

POANT MISSIVE JUNE 2017

NEWS FROM THE PORT OF ADELAIDE BRANCH OF THE NATIONAL TRUST

JUNE QUARTER 2017



Figure 1: A view from the Birkenhead Bridge looking North West 2005, photo M Weir

Current Committee Members

Pat Netschitowsky	Chairperson/Treasurer
Karen James	Strategic advocacy
Fiona McConchie	Secretary/Fort Largs contact
Michael Weir	Principal researcher
Sandra Elms	Design/publicity
Sharon Holmes	Membership liaison/website/Facebook coordinator
Andrew Winkler	Friends of Torrens Island/Quarantine Station contact/ Port Adelaide Wiki development
Michelle Hogan	Port Adelaide Enfield Council contact
Phillip Winter	Strategy/research
Clare Shuttleworth	Strategic planning

Our branch has a passionate and active Committee. If you have enthusiasm, energy and an interest in joining our Committee, please contact Pat at pat@pnetschi.com or on 0402 008 589 with an expression of interest for the Committee's consideration.

Summary of Branch activity and events

During the past six months Port of Adelaide National Trust (PoANT) committee members have met with Port of Adelaide Enfield Council (PAEC) staff, Renewal SA, State Ministers Close MP and Mullighan MP, Darren Peacock Chief Executive of National Trust of South Australia (NTSA) and Liz Burge (also NTSA), Deb Richardson (Director of Community Development), Kevin Jones of the Maritime Museum, Gianna Murphy and the MUA (Maritime Union of Australia). Information sharing about PoANT and some of the projects that Renew Adelaide has supported were among topics canvassed. PoANT has also spoken with Liz Burge of NTSA to promote the idea of a forum/meeting about adaptive reuse.

It is one year since plans for the next stage of the Port Adelaide Renewal Project were unveiled by Renewal SA.

As noted in the previous Missive, it was in November 2016 that the DAC (Development Assessment Commission) granted approval for demolition of Shed 1. Despite the disappointment of this decision, PoANT continues to advocate for the retention of Shed 1 and the development of a master plan for the important historic precinct, McLaren Wharf. As a way of indicating our on-going commitment to the McLaren's Wharf area, a prayer flag was designed by Peter Johnson. **These flags are being sold for \$20-** and several businesses and residences in the area have displayed them. These enterprises include the

- Dutch Coffee Lab in St Vincent Street
- Sarah's Sisters on Semaphore Road
- Port Art supplies
- Jackalope



Figure 2: The Shed 1 Prayer Flags

We thank these businesses for their support of this cause.

Please contact us on **0402 008 589** if you wish to buy one for your house or business.

The Rex Munn Cultural Heritage Award ceremony was conducted on 7 May 2017. This year the award went to Alison Sloley and Adam Freeman for their heritage restoration of the Port Admiral Hotel and their contribution and commitment to the on-going culture of Port Adelaide. Following consultation with MUA, PoANT noted that the MUA are happy for this award to be part of May Day events in the future.



Figure 3 Mark Butler, Pat Netschitowsky, Adam Freeman & Alison Sloley at the presentation of the Rex Munn award

PoANT met with Heath Edwards from AILA (Australian Institute of Landscape Architects) who suggested that a forum for their work could take place around October or November this year.

Other items of interest include a submission POANT provided to the Port Adelaide Enfield Council regarding a proposed Telecommunications Tower (monopole) construction near Semaphore Road and the Military Road intersection in February 2017. We are pleased to report that that the proposal was rejected by the Development Assessment Panel (DAP) at their June 2017 meeting.

A comprehensive submission on Renewal SA's proposed Ships and Boats strategy was forwarded in May 2017 to DPTI (Department of Transport and Infrastructure). In this document we emphasised our view that it is important for developers and Renewal SA to maintain an integrated approach and pathway to maritime heritage around the inner harbour linking key areas such as Fletcher's Slip to Cruikshank's Corner, Shed 26 to Jervois Bridge and Hart's Mill to Dock 1 via Wharf Shed 1 to Dock 2 and the proposed Maritime Precinct at Shed 13.

It was also suggested that items of maritime heritage be displayed along such a pathway; items are now located at Netley storage area and Shed 13 and maybe elsewhere as well.

The following segment on Adaptive Reuse outlines the argument for the beneficial effects of adapting various types of built form, particularly industrial buildings. Some of these benefits are examined in the following that considers the ecological, aesthetic, social and economic advantages of adaptive re-use in a wide range of settings.

Adaptive Reuse: Adapt or Demolish?

Jackie Craven in an article titled [“What is Adaptive Reuse? Repurposing Old Buildings: Don't Tear it Down - Give Architecture a Second Chance”](https://www.thoughtco.com/adaptive-reuse-repurposing-old-buildings-178242) (<https://www.thoughtco.com/adaptive-reuse-repurposing-old-buildings-178242>, accessed 26/7/17) notes that:

“Adaptive reuse, or re-use, is the process of repurposing buildings—old buildings that have outlived their original purposes—for different uses or functions while retaining their historic features. A closed school, [for example], may be converted into condominiums. An old factory may become a hotel. A rundown church may find new life as a restaurant... And a restaurant may become a church.”

The Australian Department of the Environment and Heritage 2004 adds that:

"Adaptive reuse is a process that changes a disused or ineffective item into a new item that can be used for a different purpose. Sometimes, nothing changes but the item's use."

Further,

“Adaptive Reuse is a way to save a neglected building that might otherwise be demolished. The practice can also benefit the environment by conserving natural resources and minimizing the need for new materials.”

