

To: The South Australian Heritage Committee

From: Senior Historical Architect

Subject: REGISTER NOMINATION REPORT  
- PORT GERMEIN JETTY SITE,  
PORT GERMEIN

Date: 30 June 1982

Summary

This report has been prepared as a result of a Ministerial enquiry about the progress of a public nomination on this item. The limited staff resources had not allowed its evaluation to proceed. The jetty has been damaged during the last two winters by storms and the extreme end is in poor condition and has been isolated. The Marine and Harbors Department has been discussing the options for the jetty which basically are: 1. Complete restoration. 2. Partial restoration and partial demolition. 3. Complete demolition. No decision has been reached. The Coastal Management Branch is involved in some minor landscaping and development work near the jetty's terminus on shore. This nomination has been initiated by the public.

Historically, the Port Germein Jetty site is significant for its association with the agricultural development of the district and the resulting maritime activity. The jetty is intimately linked with Port Germein itself and its very layout as well.

Architecturally, the Port Germein Jetty site is not so much physically notable as it is uniquely notable. The combination of the railway sheds and the remains of the longest jetty in the Southern Hemisphere create a quality not visually appreciated.

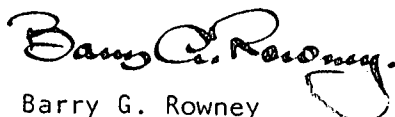
Environmentally, the Port Germein Jetty is a dominant landmark which despite its size and uniqueness is not out of character with the town.

The Integrity of the Port Germein Jetty site has been compromised by disuse and storms but its basis and associations are intact.

The Jetty itself is listed on the National Trust Register as a Recorded Listing.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Port Germein Jetty site be placed on the Register of State Heritage Items and be categorized H2, H3, A2, A3. The site is defined on the attached plan.



Barry G. Rowney

IN:JD

South Australian Heritage Act 1978-80	Register of State Heritage Items ITEM EVALUATION SHEET Buildings and Structures	
	Item. PORT GERMEIN JETTY PORT GERMEIN	

Age 1881 Completed	Theme	Office 6431-10176
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Period 1852-1883	Subject TRADE & COMMERCE - REGULATION TRANSPORT - MARITIME, LAND	Region Upper North
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Building Type Jetty	Style LINEAR	Status N.Tr. (R)
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Qualitative Data		Grading				
Component	Comment	E	VG	AG	FP	NA
<u>History</u>						
1. Context:	Built in 1880, the Jetty served as an outlet for shipping the district's produce and is a notable landmark. Previously wheat for export had to be transferred by lighter to sailing ships lying at anchorage on high tide. The port became a popular holiday place for people from Port Pirie and a stopping point for the 'Moonta' on its regular gulf trip, and can be seen in the context of the region's development.		*			
2. Person/Group:	Associated with the Hon. John Darling, member of Parliament, who promoted its construction.			*		
3. Event:	1880's - Expansion of agricultural endeavours in the district.	*				
	1883 - Jetty extended by 400 feet, making a total length of 5,459 feet, longest in the Southern Hemisphere at the time.		*			
	1953 - Severe storm damaged the jetty. Limited repairs done.			*		
	1961 - Port Germein no longer gazetted as a harbour.			*		
<u>Architecture</u>						
4. Architect/ Builder: Engineer:	Not yet established. Mr. J. Wishart Not yet established.					* * *
5. Design:	Strictly functional, long straight run with earth and stone causeway approach, cinical beacon at very end.			*		
6. Construction:	Earth and stone causeway approach, jetty built of timber with 'H' shape pile frames. Heavy brackets support beams and flooring.			*		
7. Interior:	Not applicable.					*
8. Representation:	One of several on the coast, but longest existing traditional jetty remaining.		*			

