

Name of Place:

La Perouse Monument

Inventory:

6

Current Use and Associated Items: Historic monument. Three flagpoles are aligned to the east wall of the monument approximately two metres from its boundary wall.

Other/Former Uses and Names: Laperouse Monument, La Perouse Memorial, La Pérouse Monument, French Monument. Note the monument was gazetted by NPWS as the La Perouse Monument.

NPWS Item ID SHI ID

<p>Location Plan</p>	<p>Photograph</p> <p>Fig. 6.1 La Perouse Monument in current landscape setting</p>
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CONDITION: **Good** Fair Poor Ruinous Site Only

INTEGRITY : **High** Moderate Low

Physical Description

The La Perouse Monument consists of an approximately 8m high stone obelisk on a stone base surrounded by two wall enclosures. A raised pebble bed is contained by the inner low retaining wall. Surrounding this is a pebbled pathway, trimmed by a low concrete edging. This pathway is surrounded by a lawn bed which in turn is bounded by a rendered and painted sandstone wall. The wall is topped with a row of ridged capping stones. All of the Monument's stone and concrete surfaces have been painted a mid yellow/brown tone, presumably to appear similar to sandstone.

The outer wall supports a cast iron fence barrier approximately one metre high above the stone wall. This fencing has been replaced numerous times following the Monument's erection. An iron gateway to the Monument is positioned in the centre of the eastern facade of the outer wall. Fixed to the top of the obelisk is a brass model of the globe in outline. At its base, below recessed inscriptions is a selection of approximately forty brass ship plates attached to the monument. These are either surface mounted on the base itself or attached to angled concrete mountings. Two in-ground lights are located within the monument grounds – one each in the northeast and southwest corners of the grassed area. A pebbled concrete pathway surrounds the Monument.

Current Views and Condition



Fig. 6.3 Base of the monument highlighting the rings of low walls, gravel paths and lawn surrounding the obelisk.



Fig. 6.4 Detail of the brass globe fixed to the top of the painted obelisk.



Fig. 6.5 Detail of the base of the obelisk showing brass plaques fixed to monument with screws. Some are mounted on angled concrete supports.

