

To: The South Australian Heritage Committee
From: Senior Historic Architect
Subject: REGISTER NOMINATION
- MASONIC HALL
124 COMMERCIAL STREET
PORT ADELAIDE
Date: 15 March 1982

Summary

This report has been prepared as part of a programme to consider widely recognised heritage items which at present are not covered by the South Australian Heritage Act. There is no known threat to this building. This nomination has been initiated by the Heritage Conservation Branch.

Historically, the building is significant because it represents the popularity of the Freemasonry movement between 1917-1930. Built in 1928, the building replaced an earlier meeting chambers for the Adelaide No. 2 Lodge situated opposite the Port Adelaide Railway Station. Despite several economic difficulties of the time, the Port Adelaide members donated a considerable amount towards its construction.

Architecturally, the Masonic Hall is a unique example of the Egyptian Revival style of architecture in South Australia. While the building is not a faithful reproduction of any monument, the various elements are used in a sympathetic manner to create a visually delightful result.

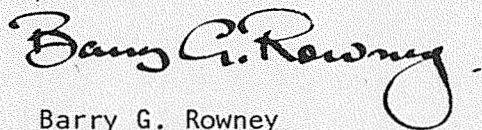
Environmentally, the Masonic Hall is an important visual landmark at the main entrance to the Port Adelaide area.

The Integrity of the Masonic Hall is virtually intact with only minor upgradings and alterations to the shops on the ground floor.

The Masonic Hall is not on the Register of the National Trust.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Masonic Hall, 124 Commercial Road, Port Adelaide, be placed on the Register of State Heritage Items and be categorized A1, A3, H3 and 3.1.



Barry G. Rowney

South Australian Heritage Act 1978-80	Register of State Heritage Items ITEM EVALUATION SHEET Buildings and Structures						
	Item	MASONIC HALL PORT ADELAIDE					
Age 1925	Theme		Office				
Period 1928-1945	Subject PEOPLE/INSTITUTIONS TRADE AND COMMERCE/RETAIL		Region Adelaide Metro.				
Building Type Masonic Hall and Shops	Style EARLY MODERN/EGYPTIAN REVIVAL		Status -				
<u>Qualitative Data</u>			<u>Grading</u>				
Component		Comment	E	VG	AG	FP	NA
<u>History</u>							
1.	Context:	Associated with the growth of the Freemasonry movement in the State of South Australia which was most popular during the early 19th century and in particular with civic pride in the welfare of the Port Adelaide community.		*			
2.	Person/Group:	Bros. Holker, Chairman, & Bros. Keley, Secretary of the United Masonic Trust formed to raise money for the building.		*			
3.	Event:	1928- Masonic Lodge built.			*		
<u>Architecture</u>							
4.	Architect/Builder:	Architect not readily available. WPL and Bro. and Colgate - Builder.					*
5.	Design:	Corner building, rectangular plan with shops below and lodge rooms upstairs, two main facades in Egyptian Revival style, corner pylons with horizontal elements between Egyptian columns, deeply recessed openings, lodge entry defined with slightly projecting Egyptian porch, shops along Commercial Road with cantilevered awning, numerous motifs and decorations in pseudo-Egyptian, bright painted accents, rear portions in conventional dark brick construction.		*			
6.	Construction:	Rendered brickwork at front, plain brickwork at rear, corrugated iron hip roofs behind parapet, concrete floors, steel cantilevered awning clad in decorative pressed metal.			*		
7.	Interior:	Spartan, shops very plain with no applied decoration or even cornices, lodge rooms simple with modest detailing on doors and wainscots, symbolic fittings in main hall, upstairs is basically several large halls, lino tiles on some floors, acoustic ceilings in the rooms.			*		

I.E.S./D3/211081

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	Item	MASONIC HALL PORT ADELAIDE					
Component	Comment		Grading E VG AG FP NA				
8. Representation: Extremely early style. <u>Environment</u>			*				
9. ContinuityL	Size and bold design dominates the area, basic two storey scale compatible with the neighbourhood.				*		
10. Local Character:	Other larger commercial buildings along Commercial Road, located on main 'entry' into Port.				*		
11. Landmark:	Size and bold unusual design dominates the area, visible from some distance, located on wide boulevard, no adjacent distractions, light colour.		*				
<u>Integrity</u>							
12. Alterations:	Minor alterations or upgrading in the ground floor shops, superfiscal floor coverings upstairs.		*				
13. Condition:	No obvious defects				*		
14. Compatibility:	Commercial and Masonic functions intact.		*				
<u>Supplementary Information</u>							
Adaptation:	The relatively large spaces would lend themselves to alternate uses easily. The treatment of the main facades should not be altered or disrupted. The profile of the building against the sky should be retained.						
Interpretation	Because the Masonic portion of the building is not open to the public the building's interpretative function is largely passive related to its visual qualities. These visual qualities relate indirectly then to the building's Masonic role.						
Current Situation:	The building is occupied by the Port Adelaide Masonic Lodge and several commercial enterprises. There is no known threat.						
Evaluated By	Ivar Nelsen	Iris Iwanicki	Date				
Reviewed By	Ivar Nelsen		Date				
South Australian Heritage Committee Categorization			Date				

