

7 To the future - a discussion

In their objection to the entry of Queens Park on the Queensland Heritage Register the MCC noted among a number of issues,

Council considers that there could be possible constraints placed on future developments that are proposed for Queens Park viz.:-

- (a) Reinstatement of the Dahlia garden on its original site.*
- (b) Reinstatement of the cactus garden - the original site is unknown.*
- (c) Refurbishment of Lily Pond and surrounds.*
- (d) Reinstatement of the original flower beds near the gardens depot.*
- (e) Reinstatement of original Memorial Fence at Cenotaph.*
- (f) Refurbishment of Cenotaph surrounds.*
- (g) Refurbishment and conservation of Banyan Fig surrounds.*
- (h) Reinstatement of the original ornamental pond.*
- (i) The extension of wheel chair friendly paths through the Gardens.¹*

Advice from the MCC is that none of these above proposals are currently being considered for budget allocation.

7.01 Planning for the Immediate Future

Projects in Queens Park that are currently listed as priority developments for the future, include:

1. **New War Memorial** - There are a number of war memorials additional to the cenotaph located in Anzac Park in Maryborough. The RSL has indicated that they would prefer all the memorials to be consolidated in one place and have indicated the Cenotaph area in Queens Park as their preferred location. Maryborough City Council has requested that this study briefly review this suggestion. Council has budgeted for this project to be undertaken and completed in this financial year.
2. **New Toilet Block** - in the general location of the old toilet block behind the Post Office. Council has received funding from Security Improvement Program (SIP) for this project, to be completed this financial year. Council's Environmental Health Officer has had preliminary discussions with the Heritage Council regarding design, etc. for these toilets. The condition that Council received the funding was on the basis that the old toilets are to be removed, as they do not meet current crime prevention standards. The stipulations under the SIP program are that all the toilets open to the outside with a screen across the front. There are height restrictions with adjacent landscaping and the toilets are to be easily visible from a road and well lit.
3. The Rotary Clubs in Maryborough have proposed that a **Wedding Chapel (Celebration Shelter)** be built in the park near the Waterfall

¹ Brouwer, C. (2001), *Queen's Park, Sussex Street, Maryborough, Assessor's Report*, unpublished report for the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency, November 2001.

/Lily pond area. This area is extremely popular for weddings, however facilities (such as seating) is very limited. A design for the chapel has never been finalised, however, it is thought that it would be a simplistic bush chapel so that the integrity of the gardens would not be compromised.

4. **The Embankment** (at the end of the river walk and leading up to the new picnic area opposite the Brolga Theatre) needs to be reinstated in some form. This is also budgeted for this year. A jobs plan group began to establish a path up this bank, however the stability of the bank became a concern so the work was stopped. The path concept will be abandoned and the bank re-established. (Council will probably engage a consultant to provide guidance on what should be done).

7.01.1 New War Memorial

Background

Currently a number of war memorials to those community members who have served Australia in conflicts more recent than those commemorated at the Cenotaph war memorial are located in Anzac Park in Maryborough. This park is the focus for active recreation activities and as such, despite its name, the location of war memorials here seems inappropriate. The RSL has indicated their wish to relocate these memorials to a more central site in Queens Park, preferably in association with the existing Cenotaph.