Plans and Drawings

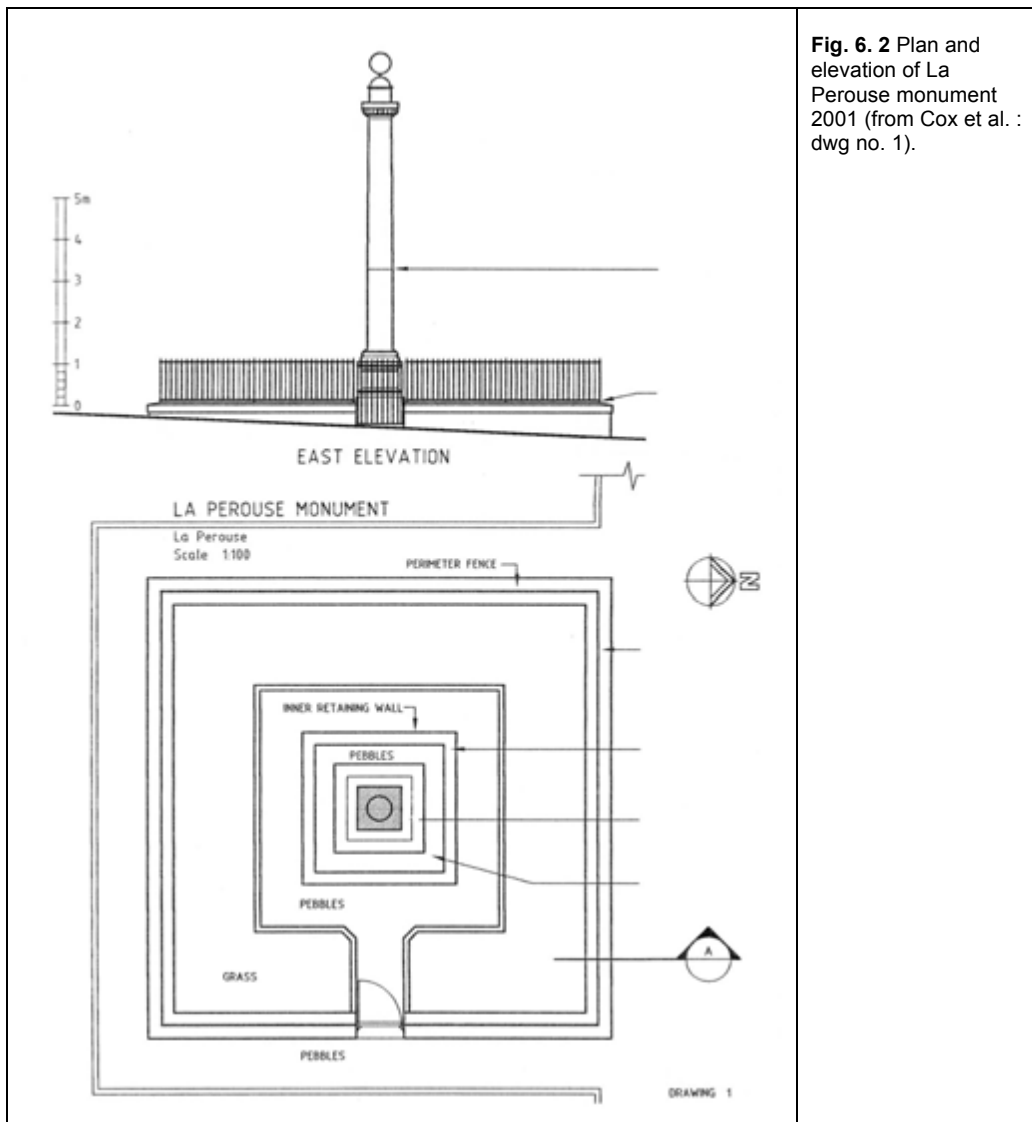


Fig. 6.2 Plan and elevation of La Perouse monument 2001 (from Cox et al. : dwg no. 1).

Chronology of works

26 January 1788	La Pérouse arrives in Botany Bay with his ships the <i>Astrolabe</i> and the <i>Boussole</i> (Tuck: 161).
17 February 1788	Père Receveur dies at Botany Bay. (Kass: 10).
11 March 1788	La Pérouse leaves Botany Bay (Tuck: 161).
Late 1780s	Arthur Phillip has an engraved copper plate installed on a tree near to Père Receveur's grave (Tuck: 162).
1819	By 1819 at least (possibly even from 1802), French visitors to Sydney begin to visit the sites of Lapérouse's stay and the grave of Père Le Receveur (Tuck 161).
March 1824	First recorded visit to the French sites at La Perouse Headland by the crew of the <i>Coquille</i> . Soldiers stationed at the watchtower showed the crew to the grave and garden sites. The crew carves an inscription in a nearby tree to the Père Receveur's grave (Tuck: 161).
26 August 1825	De Bougainville visits sites of Père Receveur's grave and Lapérouse stockade (Kass: 10).
6th September 1825	De Bougainville proposes to erect permanent memorials to both Receveur and Lapérouse and lays the foundation stone for the La Perouse monument (In de Bougainville's diary & in the publication <i>The Governor's Noble Guest</i> . (Source information for the date supplied by Friends of the Laperouse Museum). Monuments financed by de Bougainville (Tuck: 182).
January 1826	Work on the La Perouse Monument commenced. Coins from the reign of Louis XVIII (! 814-24), brother of the executed Louis XVI were laid in the foundation. (FRL Carleton, <i>Terre de France a La Perouse? A Study of the Historical Foundation of the Local Myth 1788-1950</i> , NSW, n.d.: 9)
January 1828	Work of building the La Perouse monument commences under the supervision of Captain Piper, James Macarthur and Major Ovens (Kass: 11) (Tuck: 162). Total cost 83 pounds 18 shillings 5 pence
1829	Works completed and an engraved copper plate is attached to the La Perouse monument and four Norfolk Island pines planted within the monument precinct (Kass: 11). Monument surrounded by a 'neat, low quadrangular parapet'.
1860s	Reports that much of the La Perouse monument inscriptions are illegible (Tuck: 165).
1867	Père Receveur's tomb first enclosed with fencing (Kass: 11).
1876	Both monuments enclosed with painted iron railings. Also stonework was recorded as painted. Some work undertaken/overseen by custom station residents (Tuck: 166).
1877-80	Records show repairs made to monuments annually during this period (Kass : 11).
1880s	The crew of the <i>Le Bruat</i> attach their ship plaque to the La Perouse monument beginning the ritual of plaque tributes (Tuck: 166).
Late 1800s	Photographs show the outer wall with cast iron pickets but not rendered. An undated letter to the <i>Sydney Morning Herald</i> (SMH) describes the monument as 'a column of clear white sandstone, surrounded by a flower garden (carnations chiefly) and enclosed by a dwarf wall surrounded by an iron railing'. The garden was said to be attended by the 'late Mr MacDermort' with a garden walk artistically paved with seashells. (Cox et al., 2001:39-40)
1906	French government provides money for restoration work to both the monument and tomb. Kass pg 11 Suggestion that this money provided for the substitution of a brass globe for the original steel one at the top of the monument (Tuck: 166).
c.1917	By 1917 at least, the monument has altered to consist of two low enclosure walls (Tuck: 166). <i>The monument itself has been painted dark brown, the garden and walk have disappeared, and in place of the dwarf wall there are clumsy looking chains.</i> (Cox et al., SMH clipping n.d.: 40)
c.1920s	Deteriorated railings are replaced with anchor chain supported by pylons on the perimeter walls. Later the perimeter walls collapse under the weight and are replaced again (Tuck: 166).
November 1937	La Perouse headland area gazetted as the La Perouse Monument Reserve. Trustees appointed (Tuck: 162).
1958	Renovation work undertaken on Père Receveur's tomb. Concreted surround and new iron railings installed (LPMT: 19 Sept 1958 AM).
1964	An ironstone pathway is constructed between the two French sites (Tuck: 190).
1967	Precinct gazetted as 'La Perouse Monument Historic Site' and classified 'Historic Zone' under the newly established N.S.W. NP&WS Act 1967. (NSW PWD: 3) (Tuck: 162).

