



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - 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)

- 2.1 Living as Australia's earliest inhabitants
- 7.7.3 Going to war
- 8.7 Honouring achievement
- 8.8 Remembering the fallen

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 102 Aboriginal occupation
- 501 World Wars & other wars

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

The simple graduated arches of *Blackboy Hill Memorial* form an interesting sculptural element in a landscaped setting which has been designed to echo and enhance the memorial. (Criterion 1.2 & 1.3)

Blackboy Hill Memorial features a series of sculpted arches, designed by Ean McDonald, symbolising the spirit of the A.I.F over the rising sun of its badge. The arches are situated such that they face the sun as it sets on 24th of April, which on this evening is aligned through the arches with all other elements of the memorial. (Criterion 1.2)

The various elements of *Blackboy Hill Memorial*: the arched memorial, the oval stone plinth, the curved garden beds, the stone seat and the balanced nature of the overall design, together with the park like setting in which all these elements have been placed, creates a tranquil setting. (Criterion 1.3)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

Blackboy Hill Memorial has associations with the Australian, and in particular Western Australian, contribution to the World War One Allied war effort. It was the birthplace of the Western Australian A.I.F (Australian Imperial Force) and was the largest Western Australian military training camp during the war, with over 32,000 troops training there from 1914 to 1918. *Blackboy Hill Memorial*

* For consistency, all references to architectural style are taken from Apperly, Richard; Irving, Robert and Reynolds, Peter *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture: Styles and Terms from 1788 to the Present*, Angus & Robertson, North Ryde, 1989.

commemorates this use and the men who went on to create the ANZAC legend. (Criteria 2.1 & 2.2)

Blackboy Hill Memorial has associations with indigenous people who are said to have used the place as a camp site prior to 1829. (Criterion 2.2)

Blackboy Hill Memorial includes a 35 year old Canary Island Pine tree (*Pinus canariensis*) that is an off-shoot of the Lone Pine, a significant tree located at the internationally recognized historic World War One site of Anzac Cove in Turkey. (Criterion 2.2)

From 15 June to 14 October 1919, the former military camp was used as an isolation hospital for the treatment of pneumonic influenza patients, including many returned servicemen. (Criterion 2.2)

During the Great Depression, the place was used to accommodate hundreds of unemployed single men. The men carried out sustenance work in the local area such as the beautification of Greenmount National Park (later John Forrest National Park). (Criterion 2.2)

The place has associations with the over 32,000 troops who trained there as part of a number of battalions for the Australian Imperial Forces, including the 7th, 11th, 12th, 16th, 28th, and 32nd, and the 3rd Field Ambulance, renowned for having in its ranks Private Simpson, 'the Man With the Donkey'. Nine of the 10 Western Australian recipients of the Victoria Cross trained at Blackboy Hill. (Criterion 2.3)

Blackboy Hill Memorial contains the sculpture work of architect Ean McDonald. (Criterion 2.3)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

The two concrete pads on the western side of the car park are the only features that remain above ground which relate to the use of the site by the Australian Imperial Forces during 1914 – 1918. Additional material may lie below the surface. (Criterion 3.2)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

The site has been recognized as a place of significance to Indigenous communities as evidenced by its entry in the State Register of Aboriginal Sites. (Criterion 4.1)

Blackboy Hill Memorial was established as a result of campaign by ex-servicemen and women to commemorate the former military camp and to honour the men who trained there before serving overseas during World War One. (Criterion 4.1)

Since 1963, *Blackboy Hill Memorial* has been the centre for the Shire of Mundaring's ANZAC Day services, which are attended by over 3000 people annually and involve local scout groups as well as scouts from the Dianella group. The site serves as a reminder of Western Australia's and Australia's involvement in World War One and commemorates the ANZAC legend. (Criteria 4.1 & 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

The memorial sculpture is an unusual form for a war memorial. It is also unique in Australia in that it not only commemorates those who died during World War I, but was also a site used to further Australia's war efforts, and has enormous spiritual importance to veterans of World War I, and Australians of subsequent generations.

