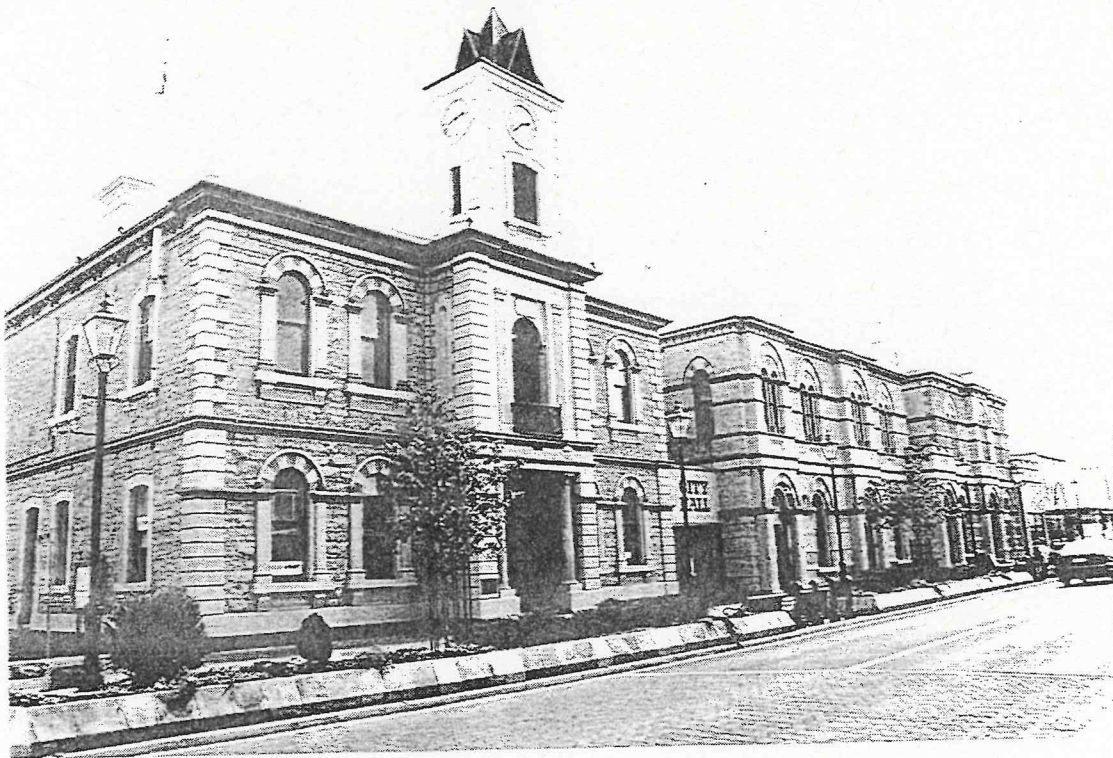


TOWN HALL, INSTITUTE LIBRARY AND RIDDOCH ART GALLERY
10-30 COMMERCIAL STREET EAST



C.T: 4397/161, 162, 163 and 4030/976, 977 (Sections 860, 407-410)

HERITAGE LISTINGS: These buildings are entered in the State Heritage Register.

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE VALUE: An exceptional group of civic buildings dating from 1868 constructed in face dolomite with limestone dressings which forms a coherent group with the adjacent significant Jens Hotel, Cave Gardens and Fountain.

RECOMMENDATION: Retain in the State Heritage Register. This building complex should form part of the proposed Mount Gambier Central State Heritage Area.

TOWN HALL, INSTITUTE LIBRARY AND RIDDOCH ART GALLERY 10-30 COMMERCIAL STREET EAST (cont)

ASSESSMENT:

This group of buildings consists of the Institute, Library and Hall, the Town Hall and Theatre. The Institute was commenced in 1868 with the ground floor, library and hall to the design of W T Gore. It was officially opened in 1869 with an evening performance in the presence of the State Governor. In 1887 a second storey was added to the Institute due to the generous donation of John Riddoch from Yallum Park. The hall became a picture theatre from 1911 until 1926 and is now the present city hall. The Institute Library ceased to function in 1967 and the Library is now located in the new Civic Centre on Watson Terrace.

The Town Hall was constructed in 1882 to the design of architect J J Barrow and the clock tower was added in 1883. This building was used as the City of Mount Gambier Council Chambers until the Council moved to the new Civic Centre in 1981.

The Theatre, which is now the Riddoch Art Gallery was built in 1906 for the Institute Trustees to cater for the growing need for public entertainment space. It was officially opened by the Hon George Riddoch in 1907. Thomas Hall was the architect and he carefully adapted parts of the original Institute design to link this new section of the complex to the earlier central area.

