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**JOINT MEDIA RELEASE**

# **COBDOGLA'S HISTORIC PUMPS DECLARED ENGINEERING LANDMARK**

Two Humphrey Pumps at Cobdogla will, this weekend, be declared a national engineering landmark in a celebration for the community and engineering heritage enthusiasts across Australia.

The pumps, which provided water to surrounding irrigators between 1927 and 1965, have been recognised as an Engineering Heritage National Landmark by the nation's leading professional engineering organisation - Engineers Australia.

The pumps are the only two of their kind in the Southern Hemisphere and one of them holds the title of the only working Humphrey Pump in the world.

They were designed by Herbert Alfred Humphrey, a chemist and gas engineer from London and their unique design and simple principle of operation gives them significant historical importance in the engineering world.

SA Water Principal Engineer, Salt Interception, Peter Forward has been working with the pumps for many years and says although they are no longer used, they have a strong historical meaning to the Cobdogla community and surrounding districts.

"From 1927 to 1965 the two pumps were the lifeblood of the Loveday and Nookamka divisions of the Cobdogla Irrigation Area, providing irrigation water from the River Murray for irrigated farming," Mr Forward says.

"They hold local historical significance in the development of the Barmera region because when soldiers returned from World War One they were allocated land in the area and so the demand for irrigation increased, as did the use of the pumps.

"Water was lifted 34-feet by the pumps to a channel which delivered water for irrigation.

"The pumps were powered by gas which was produced at the plant and in 1965 they were replaced by electrically-driven pumps due to a shortage of wood fuel.

"One of the pumps is still in working condition after being restored by Engineering and Water Supply Department employees (now SA Water) in 1985 and today it operates at set times for the Cobdogla Steam and Irrigation Museum."

Engineers Australia Deputy National President Merv Lindsay says recognition of the pumps was a significant engineering milestone.

“An Engineering Heritage National Landmark is the ultimate accolade from Engineers Australia to highlight engineering works of outstanding historical significance,” Mr Lindsay says.

“Engineers Australia recognises the unique design of the Humphrey Pump which was a vital step in the international development of very large pumping plants.

“The pumps at Cobdogla are not only part of Australia’s engineering heritage but also played a significant role in the history of irrigated agriculture in the Riverland.

“Only 10 of these pumps were installed in working pump stations around the world including six in London, two in America and the two here at Cobdogla.”

The pumps form part of the Cobdogla Steam and Irrigation Museum which is owned by SA Water and run by local volunteers.

An Engineering Heritage National Landmark (EHNL) plaque will be unveiled at a community celebration to be held at the Cobdogla Steam and Irrigation Museum, Park Terrace, Cobdogla on Sunday, 13 June 2010 at 2pm.