

documenting the lives of commercial fishermen lost at sea

From: gilwaller@gmail.com

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To: admin@wndhs.org.au, carolep@westnet.com.au, whvmr@westnet.com.au

Dear Sir/Madam

Could you please take a minute to read the attached.

We are putting together a Heritage or Memorial Trail project that ties the coastal communities of Western Australia.

I apologise for this sudden intrusion to your busy schedules but would appreciate very much if you could suggest one or two persons with community spirit and perhaps local knowledge in your Society to assist in gathering the information we need to fulfil this worthy project. Alternatively, could you please consider publishing this request in your Newsletter for your members to consider. ANY help is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Gil Waller, for
James Paratore

“Lady with the Hurricane Lamp”

(WA Fishers Lost at Sea Memorial – FlatSea Memorial Project)

What Inspired Us

“In 1916 two fishing vessels left Port Denison to fish as this was their livelihood. Harold the father and young son Francis in one boat, with elder sons Theodore and Albert in the other. By mid-afternoon with the breeze freshening Harold and young Francis returned to port, leaving brothers Theodore and Albert to do one more drift before heading home. They never returned. For many years their grieving mother Elizabeth each evening would walk to the Port Denison Point and as the sun went down over the horizon, she would light her hurricane lamp in the hope this would one day guide her boys’ home.” They never came home.

Who We Are

We are a committee, formed in late 2021 dedicated to the recognition of the hundreds of fisher men and women who have lost their lives in pursuit of the development and operation of commercial fishing in Western Australia, since early settlement. We are in the process of incorporating an Association that details out objectives and will call for membership shortly.

Seafood caught in the waters of WA have always been an important and integral food source as the colony developed, grew and prospered. Today, thanks to these pioneers we have magnificent, well-managed world class fisheries supplying the population of WA and beyond.

But it came at a price and continues to do so. Throughout the pioneering and development of WA’s fisheries, hundreds have lost their lives and we believe it is high time a memorial is erected to recognise those who have paid the ultimate price and that their stories can be told.

The Project will be in two stages. Firstly, every catastrophe will be researched in detail and the story written describing the circumstance, then listed on a website, so others can learn from the tragedies – This will form part of a “virtual” or digital memorial experience. Secondly, a suitable memorial will be erected somewhere on Western Australia’s coastline for people to visit. This memorial, in conjunction with the web site, will preserve the history and tell the stories. There is also likely to be a memorial trail which links existing memorials together.

We need help

We need help in so many areas. Undertaking the research and writing the stories is an onerous task and we are appreciative of any help and information we can get. Let’s preserve our history and the memory of those who never returned home.

Can you help?

If you can help in any way, we would like to hear from you.

Contact Email: Jamie.para@gmail.com OR fishermemorial@wafic.org.au

James Paratore 0472 786 492



James Paratore

Project Lead