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Sent: Thursday, 1 October 2009 3:09 PM
To: Standing Committee, Community Development & Justice
Subject: Lake Ballard Sculptures

Principal Research Officer
C D and J Committee
Legislative Assembly
Parliament House.

I Have noted the extent and nature of the inquiry and offer you the following thoughts and information.

I am not involved in the arts community nor would i be considered an artistic person however i do enjoy and respect the value that art brings to the quality of our lives.

my partner and I have been to Lake Ballard Sculptures four times over the past 5 years .

The first time i went with a male friend as we were in the area on a bush camping trip. we purchased fuel and stores in Menzies. My partners first visit to the site was with a women friend.They drove up from Perth just to see the Sculptures and stayed in Menzies at the Hotel. I then visited the site again with my partner as i was passing through the area following the Golden Pipeline tourist route on a bush camping trip.Again I purchased fuel and stores in Menzies and i would not have done so but for the trip to the sculptures. The last trip was this year when my partner and i took a friend from Kalgoorlie up to see the Sculptures and returned to Kalgoorlie that day.We purchased some food at the garage and on our return from the site had lunch at the Menzies Hotel.

We find the sculptures fascinating and see something different in them on every visit. We have noted the gradual improvements to the site ie toilets and tables and shelters and BBQs and commend whoever is providing them because on ever occasion i have been there we have had morning or afternoon tea and on one occasion lunch. on my first visit there were no facilities and whist i coped being of a mature age the new services are welcome.

My observation whist on site is that those who visit are also mature people. There may be some opportunity to promote the site to a younger generation.

I was delighted to see maintenance work being undertaken on three statues on my last visit. This work was being done by WA Museum staff and Shire of Menzies staff.

I was not aware the the full vision for the site had not been implemented and would like to see that plan however even without that opportunity if the further work follows the same theme then it would only add to the sites value.

I have strongly recommended a visit to the site to numerous friends and i know several have been there but i do not know what the economic contribution of their visit would have been to Menzies.

Will i visit again. Certainly its just so interesting although some of my friends would not be able to go again because of the distance.

If the Government is able to fund other projects of this or a similar kind out in our hinterland then i would encourage it. Its not just the value to the local community its also what it provides to the wider

populace. The journey to the site from Perth and return is in itself an enjoyable experience and would not on two of my families visits have occurred without the attraction of the Statues. They also make for wonderful photo opportunities.

After the original launch of the project there has been very little promotion of the site, or i haven't seen it, and i suspect that a lot of visits to the site are occurring through word of mouth promotion.

It must be difficult to impossible for the Menzies Shire to calculate what it as a Shire gets from the Statutes in an economic sense even though the Garage and Hotel benefited from my visit. That alone may not justify the Shire ratepayers as a whole paying heavily to maintain the site .If the businesses in Town would close or provide a lower level of service without the tourist income then that may be a reason for the wider Ratepayer base to contribute. As a retired Certified Practising Accountant (CPA) i can see that the Shire would need Govt support and should be intimately involved in the statutes care and maintenance provided it is serious support and not just a opportunity for the Govt to shift the cost of a wonderful project that has State wide value on to a small local community.

To get to the site there is economic benefit to many other areas. In my case i went to the site on one occasion from Perth via Mount Magnet and I spent money there and in Sandstone and Laverton and after my visit in Kalgoorlie and in Merriden.For every visit to the site on other occasions we spent a lot of money in Kalgoorlie and in Southern Cross and in one occasion in Coolgardie.And of course in Perth to get started on the journey. May i also add that the friend i took there from Kalgoorlie this year returned to Perth by rail on the Prospector. And who wouldnt visit the famous Ora Banda Inn before or after visiting the Statutes,its on the way there.

I hope this rambling series of comments are of value to you and i trust the statutes will be there for all to see for very long time .I also trust your enquiry will uncover a way to do similar wonderful things elsewhere.

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Max Williams