Site qualities

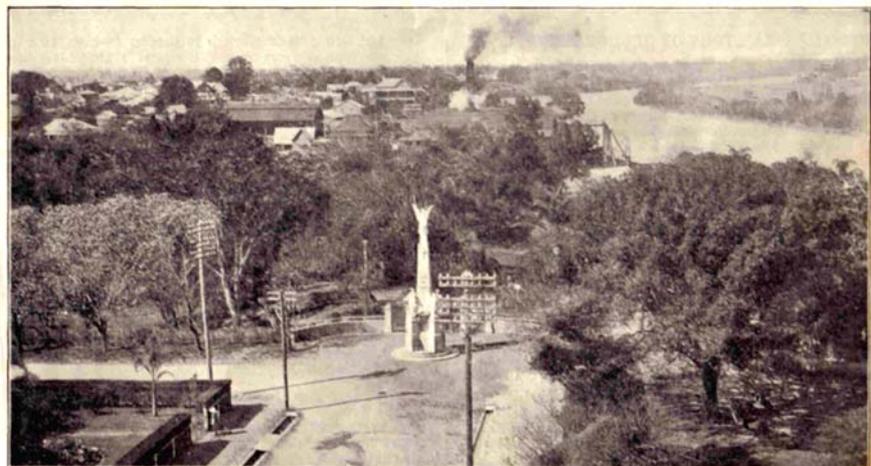
The site is the focal point of views to Queens Park along both Bazaar Street and Sussex Streets from the Central Business District of Maryborough. The tall white column of the Cenotaph contrasts starkly with its dense green backdrop of mature trees in Queens Park. Photographs looking over Queens Park from the Post Office Tower, when it was open to the public often feature this space in the foreground. The Cenotaph has been a significant design element at this park entry point since its construction in 1922.



View to the Cenotaph from the intersection of Adelaide and Sussex Streets.



View to Cenotaph from Bazaar Street



View from same point—1924. Soldiers' Memorial in centre.

Figure 48. View to the Cenotaph in its original landscape setting 1924. Seen from the Post Office tower in Bazaar Street. (Image supplied by Graham Gambie)

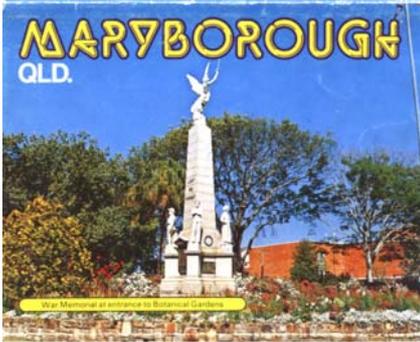


Image on the cover of a Murray Views postcard folder circa 1980.



Detail of the garden beds surrounding the Cenotaph, Spring 2003.

Cultural heritage reflections

Note again the wording for the cenotaph in the statement of significance in the QHR.

*The War Memorial and Entrance Gates War Memorials are important in demonstrating the pattern of Queensland's history as they are representative of a recurrent theme that involved most communities throughout the state. They provide evidence of an era of widespread Australian patriotism and nationalism, particularly during and following the First World War. The monuments manifest a unique documentary record and are demonstrative of popular taste in the inter-war period. Unveiled in 1922, the memorial at Maryborough demonstrates the principal characteristics of a commemorative structure erected as an enduring record of a major historical event. This is achieved through the use of appropriate materials and design elements. A major regional war memorial, **it is also of aesthetic significance, as one of the most elaborately and unusually designed monuments in Queensland still surviving in its intact surrounds.** (Author's emboldening) It is also an uncommon example of statues which are representative of Italian models rather than Australian. As a large scale regional memorial it forms a dominant landmark within the town. The memorial has a strong association with the community as evidence of the impact of a major historic event and also with Maryborough architect P O E Hawkes as an unusual example of his work and local monumental masonry firm, F W Webb.*

The proposal now being promulgated would be intruding into these "intact surrounds" physically and visually. Any additions to the area could not be contemplated unless they were to be executed with a similar degree of care and craftsmanship as exhibited by the existing cenotaph. Detailed design issues aside the relocation of the war memorials from Anzac Park to a place long recognised as a significant war memorial site by the Maryborough community seems eminently appropriate in terms of the continuum of the heritage function of this space.

Design options

Two conservation policies in particular should be directly referenced with regard to this proposal.

