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# DARTMOOR MEMORIAL AVENUE AND CARVINGS



Carving of Soldier, Dartmoor Memorial Avenue (carved from former avenue tree)

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## Location

GREENHAM STREET, DARTMOOR, GLENELG SHIRE

## Municipality

GLENELG SHIRE

## Level of significance

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Listing

Glenelg Shire

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is significant?

The Dartmoor Memorial Avenue of Honour and carvings is a number of *Cedrus atlantica* (Atlantic cedar) trees, both living and dead. The dead trees have been carved into sculptures which relate to war, in celebration of those who served in the First World War. The trees were planted immediately after the end of the First World War, in September 1918. Since about 1993, nine of the trees have been turned into carvings. The carvings are titled 'Sad News', 'The Nurse', 'The Boy at War', 'At Arms', 'Three Services', 'Over the Top', 'Rest In Peace', 'Parting' and 'The Game'. The sculptures were undertaken by Kevin Gilder, a chainsaw sculptor. The carvings are in very good condition, and the remaining trees are in good condition. Overall, as an avenue, the integrity is fair, but the integrity of the carvings is excellent.

How is it Significant?

The Dartmoor Memorial Avenue of Honour and Carvings are of historic, social and aesthetic significance to Glenelg Shire.

#### Why is it Significant?

The Dartmoor Memorial Avenue and carvings are historically significant for the commemorative association with servicemen and women who served in the First World War. Planted in 1918 as a memorial to those who served between 1914 -1918, the avenue provides an important historical focus for the township of Dartmoor. The use of *Cedrus altantica* as the planting is somewhat unusual for a memorial avenue. The Avenue and carvings are socially important for their relationship with the community as a living memorial. The carvings are of aesthetic significance as they arrest the eye and contrast with the small town streetscape of Dartmoor. The Avenue was planted as a living memorial and is recognised by the Returned Services League and the community for its continuing commemorative importance.

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|---------------------------|--|
| Heritage Study/Consultant | Glenelg - Glenelg Shire Heritage Study Part One, Carlotta Kellaway, David Rhodes Mandy Jean, 2002; Glenelg - Glenelg Heritage Study Stage Two (a), Heritage Matters, 2006; |
| Other Names               | MEMORIAL AVENUE OF HONOUR & CARVINGS,  |
| Hermes Number             | 52649  |
| Property Number           |  |

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## Usage/Former Usage

Memorial  
Artwork

## Physical Description 1

The avenue of honour is made up of a number of living *Cedrus atlantica* (Atlantic Cedar) trees, and many trees which have been turned into sculptural works relating to war. The carvings are:

1. The Nurse: Nurses were beacons of hope and comfort for the wounded; two nurses are remembered in the Avenue. This tree was planted for Sister Rachel Pratt, who famously won a Military Medal for 'gallantry under fire'. The medal is displayed at the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.
2. Sad News: It was the practice for telegrams notifying families of a death to be addressed to the local clergymen so they could break the desolate news. Sadly, some district mothers received such news more than once.
3. The Boy at War: Early in the war, recruits had to be at least 5 foot 6 inches tall, have a chest expansion of 34 inches, and be aged 19-38 years. It was common for young men...boys...to put up their age to go to war.
4. At Arms: Australian soldiers were respected for their courage and hardiness by friend and foe alike. They typically had a larrikin spirit and a casual approach to drill and discipline. But they had an undeniable bond of respect for each other, and nothing was worse than losing 'a mate'.
5. Three Services: Local men from the area served in all three services: army, navy and the fledgling airforce. The duties performed ranged from Doctor to Stoker, Cyclist to Pilot, Farrier to Gunner, Rail-ganger to Stretcher - bearer... All their lives and wartime experiences are detailed in a local history book published by the Dartmoor District Museum.
6. Over The Top: Anzac Day commemorates the anniversary of the ill-fated attack at Gallipoli. This tree was planted for a 'True Anzac' - Private 862 Sydney Smith. He enlisted within 3 weeks of war being declared in August 1914, sailed with the first convoy of troops in November, and was killed at Gallipoli on the 'first Anzac Day' - 25 April 1915.
7. Rest In Peace: Of the 60 personnel remembered in the Avenue, 18 paid the ultimate sacrifice. Makeshift graves were common; other have no known resting place.

8. Parting: The reasons why men enlisted in the Great War, to fight far from this serene district, are varied; some believed in the patriotic cause, others merely sought adventure. Some men were farewelled by a wife and children, others were held by their parents, for perhaps the last time.

9. The Game: Recreation behind the frontline was critical to the morale of Anzac Diggers - one popular betting-game was 'Two-Up'. The phrase 'The Game' was also the soldiers' euphemism for 'The War', and just as luck determined a win at 'Two-Up' so did it often determine survival on the battlefield.

## **Physical Conditions**

The living trees are in good condition and the sculptures appear to be in very good condition.

## **Historical Australian Themes**

Theme 8: - Developing Australia's cultural life

8.8 Remembering the fallen

Theme 9 - Marking the phases of life

9.7 Dying

9.7.3 Remembering the dead

*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/>*