

**Permanent reflections?
Public memorialisation in Queensland's
Sunshine Coast Region**

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By

Frances Windolf

The University of New England

Armidale, New South Wales

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Abstract

The Sunshine Coast Region of South East Queensland formally came into being in March 2008, when three local government areas – Maroochy Shire, Noosa Shire and Caloundra City – were amalgamated into one unit. This thesis examines twenty memorials which existed within the boundaries of the Sunshine Coast region before the amalgamation. It investigates how the history of the region to that time has been documented and evidenced by these memorials, and how these memorials have reflected that history.

Memorials are canvases on which stories are written and rewritten, not frozen in time by the materials of which they are constructed or societal conventions and ideologies at the time of their construction. An individual memorial can relate not only the story of the subject of its commemoration but also the story of those who chose to commemorate it. Responses to a memorial may change over time, and the reflections of those changes may portray more about society than about the memorial subject. Many different aspects of the history of the Sunshine Coast region have been revealed through the twenty memorials used as case studies.

These memorials not only exemplify the history of the region, they are an expression of that history. Through them the history of the Sunshine Coast is expressed by those who erected the memorials and those who have viewed them. Some memorials have lost their ability to tell their intended story through physical or social changes that have occurred over time. Some draw us in to become part of their story despite age or physical condition. They are part of a living regional history which is not bound by facts and figures but which encompasses the lives of those who made the Sunshine Coast region what it is today, and they provide an alternative 'text' for those who wish to investigate that regional history.

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