

SHOPS AND STUDIOS

122-130 Gouger Street



(CD Ref 3971/89)

The brick building on this site was built in C 1914. It was built at a time when significant commercial development was occurring in the vicinity, following the rebuilding and consolidation of the Central Market in C 1900.

The history of the construction of this building is linked with Edwin Ellis, originally a

confectioner and baker who purchased the site in 1907. Evidence suggests that Ellis operated a bakery or catering business from the buildings on this site. According to the Directories the building was known as and presumably was the business headquarters of Ellis Limited Caterers from 1916 onwards. Ellis died in 1925, and unfortunately little survives to document his life.

It appears that within a few years of the construction of the Gouger Street building, if not immediately, a dance hall was opened on the first floor, known as Osborne Hall. It is likely that this room was purpose-built and quite possibly an arm of Ellis' catering business, that is, they supplied the supper for the nightly dances. Some evidence suggests that Edwin's son, Percy Osborne Ellis operated the dance hall, a venue that was evidently very popular. Another source suggests that Osborne Hall was established and operated by the Carmichaels, a famous family of dance hall operators in Adelaide. Little is known of the success and life of Osborne Hall.

However in 1924 the *Advertiser* published an advertisement describing the entertainment available at the Hall.

Osborne Hall, Gouger-street. Dance To-night, Popular Dances, Moonlight Dances, Music by Clarrie Young's Orchestra, 7 Performers, Banjo and Xylophone selections.

The dance hall reputedly became very popular for Saturday night dances. At this time dancing on Saturday nights and outings to the moving pictures were the most popular forms of entertainment for young people. Dance halls were at their most popular in Adelaide during the 1920s and 1930s and most young people learnt to dance. According to the pamphlet, *Music! Dancing!* Produced by the Performing Arts Collection of South Australia, it was possible to dance during the day and night in Adelaide at this time. During the day, enthusiasts could dance at John Martin's Dining Room, the Myer Apollo, in the Railway

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Dining Room and at Birks. Apparently nearly every suburb had its own dance hall and in Adelaide, the most popular were the Floating Palais on the Torrens River and the Palais de Danse, adjacent to Ayers House. Several other large and popular ballrooms in Adelaide included the Queen's Hall in Grenfell Street (later known as the Embassy Ballroom), the King's Ballroom at the corner of Carrington and King William Streets, the Australia Hall in Angas Street, the Rendevouz Ballroom in Currie Street and the Caledonian Hall in King William Street. The popularity of this form of entertainment declined with the advent of television in the 1950s.

It is believed that the dance hall operated until c 1960 retaining the name of Osborne Hall. Percy Ellis died in 1957. In 1960 the building was sold and became known as the Embassy Ballroom. In the early 1970s the dance hall closed.

The Australian Dance Theatre acquired the lease of the first floor hall and has used the building as a dance studio and theatre since the mid 1970s. The Australian Dance Theatre was formed in 1965 by Elizabeth Dalman. The first performance of the ADT was in the newly constructed Shedley Theatre at the Elizabeth Civic Theatre on 30 August 1965. The Company toured extensively within Australia and overseas before closing in 1975. It re-formed in 1977 under the management of Johnathan Taylor and has attracted national and international acclaim. It remains a leading Australian dance company.

The former dance hall is housed in a large two storeyed red brick building. The building was designed to accommodate shops on the ground floor and the vast dance hall filling the first floor. Externally, the ground floor facade facing Gouger Street has been altered, with plate glass windows filling much of the facade. Original features remaining include the brick and render treatment to the corners of the building and the distinctive rendered doorway, the entrance to the dance hall. The first floor is largely original and features French doors leading to a wide balcony. The western wall of the building contains porthole windows with Classically derived decorative borders.

The ground floor is used as offices, a snackbar and vacant office space. There was a restaurant housed in the lower ground floor. The ground floor has been greatly altered and now resembles a modern office.



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The most original section of the ground floor is the dance hall entrance with its tessellated tiled lobby and a carved, grand timber staircase. The interior of the dance hall is very nearly original, superficial changes including the division of the dance hall into two studios. The interior features several original Classically derived decorative details that would have contributed to the dance hall being a grand space in its heyday.

The major changes to the building date from the 1970s and are unsympathetic in nature. Recently (C 7 January 1990) a fire in the rear eastern corner of the building caused smoke and some physical damage to the fabric of the building.

The building contributes to a notable physical environment. It is within the Market precinct and was built during a time of the consolidation of the Market. Many buildings of a similar architectural style were constructed in the vicinity during the early years of the twentieth century, no doubt encouraged by the success of the Central Market and the crowds the Market drew. The building is significant as one element of a reasonably intact and historically significant precinct.

Rate Assessment Books for the city for the period 1900-1940; *Town Clerk's Digest of Proceedings*, 1912-13, 1911-1925, 1925-26, 1930-31, 1944; South Australian Directories; Land Title Office, Certificate of Title 29/48, 68/210, 485/19, 1378/168, 4050/579; Statton, J. *Biographical Index of South Australians*, vol. 1, p. 466.

