

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE VALUE

**Bicentennial Conservatory
Botanic Gardens of Adelaide
Hackney Road, Adelaide**

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLACE

The 1989 Bicentennial Conservatory is located at the east side of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide and stands as a landmark element within the Garden.

The Conservatory is the largest single span conservatory in the southern hemisphere¹ - 100 metres long, 47 metres wide and 27 metres high. The building is steel framed in construction and is clad with a series of 100m² pre-fabricated composite aluminium/ glass panels in 24 metre lengths. Panels are supported by 28 trusses and all were glazed before installation. The building is a segmented curved cone in form, designed to accommodate a tall rainforest inside, allow condensation to drain off walls and also minimise glass exposed to the high summer sun of Adelaide. The curves of the building were carefully modelled to allow economical repetition and prefabrication of glazing panels, while still providing elegance in architectural form.

The project team responsible for the design and erection of the Conservatory included:

- Architect: Raffen Maron Architects Pty Ltd - Guy Maron
- Structural Engineer: Connell Wagner (SA) – Chris Michelmore
- Mechanical Engineer: Bassett PDG Consulting Engineers – Ken Daunt
- Electrical Engineer: Bassett PDG Consulting Engineers – Ken Daunt
- Landscape Architect: Land Systems Pty Ltd
- Contractor: Hansen & Yuncken

The Conservatory was designed by architect, Guy Maron AM, of Raffen Maron Architects. Maron received the RAI (SA Chapter) Presidents Medal in 1996. Maron became a Member of the Order of Australia in June 2000, *'For service to architecture, particularly to contemporary design, and in the management of professional associations'*.

The Bicentennial Conservatory is listed on the (Royal) Australian Institute of Architects (SA Chapter) 20th Century Notable South Australian Architecture Register. Architecture Awards of relevance received for the project included:

- AIA (National) Sir Zelman Cowan Award, 1991 (*public architecture*)
- BHP Architecture of the Decade Award, 1991 (*steel product focus*)
- AIA (SA Chapter) Award of Merit, 1990 (*public architecture*)
- Quaternario International Award, finalist, 1988 (*international award for innovative technology in architecture*)

¹ Adelaide Botanic Gardens – Bicentennial Conservatory brochure

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The 1989 South Australian Bicentennial Conservatory demonstrates a high degree of creative and technical accomplishment, as a well-executed South Australian example of 'Late Twentieth Century Structuralist' style architecture. The Conservatory stands as an exemplar work of the celebrated local architect Guy Maron, who produced a creative and technically excellent contemporary design solution responding to the problems of designing a tropical glasshouse within a dry, temperate climate.

The Conservatory is also of historic significance as a demonstration of the continuing development and importance of the Adelaide Botanic Garden – established for the study and enjoyment of botany from 1855 to today.

RELEVANT CRITERIA

The proposed nomination meets Section 16 criteria of the *SA Heritage Places Act 1993*. The following Section 16 criteria apply:²

(a) *it demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history*

The 1989 Conservatory demonstrates important aspects of the State's botanical, horticultural and agricultural history as a key part of Adelaide Botanic Garden's early and continuing tradition of erecting structures for the economic study and enjoyment of botany in South Australia.

(d) *it is an outstanding representative of a particular class of places of cultural significance*

The Bicentennial Conservatory is an outstanding late 20th Century example of a South Australian glasshouse. It is outstanding due to its architectural design quality, scale and fitness for purpose. It complements existing State Heritage listed glasshouses, which are 19th Century structures, as a local 20th Century interpretation of the building type.

(e) *it demonstrates a high degree of creative, aesthetic or technical accomplishment or is an outstanding representative of particular construction techniques or design characteristics*

The Conservatory is an outstanding representative of Late Twentieth Century Structuralist style architecture in South Australia and is an architectural exemplar of accomplished local architect Guy Maron. The structure is a creative and technically excellent contemporary design solution to the problems of designing a tropical glasshouse within a dry, temperate climate.

(g) *it has a special association with the life or work of a person or organisation or an event of historical importance*

As a South Australian architect of the 1970s-2010+ period, Guy Maron's work reflects contemporary architectural theory of the period, exploring the architectural expression of structure and function in material and form. Maron has been a local advocate of architecture for many years and has contributed much to media and professional architectural debates. The Conservatory is considered his most accomplished work. Maron received a RAIA (SA Chapter) Award of Merit (1990) and the RAIA Sir Zelman

² Note: This report is examining the heritage value of the Conservatory building, but the plantings inside the building are excluded from assessment. Plantings have in part changed over time and a botanical assessment of their heritage value is beyond the scope of this heritage assessment.

Cowan Award (1991) for the Bicentennial Conservatory³ – a nationally significant architecture award for public buildings.

