

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT REPORT

NAME: St Alphonsus' Catholic Church

PLACE: 26544

ADDRESS: Bunganditj Country
87 George Street, Millicent

This heritage assessment considers that the place meets criteria (a), (d) and (e). Refer to Summary of State Heritage Place for final approved wording, including criteria statements.



St Alphonsus' Catholic Church, 20 April 2022

Source: DEW Files

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Statement of Heritage Significance:

St Alphonsus' Catholic Church demonstrates two important aspects of the evolution of the State's history, namely post-war regional development, which occurred as a result of the Playford government's industrialisation strategy for South Australia, and post-war migration, which supported industrialisation.

St Alphonsus' Catholic Church is one of the largest churches built in regional South Australia after the Second World War. This reflects the rapid growth and prosperity of

the town of Millicent as it emerged as a regional service centre for forestry and nearby associated industries during the post-war boom. Industrialisation drew an influx of workers and their families to Millicent. Many were migrants, and those who attended Mass at St Alphonsus' Church swelled the size of the Catholic congregation, leading directly to the construction of the new church in 1965-1966.

St Alphonsus' Church is a pivotal example of a post-war church as it was the first South Australian church to respond directly to the *Instruction on the Liturgy*, a key document arising from the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican (1962-1965) (Vatican II). Notably, the design achieved this by fanning the pews around the sanctuary by nearly 180 degrees, the first time this was done in a South Australian post-war church. Thus, it demonstrates a key stage in the development of the class of place, post-war church.

The church is also an outstanding, critically recognised example of late twentieth-century ecclesiastical Modern Movement architecture in South Australia. The building is noted for its imposing appearance, structural engineering, use of materials, sense of light, integration of interior design, master planning, and the legible relationship between plan and external form.

Relevant South Australian Historical Themes

St Alphonsus' Catholic Church demonstrates the following themes and subthemes in *Historic Themes for South Australia* (Draft 29 May 2020).

2. Peopling Places and Landscapes

2.4 Migrating to South Australia

4. Building Settlements, Towns and Cities

4.4 Making regional centres

4.5 Living in country towns

4.7 Marking significant phases in development of SA's settlements, towns and cities

6. Developing Social and Cultural Life (supporting and building communities)

6.1 Supporting diverse religions and maintaining spiritual life

Comparability / Rarity / Representation:

St Alphonsus' Catholic Church is associated with the Catholic Church in South Australia and the sweeping reforms that emerged from the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council 1962-1965 (Vatican II). The church also represents post-war regional development, post-war migration, late twentieth-century ecclesiastical architecture and the work of South Australian architect C. William (Bill) Peters. Each is considered in turn below.

Postwar Regional South Australia

The industrialisation of the South Australian economy was a key policy of the Playford Government (1938-1965). Industrialisation had a major impact on metropolitan Adelaide and also resulted in the growth and development of many regional centres across the State. Rapid population growth was essential to provide workers for new industries and in turn necessitated the construction of community and commercial facilities to support workers and their families.

There are only 42 State Heritage Places entered on the South Australian Heritage Register that were constructed after 1945, of which only six are located in regional South Australia, namely:

- Radium Hill Townsite and Cemetery, 1949, Maldorky Station, off the Barrier Highway, criterion (a) (SHP 21246, listed 2017),
- Mount Gambier Fire Station, 1955, 40a Sturt Street, Mount Gambier, criteria (a) and (e) (SHP 13686, listed 1995),
- Executor Trustee Building, 1995, 3 Penola Road, Mount Gambier, criteria (a) and (e) (SHP 14722, listed 1995),
- Second World War Memorial Gates, 1959, Memorial Drive, Port Pirie, criterion (e) (SHP 19047, listed 2001),
- Renmark Distillery Bridge, 1960, Renmark Avenue, Renmark (SHP 13801, listed 1993),
- Coober Pedy Catholic Church and Presbytery, 1967, Hutchinson Street, Coober Pedy (SHP 10302, listed 1980).

Of those six State Heritage Places, only the Mount Gambier Fire Station (SHP 13686) and the Executor Trustee Building (SHP 14722) are specifically listed for their associations with regional development after the Second World War.

Following the Second World War, many places were built across South Australia in response to regional industrialisation and the commercial development and public investment in community facilities and infrastructure that followed. As the environment of the South East was particularly suitable for forestry, it became the focus of postwar industrialisation in the region, along with associated pulp and timber processing industries.