Various alterations internally allowed the Theatre to be used as a picture theatre with Star Pictures, the Ozone Theatre and the King's Theatre all using the building. The theatre has now been converted to the Riddoch Art Gallery.

TOWN HALL, INSTITUTE LIBRARY AND RIDDOCH ART GALLERY

10-30 COMMERCIAL STREET EAST (cont)

Site Record

Educational Building: Town Hall and Institute Complex
 10-30 Commercial Street East
 Mount Gambier SA 5290

Location	10-30 Commercial Street East, Mount Gambier
Description	Run of two storey buildings including halls and theatre with central clock tower to former Town Hall
Boundary	Buildings constructed to property boundaries including frontage to Commercial Street East
Land Description	Town Hall - CT 4030/976, 977 Institute and Theatre - CT 4397/161, 162, 163
Local Government	City of Mount Gambier
Owner	City of Mount Gambier
Use	Art Gallery, City Hall and Offices
Condition	Generally sound
Other Assessments	C J Maslen, <i>A History of the Mount Gambier Institute</i> , 1862-1980 Danvers Architects, <i>Conservation Plan for Mount Gambier Town Hall and Institute</i> Mount Gambier Heritage Society, Mount Gambier Heritage Walks No. 1 - City Centre
Heritage Status	State Heritage Register

South Australian
Heritage Act 1978-80:

HERITAGE SURVEY ITEM IDENTIFICATION SHEET

REGION 6 :
SOUTH EAST

Item No. : MTG:036
ITEM NAME: Institute & King's Theatre
Former or other names:

LOCATION:

Address: Commercial St. East,
Mount Gambier

Allotment:

Section :

Hundred : Blanche

County : Grey

L.G.A. : Mount Gambier

S.H.P. Region: 6

A.M.G., Ref. Z: 54 N: 5812850
E: 480600

TYPE OF ITEM:

Description: Meeting Rooms

Subject: 2.06

Period: 1860-1880

Date: 1868 - Condition: Well Kept

Architect: Thomas M. Hall (1906)

Builder:

STATUS State Heritage List: Registered
National Estate : Listed
National Trust : Recorded

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

RECOMMENDATION: State

Description:

Italianate style building of squared rubble walls with dressed stone and stucco dressings. Bi-partite semi-circular arched windows. String courses and corbelled parapet.

A Book Club dated from 1847. The Government granted 1,000 pounds towards an institute and John Riddoch laid the foundation stone in 1868. He was present again in 1887 to lay the stone for a second storey, both he and the Government having contributed another 1,000 pounds each. The enlarged building included for many years a Museum which eventually fell a victim to 'civic greed' (L. Hill), and its hall saw a huge variety of functions. Another hall was added in 1906 (opened by George Riddoch!); this 'New Institute' was leased as a picture theatre from 1939-66.

Report Text:

REFERENCES: L. Hill, "Mount Gambier, the City around a Cave"
pp. 162-165, 314

Verbal: Les Hill

PHOTOGRAPHS:

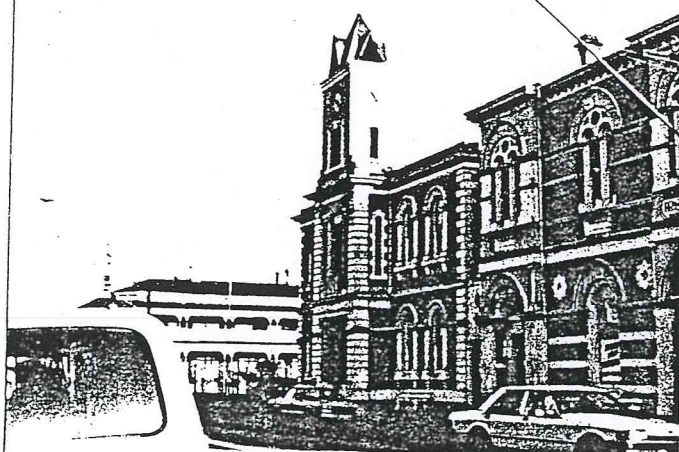
Slide No. :

Film No : 11

Negative No: 14

Archival No: B10192 (n.d.)
B10193 (n.d.)
B10195 (1890-97)

DANVERS ARCHITECTS Date: 1983



1st November 1984

REPORT: From Russell Browne, Gallery Director

NR. 1.11.84

Intentions for the immediate and longer-term future visual arts activities within the South East.

Perhaps the most pressing responsibility for a visual arts centre within the region is to facilitate broad-based community access to varied high-quality fine art and state-of-the-art craft exhibitions.

Such a programme might sound straight forward. I would like to develop therefore, some points relevant to the implementation of a visual arts programme suitable to this region.