1974	National Trust of Australia (N.S.W.) listed as 'classified' the landmarks of La Perouse Monument Historic Site under 'Botany Bay entrance' (NSW PWD: 4).
1988	Monuments officially incorporated into the Botany Bay National Park in 1988 (Tuck: 162).

Historical Images

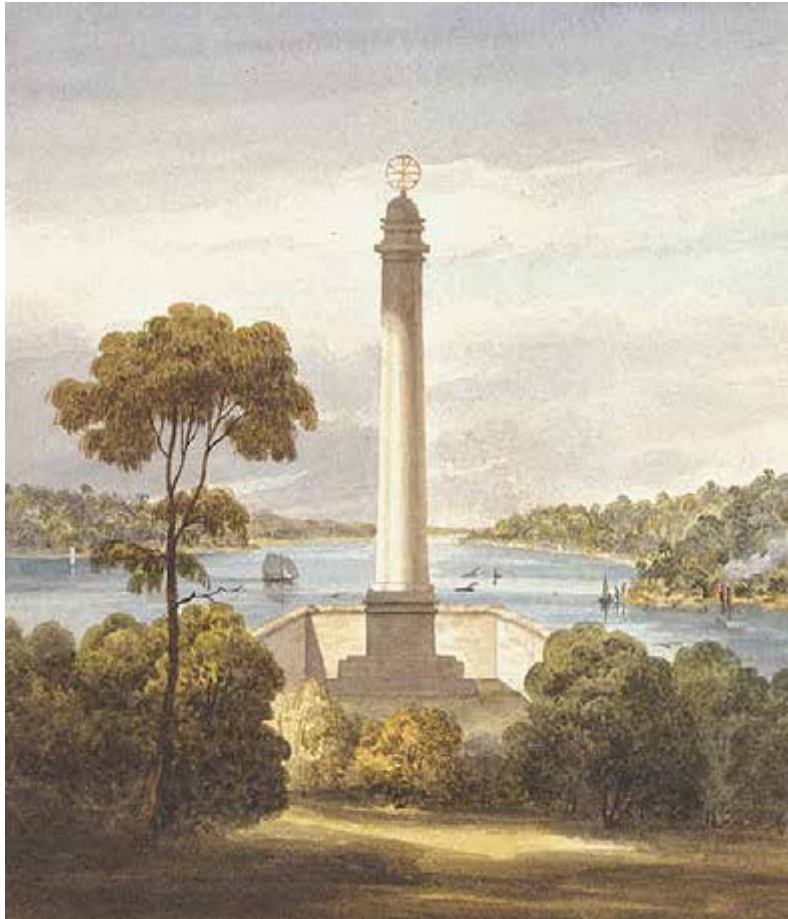


Fig. 6.6 Watercolour of La Perouse Monument by Richard Jones (c.1830s).