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

12. 3 CONDITION

Blackboy Hill Memorial is in good condition and appears to be well maintained.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Blackboy Hill Memorial has developed over a thirty year period. However, the later additions have enhanced rather than detracted from the initial layout of the place. The original east – west alignment of the site has not been altered and the new interpretive signage further emphasises this alignment. The place has a high degree of integrity.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

All original components that make up *Blackboy Hill Memorial* have been retained. The place has a high degree of authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Kris Bizzaca, Historian and Fiona Bush, Heritage Consultant, in March 2004, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Blackboy Hill Memorial comprises a steel sculpture set on a stone plinth, a flag pole, a central landscaped area incorporating raised garden beds and paved areas, a steel structure incorporating interpretive panels, a stone seat, granite slab with metal plaque and a Canary Island Pine (*Pinus canariensis*), 2 concrete footings, a row of Kurrajong trees (*brachychiton acerifolia*) and the surrounding parkland setting, on a sloping site overlooking the city. The various features were constructed between 1914 and 1992 by the Commonwealth Government and several Western Australian branches of the R.S.L.

The area of Blackboy Hill has been included, with interim status, on the State Register of Aboriginal Sites. Although the site type has not been stated in this register entry, Blackboy Hill is said to have been used as an Aboriginal campsite. Indeed, subsequent to European settlement, a spring was noted by Philip Chauncy in his 1846 survey of the York Road as being located in the area. This would have provided a water source for those camping in the vicinity.¹

On 30 September 1829, Blackboy Hill was part of the 4,000 acre (Swan Location 16) land grant taken up by Captain James Stirling, known as Woodbridge. The property was later purchased by Henry Brockman in 1883 who sub-divided it. The following year, estate agent James Morrison advertised the land for sale. The sale was unsuccessful and in 1896 Morrison held another auction, at which time Lot 100, comprising approximately 62 acres, and the adjacent Lot 115 was sold to Ernest Wood.² Lot 100 was the future site of *Blackboy Hill Memorial*.

Wood attempted to sell Lots 100 and 115 in April 1914.³ Several months later, and subsequent to the declaration of war on 4 August 1914, the Commonwealth Government took possession of Wood's land for use as a military camp to train some of the 20,000 troops Australia had initially committed to the war effort.⁴

Camp and war veteran C. Longmore later wrote:

When war was declared on August 4, 1914, I was one of 32 warrant-officers of the Instructional Staff of the C.M.F. in this State. The compulsory service scheme was in full swing and the Australian citizen army was being organized comparatively cheaply and certainly efficiently. About the middle of August I received order to take 200 men from Francis-street drill hall (now Swan Barracks) to Blackboy Hill. In Francis-street I "fell in" with my unit. The men had been passed as medically fit. The minimum height was 5ft. 6in., but otherwise they were a mixed bag – clerks, sleeper-cutters, miners, prospectors, tradesmen – in straw hats, "boxers" and felts, serge suits and dungarees, with shining suitcases and dilapidated swags. Perhaps 10 per cent were in the uniform of the C.M.F.-compulsory trainees who had volunteered for active service overseas.

¹ Register of Aboriginal Sites, Site ID 3610, Report Run on 23/3/2004; Bruce Callow & Associates with Ian Elliot, 'Shire of Mundaring Municipal Inventory', prepared for the Shire of Mundaring, 1997, Site No. 82.

² 'Shire of Mundaring Municipal Inventory', op. cit., Site No. 82; *Swan Express*, 24/4/1914, cited in Elliot, I., *Mundaring: a history of the Shire, Shire of Mundaring*, Mundaring, 1983, p. 230.

³ *Swan Express*, 24/4/1914, cited in Elliot, op. cit., p. 230.

⁴ Elliot, op. cit., p. 230.

There was no road transport to carry the gear. The men “fell in” in two ranks, numbered and were pushed and shoved into fours, turned right and “quick marched”. Not a very quick march and certainly not inspiring. We arrived at Perth station in bedraggled order and there entrained for Bellevue. From there we “marched” to the virgin slopes of Blackboy Hill. I think that six parties of about the same strength as mine made the march the first day.