1. Because of its geographical location, Mount Gambier's regional visual arts centre has a far more challenging task before it to successfully reach all regional groups rather than any Victorian or New South Wales model of a regional gallery.

Mount Gambier is the centre of a large region comprising the district between the Victorian border to the east; above Bordertown and Keith to the north; Coonalpyn to the west and along the Kingston, Robe coastline southwards. It is also the cultural and business centre for many of the small communities in the western districts of Victoria.

More importantly, a large proportion of towns in this region already have exhibition spaces run by semi-professional staff and volunteers, quite suitable for hosting small exhibitions.

Since the Art Gallery of South Australia seems no longer able to support large touring exhibitions, the responsibility for filling these venues now will devolve to the Mount Gambier gallery.

2. A further unusual responsibility is an expectancy that the Mount Gambier gallery director will act in an advisory capacity to towns, local councils and other bodies willing to support the purchase of works of art.

The director likewise is expected to advise on exhibition policies and attend regional art gallery management committee meetings.

There is no precedent in other Australian states on which to base South Australia's far reaching regional arts concept.

3. Costs associated with operating an exhibition programme for the Mount Gambier gallery in conjunction with co-ordinating touring exhibitions throughout the region will be high.

Vehicle acquisition or hire, packaging, hanging, promotional, insurance and travel costs will all be greater than other regional galleries and might be expected to approximate costs incurred by State galleries with their touring exhibitions programmes.

4. Artists in residence are from time to time sponsored to work within the region. In the past Mount Gambier has initiated the grant, chosen the artist and co-ordinated community interaction.

This appears to be the most suitable model to follow and an artist in residence may be expected to become a regular feature of the gallery's arts programme.

I hope however other local bodies such as the T.A.F.E. college will in the future share greater participation in these schemes.

5. The Mount Gambier gallery is at present under strong local pressure to commence an acquisition programme. Once running, the gallery may expect to attract funds from local activities, donations and bequests, State and Federal grants.

Although any acquisition policy for this gallery must be devised in consultation with the Art Gallery of South Australia and the Department for the Arts, one logical direction might be to collect art produced by resident or itinerant South East regional artists, past and present.

Such a programme could be seen to compliment a regional exhibitions plan by ensuring that regional artists would see themselves being supported in the best possible way.

6. The most urgent and pressing shortcomings preventing the Mount Gambier gallery from reaching its full potential audience is lack of staff and lack of suitable gallery exhibition and preparation space. A team of professionally trained museum and exhibition assistants is required. While some on-the-job training will inevitably happen, it is most important that team members possess at least basic art-handling skills.

Lack of suitable space is a subject incorporated into the separate report discussing future requirements for a new major gallery building within Mount Gambier.

SUMMARY

The Mount Gambier gallery is now in a potentially viable position from which to develop its role as South Australia's first major regional gallery. As such the gallery would be seen as a complimentary body operating beneath the auspices of the South East Cultural Trust.

To fulfill its truly regional role, the gallery via the Trust has to attract increased State Government funding covering capital expenses, staffing and on-going costs associated with a justifiably generous touring exhibitions programme.

Similarly to maximise the availability of local and regional visual arts resources the gallery must develop a strong and supportive stance towards groups such as the local Arts Council of Australia branch, T.A.F.E. college, schools, community arts and the management committees of regional exhibition venues.

NAME: *Former Mount Gambier Institute & King's Theatre
(Riddoch Art Gallery)* **PLACE NO.:** 10238

Address: *8-20 Commercial Street East, Mount Gambier*

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE VALUE:

The ground floor library, reading rooms and lecture hall of the Mount Gambier Institute were officially opened in 1869 with a soiree in the presence of the State Governor. The foundation stone was laid by John Riddoch of Yallum Park Penola in 1868 with a design by W T Gore and the contractors were George Avery and Henry Hall. The library grew over time and the Institute Committee had to once again consider expansion, W R Allison was engaged to prepare plans and specifications for proposed new anterooms in August 1876. Eleven years later in 1887 extensions were completed, including additional storey over the existing building, an enlarged area for the Institute Library and reading rooms and lengthening of the main hall. Most recently new development has been added to the rear of the building to link the building with the newly restored Cave Gardens.

The former theatre was constructed as further extensions to the Institute to the east, providing a new hall to seat 1,200 people, costing approximately £3,000. The building was constructed in 1906 and officially opened by the Honourable George Riddoch in 1907. The design was by Thomas Hall and Joseph Hosking Junior was engaged as mason. In 1926 the projection room was installed and for many years films were shown by Star Pictures. In 1939 the Ozone Theatre began with a new lease which changed to Kings Theatre in 1952. The last film was shown in 1966. Live theatre continued until 1981 and soon after the building was remodelled as an Art Gallery.

