

NAME: Original War Memorial site, Lot 1416 Main Road, COROMANDEL VALLEY

CURRENT USE: War memorial
FORMER USE: War memorial
DATE(S) OF CONSTRUCTION: 1921 with later c.2000 alterations

LOCATION: Lot 1416 Main Road, COROMANDEL VALLEY
LAND DESCRIPTION: CT 5752/673, Hundred of Noarlunga

OWNER: City of Onkaparinga

RECOMMENDATION: Local Heritage Place



Original War Memorial site, Lot 1416 Main Road, Coromandel Valley (GGA, 2021)

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DESCRIPTION:

Nine 1921 commemorative marble plaques with c.2015 concrete settings arranged in a circular configuration around the original site of the 1921 marble obelisk, now relocated to new War Memorial site 100 metres to the north. 2015 commemorative plaque to obelisk site with radial paving, encircling garden beds with low hedging with concrete external edging. Paving continues to current War Memorial Site 100 metres to the north. Six of nine c.1921 commemorative pine trees remain on the site.

It is recommended that the dwelling at the original War Memorial site, Lot 1416 Main Road, Coromandel Valley be included on the South Australian Heritage Register as a Local Heritage place.

A delineation of significant historic fabric is provided in the Extent of Listing.

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE:

The original Coromandel Valley War Memorial site at Lot 1416, Main Road, Coromandel Valley is of significance as a commemorative site that recognises and celebrates the contributions of Coromandel Valley's citizens to various conflicts in world history in the late 19th and 20th centuries; in particular the events of the First World War. Retaining nine original commemorative plaques for the nine local men who died during the First World War, six of nine commemorative pine trees, planted at this time, remain on the site. The memorial site, plaques and pine trees effectively represent the effects of these conflicts upon the local population, while demonstrating a strong local community spirit. The memorial site is also strongly associated with the War Memorial inauguration events of May 28th, 1921, a significant and well-documented event in the history of Coromandel Valley.

RELEVANT CRITERIA (As defined in Section 67(1) of the PDI Act 2016):

a) it displays historical, economic or social themes that are of importance to the local area; being the township of Coromandel Valley's original memorial site to its local citizens who fell during the First World War; a significant world event that substantially impacted the lives of local citizens both during and after the event.

b) it represents customs or ways of life that are characteristic of the local area; the original Coromandel Valley War Memorial site provides tangible evidence of the effects of the First World War upon this tightly-knitted community during the early 20th century. The deaths of nine young men of the district, then comprising approximately 50 households, profoundly affected the community who are documented as having personally raised substantial funds for the War Memorial's construction. The Memorial therefore provides an effective symbol of both the serious ramifications of the First World War on the lives of local citizens during and after the conflict as well as a tangible expression of strong community spirit at that time.

c) it has played an important part in the lives of local residents; the original Coromandel Valley War Memorial site identifies and commemorates the contributions of local citizens during the First World War.

e) it is associated with a notable local personality or event; the site being strongly associated with its inauguration occurring on May 28th, 1921; a significant and well-documented event in the history of Coromandel Valley.

g) in the case of a tree, it is of special historical or social significance or importance within the local area; the six pine trees on the site being six of originally nine pine trees planted to commemorate the nine Coromandel Valley men who died during the First World War. The site's nine plinths were originally planted at the base of each tree.

RELEVANT HISTORIC THEMES:

Theme 2: Regional Life in the Southern Vales

2.7 Remembering past generations and the fallen

BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

The original site of the Coromandel Valley War Memorial, Lot 1416 Main Road, Coromandel Valley does not appear to have been identified or assessed as part of any previous heritage survey.

Substantial information relating to the history and heritage significance of the original Coromandel Valley War Memorial site has been historically available, including a detailed history provided in the National Trust of SA's 'Coromandel Valley: its history trails and tales' document.

The National Trust's history effectively places the history of the original Coromandel Valley War Memorial site within the context of the district's strongly connected local community in the early 20th century; a community of approximately 50 households with frequent inter-marriage; the geographical valley layout encouraged close social bonds between community members. Of 32 local young men who enlisted in the First World War, only 23 returned, nine dying in action and from injuries and/or disease. The loss of these young men greatly impacted this small, tightly-knitted community, both during and immediately after the First World War. Public discussions for the erection of a local war memorial began in 1919, when local memorial committee was formed. By March 1920 the committee recommended that Coromandel Valley should be its own war memorial.

A detailed description of the inauguration of the new War Memorial on May 28th 1921 was provided in newspapers of the period, proceeding as follows:

In the presence of a large gathering on Saturday afternoon (May 28th, 1921), Brig.-Gen. Leane, C.B., C. M. G., D. S. O., unveiled a monument erected by the people of Coromandel Valley to the memory of the men of the district who had fought in the war. The monument stands in a conspicuous position on the Government Reserve at the valley. The area will also carry trees, and already several have been planted by relatives or representatives of those who gave up their lives. At the foot of each tree is a marble tablet bearing the warrior's name. The monument consists of an obelisk 9 ft. in height. It is constructed of Angaston marble. On the front scroll are the names of the nine men who were killed. On the north and south sides are inscribed the names of the returned men. The back of the monument has the inscription ; "Coromandel Valley's token of love and honour to the men who represented us in the great war, 1914-1919."