RELEVANT CRITERIA (Under Section 16 of the *Heritage Places Act 1993*)

(a) *it demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history*

Places considered under this criterion need to illustrate important aspects of events, developments or cultural phases in South Australia's history. Places should not be commonplace, not replicated commonly, should be of wide interest and contain sufficient physical fabric as evidence of heritage value.

The Adelaide Botanic Gardens are of acknowledged cultural significance in South Australia, with most buildings and features entered on the State Heritage Register. The Statement of Significance in the conservation plan for the place notes:

“Adelaide Botanic Garden is a place of diverse and steadily evolving cultural significance, especially for:

- *Development of its initial design from 1855-65*
- *Extension and embellishment from 1865-01*
- *Maintenance and complementary development under subsequent directors, particularly where such developments have evolved within the strong physical and conceptual framework of the Garden*
- *The tradition of gardening under glass, a prominent feature of Adelaide Botanic Garden from its earliest years, is of exceptional historic and aesthetic significance in an Australian context. The surviving landmark Palm House has an integral role in providing the High Victorian quality to the Garden and is a rare example of this building worldwide. Other significant aspects of this tradition survive from the flowering Victoria Lily, which gave the Garden a signature focus in the 1860s to the construction of the Bicentennial Conservatory.”⁴*

The 1989 Conservatory demonstrates important aspects of the State's botanical, horticultural and agricultural history. The Conservatory is an important illustration of Adelaide Botanic Garden's early and evolving tradition of erecting structures for the economic study and enjoyment of botany in South Australia.

The intactness of the Place is exceptional and no other 20th Century glass house in South Australia demonstrates this historic theme.

Criterion (a) applies.

(b) *it has rare, uncommon or endangered qualities that are of cultural significance*

A place which satisfies this criterion should demonstrate a way of life, function, custom or action no longer practiced, in threat of loss or of exceptional interest. The place can be rare, or once commonplace but now rare.

The Bicentennial Conservatory is the only known public conservatory dating from the 20th Century in the State and its exemplar design quality, technical accomplishment and fitness for purpose has been celebrated through numerous architectural design awards.

³ Encyclopaedia of Australian Architecture pp 430-31

⁴ Aitken et al p 206

Other conservatories of cultural significance listed on the South Australian Heritage Register include:

Beechwood (former Birksgate) Conservatory

Snows Road, Stirling



Image courtesy of Google Images

Palm House Conservatory, Botanic Gardens of Adelaide

North Terrace, Adelaide



While the Conservatory is a rare building type in South Australia, it does not demonstrate 'uncommon or endangered qualities'. The function of the place – the growing of plants in a glass house – is still practiced today, evidenced in the recent completion of the ABG Amazon Water lily glass house (2007). While the function of the place is of 'exceptional interest' to the South Australian community (evidenced by past visitor numbers), its function is a commonplace activity still practiced today and is not endangered.

Amazon Lily Glasshouse, Botanic Garden of Adelaide

North Terrace, Adelaide



Criterion (b) does not apply.

(c) *it may yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the State's history, including its natural history*

This criterion relates to the ability of a place to contribute to the knowledge of the State's past and relates to structures, archaeological or geological sites.

When considered within the 175 year post-contact history of the State, the subject building is relatively recent in construction (1989) and its use is common (glass house). Therefore, the subject place does not illustrate past themes of particular importance and does not contribute significantly to our knowledge of the past. Further, this criterion is typically applied to sites of archaeological or geological significance.

Criterion (c) does not apply.

(d) *it is an outstanding representative of a particular class of places of cultural significance*

A place which satisfies this criterion needs to belong to a particular class of places of significance within the context of the history of post-contact South Australia. The class group needs to be wide enough so comparison can be assessed and relative value determined. The place can be outstanding, or part of an outstanding class, but if it is common or of poor integrity it should not be considered.

Glass houses are of cultural significance in South Australia, as they demonstrate horticultural and botanical activities and architectural/ engineering proficiency within the State.

Two other glass houses are currently entered in the South Australian Heritage Register:

Beechwood (former Birksgate) Conservatory

Snows Road, Stirling

Palm House Conservatory, Botanic Gardens of Adelaide

North Terrace, Adelaide

The class of place is small in representation (2 places listed to date), mostly because of the uniqueness of the building type. It is considered that the class is sufficient in size though, to allow comparison of the potential cultural significance of the Conservatory as an outstanding representative of this class.

The function of the late 20th Century glass house is clearly and creatively expressed in the economic but elegant form, vertical scale, and technologically innovative detailing of the building. Numerous architectural awards have been received for the Conservatory, confirming acknowledgement of the outstanding architectural design qualities and functional appropriateness of the place. The building is also an exceptional example of application of late 20th Century technology, expressed through the scale and structural form, use of steel to provide sufficient space for rainforest species and the incorporation of purpose-designed mechanical and misting plant.

