

## **SUMMARY OF STATE HERITAGE PLACE**

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### **REGISTER ENTRY**

**Entry in the South Australian Heritage Register in accordance with the  
*Heritage Places Act 1993***

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**NAME: University of Adelaide Grandstand PLACE NO.: 26392**

**ADDRESS: War Memorial Drive, North Adelaide SA 5006  
CR 6109/995 H106100 Section 1612 Hundred of Yatala**

### **STATEMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE**

The University of Adelaide Grandstand is significant as an outstanding example of an early-20th century sporting building and as a representative of the establishment and development of formal recreational facilities in the Adelaide Parklands. As one of the first two sports buildings constructed by the University of Adelaide, it also demonstrates the emergence of the philosophy that sport and sporting achievement are an important part of tertiary education and student life. The building also has important associations with the expansion and development of the University of Adelaide.

### **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.***

Founded in 1874, the University of Adelaide was South Australia's first university and the third in Australia after Sydney and Melbourne. Although having the smallest campus of any university in Australia, it had the advantage of being adjacent to the Adelaide Parklands and the River Torrens. This meant that the majority of recreational and sporting activities happened outside of the University campus.

As the student population grew (from 60 in 1876 to over 1,000 in 1910), so too did the need for a diverse range of extra curricula activities. Increasing numbers of competitive sports were played, with rowing having the highest profile. In 1888, the inaugural University Challenge Cup was held in Sydney, and in the following

year on the Port River in Adelaide. The event became the highlight of the University's sporting year, but many other more inclusive sporting events also became popular during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Athletics, football, lawn tennis, lacrosse and ladies' hockey were played in either local or intervarsity competitions, and a Sports Association and various athletics clubs were formed. Sporting events became a meeting place for all members of the University (from Professors to undergraduates), and started to become associated with social events, including the annual ball to raise funds for the Sporting Association.

By 1908, sporting activities had become a prominent part of student life. The University Council lobbied the Adelaide City Council to let them lease land in the Parklands, and the University Oval was established. Then, two years later, a grandstand was constructed next to the oval. Along with the University boat shed, this was the earliest permanent sports-related building to be constructed by the University.

When constructed, the grandstand was described as part of the first well-equipped sports fields in the parklands. The construction of the building illustrated the importance of sport at the time, and the recognised links between sport and the pursuit of knowledge. By the period in which it was built, recreation was known to be an important part of a well-rounded education. This had long been demonstrated by the venerable institutions in Cambridge and Oxford, where sports competitions including the 'boat races' (rowing) were considered to be a significant part of University life. The University of Adelaide inherited this philosophy and demonstrated their commitment to sporting development by their early sports field.

In the context of South Australia, the University of Adelaide's facility became a 'model' sports field, at the time, the largest and best-equipped in the parklands. It has also played an important role in the cultural and recreational development and expansion of the University of Adelaide. Thus the grandstand demonstrates the growing importance of sports and recreation in education, and in particular, along with the University boatshed, is South Australia's earliest manifestation of a sports building associated with tertiary studies.

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

This architecturally-designed 1910 grandstand was sympathetically extended in 1938, and has been little altered since (apart from the 1964 addition of a toilet block). Originally considered part of a model sports field, and generously endowed by prominent South Australians, the grandstand has a high integrity and displays fine design and attention to detail.

There are only four other grandstands or groups of grandstands included in the South Australian Heritage Register, namely those at Adelaide Oval (now demolished), Victoria Park (1880s), Minlaton Showgrounds (also used as a pavilion) and Morphettville (1913). There are also twelve other grandstands and

sporting facilities that are included in local heritage registers, including at Unley, Quorn, Mount Gambier, Tanunda, Murray Bridge, Kapunda, Torrensville, Port Pirie & Alberton. When considered alongside the three surviving state-listed grandstands and other examples in the state, the example on War Memorial Drive is considered to be an outstanding example of an early 20th century grandstand. As Australia is renowned as a sporting nation, and sport has become a dominant part of our culture, this class of building has particular significance for its representation of our sporting development.

# SITE PLAN

University of Adelaide Grandstand  
War Memorial Drive, North Adelaide

PLACE NO: 26392



University of Adelaide Grandstand  
Site plan generally indicating the important elements and features of the place  
(outlined in red)

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## COMMENTARY ON THE LISTING

### Description and notes with respect to a place entered in the South Australian Heritage Register in accordance with the *Heritage Places Act 1993*

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#### Physical Description

The grandstand is a two-storey structure of Carey Gully sandstone set on bluestone foundations. It has red brick detailing to quoins, balustrade and stairs. The roof is gabled and of corrugated galvanised iron. It features five decorative gables to both the east and west. The roof is supported on cast iron posts with decorative brackets. The stand has a timber floor, timbered metal-strap seating and slate treads to entry steps. Windows are timber framed. Those to the members' room are multi-paned. Those in the rear wall facing to the west are timber-framed sash windows.

