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# CUSACK RUSSELL'S POSTAL TREE



52915 Cusack Russell Tree  
Tahara



MAP 1 - Extent of  
Registration, Cusack Russell  
Postal Tree

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## Location

Road Reserve, Intersection of Condah-Coleraine Road and Paschendale-Tahara Road TAHARA, GLENELG SHIRE

## Municipality

GLENELG SHIRE

## Level of significance

Recommended for Heritage Overlay

## Heritage Listing

Glenelg Shire

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## Statement of Significance

Last updated on -

What is Significant?

The large remnant *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* (River Red Gum) known as Dr. Cusack Russell's Tree is located at Tahara Bridge on the Road Reserve abutting the Paschendale - Tahara Road and the Condah - Coleraine Road. It was used from 1849 as a depot for messages left for Rev. Russell who was the first Anglican Minister in the Wannon District. The tree is also known as the 'Post Office Tree'. Russell was responsible for the establishment of churches at: Branxholme, Casterton, Coleraine, Digby, Gum Creek (moved to Henty and now demolished), Merino, and very likely Sandford. He also established several early schools. He lived at a parsonage on the banks of the Wannon built for him by his patron, Samuel Pratt Winter (1816-1878) of Murndal in 1851 but, apparently, the tree continued to be used for leaving messages. Russell was an important representative of the

Anglo-Irish Ascendency in the Western District, an influential social and cultural group led by S.P. Winter. Russell was also important for his association with Dr Peter Teulon Beamish, the first Anglican minister of Warrnambool. They had arrived in NSW together and, because of difficulties with the Archbishop of Australia, were sent to the furthest parishes possible. Rev. Cusack Russell died at sea in 1876 after which time the tree was no longer used. Its centre is burnt out and it is in poor condition, with the loss of a major limb.

How is it Significant?

Dr. Cusack Russell's Tree is of historical significance to the Glenelg Shire.

Why is it Significant?

Dr. Cusack Russell's Tree is of historical significance for its association with one of the most influential, well respected and much loved clergymen in the Western District; and for demonstrating a practical solution to the difficulty of early rural communication.

Heritage Study/Consultant	Glenelg - Glenelg Shire Heritage Study Part One, Carlotta Kellaway, David Rhodes Mandy Jean, 2002; Glenelg - Glenelg Heritage Study Stage Two (a), Heritage Matters, 2006;
Hermes Number	52915
Property Number	

## Usage/Formal Usage

not used for any purpose

## Physical Description 1

The tree is a large remnant *Eucalyptus camaldulensis* (River Red Gum). It is still living although in very poor condition with a major limb loss on the northern side, detrimental major pruning of an upper limb and other damage to the trunk and canopy. The tree is hollow, apparently burnt out. The diameter at breast height (DBH) is approximately 1.10m. The tree is surrounded by young saplings which are progeny of the old tree.

## Physical Conditions

Poor

## Historical Australian Themes

- 2.5: Promoting settlement
- 3.16: Struggling with remoteness, hardship and failure
- 3.7: Establishing communications
  - 3.7.1: Establishing postal services
- 6.5: Educating people in remote places
- 8.6: Worshipping
  - 8.6.1: Worshipping together
  - 8.6.2: Maintaining religious traditions and ceremonies

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>