



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.

The documentation for this place is based on the heritage assessment completed by Robin Chinnery, Historian and Philip Griffiths, Architect, in August 2003, with amendments and/or additions by HCWA staff and the Register Committee.

PRINCIPAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORIC THEME(S)

- 8.7 Honouring achievement
- 9.7.3 Remembering the dead

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA THEME(S)

- 5 World Wars & other wars
- 606 Famous & infamous people

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE*

Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial is an excellent piece of memorial design, with a well rendered likeness of its subject, set over an Art Deco style base of Donnybrook sandstone and Mahogany Creek granite against a background of Canary Island Palms. (Criterion 1.1)

Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial is a very good large-scale example of the work of sculptor Edward Kohler. (Criterion 1.2)

Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial is a landmark in the context of Riverside Drive and the Esplanade. (Criterion 1.3)

* 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Canberra, 1991, with additional reference to Richards, O. *Theoretical Framework for Designed Landscapes in WA*, unpublished report, 1997.

11. 2. HISTORIC VALUE

Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial was the first memorial erected in Perth in commemoration of a distinguished soldier, and is one of very small number of public memorials to an individual erected in Perth in the first half of the twentieth century. (Criterion 2.1)

Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial was made and erected in 1940, during the early period of World War Two. (Criterion 2.2)

The memorial commemorates Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs, Western Australia's most distinguished World War One soldier, and a renowned architect and founder of Hobbs Smith and Forbes, one of Western Australia's highly successful architectural practices. (Criterion 2.3)

Well known Architect Alex Winning, of Hobbs & Winning, designed the Art Deco style memorial, with sculptor Edward Kohler, who executed the work, which was cast by Premier Engineering Co., and erected by well known builders A. T. Brine & Sons. (Criterion 2.3)

Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial was the first bronze statue of its kind to be cast in Western Australia, and is a rare example of its type in this State, an important example of technical achievement in the World War Two period. (Criterion 2.4)

Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial is significant as one of the major works by sculptor Edward Kohler and it is a creative success, cleverly concealing Hobbs' stooped posture and small stature. (Criterion 2.4)

11. 3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

As the first bronze statue of its kind cast in Western Australia, *Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial* demonstrates technical innovation and achievement in this State. (Criterion 3.3)

11. 4. SOCIAL VALUE

Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial is highly valued by the community for social, cultural, spiritual and aesthetic reasons, as a well known memorial to a most distinguished and highly regarded Western Australian soldier, architect and citizen, as further evidenced by its classification by the National Trust of Australia (WA) and inclusion in the Municipal Heritage Inventory for the City of Perth. (Criterion 4.1)

Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial contributes to the community's sense of place as, since its unveiling in 1940, it has continuously been the focal point for the Perth Anzac Day parade, being the point from which the salute is taken. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12. 1. RARITY

Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial is a rare example of a twice life-sized portrait bust mounted on a tall column arrangement. (Criterion 5.1)

12. 2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial is representative of the practice of making life-sized or larger figures of eminent people to be located in prominent public spaces, and of the work of sculptor Edward Kohler. (Criterion 6.1)

12. 3 CONDITION

The trees set to the rear of the memorial are not currently well managed and obscure parts of the top of the figure, reducing its visual prominence. The stonework and bronze are generally in good condition, with minor joint fretting and some staining on the stone from the bronze. Paving slabs around the base of the figure are in fair to poor condition.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

The original intent of the *Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial* remains intact, though its context has developed and changed. The integrity remains high.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

The original context of the *Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial* has changed, with the loss of the sentinel plantings of cypress pines, some changes to the pavings, together with the vigorous growth of the Canary Island Palms. However, the memorial itself appears to remain unchanged and has high authenticity.

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Robin Chinnery, Historian. The physical evidence has been compiled by Philip Griffiths, Architect.

13.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial is a seven metre high memorial, comprising a twice life-size cast bronze bust of Lieutenant-General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs, in military uniform, which is mounted on a deeply fluted column of Donnybrook stone, on a base of polished Mahogany Creek granite. It was designed by Architect Alex Winning, with sculptor Edward Kohler, and erected by A. T. Brine & Sons, in 1940.