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Component	Comment	Grading				
		E	VG	AG	FP	NA
<u>Environment</u>						
9. Continuity:	Flat low lying area both on and off shore, low scrub, street running parallel to beach with scattering of buildings, long horizontal nature of the jetty is surprisingly compatible, integral part of the town layout with former railway right of way. Now a tree avenue in line with the wharf.		*			
10. Local Character:	Refer to above statement, flat coastal strip backed by hills very evident, in the broader context the jetty is not as vital an element.			*		
11. Landmark:	Long man-made incursion in a mainly natural setting, hard form contrasts beach and hills, evident from many kilometres off.		*			
<u>Integrity</u>						
12. Alterations:	Extended 400 feet in 1883, good deal of the flooring has been replaced, some beams also replaced, rail lines removed but some retained as an edge.			*		
13. Condition:	Structurally sound for over half its length end portion severely damaged by storms, some flooring needs replacing, approach eroded.			*		
14. Compatibility:	Disused now except for fishing.					*

Supplementary Information

**Adaptation:** By its very nature the jetty would be difficult to 'reuse' except as an interpretative devise. The end beacon should be maintained to show its original length. The storm damaged portions should be allowed to remain and deteriorate naturally but should be isolated from the sound portion. As much of the jetty as possible should be maintained.

**Interpretation:** The jetty has an obvious visual passive role but could, along with the jetty sheds, have an active interpretative role as part of a display. An interpretative plan should be formulated to co-ordinate any activities in relation to the site. Further study on the site is also necessary.

**Current Situation:** Refer to the 'Summary' on the Cover Sheet. The jetty is owned by the Marine Harbors Board.

Evaluated By	Ivar Nelsen Consultant Architect	Iris Iwanicki Register Historian	Date
Reviewed By	Ivar Nelsen		Date
South Australian Heritage Committee Categorization			Date

I.E.S./D3/211081

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Age 1880's Unconfirmed	Theme	Office 6431-10176																																																																	
Period 1883-1914	Subject TRANSPORT - MARITIME, LAND	Region Lower North																																																																	
Building Type Railway Sheds	Style UTILITARIAN	Status -																																																																	
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1. Context:	Refer to assessment for Jetty																																																																		
2. Person/Group:	Refer to assessment for Jetty																																																																		
3. Event:	Refer to assessment for Jetty. Archival photos indicate the sheds were built after the construction of the actual jetty.																																																																		
<u>Architecture</u>																																																																			
4. Architect/ Builder: Engineer:	Not yet established - probably S.A. Railways Not yet established. Not yet established " " "																																																																		
5. Design:	Two corrugated iron sheds with semi circular roofs adjacent each other, common wall, elevated timber floor on one side, sliding doors on side.																																																																		
6. Construction:	Timber frame with timber and iron rod roof trusses, clad in corrugated iron.																																																																		

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South Australian Heritage Act 1978-80

Register of State Heritage Items  
ITEM EVALUATION SHEET  
Buildings and Structures

Item PORT GERMEIN JETTY RAILWAY SHEDS  
PORT GERMEIN

Component	Comment	Grading				
		E	VG	AG	FP	NA
<u>Integrity</u>						
12. Alterations:	Some iron removed from walls, rails removed, one end closed off with corrugated iron, alterations obvious and reversible.		*			
13. Condition:	Structurally sound, cladding badly rusted.			*		
14. Compatibility:	Vacant				*	

Supplementary Information

Adaptation: The form and most detailing should be restored to the buildings. Internal and recessive facade adaptation should be allowed, the original openings should be utilized and external signage kept to a minimum.

Interpretation: Refer to statement on assessment for jetty. This building would provide a very good venue for an interpretative display relating to the jetty and the economic situation resulting in its construction. This could be combined with a shelter shed type of function. A commercial function could also be tolerated. An interpretative plan should specify a future for these sheds.

Current Situation: Refer to the 'Summary' on the Cover Sheet.

Evaluated By	Ivar Nelsen Consultant Architect	Iris Iwanicki Register Historian	Date
Reviewed By	Ivar Nelsen		Date
South Australian Heritage Committee Categorization			Date

I.E.S./D3/211081

HISTORICAL RESEARCH:      PORT GERMEIN JETTY

The jetty at Port Germein was built in 1880 to provide a shipping point for wheat grown in the district. It was also built against a background of developing rivalry between the residents around Port Germein and Port Pirie, and its subsequent history reflected the competition between the new township of Port Germein and its more established neighbour.

