Memorial despite the visual intrusion of ablution facilities and playground equipment at the eastern end of the site.

## **12.5 AUTHENTICITY**

The original fabric of *Soldiers' Park, Collie* remains mostly intact with no obvious intrusions. *Soldiers' Park, Collie* has retained a high degree of authenticity.

## **13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE**

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Irene Sauman, Historian and Laura Gray, Heritage and Conservation Consultant, in March 2007, with amendments and/or additions by Office of Heritage staff and the Register Committee.

### **13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE**

*Soldiers' Park, Collie* comprises Collie War Memorial (1921), the Honour Avenue (1921), and Commemorative Arch and Gates (1930), with formal and informal plantings including mature trees that line Honour Avenue, Steere Street and the banks of the Collie River. Later additions to the place include the Memorial Rose Gardens (1990) in memory of Captain Martin O'Meara VC and Private Ken Sketchley, and a Memorial to Aboriginal Servicemen (2000).

The Collie region developed initially as a timber milling district, but it was the discovery of coal and resulting coal mining operations that saw the town of Collie proclaimed on 13 December 1897 as the administration and residential centre for the coal fields. The mines, the mills and the town were served by a rail branch

constructed through the 26 miles from Brunswick Junction on the South West Railway line.<sup>1</sup>

As with most other country towns in the state, Collie sent men to the First World War. The first contingent left in October 1914, many of whom did not return. Like most other country towns, Collie claimed to have sent 'a larger number of volunteers to the war on the population basis than any other town in the Commonwealth'.<sup>2</sup> One who served with particular honour and returned was Captain Martin O'Meara VC. O'Meara was a private in the 16th Battalion Australian Infantry Forces (AIF) when his actions over the period of 9-11 August 1916 near Pozieres resulted in his being recommended for the Victoria Cross (VC).

Private O'MEARA, Martin is strongly recommended for the highest distinction for great gallantry and devotion to duty in rescuing wounded men under intense shell fire, and for voluntarily carrying ammunitions and bombs to a portion of the trenches being heavily bombarded, and which at the time was also heavily barraged. Hereunder written are statements concerning this by some of the many witnesses of his many gallant actions...<sup>3</sup>

The detail of his actions were reported by the Commander 16th Battalion Lieut-Colonel E. Drake-Brockman, Major P. Black, Lieut Frank Wadge, Captain Ross Harwood, Captain A. McLeod, Lieut R. S. Somerville and Lieut W. J. Lynas.<sup>4</sup>

Immediately following the end of the War in November 1918, suggestions were raised for the establishment of an honour roll for those who had died serving their country. From December 1918, demobbed Collie servicemen gradually returned to the town, where each train was met with a resounding welcome and a civic reception. The Collie Soldiers Welcome & Repatriation Committee was formed to organise events, which continued throughout the year and included a returned soldiers gala and sports day on 27 January 1919, a monthly Welcome Social and various receptions and events held in the Coliseum Hall.<sup>5</sup>

In the meantime, collections had begun for the establishment of the proposed honour roll but the form it would take had not been decided. On 24 July 1919 a public meeting was held, chaired by Mayor Harry King and attended by seventy people representing every organisation in the town and district, to establish a Roll of Honour Committee (later known as the Collie Fallen Soldiers' Memorial Committee, and later still as the Soldiers' Park Committee) and discuss the type of memorial to be erected. The elected Committee comprised the Mayor as chairman, Messrs H. McCulloch and J. Mackay as secretaries, Dr Rigby, treasurer, and a sub-committee of nine, consisting of Mayoress Mrs King, Mesdames A. A. Wilson, Gillies and Logan and Messrs F. H. Watt, Silas Lawson, J. G. Willis, R. McVee and Spencer.

Suggestions for the memorial included: a drinking fountain with a clock tower inscribed with servicemen's names located at the entrance to the railway station;

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<sup>1</sup> For information on the early development of the Collie district see HCWA assessment documentation P00542 All Saints' Anglican Church, Collie.

<sup>2</sup> *Collie Mail*, 1 November 1919, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> War Memorial Museum, Canberra, Private Martin O'Meara, recommendation for distinction, 16 August 1916.

<sup>4</sup> War Memorial Museum, Canberra, Private Martin O'Meara, op cit.