In 1829, the townsite of Perth was laid out by Roe. A substantial area of the Swan River foreshore was set aside as the Government Domain, as shown on Arrowsmith's plan of 1833. However, in 1834, much of this area was subdivided for residential purposes, with the area between Barrack Street and Lord Street (now Victoria Avenue) remaining as public open space.¹

In June 1845, the Public Garden in Stirling Square Perth was proclaimed, being Allotment B6, which was bounded on the west by the southern portion of Barrack Street.² A plan of Perth Townsite (1845) shows Stirling Square, with the Swan River and river foreshore to the south, south-east, and south-west, where later reclamation would form The Esplanade recreation reserve and Riverside Drive, including the future site of *Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial*.³

In 1873, the Public Works Department began reclamation of the Swan River at the south of the town, but work was spasmodic. In 1875, calls for the establishment of a recreation ground in Perth proposed use of the area between the Barrack Street and William Street jetties.⁴ On 31 March 1880, the partially reclaimed land to the west of Barrack Street, declared as Reserve 423, was handed over by deed of grant to Perth Municipal Council.⁵ In early 1880s, reclamation was continued on what was officially named, in early 1885, the Esplanade Recreation Ground.⁶ It extended from The Esplanade (previously Bazaar Terrace) to the river, and soon became a popular recreation area, utilised for exhibitions, displays, rallies, sporting events, and a popular place for spectators watching the yachting regattas held by Perth Yacht Club, which had erected its clubhouse off the foreshore

¹ Stephenson, Gordon *The Design of Central Perth: Some Problems and Possible Solutions* - A study made for the Perth Central Area Design Coordinating Committee (University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands, 1975) p. 10.

² *Government Gazette* 13 June 1845.

³ Plan of Perth Townsite, 1845, H7 City of Perth Archives.

⁴ *Inquirer* 7 April 1875, quoted in Seddon, George and Ravine, David *A City and its Setting: Images of Perth, Western Australia* (Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle, 1986) pp. 124-125.

⁵ Menagh, C. E. 'The Esplanade - link to WA's history' *West Australian* 29 November 1978, p. 7.

⁶ *West Australian* 11 February 1885, p. 3.

in 1881.⁷ In 1890, the granting of Responsible Government in Western Australia was proclaimed at The Esplanade, as The Esplanade Recreation Ground was generally known.⁸

A plan for further reclamation of the Swan River to the south of the newly built Supreme Court shows The Esplanade Recreation Ground, Reserve 423A, between the jetties.⁹ Subsequently, the newly reclaimed area at the east of Barrack Street was enclosed and used for grazing by the Agricultural Department, before its development as Supreme Court Gardens in 1919-20.¹⁰

From 1916, a march past and service was held annually at The Esplanade to commemorate Anzac Day.¹¹

From 1921, the area of Perth Water east from Barrack Street to the Causeway was progressively reclaimed to create Supreme Court gardens and Langley Park. In the mid 1930s, the area to the west of the Esplanade Recreation Ground, between William and Mill Streets was reclaimed, to provide a scenic drive from Mount Street and a city by-pass. Riverside Drive was constructed to the Causeway by 1937, and gazetted a public thoroughfare on 16 February 1940.¹²

In 1938, the General Committee of Perth City Council suggested the erection of a memorial to Lieutenant-General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs following his death on 21 April, whilst en route for France to attend the unveiling of the Australian war memorial that he had designed at Villers-Bretonneux.¹³ He was one of Australia's most distinguished soldiers, 'Western Australia's most distinguished soldier and a sincere and powerful friend of all ex-servicemen', and a renowned architect in Western Australia.

John Joseph Talbot Hobbs (b. 1864, London, arr. Perth 1887), worked as an architectural draftsman with builder, John Hurst, with whom he migrated to Western Australia in 1887, and whose daughter, Edith Ann, he later married in 1890. After initially working as a carpenter, Hobbs set up practice as an architect. In 1891, he won the design competition for the Weld Club in Barrack Street, Perth. Thereafter, he prospered and 'became a leader in the small band of Perth architects', serving as treasurer of the newly formed West Australian Institute of Architects (1896) and later as its president (1909-11).¹⁴ From 1905, he was senior partner in the firm of architects Hobbs, Smith & Forbes.

⁷ Heritage and Conservation Professionals 'Supreme Court Conservation Plan' (1998), p. 53; and Menagh, C. E. op. cit.

⁸ Stannage, C. T. *The People of Perth* (Perth City Council, Perth, 1979) p. 210.

⁹ Swan River Reclamation, 1902-03, SROWA PWD WA 2045.

¹⁰ Memoranda 1912-13, State Gardens Board File SROWA AN 176/1 Acc. 1068 Item 220/42; and *State Gardens Board: Twenty Years of Progress and Policy 1919-1939* (n. d. c. 1939) p. 25.

¹¹ Menagh, C. E. op. cit.; and *West Australian* 9 April 1971, p. 9.

¹² Stephenson, Gordon op. cit., p. 57; and Seddon, George and Ravine, David op. cit., p. 177.