Topic

Bandstand and Memorial Fountain (1890); the War Memorial and Memorial Gates (1922);²

Policy 5.03.01

A prioritised plan for the full restoration of the following items should be put in place with a view to undertaking full restoration work, if/when funds may become available. The Bandstand (also referred to as the Band Rotunda, and the Rotunda) refer **policy 5.06.00**, the Memorial Fountain (also referred to as the Melville fountain and the Fairy Fountain) refer **policy 5.05.06**, the War Memorial and Memorial (Entrance) Gates, refer **policy 5.07.00**.

² QHR Citation

<p>Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop discrete conservation plans for each of these particular items and actively seek funding to support the recommendations of these plans. In the interim attend to maintenance issues promptly in ways that will not compromise the heritage significance of these items. 	<p>Timing As funds become available</p>
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Topic
*A major regional war memorial, it is also of aesthetic significance, as one of the most elaborately and unusually designed monuments in Queensland still surviving in its intact surrounds.*³

Particular note should be taken of the statement "in its intact surrounds". These intact surrounds make a very significant contribution to the aesthetic presentation of the cenotaph and reinforce for present and future generations the significance of the role war service has played and continues to play in the lives of regional communities in Queensland.

Policy 5.07.01
 Ensure that the brief for the discrete conservation plan for the war memorial (Cenotaph) and entrance gates, policy 5.07.00, includes the consideration of their landscape setting.

<p>Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Until a discrete conservation plan for the war memorial (Cenotaph) and entrance gates is available confine any alteration to landscape elements in this area to attending to maintenance issues in ways that will not compromise the cultural heritage significance of the place. 	<p>Timing High priority</p>
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Immediate recommendations

The Maryborough City Council has indicated the wish that this work should be carried out within this financial year, with a preference for completion prior to Anzac Day 2004. This time frame would appear to preclude the commissioning of the discrete conservation plan referred to in policy 5.07.01 prior to work being undertaken.

With this in mind it is suggested that any work to be undertaken in the immediate future be regarded as "temporary", i.e. able to be easily reversed. Ultimately the recommendations of a discrete conservation plan may be to remove the work to be carried out in early 2004 and redesign and /or further relocate these additional memorials.

One acceptable interim design solution would appear to be plaques laid simply within the structure/perimeter of the existing garden beds. The form of the landscape setting is then maintained and visually the only intrusion is a break in the planting pattern. Note that these garden beds of themselves are of little heritage significance. It is the space the garden beds define which is the significant factor here along with the outstanding degree of care and craftsmanship exhibited by the original design and construction of the Cenotaph.

³ QHR Citation

7.01.2 New Toilet Block

Background

The existing separate mens' and womens' toilet blocks in Queens Park are situated at the rear of the Post Office building on the south-west boundary of the park. They are visually screened from view behind shrubbery along Judges Walk. Their condition is poor and location unsatisfactory for today's standards of public safety. These are the only toilet facilities in the park. There is an urgent need to provide additional toilet facilities on the Walker Street (north-eastern) side of the park.

Relocation opportunities

In order to service the north-western side of the park, MCC has suggested a possible location for toilets along Walker Street, between the pumping station and a council maintenance shed.

Two site options have been suggested to service the southern area of the park. These are adjacent to the entrance of Judges Walk (park side) on the Bazaar Street side of the Historic Heart and again on the park side of the Judges Walk near the place where the MELSA train line currently enters the park.

Cultural heritage reflections

The suggested site along Walker Street is eminently suitable in terms of cultural heritage considerations regarding the landscape design of Queens Park. This study has not dealt with any heritage issues which might occur as a result of the proposed close proximity of this site to the pumping station building. It is assumed that some alterations for access may be needed to the council maintenance shed should a toilet block be constructed here. This is only a matter for the MCC to consider.