The Bicentennial Conservatory is an outstanding late 20th Century example of a glass house in South Australia. It is outstanding due to its architectural design quality, scale and fitness for purpose. It complements the other heritage listed glass houses, which are 19th Century structures, as a local 20th Century interpretation of the building type.

Criterion (d) applies.

(e) *it demonstrates a high degree of creative, aesthetic or technical accomplishment or is an outstanding representative of particular construction techniques or design characteristics*

Such places should illustrate innovation in design, be an exemplar of a style or the best example of a designer's work. The design should be of acknowledged quality and merit. Further, such places should represent technological innovation or best practice use of indigenous materials or construction methods.

It is argued that the Bicentennial Conservatory demonstrates a high degree of creative and technical accomplishment, as:

- a well-executed South Australian example of 'Late Twentieth Century Structuralist'⁵ architecture and an exemplar of the work of local architect Guy Maron, and
- a creative and technically excellent contemporary design solution to the problems of designing a tropical glass house within a dry, temperate climate.

Style: The Conservatory is an outstanding representative of Late Twentieth Century Structuralist style architecture in South Australia. Such buildings are characterised by expressed structural systems, large scale forms of organic shape and use of materials of a contemporary nature.⁶ The Conservatory's architectural features of note include:

- Organic form – the Conservatory comprises two segmental cones, developed to economically and elegantly accommodate plants, minimise solar gains, allow internal drainage of condensation and finally the standardisation of all glazing panels.

⁵ Apperly et al, p 256

⁶ Apperly et al, p 256

- Exposed steel frame structure, reflecting the transparent nature of the building type
- Use of contemporary composite wall panels (aluminium)
- Column free interior.



Bicentennial Conservatory (2012)

Few buildings of this period in South Australia demonstrate these design characteristics in such a well-executed manner. The Adelaide Superdrome (1993)⁷ could be considered comparable in architectural style, but the Conservatory has received numerous design awards and other local architectural examples are not evident.⁸



Adelaide Superdrome (2012)

Award winning: The Conservatory is acknowledged as award winning architecture, in South Australia and Australia. The Conservatory is listed on the (Royal) Australian Institute of Architects (SA Chapter) 20th Century Notable South Australian Architecture Register. Architecture Awards of relevance received for the project included:

- AIA (National) Sir Zelman Cowan Award, 1991 (*public architecture*)
- BHP Architecture of the Decade Award, 1991 (*steel product focus*)
- AIA (SA Chapter) Award of Merit, 1990 (*public architecture*)
- Quaternario International Award, finalist, 1988 (*award for innovative technology in architecture*)

⁷ AIA <http://www.architecture.com.au/i-cms?page=1.17.3138.3146.5367.5565>

⁸ AIA <http://www.architecture.com.au/i-cms?page=1.18.3146.5251>

Award citations and media articles of the period confirm the high degree of architectural and technical accomplishment shown in Maron's Conservatory:

*"Adelaide's new Conservatory is an outstanding piece of Australian Architecture. The success of the building has been, to date, almost total. It was built on time, on budget, and on the basis of clearly enunciated principles of modern architecture. It is popular, not just because it contains living specimens from fragile rainforest ecologies but because the building itself is beautiful."*⁹

*"Guy Maron's Adelaide Conservatory is a tour de force, a major landmark for the city and for modern architecture."*¹⁰

*"this is a most accomplished work and reaches an international standard. The glazed walls, part of a cone, form the major component, repetition being an important element in the building process, as well as making for a most economical structure. Technologically, it has incorporated systems developed by NASA but without resorting to such complication that would cause failure of the conservatory to operate. Structurally, the system is direct, it is steel and concrete with access into the roof of this great 'humpback'! the work imparts an optimism; it does not heavily rely on the European model, and spatially it is a joy to work within."*¹¹

Technically, the Conservatory is also accomplished and innovative in design. The structural frame is economic and effective in providing clear spanning space of up to 27 metres height.

The form of the building "has its origin in the cone, the surface of which may be subdivided in any chosen number of parallel circles and dimensionally equal radials."¹² The segmental cone form also allowed minimal direct contact with sun rays, easy dispersal of condensation and accommodation of a variety of tree heights inside.

The glazing is standardised and arrayed in a curve to minimise summer sun exposure and maximise winter sun penetration. Panels were designed as pre-fabricated elements, which allowed economic erection and minimal glass loss during construction.

Exemplar of Maron's work: The Bicentennial Conservatory is considered Maron's most accomplished architectural work to date.

Early projects such as Regency Park Community College (1980) (below) are competent examples of Maron's initial use of 'Brutalist' architectural language (RAIA Award of Merit, 1981).