¹³ Annual Report, City of Perth, 1939-40, p. 11; *West Australian* 25 September 1940; and *Australian Dictionary of Biography* Vol. 9 (Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1983) p. 317.

¹⁴ *Australian Dictionary of Biography* *ibid*, p. 315.

Hobbs' military service had begun with the 1st Cinque Ports Artillery Volunteers in 1883, and he joined the Volunteer Field Artillery in Perth in 1887, being commissioned in 1889. In 1903, he commanded 1st (Western Australian) Field Battery. By 1908, he was Lieutenant-Colonel, Western Australian Mixed Brigade, and rose to Colonel, 22nd Infantry Brigade, in 1913. He was also staff officer for army engineering services (1906-12) and served as aide-de-camp to the Governor-General (1908-17). In 1914, on the outbreak of World War One, Hobbs was appointed to command the artillery of 1st Division, A.I.F. (Australian Imperial Force). He served at Gallipoli in 1915, and was appointed C.B. (Companion of the Order of the Bath). In March 1916, he went to France as commander of 1st Divisional Artillery. In October, he became acting commander, 1st Anzac Corps Artillery, and was given command of 5th Division in December, then promoted to Major-General on 1 January 1917. He commanded with 'great distinction and earned the undying affection of 20 000 men'.¹⁵ In December 1917, Hobbs was appointed K.C.B., (Knight of the Order of the Bath). He succeeded John Monash in command on 28 November 1918, as acting Lieutenant-General, and continued in command of Australian Corps through to May 1919, having been appointed K.C.M.G. (Knight Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George) in January. In addition, he was awarded the Serbian Order of the White Eagle (1917), was twice awarded the French Croix de Guerre, and was mentioned in dispatches on eight occasions.¹⁶ Prior to relinquishing his command, he was 'deeply involved in the erection of memorials to the Australian divisions', having been appointed to select sites, prepare designs and arrange construction, and he was responsible for four of the five designs implemented.¹⁷

After his return to Australia in October 1919, Hobbs was one of a committee of six generals called to Melbourne in early 1920 to advise the Australian government on the organisation, size and equipment of the army. In 1921, he was appointed commander, 5th Division and 13th Mixed Brigade, Australian Military Forces, and served in this capacity through to his retirement from the army in 1927. He was also military representative, on the Faculty of Engineering, University of Western Australia. He resumed work as an architect in Western Australia, and was responsible for the design of the Western Australian State War Memorial (1929). As a consequence of his distinguished war service, he was 'an important public figure whose help was continually sought by government, ex-service and private bodies'.¹⁸ He served variously as a delegate to the League of Nations in 1933, as Chief Scout of Western Australia, State President of Toc H, a patron of Legacy, warden of the State War Memorial, and 'above all ... devoted to the welfare of returned soldiers' to whom he was 'our loved commander of the 5th Divvy'.¹⁹

¹⁵ Major-General Sir Brudenell White, quoted in *ibid*, p. 316.

¹⁶ *Australian Dictionary of Biography* *ibid*.

¹⁷ *ibid*.

¹⁸ *ibid*, pp. 316-317.

¹⁹ *ibid*, p. 317.

The memorial proposal was taken up by a Citizens' Committee, with Brigadier A. J. Bessell-Browne, who had been 'closely associated with the late Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs throughout his military career' as Chairman of the Hobbs State Memorial Fund, C. W. Court as Fund secretary, and H. W. Taylor, City of Perth Treasurer, as treasurer, and fund raising was commenced.²⁰ The site initially selected for the proposed memorial was in Harper Square (Barrack Square). After reconsideration, a site facing the city on The Esplanade recreation ground, midway between Barrack and William Streets, at the south side of Riverside Drive, was selected and approved by the Council.²¹ On 16 June 1939, an image of a suggested design for the memorial was published in *Building and Construction*. It shows a standing figure in military uniform, mounted on a pedestal, as the central focus the memorial. The estimated cost of the memorial was, £3,000, with £1,000 received to date.²² The original proposal for a full length statue was not implemented due to lack of funds.²³

Through the office of the Royal Institute of Architects of WA, a design competition was held, which opened in November 1939, and closed on 31 January 1940. It was stipulated that the central motif should be a statue or bust of Hobbs in military uniform.²⁴ The design of Alex Winning, of Hobbs and Winning, architects²⁵, in association with sculptor, Edward Kohler, of Ajax Plaster Company, was awarded first place on 28 February 1940.²⁶ All the designs were to be exhibited in a window display at Harris, Scarfe & Sandovers Ltd. store, along with the model of the winning entry and models of two other designs, which had accompanied entries. A photograph shows the model of the winning entry.²⁷

