



HERITAGE
COUNCIL
OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES

Permanent Entry

1. **Data Base No.** 1039
2. **Name.** North Fremantle War Memorial
3. **Description of elements included in this entry.** The Memorial and the land on which it stands, being Lot 46 on Plan 1297, comprised in Certificate of Title Vol. 251 Folio 21A
4. **Local Government Area.** City of Fremantle
5. **Location.** Queen Victoria Street and Harvest Road, North Fremantle
6. **Owner.** City of Fremantle
7. **Statement of Significance of Place (Assessment in Detail)**

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

The North Fremantle War Memorial consists of a granite pillar surmounted by a finely detailed statue of imported marble. The statue is of a First World War Australian infantry-man in the "rest on arms reversed" position. The pillar is inscribed with the names of those citizens of North Fremantle who gave their lives in the First World War and, later, in the Second World War.

In the First World War, Australia sent numerous contingents of voluntary service personnel to the battle front. Australians distinguished themselves at Gallipoli and the French battlefields. The death toll of fighting Australians was very high and the war losses deeply affected all communities. Following the armistice, local communities throughout Australia raised money for the erection of war memorials to commemorate those persons from their community who lost their lives in the war. War memorials played an important role in both local recognition of the community's sacrifices and as a substitute gravesite for those who had died, and were buried, overseas.

The proposal for a memorial in North Fremantle, a separate municipality at that time, was first discussed in 1921, when a committee was formed for this purpose. The cost of the memorial was to be raised by public subscription, as a community

tribute to the fallen. The committee set about organising a variety of community activities, including bazaars, euchre parties, concerts, house collections and plays.¹

The design chosen was submitted by Mr. J. McCabe, secretary to the memorial appeal committee, and secretary of the North Fremantle branch of the R.S.L.² On Sunday, January 1, 1923 the Governor of Western Australia, Sir Francis Newdegate, laid the foundation stone for the Fallen Soldier's Memorial, North Fremantle. The ceremony was attended by a large crowd and numerous dignitaries, including Major General Sir John Talbot Hobbs and Lady Hobbs, and Mr. W. C. Angwin, M.L.A. A newspaper reporter observed: "...no one will look without remembering the cause of its erection and the part which North Fremantle played in the crisis which none of our present generation can forget. Placed on the corner of the reserve next to the Town Hall it will be seen by everyone who passes through the town and will, as a simple obelisk, serve to remind those at home of the work performed on France's battlefields..."³

Begun in January, the work was completed in August of that same year. The granite base and railings were designed and constructed by G. C. Smith & Co., a family company of monumental masons, which still operates in Fremantle. The marble statue of the unknown soldier was executed in Italy.

The unveiling of the completed memorial was performed by the Governor on Sunday, August 26, 1923. The ceremony was attended by hundreds of people including the Mayor of North Fremantle Mr. Robert Bracks, Major General Sir Talbot Hobbs, Commander Griffiths-Bowen, representatives of the army and navy, members of the various municipal and Road Board bodies, the legislature and the police force.⁴ The Governor described the memorial as a structure which "...can favourably compare with any that has been erected in the metropolitan area".⁵ The Bishop of Perth, Rev. C.L. Riley, dedicated the memorial, the last post was sounded and hymns were sung. Over fifty wreaths were laid to commemorate those who fell, many by relatives.⁶

After the ceremony the Governor met with relatives of fallen soldiers in the adjacent North Fremantle Town Hall. He shook hands with, and expressed sympathy to each one present - "...an action much appreciated by them."⁷

In 1945, an additional roll was added to the base to commemorate those who had fallen during the Second World War. In 1988, the Memorial was vandalised and the rifle damaged. The statue had to be restored and a new gun provided.⁸

The place has been the focal point for Anzac and Armistice Day memorial services since its completion in 1923.

PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

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- 1 *The Advertiser*, August 31, 1923, Page 1 and February 9, 1923, Page 1
 - 2 *The West Australian*, August 27, 1923 and *The Advertiser*, August 31, 1923, Page 1
 - 3 *The Advertiser* January 26, 1923 Page 4
 - 4 *The Advertiser* August 31, 1923 Page 1
 - 5 *The Advertiser* August 24, 1923 Page 1
 - 6 *The Advertiser*, August 31, 1923, Page 1
 - 7 *The Advertiser*, August 31, 1923, Page 1
 - 8 *The West Australian*, January 29, 1988

The memorial is sited at the corner of Harvest Road and Victoria Street, North Fremantle, on a triangular piece of land adjacent to the former North Fremantle Town Hall.⁹ A flag pole stands to the north east of the memorial.

