

South Australian Heritage Act 1978-80	Register of State Heritage Items ITEM EVALUATION SHEET Buildings and Structures Item BAPTIST CHURCH, GAWLER					
Age 1870, 1879, 1900 1903	Theme	Office 6628-10377				
Period 1852-83 1884-1914	Subject RELIGION - CHRISTIAN CHURCH	Region Lower North				
Building Type Church, School	Style MID VICTORIAN/GOTHIC	Status N.E.R. N.Tr. (CL)				
<u>Qualitative Data</u> Component Comment		Grading E VG AG FP NA				
<u>History</u>						
1. Context:	The Gawler Baptist Church is associated with the expansion of Gawler as a manufacturing and service centre for northern agricultural and pastoral areas and the related increase in population during the 1870s. This created a requirement for more public facilities, specifically churches and schools.		*			
2. Person/Group:	The Gawler Baptist congregation, after meeting since 1866 without a church, built the church in 1870. George Fife Angas donated £100 to the church during 1871.		*		*	
3. Event:	Not yet established.					*
<u>Architecture</u>						
4. Architect/ Builder: Engineer:	Not yet established D. Gray submitted tender. Not yet established.					* *
5. Design:	Although there were four distinct construction stages, the choice of materials and workmanship is coherent. The 1870 stage was designed to cater for both education and worship. Two gabled porches protrude from the east facade, with a tripartite window at its centre; ornamentation was skilfully applied with moulded or standard bricks to wall openings and parapet. Use of ornamental and diaper brickwork was continued on the 1879 stage. The 1900 and 1902 stages are less ornate and in their form unsympathetic.		*			
6. Construction:	Masonry wall construction of limestone with brick ornamentation. Roof cladding is now corrugated iron.			*		

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7. Interior: 8. Representation:	The 1870 section has a large and plain interior. Other later sections are also plain and austere. An unusual group of ecclesiastic buildings which draws its importance from the way it expresses physically the evolution of the church.			*		
<u>Environment</u>						
9. Continuity:	The building's generous set-back and use appears out of place amongst this predominantly commercial street. Its scale and construction does however complement the historic character of Murray Street.			*		
10. Local Character:	An important element which contributes to Gawler's historic character.			*		
11. Landmark:	Because of its scale, texture and set-back, the complex is a visually conspicuous landmark, also a familiar local landmark.			*		
<u>Integrity</u>						
12. Alterations:	The complex was built in four stages, and with each stage certain structural or aesthetic changes were made. Important external changes include the demolition of south porch recladding of 1870 roof and removal of central fleche.			*		
13. Condition:	The overall condition of the building is good.			*		
14. Compatibility:	Present use is the original use.	*				
<u>Supplementary Information</u>						
Adaptation:	The large internal spaces of the church are ideal for a variety of uses. The external visual integrity of the complex from Murray Street should be retained.					
Interpretation:	An important element in the study of church architecture, in particular the stylistic influence for the Baptist faith, which in later years tended to be more influenced by the Byzantine style.					
Current Situation:	No known threat exists and the church is owned by the South Australian Baptist Union.					
Evaluated By	Kate McDougall Register Historian	Lothar Brasse Consultant Architect	Date 21.4.82			
Reviewed By	Ivar Nelsen		Date			
South Australian Heritage Committee Categorization			Date			

BAPTIST CHURCH, GAWLER

Gawler was first surveyed in 1839 by Colonel William Light and the settlement grew into a town during the following decades. Substantial churches had been built for the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Presbyterian denominations before the Baptist Church in Murray Street was erected in 1870. The small congregation had been holding their services in the Oddfellows Hall in Gawler since 1866. There were Baptist congregations in Angaston, Kapunda and Lyndoch at this time and each group "clung zealously to local autonomy".

The Gawler Baptists purchased a block of land in Murray Street from Henry Bright, proprietor of a large butchering business in Gawler, and tenders were called for building the church. The congregation accepted the tender of two hundred and ninety-nine pounds from Mr. D. Gray but actual building was held up due to financial problems. The church was completed and opened in January 1870. In 1871, it was noted in the Truth and Progress, a Baptist periodical published in Adelaide, that George Fife Angas had donated fifty pounds to the Gawler church and that Angas' monetary assistance to the Church totalled one hundred pounds for the year. (Angas had also made donations to other denominations over time, being an impartial philanthropist of dissenting persuasion).

Before the passing of the Education Act in 1875, many church congregations including the Baptists provided schoolrooms for educational purposes as religion and education were closely linked in the early years of the settlement. The Gawler church was originally known as the Church School, reflecting its dual purpose until after the Education Act. In 1877-8 the first government school in Gawler was opened and could accommodate 600 pupils. At this time the private schools closed except for the Roman Catholic school.

The congregation of the Baptist Church continued to grow and the building was enlarged in 1873 and Sunday School classrooms added in 1879. The total cost of the building to this stage was two thousand two hundred and eighty-five pounds and it could accommodate 380 people. The Church was described by George Loyau in 1880 as having "unique and symmetrical proportions". The symmetry of the building was somewhat disturbed with the additions of the kitchen and lecture hall sections in 1900 and 1903, the latter part erected in memory of William Polden, who had been a moulder in Gawler from 1896 until his death in 1903.

