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**NAME:** Coolootoo Shepherd's Hut  
(originally part of Old Canowie Station)

**PLACE NO.:** 25045

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**Address:** Belalie East

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## **SUMMARY OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE:**

### **Description:**

The Coolootoo Shepherd's Hut was part of the Old Canowie Station run and is at some distance from the Homestead. It is a square stone hut with a timber framed and timber paling roof, presently covered with corrugated metal sheet roofing. Two walls are intact while the chimney and the two other walls have partially collapsed with the stone remaining on site. The roof is partially intact.

### **Statement of Heritage Significance:**

The Coolootoo Shepherds' Hut, which was part of Old Canowie Station, is significant as a remnant of South Australia's early pastoral history in the Upper North. As a shepherd's hut it is remarkable for its use of stone (although now in disrepair) and as an example of the importance of shepherding prior to the introduction of permanent stock and boundary fencing in the pastoral industry in Australia. The Old Canowie Station, (recommended as a State Heritage Place in the Upper North Heritage Survey of 2000, but not entered in the Register), dates back to the 1850s and is intact and in good condition. The Coolootoo Shepherd's Hut is evidence of the size and operation of such pastoral properties in the nineteenth century.

### **Relevant Criteria (Under Section 16 of the *Heritage Places Act 1993*):**

- (a) **It demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history.**  
The Coolootoo Shepherd's Hut demonstrates the importance of the shepherd and shepherding to the early Australian pastoral industry. Shepherding of flocks provided one of the cheapest means of managing and protecting sheep in the colonies prior to the transition to fences. During the early years of the colony shepherds contributed enormously to the growth of pastoralism, and enabled the expansion of the wool industry. However by the 1870s, with the widespread fencing of stock enclosures, shepherding had become a thing of the past.
- (b) **It has rare, uncommon or endangered qualities that are of cultural significance.**  
The Coolootoo Shepherd's Hut is important for its use of stone which is an uncommon construction material for shepherds' huts in Australia. Many were constructed of timber slabs or wattle and daub. The use of stone reflects the local availability of materials, construction skills and cultural influences present in the area of the Upper North of South Australia.

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that Coolootoo Shepherd's Hut (originally part of Old Canowie Station), at Belalie East, be **provisionally entered** as a State Heritage Place in the South Australian Heritage Register.

**Relevant Criteria: (a) & (b)**

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## **ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE VALUE:**

### **Criterion (a)**

#### **It demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history.**

Shepherding of flocks provided one of the cheapest means of managing and protecting sheep in the Australian colonies prior to the transition to fences. As Pickard has noted: 'shepherds contributed enormously to the growth of the colonies, and were a cornerstone of the foundation of the wool industry that dominated Australian exports for almost two hundred years' (Pickard, 2008, p.76).

Shepherding in Australia in the early days of the pastoral industry involved a shepherd counting the sheep out of the fold, taking the sheep out to pasture and watching them during the day. The hutkeeper was employed to do the cooking, move the hurdles (moveable usually timber, freestanding fences) every few days, count the sheep back into the fold in the evening, and watch the sheep in the yard or fold overnight. It was a practice brought from the British Isles but dating back to antiquity (Pickard 2008, p.58). Shepherds were employed to guard against 'theft by Aborigines, predation by dingoes, and to prevent sheep wandering off' (Pickard 2007, p.143).

It was common for a married couple to be employed as shepherd and hutkeeper, with children helping as well. In South Australia women and children looked after flocks in the early 1850s (Hawker and Linn, 1992, p.124). Shepherding also employed Aboriginal people (Pickard, 2008, p.55).

Preachers from the Bush Mission Society used to visit shepherds huts across the pastoral lands, including Canowie. The following account is given in the *Advertiser* in 1861: 'On entering the huts he first began by conversing with the shepherd on religious matters, and afterwards engaged in prayer with them'. However often the preachers encountered staunch resistance from the shepherds and their wives ('The Bush Mission Society', 21.2.1861, p.3). Also visiting the shepherd were those selling vegetables, fruit and wine, as is mentioned in a newspaper article from 1869 ('Illegal wine-selling', Register, 12.3.1869, p.2).

