

South Australian
Heritage Act 1978-80:

HERITAGE SURVEY

REGION 6 :
SOUTH EAST

ITEM IDENTIFICATION SHEET

Item No. : LAC:003
ITEM NAME: Cape Jaffa Lighthouse
Former or other names:

LOCATION:

Address: Marine Parade,
Kingston S.E.

Allotment:

Section :

Hundred : Lacepede

County : MacDonnell

L.G.A. : Lacepede

S.H.P. Region: 6

A.M.G., Ref. Z: 54 N: 5921550

E: 396500

TYPE OF ITEM:

Description: Lighthouse

Subject: 4.07

Period: 1860-1880

Date: 1872

Condition: Well Kept

Architect: G. Wells, Westminster, Eng

Builder: W.F. King

STATUS State Heritage List: Register

National Estate : Listed

National Trust : Classifi

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

RECOMMENDATION: State

Description:

Steel frame with corrugated galvanized iron walled eight roomed house built within the structure, 6.00 metres above the ground. The lighthouse is 33.00 metres high and the structure consists of a large proportion wrought iron.

Designed in 1867, for the Margaret Brock Reef, after agitation by insurance officers, ship owners and ship masters. Port Caroline had been proclaimed as a port in 1865. Based on a screw pile design with 13 foundation piles (200 mm. dia.), to which the screws were attached, drilled 2.70 metres into the reef. It took thirteen months to drill the piles and it took about three years to complete the lighthouse, which officially opened in January, 1872. In 1969 it was decided to partly dismantle the lighthouse and after negotiations by the Kingston Branch of the National Trust, the lighthouse was re-erected on its present site in 1975 and was handed over to the National Trust in January, 1976. The structure and platform remain on the reef.

Report Text:

REFERENCES: V. McLaren, "The Cape Jaffa Lighthouse Story"

Verbal:

PHOTOGRAPHS:

Slide No : 8/14

Film No : 11

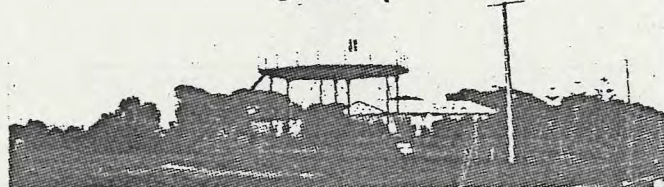
Negative No: 18

Archival No: B2016 (c.1910)

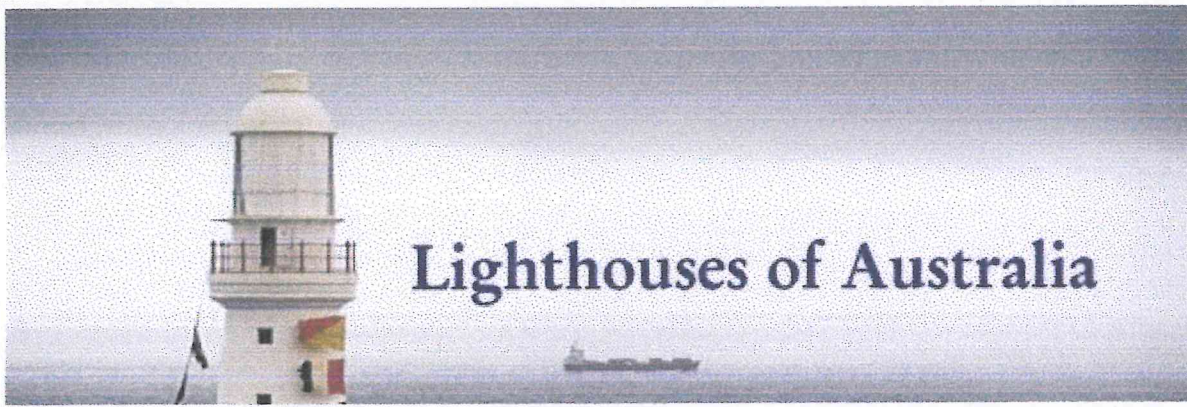
B10946 (1902)

B11099 (1902)

DANVERS ARCHITECTS Date: 1983



Originally built on Margaret Brock Reef off Cape Jaffa, at the end of it's service the screw pile lighthouse was dismantled and reassembled at Kingston.



