

FLINDERS RANGES HERITAGE SURVEY

Court House

INPA-SR-03

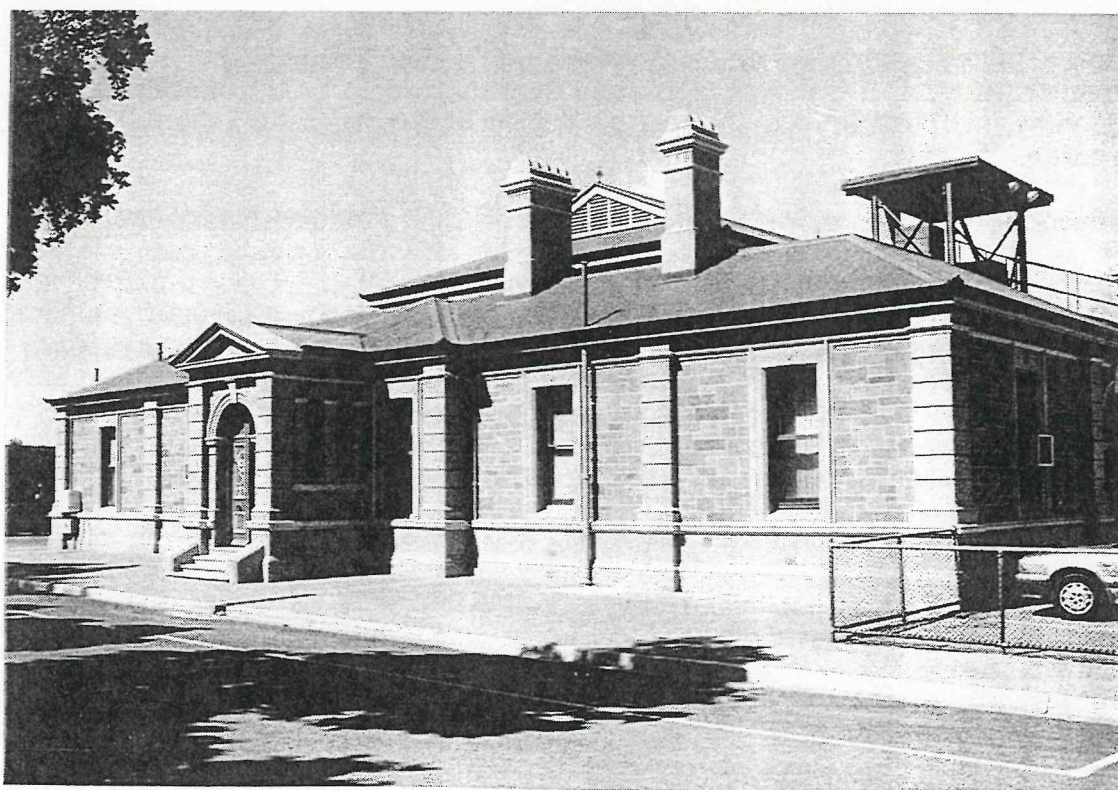
LOCATION

Address	1 Jervois Street, Port Augusta
Owner(s)	Corporation of City of Port Augusta
CT Number	1255/7
Lot	38
Hundred	Davenport
Local Government Area	Port Augusta

State Heritage Status	State Heritage Register — 10306 — 24 July 1980
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Other Assessments	Register of the National Estate National Trust Classified List — 204
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Film/Neg Number	1/35; 2/10
Photographer	B.G. Rowney



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DESCRIPTION

A single storey building with hipped and gabled roof form and double hung sash windows. The walls are of pecked ashlar sandstone with rendered quoins and dressings. There is also a plinth. The roof is of corrugated galvanized iron. There are decorative entrance doorways on the east (with a marble step) and north sides, while on the west side the original entrance doorway remains. A metal platform on the northern side has been erected for airconditioning units.