Edward Kohler (b. 1890, Queensland - d. 1964, Perth) had served in the 11th Battalion AIF at Gallipoli, and also in France, before serving as an Instructor in the Australian Corps Gunnery School, being awarded a Meritorious Service Medal for his outstanding work. Following his discharge in 1919, Kohler remained in Europe, working for the Imperial War Graves Commission (1919-28). Subsequently, he studied sculpture at the Lille Academie des Beaux-Arts (1928- c. 1930), and worked for around eight months in the prestigious studio of Belgian sculptor Pierre de Soete. There Kohler was involved in a number of important works, including the memorial

²⁰ *West Australian* 25 September 1940; and Annual Report, City of Perth, 1939-40, p. 11; and *The Architect* Vol. 1 No. 5, June 1940, p. 25.

²¹ Annual Report, City of Perth, 1939-40, *ibid*; and *The Architect* Vol. 1 No. 5, June 1940, *ibid*.

²² *Building and Construction* 16 June 1939, p. 5.

²³ Taylor, Robyn 'An investigation into the nature of modernism and modernity during the 1930s in Perth, Western Australia, through the study of specific buildings and related art and design forms' Ph.D. Thesis, University of Western Australia, Department of Fine Arts, 1993, p. 290.

²⁴ *The Architect* Vol. 1 No. 3, December 1939.

²⁵ This firm was the successor of Hobbs Smith and Forbes and Talbot Hobbs son Athol was a partner in the practice.

²⁶ *The Architect* Vol. 1 Nos. 4 and 5, March and June 1940; and *West Australian* 29 February 1940. Note: The committee judging the competition comprised Messrs. A. E. Clare (Principal Architect), J. McLeod, H. L. Brisbane and J. W. Fairweather Jnr. (*ibid*.)

²⁷ *The Architect* Vol. 1 No. 4, March 1940.

to Marshal Ferdinand Foch, and also a scale model for the Liege War Memorial. In 1932, Kohler returned to Western Australia, and found work with Ajax Plaster Company, West Perth, later becoming head sculptor. This company worked on a large number of Perth building projects, many through its association with the major builders A. T. Brine & Sons, and under Kohler's influence, the company expanded the range and quality of its products.²⁸ In 1936, a joint design by Kohler with architect Reginald Summerhayes won a national design competition for an equestrian statue of King George V, to be erected outside Brisbane Town Hall, bringing Kohler national recognition and resulting in numerous commissions

....for commemorative works, architectural decorations (eg panels on the Emu Brewery, Karrakatta Crematorium, Piccadilly Theatre, and various University of Western Australia Press, Nedlands buildings) and many religious works in WA and interstate (eg Madonna and Child rondo at Highgate, Perth; the Fremantle Blessing of the Fleet statue of the Madonna, and the statue of Brother Keaney for Bindoon).²⁹

It was reported that the memorial to Lieutenant-General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs was estimated to cost in excess of £1,000, and that the design and construction sub-committee 'will use their best endeavours to have the casting done in Australia.'³⁰

On 15 May 1940, the executive committee of the Hobbs State Memorial Fund accepted the tender of builder A. T. Brine & Sons Ltd. for the erection of the memorial at a total cost of £1324, including £600 for the sub-contract to Ajax Plaster Co. Ltd. for the bust, which was to be modeled by sculptor E. F. Kohler, assisted by Mr. Somers.³¹ It was to be 'The biggest cast bronze job yet undertaken in Western Australia'.³²

The base of the memorial was to be formed of Mahogany Creek granite, and the upper pedestal of Donnybrook stone. The base was to be 8 ft. 2ins. x 4 ft. 7 ins., and the total height of the memorial was to be 22 ft. 6 ins.³³ Axed granite steps were to enclose the surround, and the paving slabs were to 'of synthetic stone.'³⁴ The stepped stone plinth is indicative of the continued fashion for Moderne/Art Deco design.³⁵ The memorial was to be inscribed "Lieutenant-General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., V.D., 1870-1939."³⁶

In mid 1940, the preliminary stone work for the memorial was commenced.³⁷ In late June, the recently completed clay model of the bust of

²⁸ Taylor, Robyn op. cit., pp. 274-288.

²⁹ 'Talbot Hobbs Memorial' op. cit., p. 16. Note: In 1937, Kohler had fashioned a marquette for a proposed statue to commemorate explorer and surveyor A. W. Canning; however, the project did not proceed due to lack of funds. (Taylor, Robyn op. cit., p. 290)

³⁰ *West Australian* 29 February 1940.

