

## Penshurst War Memorial



23328 Penshurst War Memorial 0071



Pens 1.jpg



Pens 2.jpg



Pens 3.jpg



Pens 4.jpg



Pens 5.jpg



Pens 6.jpg

### Location

Bell street and Martin Street PENSURST, Southern Grampians Shire

### Municipality

SOUTHERN GRAMPIONS SHIRE

### Level of significance

-

### Heritage Listing

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - January 27, 2003

What is significant?

The Penshurst War Memorial is located in the centre of Penshurst, at the intersection of Bell and Martin Streets. It is set within a simply planted circular traffic island which has been planted with low hedges of Rosemary. The monument takes the traditional form of an obelisk and is composed of a tall shaft, three large blocks of increasing size and two base blocks. These are all a grey granite and have a rockface texture. The monument is surrounded by concrete and low granite blocks supporting metal tube fencing. Bronze plaques are fixed to the plinth blocks with the names of those from the Shire of Mount Rouse who served in the First World War and the Second World War. The Anzac insignia is fixed to the base of the shaft. The Monument was erected by R. B Ritchie of Blackwood in 1919 and commemorates those who fell in World War One and World War Two.

How is it significant?

The Penshurst War Memorial is of historic, social and aesthetic significance to the township of Penshurst and the Southern Grampians Shire.

Why is it significant?

The Penshurst War Memorial is of historic significance because it commemorates at a local level some of the most important events in the national history of Australia and especially the roles of those from the community who served and died.

It is of social significance as the focus of acts of commemoration such as Anzac Day and Remembrance Day, and as a place of homage for the community.

It is of aesthetic significance for its use of traditional form, style and iconography to express deep meaning. This significance is enhanced by its setting and location.

How is it significant?

The Penshurst War Memorial is of historic, social and aesthetic significance to the Southern Grampians Shire and the township of Penshurst.

Why is it significant?

The War Memorial is of historic significance for marking the contribution of the township and its immediate area in the First and Second World Wars and in other wars fought by Australia, especially the contribution of those who died. It is of social significance as the focus for the commemorative ceremonies associated with those wars. It is of aesthetic significance for its use of deep symbolism through the usual obelisk motif, associated with death since ancient times.

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Heritage Study/Consultant | Southern Grampians - Southern Grampians Shire Heritage Study, Timothy Hubbard P/L, Annabel Neylon, 2002; |
| Construction dates        | 1919,  |
| Heritage Act Categories   | Registered place,  |
| Hermes Number             | 125529   |
| Property Number           |  |

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## Physical Conditions

The memorial is in excellent condition.

## Physical Description 1

The Penshurst War Memorial is traditionally located, at the intersection of the major crossroads of the town, Bell and Martin Streets. It is set within a simply planted circular traffic island which has been planted with low Rosemary hedges. The monument takes the traditional form of an obelisk and is composed of a tall shaft, three large blocks of increasing size and two base blocks. These are all a grey granite and have a rockface texture. The monument is surround by concrete and low granite blocks supporting metal tube fencing. Bronze plaques are fixed to the plinth blocks with the names of those from the Shire of Mount Rouse who served in the First World War and the Second World War. The Anzac insignia is fixed to the base of the shaft.

## Historical Australian Themes

Theme 7: Governing  
7.7 Defending Australia  
7.7.3 Going to war

Theme 8: Developing Australia's cultural life  
8.8 Remembering the fallen

Theme 9: Marking the phases of Life  
9.7.3 Remembering the dead.

## Usage/Former Usage

war memorial

## Integrity

Highly intact

## Physical Description 2

Those who served in the First and Second World War and in subsequent wars.

## Veterans Description for Public

The Penshurst War Memorial is located in the centre of Penshurst, at the intersection of Bell and Martin Streets. It is set within a simply planted circular traffic island which has been planted with low hedges of Rosemary. The monument was erected by R. B Ritchie of Blackwood in 1919 and takes the traditional form of an obelisk and is composed of a tall shaft, three large blocks of increasing size and two base blocks. These are all grey granite and have a rock face texture. The monument is surrounded by concrete and low granite blocks supporting metal tube fencing. Bronze plaques are fixed to the plinth blocks with the names of those from the Shire of Mount Rouse who served in the First World War and the Second World War. The Anzac insignia is fixed to the base of the shaft.

The Mount Rouse Shire Centenary tells the origins of the war memorial as per the Council's minutes in detail. In June 1919, Mr. R. B. Ritchie, the owner of Blackwood proposed to Council the erection of a memorial in Penshurst to those who had served and fallen in the Great War. He requested to know whether any steps had been taken by the public to erect a memorial and whether they would be satisfied with his choice to have monument rather than a building, sporting facility or service. His preference was for a tower in the form of a cross containing a clock, with an inlaid bronze tablet bearing the names of the fallen soldiers of the Shire of Mount Rouse. Ritchie was prepared to accept suggestions if a public meeting were called but he was not prepared to bind himself to anything such a meeting might decide. Councillors thought that the decision would come better

from Mr. Ritchie without calling a public meeting and heartily approved his choice of a fitting memorial.

As soon as July 1919, Mr. Ritchie forwarded a sketch of the proposed memorial and was granted permission to proceed with the work. The memorial which was constructed was that which still stands, it is not known why the original suggestion with the clock tower did not proceed. The Country Roads Board offered no objection to the erection of a memorial. By January the next year there were already complaints about people sitting on the memorial's steps.

The designer and builder of the memorial is not known but it may well have been supplied and constructed by the local stonemasons, the Behnke family whose yard is on the Hamilton Highway on the north side of Penshurst. There was some discussion in 1925 about the relocation of the memorial but this did not proceed.

The memorial has been altered only to include the names of those who served after the First World War. Following the Second World War, with the names of those who had served and lost their lives added. The memorial is deliberately sited at the centre of the township as it forms the focus for ceremonies on Anzac Day and Remembrance Day.

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*