SLNSW ML PXA 972

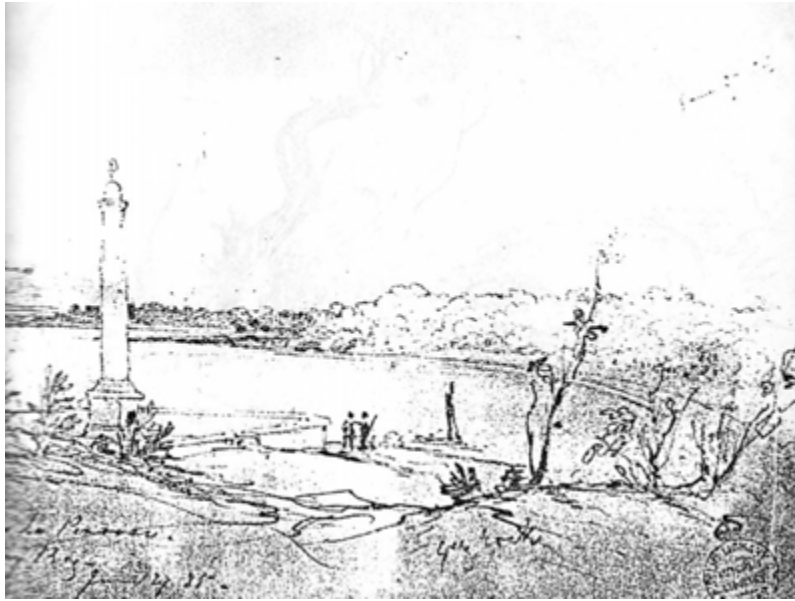


Fig. 6.7 Sketch of Monument by Conrad Martens (1835).

SLNSW ML - ML
SPF/ZPXC 391



Fig. 6.8 Image of Monument depicting un-rendered stone coursing of enclosure wall. Date unknown.

SLNSW ML - GPO 1 -
18318



Fig. 6.9 La Perouse Monument. The sandstone coursing of the enclosure wall and its capping is visible. The iron fencing on the wall has a straight profile. Date unknown.

SLNSW ML SPF8



Fig. 6.10 Distant view of La Perouse Monument from 1876 (time of the laying of the submarine telegraph cable).

SLNSW ML GPO 1 - 05256

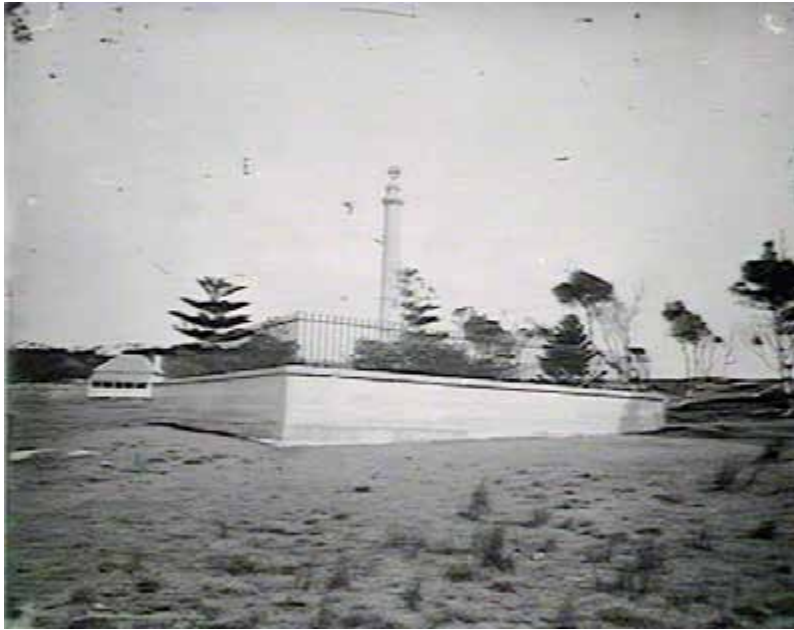


Fig. 6.11 View of Monument from 1876 (time of the laying of the submarine telegraph cable). The iron fencing on the wall has a straight profile.