<sup>5</sup> *Collie Mail*, 4 January 1919, p. 2 and many later issues for the year.

an Australian granite monument at the railway station; a band gazebo; a public gymnasium hall with a monument at the front of the building (suggested by Dr Rigby who had the physical training and development of Collie's youth in mind); and variations on these ideas and the preferred location. The decision on the form of the memorial was deferred to another meeting while the method of collecting subscriptions and allowing people to pay off their donation was finalised.<sup>6</sup>

A second meeting was held on 7 August 1919. After several failed amendments to the motions put, the majority voted for the War Memorial to be in the form of an Australian granite monument to be located in the reserve, opposite the Co-Operative Stores, known as Soldiers' Park. This piece of land had been gazetted a Class 'C' Reserve (7818) for recreation in 1901. A section at the western end, originally part of Lefroy Road, had been added to the Reserve in 1908. In 1916, the Reserve was gazetted an 'A' Class Reserve.<sup>7</sup> It is uncertain when or why it came to be referred to as Soldiers Park, but this may refer to newly enlisted local men gathering or camping there prior to mobilisation.

It was decided also to call for designs for the War Memorial accompanied by a five-guinea submission fee, with the cost of the monument not to exceed £1,500.<sup>8</sup>

It was also suggested that the Council be asked for the Soldiers' Park for the purpose of the memorial and they be asked to convert it into a garden and keep it in repair when the monument was erected.<sup>9</sup>

This suggestions appears to have been accepted as it was later reported that:

The reserve is to be laid out in gardens and as, by its situation on the river it lends itself so admirably for the purpose, a beauty spot surpassing anything in the State should be the result, thereby creating a fitting setting for the memorial.<sup>10</sup>

A committee of ladies undertook to canvass the town and district to collect donations and the *Collie Mail* ran items of support for the project.

Bit by bit we are learning of the magnificent part played by our men in this the mightiest conflict of the ages and the more we hear the more we feel that the deeds performed by the men who gave Australia her place as a nation should be commemorated in such a manner that our children's children may be reminded every day that, when the call came, Australia's sons were not found lacking, that they in their turn may be stirred to worthily play the part as men and women of a great nation.<sup>11</sup>

The Soldiers' Welcome & Repatriation Committee continued its operations through 1920 while the Memorial Committee laboured on with its fundraising and the choosing of a memorial design. The initial choice was for a design submitted by the firm of Messrs Wales and Gillies, but in November 1920 they contended that the price submitted by them did not include foundations despite the wording of their specification. The Committee chose to drop negotiations with them and

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<sup>6</sup> *Collie Mail*, 26 July 1919, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup> Landgate Reserve Enquiry, Reserve 7818 and correspondence files for the Reserve held at the Midland office of the Department for Planning & Infrastructure.

<sup>8</sup> *Collie Mail*, 9 August, 1919, p. 5.

<sup>9</sup> *Collie Mail*, 9 August, 1919, p. 5.

<sup>10</sup> *Collie Mail*, 23 August, 1919, p. 5.

<sup>11</sup> *Collie Mail*, 23 August, 1919, p. 5.

instead began negotiations with another designer, local resident W. D. Pusey. After some modifications to his original design it was accepted.<sup>12</sup>

Walter Dobson Pusey was the son of William D. Pusey, a private in the 51st Regiment who is believed to have arrived in the Colony with his Regiment in 1840. He married in WA and Walter, born in 1868, was the eighth of his nine children. Walter Pusey was a bricklayer in 1887, and from at least 1902 to 1917 he is listed as a dairyman at Woodlupine (Cannington district). He first appears at Collie in 1918 as manager of the Water Works, a position he held until 1925. He is also noted as an architect in the *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians*, but there is no listing for him in the trade section of the Post Office Directories under that occupation, and this title is likely a result of his designs for the War Memorial and later for the Commemorative Arch and Gates at *Soldiers' Park, Collie*. Walter Pusey was later a member of the Soldier's Park Committee.<sup>13</sup>

The War Memorial was to be built by Messrs Wilson, Gray & Co at a cost of £800, under the direction of W. D. Pusey with A. J. Stibbs as general supervisor on behalf of the Committee. Another £200 still needed to be raised to cover the cost of the Memorial.<sup>14</sup>