Lighthouses of Australia

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The Cape Jaffa Lighthouse



Originally built on Margaret Brock Reef off Cape Jaffa, at the end of it's service the screw pile lighthouse was dismantled and reassembled at Kingston.

[Operation](#)[History](#)[Access](#)[Surrounding Area](#)[Museum](#)

The Cape Jaffa Lighthouse

Photograph: [Ed Kavaliunas](#)

Last Operation (1973)

LOCATION: Latitude 36° 57' S; Longitude 139° 40' E ([Map](#))

OPERATOR: Australian Maritime Safety Authority

CHARACTER:

LIGHT SOURCE: Vapourised Kerosene Mantle

POWER SOURCE: Vapourised Kerosene

INTENSITY: 142,000c cd

ELEVATION: 41 Metres

RANGE: 16 Nautical Miles

HEIGHT: 41 metres



Cape Jaffa's Magnificent Crystal Lantern

Photograph: [Ed Kevallunas](#)

Extreme difficulties were encountered during its construction which took 3 years instead of the proposed 1 year.

History

Established in 1872 on Margaret Brock Reef, the Cape Jaffa Lighthouse was built to protect ships from the treacherous currents that had seen the demise of many ships in the area.

The original multi-wick oil burner was replaced by a pressurised kerosene burner in 1909. This lighting apparatus was turned off in 1973 and is believed to have been the last of its type to operate in Australia.

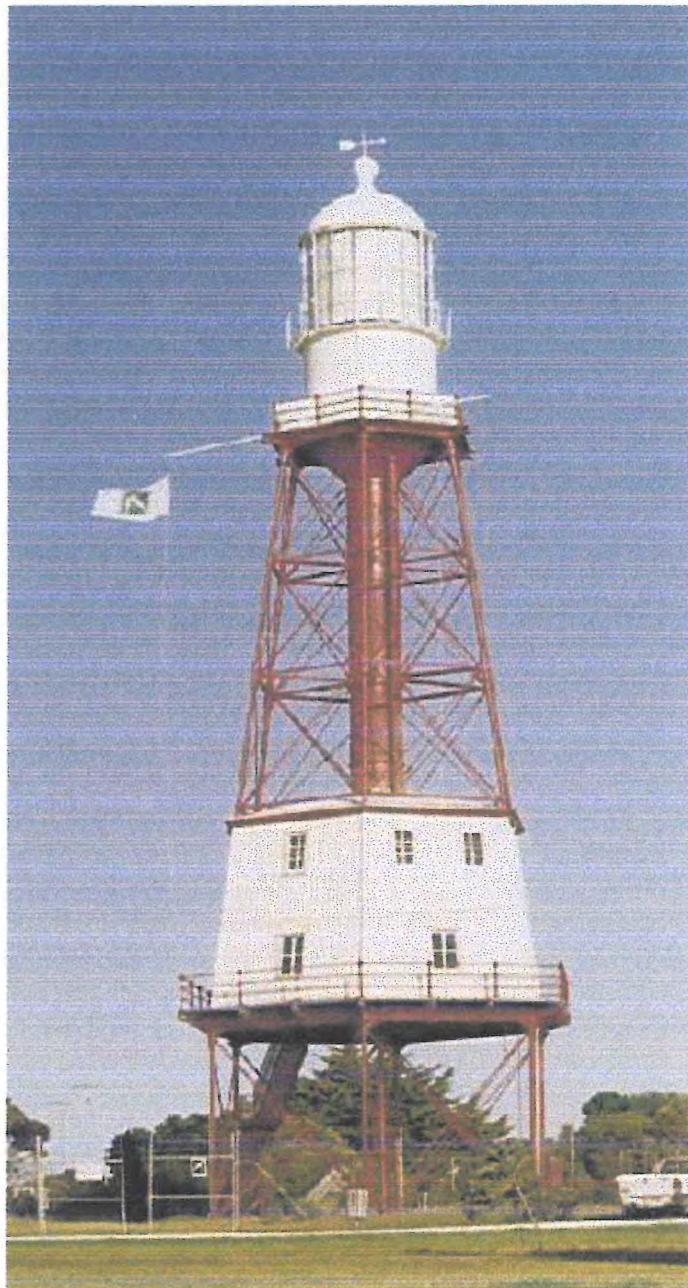
This type of lighthouse is known as "Wells Screw Pile" and was selected for this location because the narrow wrought iron piles offered the most resistance to the heavy seas that break across the reef.