There are a number of places associated with forestry, the pulp and timber industries and associated development in the South East not listed in the Register, including:

- Former Cellulose Australia Pulp Mill, from 1941, 30989 Princes Highway, Millicent, associated with post-war industrialisation,
- Former Apcel Pulp Mill (now Kimberly-Clarke – Millicent Mill), 1960, 75 Glens Lane, Tantanoola, associated with post-war industrialisation,
- Mount Burr Forest Reserve, from 1882, Tantanoola Road, Tantanoola, associated with post-war industrialisation,

- Former Softwood Holdings Ltd sawmill, board and wood preservation complex (now owned by Borg Panels), 1956, Jubilee Highway West, Mount Gambier, associated with post-war industrialisation,
- Former State Sawmill (now One Forty One – Jubilee Sawmill), including thermal electric power station, 1958, 170 Jubilee Highway East, Mount Gambier, associated with post-war industrialisation,
- Millicent Swimming Lake, 1969, 9 Park Terrace, Millicent, associated with post-war public investment in the South East,
- Millicent Civic Arts Centre, 1970, associated with post-war public investment in the South East (identified for assessment),
- Mount Gambier Hospital Ward Block, c1954, post-war public investment in the South East (identified for assessment),
- George Street Millicent shopfronts, c1960, associated with post-war commercial development in the South East.

Post-war migration

Places associated with post-war migration include migrant hostels, monuments and memorials, club and association halls, and places of worship. Each is examined in turn.

Migrant hostels provided accommodation and services for new migrants and have particularly strong associations with the theme of post-war migration. However, comparative analysis undertaken during assessment of the Glenelg North Hostel (Remains) in 2018 found that little physical evidence survives of any of the former hostel sites in South Australia.

Monuments and memorials associated with post-war migration are numerous, and include:

- 'The Immigrants', 82 Kintore Avenue, Adelaide, sculpture commemorating the migrants who have settled in South Australia,
- Migration Memorial Wall, 82 Kintore Avenue, Adelaide, commemorating various migrant groups,
- Katyn Memorial, 232 Angas Street, Adelaide, commemorates Polish military personnel who died in service or were killed in action during World War Two, and the victims of Katyn Massacre (subject of future assessment),
- Migration Monument, Lower North East & Montacute Roads, Campbelltown, commemorates the contribution made by migrants to the Campbelltown area,
- 'Memories in a Suitcase', Watson Terrace, Mount Gambier, sculpture commemorating the contribution of migrants to Mount Gambier,
- Italian Immigrants Memorial, Beach Road, Port Pirie, commemorates Italian migrants who settled in Port Pirie.

Clubs and halls associated with post-war and later migration are also numerous and include:

- Macedonian Community Hall, 148 Crittenden Road, Findon

- Latvian Hall "Tālava", 4 Clark Street, Wayville
- Dom Polski Centre, 232 Angas Street, Adelaide
- Estonian Cultural Centre, 200 Jeffcott Street, North Adelaide
- Russian Community Centre, 239 The Parade, Norwood
- Greek Community Centre, 71 George Street, Thebarton

Places of worship, in particular churches, have been described as 'the most conspicuous heritage' of post-war migration and multiculturalism in South Australia.¹ Some examples of post-war migrant places of worship are:

- St Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church, Wayville, 41 Greenhill Road, Wayville, 1970 (identified for assessment)
- St Peter's Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church, 23 Rose Terrace, Wayville, 1971 (identified for assessment)
- Our Lady of Protection Ukrainian Catholic Church, Davenport Terrace, Wayville, 1975 (identified for assessment)
- St Sava Serbian Orthodox Church, 677 Port Road, Woodville Park, 1983
- St Dimitrios Greek Orthodox Church, 35 Zante Road, Berri, 1965

After the Second World War, immigration led to a substantial increase in the Catholic population of South Australia and the construction of many new Catholic churches.

Places on the Register that are broadly associated with post-war and later migration include:

- Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church, 15 Pennington Terrace, Pennington, criteria (a), (d) and (e) (SHP 26520, listed 4 November 2021), associated with post-war migration through its proximity to the Finsbury Migrant Hostel,
- St Margaret Mary's Catholic Church, 286 Torrens Road, Croydon Park, criteria (a), (d), (e) and (g) (SHP 26521, provisionally entered 17 February 2022), associated with post-war migration through its proximity to industrial development and associated migrant settlement in the north-western suburbs of Adelaide,
- Greek Orthodox Church and Bell Tower, 282-288 Franklin Street, Adelaide, criterion (f) (SHP 13205, listed 1997), is associated with the Greek community and post-war migration to South Australia,
- Shri Ganesh Temple, 3A Dwyer Road, Oaklands Park, (SHP 26261, listed 2013) is associated with late twentieth-century migration and the Indian community,
- St Maximilian Kolbe Catholic Church, Agnes Street, Ottaway, criterion (f) (SHP 26473), opened in 1985, has strong associations with the Polish community,
- Our Lady of Protection Ukrainian Catholic Church and fence, 18 Bartley Crescent Wayville (LHP, listed 2013), associated with the Ukrainian community and post-war migration to South Australia,
- Ukrainian Catholic Church of St Volodymyr & Olha, 92A Woodville Road, Woodville (LHP, listed 2017) associated with the Ukrainian community and post-war migration to South Australia.

When compared with the places noted above, St Alphonsus' is considered to be an important representative of post-war migration in South Australia.