I.E.S./D3/211081

HISTORICAL RESEARCH - MASONIC LODGE, PORT ADELAIDE

The Freemasonry Movement, which manifested itself in South Australia from 1884 onwards, underwent an expansionary phase between 1914-1930. Between 1914-1924, 35 new lodges were established and membership throughout South Australia doubled. Reasons for the expansion can possibly be found in the effects of the First World War, namely the need to continue the comradeship experienced in the trenches and to establish mutual support between trades and crafts people. Following 1924, a period of prosperity occurred for 6 years, evidenced by 32 more lodges being established. It was towards the end of the period that the Masonic Lodge at Port Adelaide was erected, in 1928. The advent of the lodge can thus be linked to a State-wide phenomenon and reflects the appeal that the tenets of the Freemasonry movement held for the male population. From an examination of articles appearing in the Freemasonry Journal of the time, these can be summarized as a belief in the universal brotherhood of man (Asiatic races excepted) mysticism and mild misogyny expressed in jingoistic phrases.

The former meeting chambers at Port Adelaide situated in The Old Masonic Hall, opposite the Port Adelaide railway station proved inadequate during the 1920's and a new temple scheme was launched, with the initial five thousand pounds raised by public donation, and the remaining ten thousand pounds borrowed. The construction of the building occurred during hard times for The Port Adelaide community. Unemployment within South Australia was the highest in the country in 1928, with Port Adelaide having the highest unemployment figures in the State. Therefore the raising of five thousand pounds by public subscription to part finance the building at a time of economic depression and severe unemployment testifies the degree of support by lodge members in the Port Adelaide vicinity. Described by a speaker at a Lodge meeting of June 1928 as "a fine edifice and its achievement was fitting tribute to what could be done by unity of purpose". The Masonic Lodge was built by Wpl. Bro. E. Colgate as contractor, after a total of 11 tenders for its construction had been submitted. The intention was to "provide increased accommodation and comfort, an ideal situation, convenience of approach, absolute appearance, solid and beautiful, and in design, Egyptian". (S.A. Freemasons Journal, 1928, p.76).

The first regular meeting of the Adelaide Lodge No. 2 in the new Temple at Port Adelaide took place on Tuesday evening, Oct. 16, 1928. A month earlier Pt. Adelaide had witnessed a full pitched battle between police and strikers when voluntary labour had been brought in to break a strike, resulting in arrests and imprisonment. No doubt the visiting speaker had this in mind when he "trusted that as a result of - co-operation at Port Adelaide the brethren of the local lodges would have greater influence on the welfare of the Port Adelaide community".

Since its erection the building has been used for lodge events and shops facing Commercial Road let by the owners.

Sources:

Pt. Adelaide Historical Society Portonian "The Port in the Great Depression" Feb. 1973, p.9-11.

The Board of General Purposes A History of Craft Masonry in S.A. 1884-19.
The S.A. Freemasons Journal - issues for 1928.

MASONIC TEMPLE AND SHOPS 142-150 COMMERCIAL ROAD



C.T: 2498/134 Section 2112/Lot 154

HERITAGE LISTINGS: State Heritage Register

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE/RELEVANT CRITERIA: This Masonic Lodge, constructed in 1928, is representative of the expansion of Freemasonry in South Australia between 1911 and 1930. It is an excellent example of the Egyptian Revival style of architecture in South Australia.

RECOMMENDATION: This building was entered in the State Heritage Register in 1982.

MASONIC TEMPLE AND SHOPS 142-150 COMMERCIAL ROAD (cont)

ANALYSIS:

Extract from State Heritage Branch Assessment: 1982

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- The Board of General Purposes *A History of Craft Masonry in SA 1884-19*.
- The *SA Freemasons Journal* - issues for 1928.



FILM NO.

MASONIC HALL
PORT ANGELES

MAR 82

FILM NO.

MASONIC HALL
PORT ADCAIDE

MAR 82