The visual intrusion into a space of exceptional heritage significance for both the sites nominated by MCC for the toilet block in the south-west of the park requires further enquiry. Either of the two sites under consideration would adversely affect the relationships to each other of the existing historic elements in this area and would destroy the status quo of the visual aesthetics of the space, highlighted in the images at left. Attention is drawn to Figures 16 and 20 pg.20 which show the existing toilet blocks visually intruding into the landscape space of the Historic Heart of Queens Park prior to the reinstatement of the shrubbery plantings along Judges Walk. Both selected sites also appear to be unacceptably close to trees of exceptional cultural heritage significance and therefore have the potential to adversely affect the health of these trees.

This study suggests two more site options in the general vicinity for consideration.

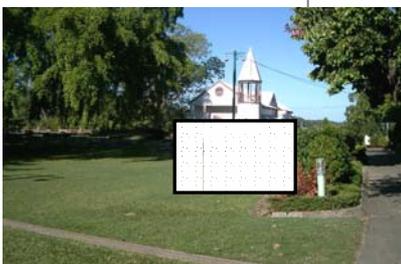
1. Installation of the new toilets on the current site directly behind the Post Office with adjustments made to the landscape surrounds in order to comply with the requirements of the SIP.
2. A more radical suggestion, but one that might ultimately better serve the whole heritage precinct of Maryborough rather than Queens Park alone, is to consider installation of toilet facilities in association with the George Ambrose White car park immediately outside the



The MCC maintenance shed on the brow of the hill would be to the right of the proposed location of the new toilet block. A line of dwarf date palms, *Phoenix robellini*, screens this site from Queens Park.



Location under consideration for a new toilet block near the Bazaar Street entry to Queens Park.



Alternative location under consideration for a new toilet block, on the park side of Judges Walk near the MELSA track entry to Queens Park.

park fence. This proposal would also require a substantial degree of design and siting finesse in association with the heritage buildings of the Court House and Customs House.

Design options

Approval in principle for all sites suggested will rely as much on the precise siting and orientation of the toilet buildings and the proposed landscape treatment of the surrounds as it will on the details of the buildings themselves.

7.01.3 Celebration Shelter (Wedding Chapel)

Background

Church attendance in all Australian communities has been dropping steadily during the closing years of the twentieth century. In association with this situation a number of people are now looking for 'neutral' and attractive places to celebrate the significant ceremonies of their lives such as a marriage or 'life partnership' commitment and christenings or 'naming days' for new family members. Queens Park has become a popular venue for people in the Maryborough region wishing to celebrate such events, particularly the immediate area of the Lily Pond. For some time now the Rotary Clubs of Maryborough have suggested that it would be appropriate to construct a small chapel/ shelter in Queens Park near the Lily Pond as a focus for such celebrations. This could also provide some much needed seating for such events. The MCC was approached by letter on this subject again in March 2003 with a view to reviving the project in light of the approaching 100th Anniversary of the founding of Rotary international in 2005.

Site qualities

The topography of the Lily Pond offers a natural containment to the space now used for weddings. The pond and small waterfall provide a particularly attractive setting to compliment and focus the physical suitability of the topography.

Cultural heritage reflections

Would the people who chose to celebrate their weddings here be enamoured of the suggestion that the site might be enhanced with the addition of a chapel? For many of them it is the conscious decision to dissociate the ceremony to mark this particular step in their lives from all things to do with conventional religious routines that has prompted their choice of the Lily Pond as the location for this celebration of such a special event.

This area of Queens Park offers an idyllic landscape backdrop for weddings, family picnics, or personal reverie. For many years in the middle of the twentieth century it was physically inaccessible to the public, locked away behind the wire fencing of an animal enclosure. The Lily Pond as an enduring element of exceptional cultural heritage significance within Queens Park has withstood a variety of changes to the use of to its immediate environs over the life span of Queens Park in response to the changing needs of the community it serves.



Detail of the Waterfall and Lily Pond.



The sweep of lawn to the east of the Lily Pond visually and physically connects this landscape to the Mary River.



The Bidwell memorial shelter sits quietly in its landscape context.



Suggested site for a celebration shelter on the edge of the Lily Pond is the location of this existing picnic table.