Image taken from 'The Architecture of Guy Maron'

⁹ Downton, P Architecture Australia, Feb 1990, p 50

¹⁰ Steel Profile Architecture of the Decade Awards 1981-1991

¹¹ Murcutt, G – Jury Comment, Sir Zelman Cowen Award for Architecture, 1991

¹² Quaternario 88 citation/ submission

The College is an impressive example of the creative use of insitu concrete and the form is a clear expression of function and response to environment.

Projects completed by Maron during the mid-late 1980s and 1990s reflect modernist and more specifically his 'Structuralist' approach to architectural design, but are considered less accomplished in design when compared with the Bicentennial Conservatory - mostly due to programme or budget constraints. These projects include:

Alice Springs Railway Station (1981) (below) – RAIA Award of Merit. Simple structure, architectural expression of structure – elegant but functional



Image taken from 'The Architecture of Guy Maron'

Flinders University Law and Commerce Building (1992) (below) RAIA Award of Merit/ Commendations. Expression of structural grid in form and layout and facade articulation – competent, but not innovative for function



Image taken from 'The Architecture of Guy Maron'

UniSA City West Campus (1994) (below). A substantial city campus comprising a grid of adaptable spaces. Budget cuts and a rushed programme resulted in a simplistic solution without architectural quality



Image taken from 'The Architecture of Guy Maron'

Mount Lofty Summit Redevelopment (1996) (below). Organic, honest form with structure expressed and form reflecting the desire for views - but as a formal study, the building is less convincing



Image taken from 'The Architecture of Guy Maron'

Maron has also entered many national and international architectural competitions during his career, but these are not considered here as this report is only concerned with Maron's built works.

Out of all Maron's works, he has gained the most peer recognition (architecture awards) for the Bicentennial Conservatory and he personally believes it is his best work to date.¹³

Criterion (e) applies.

(f) *it has strong cultural or spiritual associations for the community or a group within it*

Places entered in this category should be held in high regard and potentially for a long period. The association should not be ordinary, or held by few in the community.

The Bicentennial Conservatory is widely published and is promoted by the Gardens as a key feature of the Botanic Gardens – so, the place has had a high profile in the media and community. This aside, it is difficult to confirm the social value of the place without extensive community consultation – beyond the scope of this report.

'The Australian' newspaper held a 'Best Buildings in Australia' poll in late 2010¹⁴ and the Bicentennial Conservatory was listed by readers as one of Australia's '10 best buildings' –

¹³ Interview between M Queale and G Maron, 15 November 2011

¹⁴ *The Australian Magazine*, 6-7 November 2010

evidence in part of the potential social value of the place. Further local consultation is required to confirm the community's cultural association with the place.

Criterion (f) does not apply.

(g) *it has a special association with the life or work of a person or organisation or an event of historical importance*

Close association is required and this association should be able to be demonstrated in the fabric of the place. The place and important role or impact of the person/ organization should be directly linked.

Association with ABG and Director Brian Morley – Brian Morley was the seventh director of the Gardens during the years 1981-2000. The Bicentennial Conservatory was erected during his directorship and could be considered one of his more important achievements. Morley restored many of the buildings in the Gardens, consolidated the new gardens at Mt Lofty and Wittunga and managed the relocation of the Herbarium and reclamation of Tramways Trust land along Hackney Road. "Morley believed that he had left the Adelaide Botanic Garden 'culturally enhanced.'"¹⁵

Morley was one of several Gardens directors responsible for substantial changes and developments at the Gardens. His contribution is similar, but not as influential as that of much earlier director, Richard Schomburgk (1865-91). Gardens were developed and public buildings erected for public use. The association between Morley and the Conservatory is not considered sufficiently 'special', when compared with the work of other Directors of the Garden such as Schomburgk.

Association with architect Guy Maron – Bicentennial Conservatory Architect, Guy Maron AM (c1935-) completed his architectural studies at the University of New South Wales in 1962 and gained early professional experience in Sydney and then Canada. By 1973, Maron had returned to Australia and settled in Adelaide, as a partner in the highly prolific practice of Cheesman, Doley, Neighbour & Raffin. In 1978, when the practice was dissolved, Maron and Raffin established Raffin Maron Architects.

Maron received the RAIA (SA Chapter) Presidents Medal in 1996. Maron became a Member of the Order of Australia in June 2000, 'For service to architecture, particularly to contemporary design, and in the management of professional associations'.