My 200 men were to become “E” and “F” companies of the 11th Battalion. There were 8 companies to a Battalion then. Later the two companies became “C” Company, commanded by Captain Raye Leane. At the Hill we formed into two extended flanks. A G.S. (general service) wagon, horse drawn, drove along and dropped bell tents and poles at intervals. There was a rough alignment and spacing; then with 16 men to a tent, the 11th Battalion was under canvas before nightfall – each man with a ground sheet and two army blankets. The ground was damp and it was a cold night. The evening meal? You’ve guessed it – stew.⁵

There were very few amenities at the Blackboy Hill camp and it was not until after a storm had swept away many of the bell tents, that some timber barracks and other huts were erected.⁶ These timber buildings can be seen in photographs of the place while it was used as a military camp. It should be noted that the tents remained in use up to 1918.⁷

On 16 October 1915, Sir John Forrest opened a YMCA Social Centre, which had been built at the camp by busy bees consisting of local residents and Midland Railway Workshop employees.⁸ In *Mundaring: a history of the Shire*, Ian Elliot stated that ‘Concerts and fetes became regular events at the social centre from then on, while committees in Bellevue and Midland organized weekly dances for those troops lucky enough to get a pass.’⁹

Blackboy Hill camp, under Commandant Lieutenant Colonel C. Battye, was the largest military camp in Western Australia during World War One. When hostilities ceased in November 1918, over 32,000 troops had been trained or had camped at Blackboy Hill.¹⁰ These included the 7th, the

11th, two companies of the 12th, the 16th (less two companies), the 28th, and two companies of the 32nd comprised the infantry. The 3rd Field Ambulance, which produced Private Simpson, “the Man With the Donkey”, was [also] trained there.... The 48th and the 51st Battalions were formed in Egypt, after Gallipoli, with half of the 16th and 11th Battalions respectively as their nuclei. They were filled with reinforcements from Australia. Blackboy Hill trained most of them.¹¹

The various Australian Imperial Force (A.I.F) Companies saw action at Gallipoli, the Somme and other areas in Flanders, Jerusalem and Palestine.¹² Of the ten Western Australian World War One recipients of the Victoria Cross, 9 trained at Blackboy Hill.¹³

5 *West Australian*, 27/5/1950.

6 ‘Shire of Mundaring Municipal Inventory’, op. cit., Site No. 82; Elliot, op. cit., p. 230.

7 See Photograph H02001, The Camp of the 32nd Battalion AIF, c. 1918, Australian War Memorial (www.awm.gov.au, 23/3/2004).

8 *Swan Express*, 22/10/1915, cited in Elliot, op. cit., p. 230.

9 Elliot, op. cit., p. 230.

10 Ibid; *West Australian*, 18/5/1950; 6/12/1962.

11 *West Australian*, 27/5/1950.

12 *West Australian*, 27/5/1950.

13 ‘Shire of Mundaring Municipal Inventory’, op. cit., Site No. 82.

From 15 June to 14 October 1919, the former camp was used as an isolation hospital for the treatment of pneumonic influenza. Many of the 1,519 patients who were hospitalized at Blackboy Hill were returned servicemen. It is believed that 79 people died whilst at the hospital.¹⁴

The former Blackboy Hill camp was largely unused after the closure of the hospital. In the 1920s, the officer's mess was used for dances by local Greenmount residents and for a few years the place was the location of the annual Greenmount District Show.¹⁵

During the Great Depression, from 1930 to c. 1933, the former military camp was used to house hundreds of unemployed single men.¹⁶ Preference for the small number of jobs available was given to married men with families while single men were forced to rely on the government for welfare. The men at Blackboy Hill received some money (initially 5 shillings) and their keep for 12 hours work a week. The sustenance workers were employed at such tasks as beautification works and road making at Greenmount National Park (later John Forrest National Park).¹⁷

Subsequent to this, the former Blackboy Hill camp fell into disuse and in the preceding years the buildings were removed from the site.¹⁸ For example some of the timber huts were removed from Blackboy Hill to the camps at Melville and Naval Base at the beginning of World War Two.¹⁹ (All that remains of the Blackboy Hill camp in 2005 are two concrete pads.)