All the parts for this lighthouse were manufactured and pre-assembled, in England then dismantled and shipped to Australia

Apparently when the site was first chosen the sea and weather was unusually calm. When it came time to construct the lighthouse sea were wild and the weather rough. Early construction was washed away and sometimes the contractors could not go out for days.

Another story from Jack Loney's book of Shipwrecks on the South Australian Coast tells of some castaways reaching the lighthouse only to find it was unmanned. On reporting this the body of one of the lightkeepers was found and the other was never recovered. It was known that they got on well and were very keen on fishing. Jack Loney states that it was this tragedy the led to the decision to close the lighthouse.

On 1 April 1973 a [new lighthouse at Robe](#) was switched on and the Cape Jaffa light was extinguished. A low powered temporary beacon was attached to the tower.



The Relocated Cape Jaffa Lighthouse

Photograph: [Ed Kavallines](#)



The Lighthouse In Its Original Location Off Cape Jaffa

Photograph: Ken Taylor

The then Department of Transport had decided to dismantle the lighthouse and replace it with a beacon on the platform.

The National Trust of South Australia (Kingston Branch) successfully lobbied for the lighthouse to be re-erected at [Kingston](#) where it could be preserved as a [museum](#) to show what life was like on the platform.

Dismantling began in February 1974 and was complete by March 1975.

The reconstruction began at Kingston in June 1975 and was completed in December 1976.

The Lighthouse was officially handed over to the National Trust of South Australia (Kingston Branch) on January 1976 and now operates as a [museum](#).

For more visit the [Cape Jaffa Lighthouse Museum Page](#).

Access

The lighthouse is easily accessible being adjacent to the beach road in Kingston. Regular tours are conducted by the Kingston branch of the National Trust of South Australia. A tour of this light is well worth the effort.

The Surrounding Area

The [Cape Jaffa Lighthouse Museum](#) at Kingston

The [Kingston Township](#)

The [Robe Lighthouse](#) to the South East

Cape Jaffa Lighthouse Museum Page



The office and living areas in the Cape Jaffa Lighthouse tower structure have been used to create the [Cape Jaffa Lighthouse Museum](#) that demonstrates the difficult life was for the early keepers and their families.

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[FEEDBACK](#) [ABOUT](#)

The Cape Jaffa Lighthouse page created: 29/4/98

Last Updated: 19/2/99

Web Site First Published: 3/12/97

Special Thanks to:

Ed Kavaliunas for Photographs
Ken Taylor for Historical Photograph

Sources:

Alison Downing
AMSA
Brian Lord
From Dusk Till Dawn by Gordon Reid
Ken Taylor
Lighthouses of South Australia by R Parsons
National Trust of SA (Kingston Branch)
The Cape Jaffa Lighthouse Story by Verne McLaren

Site Constructed and Maintained by: [Lighthouse Computer Training & Development](#)

Contact: [Lighthouse Keeper](#)

