

Place No. 01 Aboriginal Cemetery (2 Mile)



Aboriginal Cemetery gate



Memorial plaque in Aboriginal Cemetery

LOCATION	
Name of Place	Aboriginal Cemetery (2 Mile), Roebourne
Other Name (1)	2 Mile Cemetery
Other Name (2)	2 Mile Burial Ground
Location/Address	
Street Number	
Street Name	Track to 2 Mile
Suburb/Town	Roebourne
Other Locational descriptor (text)	mE 515789 mN 7700955 Longitude 117.1517 Latitude -20.7912

OWNERSHIP & LAND DESCRIPTION				
Owner	Address	Phone/fax	Status	Item No.
Department of Indigenous Affairs	PO Box 7770 Cloisters Square WA 6850			
Reserve No.	Lot/Location No.	Plan/Diagram	Vol/Folio	Item No.
22681	16	P92214	LR3062/322	

LISTING AND ASSESSMENT	
HCWA Reference Number	8659
State Register of Heritage Places:(Y/N)	No
Classified by the National Trust (Y/N)	No
Register of the National Estate (Y/N)	No
Local Town Planning Scheme (Y/N)	
Management Category	A

DESCRIPTION	
Construction Date (1)	1952
Construction Date (2)	
Site Type (Place Type)	Other Built Type

Use(s) of Place	
<i>Original</i>	MONUMENT/CEMETERY: Cemetery
<i>Present</i>	MONUMENT/CEMETERY: Cemetery
<i>Other</i>	
Construction Materials:	
<i>Walls</i>	
<i>Roof</i>	
Condition	Fair
Integrity (how much of the original fabric is intact?):	Evidence of headstones and gravesites remains, memorial intact
Physical Description	
<p>The Aboriginal Cemetery is located on the eastern side of Harding River, on the track heading southwards to 2 Mile from the North West Coastal Highway on the way to Port Hedland. The Aboriginal Reserve (2 Mile) is also located on this track, just to the south of the Cemetery.</p> <p>There are two Law trees, which are associated with initiation rites, located to the north of the cemetery.</p> <p>There is a memorial on a flattened boulder located at the entrance to the burial grounds; this is dedicated to the memory of Roger Soloman and all people buried in or near the Aboriginal Cemetery.</p> <p>The cemetery is overgrown and the wire fence enclosing the cemetery is partially intact. Limited evidence of headstones and gravesites remains.</p>	
History	
<p>Between 1952 and 1972, 159 Aboriginal people were buried at the Aboriginal Cemetery (2 Mile). The people buried here were living at the 2 Mile and 5 Mile reserves in Roebourne at the time of their deaths. However, their traditional country varied and encompassed many areas of the Pilbara, including Roebourne, pastoral stations south and east of Port Hedland and the tablelands of the Chichester and Hamersley Ranges.¹</p> <p>There are several unmarked burials located outside the cemetery which pre-date the 1950s.</p> <p>Roger Solomon, who undertook work to protect and manage the cemetery, passed away in April 1993. It was his wish to be buried in this area on the banks of the Harding River. This led to the cemetery being reopened, extended and upgraded.²</p> <p>Prior to upgrading works at the cemetery, it was recorded that the majority of the graves were simply marked with star pickets or headstones made from sheets of tin. There was only one marble/granite headstone in the cemetery at this time.³ Upgrading works commenced at the cemetery in mid-1994, at which time a fence was erected, a graded car park and access track were established and new trees were planted in the area. An opening ceremony was held on the 8th November that year. The burial ground was formally gazetted as a cemetery at this time.</p> <p>A plaque mounted on a flattened boulder was unveiled at the opening ceremony which listed the names of all the men, women and children who were buried there; the plaque was erected by Robe River Iron Associates. New grave markers were also placed on graves by individuals from the community around this time.⁴</p> <p>Aboriginal people from the local communities are now using the cemetery again.</p> <p>There is only one grave marked with a headstone in the old section; this was erected on Tommy Smith's grave by the owners of Cooya Pooya Station, Harry Gratte and Bruce Paterson. Tommy Smith was a well-respected stockman on the station.</p>	
Archaeology	
<p>There is some potential for archaeology in terms of material culture associated with people buried in the cemetery and from people visiting the area.</p> <p>This is a Registered Aboriginal Site (DAA Site ID 6011). There are also a number of other Registered Aboriginal Sites associated with this location (DAA Site ID 6009 – Law Tree, Closed site; DAA Site ID 11986 – Roebourne Burial).</p>	

SIGNIFICANCE	
Historic theme (s)	1. DEMOGRAPHIC SETTLEMENT & MOBILITY 107 Settlements 4. SOCIAL & CIVIC ACTIVITIES 407 Cultural activities 6. PEOPLE 601 Aboriginal people
Statement of Significance:	

The Aboriginal Cemetery (2 Mile) is highly significant as the burial place of a large number of Aboriginal people from the area. It has particular historical significance for its association with significant Aboriginal leaders, such as Roger Solomon, and with many people who worked on pastoral stations surrounding Roebourne. For Aboriginal people today its social importance is clear and ongoing.

ASSOCIATIONS	
Architect/Designer (1)	
Architect/Designer (2)	
Other Associated Person(s)	Roger Solomon Robe River Iron Associates

MHI Version 1 (1996)	Identified on Review List
MHI Version 2 (1999)	Assessment Undertaken and Place Record Form Created
MHI Review 2013	Entry updated

¹ Information provided by the Roebourne Aboriginal Community, for the commemorative plaque at the cemetery.

² Ibid.

³ DAA Site ID 6011 Management Update Form, January 1994.

⁴ DAA Site ID 6011 Management Update Form, November 1994.