Many communities built a memorial to the war dead. The memorials usually took the form of an obelisk, cairn or cross, however some of the more expensive memorials included statues of soldiers. The North Fremantle Memorial is approximately six metres in height. A two metre square base of rusticated grey granite supports an ornamental slab and a further rusticated base with polished inserts inscribed with the names of the fallen. Above this stands a highly polished obelisk of Mundaring granite, inscribed with the names of those who enlisted from the district.¹⁰ The obelisk is surmounted by a white marble statue of a soldier, in the "rest on arms reversed" position. The soldier faces southwards, down Queen Victoria Street. A decorative cast iron railing surrounds the whole.

The area immediately surrounding the memorial is now paved with concrete slabs, although it is more likely to have been originally surrounded by a gravelled or grassed area.¹¹ Additional names were added to the memorial to commemorate the dead service personnel of World War Two.

In 1988, the statue was vandalised and the statue was restored with a new gun provided. The railings remain intact.

ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in September, 1991 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

1. AESTHETIC VALUE

The North Fremantle War Memorial is a well proportioned and well executed combination of obelisk and statuary. The highly polished granite name plates are well defined planes that contrast with the rusticated rock face, and thus contribute to the plasticity of the obelisk. The statue atop the obelisk is well sculptured, the subject admirably evoking the spirit of remembrance for the military dead

The memorial was specifically located at the intersection of Queen Victoria Street and Harvest Road, adjacent to the former North Fremantle Town Hall, so as to be a focal point in the community. It remains a focal point, although this aspect has been diminished by the demise of the civic function of the Town Hall, and the mural painted on its southern wall.

2. HISTORIC VALUE

⁹ *The Advertiser*, August 31, 1923, Page 1 and February 9, 1923, Page 1

¹⁰ *The Advertiser*, August 31, 1923, Page 1

¹¹ Inglis, K. "Monuments and Ceremonies as Evidence for Historians" *ANZAAS Congress* (September, 1977); Photograph taken in 1981. HCWA Collection.

The North Fremantle War Memorial has historic significance because of its commemoration of those members of the local community who fought and those who died in the First and Second World Wars.

3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

4. SOCIAL VALUE

The North Fremantle War Memorial has social significance in the community for its role as a constant reminder that being part of a community on occasions requires a loss of life for the well being of the community.

5. RARITY

The North Fremantle War Memorial has some scarcity value in that it includes a well executed statue of a soldier, rather than the more usual obelisk, cairn or cross.

6. REPRESENTATIVENESS

The North Fremantle War Memorial is representative of the memorials commemorating the war dead constructed by communities throughout Western Australia following the 1918 armistice.

Representative of a type of social and cultural commemoration of the dead in the periods immediately succeeding both the First and the Second World War..

Representative of the continuity of commemoration over two successive generations.

CONDITION

The North Fremantle War Memorial is in sound condition.

INTEGRITY

The North Fremantle War Memorial has a high degree of integrity.

AUTHENTICITY

The North Fremantle War Memorial has a high degree of authenticity.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The North Fremantle War Memorial has cultural significance for its commemoration of community members who fought and died for their country in both World Wars.

It is an unusual community war memorial in that it includes a well executed marble statue of a soldier.

The memorial has particular social significance as a focal point for communal remembrance.

8. Register of Heritage Places

Interim Entry 20/11/1992
Permanent Entry 16/11/1993

9. Conservation Order

10. Heritage Agreement

11. References

The Advertiser, August 31, 1923, Page 1 and February 9, 1923, Page 1
The West Australian, August 27, 1923 and *The Advertiser*, August 31, 1923, Page 1
The Advertiser January 26, 1923 Page 4
The Advertiser August 31, 1923 Page 1
The Advertiser August 24, 1923 Page 1
The Advertiser, August 31, 1923, Page 1
The Advertiser, August 31, 1923, Page 1
The West Australian, January 29, 1988
The Advertiser, August 31, 1923, Page 1 and February 9, 1923, Page 1
The Advertiser, August 31, 1923, Page 1
Inglis, K. "Monuments and Ceremonies as Evidence for Historians" ANZAAS Congress (September, 1977); Photograph taken in 1981. HCWA Collection.
City of Fremantle Local History Collection
National Trust Assessment Exposition
Australian Heritage Commission Data Sheet