The text in this Information Sheet was copied from the **City of Adelaide Heritage Study**, October 1990, Volume One, part of a review of the City of Adelaide Plan 1986-1991. 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 a place of Local Heritage (City Significance). A heritage listing does not mean or imply right of access by the public to such properties.

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

ITEM	SHOPS AND DANCE STUDIOS, (FORMER OSBORNE HALL)	BUILDING NO.
ADDRESS	122-130 GOUGER STREET, ADELAIDE.	CT 4340/584 4050/580*

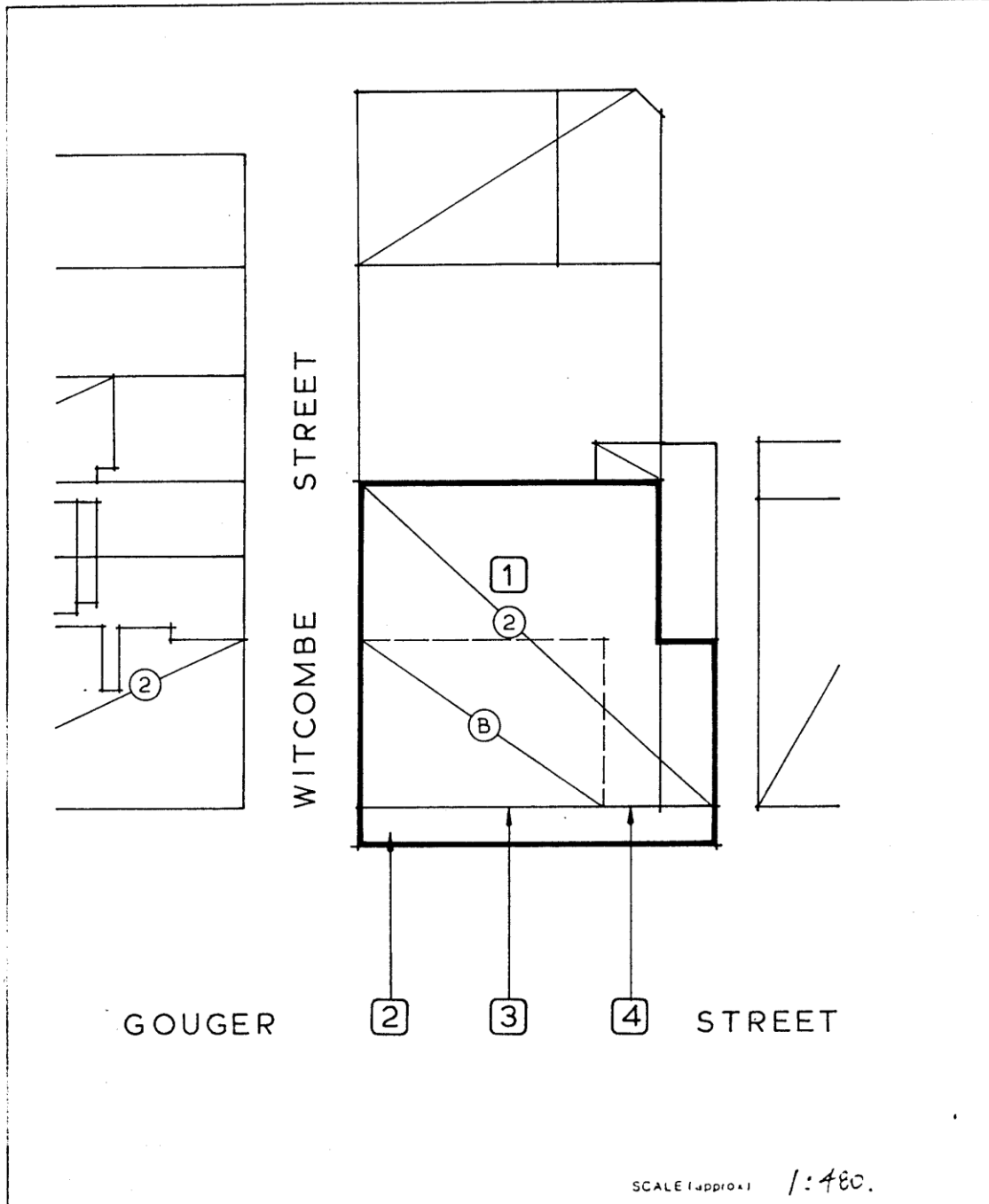


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CITY OF ADELAIDE HERITAGE STUDY

The City Heritage Register-Definition of Items
Prepared by the Dept. of Planning and Development

Item	SHOPS AND DANCE STUDIO (Former OSBORNE HALL)	Building No
Address	122-130 GOUGER STREET, ADELAIDE	CT 4340/584 4050/580*

NOTES:

1. Extent of building subject to Listing shown within thick black line.
2. Balcony to Gouger Street.
3. Unsympathetic ground floor shop fronts which could be subject to further adaptation.
4. First Floor Entrance.

* CT 4050/580 was omitted in the Statutory Exhibition November-December 1990, but is to form a part of the conservation site. The referencing will be corrected in a future exhibition.