

**EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA,
CENTRE FOR PERFORMING ARTS
(Former Advanced School for Girls and
Adelaide Girls' High School)**

101 Grote Street

In his 1876 annual report the Minister of Education stated:

. . . it is generally admitted that a school for the higher education of girls is much required, and we wish to point out that if the necessary expenditure should be sanctioned by Parliament, such a school could be established under the powers conferred upon us by the Education Act.

The Council of Education was prepared to set up a school if enough parents responded to their advertisement for such a venture. Thirty-three names of potential scholars were received, and temporary accommodation was found in a doctor's two storey residence in Franklin Street. The school was opened in Franklin Street on 7 October 1879 with Miss Jane Staines as headmistress.

Initially the school was the colonial government's only contribution to secondary school education as there was no equivalent provision for boys until 1908. There were, however, some government scholarships available to take primary school boys to private secondary schools. Another factor in the formation of the school was the opening of the adjacent Teachers' Training College a few years before in 1876 which led to the need for more secondary educated girls to train as teachers. As female teachers were paid far less than males, the administration looked favourably upon them. It was also a matter of the simple pressure of numbers, for when primary education became compulsory following the 1875 Education Act, schools were soon ' . . . clogged up at their top end (the 5th class) with girl students who had nowhere else to go to continue an education'.

The government intended the school to be self-supporting by charging fees, and this still applied even after the Act of 1891 introduced free education for primary schooling. The only intended expense was the actual construction of a school building which was designed in 1890.

Miss Rees George who was headmistress for twenty-two years from 1885 advised on the planning of the building. The superintendent of Public Buildings, C.E. Owen Smyth designed the brick two storey school built in 1891 for a contract price of £2533 by J.J. Leahy. It contained eleven rooms with five classrooms and a dining-room. It was a functional building with high windows, surrounded in stone reveals, sills and corbel stones and is of no particular architectural significance. Owen Smyth also designed the first part of the Art Gallery of South Australia and the north wing of the Museum. Like these two other buildings the school was

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urgently needed but built during a period when government funds were hard to obtain. Owen Smyth designed what he considered was the best for the funds allocated for the project.

In 1902 W. Ling and Son built a music room with a hipped roof over the ground floor kitchen. Since then, the building has remained unaltered externally.

In 1908 the Continuation School for boys was established, occupying both school buildings to the west of the Advanced School for Girls. Later in that year the Continuation School and the Advanced School for Girls amalgamated to become the Adelaide High School. Although now co-educational, boys and girls were still segregated. The school remained wholly on this site until 1917 when increasing numbers of pupils created a need for extra accommodation.

In 1917 the school rented accommodation from the Church of Christ and in 1928 accommodation was found at the Printer's Trade School on the corner of Morphett and Gouger streets. A year later the ground floor of the Currie Street School was used by several classes of boys. By 1931 the whole of Currie Street School was taken over as part of the boys school. In 1939 four more classes were located in 'the factory', as the Printers Trade School was sometimes known, opposite the former Grote Street Model School.

In 1951 the new Adelaide Boys' High School was opened on West Terrace while the girls continued to occupy the three school buildings in Grote Street, to be known as the Adelaide Girls' High School. The decision to amalgamate both schools into one and return to its former name of Adelaide High School, occurred in 1976. The first intake of girls began in 1977 and by 1979 the remainder of the girls' school had been transferred to the West Terrace premises.

The former Advanced School for Girls has unique historical significance as the first state secondary school and the first school for girls beyond primary level. It is an integral part of a group of three school buildings depicting the different forms of education before, during, and after the Education Act of 1875. Still used by the Education Department, it is now the Centre for Performing Arts.

Adelaide Girls' High School Magazine, December 1951; *Adelaide High School, 75th anniversary souvenir book*, 1983; Department of Housing and Construction Plan Room, HD 845-6; Jones, H., 'Pinnacle of the state school system: the Advanced School for Girls, Adelaide' in *Australian and New Zealand History of Education Society* (ANZHES) Journal, Vol. 4, No. 1, 1975, p. 6; MLSA, Bierbaum files, Historical photographs (Town Acres 329-330); Menzies, H., 'Adelaide Girls High closes and century of education ends' in *South Australian Teachers Journal*, 7 March 1979, p. 21; PRO, GRG 18/93, Records of the Board of Education, annual reports of the minister for the year 1876, p. 4; SAPD, 14 October 1890, col. 1537.

The text in this Information Sheet was copied from the **Heritage of the City of Adelaide: An Illustrated Guide**, (1996). The photographs contained in this Information Sheet are a selection of those held by Heritage Services, in digital format.

The property described in this Information Sheet is included in the Register of State Heritage places. A heritage listing does not mean or imply right of access by the public to such properties.