It was hoped to have the War Memorial completed for the Anzac Day service in April 1921, but it was Sunday 15 May 1921 before the foundation stone was laid, in a solemn ceremony. On that day, a procession, composed chiefly of the Collie Brass Band, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides and children from the various Sunday Schools marched from the Mechanics Institute to Soldiers' Park, under the marshal for the day Mr Ernie Walker, President of the local branch of the Returned Servicemen's League (RSL). Mayor Harry King presided over the ceremony and the Governor Sir Francis Newdegate laid the foundation stone of the Collie Fallen Soldiers' Memorial in the presence of Lady Newdegate, Minister for Works Mr W. J. George, Leader of the State Opposition Mr P. Collier, the Bishop of Bunbury Rev Cecil Wilson, returned soldiers and a large assembly of residents. During his speech the Governor noted that 1200 men had enlisted from the Collie district, of whom 400 had been wounded and 120 were killed. Other members of the official party also spoke, with the speeches being interspersed with hymns.<sup>15</sup>

The planting of the Honour Avenue followed the speeches. The order of the plantings had been arranged previously by the Committee with a draw of soldiers' names and an allocation of a number based on the order of the draw. The only departure from this was in the case of two or more members of one family being killed. When one of those names was drawn, the next number was allotted the other family member so they would be together. There were two cases of two brothers being killed and one of three. Plaques, or tablets, were to be made stating name, regimental number, battalion and place and date of

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<sup>12</sup> *Collie Mail*, 2 December 1920, p. 2.

<sup>13</sup> Erickson, Rica, *Bicentennial Dictionary of Western Australians*, Perth, UWA Press, 1988, p. 2550; *Wise's Post Office Directory*, 1900-1930; *The Collie Mail*, 24 January 1930, p. 5.

<sup>14</sup> *Collie Mail*, 2 December 1920, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup> *Collie Mail*, 20 May 1921, p. 5.

death, to mark each tree. The Governor planted one of the first trees and another 99 were planted by relatives or friends of the soldiers.<sup>16</sup>

It had been reported on the 13 May 1921, that following the laying of the foundation stone, and prior to the planting of the Honour Avenue, there would be a presentation of war medals by Colonel Tilney, but there is no report of this occurring on the day. The inadvertent omission of Colonel Tilney from the official party was a sore point with the Collie RSL and generated several letters to the metropolitan and local press at the time.<sup>17</sup>

The Collie War Memorial was officially unveiled on Sunday 4 September by Governor Sir Francis Newdegate. The night prior, a grand concert had been held in the Lyceum Theatre during which the Premier, Sir James Mitchell, on behalf of the members of the Memorial Committee, had made a presentation to Mayor Harry King for his role as Committee chairman.

Immediately prior to the Sunday ceremony, Boy Scouts and Girl Guides marched to *Soldiers Park, Collie* from the residence of the local MLA, A. A. Wilson, and took up position at the various trees in the Honour Avenue 'so as to protect them from injury'.<sup>18</sup>

The Governor, on his arrival, passed through a guard of honour of returned servicemen in civilian attire. Others of the official party present included the Premier, Sir James Mitchell, Mrs Edith Cowan, MLA, MLAs Gibson, Thompson, Smith & Pickering, and MLCs John Ewing and Edwin Rose, Mayor King and his wife, and A. E. Anderson, vice president of the Collie Branch of the RSL.

The War Memorial was draped with the Union Jack and the Australian flag, and the unveiling of the 33-foot tall monument was achieved by drawing the flags up the flagpoles. Following the unveiling, the Last Post was sounded by Private T. Butcher and the National Anthem was sung. Wreaths were laid by A. E. Anderson for the RSL, the Mayoress for the Collie Municipal Council, Mrs D Logan for the Memorial Committee followed by many wreaths laid by friends and relatives of the fallen servicemen. The Governor presented medals to a number of returned servicemen, including those who had already received their medal but not had it officially presented. Events were punctuated by hymns sung by the combined church choirs accompanied by the Collie band. The ceremonies concluded with a united service in the Tivoli Theatre at 8.45 pm.<sup>19</sup>

The inscription on the marble plaque on the face of the War Memorial obelisk read:

To honour the brave.  
In memory of  
the men of Collie district  
who gave their lives in the  
cause of freedom  
while serving with  
the Australian Imperial Forces, in the

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<sup>16</sup> *Collie Mail*, 20 May 1921, p. 5, includes a list of the fallen soldiers represented on the Honour Avenue in order of planting.