In May 1950, it was announced that the 62 acres of the former Blackboy Hill military camp was to be transferred from the Commonwealth Government to the State Government for the construction of Commonwealth and State public housing.²⁰ Although it was to be some years before the work was to begin with the laying of sewerage and a water supply to the area, public knowledge of the plans resulted in a strong reaction from ex-servicemen and women and their organisations opposing the plans with many seeing Blackboy Hill 'as the birthplace of the A.I.F. in Western Australia',²¹ and in particular of the 44th Battalion.²²

One such response was published in the *West Australian* on 27 May 1950, in which Longmore recalled life at the camp and the experiences of the battalions, which trained there in World War One.²³ He went on to state:

If an area of land in this State is entitled to be a national park – a memorial – it is this. Blackboy Hill with its traditions, its historical associations, its links with the soldiers and epic events is indeed hallowed ground...

To the memory of these men we have one man-made memorial in King's Park. But Blackboy Hill should be another – Western Australia's Park of Memories. Perhaps it is not yet too late for the Authority to act.²⁴

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- 14 'The History of Blackboy Hill', a paper compiled by the "Marai Bilan" Club (Pupils assisted by the Staff of Greenmount Primary School 1967-1969), cited in Elliot, op. cit., pp. 230 – 231.
- 15 Elliot, op. cit., p. 231.
- 16 *West Australian*, 18/5/1950; *West Australian*, 21/8/1931, cited in Elliot, op. cit., p. 231.
- 17 Ibid (both); 'Shire of Mundaring Municipal Inventory', op. cit., Site No. 82.
- 18 'Shire of Mundaring Municipal Inventory', op. cit., Site No. 82.
- 19 National Archives of Australia, K1141, M1939/40/109/1.
- 20 *West Australian*, 18/5/1950.
- 21 'Shire of Mundaring Municipal Inventory', op. cit., Site No. 82.
- 22 Bill Gaynor, President of RSL in WA, phone conversation with Clare Schulz, 21 March 2005.
- 23 *West Australian*, 27/5/1950.

The very next month, in June 1950, the Returned Servicemen's League (RSL) approached the State Housing Commission requesting that consideration be given to the erection of a memorial park or garden on the former camp site.²⁵

In March 1951, the campaign by the RSL and others proved successful, with the announcement that a letter had been received by the RSL informing it of the decision to set aside seven acres as an A-Class reserve on which a memorial could be put.²⁶ The State Housing Commission later agreed that one acre would be made available specifically for the memorial site.²⁷

The RSL set up a Blackboy Hill Campsite Memorial Project Committee, chaired by veteran Reg Nicholas who had trained at the camp, to organize the construction of the memorial.²⁸ In 1958, the plans for the site were made public. Central to the design was a decagon and pylon enclosed by circular walls and featuring the name and colour patch of each of the 10 AIF units that had been stationed there.²⁹

A public appeal for funds was set up by the Project Committee; however, only £2,000 of a target of £6,500 was raised. This caused delays in the commencement of work as well as major modifications to the plans.³⁰ The RSL approached Architect Ean McDonald to design plans for a memorial featuring the A.I.F badge.³¹

In August 1962, it was reported that work was to begin on *Blackboy Hill Memorial*. McDonald's plan featured a series of ascending elliptical arches symbolising the spirit of the AIF over the rising sun of its badge. The arches were to face along the setting sun on 24 April (the day before the Gallipoli landing), and were cut from one big steel plate.³²

Costing £2,500, with the additional money contributed by the State Government, *Blackboy Hill Memorial* was completed by December 1962. It was unveiled by Charles Court, the Minister for Industrial Development, and dedicated by Bishop Riley, a former chaplain at the AIF camp.³³ The plaque unveiled by the Minister was inscribed 'Commemorating the Spirit of the ANZAC rising from this soil at Blackboy Hill.'³⁴ During the one-hour long ceremony, flags representing the various units who trained at the camp were raised, and music was provided by the Western Command Band.³⁵

Blackboy Hill Memorial has been the location of ANZAC Day Services in the area since 25 April 1963, including the unusual sunset service on April 24th, the

24 *West Australian*, 27/5/1950.

