

CHRISTIAN BROTHERS COLLEGE

208-226 Wakefield Street

The buildings at Christian Brothers College (CBC) are of historical and architectural significance due to their association with the expansion of Catholic-sponsored education in South Australia, and the fine workmanship of the south and east wings. The buildings were erected in stages as college enrolments increased, and as the financial capability of the brothers allowed.

The Society of the Brothers of the Christian Schools was founded in Waterford, Ireland, in the late eighteenth century by Edmund Ignatius Rice. The society prospered to such a degree that it assimilated the Christian Brothers in France. By 1878 there were communities of Christian Brothers throughout Ireland and in such 'outposts' as Gibraltar, Newfoundland, South Africa, India, New Zealand and in most of the Australian colonies, with an estimated 50 000 boys attending Christian Brothers schools. By the late 1890s 4190 pupils attended Christian Brothers schools in Australia, with a teaching staff of 110. CBC in Adelaide was established soon after the passing of the State Education Act in 1875 and during the erection of many state schools. It was the first boarding school in the world run by the Christian Brothers.

The *South Australian Register* of 16 August 1878 reported in detail the laying of the foundation stone of the first part of the college (the ground floors of the west and south wings). The site for the residence and schools was an acre at the corner of Wakefield Street ' . . . and a handsome edifice from the design by Mr E. Baver is to be erected on it'. Apart from the 'convent' there would be at first two schoolrooms, each having a classroom attached, so arranged that a future second storey could be added. Glen Osmond stone would be used with freestone dressings. About 400 people were present at the ceremony, including the Catholic bishop and clergy of the other denominations.

The school started in 1879 with sixty boys and three brothers, Brother Hughes being responsible for administration and construction. In 1880 the south wing fronting Wakefield Street was completed to designs by the architects Bayer and Withall. Substantial additions were carried out in 1892, providing four new classrooms, a laboratory, and music room. The classrooms were divided by roller partitions which could be raised if two of the classrooms were needed as a lecture hall or for public entertainment. 'These partitions are similar to those used in London schools, but this is the first time they have been constructed in the Colonies.' The new building was considered handsome, its two storeys ' . . . in style late Gothic, built of Glen Osmond stone with freestone copings and carved finials, adding very much to the grouping of the original college buildings'. The architect was M.E Cavanagh and the contractors Mannion and Hudd.

Next the east wing was erected in 1897 enclosing a quadrangle in typical college fashion. This was constructed of Tapley Hill bluestone with Murray Bridge 'freestone' dressings. There was a gymnasium, music room, boys refectory, and several smaller rooms. 'The second floor is supported by four mighty metal girders, which are also intended to support the pendant apparatus of the gymnasium, which will be the most modern and best.' There were dormitories for boarders, bedrooms for brothers in charge, wardrobes and shower baths. 'The

Heritage of the City of Adelaide

lavatory basins will have white polished marble tops, and will be supplied with patent nickel taps of the newest and most approved pattern.' The ceilings were mostly Oregon pine, arranged in panels, and polished. 'All the doors will have transome lights in best cathedral glass and the large Gothic window in front will be in cathedral glass also.' There was also a wide veranda running the whole length of the building on the western side, opening out on the school playground. The architect was Albert Conrad, and J.J. Leahy the contractor.

Until 1963 the buildings remained largely original and as depicted in the *Jubilee record* illustration of 1903. The buildings are of Gothic design and were substantially built of bluestone with well-finished freestone dressings. In 1963, however, Ackland Street was widened for the extension of the new thoroughfare, Frome Street, thus encroaching on the CBC property and resulting in the demolition of the west wing. Then in 1983 the east wing was gutted by fire, both events seriously impairing the integrity of the complex.

However, the complex remains a good representative example of a private school of the nineteenth century.

ACA, Smith Survey 1880; *Advertiser*, 13 January 1879; *Christian Brothers College*, Jubilee record, 1903, pp. 36-7, 45, MLSA, Historical photographs (Town Acre 293); *South Australian Register*, 16 August 1878, 1 January 1879.