<sup>17</sup> *Collie Mail*, 27 May 1921, p. 2.

<sup>18</sup> *Collie Mail*, 2 September 1921, p. 5.

<sup>19</sup> *Collie Mail*, 9 September, 1921, p. 5. A list of those named on the War Memorial Honour Roll was included as part of this news report.

Great War, 1914-1918.  
Erected by the residents of Collie and District.

*Soldiers' Park, Collie* was the focal point of Anzac Day ceremonies in the town over the 1920s. Collie received a war trophy in the form of a 104mm gun captured by the Australian Light Horse unit, which was located in *Soldiers' Park, Collie*.<sup>20</sup>

During the 1929 State Centenary celebrations, a commemoration service was held at the War Memorial on 3 November 1929. Those gathered heard a service delivered by Rev R. W. Needham of All Saints Anglican Church. Attendees included the Mayor Mr J. S. Jackson, Mr. H. E. Wells, representing the State Executive of the RSL, Mr. H. May, Collie RSL branch president, and a troop of Boy Scouts and Girl Guides.<sup>21</sup> On the following morning, Monday 4 November 1929, the foundation stone of the Commemorative Arch and Gates was laid by the Premier, the Hon Philip Collier, MLA.

The Premier was assisted at the ceremony by local MLA Mr A. A. Wilson and the Lord Mayor of Perth, Mr. J. T. Franklin. During his speech, the Premier mentioned the 1,100 men who had enlisted from the Collie district, the 500 who had been wounded and the 112 who did not return. These figures were at slight variance to those given by the Governor in 1921.<sup>22</sup> The Mayor of Collie, J. S. Jackson, presented the Premier with a silver trowel and a drawing of the proposed Commemorative Arch and Gates with a written description:

The walls and piers... will be built of local granite filled with ironstone rubble and concrete. The ornaments - or vases - are to be of reinforced concrete and finished in cement rendering. The floor will also be of reinforced concrete with brass letters set therein to form the words Soldiers' Park. In two of the outside piers provision will be made for drinking fountains, whilst above the pediment will appear a Rising Sun set in brass over the figure shown in the sketch [1929] whilst brass letters will also be used for the words State Centenary appearing directly above the kerbstone of the arch. The vases will be so constructed to take brackets for four electric lights. The two flag poles... will be removable... The gates will be of wrought iron and will be of the folding design made to cover a width of nine feet, the arch entrance being six feet.<sup>23</sup>

A donation of £50 for the construction had been received from Amalgamated Collieries who had also agreed to supply the cement at cost price. The foundation work was carried out by voluntary labour with the assistance of the Municipal Council, and the estimated cost for the structure was £400.<sup>24</sup>

The Commemorative Arch and Gates was a project of the Soldier's Park Committee and had been designed by W. D. Pusey, who had been responsible

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<sup>20</sup> Photograph, c. 1930, Battye Library 24888P; Billett, Major R. S., *War Trophies from the First World War 1914-1918*, East Roseville, NSW, Kangaroo Press, 1999, Appendix 10, Western Australian Directory of Allotted Trophies. For more information on Australian war trophies refer to HCWA assessment documentation P01819 Narrogin Memorial Park. The Collie war trophy is no longer located in Soldiers' Park.

<sup>21</sup> *Collie Mail*, 8 November 1929, p. 6.

<sup>22</sup> *Collie Mail*, 8 November 1929, p. 7.

<sup>23</sup> *Collie Mail*, 8 November 1929, p. 7.

<sup>24</sup> *Collie Mail*, 8 November 1929, p. 7.



for the design of the War Memorial.<sup>25</sup> It was a combination of War Memorial and State centenary commemoration.

