



Aisling Studios 906 Reen Rd Gidgegannup WA 6083 Tel 08 95747 197 Fax 08 95747 279
Juggernaut Holdings Pty Ltd. Trustee as Aisling Trust trading as Smith Sculptors
www.smithsculptors.com e-mail joan@smithsculptors.com
ABN - 1104 0389 967

JANE BROOK PUBLIC OPEN SPACE ARTWORKS

DESIGN FOCUS: 'CELEBRATION OF COUNTRY'

Responding directly to the site as it exists now while remembering the past.

Concept Theme:

Given the sensitivity of the site in relation to Indigenous Heritage and the large area involved, we have designed a signature central concept which would have the facility to further express 'generic' concepts that would embrace complex Indigenous Cultural achievements while also indicating the traditional European daily Time-marker and Calendar.

We believe that the idea of a large **landscape interactive Solar Clock**, would provide a fascinating, educational format in which to celebrate and honour the original inhabitants of this area and the land itself, in its entire history, including European Settlement. If all history is a measure of time, the passage of which marks events and activities we respond to and wish to preserve in memory. This applies to all Cultures throughout human history.

Our concept for a large Solar Clock at Jane Brook is quite complex, as it not only denotes the passing of the hours daily, but has a secondary function which marks the six seasons of the Indigenous Calendar and the four seasons of the European Calendar. This is quite complex to achieve mathematically and would require a high level of on-site survey in order to precisely mark the particular points of reference on the landscape throughout the year. However, the outline basis of this has already been completed.

This highly relevant secondary function of the Solar Clock celebrates and acknowledges the advanced level of Indigenous people's understanding of the natural world around them and how seasons fluxed and waned throughout the year. It also provides a unique opportunity for the observer to visibly compare the seasonal division of the two Cultures and as a consequence, the different approaches to the cultivation and exploitation of the land and its resources.

The Indigenous Calendar proposed, is specifically related to the activities of the local people of this area, and their response to their seasonal life-cycle. These were the Noongar (Whadjuk) seasons in this part of the South West of Australia, which were defined into six segments: from February to the end of the following January:

Bunuru; Djeran; Makuru; Djilba; Kambarang; Birak

This was reflected in nomadic movement and sedentary periods, particularly involving 'hunting and gathering' activities. These would encompass the trapping of fish; marron, frogs, tortoises, bandicoots emu, kangaroo and possum. It also involved the collection of roots: edible bulbs, seeds, blossoms – Wattle; Banksia and various Grevillea, Macrozamia fruits and the bark of the W.A. Christmas Tree, amongst many others in this rich environment, including eggs from water fowl and other birds. It also involved controlled burning to manage the land and environment.

Description

Function of 'Solar Clock/Calendar':

From a practical point of view, the great Central Gnomon, inclined at the exact geodesic of the site, would tell the time extremely accurately throughout the day, in the normal fashion, by way of its **long shadow** falling upon a time marker, indicating true Solar Time. In this instance, the time markers would be natural rocks obtained from the site- by way of construction excavation, sliced in half, with a sawn face, then polished and decorated with appropriate motifs and text, sandblasted into the polish face. The obverse face of the rock would carry a large numeral, denoting the hour of the day, also sandblasted into the natural surface of the rock. The degree of time marking can be as simple or as complicated as required. e.g. does one define the 'quarter' and 'half hours'? (These factors need to be discussed.)

The secondary function of the gnomon, is to tell **the date and time of year**. This is done by the tip of the gnomon, or **nodus** becoming a **shadow pointer**, which would touch a specific rock, incised with relevant images and references -- as with the daily markers. The path of the tip of the shadow describes a complex shape on the ground, called an **analemma** -- we have already done the calculations for this, which we attach.

Please note, that these complex lines do not have to be physically installed on the ground. Of course we would have to survey them on site first and only mark the relevant date points, along the lines, with an appropriate artwork, symbolic of the environment.

As can be seen from the foregoing, a solar clock as proposed provides a fascinating, interactive and educational vehicle, for interested observers of all ages and cultural background. It has the ability, to not only tell the time of day accurately, but also the date and seasons of the year, both Indigenous Australian and European, as well as having the potential to carry as much or as little historical and environmental symbolism as desired. It would have particular relevance to young families and schools in the area and would also provide a haven of solitude and contemplation within the dense fabric of urban development.

Combined with the natural rock, artworks amalgamating images of fauna and flora from this environment, accompanied by explanatory text, produces a truly exciting format, in which every aspect of the natural history of the site, from pre-human habitation up to the present day, can be expressed. All this can be achieved with the minimum of disruption to the natural landscape. In fact we see it as enhancing the environment by focusing on the unique and special elements which gave life and meaning to this place for so many thousands of years, culminating now in this '*Celebration of Land*'.

Further Developments and artwork concepts:

As a further development of the above, we envisage continuing this theme of native rocks which have been sliced and incised with appropriate images and text, being placed anywhere on the site as required. Obviously the shadow of the Gnomon on the Look-out would not physically reach these rocks on distant parts of the site. However, the metaphorical continuity of the theme holds true and would serve as a link back to the main focal point of the Timepiece/Gnomon, thus embracing this large site, conceptually.

Indigenous Astronomy:

It is not generally well appreciated or understood that Indigenous people had an extremely advanced understanding of the night sky, without the aid of a telescope. Their 'naked eye' astronomical observations led them to identify not only the planets of the Solar System, but also, stars, our galaxy itself, nearby companion galaxies, nebulae, comets, meteorites etc. -all to a high level of sophistication, enabling them to use the cycle of astronomical events as aids to their harmonious relationship with the land and its seasons. We have a number of ideas of how we can acknowledge and celebrate this ancient knowledge, probably the oldest known cosmology on Earth.