Maron's work expresses the formal possibilities in the architectural expression of function and structure. His early buildings were often brutalist in style, with dominant grids and dressed concrete forms. Later buildings, including the Bicentennial Conservatory, were lighter in expression, with structural systems celebrated in form, pattern and connection. He received a RAIA (SA Chapter) Award of Merit (1990) and the RAIA Sir Zelman Cowan Award (1991) for the Bicentennial Conservatory¹⁶ – a nationally significant architecture award for public buildings. Only two other Sir Zelman Cowan awards have been received by South Australian architects in the 30 year history of the award.¹⁷

Out of all Maron's works, he has gained the most peer recognition (architecture awards) for the Bicentennial Conservatory and he personally believes it is his best work to date.¹⁸

Guy Maron has been a local advocate of architecture for many years and has contributed much to media and professional architectural debates. A review of awards received by Maron confirms that the Bicentennial Conservatory is his most celebrated work. Given

¹⁵ Aitken et al p 55

¹⁶ Encyclopaedia of Australian Architecture, pp 430-31

¹⁷ (1995) Swallowcliffe Schools; (2006) UniSA Kaurna Building – Interior Design

¹⁸ Interview between M Queale and G Maron, 15 November 2011

Maron's professional awards and AM, a 'special association' between the Conservatory and architect can be demonstrated.

Criterion (g) applies.

BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The following Historical Background focuses on the development of glass houses in Adelaide's Botanic Garden and not the development of the Garden as a whole.

The Adelaide Botanic Garden was established in 1855, in the north-east Adelaide Parklands, north off North Terrace. The Garden's first Director, George Francis (1855-1865) was responsible for the early layout and selection of plant species.

The first glass house in the Garden was erected in 1859 - "a handsome domed conservatory (with flanking plant houses) was erected on the west boundary. This included provision for a wide range of tender and valuable plants ranging from florists' flowers, succulents, and dwarf plants to orchids and aquatic plants: in the centre were larger tropical foliage plants. A 'rustic temple' was constructed nearby in the early 1860s, sited on a diagonal alignment and so placed to take advantage of sweeping views over the lake."¹⁹ Remnants of the rustic temple remain today in the same location – the structure is now greatly altered and is used as a summer house. The glass house has been demolished.



Remnant of 'rustic temple', Adelaide Botanic Gardens (2012)

The 'Victoria House' was the next glass house to be erected in the Garden in 1868. The Garden's second Director Richard Schomburgk, wished to grow and display the South American 'Victoria Amazonica' water lily and a glass house was required. The glass house was a simple timber and glass structure, with a large pond inside for the water lily. "The venture was a huge success and the first flowering (of the lily) produced extraordinary public interest. Newspaper reports gave hour-by-hour descriptions of the opening of the flower buds. Some 30 000 visitors were recorded in the five week period up to November 1868."²⁰ The glass house was later demolished, but the pond remains to today, now inside a new glass house enclosure.

¹⁹ Aitken et al, p 25

²⁰ Aitken et al, p 31



Victoria Regina House, c1872 Adelaide Botanic Gardens, State Library of South Australia

Schomburgk proposed a further glass house in the early 1870s, to house the growing tropical plant collection. An order was placed in 1874 to purchase a glass house from Bremen, Germany and the glazed, cast and wrought iron structure was erected and opened in 1877. The glass house was surmounted by a glazed hexagonal dome in the middle. Glazing was clear, but also featured blue coloured glass inserts. The glass house remains today and is now known as the 'Palm House'. Plantings are no longer tropical, but dry/ temperate in selection.



Palm House Conservatory Botanic Gardens of Adelaide (2012)

Several other glass houses have been erected in the Garden over the years for propagation purposes. In 1951-2, then Director, Noel Lothian erected several new glass houses in the vicinity of the Victoria House, to replace earlier glass houses and suit planting programmes. One of these glass houses replaced the earlier Victoria House.

The seventh Gardens Director, Brian Morley (1981-2000) was instrumental in the conservation of the then dilapidated Palm House (1995) and the restoration of several other Garden elements (gates, roofs, statues etc...).

Morley was also responsible for the development of a new tropical conservatory – the Bicentennial Conservatory. Plans were first prepared for a new tropical conservatory in Botanic Park by architect Guy Maron, of Raffin Maron Architects, in 1984. Public opinion rose against the proposal, as the conservatory would have encroached upon the Adelaide Parklands.²¹ In 1985, the State Government of the day offered the Gardens a narrow parcel of redundant Municipal Tramways Trust land to the east of the Gardens. This land became the site for the proposed conservatory. Raffin Maron Architects were engaged to design the Conservatory and funding was sourced from the Federal Government, as a part of its 'Commonwealth/State

²¹ Aitken et al, p 54

Bicentennial Commemorative Programme'. Maron studied overseas glass house models in Frankfurt, London (Kew) and Philadelphia and developed an organic building form which was able to be easily prefabricated, provided a suitable tropical environment and expressed its function in a contemporary, honest and innovative manner.

Construction commenced in October 1987 and was completed in time for the planting of the landscape in May 1989. The Conservatory was opened on November 18, 1989.

