

NORTH ADELAIDE INSTITUTE AND POST OFFICE

164-176 Tynte Street

North Adelaide's remarkable stock of historical buildings provides an excellent example of some of the processes of Australian nineteenth century urban development. The juxtaposition of shops, residences, work places and cultural institutions which is characteristic of much of that development is superbly illustrated in the largely intact streetscape of Tynte Street. This complex is perhaps the ultimate example of multiple purpose development, the one building being financed co-operatively by public and private funds as a cultural centre, post office, meeting place, private residence and handsome public monument.

The Post Office has occupied a prominent part in local affairs of North Adelaide. It was erected and still operates as the mail clearing house and receiving house for North Adelaide. The date of construction in 1884 also marks the rapid expansion of telegraphic communication which took place during the 1880s. The building of the adjoining Institute testifies to the capacity of Adelaide residents in the 1870s to remedy the cultural shortcomings of the colony. Other cultural buildings such as the Art Gallery of South Australia, Mitchell Building, Jervois Wing of the State Library, Public Baths, Band Rotunda and Torrens Weir were also constructed during this period of unprecedented prosperity and confidence. The North Adelaide Institute was part of that dynamic phase of urban and cultural development, and a milestone for the North Adelaide community.



(CD Ref 1345/50)

In 1880 ' . . . the desirability of establishing an Institute at North Adelaide was affirmed at a large meeting of the residents'. No action was taken until mid-1882 when a further call for residents' support was made. The proposed erection of a local post office appears to have been

the necessary catalyst, for in August 1882 at a public meeting it was resolved that the Institute buildings be erected on land provided by the government adjoining the post office site. The sum of 220 guineas was subscribed at the meeting, a building committee formed, and encouragement given by the chief justice and the Honourable J.L. Parsons (minister for Education). By July 1883 the committee had sufficient monies subscribed to accept the tender of R.C Rees for £3470 allowing for the entire Institute building to be erected, except for rooms at the rear of the hall dating from 1885.

Heritage of the City of Adelaide



The foundation stone for the North Adelaide Institute was laid by the Governor Sir William Robinson on 10 September 1883. A contemporary account of the opening ceremony in 1884 described the Institute as part of a large and handsome building which would also contain a post and telegraph office. There was a hall, library and a large assembly room fitted with a stage. 'The hall is provided with four doors opening outwards, so as to minimise the danger in case of panic among the audience'. On the upper floor was a reading room and committee rooms.

The front is in the classic style of architecture, with red brick facing and cement base and dressings. In the Post Office there will be complete accommodation for the postal as well as for the telegraphic and telephonic departments, also for night clerks and messengers. On the upper floor are seven apartments for the resident Postmaster.

(CD Ref 1345/52) The Post and Telegraph Office was opened on 1 November 1884, the cost of the entire project being £6942. The complex consists of three main areas, the Post Office and the Institute offices which together make up the street frontage of the building, and the large hall at the rear. The facade of brick and cement dressings was a radical departure from the constructional vernacular of the time of bluestone rubble and stuccoed dressings. This may be explained by the then growing reaction to the use of bluestone and stucco coinciding with an increased availability of quality face bricks. The composition of the building is strongly derived from the classical tradition. The institute and post office sections are differentiated by setbacks, the juxtaposition of entrances, the grouping of openings and the use of classical orders and pediment to centralise the institute frontage. The building is visually unified by a strongly rusticated plinth, the banded base to the first floor and a decorative frieze linking the impost level of first floor window openings. The street frontage is an impressive combination of two discrete functions architecturally linked by continuity and similarity of detail. The use of the salmon coloured brick with stuccoed dressings is distinctive and attractive. By comparison, the hall is constructed of roughly squared sandstone with brick dressings. The Institute section has an impressively original interior.

The architectural qualities of the building give it additional significance as a major element in Tynte Street the traditional 'High Street' of North Adelaide. In a streetscape dominated by large and robust buildings of great and varied architectural character, the North Adelaide Institute and Post Office Building are pre-eminent.

Heritage of the City of Adelaide

Frearson's Monthly Illustrated Adelaide News, May 1884, pp. 70, 77; MLSA, Historical photographs (Town Acre 862); Nagel, P., *North Adelaide 1837-1901*, 1971, pp. 51-3; National Trust Register, 1980, p. 11; *South Australian Register*, 13 December 1883, 1 January 1884, 19 April 1884, 31 December 1884, 1 January 1885, 3 January 1885, 31 December 1885.

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.