The rear portion of the stand beneath the southern two gables is enclosed to form a members' area and office.

The curtilage of the site includes the footprint of the structure and preferably an area of four metres around it.

The components identified as being intrinsic to the heritage significance of the University of Adelaide Grandstand include:

- Two-level five-bay stone and brick grandstand with fabric dating from 1910 to 1938;
- Features including original roofing, cast-iron posts and brackets, timber and metal seating, flooring, timber-framed windows and slate stair treads; and
- Parkland setting adjacent to the oval, including a minimum curtilage of four metres.

The extent of listing *excludes* post-1938 additions such as the 1960s toilet block.

#### History of the Place

In 1908, the University of Adelaide leased a portion of the Park Lands that had formerly been used for agisting stock. The successful application followed lobbying of the City Council by Professors Naylor and Henderson on behalf of university students for the purpose of establishing a playing field. The university proposed spending £500 during the first five years of the lease, but succeeded in investing far more than this. As much as £3448 had been spent in improvements and facilities by 1912: chief among these was construction of the grandstand.

The original building was designed by notable Adelaide architect George Klewitz Soward, and it and his boatshed on the banks of the River Torrens were both erected

in 1909-10. Soward's design exhibited half-timbered gables, Victorian cast iron work, and sandstone and bluestone construction, with brick quoins. Soward designed a number of important buildings in the State, including other grandstands, such as Morphetville Racecourse. However, the University Grandstand is not considered to be one of his most important works.

The grandstand was financed from £100 donations from 13 prominent members of the Adelaide establishment including the Chancellor of the University. Their names are commemorated in the bronze plaque which states: "This pavilion was erected for the encouragement of Sport within the University." The grandstand was opened in 1910. It originally comprised three bays, being the portion to the north.

In 1928, the architectural firm of Woods Bagot undertook remodelling of the stand with Fricker Bros as the builder. Then in 1938, major extensions were made to the southern end of the stand. These additions were designed by AE Welbourn in association with architectural firm of Evans, Bruer and Hall in accordance with plans dated August 1938.

Additional toilets and facilities were later added to the ground floor at the rear of the stand in 1964 in accordance with plans drawn by architects Walkley & Welbourn and dated 29 October 1964. These later additions are of red brick with a skillion roof of corrugated galvanised iron.

The *Advertiser* of 12 July 1910 described the opening of the original grandstand by Governor Sir Day Hort Bosanquet the previous evening:

*The University sports ground, on the northern, side of the Torrens, between King William and Frome roads, was formally opened on Monday afternoon by his Excellency the Governor, ...*

*A Beauty Spot.*

*Surrounded by parks and ornamental trees, the ground is picturesquely situated, and is itself a beauty spot. It covers 61 acres, the boundary fences having been embellished by Kaffir hedge, which, when full grown, will make an attractive fringe. The pavilion is a handsome and commodious structure, costing £1,300. In the three dressing rooms at the rear—one for ladies — attention has been paid to details, and the rooms are replete with modern conveniences, including electric lights. The fine boathouse ... [For the rest of the excerpt, see Donovan & Associates report.]*

## **References**

- Donovan & Associates, *Adelaide Park Lands Heritage Places*, 2011.
- David Jones, *Adelaide Park Lands & Squares Cultural Landscape Assessment Study*, Corporation of the City of Adelaide, October 2007, pp. 201, 684–85.
- Adelaide City Council Archives file SPF 033A and Plans BAP 15793 and BAP 05431.
- *Advertiser*, 12 July 1910.
- *Register*, 12 July 1910.

## SITE DETAILS

University of Adelaide Grandstand  
War Memorial Drive, North Adelaide

PLACE NO: 26392

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<b>FORMER NAME:</b>	N/A
<b>DESCRIPTION OF PLACE:</b>	Two-level five-bay stone and brick grandstand including all original fabric from 1910 to 1938
<b>DATE OF COMPLETION:</b>	1910
<b>SA HERITAGE REGISTER STATUS:</b>	<b>Description:</b> Confirmed <b>Date:</b> 7 March 2014
<b>LOCAL HERITAGE STATUS</b>	N/A
<b>CURRENT USE:</b>	<b>Description:</b> Grandstand <b>Dates:</b> 1910 to present
<b>PREVIOUS USE(S):</b>	<b>Description:</b> N/A <b>Dates:</b>
<b>ARCHITECT:</b>	<b>Name/s:</b> GK Soward/ AE Welbourn <b>Dates:</b> 1909-10/ 1938
<b>BUILDER:</b>	<b>Name:</b> Not known <b>Dates:</b>
<b>LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA:</b>	<b>Description:</b> Adelaide City Council
<b>LOCATION:</b>	<b>Unit No.:</b> <b>Street No.:</b> <b>Street Name:</b> War Memorial Drive <b>Town/Suburb:</b> North Adelaide <b>Post Code:</b> 5006
<b>LAND DESCRIPTION:</b>	<b>Title Type:</b> CR <b>Volume:</b> 6109 <b>Folio:</b> 995 <b>Lot No.:</b> <b>Plan No.:</b> H106100 <b>Section:</b> 1612 <b>Hundred:</b> Yatala