Over the following months *Soldiers' Park, Collie* received the attentions of a gardener, resulting in a much improved appearance. The lawns had been top dressed, flower beds had been set out between the trees of the Honour Avenue and other clearing and formation work done.<sup>26</sup> It was reported that the Soldiers' Park Committee were determined to make the reserve 'something that will be in keeping with the size and importance of Collie' and that their efforts deserved public support.<sup>27</sup> All work done at the place was covered by fund raising and the Committee were seeking a subsidy for improvements and maintenance from the Council, but the Council could not see its way to finance the employment of a town gardener at that time.<sup>28</sup>

It was hoped to have the Commemorative Arch and Gates ready for the Anzac Day service in April 1930, but the two stone masons sent from Perth by the contractor had been Bulgarians, and as Mayor Jackson explained at the 25 April service, 'it would not have done to have employed foreigners of enemy nationality upon such a work as this, so they were returned to Perth'.<sup>29</sup> Two 'Britishers' were then secured but they proved so slow they were paid off, and two more worked well for a week before being called back to Perth, but fortunately one decided to stay and complete the work.<sup>30</sup>

No report of an opening ceremony has been located in the *Collie Mail* over the following twelve months and no mention of the Commemorative Arch and Gates were made at the Anzac Day celebrations the following year.

Following World War Two, an addition was made to the wording on the marble plaque on the War Memorial. The words: 'The torch upheld World War 2 1939-1945. For King and Country' were added below the original inscription.

On Remembrance Day 11 November 1990, a memorial plaque was installed for Captain Martin O'Meara VC. O'Meara died on 20 December 1935 in Graylands Hospital, having been incarcerated there since the end of the War suffering from mental illness believed to have been the result of wounds received. He was buried with full military honours at Karrakatta.<sup>31</sup>

In 1994, the Commemorative Arch and Gates at *Soldiers' Park, Collie* was entered on the Art Deco Significant Building Survey and in 1996 the place was listed in the Statewide War Memorial Survey.<sup>32</sup>

On 15 October 2000, Collie held a commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Korean War. The weekend celebration included a regimental dinner for 165 guests, a military parade, rededication of the War Memorial and a Korean

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<sup>25</sup> *Collie Mail*, 8 November 1929, p. 7.

<sup>26</sup> *Collie Mail*, 1 May 1930, p. 5.

<sup>27</sup> *Collie Mail*, 17 January 1930, p. 4.

<sup>28</sup> *Collie Mail*, 17 January 1930, p. 4 & 24 January 1930, p. 5.

<sup>29</sup> *Collie Mail*, 1 May 1930, p. 5.

<sup>30</sup> *Collie Mail*, 1 May 1930, p. 5.

<sup>31</sup> *Collie Mail*, 8 November 1990, p. 20.

<sup>32</sup> Richards, Oline, *War Memorials in Western Australia*, Perth, O. Richards, April 1996, p. 84; Geneve, Vyonne, *Significant Buildings of the 1930s in Western Australia*, National Trust, Perth, 1994.

remembrance service in the presence of the WA Governor Lt Gen John Sanderson. A large contingent of Korean veterans travelled to Collie to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the death of Private Ken Sketchley of Collie, who died on 3 October 1950 when his Bren Gun Carrier tripped a land mine. Sketchley was the first Australian killed in the Korean War. He was a member of the 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment which had arrived in Korea only four days previously. A memorial wreath to Pte Sketchley was laid by his sister Delys Jackson and fellow serviceman Len Ogilvie. Korean veteran Pung Park laid a wreath at the foot of the War Memorial for the WA Korean Association.<sup>33</sup>

A particularly important event during the commemorations was the unveiling by Jean Ugle and Governor Sanderson of a Memorial to Aboriginal Servicemen dedicated to those Aboriginal veterans who served their homeland. This Memorial to Aboriginal Servicemen is thought to be the first in WA. Also present at the unveiling were Joe Northover, chairman of the Ngalang Boodja Aboriginal Corporation, Aboriginal community elder Irene Khan Sr, John Khan Jr, Norm and Shirley Hayward and Steven Michael.<sup>34</sup>

Other structures and facilities added to the Park at various times include a gazebo, playground, ablution facilities and picnic settings. In 2005 new playground equipment, including a liberty swing for disabled children was installed. Funding of \$100,000 was provided by the Disabled Services Council Committee, the Variety Club, Mine Welfare Board, and the Mine Workers Trust Fund for the project. A commemorative plaque was unveiled at the opening of the refurbished playground on 27 January 2006.<sup>35</sup>

The war trophy gun is no longer located in *Soldiers' Park, Collie*. The brass Rising Sun emblem that adorned the top of the Commemorative Arch and Gates has been removed at some time.

