

Curious Australis



The remains of Number 203 Cowell Radar Station.

COWELL IGLOOS

Take a drive south of Cowell on Eyre Peninsula's Lincoln Highway, and you'll see a road sign around the 18 kilometre mark, pointing down the curiously named Igloo Road. When you're driving through wheat and sheep country, igloos are the last thing you'd expect to find so it deserved a detour to find out more about these structures.

Following the well graded dirt road for around 6 kilometres towards Port Gibbon, leads to the tall curved concrete structures that are known as the igloos. The four

structures which stand about 70 metres apart in a field, are actually the remains of Number 203 Cowell Radar Station. The Royal Australian Air Force began building them early in 1942 in response to the war in the Pacific and the perceived threat of attacks by the Japanese. After the bombing of Darwin in 1942, coastal radar stations were being built nationally, including a number planned at locations in South Australia.

Not too far from here are the industrial towns of Whyalla and Port Pirie, and it was considered at the time an important site



The Igloos makes a strange sight in the field.

for a radar station to be built. Just before completion though, peace was declared and the buildings were never used. The structures still standing are the transmitting and receiving equipment shelters and two generator houses.

At the same time as they were built, there were also sheds for barracks and radio location towers, all of which were dismantled and sold off in 1946. The towers were sold for ten pounds each and some of the timbers were used to build a local woolshed.

The remains of the Number 203 Radar Station can be found on a Department of Defence site on the Port Gibbon Road where you'll find an access gate to enter the field and take a closer look.



All that is left is a large concrete cave like structure.

Glenys Gelizinis