25 *West Australian*, 28/3/1951.

26 *West Australian*, 28/3/1951.

27 *West Australian*, 30/11/1961.

28 *West Australian*, 30/11/1961; 10/12/1962.

29 *West Australian*, 16/9/1958. It is not known why there was such a long delay between the announcement of the State Housing Commission's decision and the release of the memorial plans.

30 *West Australian*, 30/11/1961.

31 *West Australian*, 18/8/1962.

32 *West Australian*, 18/8/1962. The name of the craftsperson responsible for the construction of the memorial has not been found in the course of research for this assessment.

33 *West Australian*, 10/12/1962.

34 Ibid.

35 *West Australian*, 10/12/1962; 6/12/1962.

keeping of an all-night vigil by the Scouts and Guides, and the Shire of Mundaring's main dawn service.³⁶

In April 1963, members of the Dianella Scout Group held the first all-night vigil leading into ANZAC Day at the place. The Dianella group took on the responsibility as at the time there were no local hills scout groups to be involved.³⁷

An aviation beacon was also erected at the site in 1963.³⁸

In 1964, beautification works in the form of lawns and rose gardens were undertaken at *Blackboy Hill Memorial*. This volunteer work was carried out by a group of former Legacy wards, known as Companions of Legacy. Perth Legacy had made the upkeep of the memorial site one of its responsibilities.³⁹

Another addition to the site in 1964 was the installation of a seat by the Gallipoli Legion of ANZAC's.⁴⁰

In 1964, Greenmount Primary School was relocated from Marloo Road to a site adjacent to *Blackboy Hill Memorial*, and located on the former camp site.⁴¹ Since this time, the School has had an active interest in the former military camp and various classes and students have undertaken a number of projects dealing with the history of the place.⁴²

On 4 November 1969, *Blackboy Hill Memorial* was vested to the Shire of Mundaring as a war memorial site.⁴³ From this time, the Shire managed the place on behalf of the community.

In 1969 a pine tree said to be an off-shoot of the pine tree at Lone Pine, Anzac Cove, Turkey was planted at *Blackboy Hill Memorial*.⁴⁴

On 20 June 1986, the Blackboy Hill Commemorative Site Advisory Committee was formed to advise the Council of the Shire of Mundaring in regard to the management of the place.

Plans were developed in 1988 by landscape architects P & M Tooby for a number of works to the site including the planting of more trees, shrubs and groundcover, the construction of garden beds planted with Blackboys, the installation of paving around the memorial and seating, and other fixtures such as information bays.⁴⁵ The estimated cost of this landscaping was approximately \$50,000 - \$60,000; however, it appears that only a portion of this work was carried out in the form of some of the plantings and the paving.⁴⁶

36 'Shire of Mundaring Municipal Inventory', op. cit., Site No. 82.

37 Bill Gaynor, President of RSL in WA, phone conversation with Clare Schulz, 21 March 2005.

38 'Shire of Mundaring Municipal Inventory', op. cit., Site No. 82.

39 *West Australian*, 18/8/1964.

40 'Shire of Mundaring Municipal Inventory', op. cit., Site No. 82.

41 'Shire of Mundaring Municipal Inventory', op. cit., Site No. 82.

42 For example see Edwards, C., 'A History of Blackboy Hill', History Assignment for Mr. Ellery, n.d. [c. 1988] & 'The History of Blackboy Hill', a paper compiled by the "Marai Bilan" Club (Pupils assisted by the Staff of Greenmount Primary School 1967-1969), cited in Elliot, op. cit., pp. 230 – 231.

43 *Government Gazette*, 11/4/1969.

44 'Shire of Mundaring Municipal Inventory', prepared op. cit., Site No. 82.