HISTORY

The first Court House was a weatherboard building on Flagstaff Reserve at the southern end of Mildred Point. Indeed, the building was a Customs House-cum-Court House-cum-Post Office. In 1865 a petition from 107 people was presented to the government asking for this primitive building to be replaced. As a consequence, by July 1867 a new Court House, with Police Residence, was erected on the corner of the present Jervois Street and Commercial Roads.

However, it was not long before this building became inadequate for the demands being placed upon it and tenders were called for the construction of a new Court House on the corner of Jervois Street and Beauchamps Lane, just behind the old Court House. Tenders closed on 8 October 1883. The building, designed by the architect in chief, E.J. Woods, apparently from suggestions by the late sheriff, Mr. Boothby, was constructed by the local builder and timber merchant, T. Sara & Co., at a cost of £5,146-6-5.

Edward John Woods arrived in South Australia in 1860 after having been previously articulated in the offices of C.J. Richardson, a London architect, for three years. He also spent a further two years working for T.E. Knightly, another London architect. In 1860 he was employed by Edmund Wright as a draftsman who, in 1861, offered him a partnership. Woods later left the partnership to work on his own becoming Architect-in-Chief in 1878. When retrenched from the position in 1884 he once again returned to private practice. Described as influencing 'South Australian architecture for half a century', Woods' work included Kent Town Methodist Church (1864); Eagle Chambers, Adelaide (1874); southern portion of Cathedral Lodge (1877); Anglican Church Office (1881-2); eastern aisle St Francis Xavier's Cathedral (1889); supervision of work at St Peter's Cathedral (1876, 1901-04) and the western portion of Parliament House (1884). This was in addition to the design of government buildings such as the Customs House at Port Adelaide in 1874. Woods was an inaugural Vice-President of the South Australian Institute of Architects set up in 1886 and was made a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1892. In 1905 Woods took Walter Hervey Bagot into partnership and the firm practised as Woods & Bagot until Woods died.

Wood's Court House was built:

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... of pure Saltia stone with cement dressing, the main court room [being] fifty feet long, thirty-three feet wide, and twenty-one feet high,' the cells for prisoners were paved with Kapunda marble, and the cells for men were larger than those provided for women. Stoves were recessed into the walls of all rooms in the building with the exception of the cells ...

Contained in the building were ten offices and rooms, and the whole complex was enclosed by a galvanized iron and picket fence.

Internal and external renovations were carried out in 1906, an office and lobby was renovated in 1921 and electric light was installed in 1925.

The building continues to be used as a Court House.

STATEMENT OF HERITAGE VALUE

This place is a significant public building which highlights the significance of law and order in the early community and something of the regional significance of Port Augusta as the northernmost major community. The building is closely associated with other significant buildings and its location helps reinforce the historic centre of the city and to define an important public space. The building was designed by Edward John Woods and is important also for the manner in which it exemplifies his design features and reflects features of the architectural history of South Australia.

The Court House was entered in the State Heritage Register on 24 July 1980.

RELEVANT CRITERIA

- (a) The Court House demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history, particularly the significance of law and order in the early colony and the fact that it continues to be used for its original purpose;
 - (d) The Court House is an outstanding representative of a particular class of places of cultural significance, as a court house;
 - (e) The Court House demonstrates a high degree of creative, aesthetic or technical accomplishment or is an outstanding representative of particular construction techniques or design characteristics, most notably because of its identification with architect Edward John Woods.
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Court House

REFERENCES

- Anderson, R.J., *Solid Town: The History of Port Augusta*, Port Augusta, 1988, pp. 48, 53, 116.
- Branson, V.M. and Millstead R., *Port Augusta Sketchbook*, Rigby, Adelaide, 1977, pp. 52-53.
- Department of Environment and Natural Resources, State Heritage Branch — 10306.
- Morgan, E.J.R. and Gilbert, S.H., *Early Adelaide Architecture 1836 to 1886*, Oxford, Melbourne, 1969, pp. 11, 37, 59, 92, 95, 155.
- Mortlock Library photographic collection, B.17260; B.22276.
- Page, M., *Sculptors in Space: South Australian Architects 1836-1986*, Royal Australian Institute of Architects (South Australian Chapter), Adelaide, 1986, pp. 46-47, 104-06.
- Port Augusta Dispatch*, 19 September 1883 (tenders); 1 November 1883 (noting winning tender).
- Robertson, J. Edward, *Prosperous Quorn and Port Augusta, The Seaside Resort of South Australia*, J. Edward Robertson, Adelaide, 1909, p. 14.
- SAPP 29-1885, p. 115; SAPP 29-1886, p. 117.
- State Records — GRG38/15, Record Book of Public Buildings 1838-1925, Vol. 1, p. 982.
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Site Surveyor

