

FLINDERS PLAQUE UNVEILED AT STREAKY BAY

INTERESTING ADDRESS BY HON.
A. L. McEWEN, M.L.C.

Approximately 150 people, well representative of the district, were present at the Streaky Bay Post Office corner at 2 o'clock last Thursday afternoon to witness the unveiling of the Matthew Flinders Memorial Plaque. It was affixed to the obelisk which bears a plaque in memory of Peter Nuyts, who visited these waters in the Gulden Zeepaard in 1627.

Prior to the unveiling ceremony by Mr. W. J. Williams (chairman of the District Council of Streaky Bay), Mr. R. Fleming (district clerk of the council) introduced the Hon. A. L. McEwen, M.L.C., who gave a most interesting address on the life and history of Flinders. Mr. McEwen read extracts he had secured from an Aline history on Flinders by Frederick Morrison.

Matthew Flinders was born in 1774 and commenced his adventurous voyages at the age of 16, despite his parents' wishes that he should study medicine. Although he died on February 5, 1814, at the early age of 40, he had contributed a great deal to history during his life. He was a young man of unbounded popularity. His achievements in coastal exploration, and his accurate mapping and depthing of waters whilst on this work, won him outstanding recognition.

He reached Fowler's Bay in January, 1802, and on February 5, perceiving this bay, he called it Streaky Bay on account of its streaky appearance, but decided not to land.

Flinders was detained as a prisoner on Mauritius for seven years, during which he wrote "A Voyage to Terra Australis."

"It is time we recognised those who did so much in our early history," Mr. McEwen said.

In his remarks, Mr. Williams thanked his colleagues for the honour of unveiling the plaque. He spoke highly of the small band of pioneers who endured the hardships of these parts in the early days, so that we are able to enjoy the up-to-date facilities of today.

He expressed the district's indebtedness to the Historical Memorials Committee for preparing and presenting the plaque, and thanked the Minister for his address. If Flinders could return and sail up the bay he would not be proud of what had been done on the foreshore of Streaky Bay, Mr. Williams declared. In the early days the foreshore areas had been sold for private enterprise and now the town

was "hamstrung" in its efforts towards civic beautification.

Addressing the children and alluding to the plaque Mr. Williams said, "Give it reverence, protection and respect always."

After the unveiling had been performed, and as the ceremony concluded, Mr. Fleming read out the inscription on the plaque:

Matthew Flinders, R.N.,
1774-1814.

Commander of H.M. sloop 'Investigator.'

On 5th February, 1802, named Streaky Bay, the water being discoloured in streaks; Point Brown, Cape Bauer, Point Westall and Olive Island, after members of the ship's complement.

Unveiled 20 May, 1948.

Among visitors present were the Hon. E. H. Edmonds, M.L.C., Dr. L. W. Jeffries (Inspector-General of Hospitals), and Mr. G. E. Scantlebury (secretary of the Hospitals' Department).