These buildings sit within the recently proclaimed Mount Gambier Central State Heritage Area.

The former Institute and Theatre (incorporating the Riddoch Art Gallery) is a registered place on the Register of the National Estate (ID No: 8176).

Statement of Heritage Value:

Built in 1868 the Institute was one of the earliest public buildings constructed in the Commercial Street precinct. Changing social and cultural aspirations of the residents are represented in the various and rapidly successive extensions to the original building, which has served the educational and cultural needs of the community of Mount Gambier for more than a century. The theatre, designed by T Hall, was built in 1907 to cater for a growing need for entertainment venues in Mount Gambier and has been used for both cinema and live performances.

The buildings are two of an exceptional group of civic buildings dating from 1968 constructed in face dolomite with limestone dressings, which form a coherent group with the adjacent significant Jens Hotel, Cave Gardens and Fountain.

Relevant Criteria (Under Section 16 of the Heritage Act 1993):

- (a) *It demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history; former Mount Gambier Institute and Kings Theatre (Riddoch Art Gallery) demonstrates the provision of facilities for social and cultural aspirations of residents in developing country towns. The two stages of the building reflect the two periods of growth across South Australia in the 1860s and the early 1900s.*

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the former Mount Gambier Institute and Kings Theatre (Riddoch Art Gallery) at 8-20 Commercial Street East, Mount Gambier remain as an entry in the State Heritage Register.

Note the change in order of the names of the sections of the building for listing purposes

NAME: *Former Mount Gambier Institute & King's Theatre
(Riddoch Art Gallery)* **PLACE NO.:** 10238

SITE RECORD:

FORMER NAME:	<i>Hall; Ozone Theatre; Kings Theatre; Institute</i>
DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:	<i>Two two storey stone buildings</i>
DATE OF COMPLETION:	<i>1869 (Institute); 1906 (Theatre)</i>
REGISTER STATUS:	Description: <i>Confirmed</i> Date: <i>24 July 1980</i>
CURRENT USE:	Description: <i>Art Gallery</i> Dates: <i>1981 - present</i>
PREVIOUS USE(S):	Description: <i>Hall; Picture Theatre; Live Theatre; Institute</i> Dates: <i>1906 1926; 1926-1966; 1966-1981</i>
ARCHITECT:	Name: <i>King's Theatre: Thomas Hall Institute: W T Gore; W R Allison</i> Dates:
BUILDER:	Name: <i>Institute: George Avery and Henry Hall</i> Dates: <i>1869 (Institute); 1906 (Theatre)</i>
SUBJECT INDEXING:	Group: <i>Community facilities Recreation and entertainment</i> Category: <i>Institute Art Gallery Theatre</i>
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:	Description: <i>City of Mount Gambier</i>
LOCATION:	Street No.: <i>8-20</i> Street Name: <i>Commercial Street East</i> Town/Suburb: <i>Mount Gambier</i> Post Code: <i>5290</i> Region No.: Region Name:
LAND DESCRIPTION:	Title Type: <i>Certificate</i> Volume: <i>4397, 4030</i> Folio: <i>161-163, 976-977</i> Lot No.: Section: <i>860, 407-410</i> Hundred:
AMG REFERENCE:	Zone: <i>54</i> Northing: <i>5813158</i> Easting: <i>480743</i> Map Sheet No.: <i>7022</i> Map Scale: <i>1:100,000</i>
OWNER *:	Name: Address: Town/Suburb: Post Code:

PHOTOGRAPH: **Film No.:** *Digital*

NAME: *Former Mount Gambier Institute & King's Theatre* **PLACE NO.:** 10238
(Riddoch Art Gallery)



