

HERITAGE PLACE

NAME OF PLACE: MAJOR MITCHELL MEMORIAL AND WATER TROUGH

ADDRESS/LOCATION OF PLACE: Glenelg Highway DUNKELD

STUDY NUMBER: 101

HERITAGE OVERLAY NUMBER:

PRECINCT: Dunkeld

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Southern Grampians Shire

ACCESS DESCRIPTION:

CFA 433J 6; Vicroads 229 S4; located at the north-east corner of the Glenelg Highway (Parker Street) and Templeton Street at the centre of the township of Dunkeld.

SIGNIFICANCE RATING: Local



Major Mitchell Memorial, Dunkeld.

Image Date: 9/12/02

EXTENT OF LISTING:

To the extent of: 1. All the structure and its immediate surrounds

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PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

The memorial is constructed from a local stone and takes the common form of a tapering obelisk set on three stone blocks. It is about 2.0m high and .8m square at the base. The obelisk shaft is dressed sandstone and plain. The bluestone blocks are dressed to a rock-face finish.

The top bluestone block is incised on its smooth face with gilded lettering and states 'In honour of Major Mitchell who having discovered Mt Abrupt ascended it 14th September 1836. This monument was erected by residents of Dunkeld and district 14th Sept 1914.'

The structure is located in the south-west corner of a large public reserve on the Glenelg Highway in Dunkeld.

HISTORY:

Major Mitchell passed nearby this place at the beginning of August 1836, following the Glenelg River downstream. He stated in his journal "The country on its banks was, as far as I could see, the finest imaginable, either for sheep and cattle or for cultivation" (Mitchell, 258).

The monument was erected in 1914 and recognised officially on 14th September to commemorate the anniversary of the day he passed closest to Dunkeld. He noted in his diary, after some apprehension about the weather, "from the summit of Mount Abrupt I beheld a truly sublime scene; the whole of the mountains, quite clear of clouds, the grand outline of the more distant masses blended with the sky, and forming a blue and purple background for the numerous peaks of the range on which I stood, which consisted of sharp cones and perpendicular cliffs foreshortened, so as to form one grand feature of the landscape, though composing a crescent nearly 30 miles in extent" (*ibid.*, 258-9). The monument was erected before the larger rural Centenary celebration which occurred in the 1920-30s.

On 14th September 1986, Professor Manning Clarke unveiled the new bronze plaque on the monument.

THEMATIC CONTEXT:

Theme 2: Peopling Australia
2.5 Promoting settlement

Theme 3: Developing local, regional and national economies
3.3 Surveying the continent
3.3.1 Looking for inland seas and waterways
3.3.4 Looking for land with agricultural potential

Theme 8: Developing Australia's cultural life
8.7 Honouring achievement
8.9 Commemorating significant events

CONDITION:

The memorial is in good condition.

INTEGRITY:

High degree of integrity

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

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What is significant?

The Major Mitchell Memorial in Dunkeld is located in the south west corner of a public reserve on the Glenelg Highway. It takes the form of an obelisk set on three stone blocks. The shaft is dressed sandstone and plain. The bluestone blocks are dressed to a rock-face finish. A gilded incision has been written on the top bluestone block honouring Major Mitchell's discovery and ascent of nearby Mount Abrupt on September 14th, 1836. The memorial was erected by residents of Dunkeld and district in 1914 to commemorate Major Mitchell's 1836 exploration.

Mitchell passed nearby Dunkeld at the beginning of August 1836, following the Glenelg River downstream. He stated in his journal "The country on its banks was, as far as I could see, the finest imaginable, either for sheep and cattle or for cultivation".

Monuments and memorials to commemorate Major Mitchell's epic 1836 journey can be found in many locations throughout south western Victoria. The Major crossed Victoria's northern and western plains, found a European settlement already established at Portland, and returned to New South Wales to give a glowing account of the rich land of 'Australia Felix'. One hundred years later, local communities at points along his former route engaged enthusiastically in a bout of centennial monument building. After war memorials, the Mitchell monuments are the most common form of public commemoration in the region.

How is it Significant?

The Major Mitchell Monument, Glenelg Highway, Dunkeld is of historical significance to the community of Dunkeld and the Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it Significant?

The Major Mitchell Monument is of historical significance because it commemorates the very beginning of European interest in, occupation of and subsequent exploitation of the further Western District. It is example of the way in which Major Mitchell is revered as a person of extreme importance within the community.

COMPARISON:

298 Major Mitchell Monument, Lake Repose, Bundoran Lane, Glenthompson (Strathmore)

101 Major Mitchell Monument, Turnbull St, Coleraine

089 Henty Memorial, Glenelg Highway, Carapook

ASSESSED BY: tfh

ASSESSMENT DATE:

02-Nov-01

EXISTING LISTINGS:

HERITAGE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Include in VHR **Include in RNE** **Include in Local Planning Scheme**

No Recommendations for Inclusions

REFERENCES:

Author	Title	Year	Page
Elise Claburn et al.	Dunkeld and District: A Short History	1989	Ch.3
Gregory C. Eccleston	Major Mitchell's 1836 'Australia Felix' Expedition: A Re-Evaluation	1992	
Gregory C. Eccleston	The Major Mitchell Trail - Exploring Australia Felix	1990	87-88
Major T. L. Mitchell	Three Expeditions Into The Interior of Eastern Australia - Volume Two	1839	258-9