Renovations to the Church in 1911 changed the interior arrangement around. The southern porch entrance was closed up; and the altar and pulpit moved to this southern end of the building. Various other internal rearrangements have taken place over time and the open tiled

Baptistry (for total immersion) was built behind the altar in 1941. Church records state that the first baptism was held in the South Para River "near the Gas Works" which were located in Seventh Street, Gawler.

Sources:

G. Cook (Rev.), A Short History of Gawler Baptist Church (Adel, 1966)

E.H. Coombe, History of Gawler 1837 to 1908 (Gawler 1908)

G.E. Loyau, The Gawler Handbook (Adel., 1880)

D. Pike, Paradise of Dissent (London, 1957)

S. Woodburn and P. Hignett, Gawler Heritage Study (Dec., 1981)

Also: Sands & McDougall Directories, 1896 to 1903.

Katrina McDougall
Register Historian

KMcD:JD

21/4/82

GAWLER HERITAGE STUDY: STAGE 1

ITEM IDENTIFICATION SHEET

Hignett & Company

ITEM NAME

Current: BAPTIST CHURCH

Historical:

ITEM NUMBER

26

DATE

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE:

Original building and first permanent premises of the Baptists in Gawler, opened January 1870 as a church school, cost £760. (Original tender £299 from D. Gray). Enlarged 1873, classrooms added 1870 (south wing). Further classrooms and kitchen added 1900 (north wing) and school hall (Polden Hall) built 1905. Complete remodelling of church and school buildings in 1911, further renovations 1951, re-roofed 1962.

Random limestone with brick quoins, copings, cornice work and surrounds to openings. Central section has bevelled and agree profile bricks to the cornice and diapered brick-work to the parapet. Openings are pointed Gothic arches, brick blocked and brick string courses.

LOCATION

Street No: 23

Allotment: 2

Section:

Hundred:

Street: Murray

Town:

LGA:

Postcode:

State Hist. Pres.

Region:

HISTORICAL THEME

Theme: Social Life and Organisation

Subtheme: Religion

HISTORICAL PERIOD

State:

Study Area: 1849-70

TYPE OF ITEM

LAND Natural Feature
Historical Site
GardenBUILDING Individual
GroupSTRUCTURE Complete
Relic

REFERENCES:

Written: Rev. Gordon Cook - A Short History of Gawler Baptist Church; Coombe p.387, 391; Loyau p.129. Architectural assessment from Update to National Trust file by Paul Stark, January 1980.

Vocal:

Archival Photographs: Cook (1870, 1966)

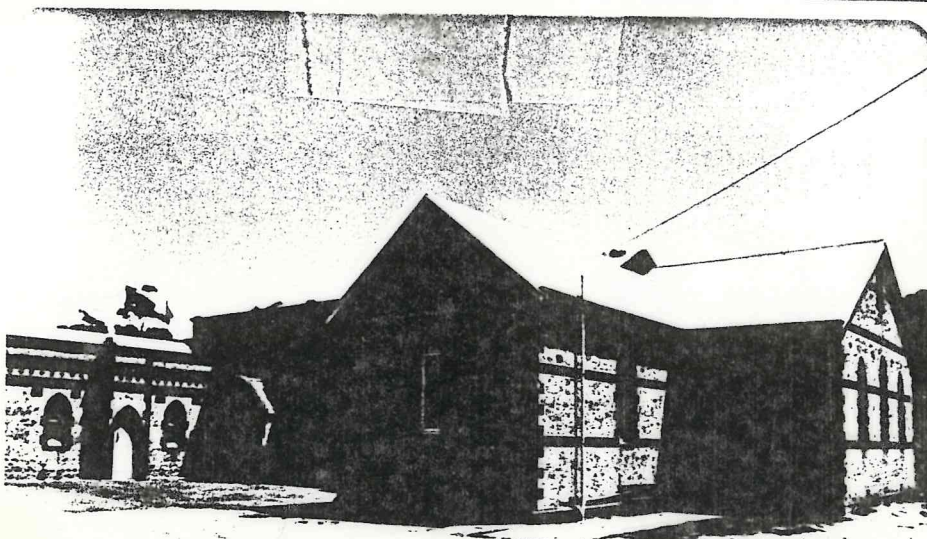
RECOMMENDATION:

PHOTOGRAPH

Film No:

Negative No:

Direction of view:



STATUS

Register of State
Heritage Items

On Register

Interim List

Nominated

National Estate 1978
National Trust ✓ 262:
R.A.I.A. (in 1970)
Civic Trust
N.P. & W.L.S.

Council
Australian Heritage
Engin. Record
Other

MAP

Scale:

Source:

PREPARED BY:



FILM 432
NO 1

BAPTIST CHURCH GAWLER

FEB '82
LORWAN