

Irwin Shire Council

Municipal Inventory Place Record

Place Details **Place Number:** 081 **Category:** 1A **HCWA No:** 1242
TPS No: 42 **Assessment Date:** 16/10/1996 **Last Revision Date:** 22/08/2004

Name: Obelisk, Plaques and Site of Obelisk
Former Name:
Type of Place: Obelisk
Address: Point Leander Drive
Map Reference: HUNT 1:2000 BE42/35.03
Locality Name: Port Denison **Area of Site:**
GPS Northing: **GPS Easting:**

Photograph

Date of Photograph: 12/07/2004 **Source:** G. W. Grundy



Obelisk, west side

Ownership

Owner: Shire of Irwin **Owner Phone/Fax:** 08 99271453
Address: PO Box 21, Dongara, 6525

Site Details

Lot/Locn: Loc 581 **Diagram/Plan:** **Vol/Folio:**
Reserve: 40029 **Purpose:**
Assess No: **Vesting:** Shire of Irwin
Occupied: No **Occupier:**
PubAccess: Yes **Lease:**

Irwin Shire Council

Municipal Inventory Place Record

Uses of the Place

Original Use: Obelisk

Current Use: Memorial

Description

Walls: Limestone

Roof: N/A

Condition: Good

Integrity: High

Orig'l Fabric:

Modifications

The Fishermen's Memorial, former Obelisk is prominently situated at Point Leander on top of a sand hill and has a commanding view of Arurine Bay. It is of solid stone construction, standing on a stone base about three metres square. The obelisk is about 1.8 metres square at its base and about 4 metres high. The top section is pyramidal. There are several plaques attached to the structure which list the names of fishermen lost at sea between 1916 and 1977. The dedication of the memorial was recorded on a plaque unveiled by Michael Kailis on the 11th of November 1979. A third plaque commemorates the loss of the 'Leander' on 11/11/1858 and the 'HMS Beagle'.

The fishermen listed on the plaque to the west are:

Albert & Theodore Money 1916; Charles Swanson 1944; Edward Joseph Foster, William Roser, Robert Allen, 14.2.64 LFB D34, 'Kathy Joe'; Maxwell Conrad Bussenschutt 1/3/1964, Malcolm Donald Zimmerman, 18/11/1967; Robert Green 4/5/1976; Neville Graeme Hynes, 15/8/1977. To the west of the memorial there is another plaque set on a stone plinth which has a map showing the location of shipwrecks in the vicinity.

It is believed that the second obelisk was of similar design but is now in a ruined state.

2004

The Irwin Shire Townscape Committee sought and were given approval for the installation of decking, fencing and interpretive signage around the Obelisk site. In addition the local landcare group has removed boxthorn and other weeds from the site and replanted the hillside with species of local coastal plants.

History

Const'n Date: 1869

Source:

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Richard Sparkes

Two obelisks were built in 1869 to guide vessels through hazardous reefs into the anchorage at Port Irwin (Port Denison). The tender of Richard Sparkes was accepted, the price being £45 for the two obelisks. In 1979 a plaque was added to the obelisk at Point Leander to commemorate the loss of the vessel "Leander" in 1853. The second obelisk, situated in the sand hills, is in a ruined condition, having been demolished at the time the breakwater was constructed in 1974.

(Government Gazette 21/12/1869, p. 266)

(IDHS Records)

Chronology Entries

1869 Two stone obelisks were built at Port Denison at a contract price of £45 by expiree Robert Sparkes. One was situated in the sand hills to the east of the townsite, the other at Point Leander, above the reef. By aligning the obelisks, ships could safely enter the port through the reef.

Bunney, R & Ellery, K, Dongara 1839 - 198-, Geraldton Newspapers Print, 1975

Port Denison 1850-1915 and the Rimmer Sequence as a Model for Port Development, Baskerville, B., UWA Thes Pages 15

11/11/1979 The Obelisk was dedicated as the Fisherman's Memorial. Michael Kailis unveiled the dedication plaque.

Irwin District Historical Society Records

Historic Theme(s)

HCWA

AHC

201 River and sea transport

3.11.1 Regulating waterways

400 Social and civic activities

3.8.3 Developing harbour facilities

9.7.3 Remembering the dead

Irwin Shire Council

Municipal Inventory Place Record

Statement of Significance

The Port Denison Obelisk, plaques and site of Obelisk has cultural heritage significance for the following reasons:

the site has historical significance for its association with the early development of sea transport at Port Denison and is a rare historical component dating from the early days of the settlement at the Irwin River (c.1860s);

the site is highly valued by the local community who consider it to be an important landmark, with its high vantage point and views of Port Denison and the coastline, and a popular tourist destination;

the ruins of the second obelisk, which was demolished 1977-79 and is situated approximately one kilometre from the first, is associated with the original Port Denison and Old Irwin Jetty;

the site has associations with deceased fishermen Albert and Theodore Money, Charles Swanson, Edward Joseph Foster, William Roser, Robert Allan, Maxwell Conrad Bussenschutt, Malcolm Donald Zimmerman, Robert Green and Neville Graeme Hynes;

the site is of historical significance because of its commemorative associations with the sinking of the Leander (1853) and the services of John Lord Stokes and crew of the survey ship HMS Beagle (1841 – 1870);

the site retains a high degree of authenticity and still features the electric wiring for the blue alignment light; and,

the site has associations with Michael G. Kailis who unveiled the fisherman's memorial plaque (1979).

