

<b>Other Names</b>	Proserpine Cenotaph	
<b>Street Address</b>	Main Street	Proserpine
<b>Title Details/ GPS Coordinates</b>	208HR1473	

**Historical Context**

The town of Proserpine emerged following the establishment of a central sugar mill in the late 1890s. European settlement of the district began in the 1870s; the land was initially used to run cattle, but from the 1880s onward sugar cane estates, then farms, predominated. The central sugar mill – still in operation today – processed the first crush in 1897. The town of Proserpine was surveyed at this time and the Shire of Proserpine was created by 1910, two years after work on the railway between Proserpine and Bowen commenced.

The Proserpine War Memorial was erected sometime after World War I. War memorials were erected in towns and cities around the nation after the war to commemorate the service of local men (and sometimes women) who served in the conflict. Generally, each town formed a memorial committee that established a process to determine the appropriate form of the memorial (subject to funds) and to commission the masonry firm to build it. There are broad similarities between monuments from town to town, but each monument is fundamentally unique; a local expression of a national desire to commemorate the district’s contribution to the war. The Proserpine War Memorial is relatively unusual in that it is designed to resemble a headstone, rather than an obelisk or ‘digger on a pedestal’. This suggests that the memorial was intended to emphasise mourning and loss.

The memorial was originally located at centre of the main entrance to the Proserpine Showgrounds. An early image in this location shows it surrounded by a low picket fence, further reinforcing the funereal symbolism, as is the fact that only the fallen are listed – an uncommon practice at the time, as most regional memorials list everyone who served. The entrance to the Showgrounds appears to have been accessed from Anzac Road at this time. It is understood that an avenue of fig trees was also planted alongside the road at the approach to the memorial, although it is unclear whether any of these trees remain. The memorial was moved to a location outside of the School of Arts building in 1939, where the Main Street entrance to the mill is now located. Name plaques were added after World War II, and also Korea, all of which continued the practice of only listing those who died. The memorial was moved once again, this time in the grounds of the Cultural Centre when it was constructed in 1984.

**Physical Description**

The Proserpine War Memorial is located in a grassed area in Cultural Hall Park on the corner of Main Street and Dobbins Lane in the Proserpine Central Business District. The northern and eastern side border onto the footpath, while the southern and western sides are bounded by a driveway leading to the entertainment centre in the southern part of the park. A mature pine tree is situated close to the footpath on Dobbins Lane.

The memorial consists of three brick panels set on an angle with a square three tiered base consisting of bricks and exposed aggregate concrete. The central standing section consists of a straight brick capped edge and the top third of each side is sloped. Each brick panel features a marble tablet.

The central marble table commemorates the volunteers from Proserpine who lost their lives during World War I. The tablet resembles a gabled headstone with shoulders. The top part shows a carved scroll with the engraving ‘PROSERPINE SHIRE COUNCIL’. Below is a plaque reading ‘TO THE MEMORY OF THOSE BRAVE VOLUNTEERS FROM PROSERPINE WHO MADE THE SUPREME SACRIFICE DURING THE GREAT WAR 1914-1919.’ Crossed rifles and a laurel wreath are carved underneath the dates 1914 and 1919’ followed by a list of the fallen stating their name, unit and date of death. The inscription ‘IN THE HOSPITAL WARD, OR THE BATTLES FIERCE CLASH, THEIR SOULS TO THE MAKER HAVE SPED. WE ASK OF OUR COUNTRY TO CHERISH THEIR NAMES AMONGST – THE IMMORTAL DEAD.’ is engraved at the bottom section. A more recent ‘Australian Commonwealth Military Forces’ badge is located above the tablet.

On both sides of the World War I tablet are tall rectangular tablets commemorating the fallen from WWII and the Korean War. Three flagpoles are situated behind the war memorial towards Dobbins Lane.

<b>Integrity</b>	Poor	<b>Condition</b>	Fair
<b>Statutory Listings</b>	No statutory listings		
<b>Non-Statutory Listings</b>	No non-statutory listings		
<b>Inspection Date</b>	16/4/2014		

**References**

Kerr, John, 1997. A Crystal Century. The History of Proserpine’s Sugar Mill, its Farms and its People, Proserpine Co-operative Sugar Milling Association Limited, Proserpine.

**Heritage Significance**

Criteria	Definition
<b>A</b>	<i>The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the region’s history.</i>
<b>Statement</b>	The Proserpine War Memorial is important in demonstrating the pattern of the region’s history, as communities across the region and nationally erected war memorials to commemorate local soldiers following the end of World War I.
<b>B</b>	<i>The place demonstrates rare, uncommon or endangered aspects of the region’s cultural heritage.</i>
<b>Statement</b>	The Proserpine War Memorial represents an uncommon aspect of the region’s history, as it only lists the servicemen from the district who fell during the conflicts noted on the memorial, rather than the more common practice of listing all the men who enlisted. The design of the memorial was clearly intended to resemble a grave headstone, which was an unusual design choice for a memorial following World War I.
<b>D</b>	<i>The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of cultural places important to the region.</i>
<b>Statement</b>	The Proserpine War Memorial is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a regional war memorial. All war memorials are essentially an idiosyncratic reflection of the local community’s desire to commemorate the men who served and died during war.
<b>G</b>	<i>The place has a strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons important to the region.</i>
<b>Statement</b>	The Proserpine War Memorial has a special association with the Proserpine ex-service community and the Proserpine community more generally, particularly as a focus of Anzac Day and Remembrance Day ceremonies held each year.

**Location Map**



Kerr, John, 1997. Crystal Century. The History of Proserpine's Sugar Mill, its Farms and its People, Proserpine Cooperative Sugar Milling Association, Proserpine.

McClements, Mavis, 1974-75 "A Town Called Proserpine", Journal of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland, v. IX, n. 6.

Proserpine Historical Museum Society Inc Magazine, Issue 73 December 2008.