B.G. Rowney

Date(s) of Survey 11.2.1994

PORT ADELAIDE - WAREHOUSE.

66/16/01

Ref. Colonial Architect Outgoing Correspondence 871

220/56 17/5/1856 to Colonial Secretary

Proposed new warehouse at Port Adelaide

PORT AUGUSTA - COURT HOUSE & CUSTOM HOUSE.

Ref. Colonial Architect Outgoing Correspondence 871

136/59 12/4/1859 to I. D. Tassie, Port Augusta

Forwarding plans and specifications of a Custom House and Court Room proposed to be erected at your port.

183/59 2/5/1859 Commissioner of Public Works

Contract for Port Augusta Custom House having been taken at sum lower than estimate beg to recommend that a slight improvement be made to the building by giving an additional height of 18 inches to the rooms making them 10'6" high instead of 9'0" as provided in the contract.

188/59 4/5/1859 to Messrs. T. & I. Baker, Adelaide

Beg to inform you that Tender for Court Room and Custom House at Pt. Augusta accepted.

209/59 11/5/1859 to Crown Solicitor

Request prepare Bond and agreement for Custom House and Court Room at Pt. Augusta. Contractors Messrs. Thos. & John Baker, Builders, Adelaide. Sureties - John Pulsford, Timber Merchant, Adelaide; Henry Bryan Robinson, Painter, Adelaide. Amount of Contract £575.

587/66 6/8/1866 to Messrs. Wells & Dicken, builders, Pirie St. Adelaide

Tender for Court House and Police Station at Pt. Augusta accepted £2834. To be executed in Brick dressing.

1091/66

Mr. Fairweather appointed Clerk of Work for New Court House & Police Station Pt. Augusta 7/- per day.

COURTHOUSE

The first court proceedings in Port Augusta were held in the Customs House, built in 1859. Eight years later a separate Courthouse was erected, the police occupying part of the building. A Special Magistrate and several Justices of the Peace were appointed but this did not satisfy the Port Augustans. They wanted a Circuit Court, for all serious crimes were tried in Adelaide and few residents could afford the time, let alone the cost, of prosecuting in the city. Their campaign was successful and on 25 November 1881, Chief Justice Sir Samuel Way presided over the first Full Court in the town.

More commodious premises were soon found to be necessary and in 1884 a new Courthouse was erected on the corner of

Jervois Street and Beauchamp's Lane, and the police took over the whole of the old building.

