

Cape Bowling Green Lighthouse

Cape Bowling Green lighthouse was built in 1874 to assist vessels passing through the Great Barrier Reef via the Inner Route. It was one of 22 lighthouses built to the same design to aid ships serving the expanding North Queensland ports. Cape Bowling Green is a low sandy spit 70 km south of Townsville, where many ships had run aground.

The lighthouse was built using local hardwood for the frame and clad with iron plates imported from Britain. It was prefabricated in Brisbane under the direction of the colonial architect. Chance Brothers of Birmingham supplied the original third-order dioptric rotating light and the fuel system which operated on kerosene. A clockwork mechanism rotated the light, which produced 13,000 candlepower, with a range of 14 nautical miles.

The lighthouse was staffed by a keeper and three assistants, who lived in four cottages on the site. It had to be moved twice when threatened by the sea. In 1878 the whole lightstation was moved, and 1908 the tower was re-erected further away.

In 1913 an incandescent mantle was installed,

fuelled by vapourised kerosene. This increased the candlepower to 64,000. Then in 1920 an automatic acetylene light was installed. The light was now switched on automatically by a sun valve, and could be set to produce the desired sequence of light signals. It no longer needed to rotate, so the turntable and clockwork mechanism were removed, the lighthouse was de-staffed, and the keepers' cottages and other buildings were demolished. Later, two red stripes were painted around the tower to aid daytime visibility from the sea.

By 1987 the lighthouse had been replaced by a modern tower. It was dismantled using a Department of Transport helicopter, which lifted sections and transferred them to a site where they could be numbered, crated, loaded onto an RAN ship, and taken to Sydney. The lighthouse was re-erected at the National Maritime Museum in 1994.



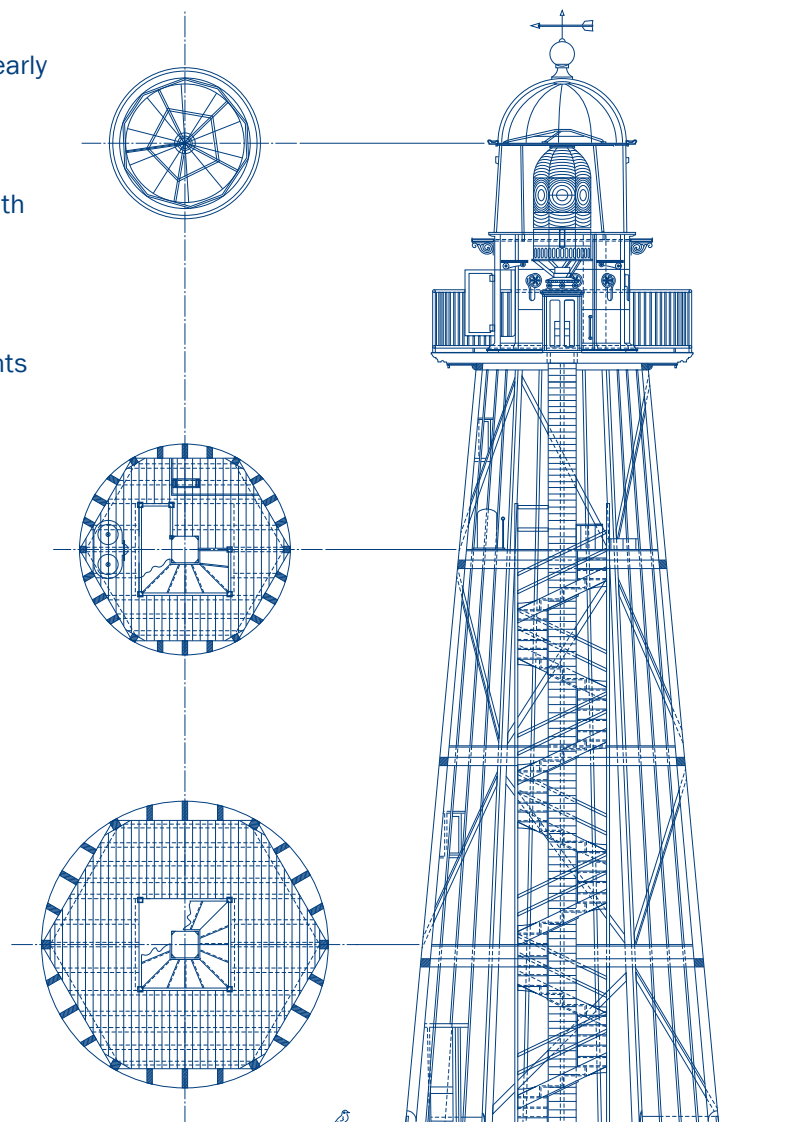
Specifications

Built 1874

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Height	22 m
Materials	Queensland hardwood timber frame iron cladding
Light	3rd order dioptric lens 1874 kerosene wick 13,000 candlepower 1913 incandescent mantle 64,000 candlepower 1920 automatic acetylene light 23 acetylene bottles replaced yearly 1985 marine radar responder beacon installed
Character	Four flashes of half a second, with eclipses of one second between each flash, and an eclipse of 15 seconds between each group
Staff	1874 one keeper, three assistants 1920 light automated and de-staffed

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Front left, The lighthouse 1917 Reproduced courtesy National Archives of Australia,

Front right : Light mechanism Photographer A Frolows ANMM Above: Plans from drawings by David Payne ANMM Collection