RECOMMENDATION:

Consideration should be given to reconstructing the ruined obelisk, or at least permanently marking its site.

Management Category: 1A

PERMANENT ENTRY ON THE STATE REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES.

Highest level of protection appropriate. Provide maximum incentives under the Town Planning Scheme with encouragement to the owner to conserve the significance of the place. Prepare a floor plan and photographically record the place prior to any redevelopment.

Other Listings

NTWA - Classified; 05/09/1983

Shire of Irwin - Town Planning Scheme (42); 10/03/1998

HCWA - State Heritage Register (Interim); 19/05/1992

HCWA - State Heritage Register (Permanent); 24/04/2003

Supporting Information

IDHS Records

AHC Reference 009663 01-02

Bain, M.A., "Ancient Landmarks", UWA Press. 1975.

Government Gazette, 1869

HCWA, Register Documentation.

HCWA Database No.1242

Irwin Shire Council

Municipal Inventory Place Record

Additional Photographs

Date of Photograph: 12/07/2004 IR081-1

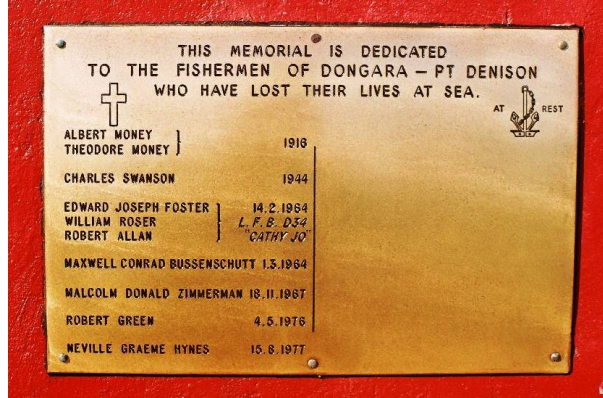
Source: G. W. Grundy



Obelisk, showing decking, northwest aspect

Date of Photograph: 12/07/2004 IR081-2

Source: G. W. Grundy



Upper plaque, west side

Date of Photograph: 12/07/2004 IR081-3

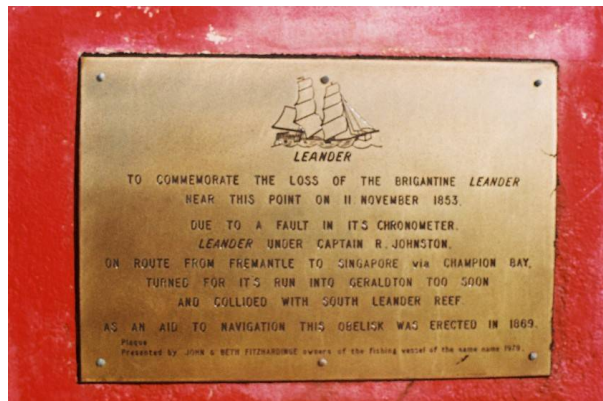
Source: Suba & Grundy



Lower plaque, west side

Date of Photograph: 12/07/2004 IR081-4

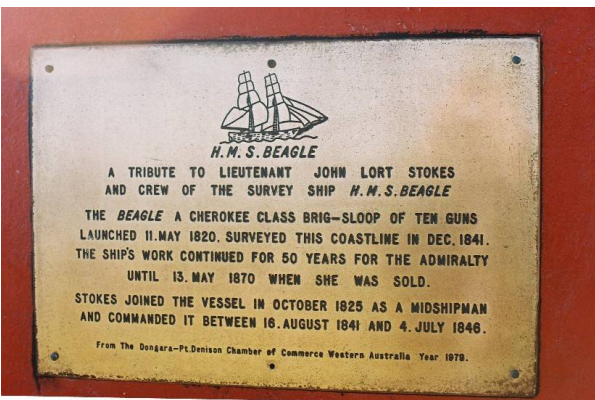
Source: G. W. Grundy



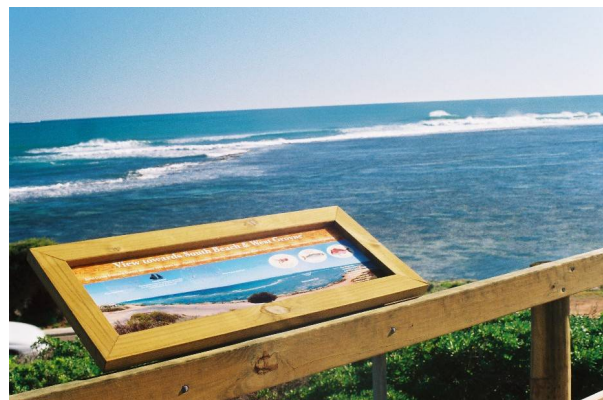
Plaque, north side

Date of Photograph: 12/07/2004 IR081-5

Source: G. W. Grundy



Plaque, south side



Interpretive signage, west side.

Irwin Shire Council

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Date of Photograph: 16/10/1996 IR081-7

Source: Suba & Grundy



Obelisk and entry road

Date of Photograph:

IR081-8

Source: G. W. Grundy



Map showing the location of the Second Obelisk between the Golf Course and the Transfer Station.