The Conservatory is the largest single span conservatory in the southern hemisphere²² and is 100 metres long, 47 metres wide and 27 metres high. The building is steel framed in construction, incorporates 2434 m² of toughened glass and is clad with insulated aluminium panels at its base. The curved segmental form evolved from the requirements to need to standardise and prefabricate glazing and framing to suit timing constraints and quality control.

The internal Conservatory environment is managed by substantial mechanical plant. Nearly a thousand NASA developed misting nozzles in the roof create a 'cloud' effect. This acts as an efficient cooling, shading and humidifying system depending on the outside weather conditions. Until April 2012 when heating was discontinued, night time temperature was maintained at 12°C, with a minimum day time temperature of 23°C rising to a maximum of 35°C. The relative humidity is maintained between 65% and 75%.

On opening day, 18000 people passed through the building. A glass sculpture 'Cascade' by artist Sergio Redegalli, was located to the southern end of the site. 'Cascade' was commissioned by the World Expo '88 Authority and was shown in Brisbane as part of that year's Expo. It was donated to the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide by Pilkington (Australia) following completion of World Expo88.

The project team responsible for the design and erection of the Conservatory included:

- Architect: Raffin Maron Architects Pty Ltd - Guy Maron
- Structural Engineer: Connell Wagner (SA) – Chris Michelmore
- Mechanical Engineer: Bassett PDG Consulting Engineers – Ken Daunt
- Electrical Engineer: Bassett PDG Consulting Engineers – Ken Daunt
- Landscape Architect: Land Systems Pty Ltd
- Contractor: Hansen & Yuncken

Architect, Guy Maron AM (c1935-) completed his architectural studies at the University of New South Wales in 1962 and gained early professional experience in Sydney and then Canada. Among other projects, he was the architect responsible for the new Fanshawe College of Applied Arts and Technology in Toronto, in 1970. By 1973, Maron had returned to Australia and settled in Adelaide, as a partner in the highly prolific practice of Cheesman, Doley, Neighbour & Raffin. In 1978, when the practice was dissolved, Maron and Raffin established Raffin Maron Architects.

Maron's work expresses the formal possibilities in the architectural expression of function and structure. His early buildings were often brutalist in style, with dominant grids and dressed concrete forms. Later buildings were lighter in expression, with structural systems celebrated in form, pattern and connection. He received (SA Chapter) RAI A Awards of Merit for Regency Park Community College, SA (1981), Neales Place Housing, Adelaide (1983), and also awards for Alice Springs Railway Station and the Australian Automobile Association Headquarters in Canberra during this period.

Maron received the RAI A (SA Chapter) Presidents Medal in 1996. Maron became a Member of the Order of Australia in June 2000, 'For service to architecture, particularly to contemporary design, and in the management of professional associations'.²³

²² Adelaide Botanic Gardens – Bicentennial Conservatory brochure

²³ Australian Encyclopaedia of Architecture

Subsequent to the construction of the Conservatory, further Tramways land was passed to the Gardens in the early 1990s and redundant shedding removed, improving the garden setting of the Conservatory.

The Gardens undertook a review, including the plant collection, visitor experience, running costs and Greenhouse Gas Emissions associated with the Bicentennial Conservatory in 2011 and it was discovered that energy costs associated with the Bicentennial Conservatory were in the order of \$70 000 per year. The Gardens is currently (2012) considering whether to replant the building with species which are less reliant on heating to thrive.²⁴

In April 2012 heating to the Bicentennial Conservatory was turned off. The plant collection has been transitioned to that of a warm temperate rainforest (capable of tolerating lower winter temperatures) rather than tropical rainforest. The key themes associated with rainforest plants and their distinctive adaptive features will still be demonstrated by the changed selection of plant species on display.

The Adelaide Botanic Gardens Bicentennial Conservatory was erected to further the aims of the Gardens as a place to conserve, study and enjoy plant species. The Conservatory reflects the late twentieth century needs of the Gardens, as a high quality piece of public architecture, for the presentation and conservation of rainforest plant species – many of which are at threat of extinction at the close of the century.