View of the former Kings Theatre

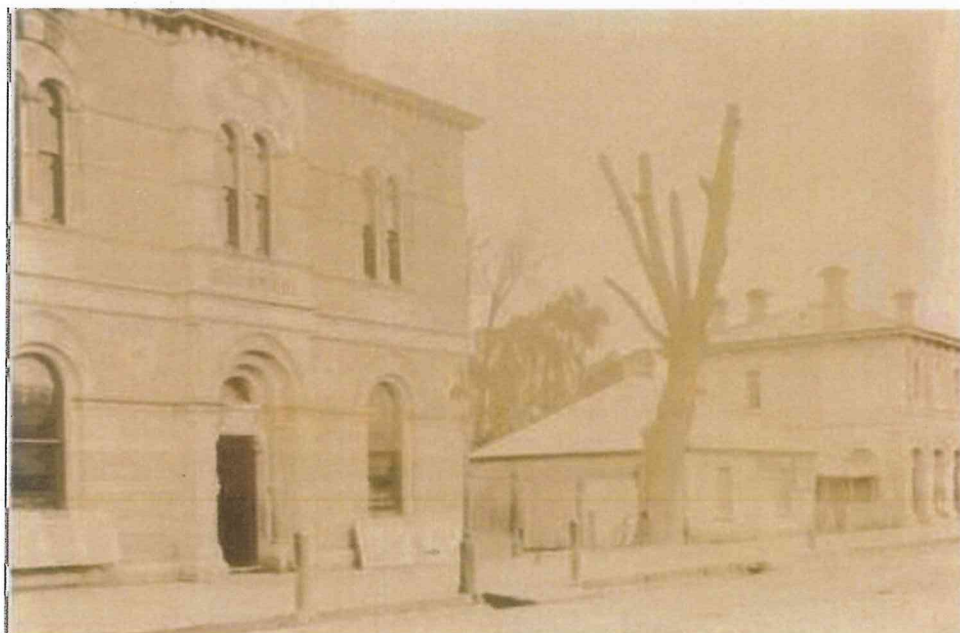


View of the former Mount Gambier Institute

NAME: Former Mount Gambier Institute & King's Theatre (Riddoch Art Gallery) **PLACE NO.:** 10238

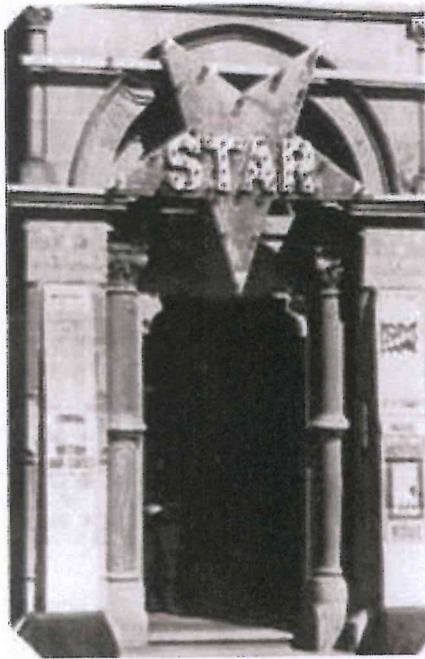


1880 view of original single storey Institute building
(Source: SLSA B10193)



1890 view of 10 Commercial Street East
(Source: SLSA B10195)

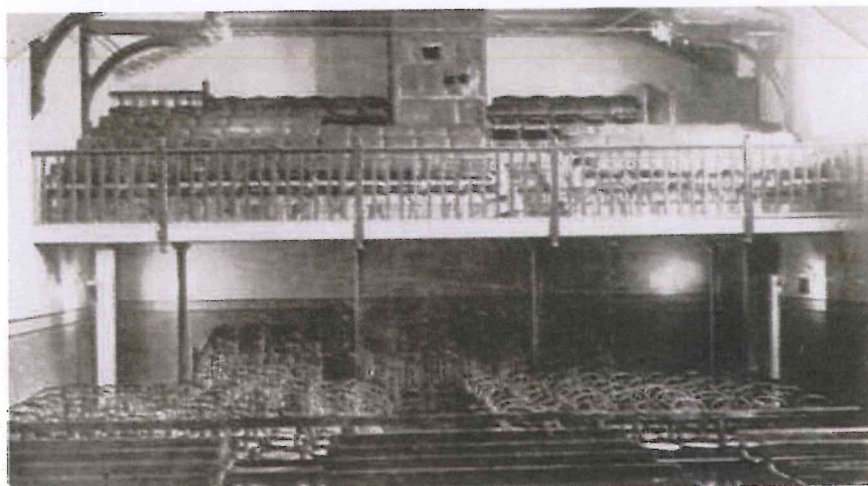
NAME: *Former Mount Gambier Institute & King's Theatre
(Riddoch Art Gallery)* **PLACE NO.:** 10238



Star Theatre entrance door, 1918 (Source: SLSA B15185)



View of Star Theatre in 1926 (Source: SLSA B20021)



Internal view of Star Theatre, 1924 (Source: SLSA B15203)

State Heritage Areas of South Australia



Riddoch Art Gallery **former Mount Gambier Institute Building, City Hall and** **King's Theatre** **Commercial Street East, Mount Gambier** **SHR 10238 – confirmed as a State Heritage Place 24 July 1980**

Mount Gambier's Institute was one of the earliest public buildings in the Commercial Street precinct, and served the educational and cultural needs of the community for more than a century.

