

10.4. Memorial for Jim Saad

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ATTACHMENTS: 10.4.1 Saad Memorial Site Artwork; 10.4.2 Broughton & Burton Sts Concept Design Option 1C (excerpt)

PURPOSE:

This report responds to Council's resolution of 13 February 2023 for a report detailing the creation of a memorial for Jim Saad.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Jim Saad worked as a shoe repairer and key cutter in a small shop in the Milsons Point Train Station tunnel for more than 50 years. When Mr Saad died in 2021, his business was probably the oldest in the area. There was an outpouring of respect and sympathy, with flowers and tributes placed at his shopfront. A Mayoral Minute in September 2021 suggested a memorial be installed in Mr Saad's honour.

Various options were considered over the following year without success. At its meeting of 13 February 2023, Council resolved as part of the Burton Street Plaza project:

THAT Council receive a report detailing future opportunities to incorporate public art within the project area, including a memorial to Jim Saad.

THAT Council promptly progress the memorial bronze sculpture to the late Jim Saad as shown in the report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

\$50,000 has been allocated for this memorial from the Kirribilli & McMahons Point Village Centres 2022/23 budget.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the report be received

LINK TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The relationship with the Community Strategic Plan is as follows:

2. Our Built Infrastructure

2.1 Infrastructure and assets meet diverse community needs

4. Our Social Vitality

4.3 North Sydney's history is preserved and recognised

BACKGROUND

Lebanese-born Jim Saad arrived in Sydney in 1962 at the age of 20. Two years he later started work in a small shoe repair and key cutting business in the Milson Point Train Station access tunnel. In 1966 Jim bought the business and worked there for the next 56 years. During that time Jim cut countless keys and repaired thousands of shoes. His clientele included those who accessed the station from Milson's Point on the west side of the tunnel, and Kirribilli on the east, with Jim's shop being closer to the Kirribilli entrance.

Mr Saad's business was a local institution and he was possibly the oldest working proprietor in North Sydney when he passed away in August 2021 aged 80 years. His death was reported internationally. Tributes and flowers were placed at his shop front.

A Mayoral Minute in September 2021 paid tribute to Mr Saad, and suggested installation of a memorial to commemorate his life and work. A tree was one option, dedicated street furniture and a plaque was another. However, as the Kirribilli entrance to the station tunnel is a busy paved area, there was no obvious location for a memorial. Finding a suitable location was further complicated because the station structure is heritage-listed as part of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, and fixing plaques or similar memorials to the structure is not possible.

In February 2023 it was decided to include a memorial to Mr Saad as part of Council's Burton Street Plaza project. It will likely be the only artwork as such, as any Indigenous-inspired element will likely be a design feature rather than a single piece of art.

CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

The family will be consulted in the final design.

DETAIL

The delay in situating a memorial for Jim Saad fortuitously allowed this project to be incorporated into the Burton Street Plaza project. The planned garden bed at the top of Burton Street provides an ideal location for a three-dimensional memorial/artwork. It is

across Broughton Street from the train station entrance but is within suitable proximity to that landmark for the site to be relevant.

One design option is a pair of shoes and/or shoe repair tools rendered in metal such as bronze and placed on a stone plinth, with a dedication to Mr Saad either inscribed in the stone or cast on metal.

An invitation to submit a fee schedule has been drafted and will be sent to appropriate artists. The invitation allows for interpretation and the suggestion of other thematic forms.



1.1 Burton Street | Option 1 / Existing levels & no kerbs



Bega – Pole top luminaire
77 911 K3



Street Furniture Australia –
Victorian Bollard



Catenary & fairy lights



Stone seating edge with timber top