In 2007, *Soldiers' Park, Collie* continues to be the focal point for Anzac Day ceremonies in Collie and is a well kept and treasured part of the Collie township.

### 13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

*Soldiers' Park, Collie*, a pentagonal area of landscaped park on the bank of the Collie River, comprises the Collie War Memorial (1921), Honour Avenue planted with mature Camphor Laurel Trees (1921), Commemorative Arch and Gates (1930), Memorial Rose Gardens (1990) and Memorial to Aboriginal Servicemen (2000), with other formal and informal plantings.

*Soldiers' Park, Collie* is bounded by Steere Street to the northwest, Johnston Street to the southwest, and the first tree line towards the Collie River across the northeast boundary. The southeast boundary is truncated at a point just past the gazebo. The site is level except for the steep bank along the Collie River boundary. The Park is grassed almost entirely, with mature plantings lining the

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<sup>33</sup> *Collie Mail*, 19 October 2000, pp. 1, 10-11.

<sup>34</sup> *The Western Veteran*, December 2000, p. 6; *Collie Mail*, 19 October 2000, pp. 1, 10-11.

<sup>35</sup> *Collie Mail*, 2 February, 2006, p. 5.

riverbank, Honour Avenue and most of the street boundaries. On the street intersection corner of the Park, to the west, the Commemorative Arch and Gates truncate the corner denoting the formal entry into the Park and signalling the beginning of Honour Avenue that leads direct to the War Memorial, in a northeast direction. At the east end of the Park, with an intervening open grassed expanse interrupted only by a gazebo, is the 2006 soft fall playground installation, and further east is a brick ablution facility (the latter two features are not included within the curtilage of the place). There are concrete picnic settings mostly along the Johnston Street frontage.

The Commemorative Arch and Gates is a single storey structure truncated across the corner with return sidewalls parallel with both streets to form triangular wings, the rear wing forming the rear wall flanking the arch. The ends of each wall are delineated by rendered pillars on similarly rendered bases and topped with stucco faceted conical towers. The pillars have simple recessed details in a vertical format, and horizontal recessed sections on the plinth bases. The walls are random face stone with distinctive pointing. From the wrought iron swing gates at the entry opening, an open corridor leads through to the arched opening on the rear wall. The opening is a simple classical arch with a central keystone. It is flanked on the top by more of the faceted conical towers on each side. The arched entry has the words 'State Centenary' in sans serif lettering with the 'S' and 'C' in decorative script. On the reverse, facing into the park, are the words 'Soldiers' Park'. The wrought iron gates are decorative in a geometric design and when closed, read 'lest we forget' in italic written script, and '1914-1918', and '1829-1929' across both gates. The 1929 foundation stone is on the Steere Street wall and plaques commemorating peacekeeping and conflicts are in place on the stone walls within the corridor space.

Immediately adjacent to the arched opening through to Honour Avenue, flanking both sides of the path, are low-level manicured rosemary bushes. From the Commemorative Arch and Gates the brick paved pathway leads down to the War Memorial symmetrically located at the end, flanked by recent circular rose gardens, referred to as Memorial Rose Gardens. Honour Avenue is flanked by evenly spaced mature (1921) Camphor Laurel trees (*Camphora cinnamomum*) along the southeast side (right). The area to the left is grassed and similar Camphor Laurel trees are spaced mostly evenly along the Steere Street boundary. In the immediate lead up to the War Memorial the pathway is flanked by low-level manicured rosemary bushes.

The War Memorial comprises an elegant slender granite obelisk with a bronze wreath, on a carved plinth with polished grey tablets commemorating those of the district who died in conflict, all set onto a stepped face granite base. The area has a square concrete apron, set at an angle to form a diamond with the War Memorial central and another triangular section behind, with a rock plinth and plaque commemorating Aboriginal people who served Australia, with three symmetrical metal flag poles behind. The plaque reads:

This plaque is dedicated to Aboriginal people who served  
their Motherland with honour and pride.  
Our land, together, all Australians  
15<sup>th</sup> October 2000

The concrete apron, connecting the War Memorial to the flanking rose gardens, is finished with a 'crazy path' imprint. The Memorial Rose Gardens have several

paths bordered by rose beds within the overall octagon shape that is edged with concrete kerbs in which are laid commemorative plaques at regular intervals.