45 Plans dated January 1988, in HCWA File: PD4479.

46 Ibid; Photograph in 'Shire of Mundaring Municipal Inventory', prepared op. cit., Site No. 82.

Council records show that in 1989 approval was given for the erection of a new entry statement with interpretation at *Blackboy Memorial Hill*, similar to the design of the 1962 memorial.⁴⁷ It was constructed during 1989.⁴⁸

On 5 May 1992, the place was officially gazetted as the 'Blackboy Hill Commemorative Site'.⁴⁹ In that same year, the City of Perth sub-branch of the R.S.L. paid for paving to be laid in the area to the east of the memorial. Incorporated into this paving were plaques commemorating the names of the soldiers who were awarded Victoria Crosses during the war.⁵⁰

ANZAC Day commemorations for the area are focussed at the site. These include a memorial service attended by up to 1,500 school children from the area in the week prior to ANZAC Day, a dusk service on the 24th of April attended by approximately 600 people, of whom half are scouts, guides and members of other youth organisations, and the Shire's main dawn service on ANZAC Day, with an average attendance of around 1,500. The all-night scout vigil at the place is still maintained. While some members of the Dianella Scout Group, which began the vigil in 1963, continue to be involved, the majority of the scouts marking the vigil are now from the local Bilgoman Scout Group.⁵¹

Blackboy Hill Memorial is also used to commemorate the 'birthdays' of individual battalions.⁵²

In 2005, *Blackboy Hill Memorial* continues to be used as a memorial site and is the centre for the Shire of Mundaring's ANZAC Day commemorations. The Blackboy Hill Commemorative Site Advisory Committee continues to manage the site in 2005 and comprises members of the Returned Serviceman League, Councillors from the Shire of Mundaring, a member of the Legacy Club of Perth, a member of the Army Museum of Western Australia and a project architect.

13.2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Blackboy Hill Memorial comprising a steel sculpture set on a stone plinth, a flag pole, a central landscaped area incorporating raised garden beds and paved areas, a steel structure incorporating interpretive panels, a stone seat, granite slab with metal plaque and a Canary Island Pine (*Pinus canariensis*), 2 concrete footings, a row of Kurrajong trees (*brachychiton acerifolia*) and surrounding parkland setting, on a sloping site overlooking the city. The various features were constructed between 1914 and 1992 by the Commonwealth Government and the several Western Australian branches of the R.S.L.

Blackboy Hill Memorial is located in a residential area on the northern side of Innamincka Road. To the east of the site is Greenmount Primary School and to the west, St. Anthony's Church and School. The site slopes gently down to the west, with a somewhat steeper slope to the south that has led to the development of terracing around the memorial area.

47 Shire of Mundaring, Council Files, Building License Application No. 89/0293, approved 29/3/89.

48 'Shire of Mundaring Municipal Inventory', prepared op. cit., Site No. 82.

49 *Government Gazette*, 5/5/1992.

50 Information obtained from plaques found on site during the site assessment 24 March 2004. A metal plaque displaying an image of the Victoria Cross notes that the names record 'winners from Blackboy Hill'. There are ten plaques, including that of Hugo Throssell. It should be noted that Throssell served with the 10th Light Horse Regiment which did not train at Blackboy Hill.

51 Bill Gaynor, President of RSL in WA, phone conversation with Clare Schulz, 21 March 2005.

52 Ibid.

The immediate area around the memorial has been planted with a variety of native plants (varieties of grevillea), exotic trees and various eucalypts. The southern side of the site is lined with evenly spaced Sugar gums (*eucalyptus cladocalyx*) which have been planted along the length of Innamincka Road.⁵³ The area beyond the memorial is interspersed with a variety of trees, including several rows of kurrajongs (*brachychiton acerifolia*), various species of eucalyptus and zamia palms (*macrozamia riedlei*).

The memorial area is bracketed by curved garden beds that lie on either side of a paved central area which is dominated by the memorial sculpture which lies along a central axis. All of the remaining structures have been placed along the central east – west axis which is intended to align the features with the sun as it sets on ANZAC Day. At the eastern most end of the axis is an interpretive panel. Heading west from this structure, a paved brick path leads down through two flights of steps to the central monument. To the west of the monument is a curved stone seat, and beyond this a large granite rock to which has been fixed a metal plaque. Directly to the west of the rock is a mature Canary Island Pine (*Pinus canariensis*).