Economic considerations loom large



Figure 4: Part of the Adelaide Fruit and Produce Exchange Market following adaptive reuse (photo: WeekEndNotes)

By way of a case study it is noted here that the conversion of the former Adelaide Fruit and Produce Exchange market site carried out in Adelaide in the 1990s is regarded as a good example of an adaptive re-use project. This project required considerable public support for implementation of its present form which is mixed use apartments and commercial enterprises. Developer's first option was to raze the buildings as this was assumed to be the cheapest way forward. In the end the facades on all boundaries of the site were retained as well as most of the shops within those facades and these have since proved a considerable asset for the area.

This site provides good evidence that reuse is a form of preservation particularly when it is conducted in a respectful manner. As such the process of adaptive reuse can provide a significant counter to the ruthless onslaught of placelessness and the psychological perils of being nowhere and yet everywhere at the same time to which new builds are frequently prone.

The importance of adaptive reuse strategies to community well-being are perhaps most cogently revealed in the introductory remarks in the Commonwealth Government's paper on Adaptive Reuse in 2004 which is stated:

“The built environment provides a footnote to our histories, helping to identify our places as Australian, rather than generically “modern” or “contemporary”. Historic buildings give us a glimpse of our past and lend character to our communities as well as serving practical purposes now.

In the pursuit of sustainable development, communities have much to gain from adaptively reusing historic buildings. Bypassing the wasteful process of demolition and reconstruction alone sells the environmental benefits of adaptive reuse. Environmental benefits, combined with energy savings and the social advantage of recycling a valued heritage place make adaptive reuse of historic buildings an essential component of sustainable development.

To mark Australia’s Year of the Built Environment 2004, this booklet will explore some of the environmental, social and economic benefits of the adaptive reuse of historic buildings”.

(<http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/publications/adaptive-reuse>, accessed 26/7/17)

Around Australia

There are numerous examples in Australia of adaptive reuse projects and countless examples overseas. For example, in Sydney, sites such as the old Sydney Mint have been renovated and adapted into inner-city headquarters for the Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales. The Hyde Park Barracks building has also been transformed from an old jail into a museum which documents and records the history of Australia's first settlers and convicts. Examples of old wharf sheds being turned into high-end apartments (e.g. Woolloomooloo Finger Wharf), or event spaces such as on the Macquarie Wharf in Tasmania feature among a range of strong examples.



Figure 5: View of Woolloomooloo Finger Wharf apartments



Figure 6: Macquarie Wharf No. 2 Cruise Terminal is one of Hobart's newest waterfront event spaces catering for medium to large scale corporate functions, events, concerts and expos (photo TasPorts)

The industrial history of Australia has been an influential factor in determining the types of buildings and areas which have gone on to become adaptive reuse sites, especially in the realms of private residences and community based buildings. In South Australia noteworthy sites include the Balhannah Mines which was adapted into a private residence and has received awards from the Housing Industry Association and the Design Institute of Australia (see Australian Government Department of the Environment and Heritage 2004, "Adaptive reuse – Preserving our past", DEH, Canberra).

In Adelaide four prominent, heritage listed 19th Century buildings in poor repair were restored, refurbished and given new roles by the South Australian Government (2002 to 2011). Among these refurbishments are the Torrens Building, the former Adelaide Stock Exchange building, the Torrens Parade Ground and building and the 62 hectare former Mitsubishi Motors plant.

Now more than ever would seem the right time for the Government to step in once again and save some of the historic buildings on the Port Waterfront that detail their essential relevance to the industrial and pre-industrial era of this State.

There has been much debate on the economic possibilities and viability of adaptive reuse as different corporations and companies seek to find sustainable ways to approach their

corporate or retail sites (see for example Hyllegard, K., Paff Ogle, J., Dunbar, B. 2003 'Sustainability and Historic Preservation in Retail Design: Integrating Design into a Model of the REI Denver Decision-Making Process' Journal of Interior Design Vol. 29, No.1&2, pp. 32-49).

The economic costs differ from project to project and some professionals even assert that new build is always more economical and renovation is universally more expensive, (Blackburn, L. 1983 'What Developers Think of Historic Preservation' Urban Land Vol.42, pp. 8 – 11). Yet others claim that the return on investment is enhanced when using an older building because of the savings involved. One Canadian developer claims that reusing buildings generally represents a saving of between 10-12% over building new (Shipley, R., Utz, S., Parsons, M. 2006 'Does Adaptive reuse Pay? A Study of the Business of Building Renovation in Ontario, Canada', International Journal of Heritage Studies Vol. 12, No. 6, pp. 505–520).

Governing bodies also benefit from the reuse of once abandoned sites as once they are occupied they generate tax revenue and therefore often recover the initial investment.

Adaptive reuse is an inherently rational practice

Builders and developers are naturally inclined to create a functional space at a reasonable cost. Yet often, the cost of rehabilitation and restoration is more than the cost of demolition and a new build. So why else is it so compelling to think about adaptive reuse? Here are some reasons from a purely practical building approach:

- Seasoned building materials are not even available in today's world. It's very difficult if not impossible to find close-grained, first-growth timber which is naturally stronger and richer looking than today's timbers. And what about the incredible sustainability of old brick?
- The process of adaptive reuse is inherently green. The construction materials are already produced and transported onto the site. It is ecologically sensible and right.

And finally it seems obvious but:

- Architecture is history. Architecture is memory. Ÿ