REFERENCES

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- Personal files of Guy Maron, including various notes, submissions and newspaper articles relating the Bicentennial Conservatory

²⁴ Interview with Dr Phil Ainsley, Adelaide Botanic Gardens, 7 July 2011

- *Architects of South Australia* database
<http://www.architectsdatabase.unisa.edu.au/default.asp> (28 November 2009)
- www.architecture.com.au (SA Chapter site, Archive – Sir James Irwin SA Chapter Presidents Medal)
- <http://www.itsanhonour.gov.au/> (28 November 2009)
- http://www.architecture.com.au/awards_search?option=showaward&entryno=19915001 – web link, RAI website – awards featured. (28 November 2009)
- Adelaide Botanic Gardens – Bicentennial Conservatory brochure – Located February 2012
http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/botanicgardens/Visit/Adelaide_Botanic_Garden/Bicentennial_Conservatory

SITE RECORD

**Bicentennial Conservatory
Botanic Gardens of Adelaide
Hackney Road, Adelaide**

FORMER NAME:	N/A	
DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:	Bicentennial Conservatory Building.	
DATE OF COMPLETION:	18 November, 1989	
REGISTER STATUS:	Description:	Nominated
	Date:	2005
CURRENT USE:	Description:	Glass house
	Dates:	1989 to present
PREVIOUS USE(S):	Description:	N/A
	Dates:	N/A
ARCHITECT:	Name:	Guy Maron AM, (then) of Raffen Maron Architects Pty Ltd
	Dates:	1986-89
BUILDER:	Name:	Hansen and Yunken Pty Ltd
	Dates:	1988-9
SUBJECT INDEXING:	Group:	
	Category:	
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:	Description:	Adelaide
LOCATION:	Unit No.:	N/A
	Street No.:	N/A
	Street Name:	North Terrace
	Town/Suburb:	Adelaide
	Post Code:	5000

SITE RECORD (Cont.)

**Bicentennial Conservatory
Botanic Gardens of Adelaide
Hackney Road, Adelaide**

LAND DESCRIPTION:

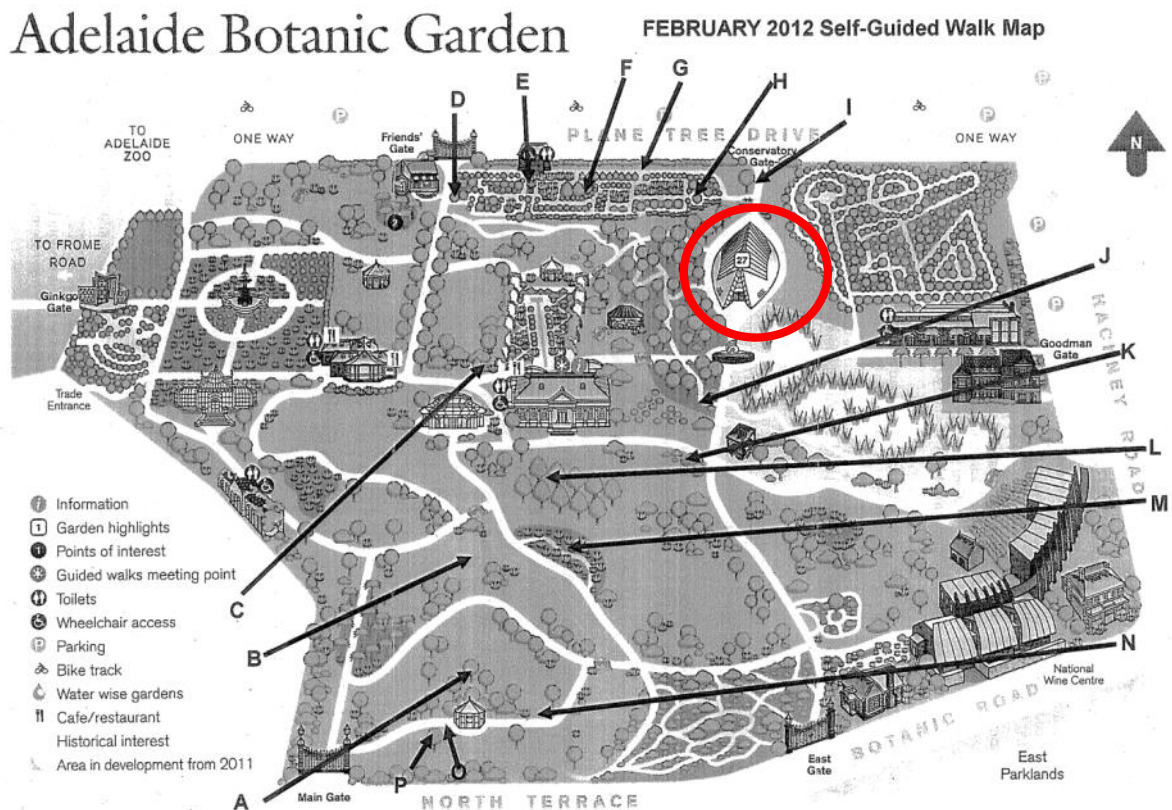
Title Type: CR
Volume: 5943
Folio: 443
Lot No.: 102, DP 66751
Section: 571
Hundred: Adelaide

OWNER:

Name: Governors of the Botanic
Garden
Address: Hackney Road
Town/Suburb: Adelaide
Post Code: 5000