Memorial Sculpture

The sculpture is composed of four flat, galvanised metal arches, which have been inclined 60, 40 and 20 degrees and diminish in size as they approach the ground. The tallest arch is placed at a 90 degree angle. The arches are approached by a series of five, oval shaped stone steps, which diminish in size as they rise, echoing the metal sculpture. The arches are embedded in the top step and bracket a metal plaque set on the ground, which is in the image of the A.I.F.'s badge of the 'rising sun'. The 'badge' is supported on a stone base that is slightly higher at the eastern end. Immediately in front of the 'badge' is a metal plaque bearing the inscription:

Commemorating
the spirit of ANZAC
arising from this soil
of Blackboy Hill

The name 'Cumpton's, Leederville' is marked in the lower right hand corner of the plaque.

The memorial is in very good condition.

Interpretive Panel Entrance Feature

The entrance feature, also designed by the original architect, echoes the design of the memorial sculpture. It consists of three galvanised steel arches set in a parallel line with interpretive panels fixed on the inner sides of the arches. The interpretive information is set in aluminium frames and protected by a sheet of clear perspex.

The structure has been set on a long, narrow stone platform which is approached from the west by a flight of six stone steps. As the ground rises to the east the stone platform lies almost flush with the brick paving which continues eastwards beyond the panel and encircles a mature sugar gum (*eucalyptus cladocalyx*) at the eastern end of the path.

⁵³ The date of this planting is not known.

On the northern side of the panel are two Pencil pines (*cupressus semprevirens*). The interpretive structure entrance feature is in very good condition.

Victoria Cross Commemorative Paving and Flag Pole

The brick paving continues to the west of the interpretive panel, sloping downwards slightly to a timber flag pole. Twelve metal plaques have been set into the paved area between the interpretive panel and the flag pole. Ten plaques have been evenly spaced (five on each side) near the outer edge of the paving. These plaques record the names of Western Australian soldiers who received the Victoria Cross during World War I.⁵⁴ The remaining two plaques have been centrally placed at the western and eastern ends of this section of paving. The eastern plaque bears an image of the Victoria Cross and the inscription: 'Victoria Cross winners of Blackboy Hill'. The western plaque carries the inscription: 'Presented by City of Perth sub-branch R.S.L. November 1992.'

To the west of the plaques, a flight of steps leads down to the memorial sculpture.

The plaques and the flag pole are in very good condition.

Stone Seat

The commemorative seat lies approximately 10 metres to the west of the memorial sculpture. The seat is curved, an echo of the arches. The stone seat and backrest have been covered with a layer of cement to create a comfortable flat surface. The area directly in front of the seat has been paved with concrete 'crazy paving'. A metal plaque has been centrally placed in the seat back recording:

Rest and reflect

Blackboy Hill

from this camp site

ANZACS departed in 1914 – 1918

Gallipoli Legion of ANZACS W.A.

The name 'Cumpston's, Leederville' also appears on this plaque in the bottom right hand corner.

The seat is in good condition.

Garden Beds and Terracing

Terracing and garden beds have been arranged symmetrically on either side of the path at the eastern end of the site and on either side of the central paved area around the memorial sculpture.

Flat oval, areas have been developed at the eastern end by excavating into the sloping site. A low, battered stone retaining wall has been constructed at the base of the excavated slopes. Blackboys (*xanthorea preissii*) have been planted at the eastern end of these cleared areas. The majority have died with only one surviving on the northern side and two on the southern side.

Curved stone walls have been built to support the earth bank on either side of the steps which lead down to the central paved area around the memorial sculpture. These walls have been extended outwards at their western ends to form garden

⁵⁴ See Appendix for a list of the names.

beds, which have been planted with varieties of low growing grevilleas. The southern bed features a pair of red flowering marris (*eucalyptus ficifolia*). A brick paved path on the northern side curves around the top of the beds to the car park, which is located on the northern side of the site.