SLNSW ML d1-05255.



Fig. 6.12 La Perouse Monument c.1900.

SLNSW ML PXE 711/174



Fig. 6.13 View of the La Perouse Monument with Cable Station building in the distance. Tentatively dated 1906-1917 (Tuck: 174).

SLNSW ML SPF



Fig. 6.14 La Perouse Monument February 1920. Note flagpoles and fencing with scalloped profile.

SLNSW ML GPO 1-14146



Fig.6.15 La Perouse Monument with scalloped profile fencing (could be anchor chain supported on wall by pylons). July 1924.

SLNSW ML GPO 1 - 18695



Fig. 6.16 French sailors photographed at the La Perouse Monument. Flagpole in foreground to the right. Fencing has scalloped profile and appears to be painted a dark tone. Date unknown.

SLNSW ML - Home and Away - 21037

Item name: La Perouse Monument		Inventory No. 6
Summary Statement of Significance		
<p>The cultural heritage value of the La Perouse Monument is as a symbol of the Lapérouse Expedition that is associated with the ongoing relationship between France and Australia, which is an intangible value of State and to a lesser extent national, significance value.</p> <p>The loss of the Lapérouse expedition in the Pacific drew the attention of French mariners to their last known anchorage and it became a site of pilgrimage to monuments erected in the memory of the expedition. The funding of the French monument proposed by Bougainville during his 1825 expedition to the South Pacific was an intensely personal expression of the regard for the Lapérouse Expedition held by the officers of the French expedition ships, who collected money among themselves to raise the monument. The globe at the top of the monument refers to the extent of the travels of the expedition.</p> <p>The La Perouse Monument and Père Le Receveur's grave have come to be recognised as symbols of French/Australian goodwill that continues to be celebrated at the headland with annual events as well as a tradition of visits from French sea captains bearing the gift of their ship's plaques.</p>		
Risk Assessment		
<p>High H Medium M Low L None N</p> <p>Structural Risk</p> <p>Fire Risk</p> <p>Wind Loading</p> <p>Visitor Safety Issues</p> <p>Other</p>	<p>Risk Assessment Summary</p> <p>L</p> <p>L</p> <p>M</p> <p>L</p>	<p>The La Perouse Monument has low levels of storm and fire risk. The Monument has withstood many years of severe weather and appears to have low levels of structural risk. There are no obvious visitor safety issues in the vicinity.</p>
Management Objective:		
<p>Retain and conserve, enhance the physical item and site if possible and facilitate the longstanding tradition of ships plaques being displayed around the monument. Encourage and facilitate events based on the monument that celebrate and reinforce Franco-Australian relations.</p>		
Conservation Policy		
General		

- The La Perouse Monument should be treated in accordance with the guidelines and principles of the Burra Charter of Australia ICOMOS.
- The setting of the La Perouse Monument as the landmark feature on a rise in the La Perouse headland should be retained and if possible enhanced by replanting of appropriate vegetation, similar to the historic Norfolk Island Pines.
- Minimum standards of maintenance and repair should be maintained in weatherproofing; security; and essential maintenance.
- Reconstruction of known historic features could be considered if such works would enhance the presentation of the monument.
- New fabric may be introduced to the La Perouse Monument for sound practical reasons.
- Where possible any new work should be low impact and reversible. Any new work should respect the period and character of the monument.

Adaptive Re-Use Opportunities

N/A

Catch-up Works

Issues associated with the fixing of plaques on the monument are:-

- ***Damage to the monument fabric from the fixing methods,***
- ***The plaques are all different shapes and sizes,***
- ***Placing has been haphazard in the past.***

Immediate

Option to display plaques

Select a preferred option to effectively accept and display ships plaques.

The options that have identified so far from least to most preferred are:

- a) Leave as is;
- b) Leave the monument as is but in future place plaques only on the existing low wall (plinth), surrounding monument. An even angled capping stone/concrete piece to be applied to the wall top to provide an angle for runoff.
- c) Clean up the monument a bit: remove small plinths at the base; at a minimum remove plaques from faces of monument that have inscriptions. Retain only the oldest plaques fixed to the monument. All other plaques should be fixed on a low wall as above.