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The heritage related Principles of Development Control as well as the Precinct specific objectives and Principles of Development Control are contained in the Adelaide (City) Development Plan. These should be referred to in whole when contemplating any development.

Further information on the Heritage Incentives Scheme, an initiative of Council to sponsor timely and appropriate conservation action is available upon request of the Customer Service Centre.



CITY OF ADELAIDE HERITAGE STUDY

The City Heritage Register-Definition of Items

Prepared by the Dept. of Planning and Development

Item	EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA - CENTRE FOR PERFORMING ARTS, Former ADVANCED SCHOOL FOR GIRLS (A.G.H.S. EAST BUILDING)	Building No 10/2003-2
Address	101-139 Grote Street	NUA 0330/1*

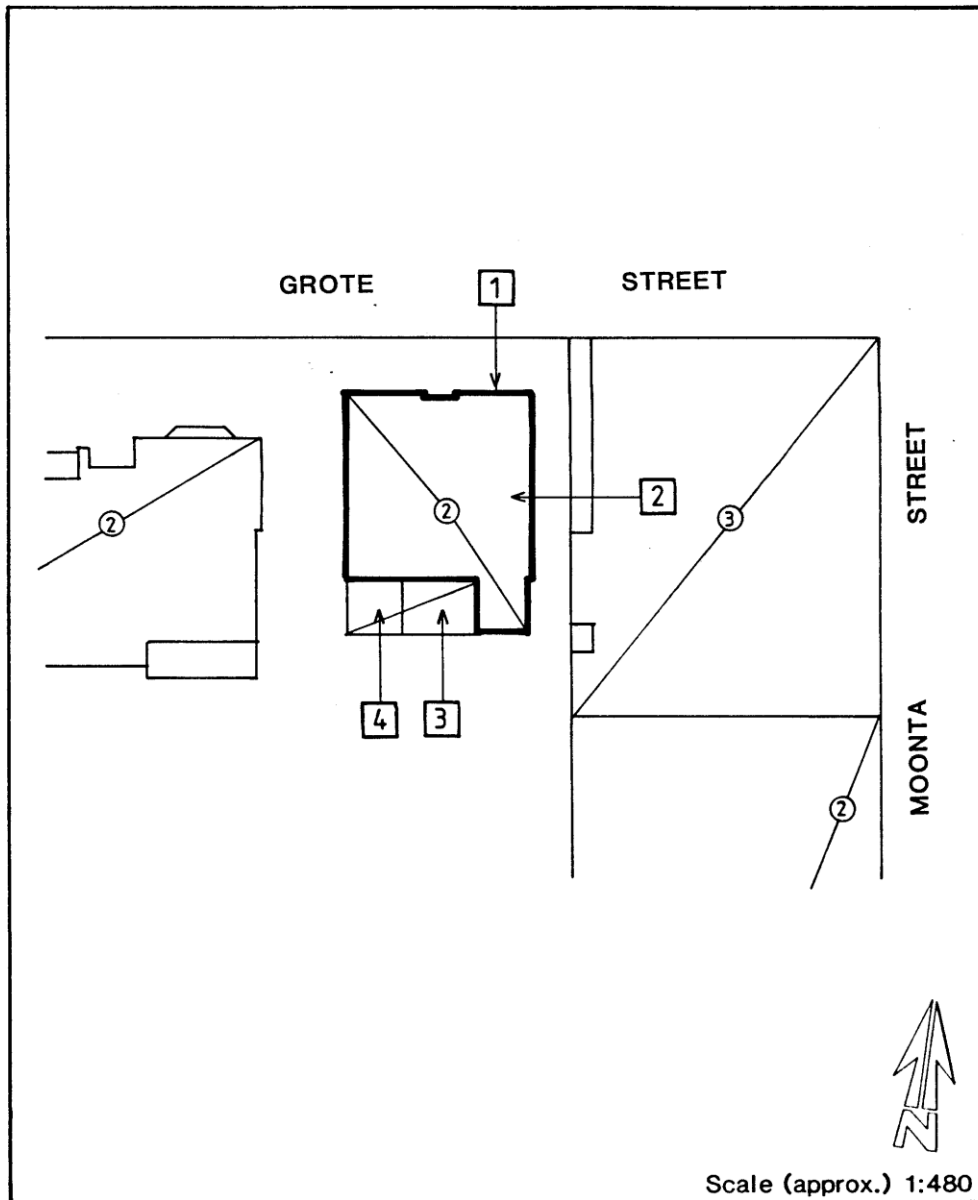


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NOTES:

1. Red brick (Flemish bond) with bluestone plinth.
2. Dormer window addition.
3. Timber and iron addition.
4. Brick addition.

* (Conservation site comprises that part of the above NUA reference to a depth of half Town Acre 330 from the Grote Street alignment.)