A set of steps on the northern side of the central paved area also provides access to a brick paved path, which joins the eastern path, mentioned above, to the car park.

A stone retaining wall also curves around the site on the western side of the seat. All of the retaining walls have been constructed by using alternating vertical bands of brown laterite and grey granite. The curved walls appear to echo the arches in the memorial sculpture.

The stone walls are in good condition and the plantings have flourished with the exception of the blackboys.

Granite Rock

A large, undressed granite boulder, roughly rectangular in shape, has been placed between the seat and the pine tree. A metal plaque has been fixed to its eastern face and records the following:

'In commemoration of all troops
that initially trained at this
Historic Camp Site 1914 – 1918
Thereby making Blackboy Hill
the birthplace of the A.I.F. in
West Australia
Erected by
Blackboy Hill RSL Sub Branch
& Women's Auxiliary'

Pine Tree

A Canary Island Pine (*Pinus canariensis*) tree, approximately 35 years old in 2005, is located approximately 10 metres to the west of the rock and lies on the central east – west axis. It is enclosed by a cyclone mesh fence with a gate in the north west corner. A metal plaque inside the fence notes that the tree is 'a seedling from the lone pine, Gallipoli.'

The tree appears to be in good condition.

Concrete Pads

To the south of the car park lie two concrete pads (approximately 1.5 x 2.0 m), which were probably constructed sometime during 1914 – 1918. The northern most pad displays evidence of two narrow room divisions together with metal pipes which exit from the western side of the pad. Metal straps fixed into the concrete were probably used to support a more temporary superstructure. The southern pad is slightly smaller and displays no evidence of room division.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

When war was declared on Germany in August 1914 the majority of Western Australia's young men enlisted to fight overseas. Although they came from all over the state they all ended up at the army camp established on Blackboy Hill in that same year. It was from this camp that the various battalions of the Western Australian branch of the A.I.F. trained (the mounted regiments trained elsewhere) during 1914 – 1918.⁵⁵

Many war memorials have been constructed throughout the state to commemorate both World War I and World War II. In general, these memorials are composed of a stone obelisk that carries plaques bearing the names of those who served and died during these wars. Variations on this style of memorial are found, such as the clock mounted on top of the dome of the *Midland Town Hall*, the various memorials found on Memorial Hill at Fremantle and the Desert Mounted Corps memorial at Albany.

In general, Western Australia's various war memorials tend to commemorate the lives of those soldiers who fought and died during both world wars, whereas *Blackboy Hill Memorial* commemorates not only the ANZAC spirit but also the birthplace of the Western Australian branch of the A.I.F., which the veterans felt was first developed in the Blackboy Hill training camp.

Blackboy Hill Memorial displays a unique sculptural design for a war memorial in Western Australia. The memorial is also unusual in that it recognises not only those who died during World War I, but the symbolism of the site for the ANZACs and the birth of the Western Australian branch of the A.I.F.

13.4 KEY REFERENCES

No key references.

13.5 FURTHER RESEARCH

⁵⁵ Elliot, op. cit., p. 230; Richards, R., *Murray and Mandurah, a sequel history of the old Murray District of Western Australia*, Shire of Murray and City of Mandurah, 1993, p.320.

APPENDIX – VICTORIA CROSS WINNERS

Plaques listing Victoria Cross Winners from Blackboy Hill

1. M. O'Meara, 16th Battalion, France 1918
2. C. Pope, 11th Battalion, France 1917
3. C.W.K. Sadlier, 51st Battalion, France 1918
4. H.V.V. Throssell, 10th Light Horse Regiment, Gallipoli 1915 (Throssell did not actually train at Blackboy Hill)
5. J.P. Woods, 48th Battalion, France 1918
6. T.L. Axford, 16th Battalion, France 1918
7. J. Carroll, 33rd Battalion, France 1917
8. A.E. Gaby, 28th Battalion, France 1918
9. L.D. McCarthy, 16th Battalion, France 1918
10. H.W. Murray, 13th Battalion, France 1917