³¹ *The Architect* Vol. 1, No. 5, June 1940, op. cit.; Annual Report, City of Perth, op. cit.; and *Daily News* 11 November 1940.

³² *West Australian* 16 May 1940; and *The Architect* *ibid*.

³³ *ibid*.

³⁴ *West Australian* 29 February 1940.

³⁵ Taylor, Robyn op. cit.

³⁶ *West Australian* 29 February 1940.

³⁷ *The Architect* op. cit.

the late Lieutenant-General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs was inspected at Kohler's studio by Hobbs' widow and her daughters, S. A. Hunn and J. E. Gordon, and Brigadier-General Bessell-Browne, who congratulated the sculptor on his work. It was anticipated that bronze casting would commence at the works of Premier Engineering Co., under the supervision of Messrs. A. W. Gordon and L. Duffy 'in about a fortnight'.³⁸

By 24 September 1940, the large bronze statue was completed, when Brigadier-General Bessell-Browne and the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir James Mitchell inspected it at the factory of Premier Engineering Co. The statue was about six ft. high and 40 ins. wide, weighed about 11 cwt., and the thickness of the metal varied 'from 3-8 in to _ in.'³⁹ The twice life-size figure, reproduced down to the waist, which reportedly captured Lieutenant-General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs likeness 'in striking manner', represented him in military uniform, with a replica of his 8 ft. ceremonial sword, and wearing his orders and medals, which 'demanded intricate treatment.'⁴⁰ It was reputed to be 'the first statue in bronze made in Western Australia'.⁴¹ Previously, bronze castings of such size had been cast in overseas foundries. Thus *Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial* represents 'a level of technological achievement not previously known or possibly understood in Western Australia.'⁴²

It was announced that the memorial would be unveiled by the Lieutenant-Governor on Armistice Day, 11 November 1940. It was to be marked by the march through Perth of 'men who served in the last war with the A.I.F.', who were invited to attend the unveiling.⁴³ The arrangements were to follow the procedure of Anzac Day ceremonial. The parade was to march from Anzac House through the streets to The Esplanade for the unveiling ceremony, which was to follow the traditional two minutes silence at 11 am on Armistice Day.⁴⁴

On 4 October, Sir James Mitchell inspected the newly completed foundations 'on the Perth Esplanade south of the Riverside-drive'.⁴⁵

On 11 November 1940, when Perth celebrated the King's birthday and Armistice Day, *Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial* was officially unveiled by the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir James Mitchell. The ceremony was attended by a large number of ex-servicemen, detachments of the A.I.F., R.A.A.F., reinforcements militia units, secondary schools cadet corps, boy scouts and members of the sons of soldiers' league. The official party included Lady Hobbs, the Premier, Mr. Willcock, Senator A. McDonald, the

³⁸ *West Australian* 25 June 1940. Note: Kohler's original model was 'an exact likeness of the man known affectionately as "Little Hobbs" with his stooped posture', which was 'rectified to satisfy the need for an appropriate image of a military hero with officer bearing.' (Taylor, Robyn op. cit., p. 290.)

³⁹ *West Australian* 25 September 1940; and *Daily News* 24 September 1940.

⁴⁰ *West Australian* ibid.

⁴¹ ibid.

⁴² 'Talbot Hobbs Memorial' in *Trust News* Vol. 205 Summer Edition, December 1999, p. 14.

⁴³ *West Australian* op. cit.

⁴⁴ ibid.

⁴⁵ *West Australian* 5 October 1940.

Lord Mayor of Perth, Dr. W. T. Meagher, Major-General J. M. A. Durrant, General Commanding Officer Western Command, and representatives of the fighting services. In his speech Major-General J. M. A. Durrant announced one of the main streets at Northam Army Camp would be named Hobbs Avenue. Mr. A. Yeates, R.S.L. President, said 'Sir Talbot was a great soldier and one of the State's greatest citizens', and 'it was fitting that his monument should be at the spot where Anzac Day was commemorated each year.'⁴⁶ The Premier said 'Sir Talbot would always be remembered as a splendid citizen', with 'great and diverse' interests in public and social welfare organisations, who, as an architect, was responsible for the erection of buildings in the State valued at about £8million, and Sir James Mitchell paid tribute to 'General Hobbs' 'distinguished and outstanding service' to the community, a man who had been honoured by the King, the Commonwealth, and the State, who was 'entitled to be remembered with honour and distinction in this State.'⁴⁷

The memorial was dedicated by Canon Collick. Perth City Council had agreed to the Committee's request that the Council take over the memorial and assume responsibility for its care and preservation. It was officially handed over by Brigadier-General Bessell-Browne to Dr. W. T. Meagher, who said 'General Hobbs was an Empire builder', and the Council 'had already decided that the surroundings of the statue should be put in proper order.'⁴⁸ After the playing of the National Anthem, the parade marched east along Riverside Drive before the official dais, and the Lieutenant-Governor took the salute.⁴⁹ Since the unveiling of the statue in 1940, the *Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial* has continuously been the focal point for the Perth Anzac Day parade, and is the point from which the salute is taken prior to the minute of silence and the playing of 'The Last Post'.