In January 1879 sales of the township blocks at Port Germein commenced following Government survey, and by the end of the year shops, hotels and homes were built. By the time the road through Back Creek Gorge was completed in December 1879, a number of major wheat growing firms were setting up agencies in Port Germein. After petitioning the State Government<sup>1</sup> and the successful advocacy by John Darling, Port Germein's jetty was approved and built by Mr. J. Wishart for a sum of £12,000. Sugar gum (*Euca. cladocalyx*) from the Wirrabara forest was used for the first 4,600 feet from the shore despite the specification that the piles were to be of "blue gum or boxwood from the Wirrabara Forest, "jarrah or karri". Work proceeded at both ends of the jetty, with jarrah from Western Australia used at the seaward end.

After the jetty was opened on July 17th, 1881, and handed over to the Marine Board in March 1882, a further extension of 400 feet was found necessary. This was also built by Mr. J. Wishart at a cost of \$5,000. When completed in March 1883, the jetty's length totalled 5,459 feet. At the time it is reputed to have been one of the longest jettys in the Southern Hemisphere.

A 3'6" railway gauge was laid along the jetty to facilitate the loading of the wheat, and an engine replaced horses in 1884 for this purpose.<sup>2</sup> Efforts to attract improvements to the jetty's berthing facilities were thwarted by the fact that there was no distinction up until 1884 between the wheat shipped from Port Pirie and Port Germein. However, once the amount of wheat shipped from Port Germein could be identified and used as a reason for improving the jetty area, the local Progress Association had the satisfaction of seeing two berths dredged on both sides of the jetty. In 1886 the east side of the jetty was dredged to 20 feet low water depth for a distance of 300 feet, followed by similar dredging on the western side in 1887. After 1890, these berths gradually silted up, with local initiative financing dredging in 1932 when the Harbours Board proved reluctant to do so.

The jetty was the scene of much activity between 1881 to 1934. Not only ~~did the~~ windjammers call there after a 2,600 mile journey from the other side of the world for their cargo of wheat, but also the domestic "tea and sugar boat", the Moonta, called with provisions and collected wool to take to Port Adelaide. The boat ran a regular Gulf trip, calling on Port Lincoln, Pt. Pirie, Port Augusts, and Port Germein.

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1. Petition No. 43 of 1880, signed by 242 inhabitants of Baroota, Telowie, Napperby, Appila, Wongarr, Booleroo, Winininowie, Willowie and Germein.
  2. G. Eardley: Port Germein Jetty Railway in Australian Historical Society Bulletin No. 436 provides details.

Members of the week long cruise took a lively interest in the windjammers berthed alongside the jetty. By 1934 there were not many of these beautiful ships left. Most of those that survived sailed under the Finnish flag and several were used as training ships for naval novices. The first sailing ship berthed at Pt. Germein jetty in March 1884. During 1888 a total of 19 sailing ships were loaded and despatched, including the Airlee (1500 tons), the Argus (1543 tons) the Ravola (1493 tons) Cape Wrack (1198 tons) and the City of Lucknow (1193 tons). After dredging in 1892, the jetty accommodated its first four masted barques, the Earl of Dunmore (2205 tons), followed by others. One notable loading in the history of South Australian shipping occurred at Pt. Germein in 1900, when the DUMFERLINE (2902 tons) loaded 158,084 bushels of wheat, laving port on a draught of 22 feet 8 inches.

In March 1904, the barque Santo was loaded with 10,375 bags of wheat in 30 working hours, a significant feat of human industry in days when mechanical loading devices were at a minimum on the wharves. Elderly residents recall also the visit by the windjammer Kobenhaven in 1924. Later lost at sea, the ship had a complement of 36 cadets on board, and her five masts carried a total of 40 sails. The sail power was boosted by a 640 horsepower diesel engine, and she carried a total of 58,000 bags of wheat. Today, the jetty is used by local fishermen and holidaymakers.

