

The Cathance Water Tower



The Cathance Water Tower located in Topsham Maine was built in 1906. It was built to serve the household and farm of the Rogers family that had farmed the area since 1773.

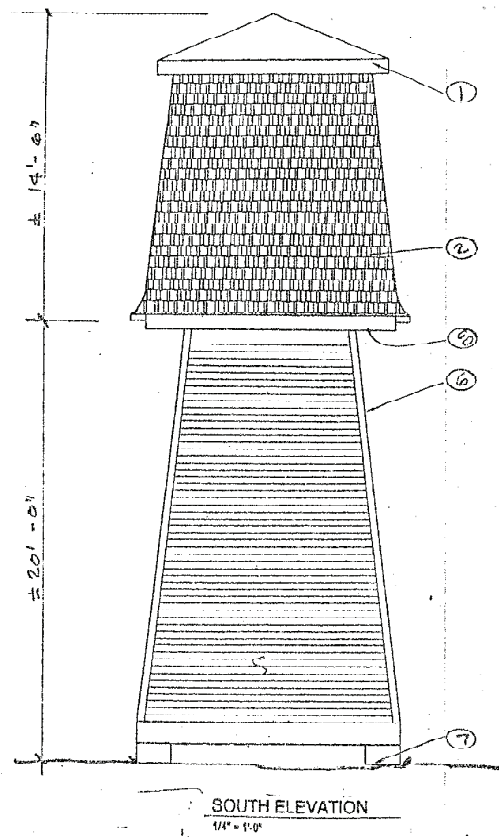
The Tower is 29 feet high with a base measuring 12 feet 4 inches square. The tank located in the top of the tower held over five thousand gallons of water.

Currently owned by the Town of Topsham the Cathance Water Tower is virtually unaltered from the time of its construction and is a rare example of a stylized water tower. The Tower was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in January 2001 as a locally significant rare surviving domestic water supply structure. In June of 2001 the town of Topsham was awarded a U.S. Department of the

Interior matching Historic Preservation Fund grant through the Maine Historic Preservation Commission for the purpose of restoring the Cathance Water Tower.

A timber frame preservation contractor was retained to stabilize and restore the structure and this work was completed in 2002. Further interior and exterior restoration work was completed in 2005.

The town now wishes to recreate the original method of filling the tank by means of a hydraulic ram pump. To get water to the holding tank a hydraulic ram uses the power available from an elevated water source to pump a small portion of the water up a considerable height above the stream. Unfortunately the original source of water that powered the hydraulic ram no longer is a viable source of water so the Town may have to fall



back to having a miniature working model of the hydraulic ram pump on the ground floor of the structure to demonstrate the workings of this piece of history to today's school children.

It is hoped that anyone with a knowledge restoring a water tower to a working condition particularly the workings of a hydraulic ram pump who would be willing to advise the town in their restoration project will contact Rod Melanson, Assistant Town Planner, Topsham Maine. Rod can be contacted at a/c 207-725-1724. E-mail address is rmelanson@topshammaine.com

Details on the description and original workings of the Cathance Water Tower is from the Historic Resource Study and Restoration Plan for the Cathance Water Tower prepared for the Town of Topsham by Turk, Tracey, & Larry Architects Portland Maine

Ed Galvin



Photo, right: the tower before restoration.