All of the above options are acceptable from a heritage point of view and there is no heritage reason why the most preferred option e). should not be proceeded with as soon as possible, keeping in mind that it is desirable that the placing of the plaques on the plinth should be done so that people can see details of the plaques.

Available Space for Display

If there is not enough room on a low perimeter wall within the current fenceline, consider constructing an inner perimeter wall. There is also the option of an outer perimeter wall that could incorporate planter boxes with deep soil for four new trees (See tree recommendation below) outside the current fenceline. The treed area could then be fenced by an outer perimeter wall to provide security for the plaques.

Guidelines for Acceptance of New Plaques

Set in place **guidelines** for the formal acceptance of new plaques. The guidelines should include:

- A request to limit the size of plaques within a specified range.
- A standardised record should be compiled by the museum of the details of the Captain and ship, ship's name, port of origin, ports of call, reason for visiting Australia, tonnage, trade etc and comments about the occasion, why La Perouse and Lapérouse are important to them, what it means to lay the plaques etc.
- A photograph of the person/s and ship if possible, and some history of the ship.
- A digital recording of the person/s with a brief interview for subsequent interpretation would be ideal.

Short Term (1-2 Years)

- Consult with the French consuls office about the preferred display options for plaques.
- Commission a suitably qualified and experienced professional (expert) to undertake a paint scrape analysis to investigate the condition of the original monument surface and consider the possibility of returning the monument to its original surface.
- The expert should also identify any plaque fixings that will damage the monument in the long term and suggest ways to remove and relocate those plaques to limit damage.
- The expert should identify the oldest plaques that should remain on the monument and refix/ relocate them as required to minimise long term deterioration of fabric.
- The expert should recommend a fixing method for future and re-fixed plaques that will minimise long-term damage to the monument and the fence plinth.
- The expert should also recommend a long term maintenance schedule for the monument

- Consider re-planting four trees around the monument, reflecting the historic plantings, but outside the fenceline. Replace the Norfolk Island Pines with a hardy coastal plant such as Norfolk Island Hibiscus or a species with a connection to the French and/or La Perouse.
- The trees can be located in planter beds incorporated in a wall to assist with the display of plaques if necessary.

Medium Term (1-5 years)

- If decision is made to repaint monument make sure to match colour more closely to sandstone, assuming that sandstone was the original material.
- Repair/replace current in-ground site illumination using new technology if possible.
- Consider planting four pine trees (or another sympathetic species) as seen in historic photographs outside the Monument fence.
- Repaint fencing with an appropriate dark-tone metal paint to reduce visual impact of fencing – black is recommended but other dark tones can be considered.

Long term

- No long term works required.

Maintenance

Inspection: - Make a thorough inspection of the item at three (3) monthly intervals and identify maintenance and repair issues.

- Check site lighting is operational.
- Check storm water will flow away from the monument complex.
- Check that grass/vegetation is not growing into storm water system or against building walls/footings.
- Check fencing for rust and treat as required.

Fire Protection:-Ensure vegetation and other material that could create a fire hazard is removed from the vicinity of the monument and is not permitted to accumulate.

Security:- Maintain/upgrade lighting system to monuments and surrounds. Maintain metal fencing and gate around monument.

Archaeology:- Ensure potential in-situ archaeological deposits are not disturbed by ad-hoc sub-surface excavation. Any substantive excavation proposed in areas of archaeological sensitivity should be discussed with the NPWS Site Manager who will advise on the appropriate strategy.

Interpretive opportunities

Significant opportunities exist to enhance the appreciation of the historic monument through the provision of interpretation information at the site. Currently no interpretation signage or information is available at the immediate location. This could be provided in the form of a self-guided tour/information sheet available at the Laperouse Museum, or through the installation of interpretation panels located inside the Monument fencing (to reduce risk of vandalism).

Consideration could also be given to constructing a plinth within the monument fence for mounting the new plaques as they arrive. Alternatively a special illuminated path to the monument that includes weatherproof boxes with glazed lids at the path level that could house the new plaques as they arrive in a linear form. The boxes could also include interpretation including the names of the ships, their captains and their business in Australia. Such an installation would lead visitors along the path.