Beyond the War Memorial is the Collie River. The first tree line towards the river bounds the northeast of the site, forming one side of a pentagonal shape with the three street boundaries. From the Steere Street intersection with the river, parallel with the river, there is a steep embankment with numerous planting of various *pinus* sp., a bitumen path, and then a row of regularly spaced Japanese Peppers or Peppercorns (*Schinus terebinthifolia*), part of which is not within the curtilage of the place.

Central in the open grassed expanse between the Honour Avenue and the playground, is a small gazebo.

The Johnston street frontage has an irregular edge of mostly European, or Common, Box trees (*Buxus sempervirens*).

*Soldiers' Park, Collie* is in good condition. The Park is obviously maintained on a regular basis, although the Commemorative Arch and Gates require some restoration.

The gazebo is of no heritage significance.

### 13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

War Memorials on the State Register

At least 21 War Memorials are entered into the State Register.<sup>36</sup> Nine of these are identified as constructed between 1918 and 1939 (of 61 from this period in the database) and two are in the South West region (of 27 from this region in the database):

- P00348 *St Patrick's Anglican Church (fmr) & War Memorial, Rathmines* (1920)
- P05700 *ANZAC Park, Bunbury*, (1924)

*Anzac Park, Bunbury* has a memorial in the form of a cenotaph with a marble statue of a soldier, an older stone obelisk, and rose gardens, located in a geometric style park setting. *St Patrick's Anglican Church (fmr) & War Memorial, Rathmines* is an octagonal stone memorial topped by a cross.<sup>37</sup>

Other South West War Memorials constructed 1918-1939

In addition to *ANZAC Park, Bunbury* and *Soldiers' Park, Collie*, the Office of Heritage database includes five South West War Memorials that are not on the Register:

- P00716 *Soldiers' Memorial Hall, Donnybrook* (1919): two storey stone civic building.
- P01182 *Harvey War Memorial Library & District Honour Rolls* (1925-1930), timber and iron building established as a War Memorial.

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<sup>36</sup> 'War Memorial' is not a searchable category in the HCWA database. These results are on the basis of searching 'specific use: monument/ cemetery' and 'places: any keyword: war'. This returns 174 places (5 Dec 2007), of which 21 are Registered.

<sup>37</sup> Heritage Council database and assessment documentation.

- P01192 Brunswick & Memorial Hall, also known as Brunswick Junction District Honour Rolls (1925-1936): large brick building designed by Powell, Cameron & Chisholm architects, incorporating three halls.
- P04992 Boyup Brook & District Soldiers Memorial Hospital & Honour Boards, WW1 (1923): hospital building constructed by the PWD.
- P11374 Manjimup Recreation Ground Gates (1924): stone gates
- P13481 Busselton War Memorial, Victoria Sq (1919-1920): bronze & limestone cenotaph-style monument on a stone platform.

All these places, except Harvey War Memorial Library & District Honour Rolls, are entered on their local Municipal Inventories. All except the Manjimup gates are listed in the Statewide War Memorial Survey.<sup>38</sup>

A further seven war memorials in the South West were established after 1939, none of which are Registered.

### Memorial Parks

While many places have memorial parks, it is considered likely that the majority of them were existing parks that have been renamed rather than parks established specifically as memorials. With few exceptions, memorial parks were formal in layout, although some of that formality has been softened in more recent years at many places. War memorials took a number of forms, ranging from a traditional monument, statue or obelisk, to memorial buildings, parks, tree plantings and honour avenues.<sup>39</sup>

There are 20 places in the Office of Heritage database noted as both parks and monuments/cemeteries, 16 of which appear to be parks that either are War Memorials in their own right, or contain War Memorials. Four of these are on the State Register:

- P01819 *Narrogin Memorial Park & War Memorial Pavilion*, (1922-23)
- P04479 *Blackboy Hill Memorial*, Greenmount (1992 Memorial at 1914 site)
- P05700 *ANZAC Park, Bunbury*, (1924)
- P13668 *Peace Memorial Rose Garden*, Nedlands (1948)

### Obelisks

The Statewide War Memorial Survey indicates that obelisks are the most common form of War Memorial in Western Australia, with 70 examples noted.<sup>40</sup>

### Commemorative Arches & Gates

There are five entries for Memorial Gates associated with war for the South West region and two of these, apart from Collie's, were constructed between 1918 and 1935:

- P14885 Boyanup Memorial Park, Memorial Gates & War Memorial
- P11374 Manjimup Recreation Ground Gates

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<sup>38</sup> Richards, Oline, op cit; Heritage Council database.

