

25b - DUNWICH: Benevolent Water Pump

Street Address	Lot 89 Yerrol Creek, Dunwich
GPS/RPD	L89 SL5124
Place Type	Built



RCC, 2013.



Yerrool Creek Water Pump, Dunwich (AHS, 2017).

Condition	Good	Integrity	Good
Statutory Listings	Local Heritage Place		
Non-Statutory Listings	No current listing		
Inspection Date	17/01/2017		

Historical Context

The water tanks located at Rainbow Crescent were constructed as part of the Dunwich Benevolent Asylum. The Benevolent Society in Moreton Bay was established in 1844 as a citizen run charity. In 1861, the Queensland Government passed the Benevolent Asylum Act, which provided funds to transform hospital wards into these asylums. Prior to the formation of the Dunwich Benevolent Asylum, the area was used as a convict out station from 1827-1831, a Catholic mission for the local Indigenous population from 1843-1847, and a quarantine station from 1850-64. The Dunwich Benevolent Asylum housed Queensland's poor and underprivileged, including the aged, infirm and individuals without access to required care from their families.[1]

The construction of a reservoir became necessary during the drought in the winter of 1885 and water came from Yerrool Creek, situated three kilometres to the north. Although this was expected to solve the water supply problems, the pump required continual maintenance due to the high demand from the asylum.[2]

In the years after the pump was installed it was upgraded and controlled by a number of authorities. The Brisbane Board of Waterworks assumed control in 1905, followed by the Public Works Department. In the early 1920s, the site was taken over by the Irrigation and Water Supply Commission.[3] The current engine for the pump is a "National Gas Engine Co Ltd" engine, built c.1910.

The pump serviced the Asylum during a time of increasing patient numbers. In 1913, the Asylum expanded to include a police station, visitor centre, public hall, ancillary service buildings, ward buildings, tent accommodation and recreational facilities, catering for live-in staff, including cooks, administration staff, and wards men.[4] The Asylum closed in 1947 due to overcrowding and poor conditions, and the pump ceased operation in the 1950s.

Physical Description

The site is located at Yerrool Creek approximately two miles north of Dunwich on Rainbow Crescent. The complex consists of a pump house enclosure which is a small red brick building. On the east side is where a portion of Yerrool Creek flows through the site. This portion of the creek has been modified to include small dammed areas. These dams were used to hold water from the creek, where a pump could draw water to be pumped for storage in the Asylum's water tanks on the ridge above Dunwich.

On the east side of the site is a steel constructed shed, roofed in galvanised roofing iron. This shed houses a charcoal gas producer, internal combustion gas engine and pump. The floor of the shed is made of concrete that has embedded pipe work associated with the machinery.

There are a number of elements to this site: gas engine and associated gas producer, water pump, cofferdams, pump house, road and tanks, and the lower site area. Continued degradation of the engine and other equipment has occurred due to rust. This site is not currently in use.

Statement of Significance

The water pump is a locally significant site and it displays historical and representative values. It is historically important as a remaining element from the Dunwich Benevolent Asylum. It illustrates the development of Dunwich while the asylum was operational. The pump station site is a well preserved in situ example of late nineteenth to early twentieth century water management equipment.

Criteria A

The place is important in demonstrating the evolution or pattern of the region's history.

The pump station is historically significant as a surviving element of the former Benevolent Asylum. It demonstrates the need to provide water supply infrastructure to service the growing asylum population.

Criteria D

The place is important in demonstrating the principal characteristics of a particular class of cultural places important to the region.

The establishment and administration of the Benevolent Asylum illustrates the social policies adopted by the Queensland Government of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to deal with those elderly, sick or disabled members of society who were unable to care for themselves. The pump station demonstrates daily functioning of the asylum, which is representative of characteristics of the asylum.

Primary Themes

2.0 Exploiting, Utilising and Transforming the Land

2.05 Managing water

References

[1] RPS, Redland City Council – Heritage Citation, “Benevolent Asylum Structures,” 2012.

[2] Ibid.

[3] Joseph B. Goodall, “Whom Nobody Owns: The Dunwich Benevolent Asylum, An Institutional Biography 1866-1946,” PhD Thesis, The University of Queensland, 1992, p. 211.

[4] RPS, Redland City Council – Heritage Citation, “Water Tanks and Water Pump,” 2012.



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