In late 1940, the area in the immediate vicinity of *Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial* was landscaped with 'crazy paving' and garden beds. A pencil pine was planted at either side of the memorial, and a single palm was planted behind it.⁵⁰ Early photographs show the memorial with this palm, a Canary Island Palm (*Phoenix canariensis*), with a flower bed around it, and to the west, a Parade Palm (*Washingtonia robusta*).⁵¹

A Sewerage Plan shows 'Hobbs Memorial' at the south of Riverside Drive, with the path from the road to the memorial and encircling it.⁵² The memorial faces the Recreation Reserve (The Esplanade) to the north, with Union Jack Square (Barrack Square) to the east, and, at the south steps lead down to the river's edge, and the Royal Yacht Club to the south-west.⁵³ In the 1940s and 1950s, photographs of the memorial 'suggest there were evenly

⁴⁶ *West Australian* 12 November 1940.

⁴⁷ *ibid.*

⁴⁸ *ibid.*

⁴⁹ *West Australian* 25 September 1940; Annual Report, City of Perth, 1939-40, p. 11; and 'Talbot Hobbs Memorial' op. cit., p. 15.

⁵⁰ Site of Hobbs Memorial, Perth City Council File 1359/52.

⁵¹ Photographs, 1940, Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial, courtesy Dr. Robyn Taylor.

⁵² Metropolitan Sewerage, City of Perth, SROWA Cons. 4156 Item 22.

⁵³ *ibid.*

spaced palm trees along Riverside Drive, with one located behind the memorial.⁵⁴

From 1954, and through the 1960s, in the vicinity of the memorial, there was further reclamation of the foreshore, including the area behind the monument, and construction of the Narrows Interchange, as part of the Narrows Bridge and freeway project. Riverside Drive was widened to carry east bound traffic whilst an additional road was constructed to carry west bound traffic, isolating the memorial between the two roads. A number of specimens of a different species of palm trees to that in the above-mentioned photographs were planted to the rear of the memorial, which, in maturity by 1999, formed 'a dense backdrop', screening it from the view of west bound traffic, and providing some protection 'from salt-laden breezes off the river.'⁵⁵

In 1971, City of Perth Director of Parks and Gardens, K. Hunter, released his new design for The Esplanade reserve, which included relocation of *Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial* to a site at the northern boundary of the reserve, with a dais in front for the holding of the Anzac Day ceremony. This proposal was strongly opposed by the R.S.L. (Returned Services League), who did not want the memorial relocated and desired that the reserve be retained 'as a city square where crowds could assemble.'⁵⁶ The plan to reduce the area available for sport from 13 acres to less than five acres was opposed by the Associated Sporting Committee, which wanted the retention of a greater area of open space. A rally to save the reserve from the proposed re-development was held, and subsequently a revised plan left the memorial in its original location and provided 10 acres for sport and three acres for passive recreation.⁵⁷

In June 1994, *Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial* was included in the Art Deco Significant Building Survey, and recommended for inclusion in the State Register of Heritage Places.⁵⁸

In May 1996, the memorial was included in 'War Memorials in Western Australia'⁵⁹, a survey of War Memorials in the State.

On 11 October 1999, *Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial* was classified by the National Trust of Australia (WA). At this period, the memorial appeared to be in sound condition. It was recommended that if removed from its original location, as proposed in plans to develop Riverside Drive, then the memorial should be 'reinstated on the Esplanade on a site conducive to its function as a memorial and as a focus for annual Anzac Parades.'⁶⁰ It was noted that the palms to the rear of the memorial 'are considered to be part of the place ... which fan in an "art deco" manner

54 'Talbot Hobbs Memorial' op. cit., p. 16.

55 *ibid.*

56 *West Australian* 18 March 1971, p. 6; and *Sunday Times* 4 April 1971, p. 30.

57 *Sunday Times* *ibid*; *West Australian* 19 March, 9 and 20 April and 18 May 1971 pages 9,9, 2 and 2 respectively.