LOCATION PLAN

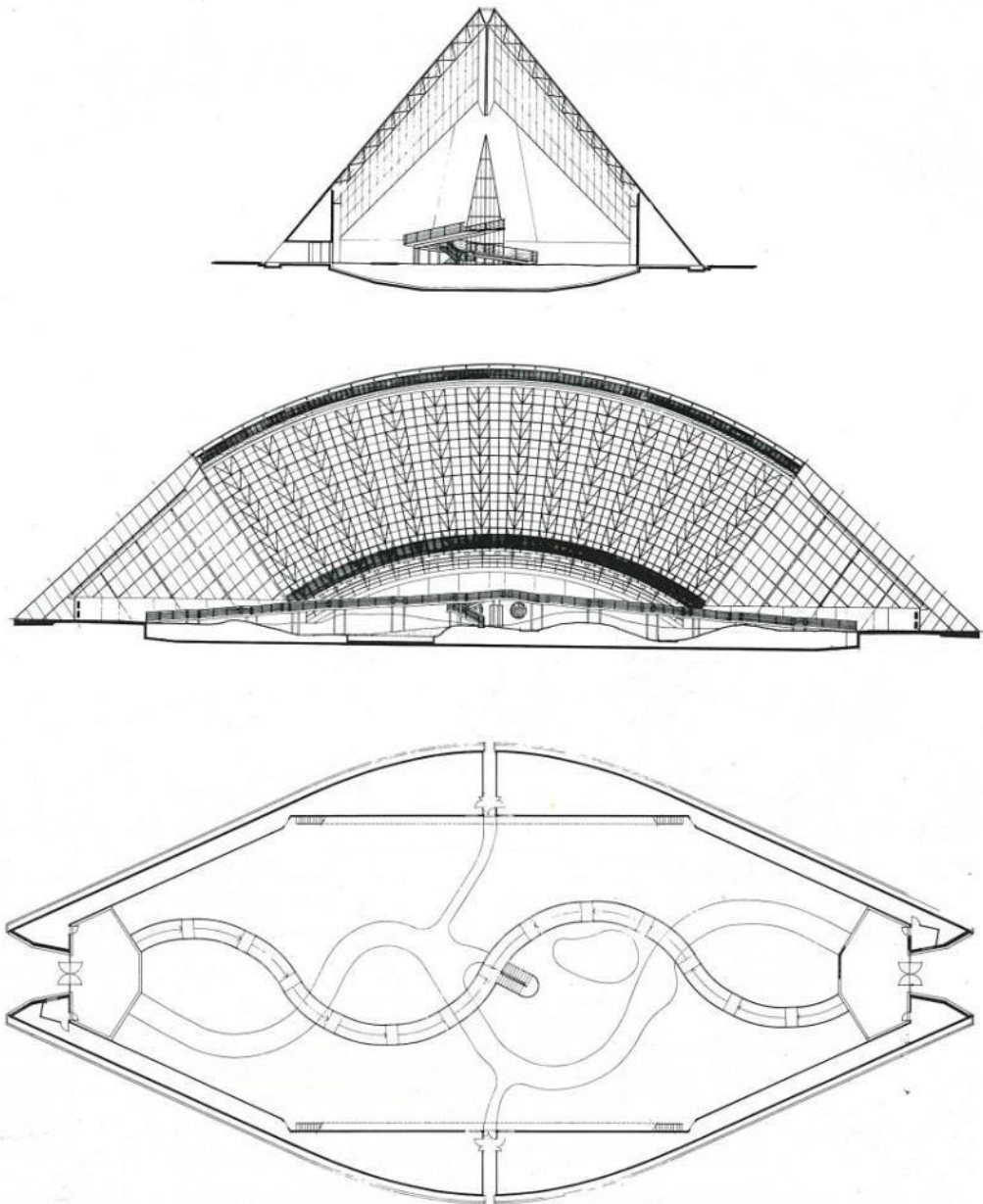
Bicentennial Conservatory
Botanic Gardens of Adelaide
Hackney Road, Adelaide



Free guided walks are available DAILY at 10.30 a.m. starting from the Schomburgk Pavilion For information about booked walks please phone (08) 8226 8803
 For information about the Friends of the Botanic Gardens Ph (08) 8222 9367 This leaflet has been prepared by the Guides and funded by Friends of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide.

SECTION, ELEVATION & FLOOR PLAN

**Bicentennial Conservatory
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Hackney Road, Adelaide**



Drawings from Sir Zelman Cowen Award for Architecture, 1991 brochure, Guy Maron files.

PHOTOGRAPHS

**Bicentennial Conservatory
Botanic Gardens of Adelaide
Hackney Road, Adelaide**



PHOTOGRAPHS (Cont.)

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Botanic Gardens of Adelaide
Hackney Road, Adelaide**