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	NORTH ADELAIDE INSTITUTE AND POST OFFICE	Building No	30/0231
Address	164-176 Tynte Street, North Adelaide	CT 3967/143	CT 4279/431

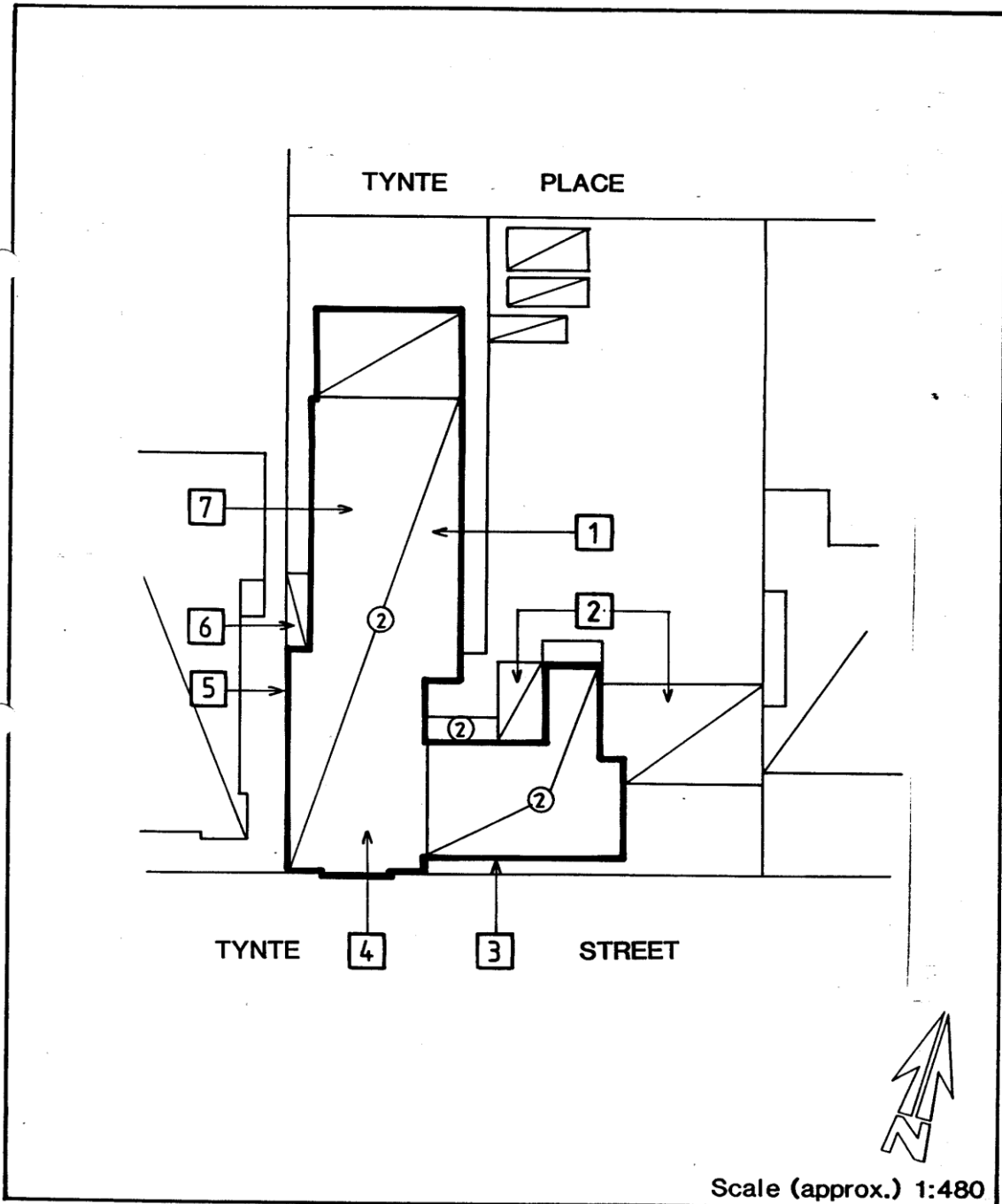


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30/0231

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CT 3967/143
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NOTES:

1. Note plaster ceiling ornamentation.
2. Brick additions.
3. Brick facade (Flemish bond) with stucco enrichment.
Note: Pilasters, pediments, parapet, strongly rusticated plinth and base of walling, horizontal mouldings and string courses.
4. Foyer area intact.
5. Roughly squared sandstone.
6. Brick addition.
7. Internally subdivided by timber framed partitions.