58 Art Deco Significant Building Survey, 30 June 1994.

59 Richards, Oline 'War Memorials in Western Australia' April 1996, p. 99.

60 National Trust of Australia (WA), 11 October 1999; and 'Talbot Hobbs Memorial' op. cit..

complementing the design of the monument', and hence any proposed relocation should also include them.⁶¹

In 1999-2000, there were discussions between Carol Jelley, a Department of Transport consultant, Hobbs' descendants, representatives of the Returned Servicemen's League, Perth City Council and the Heritage Council, with regard to re-locating the statue to 'a suitable landmark building ... as a tribute to his architectural skill.'⁶² The former Newspaper House, St Georges Terrace, was among the buildings considered. However, it was concluded that 'a military memorial was more fitting', and that the existing site was 'the most appropriate for it.'⁶³ Consequently, in mid 2000, it was agreed that the memorial would remain in situ, and the two arms of Riverside Drive would be 'brought together on the river side' of the memorial.⁶⁴ The realignment of the road was part of the downgrading of Riverside Drive from a regional road to a city street, related to the Graham Farmer Freeway project. The changes to Riverside Drive returned the relationship of the memorial to the road to its original position.⁶⁵

In March 2001, *Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial* was included in the City of Perth Municipal Heritage Inventory, and recommended for entry in the State Register of Heritage Places.⁶⁶

In 2003, *Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial* is extant in its original location on Riverside Drive, this portion of which is recorded as Structure 8009 of the Narrows Interchange Structures, the crossing name being Sign Gantry Riverside Drive South, Road No. 510.⁶⁷ *Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial* is well recognised as a significant memorial in Perth and the focal point for Anzac Day parades in Western Australia. The palms around the memorial have grown large, so that when viewed from the roadway it appears less prominent than in former years.⁶⁸

13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial is a seven metre high memorial, comprising a twice life-size cast bronze bust of Lieutenant-General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs, in military uniform, which is mounted on a deeply fluted column of Donnybrook stone, on a base of polished Mahogany Creek granite. It was designed by Architect Alex Winning, with sculptor Edward Kohler, and erected by A. T. Brine & Sons in 1940.

Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial is located at the south of Riverside Drive between the east and west bound carriageways. It is part of an important component of a civic precinct that extends from the Perth Town

⁶¹ *ibid*, p. 16.

⁶² *Post* 8 July 2000, p. 9.

⁶³ *ibid*.

⁶⁴ *Post* 8 July 2000, p. 9.

⁶⁵ *ibid*.

⁶⁶ City of Perth Municipal Heritage Inventory, Adopted 13 March 2001.

⁶⁷ Narrows Interchange Structures, information supplied by Main Roads to HCWA, 25 September 2002.

⁶⁸ Site visit, Robin Chinnery, August 2003.

Hall on the corner of Barrack and Hay streets, Treasury Buildings, St. George's Cathedral, Burt Hall, The Deanery, St. Andrew's Church, Council House, the old Court House, Stirling Gardens, Government House, the Supreme Court and gardens, The Weld Club, The Esplanade, and Barrack Square. Located south of the Esplanade, the memorial is set roughly at the mid-point of the Esplanade, and the sculpture has its back to the Swan River and overlooks the Esplanade and to the city skyline.

The east bound side of Riverside Drive, which provides the foreground to the memorial, is currently three lanes wide plus the width of a parallel parking zone in front of the memorial. The memorial is set some 20 metres off the kerb and has a surround of concrete paving slabs and lawn. There is a dense backdrop of Canary Island Palms (*Phoenix canariensis*) behind the memorial, with Parade Palm (*Washingtonia robusta*) set a short distance away. The Canary Island Palms are planted in a clump of nine in close proximity to one another and the rear of the memorial. The trees are vigorous and are beginning to impact visually on the memorial, overhanging element of the bust. Read in the context of the Esplanade and Riverside Drive, *Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial* has a minor landmark quality.

The statue is set in the pavement of standard grey 2'0" x 2'0" (600 x 600mm) pavers retained by a flush concrete kerb. The path takes a form that reflects the shape of the memorial and then provides an axial approach between Riverside Drive and the platform on which the memorial is located.

Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial is a twice life-size bronze bust with the overall bronze being about 4'6" (1.4 metres) tall, excluding the ceremonial sword on Hobbs left hand side. The torso down to the waist rests on a fluted Donnybrook sandstone pilaster of around 4'0" (1.2metres) diameter, while the shoulders rest on Donnybrook sandstone blocks. The bronze sword extends down half the height of the Donnybrook stone base.