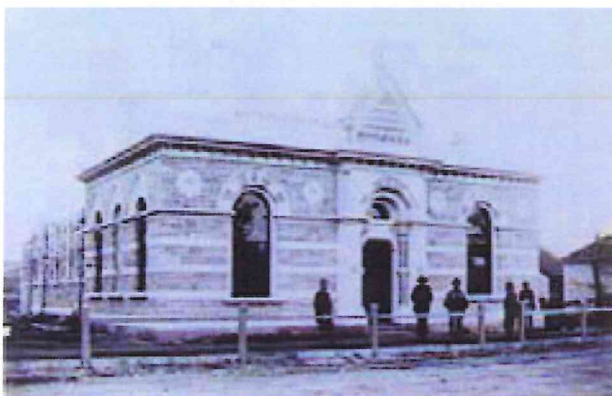
Tenders for the new building, to contain a library, reading room and lecture hall, were called in August 1867, based on amended plans submitted by W.T. Gore of Mosquito Plains (Naracoorte). The foundation stone of the single-storey building was laid by John Riddoch on 6 January 1868.

By June, the institute library moved to the partly completed new building. One month later work began on the hall at the rear. The completed institute complex was opened on 8 May 1869, with an evening performance in the presence of the governor.

A reading room was opened for the public in 1870, with many daily and weekly newspapers available. This service continued for 60 years, until the privilege was withdrawn because of continual abuse by some readers.

A museum was opened in the building in the 1870s. Exhibits included early coins, medals, stuffed animals and weapons and other artefacts of local indigenous people. The museum was broken up in 1875 due to lack of space, with many of the exhibits given to the museum in Adelaide.

Increasing numbers of subscribers, and the growth of the library caused the committee to consider expansion. Their decision was made after John Riddoch offered £1,000 towards the cost (augmented by a further £1,000 from Government), requesting that a second storey be added, to be used as a gallery. Tenders were called in October 1886 and the foundation stone for the new upper storey was laid, again by John Riddoch, on 19 February 1887. Under the stone was placed a pint of Tuscan wheat grown at Yahl. The crop had produced 55 bushels to the acre, and it was claimed that this wheat would create more interest in the future than a handful of coins. By June that year the extensions were complete. The opening of the new section, which included a gallery for 150 people, was celebrated with an art exhibition.



Mount Gambier Institute 1868
Photo B 11412: State Library of SA



Commercial Street East frontage, April 2005

In July 1890 a bazaar raised £255, which was partly used to renovate the main hall and lobby, and in the same year tenders were called to supply gas to the building.

The old hall at the rear of the building was used for many types of entertainment between 1869-1907. It was in continual use for concert parties, political meetings, balls and sporting entertainments. On one occasion a man walked for three hours in the room, making 940 circuits before a large gathering of spectators. On 26 January 1897 motion pictures were shown in the hall, for the first time in Mount Gambier.

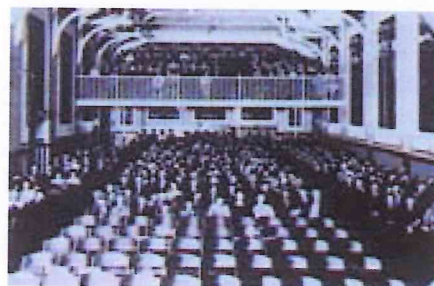
An ever-increasing need for more hall space led to extensive negotiations to secure additional Commercial Street frontage, on which to build a hall seating 1 200 people. The foundation stone for this new building, later called King's Theatre, was laid in June 1907. The architect, Thomas Hall, carefully adapted parts of the original institute design to link this new section to the

earlier central area. The passage between the two halls was roofed in 1911. Plans for alterations were approved in 1912 and the rebuilding completed in 1913.



*Star Theatre
Mount Gambier 1918
Photo B 15185: State Library of SA*

In 1979-80 the Mount Gambier Institute was dissolved, a new public library built in the new Civic Centre in Watson Terrace and the institute's collection of paintings, artefacts and sculptures handed over to the South East Regional Cultural Trust. The rooms of the Institute Building were subsequently used as offices and studios. In 1988 the Riddoch Art Gallery moved into the redeveloped King's Theatre building.

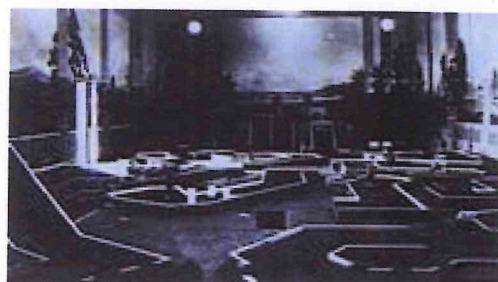


*Star Theatre re-opening night 1925
Photo B 15202: State Library of SA*

The hall at the rear continued to be used for an assortment of activities. A miniature golf course was installed in 1928 and was a popular feature for a number of years. For three years, from July 1932, the old hall was used as a dancing and skating palais, which required the installation of a new floor.