Vegetative backdrop to the new picnic shelter in the Vista Area of Queens Park. Behind this living screen is an outlook across the Mary river and Historic Heart of the park. Underneath the area is the crumbling embankment in Figure 48 pg.120.

Design options

The focus of this Landscape Unit is the Lily Pond itself and its landscaped surroundings. Any introduced built element and/or substantial quantity of park furniture which competed with or distracted from this focus would detract from the cultural heritage significance of this space. The large open sweep of lawn to the east of the pond supports the interpretation of the principles of the 'picturesque' layout of the initial landscape design works in Queens Park. (refer to pg.8, 'informative note' pg.57 and Appendix C).

Any introduced built element should be small scaled, simply designed, and located to one side of this lawn area. The scale and design simplicity of the shelter envisaged would be similar to that of the Bidwell memorial in Landscape Unit One. Indeed, on first appraisal, a copy of this shelter would appear to be appropriate. Also on first appraisal the western side of the pond, in the vicinity of, or on the site of, the existing picnic table, would appear to be the more appropriate position for this shelter as this removes the potential for large gatherings to conflict with public entry along the diagonal pathway to the east. This would offer shelter close to the edge of the lake for such size groups as 'the wedding party', while supporters could stand or be seated under the shade of the near-by large fig tree. Note the recurring problem in the park however of excessive ground compaction when proposing to congregate people in the vicinity of the roots of established trees. Requisite precautions /surface treatment would be implicit in any landscape design associated with the creation of a shelter.

7.01.4 The Embankment

Background

The stability of the embankment on the northern boundary of *The Saddle* landscape unit and the southern edge of the Vista Area Landscape Unit is in question. This embankment would initially have been formed by the course of the original Gardens Creek but was later modified by blasting to install the railway branch to Wilson Hart's Sawmill, which previously occupied the site of the Brolga Theatre.

A recent initiative to construct an access path up this bank from The Saddle to the Vista Area has been halted due to the instability of the bank and the failure of the path, as designed, to meet acceptable standards for public accessibility and safety. A poor level of access is therefore only available via the grassed slope to the west of the embankment or the vehicular track to the Sailing Club at the end of Walker Street. There is opportunity for the latter to be upgraded in association with future changes resulting from of the MURI RiverWalk initiative.



Figure 49. Note safety fencing installed along the crumbling section of this bank. The silhouette of the new picnic shelter can be seen above in the Vista area, Landscape Unit 9.



Eroded and crumbling rock faced retaining wall to the south of the sailing club entry area to Queens Park.



Rock faced retaining wall to the north of the sailing club entry area to Queens Park in good repair.

Site qualities

This bank is topped with a tangle of aging exotic vegetation which encloses the picnic shed and picnic area recently constructed here. The eastern face adjacent to the Sailing Club and the Mary River is rock faced. The south-eastern face into Queens Park appears to be crumbling and close public access has been prevented by temporary fencing.

This unstable face forms the backdrop to one of the level picnic areas in the park and there is some picnic furniture installed here. The area will also become one of the sides to a new 'front door' to the park when 'The Recreational Walk and Cycle Network' as proposed is completed.

Cultural heritage reflections

The broken rises on the North side of the creek has been left as nearly as possible in its [sic.] original condition. Nature has just had her hair combed; the untidy looking scrub that once encumbered it has merely been thinned out or trimmed, and wherever a tree or shrub seemed worthy of preservation, it has been left. A rustic path now skirts the ascent and due provision has been made, at suitable spots, for the dreamy tete a tetes of moonlight lovers. On the brow of the hill Mr. Ingham's cottage, now finished, forms a picturesque specimen of ornate rusticity, and commands the whole of the gardens in one view.⁴

Many of the early written references to the use of Queens Park refer to the 'rustic' character of much of the landscape detailing and the romantic imagery of moonlight nights here, particularly in association with the Mary River on the eastern boundary of Queens Park. As a place, the landscape expression of the park was not one of over-design or lavish appointment. Residents enjoyed this space for passive recreation in a carefully contrived setting which drew heavily on its natural geographical assets in supporting the beauty of its overall landscape aesthetics.