In South Australia in 1858 the estimated number of sheep under the care of each shepherd was approximately 1,250, and the number of shepherds employed in South Australia was 1,333. Flock sizes had increased from around 800 before the Victorian Gold Rush as shepherds headed east to seek their fortune. According to Hawker and Linn (1992, p.124) shepherds in South Australia were paid on average £40 a year between 1853 and 1861. In South Australia hut keepers were customarily the wives of shepherds and were paid in rations for their service ('Minutes of Evidence', 1858, p.6).

Other employees of stations generally included 'hut-builders, well-sinkers, fencers, bullock-drivers, carters, and others ... a very considerable number of persons employed in tuition on the various stations, ... as well as those employed in gardening' (Minutes of Evidence, 1858, p.6). During the shearing season stations also employed, shearers, washers (who washed the sheep for shearing). During the lambing season 'lambinders' were employed, often the



wives and children of shepherds fulfilled this role. Stations running cattle employed stock-keepers and hut keepers in a similar role to shepherds.

'Minutes of Evidence', (1858, p.6.) reported that 'most land is now fenced in wire' however this was probably referring to the boundary fencing rather than paddocks or smaller stock enclosures (Pickard 2007). But by 1870, once fencing became more widely used, Pickard has noted that 'shepherding was almost a thing of the past (Pickard 2008, p.61).

## **Criterion (b)**

### **It has rare, uncommon or endangered qualities that are of cultural significance.**

The use of stone as a permanent construction material for shepherds' huts is uncommon in Australia and it has been recorded that in the eastern states, many shepherds' huts were constructed of timber slabs or wattle and daub. The use of stone in the Coolootoo shepherd's hut reflects the local availability of materials, construction skills and cultural influences in the local area.

'Canowie homestead is characterised by a number of fine dry stone walls, and it is probably not coincidence that the homestead is close to the northern end of the great Brown Hill Range Stone Wall. This is also one of the rare cases where we know the name of at least one of the wall-builders. Nancy Robinson mentions that a waller named Patrick O'Grady was employed on Canowie run in the 1860s, and a waller named O'Grady is also said to have worked on the great wall. (Robinson 1971, p.67).'

(Austral Archaeology Pty. Ltd. et al, 2000, p.104)

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## **BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:**

Old Canowie Station dates back to the 1850s. It has been described in the Upper North Heritage Survey:

'Canowie Run was one of the second generation of pastoral stations in the Upper North, being taken up by the Browne brothers under the *Waste Lands Act* in 1851. In 1859 they sold to a syndicate of Jones, Scott and Hayward (this was Johnson Hayward, former manager of Pekina Run) and the property was in a number of joint ownerships until the 1890s. It was one of the bigger runs in the region, grazing 63,000 sheep at times. Charles Brown Fisher, whose merino breeding empire include Bundaleer Run bordering Canowie on the west, in later years expressed the opinion that Bundaleer, Hill River, Canowie and Booborowie 'are the pick properties in Australia.'

(Austral Archaeology Pty. Ltd. et al, 2000, p.104)

The builder of the hut may have been Patrick O'Grady 'who took contracts for stone wall building' at Canowie Station ('Obituary' 1928, p.12).

Goyder visited the Canowie Run in 1864, listing the improvements at the homestead, included a stone hut (Austral Archaeology Pty. Ltd. et al, 2000, p.105). In 1864 Goyder reported that Canowie Run had 49,000 sheep and a few horses and cattle. He described the run as 'well-grassed – some of the flats and valleys abundantly so. The spurs and ranges are studded with sheoak, with clumps of bushes, and timber of a larger size. There is about five miles of forest land on the west side of Yungala flat, north of Canowie. With the exception of one spring on the west and one on the east side of the main range, there are no permanent surface waters sufficient for stock upon the run. The whole is therefore made

available throughout the entire year by the wells sunk' (*Advertiser*, 5 September 1864, p.2). He also mentioned there being twenty-five huts and wells, troughs, and pumps on the Canowie run.

With the passing of the Strangways Act Canowie was divided up, and Munduney and other smaller runs were created out of it in 1868. The property now known as Old Canowie runs sheep and cattle and has been in continuous use for 150 years.

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## REFERENCES:

[untitled report of Mr Goyder], *Advertiser*, 5 September 1864, p.2.

'Illegal wine-selling', *Register*, 12 March 1869, p.2.