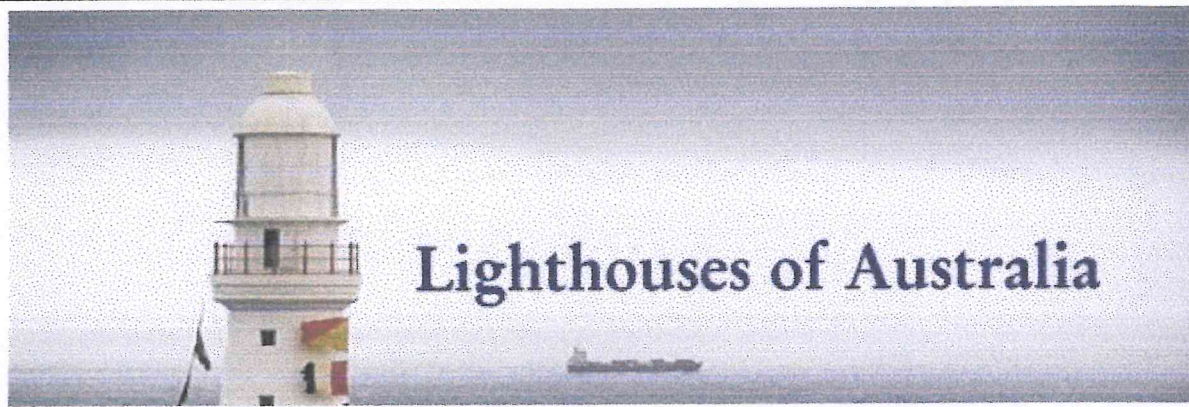
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LIGHTHOUSE PEOPLE

HOW YOU CAN HELP

The Cape Jaffa Lighthouse tower has been used to create unique museum that demonstrates how difficult life was for the early keepers and their families.

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The Cape Jaffa Lighthouse Museum



The office and living areas in the Cape Jaffa Lighthouse tower structure have been used to create unique museum that demonstrate how difficult life was for the early keepers and their families.

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The Cape Jaffa Lighthouse Museum

Photograph: [Ed Kavaliunas](#)

Cape Jaffa Lighthouse Page



The [Cape Jaffa Lighthouse](#) was originally built on Margaret Brock Reef off Cape Jaffa. At the end of its service the screw pile lighthouse was dismantled and reassembled at Kingston.

Lifestyle

Established in 1872, life on the lighthouse was hard with up to 3 families of 3 adults and 11 children living on the platform at the same time. The platform was only 10 metres by 20 metres. The office and living areas of 8 rooms were built as 2 floors into the structure of the tower. The original structure had a separate cook house as was the practice in colonial Australia.

During the daytime the children were kept in the cookhouse so the keepers could sleep.

The keepers would have 3 months on the lighthouse and one month ashore.

Soon cottages were built at Cape Jaffa from then on 2 keepers would be ashore and 2 keepers on the lighthouse in 4 week cycles. Note, now a total of 4 keepers.

Stores were brought out from Kingston every 2 weeks.

In 1929 these cottages were replaced by new cottages built in the nearby township of Kingston SE.

In later years only 2 men were stationed on the light



The Office and Flag Room at the Museum

Photograph: [Ed Kevallunas](#)



The Signal Room at the Museum

Photograph: [Ed Kavaliunas](#)

One Blustery Night

A story is told that during a fierce storm one window on the residences level blew in. In fear that the wind would pressurise the lighthouse keepers quarters and blow out all the remaining windows, the lighthouse keepers wife, a huge woman sat in the window, to seal it, all night while her husband operated the light. The other lighthouse keeper was so petrified that he stood motionless all night until the storm had ceased.