Alterations, additions and refurbishments to various areas of the building continued, including approval for electric lighting in 1924. Plans were drawn in 1958 for the remodelling of the civic buildings, the main part of which involved upgrading the old institute hall to become the Civic Hall. In September 1959 a ball was held to open the renovated hall.

The Institute's centenary was celebrated on 4 September 1962, marked by an open day at the library, and the erection of a plaque commemorating the occasion.



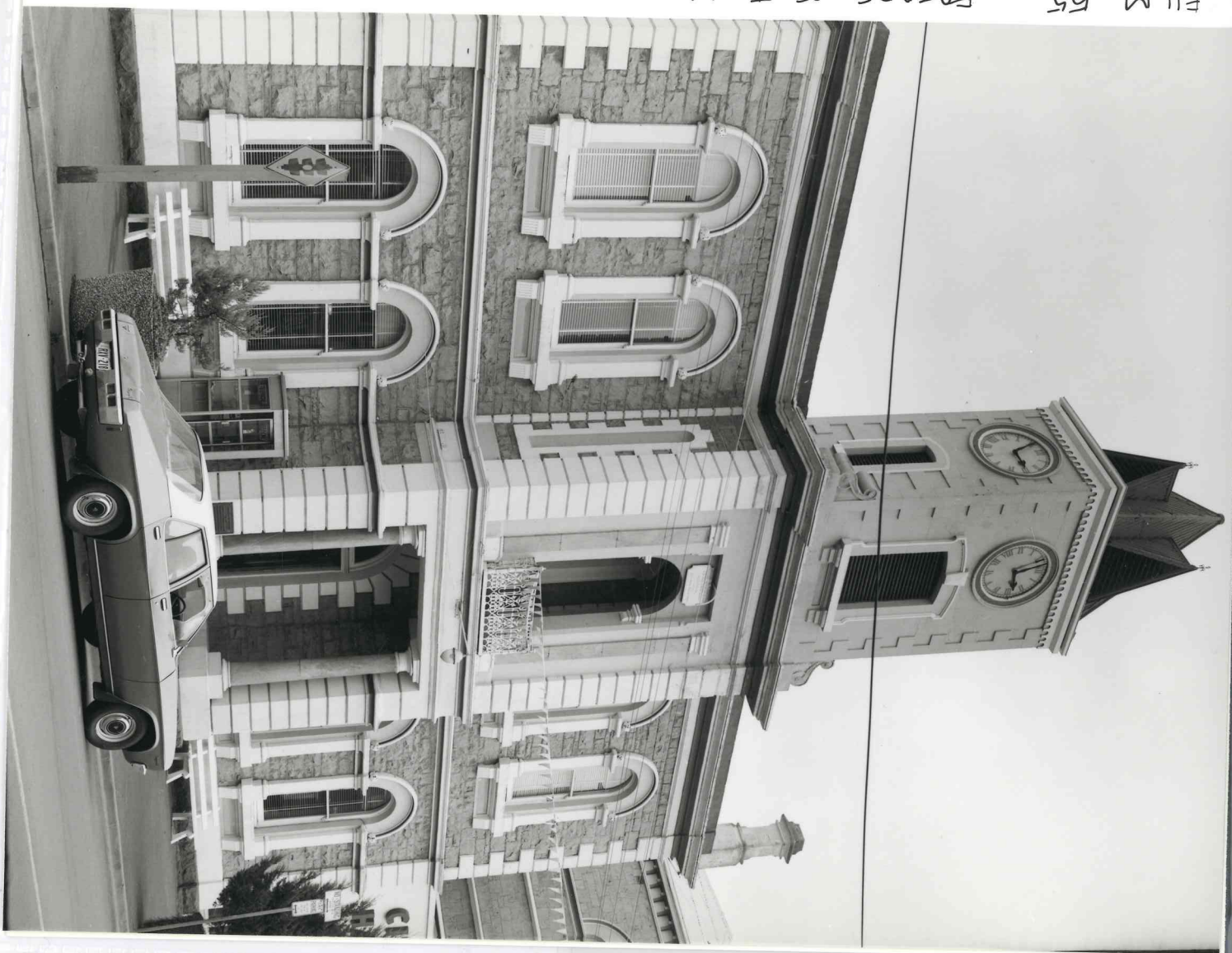
*Mount Gambier Civic Hall: indoor golf area 1929
Photo B 19995: State Library of SA*



FILM 55
No 7

FACADE OF TOWN HALL

MOUNT GAMBIER
22-2-79





FILM 55
NO 6

VIEW FROM EAST OF TOWN HALL, INSTITUTE,
THEATRE, COMMERCIAL ST EAST.