<sup>39</sup> Richards, Oline, op cit, pp. 4-10.

<sup>40</sup> Richards, Oline, op cit, p.9.

Other decorative gates built at this time were designed for the State Centenary and are for entrances to sports grounds. The main entrance to Perth Oval is another exuberant Art Deco example of such a structure.

There are not other places identified in the Office of Heritage database as having gates designed in the Interwar Free Classical style.

#### Honour Avenues

Three other honour avenues are located at King's Park, Point Walter and Mt Clarence, Albany. They are all associated with roadways.

#### Rose Gardens

Rose gardens are typical of floral memorials. *Peace Memorial Rose Garden, Nedlands* (P13668) is the largest and best-known rose garden memorial in the State. Smaller memorial rose gardens are known to be at Albany, Kalgoorlie, Katanning, East Fremantle, Leederville, Floreat, Kondinin and Corrigin. This form of memorial became popular after World War Two, as honour avenues fell out of favour. A 1945 letter from the National Rose Society of WA encouraging the use of rose gardens for War Memorials is reported to have had an 'encouraging response', but a detailed study of where rose garden memorials were planted has not been undertaken.<sup>41</sup>

#### Memorials to Aboriginal Servicemen & Servicewomen

Memorials to Aboriginal servicemen and servicewomen are uncommon. Herberton War Memorial, Myers St, Herberton, Queensland is unusual in designating one of the men killed in World War One as an Aboriginal. This Memorial is entered on the Register of the National Estate. In 1991 the first War Memorial to Aboriginal servicemen and servicewomen was unveiled at Jebbribillum Bora Park in Burleigh Heads, south of Brisbane. No other examples are known of at this time.<sup>42</sup>

#### Combination of Elements

Memorial Parks in the Office of Heritage database that are noted to include more elements than just a park and a monument are:

- P05700 *ANZAC Park, Bunbury*, (see above)
- P06621 *Bridgetown Memorial Park, War Memorial & Pavilion* was established from 1944, with the 1952 stone and bronze monument itself relocated from another site c.1959. The Park includes a stone and brick memorial gatehouse, which creates an entranceway into a grassed park with pencil pines leading to the monument.
- P11011 *Peace Park Memorial, Moora*, has decorative gates leading into a park that contains a bronze and stone obelisk.

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<sup>41</sup> HCWA Register Documentation P13668 *Peace Memorial Rose Garden, Nedlands*.

<sup>42</sup> Database of the National Estate; Hansard extract of the NSW Legislative Assembly, 21 April 1994, speakers on 'Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Servicemen, matter of public importance', [www.parliament.nsw.gov.au](http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au).

- P11817 Dongara War Memorial & Memorial Park includes a granite obelisk (constructed 1920s, relocated to site 1938), galvanised iron entrance arch with rendered entry pillars, pencil pines, and a rose garden set within a park.
- P14885 Boyanup Memorial Park, Memorial Gates & War Memorial includes a granite obelisk, stone gate pillars with ornamental gates, and an honour avenue of peppermint trees, all located within a Memorial Park that also includes sporting facilities.<sup>43</sup>

#### Conclusions

*Soldiers' Park, Collie* is a good example of a War Memorial and associated park with formal plantings still evident.

It is unusual for the number of memorial forms located together in one Memorial Park, being: an obelisk, rose gardens, an honour avenue, a Memorial to Aboriginal Servicemen, and memorial gates.

The Commemorative Arch and Gates are a distinctive and less common form of 1920s War Memorial.

The Memorial to Aboriginal Servicemen is rare in the State and also nationally.

#### 13.4 KEY REFERENCES

No key references.

#### 13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

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<sup>43</sup> Richards, Oline, op cit, pp.31-32.