

FLINDERS RANGES HERITAGE SURVEY

Water Tower

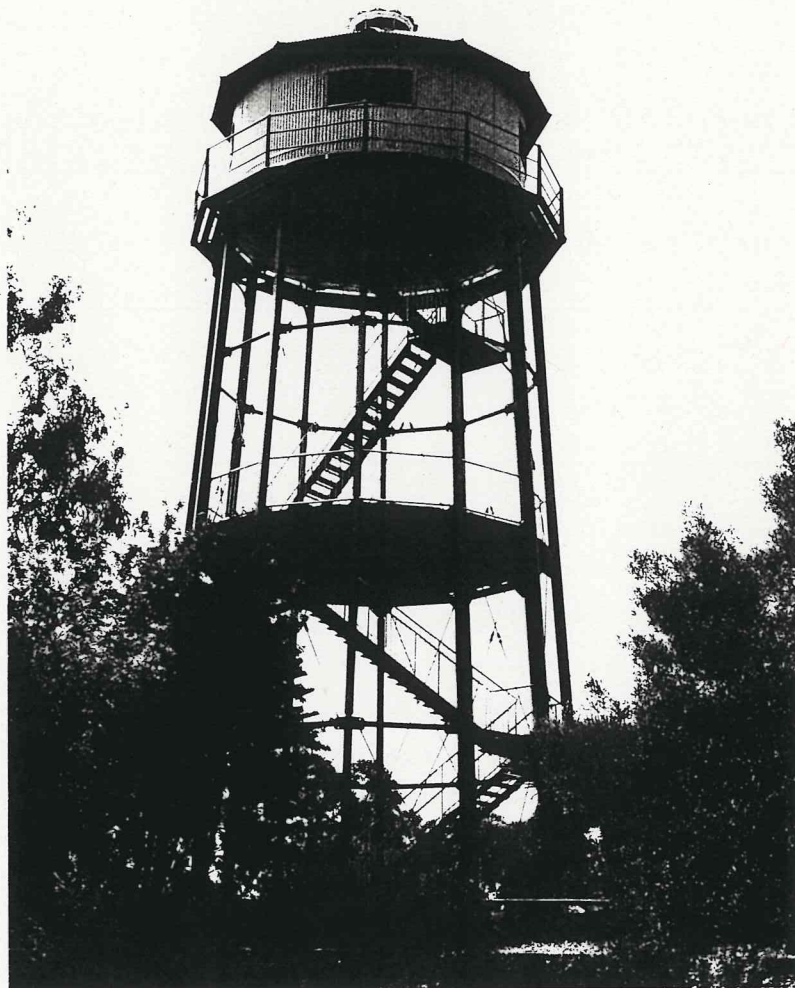
INPA-RSR-04

LOCATION

Address	Mitchell Terrace, Port Augusta
Owner(s)	Corporation of City of Port Augusta
CT Number	Corporation Reserve — Gazetted 22 September 1960
Lot	432
Hundred	Copley
Local Government Area	Port Augusta

State Heritage Status	Nil
Other Assessments	Register of the National Estate National Trust Classified List — 2760

Film/Neg Number	1/10, 11, 12, 13; 15/13, 14, 15
Photographer	B.G. Rowney/P.F. Donovan



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DESCRIPTION

The construction consists of a large metal water tank on an iron tower. The tank is of boiler plate construction, rivetted, and lined internally, and is covered by corrugated galvanized iron which is pitched and conical in roof form.

The structure is currently used as a viewing platform with the addition of metal stairs braced by iron rods. The first floor landing is of timber and there is a concrete ground base. The tower is set in a park overlooking the Gulf and Port Augusta.

HISTORY

This tower was constructed in 1882. It stood 24m high with a holding capacity of 100,000 litres. The water tank was erected on the highest part of Port Augusta West to serve people living in that community. This was as a precaution against the Woolundunga pipe failing and also as a precaution for fire fighting. *The Port Augusta Dispatch* noted:

The tank now in course of erection was made on Government designs, by Mr. J.T. Hooker, of the Hindley-street Foundry, and is being put up under the superintendence of Mr. Hullett by Mr. Wolfe, foreman engineer for the maker. The whole structure weighs somewhere about 35 tons, and is built on a foundation of 30 inches of concrete, with 12 foot-plates, 18 inches square, to carry the columns, which run to a height of 48 feet, and are braced with right and left hand tie-bolts, so arranged that when they are screwed up, both ends are worked upon, and any degree of tension may be obtained. The tank, which is 11 feet in depth, rests upon these columns, and contains 23,000 gallons. A handsome balcony surrounds the tank, two feet wide, and three feet 9 inches high, with two rails and a gaspipe top rail. The tank is made of boiler plate, three eighths of an inch thick, and is double riveted throughout, and is covered with a louvre roof of galvanized iron at a height of 14 feet, which is surmounted with an ornamental finial, which carries the lightning rods to the ground, a distance of 72 feet. Thirteen hands are employed, and the work will be completed in about two months' time. From the balcony a splendid view of the Gulf may be obtained, and a light erected on the tank would be visible at a very considerable distance.

The tank, including fencing, cost £2,000.

However, with the opening of the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline in 1944, which ensured a secure water supply to Port Augusta residents, the need for the tower became obsolete. With assistance from the Engineering & Water Supply Department and the South Australian Government Tourist Bureau, the tower was converted by Forwood Downs & Co. Ltd. (originally founded in 1873) into a public lookout. The official opening was performed by Mr R.E. Steele, District Engineer, E. & W.S. Department, on 30 May 1962. At the same time a plaque positioned at the top of the lookout was unveiled by the local manager of Forwood Downs, Mr J.D. Watkin.

The lookout continues to be used as a public venue.

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STATEMENT OF HERITAGE VALUE

This place is a rare example of an iron water tank. It is also of historical significance because of its identification with the early development of Port Augusta West as a community distinct from the larger town on the eastern side of the Gulf. It also reflects the importance of water as a scarce resource in the period before the construction of the Morgan–Whyalla pipeline.

The water tower is recommended for inclusion in the State Heritage Register.

RELEVANT CRITERIA

- (a) the water tower demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history, principally the need to provide water resources for communities in isolated areas.
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REFERENCES

- Anderson, R.J., *Solid Town: The History of Port Augusta*, R.J. Anderson, Port Augusta, 1988, p. 45.
- Anderson, R.J. (ed.), *McLellan's Transcontinental Articles on the History of Port Augusta*, Port Augusta College of TAFE, Port Augusta, 1986, p. 49a, d.
- Cumming, D.A. and Moxham, G., *They Built South Australia: Engineers, Technicians, Manufacturers, Contractors and Their Work*, D.A. Cumming and G. Moxham, Adelaide, 1986, pp. 63–64.
- The Port Augusta Dispatch and Flinders Advertiser*, 27 September 1882 (opening).
- Transcontinental*, 1 June 1962 (opening of lookout).
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Site Surveyor B.G. Rowney/P. Donovan **Date(s) of Survey** 10.2. and 3.11.1994

Water Tower

Interior — showing construction of the water tank and later viewing deck



Water Tower

Interior — showing construction of the roof of the tank