⁴ *Maryborough Chronicle* 15/1/1876 transcribed from information provided by the Maryborough Historical Society.

Design options

Design for the area must recognise its high profile: as a physical and visual gateway to the park, with all treatments displaying a high level of finish and quality. This key role would be magnified with the implementation of the proposed RiverWalk. Design of the Vista area should therefore also be considered in cognisance of this wider context.

Within that context, design of the Vista area needs to address two key issues: pathway connections with the body of the park, and treatment of its embankment. Direct access should be provided linking the Vista and Saddle areas, with the pathway meeting standards for disability access. With respect to a pathway alignment, the treed and grassy slope west of the Vista area and below the pumphouse/maintenance shed invites investigation, especially in association with a line of mature trees that form a partial avenue. An approach for the treatment of the destabilised embankment is a priority, in light of public safety issues. The pathway project already commenced should be abandoned at this time and the area secured.

As mentioned elsewhere in this study, the stability of the retaining wall to the entire riverside boundary of Queens Park needs urgent structural assessment, short term repairs and long term design detail consideration, in both structural and aesthetic terms. This area is not strictly within Queens Park and as such is not included in the entry for the park on the Queensland Heritage Register. It's stability is of vital importance to the park however, particularly in the light of the regular flooding experienced in the area. Failure of this eastern retaining wall could see a substantial amount of Queens Park subside onto the bank of the river.

Again attention is drawn to the plans of MURI for the RiverWalk initiative. Any work proposed with respect to the stabilisation of this bank will to some extent be required to interface with the design intent and design detailing of the RiverWalk.

Further consideration should also be given to the comments in section 6.01.09 regarding the best use of the Vista Area landscape unit on the top of this embankment with respect to the conservation policies presented in Chapter 5.

The vegetation, both new and established, to the top of this bank, should be assessed in detail on the basis of both its health and its cultural heritage significance. The comparative photographs of Queens Park on pg. 64, the cover of part B of this study, are both taken from somewhere of the top of this embankment in the Vista Area landscape unit. The view line of the historic photograph, circa 1878, cannot be accessed today due to vegetation cover. The park panorama in the current photograph lies to the south-west (right) of the historic photograph. The quote included here as a cultural reflection describes a 'thinning' and 'trimming' on this bank of its natural bush cover. This approach would have preserved lines of site across to the *Historic Heart* of the park and also out across the Mary River from this vantage point on the top of the embankment.

Immediate recommendations

The plan, Recommended Future Directions, figure 50 pg 123 recommends the physical scope of work associated with The Embankment to be addressed as a single design exercise. This extent of work would encompass not only the pathway and embankment, but the siting, design and landscape works associated with new toilets; the relocation and/or integration of picnic/BBQ facilities; upgrading of the existing picnic facilities; the interface with the parks depot; and associated vegetation and planting; and the gateway treatment to the park from both the RiverWalk and the Brolga Theatre approaches.

Maryborough City Council has indicated that there is a high priority need to remove the temporary safety fencing from the face of the embankment for aesthetic reasons as much as anything else. They have budgeted to this end for the current financial year. To address the concern of the Maryborough City Council regarding the continued need for the safety fence around the embankment it is recommended that structural consultants be engaged to investigate and report on the stability of this area as first priority.

This study further recommends that the remainder of the budget for the work for this financial year be directed in the first instance to the commissioning of the comprehensive design work foreshadowed by the concept plan Recommended Future Directions, figure 50 pg 123. To approach all the interrelated issues involved here on a piecemeal issue by issue basis can only produce an unsatisfactory mish-mash as a total design result. Once the comprehensive design has been agreed a sensible program for the staging of the construction work involved can be determined and budgeted for appropriately.