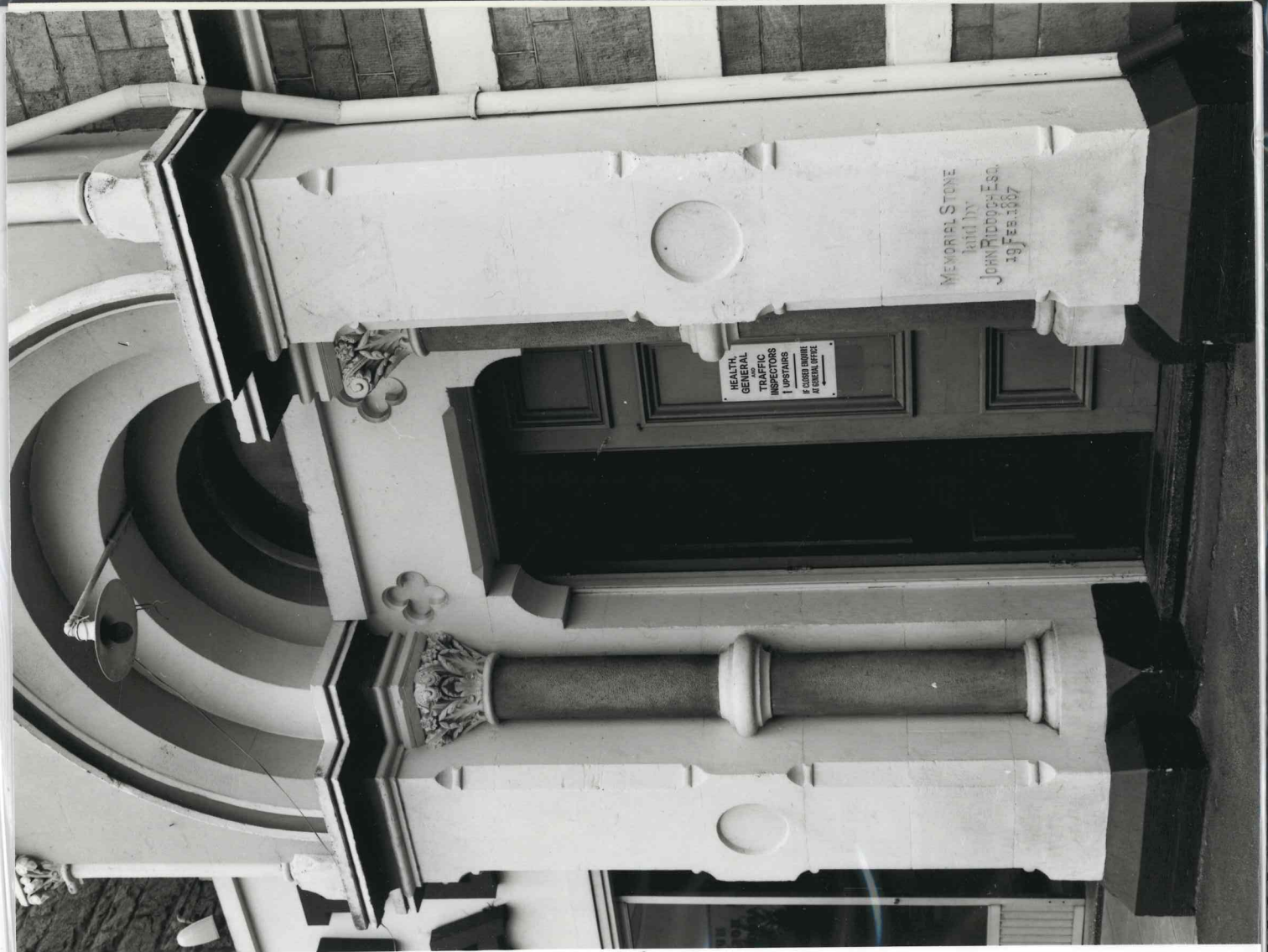
MT. GAMBIER
22-2-79



FILM 55
NO 8

FACADE OF INSTITUTE LIBRARY

MOUNT GAMBIER
22-2-79



FILM 55
NO 10

EASTERN ENTRANCE DOORWAY ON NORTH MT GAMBIER
FACADE OF INSTITUTE, COMMERCIAL ST EAST. 22-2-79



FILM 55
NO 9

FACADE OF THEATRE

MOUNT GAMBIER
22-2-79