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	CHRISTIAN BROTHERS COLLEGE	Building No	12/0501
Address	208-226 Wakefield Street; 184-200 Frome Street; 75-79 Ifould Street	CT	3113/105 1625/163; 1603/159

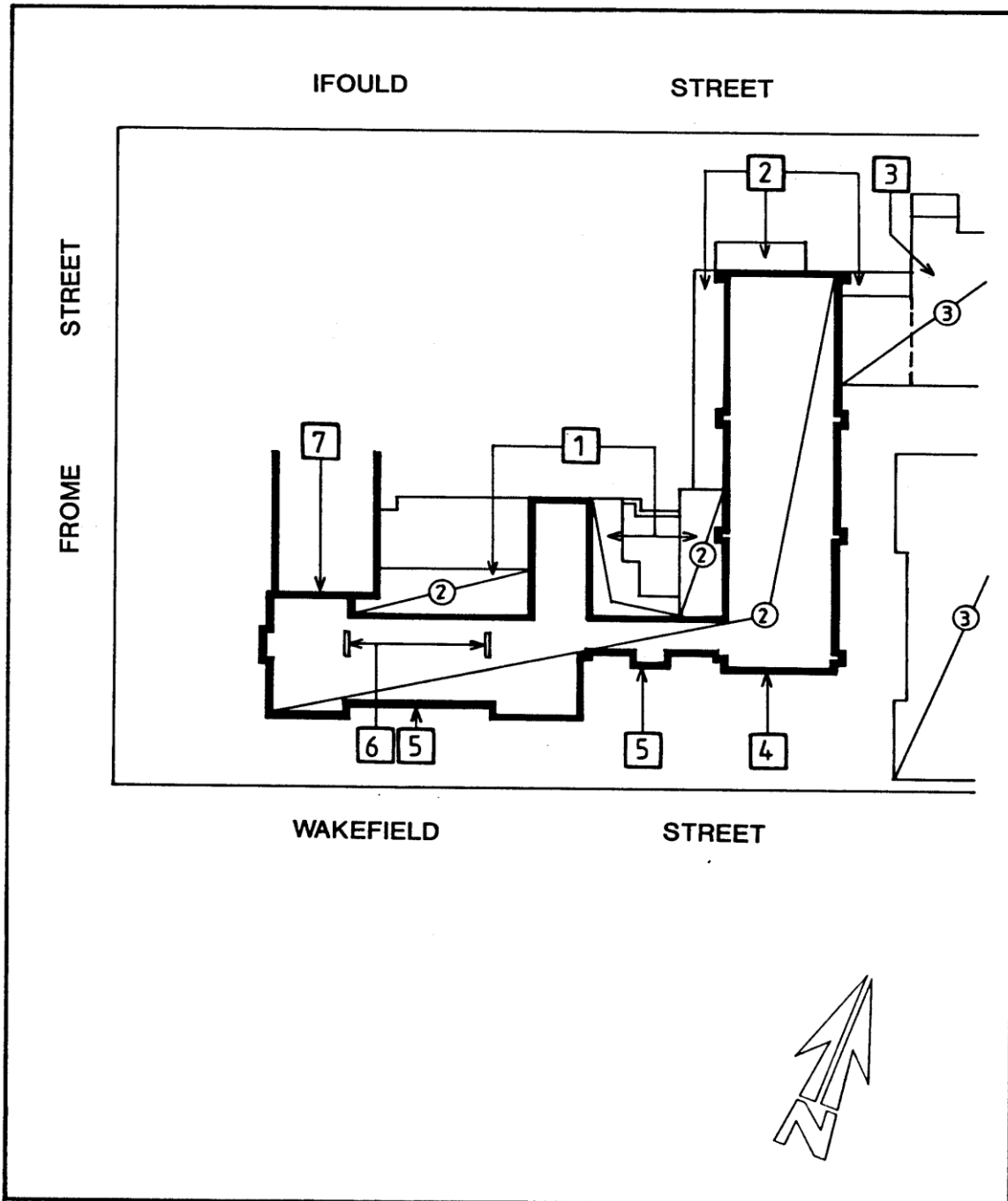


Image scanned - not to stated scale.

This Curtilage Map has been prepared as a guide only and no warranty or assurance is given about the accuracy of the content as it may contain obsolete information. The Corporation excludes all liability [including for negligence] in relation to your use of these documents.



CITY OF ADELAIDE HERITAGE STUDY

The City Heritage Register-Definition of Items

Prepared by the Dept. of Planning and Development

Item	CHRISTIAN BROTHERS COLLEGE	Building No 12/0501
Address	208-226 Wakefield Street; 184-200 Frome Street; 75-79 Ifould Street	CT 3113/105 1625/163; 1603/159

NOTES:

1. New additions.
2. Verandahs.
3. Brick.
4. Coursed random bluestone with drafted sandstone quoins and sandstone enrichment.
5. Note: Leadlight
6. Note: Rendered chimneys.
7. Facade rendered for handball court.