Brig.-Gen. Leane was greeted by a guard of honour, consisting of local returned soldiers. The Commissioner of Crown Lands (Hon. G. R. Laffer) was also present. Mr. J. Weymouth (Chairman of the committee) said that the men who went to the fields were the descendants of early pioneers, who had struggled for the prosperity of this country. The secretary (Mr. G. W. Summers) stated that although there were only 50 houses in Coromandel Valley, the contributions had amounted to nearly 268 pounds. In all 32 names were on the monument but that did not represent the whole of the enlistments of the district. One family had given four sons, and another household three sons. He eulogised the work of the local Red Cross, which had done much to assist in raising the money for the monument.

Brig.-Gen. Leane said that the people of the district had reason to be proud of the memorial, and had each part of the Empire responded in a similar way to Coromandel Valley the result would have been even better than it had been. He had fought with some of the men from the Valley, and he remembered very clearly the bravery of one of them in particular (Lieut. Sheldon) who died nobly doing his duty. To the parents and loved ones of those who had not returned he offered his deepest sympathies. They had died doing their duty. That was the greatest thing that could be said of them. Coromandel Valley had erected a splendid monument.

Messrs. H Jacobs (representing the Clarendon District Council), W. L. Summers (Blackwood Memorial Committee), and E. Strange (Cherry Gardens Memorial Committee) also spoke. During the afternoon selections were rendered by the Blackwood Brass Band and the Coromandel Valley School Band.

The Coromandel Valley Memorial Committee consisted of Messrs. J. Weymouth (Chairman), W. G. Summers (secretary), O. S. Jones, A. W. Jones, R. Cook, R. Tapley, T. James and R. Watchman.

(extracted from 'Coromandel Valley Soldiers: A Monument Unveiled, The Register, Mon 30 May 1921, p.3.)

The National Trust of SA history also records that nine pine trees were planted immediately west of the memorial after the unveiling by the families who had lost loved ones during the War. At the base of each pine tree, a marble plaque was placed commemorating an individual soldier. Today, only six of the original nine pine trees remain.

In 2000, the 1921 monument obelisk was restored and removed to a new location approximately 100 metres north of its original site. It is presumed that this site was deemed appropriate for a larger memorial gardens commemorating the subsequent wartime contributions of Coromandel Valley citizens, in addition to a more shelter location away from the increasingly-heavy traffic of Main Road.

The National Trust of SA history records that memorial plaques located under the pine trees had then (as of 2014) been recently relocated as part of a plan to redevelop the original war memorial site to include plinths at that site. On ANZAC Day April 25th 2015, the original nine memorial plaques were relocated to their current circular arrangement around the original obelisk site.

EXTENT OF LISTING:

The form and materials of the nine 1921 commemorative marble plaques (excluding their current concrete settings) are considered of significance and are included in the listing. The 2015 plaque on the former site of the 1921 obelisk and circular arrangement of the nine 1921 commemorative

plaques is considered of significance and are included in the listing. The six remaining pine trees on the site are considered of significance and are included in the listing.

All other fabric, including the concrete plinth settings of the commemorative marble plaques (excluding marble plaques themselves), radial paving, concrete edging and garden beds are not included in the listing.

All later additions and alterations are not included in the listing.

REFERENCES:

'Coromandel Valley Soldiers: A Monument Unveiled', The Register, Mon 30 May 1921, p.3.

'Coromandel Valley Soldiers', Observer, Sat 4 Jun 1921, p.26.

National Trust of South Australia, Coromandel Valley & Districts Branch, 2014, Coromandel Valley: its history trails and tales, Freestyle Publications, Blackwood.

SITE MAPPING:



Site of original Coromandel Valley War Memorial, Lot 1614 Main Road, Coromandel Valley (War Memorial site highlighted within red circle) (Planning SA SAPPa)

HISTORICAL IMAGES:



Dedication of Coromandel Valley War Memorial on its original site on May 28th, 1921 (SLSA PRG 280/1/26/214)



Dedication of Coromandel Valley War Memorial on its original site on May 28th, 1921 (SLSA PRG 280/1/27/41)



Brigadier General Leane unveiling the new war memorial monument on May 28th, 1921 (Coromandel Valley Soldiers, Observer, Sat 4 Jun 1921, p.26).



Members of the Memorial Committee on May 28th, 1921 (Coromandel Valley Soldiers, Observer, Sat 4 Jun 1921, p.26).

OTHER IMAGES:



Site of original War Memorial viewed from the north; several c.1921 commemorative pine trees located to the immediate west (far right of image) (GGA, 2021).



C.2015 plaque on original obelisk site (GGA, 2021).



One of the nine 1921 plaques commemorating a local fallen soldier, originally located beneath nine pine trees on the site, relocated to current circular configuration by 2015 (GGA, 2021).



Several commemorative pine trees located west of the original War Memorial obelisk site, looking north-west (GGA, 2021).