

FORMER MARINE AND HARBORS BUILDING

199-201 Victoria Square

Only the facade and one room in depth remain of this once exquisite building. The facade was the subject of a unique engineering feat for South Australia in 1979 when it was moved to its present site 34 metres to the north of the old site to make way for the SGIC building.

The four storey building was originally constructed for the National Mutual Life Assurance of Australia (NMLA) in 1884 and reflected the financial optimism of the period, just before South Australia plunged into a depression. The NMLA company first opened in Melbourne in 1869, commencing operations in Adelaide in 1878.

The Victorian elegance of the building still attracts attention. The architects were Cumming and Davies and the builder was James Shaw. The classical design was described at the time as 'Italian'. The roof is unique to Adelaide, 'A French roof . . . with a large square dome in the centre, covered with lead cut to fish-scale pattern, and surmounted by handsome cast-iron cresting and finials surrounding a look-out'.

The high standard of the stonework was also much admired. The stone was imported from New South Wales, although it is not certain whether it was 'freestone' from Mossman's quarries in Sydney or Hawkesbury sandstone.

Much attention was also given to the interior, with wide, handsome archways and a magnificent 'hanging' spiral staircase of Kapunda marble. Before the move in 1979 this was dismantled by the Public Buildings Department (now the Department of Housing and Construction) and is presently in storage.

The building is best known as the original headquarters of the South Australian Harbors Board (now the Department of Marine and Harbors). The building was bought for that purpose in 1914, soon after the Harbors Board was established under the provisions of the Harbors Act of 1913. This act heralded a significant expansion in state government functions as it provided for public acquisition of wharves, water frontages and other waterfront property and vested control of all harbors in the board.

Three storey extensions were made in 1914 to the rear of the building, followed by further extensions in 1945. The Department of Marine and Harbors moved to new headquarters at Port Adelaide in 1979.

Department of Environment, Report No. 622, 1978 (Heritage Unit); Boulderstone Hornibrook photograph collection; MLSA, Bierbaum files for Marine and Harbors building, Historical photographs (Town Acre 267); Morrison, W.F., *The Aldine history of South Australia*, Vol. 2, 1890, p. 772; *Observer*, 31 May 1884; *South Australian Register*, 21 March 1884, 31 May 1884; South Australian directories, 1902-05; *South Australian Yearbook*, 1966, p. 269.

Heritage of the City of Adelaide

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	Former MARINE AND HARBORS BUILDING	Building NO 10/0605
Address	199-201 Victoria Square; 20-22 Morialta Street	CT 4153/78

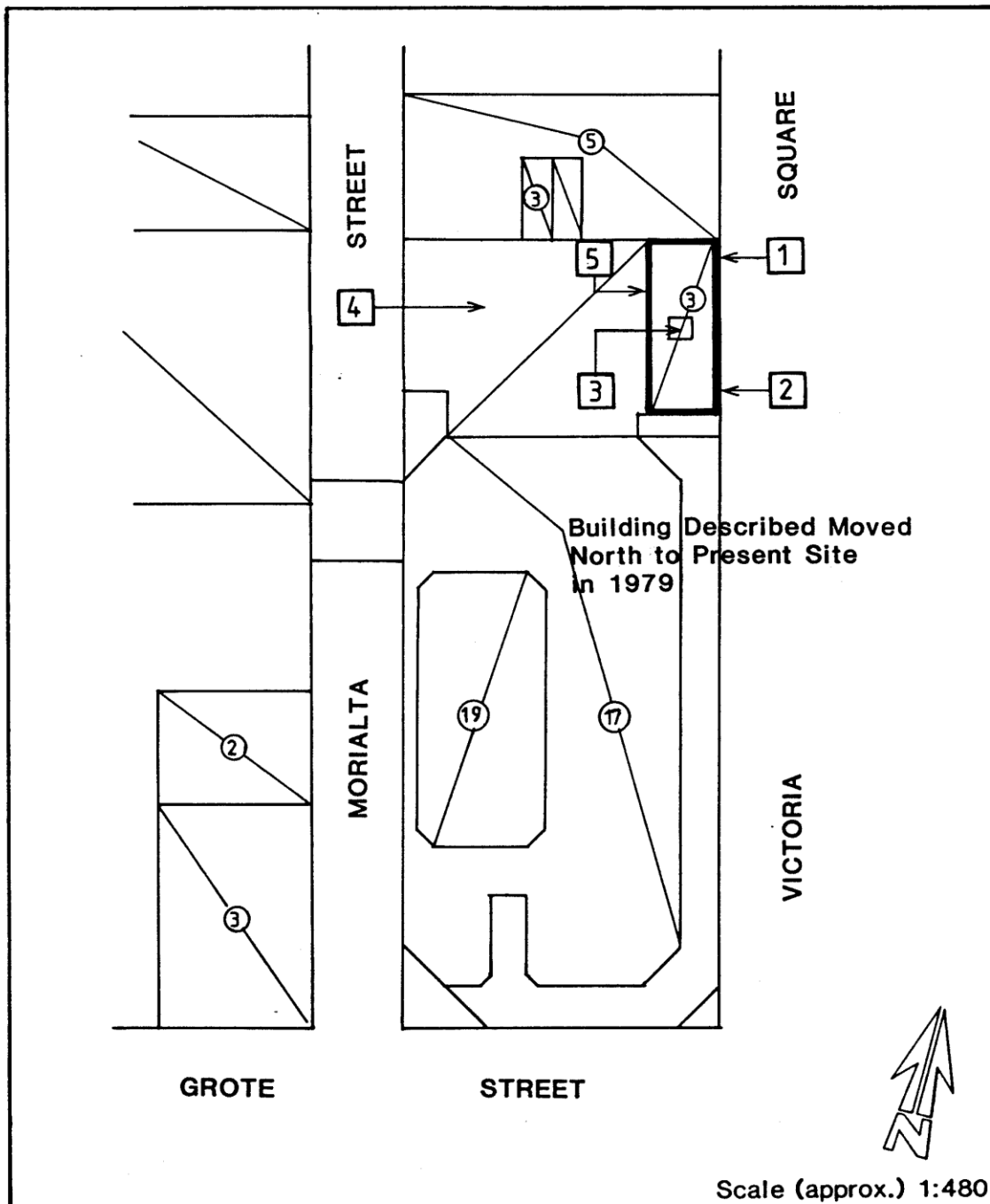


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NOTES:

1. Ashlar sandstone with sandstone detailing and basalt plinth.
2. Note pilasters, columns and floral detailing.
3. Metal shingled mansard roof with widows walk.
4. Concrete block addition replacing three storey rear section of building.
5. Rear facade faced with concrete blocks.