



REGISTER OF HERITAGE PLACES - ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTATION

11. ASSESSMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria adopted by the Heritage Council in September, 1991 have been used to determine the cultural heritage significance of the place.

11.1 AESTHETIC VALUE

Rotunda has significant aesthetic value in its unusual half-ellipse plan and the quality of the timber workmanship. (Criterion 1.2)

11.2. HISTORIC VALUE

Rotunda has historic value due to its association with the setting aside of Queen's Park, Albany, as a public reserve in commemoration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. (Criterion 2.2)

11.3. SCIENTIFIC VALUE

11.4. SOCIAL VALUE

Rotunda is highly valued by the local community as an example of a civic amenity funded partially by public subscription. (Criterion 4.1)

A former focal point for local entertainment, *Rotunda* has landmark qualities as a commanding viewpoint on Stirling Terrace. (Criterion 4.2)

12. DEGREE OF SIGNIFICANCE

12.1. RARITY

The half ellipse plan of *Rotunda* is unusual, making it an uncommon structure. (Criterion 5.1)

12.2 REPRESENTATIVENESS

Rotunda reflects the desire of a remote town wishing to consolidate its links with the monarchy and at the same time provide a civic structure of practical use and aesthetic quality. (Criterion 6.2)

12.3 CONDITION

Rotunda is in good condition but the granite base wall and the stucco moulding at the top have several large cracks, probably caused by either insufficient sub soil drainage or by vibration from passing traffic.

12. 4 INTEGRITY

Apart from the gabled entrance, the structure is original. It would not lend itself for use as a bandstand now in that planting to the south and bollards to the north would make viewing and accommodation of a band difficult. Even so, it was and is a delightful place, providing practical shelter from the elements and perhaps more importantly, graciously inviting the pedestrian to take a moment and admire the views beyond.

12. 5 AUTHENTICITY

The fabric of *Rotunda* is original, apart from the soffit, contemporary light fittings, steel tie rods, and the gabled entrance. The gabled entrance appears to be very similar to what was originally built. However, the pine cladding of the soffit is unauthentic. As a whole, the authenticity of *Rotunda* is high

13. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

The documentary evidence has been compiled by Sarah Stephenson BA. The physical evidence has been compiled by John Loreck, Architect.

3.1 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

Rotunda is situated in Queen's Jubilee Park, Stirling Terrace.¹ In 1890, Albany Mayor, Mr J. Moir, proposed to develop the embankment of Stirling Terrace, an area which was previously a dumping ground.²

Between 1890 and 1897, a reserve was established on the embankment at a cost of £300.³ In June 1897, Queen's Park was officially opened by Mayor J. Moir.⁴ It was dedicated to Queen Victoria in commemoration of her Diamond Jubilee.⁵ On this auspicious occasion Queen's Park was the centrepiece for Albany's celebrations. Numerous speeches and musical programmes were performed in the grounds.⁶ Six trees were planted by the mayor to symbolically mark each decade of Her Majesty's reign.⁷

It was on this occasion that the mayor proposed the establishment of *Rotunda*. The *Albany Advertiser* carried his speech relating to plans to

build over this bandstand a handsome structure - a pavilion - which, I think, will do credit to the town. This work is in the hands of a committee, who will see the pavilion erected at a cost of between £290 and £300.⁸

Rotunda was built by local carpenter and joiner, Nobby Clark. It was designed and its construction supervised by Mr Greenshields.⁹ *Rotunda* was funded by a state government grant of £150, a donation of £90 by the Albany Council and public subscription.¹⁰

Rotunda was officially opened on 23 May 1898 by Mayor W.G. Knight.¹¹ The bandstand committee handed over the Jubilee Bandstand to the Municipal Council on behalf of the ratepayers. The mayor 'hoped that it would be the means of giving entertainment with the assistance of the band and he was sure that the townspeople and visitors would appreciate it.'¹²

During the 1940s the covered entrance to *Rotunda* was removed.¹³ Subsequently the area of Queen's Park has been reduced to make way for roadworks. *Rotunda* was repaired by Albany Council in August 1972.¹⁴ Although no longer suitable as a bandstand, *Rotunda* remains an unusual,

1 National Trust Assessment Form, 4 April 1977.

2 *Albany Advertiser*, 24 June 1897.

3 *Ibid.*

4 Garden, D. *Albany, A Panorama of the Sound* (Thomas Nelson Ltd., Melbourne, 1977) p.240.

5 *Ibid.*

6 *Albany Advertiser*, 24 June 1897.

7 *Ibid.*

8 *Ibid.*

9 *Albany Advertiser*, 24 May 1898.

10 *Ibid.*

11 Wilson, H. *Albany Sketchbook* (Rigby, Adelaide, 1975) p.24.

12 *Albany Advertiser*, 24 May 1898.

13 National Trust Assessment Form, 4 April 1977.

14 *Ibid.*

attractive and historic civic structure providing delightful views and practical pedestrian shelter from the elements.

13. 2 PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Rotunda is an open-sided pavilion, situated on the south side of Stirling Terrace, overlooking the Memorial Gardens, the railway station and Princess Royal Harbour. Opposite *Rotunda*, to the north, is the Terrace group of buildings and the Vancouver Guest House.

Rotunda is orientated parallel to Stirling Terrace and is positioned at pavement level approximately 3.5 metres from the kerb. Two curved perimeter stairs, located to the east and west, wrap around a curved granite retaining wall which forms the base of *Rotunda*, and provide access from Stirling Terrace down to a paved landing area immediately south of the *Rotunda*. Beyond the landing a further set of stairs lead onto Proudlove Parade, which runs parallel to and level with the Memorial Gardens. The difference in level from the pavement of Stirling Terrace and the bottom of the curved steps is about three metres, with a further metre down to the Proudlove Parade pavement.

Rotunda is flanked by two pairs of mature Cocos Island palms, which are aligned immediately south of the Stirling Terrace pavement. South of these palms is a landscaped bank, which goes down to Proudlove Parade.

Rotunda is in plan a half ellipse, with the curved section of the ellipse facing the Memorial Gardens and the views beyond, and the straight section aligned parallel with Stirling Parade. The random granite retaining wall base is expressed for the curved section only, and is surmounted by a stucco moulding. A central gabled entrance, with its axis aligned at right angles to Stirling Terrace, projects over the pavement to come within one metre of the kerb, and provides the only entrance to within *Rotunda*. This gabled section appears to be a recently added item, judging by the pine lined soffit and the slightly different column capitals. A perimeter timber balustrade is continuous around *Rotunda*, interrupted only at the entrance. Timber posts and beams support a timber framed, zinc clad roof. The soffit is at present lined with painted asbestos, although originally the roof structure would have been exposed or perhaps lined with pressed metal.

Rotunda is built in a Federation Carpenter Gothic style, displaying a vigorous and confident use of timber craftsmanship, with elaborate balusters, posts, capitals, brackets and bosses.

Rotunda is in good condition but the granite base wall and the stucco moulding at the top has several large cracks, probably caused by either insufficient sub soil drainage or by vibration from passing traffic.

13. 3 REFERENCES