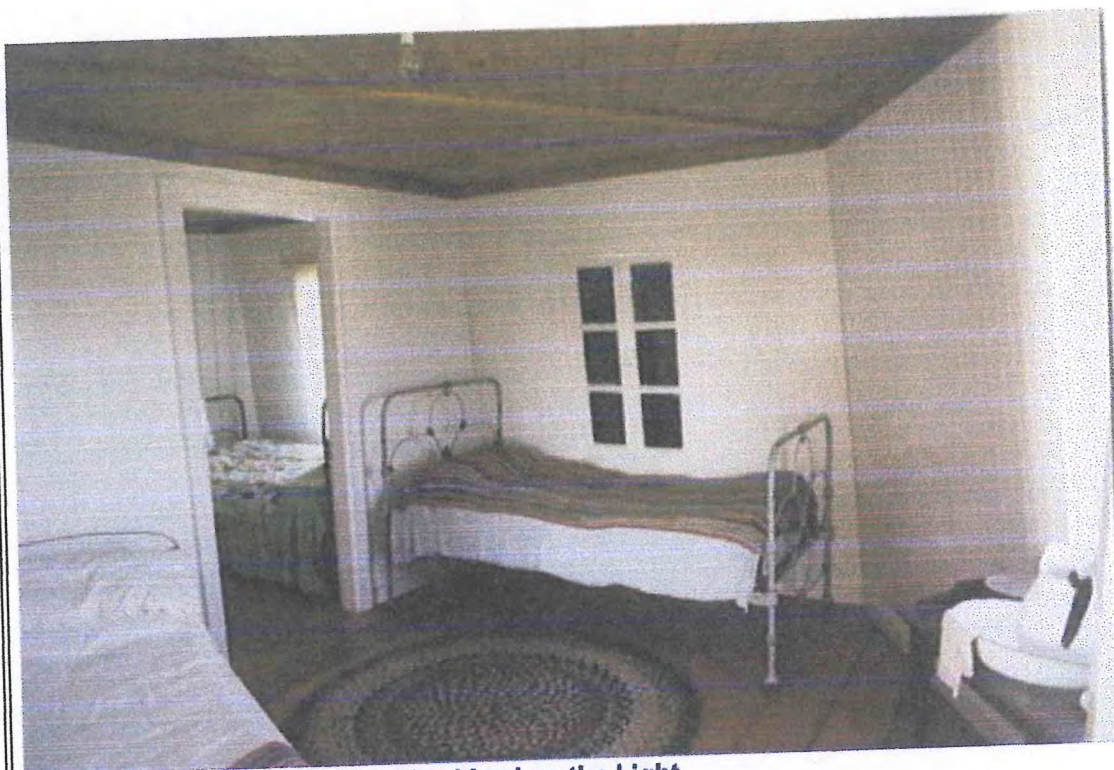
The

Upstairs Sitting Room

Photograph: [Ed Kavaliunas](#)

Education

It is interesting to note that Cape Jaffa, as well as Cape Northumberland, were the only two lighthouses in South Australia where the keeper's children could attend a normal Government School. For this reason keepers with children were circulated through these postings.



Originally 3 Keepers and Families Lived on the Light

Photograph: [Ed Kavaliunas](#)

Access

The lighthouse museum is easily accessible being adjacent to the beach road in Kingston. Regular tours are conducted by the Kingston branch of the National Trust of South Australia. A tour of this light and museum is well worth the effort.

The Surrounding Area

The [Cape Jaffa Lighthouse](#) at Kingston

The Kingston Township

The [Robe Lighthouse](#) to the South East

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The Cape Jaffa Lighthouse Museum page Created on: 25/12/98

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Special Thanks to:

[Ed Kavaliunas](#) for Photographs
Ken Taylor
Alison Downing
National Trust of SA (Kingston Branch)

AMSA

Sources:

From Dusk Till Dawn by Gordon Reid, Macmillan
The Cape Jaffa Lighthouse Story by Verne McLaren

