

# State Heritage Areas of South Australia



## Mount Gambier Centenary Tower

Lakes Area, Mount Gambier

SHR 13859 – confirmed as a State Heritage Place 29 June 1992

Centenary Tower, built on the highest point of Mount Gambier, is 190 metres above sea level. Designed by T.M. Hall, the square stone tower commemorates the centenary of the sighting and naming of Mounts Schank and Gambier (the first two major place names bestowed in South Australia) by Lt James Grant, on 3 December 1800.

The idea for the tower was first proposed during 1900, but the project took some time to come to fruition, as the committee had difficulties raising the money by public subscription. Chief Justice, Sir Samuel Way, laid the foundation stone on 3 December 1900 (100 years after the sighting and naming by Grant) but it was 18 months before enough money had been raised to call for tenders. The official opening, on 27 April 1904, was also performed by Sir Samuel Way.

The tower is almost 10 metres high. It is set on a cement foundation, with walls 60cm thick. At an original cost of approximately £480, it is built of red dolomite, collected in the district and carted to the summit by a team of horses. The tapered structure has a wooden balcony, semi-arched windows and a crenellated parapet.



*Centenary Tower, April 2005*



*Walking trail from the carpark, 2005*

During Bicentennial celebrations in 2000, the tower was refurbished and two plaques were unveiled in the carpark.

Centennial Tower is an important landmark in the lakes region. At night its light, installed in 1993, is a beacon for visitors. Spectacular views of the city and across Browne Lake can be seen from the balcony, especially through the telescope, which was a gift of the South Australian Government.



*circa 1980s*

The tower is accessible by a walking track from a carpark overlooking the Blue Lake. The climb is quite steep, but there are places to rest along the way. A daily caretaker flies a flag to indicate when the tower is open for visitors. Because of its elevation and view of the surrounding district, the tower is used by fire spotters during summer months.