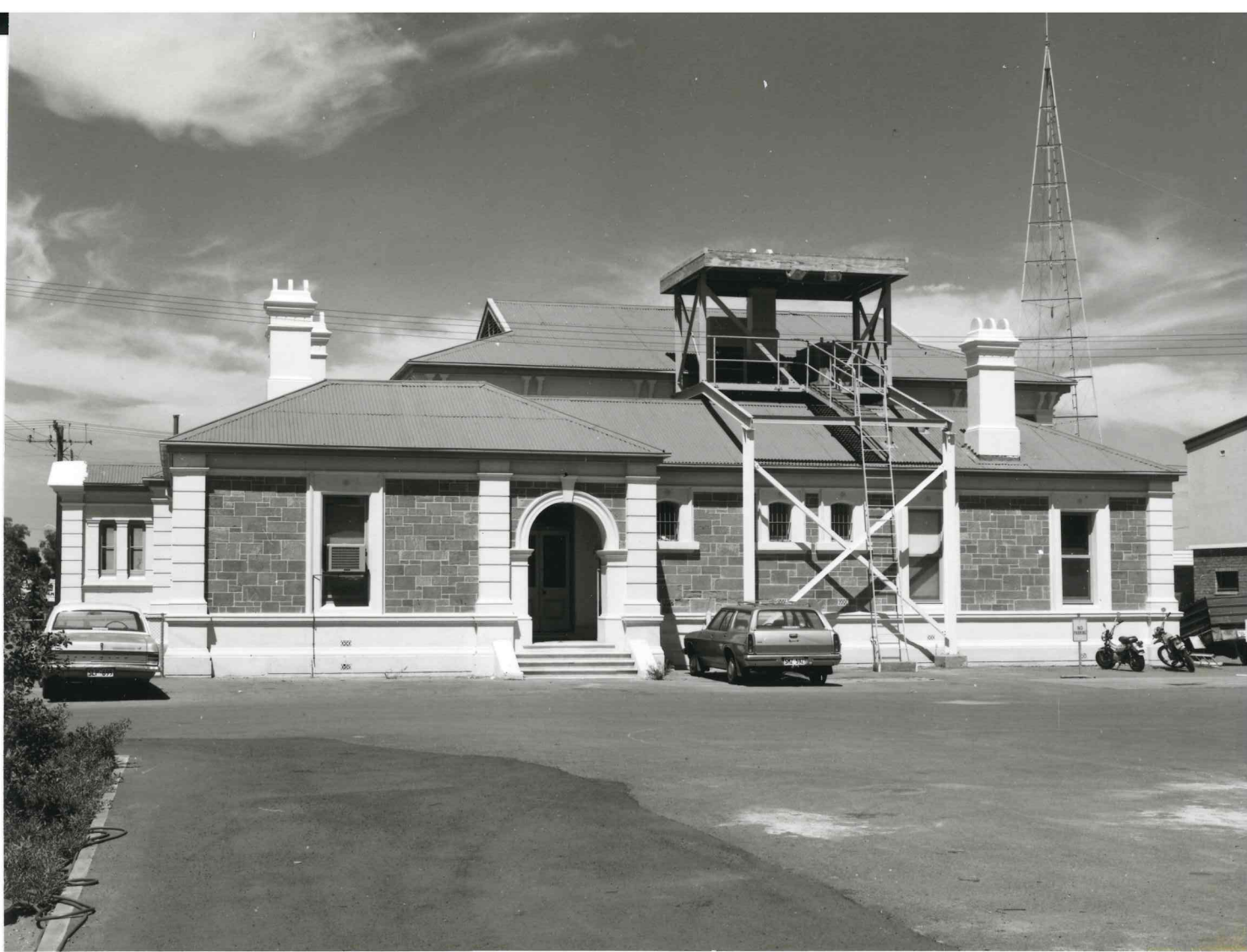
A journalist furnished a full description of the building in the *Dispatch* and he recorded that it was constructed of 'pure Saltia stone with cement dressing, the main court room [was] fifty feet long, thirty-three feet wide, and twenty-one feet high,' the cells for prisoners were paved with Kapunda marble, and the cells for men were larger than those provided for women. Stoves were recessed into the walls of all rooms in the building with the exception of the cells, and this seemed a little unfair as the accused had not yet been found guilty. The journalist strongly criticised the acoustics of the court room, the lack of sufficient space for jurors, and the fact that 'in the ceiling were four ventilators, unrelieved by borders of any kind, and as ugly as they could be contrived.'

The reporter may have been prejudiced, however, as *no* accommodation had been provided for the Press, and at the first sitting, a table and chair had to be borrowed from a nearby hotel.









FILM 84
NO 8

COURT HOUSE FROM NORTH

PORT AUGUSTA
11-3-79



FILM 84
NO 9

DOORWAY WEST WALL OF
COURT HOUSE

PORT AUGUSTA
11-3-79



FILM 85
NO 1

COURT HOUSE, JERVOIS ST,
FROM SOUTH

PORT AUGUSTA
11-3-79