The base comprises two unequal Mahogany Creek granite steps rising to a platform that is roughly semicircular in plan with a diameter of 16'3" (5metres) and the floor plate is laid with 'reconstructed stone' (concrete) pavers, set diagonally to the baseline of the plinth. The base to the statue is laid in Mahogany Creek granite and consist of a solid half round pilaster, flanked receding wall planes. The pilaster is engraved:-

LIEUT GENERAL
SIR J. J. TALBOT HOBBS
KCB KCMC VD
1864-1938

A Donnybrook sandstone pedestal rises from this base with the torso of the bust resting on an 11'8" (3.6metres) fluted sandstone pilaster, with plain stepped sandstone piers some 12'8" (3.9 metres high). On the east and

west side of the pier there are bronze badges AIF Artillery. This whole arrangement has stylistic sources in Inter-War Art Deco style.⁶⁹

Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial is a very fine twice-life-size bronze bust representation of Hobbs, portraying him in full military uniform complete with cap, jacket, Sam Brown belt, sword, and military decorations. The figure is upright, with shoulders braced, and gaze fixed towards the Esplanade as if reviewing a parade. In life Hobbs was not a tall man and was inclined to a stooped posture. The scale of Kohler's rendering is somewhat difficult to ascertain visually but the height of the column and twice life-sized but suggest a tall erect person. The symbolic value is enhanced by these devices.

The pavings around the memorial are in fair to poor condition, while all of the granite work is in good condition. The Donnybrook sandstone is in good condition with only minor jointing losses and a small amount of staining from the bronze.

13.3 COMPARATIVE INFORMATION

There were few public memorials erected in Perth in commemoration of individual Western Australians for much of the twentieth century. Pietro Porcelli's life-sized statue of Alexander Forrest (1902) in bronze on a Donnybrook sandstone base was the first, erected at the reserve in St. George's Terrace now known as Florence Hummerston Reserve. This statue was re-located to a more prominent position, at the corner of St. Georges Terrace and Barrack Street, in 1916 (included in State Register).

The second public memorial erected in commemoration of an individual West Australian in Perth was Sir Bertram MacKenna's of Lord Forrest (1926), erected at Mount Eliza. This piece is also in bronze and set over a granite plinth, and located in Kings Park in a position that visually terminates Main Drive (now Fraser Avenue). It is a one and a half times life-sized figure. In 1937, the proposal for a statue of explorer and surveyor A. W. Canning had to be abandoned, due to lack of funds.

Sculptor Edward Kohler was responsible for a marquette for this project. In 1940, the design by Kohler and Alex Winning won the competition for *Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial*, and the memorial was duly executed and erected at the south of Riverside Drive, Perth. Kohler also produced a number of bas reliefs for Perth buildings during the 1930s. His work was incorporated into the UWA Agriculture building, the Emu Brewery, the Karrakatta Crematorium and the *Piccadilly Theatre & Arcade* (Permanently Registered 20/12/02). In addition to *Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial*, other statues crafted by Kohler include that of Brother Paul Keaney, located at *Catholic Agriculture College, Bindoon* (Permanently Registered 15/12/00) and one of George V, located outside Brisbane Town Hall⁷⁰. He also undertook work for the Imperial War Graves

⁶⁹ 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. pp188-191.

⁷⁰ Taylor, Robyn, 'Edward F Kohler, Perth Sculptor 1890-1964', in Bromfield, David (ed) *Essays on Art and Architecture in Western Australia*, UWA Centre for Fine Arts, 1988, pp. 1-7.

Commission, including the figure of Marshall Ferdinand Foch and a scale model for the Liege War Memorial.

Whilst numerous war memorials had been erected in Western Australia in the inter-war period, this was the first memorial erected in Perth in honour of a most distinguished World War One soldier. The bronze statue for *Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial* was the first bronze casting of such size cast in Western Australia, and represents a significant technological achievement in the State in the World War Two period.

Other memorials to individuals include Captain Stirling (Bassendean), Major Lockyer (Albany), C.Y. O'Connor also by Porcelli (Fremantle), Hugo Throssel (Greenmount), and in more recent times Porcelli (Fremantle). Other figurative statues include those to Queen Victoria (Kings Park), Peter Pan (Perth), and numerous figures of soldiers associated with war memorials. Memorials to individual Western Australians are infrequently life-like representations and are sometimes abstract or useful memorials (Throssell Memorial, Burt Memorial Hall).

Lieut. General Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs Memorial is one of a small collection of life-like memorials in the State dedicated to Western Australians.

13. 4 KEY REFERENCES

National Trust of Australia (WA) Assessment, 11 October 1999

'Talbot Hobbs Memorial' in *Trust News* Vol. 205 Summer Edition, December 1999

13. 5 FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research may reveal additional information about the plantings in the vicinity of the memorial, in particular the Canary Island Palms.