## PHOTOS

University of Adelaide Grandstand  
War Memorial Drive, North Adelaide

PLACE NO: 26392

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University of Adelaide Grandstand from oval (from east)

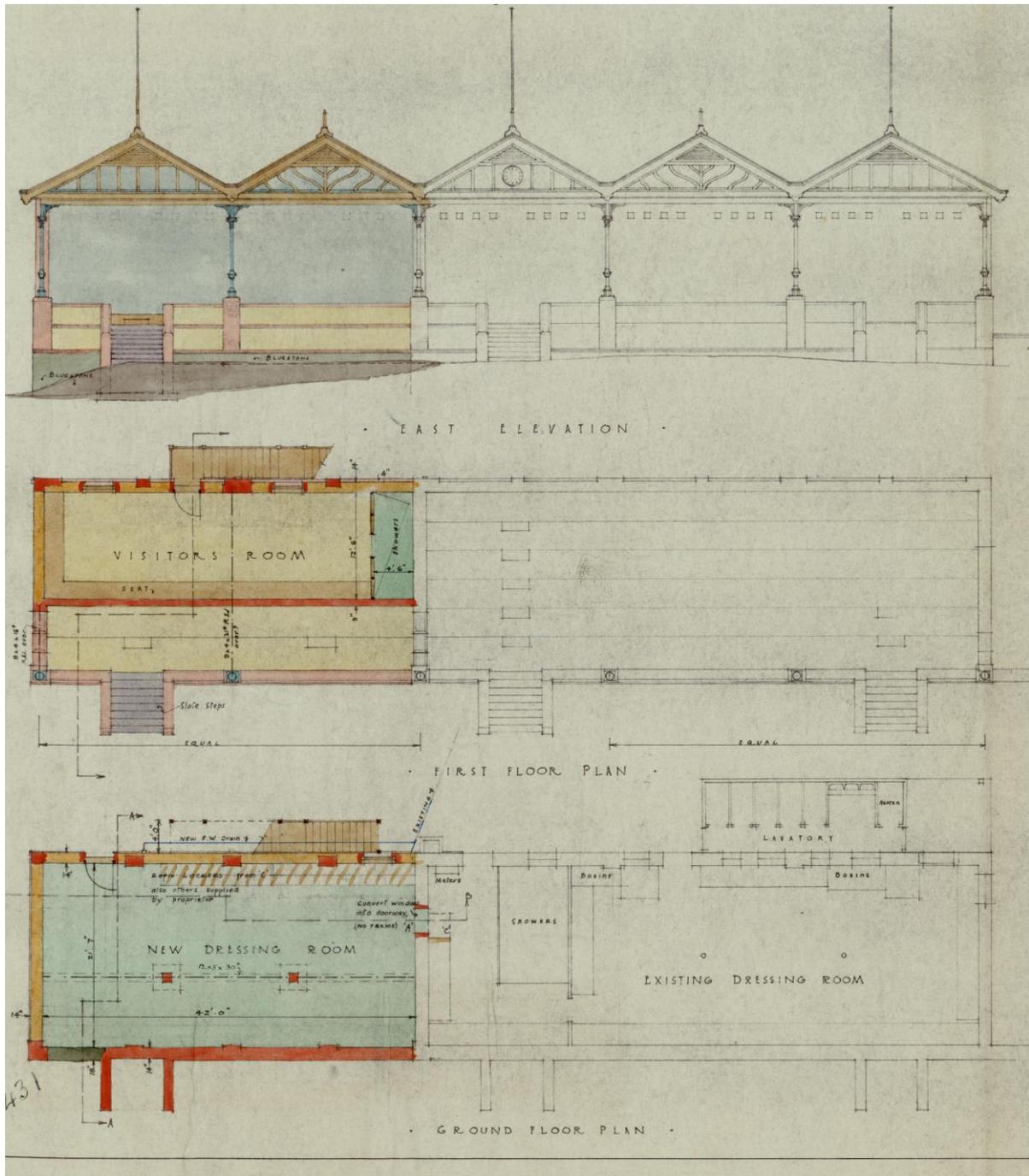


University of Adelaide Grandstand from rear (from west)

# ARCHITECTURAL DRAWINGS

University of Adelaide Grandstand  
War Memorial Drive, North Adelaide

FILE NO: 26392



Plans for 1938 additions to grandstand, showing original 1911 structure, on the right, and 1938 additions (in colour) on the left. [Adelaide City Council Archives: BAP 05431]