'Minutes of Evidence in Assessment of Stock', *Advertiser*, 10 November 1858, p.6.

'Obituary' [Mrs Annie O'Grady], *Register*, 24 August 1928, p.12.

'The Bush Mission Society', *Advertiser*, 21 February 1861, p.3.

Austral Archaeology Pty. Ltd., Flightpath Architects and Historical Research Pty. Ltd. (2000) 'Old Canowie Station Complex', in *Heritage of the Upper North*, volume 4, Department for Environment and Heritage, pp.103-109.

Hawker, Frankie and Rob Linn (1992) *Bungaree: Land, Stock and People*, Turnbull Fox Phillips, Adelaide.

Pickard, John (2007) 'The Transition from Shepherding to Fencing in Colonial Australia', *Rural History*, 18 (2), pp.143-162.

Pickard, John (2008) 'Shepherding in Colonial Australia', *Rural History*, 19 (1), pp.55-80.

Robinson, Nancy (1971) *Change on Change, a history of the Northern Highlands of South Australia*, Investigator Press, Adelaide.

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**SITE RECORD:**

**FORMER NAME:** N/A

**DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:** The Coolootoo Shepherd's Hut was part of the Old Canowie Station run and is at some distance from the Homestead. It is a square stone hut with a timber framed and timber paling roof, presently covered with corrugated metal sheet roofing. Two walls are intact while the chimney and the two other walls have partially collapsed with the stone remaining on site. The roof is partially intact.

**DATE OF COMPLETION:** c.1850s-1860s

**REGISTER STATUS:** **Description:** Nominated  
**Date:** 21 February 2007

**CURRENT USE:** **Description:** Unoccupied  
**Dates:**

**PREVIOUS USE(S):** **Description:** Shepherd's Hut  
**Dates:** c.1850s – c.1870s

**ARCHITECT:** **Name:** unknown  
**Dates:**

**BUILDER:** **Name:** unknown (possibly Patrick O'Grady)  
**Dates:**

**SUBJECT INDEXING:** **Group:** Farming and grazing  
**Category:**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:** **Description:** Northern Areas Council

**LOCATION:** **Unit No.:**  
**Street No.:**  
**Street Name:** Jamestown to Hallett Road  
**Town/Suburb:** Belalie East  
**Post Code:** 5419

**LAND DESCRIPTION:** **Title Type:** CT  
**Volume:** 5694  
**Folio:** 566  
**Lot No.:**  
**Section:** Section 4, Plan H 241100  
**Hundred:** Hundred of Reynolds



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**SITE RECORD (Cont.):**

**AMG REFERENCE:**

**Zone:**

**Northing:**

**Easting:**

**Map Sheet No.:**

**Map Scale:**

**OWNER \*:**

**Name:**

Stakers Holdings Pty Ltd

**Address:**

14 Houghton Street

**Town/Suburb:**

Jamestown

**Post Code:**

5491

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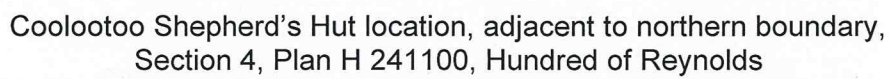
This is a detailed road map of the Southern Flinders Ranges in South Australia. The map shows a network of roads connecting various towns and regions. Key locations include Port Augusta, Stirling North, Willemstown, Melrose, Bolderoo Centre, Wirrabadarra, Laura, Jamestown, Gladstone, Crystal Brook, Georgetown, Naradby, Wandearah East, Merton, and Port Broughton. The map also depicts the Gulf of St. Vincent, Spencer Bay, and the surrounding mountainous terrain. A legend in the bottom left corner defines symbols for different types of roads (sealed/unsealed), tracks, camping sites, lookouts, accommodation, parks, airports, tourist information centres, tourist info boards, attractions, historical sites, and private homesteads. A scale bar indicates distances up to 20 kilometers. The map is titled "SOUTHERN FLINDERS RANGES SCALE" and includes a north arrow.

Julie Collins



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## PHOTOGRAPHS

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Shepherd's Hut with locals in attendance



Intact rear walls (note wind towers)



## PHOTOGRAPHS

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Hut showing collapsed walls



Hut showing damaged wall and roof



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Interior showing timber roof structure