

St. Arnaud Boer War Memorial



boer war & WW II st arnaud jun 07 ta



boer war st arnaud bank view jun 07 ta



boer war st arnaud road view jun 07 ta



dedication boer war memorial st arnaud jun 07 ta



wreath detail boer war memorial st arnaud jun 07 ta



war memorials st arnaud jun 07 ta



detail boer war memorial st arnaud jun 07 ta



boer war memorial st arnaud tree view jun 07 ta



boer war memorial st arnaud jun 07 ta



SaintA 5.jpg



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SaintA 7.jpg



SaintA 8.jpg

Location

NAPIER STREET and MARKET STREET ST ARNAUD, Northern Grampians Shire

Municipality

NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE

Level of significance

-

Heritage Listing

Vic. War Heritage Inventory

Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

The South African (Boer War Memorial) in Napier Street, St Arnaud was erected in 1903. It was situated in a memorial park flanked by four small cannons and bounded by an iron palisade fence. The Memorial was moved to its current site some time in the 1930s. It is still a prominent marker in the township and has been joined by a memorial to World War II and post World War II conflicts (Korea, Malaya, Borneo, Vietnam, Kuwait).

The Boer War was the name given to the South African Wars of 1880-81 and 1899-1902 fought between the British and the descendants of the Dutch settlers (Boers) in Southern Africa. As part of the British Empire, the Australian Colonies offered troops in 1899 and the first Mounted Australian units arrived in South Africa in December 1899. At least 12,000 Australians served in contingents raised by the six colonies or (from 1901) the new Australian Commonwealth. It is believed that at least 600 Australians died in the campaign, nearly half (265) being from Victoria. At least sixty men from St Arnaud and the surrounding district served in the Boer War. The memorial at St Arnaud commemorates their involvement and notes in particular the death of three local men, Private Schultze, Lieutenant Skene, and Private McNally.

The Memorial has a bluestone base, with white granite plinth and polished red granite Doric column with an urn carved on top. The lettering on the column is in gold. Carved in the white granite plinth is a drinking fountain, and fixed to the plinth on two sides is a crossed rifle and wreath insignia. The column appears to have been made and designed by A & G Ballantine of Carlton, who were monumental sculptors and granite merchants. The design was commissioned by the local fund raising committee, who were able to raise £115 towards the cost.

Hermes Number 125466

Property Number

Veterans Description for Public

The St Arnaud Drinking fountain and column was erected in 1903 to commemorate the service of sixty local men in the Boer War, in what was then known as South Africa Park. In the 1920s or 1930s it was moved to its present position on the corner of Market and Napier Street to make way for a band rotunda. It originally held the names only of those men killed in the war but when it was refurbished in 2000, the names of forty soldiers who returned were added.

The monument is a polished red granite doric column on a grey granite base. It is surmounted by an urn under which are carved leaves and symbols, circling the cylinder. There are water basins on the south east and north west sides, the north west side still having a tap.

The South West face reads "Erected to Commemorate the Part Taken in the South African War of 1899-1902 By Volunteers from St Arnaud and District 1903." On the section below an inscription reads "Lieut W. Skene Killed at Nooitgedaught 13th Dec 1900." On the South East face is the inscription "Pte H.E. Schultze Killed at Belmont 25th Nov 1899." On the North West face is the inscription "Pte J. McNally Killed at Naauwpoort 2nd Jan 1902."

Plans for a Boer War memorial commenced as early as 1901. The *St. Arnaud Mercury* reported on 30 March 1901:

"The Ladies Committee who have been working for some time to establish a fund for the erection of a memorial in St. Arnaud to mark the services of our local soldiers in the South African War arranged a concert in the Town Hall".

By July 1903 Mr. Blakeley, secretary of the Shire of Kara Kara was calling for designs for a South African Soldiers Memorial Fountain. In early August the *St. Arnaud Mercury* reported further progress:

"The ladies Committee in connection with the Local Soldiers Memorial Fountain held a meeting on Wednesday. A number of designs, forwarded by various firms, were considered and one submitted by Mr. Ballantyne, of Melbourne was approved. It was decided to refer the design to Mr. Blakeley for a professional report. The cost of the fountain, including the laying of the water pipes, will be about £120. Total amount collected at present £94".

By September of that year, Mr. Blakeley requested permission from the Borough Council for the erection of the memorial. His reasons for the site were explained by the *St. Arnaud Mercury*: "*to erect the fountain at the corner of the square opposite the St. Arnaud Hotel, as it is thought for many reasons that would be the most suitable position. Had the fountain been a series of basins with a jet from the top, the centre of the reserve would have been the best place for it. Being a drinking fountain it was thought its purpose would be best served by placing where suggested*". However, by the end of the same month the Borough Council had decided it would be placed in the centre of the reserve facing Napier Street.

Erected in December 1903 it consisted of a bluestone base and a white granite plinth and a short Doric column and urn in polished red granite with engraved dedication, drinking fountains, and brass insignia. It was situated in the Boer Memorial Square on Market Square opposite Kinnear's St. Arnaud Hotel, with four small cannon, which was then fenced with iron 'pickets'.

By early July 1904, after much fund-raising by the Ladies Committee, the memorial was fully paid for at a total cost of £115. About ten years later the names of the fallen were unveiled at an impressive ceremony, but no record of the ceremony has yet been found.

Henry Emil Schultze was the first Australian to be killed in the Boer War on 24 November 1899. He was born and raised in St. Arnaud. He initially trained with the Victorian permanent artillery and then joined the Grenadier

Guards in London. In October he responded to the call for arms and joined the 3rd Grenadier Guards for a active service. On 23 November he was wounded in the battle of Belmont and he died while on a hospital train to Wynberg. Both he and Private Lynch died on 25 November 1899 and were buried at Fraserberg Station (290 miles from Capetown). The local English people erected gravestones to the two men and a photo was sent to Henry's mother. Following the news of his death, a memorial fund was set up in St. Arnaud. By late 1900 a plaque had been unveiled on the wall of the State school, another on his parent's grave at the cemetery and in c. 1903-1904 his name was engraved on the Boer War Memorial, each to honour his memory.

Private John McNally, from the St. Arnaud district and of C Company of the 5th Victorian Mounted Regiment was accidentally shot by a sentry, while on duty at an outpost on the foggy night of 2 January 1902.

Of W. Skene's life and circumstances of his death, nothing is known other than that he was from the St. Arnaud district. There may be a connection with the "Skene" shield, a rifle shooting competition trophy, a magnificent piece with a large silver centre piece depicting a "mounted rifle". This trophy is held by the Shire of Northern Grampians and displayed in the Stawell Town Hall.

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/>