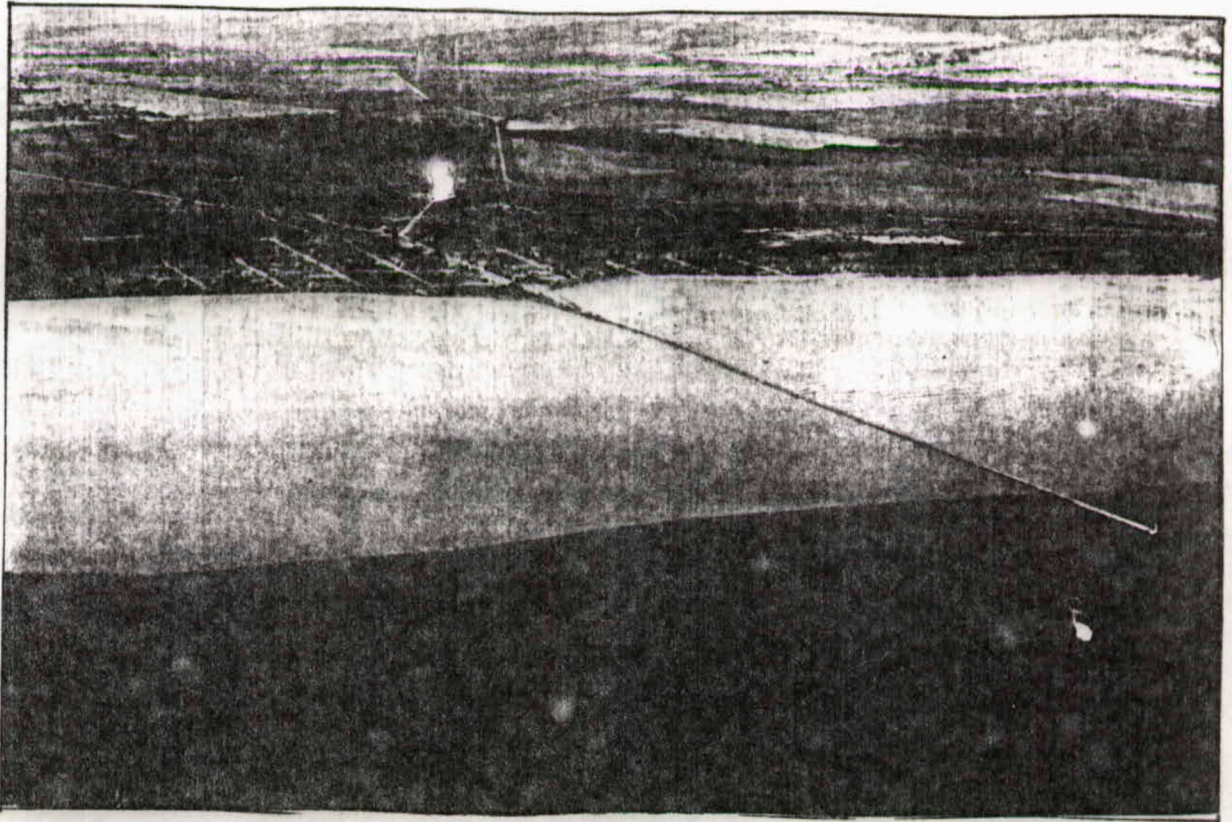
The jetty's significance can be related to a number of historical themes, all of which are important to the State and reflect its development during the first 3 decades of the 20th century. These include regional development, the exploitation and utilization of natural resources, transportation patterns, past trends in tourism and leisure which have virtually disappeared, and the technologies and crafts which supported the marketing system.

Sources:

- S.A.A. Parliamentary Reports 67, 67A, 89, 127 of 1881.  
G. Eardley: Port Germein Jetty Tramway, Aust. Railways Historical Soc. Bull. No. 436.  
R.J.R. Donley: The Rise of Port Pirie, Pt. Pirie, 1976.  
D.W. Meinig: On the Margins of the Good Earth, Lond, 1963.  
R. Purvis: Please Sir, Let's Do History, Nadjuri, Australia, 1978.  
Nancy Robinson: Reluctant Harbour, Nadjuri, Australia, 1976.

Iris Iwanicki  
Register Historian

II:JD  
29/6/82



1975 AERIAL PHOTO



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF THE RELUCTANT HARBOUR BY NANCY ROBINSON  
OUR APOLOGIZES FOR THE QUALITY.



port germain

railway sheds

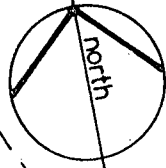
approximate line of shallow water

boundary of nomination

beacon

200m  
200m

# port germain jetty site



0 500m