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LIGHTHOUSE PEOPLE

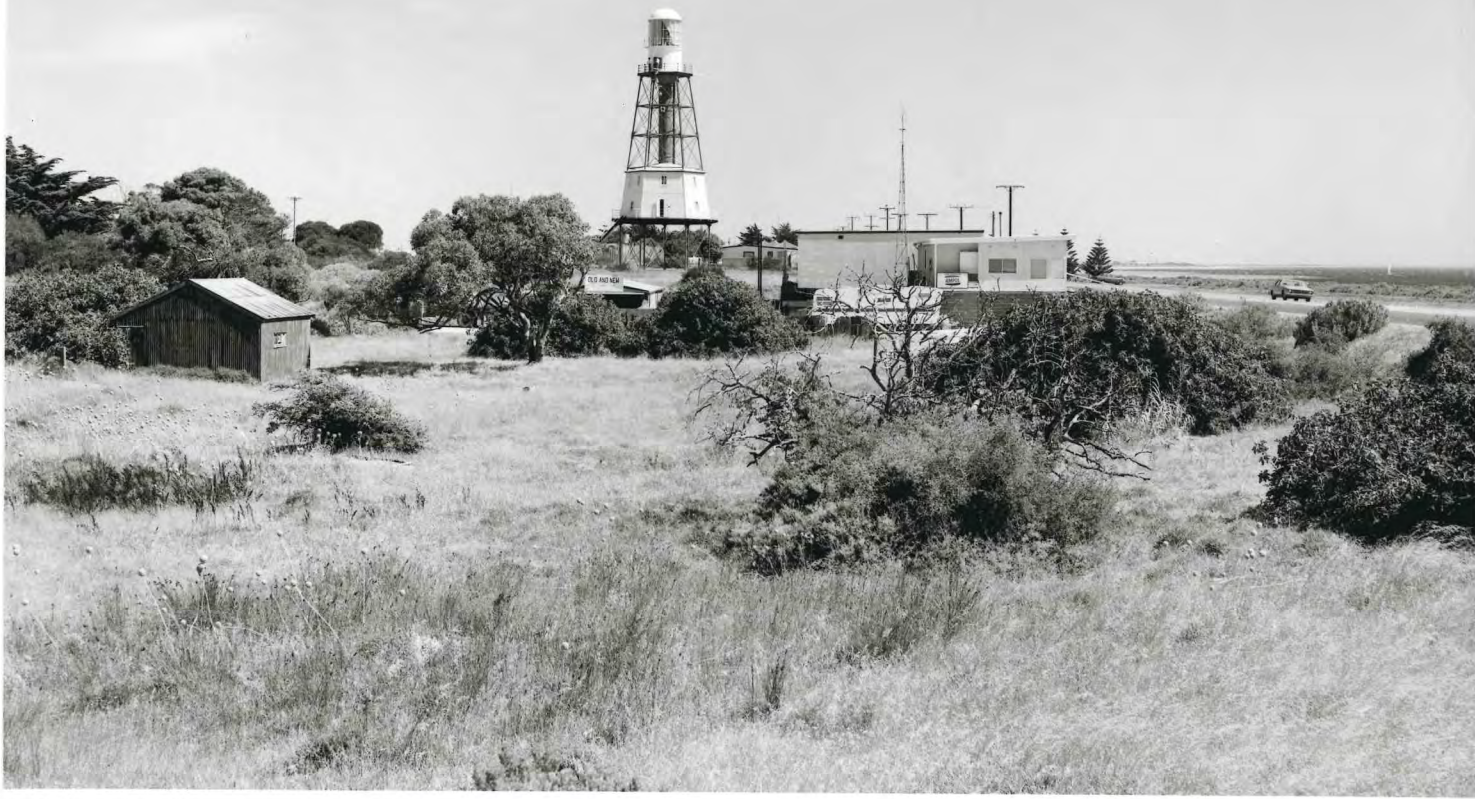
HOW YOU CAN HELP



FILM 541
Nº 3

KINGSTON S.E.
LIGHT HOUSE KEEPER'S COTTAGES

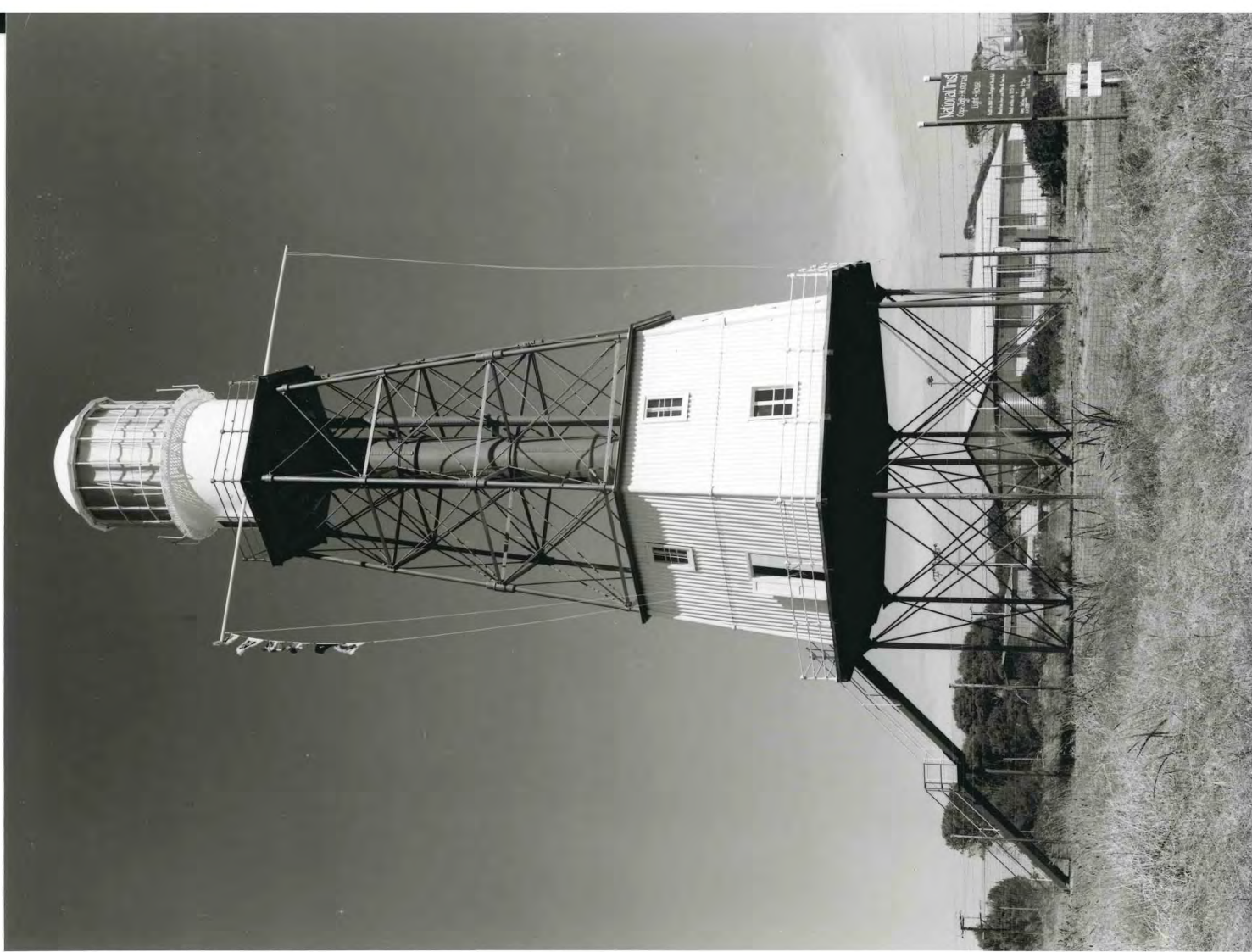
OCT '82
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Carol



FILM 43
NO 1

VIEW SOUTH TO RECONSTRUCTED CAPE
JAFFA LIGHTHOUSE

KINGSTON
18-2-79



FILM 43
NO 2

RECONSTRUCTED CAPE JAFFA
LIGHTHOUSE

KINGSTON
18-2-79