Post-war Catholic places of worship

30 Catholic churches are listed as State Heritage Places in the South Australian Heritage Register (the Register), of which six were built after 1945:

- Coober Pedy Catholic Church and Presbytery, 1967, Hutchinson Street, Coober Pedy (SHP 10302, listed 1980), an atypical underground dugout church employing typical vernacular construction techniques of the locality,
- St Maximillian Kolbe Catholic Church, 1984, Agnes Street, Ottaway, criteria (f) and (g) (SHP 26473, listed 2019), modelled on the form of a traditional Polish mountain hut,
- Holy Cross Catholic Church, 159-165 Goodwood Road, Millswood, criteria (d), (e) and (g) (SHP 26498, listed 2021), an outstanding example of post-Vatican II Catholic architecture,
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church, 15 Pennington Terrace, Pennington, criteria (a), (d) and (e) (SHP 26520, confirmed 4 November 2021), an architecturally influential post-war church associated with post-war migration through its proximity to the Finsbury Migrant Hostel,
- Catholic Church of the Holy Name, 80 Payneham Road, Stepney, criterion (e) (SHP 26519, provisionally entered 4 November 2021), an outstanding example of International Style architecture.
- St Margaret Mary's Catholic Church, 286 Torrens Road, Croydon Park, criteria (a), (d), (e) and (g) (SHP 26521, provisionally entered 17 February 2022), associated with post-war migration and an outstanding example of post-Vatican II Catholic architecture.



Coober Pedy Catholic Church and Presbytery (SHP 10302)

Source: Google Street View (2019)



St Maximillian Kolbe Catholic Church (SHP 26473)

Source: Google Street View (2013)

Late twentieth-century ecclesiastical architecture in South Australia

Before 1945, churches were generally designed in decorative historicist styles derived from ancient or medieval precedents. However, after the Second World War,

traditional decorative styles became less prevalent for a number of reasons. The loss of skilled trades and the time involved in traditional construction led to increased costs, making traditional styles less economical.² Meanwhile, architects who followed the Modern movement in architecture tended to reject the decorative nature of historical styles deeming it to be superficial, regressive and 'dishonest'.³

Apperly, Irving and Reynolds identify two styles associated with places of worship constructed in Australia since 1945, namely the post-war ecclesiastical style (c1940-1960) and late twentieth-century ecclesiastical style (c1960-1990). The late-twentieth century ecclesiastical style is understood to continue and extend the trends exhibited by the post-war ecclesiastical style.

The late twentieth-century ecclesiastical style is characterised by the following key style indicators:

- radical plan-shapes responding to liturgical changes,
- unbroken straight lines emphasising verticality,
- clerestory windows,
- inverted V shapes reminiscent of Gothic pointed arches,
- elements reminiscent of Gothic flèches or spires, pointing 'heavenward',
- glazing with vertically proportioned panes,
- plain wall surfaces,
- architectural 'distinctiveness' achieved through experimentation in space and form,
- integration into community expressed through familiar, 'humble' materials such as brick and timber, with domestic associations,
- new structural materials facilitating dramatic shapes.⁴

In *Postwar Places of Worship in South Australia 1945-1990*, Burns identified nine common typologies associated with post-war churches in South Australia.⁵ St Alphonsus' Catholic Church is a representative of the flat-roofed typology.

Places of worship with flat roofs 'addressed most directly the Modernist imperative of the late 1950s and early 1960s'.⁶ Typical elements include minimal eaves and a rectangular plan form, although examples with more unusual plan forms may be found.⁷ Currently there is one flat-roofed church in the SA Heritage Register,⁸ namely the Catholic Church of the Holy Name, 80 Payneham Road, Stepney, criterion (e) (SHP 26519, provisionally entered 4 November 2021).

Examples of other flat-roofed churches include:

- Former North Adelaide Memorial Methodist Church, 92 Archer Street, North Adelaide, 1963, with a rectangular plan
- St Peter Claver Catholic Church, 8 Stuart Road, Dulwich, 1964, with a square plan
- St Richard of Chichester Anglican Church, Henley Beach Road Brooklyn Park, 1964, with a wedge-shaped plan

- St Ann's Catholic Church, 30 Midway Road, Elizabeth East, 1965, with a wide rectangular plan
- Our Saviour Lutheran Church, 121 Military Rd. Semaphore, 1969, with a rectangular plan



Former North Adelaide Memorial Methodist Church, North Adelaide, 1963

Source: Google Maps



St Peter Claver Catholic Church, Dulwich, 1964

Source: Google Maps



Our Saviour Lutheran Church, Semaphore, 1968

Source: Google Maps



St Richard of Chichester Anglican Church, Brooklyn Park, 1964

Source: Google Maps

When considered alongside other examples of flat-roofed churches, St Alphonsus' church is unusual due to its triangular plan with rounded corners, clerestory and spire.

Non-Catholic post-war places of worship

Other than the post-war Catholic churches mentioned above, there are three other places of worship on the Register from this period, namely:

- Nunyara Chapel, 1963, 5 Burnell Drive, Belair, criterion (e) (SHP 14785),
- Cathedral of Angels Michael and Gabriel Greek Orthodox Church and Bell Tower, 1966, 282-288 Franklin Street, Adelaide, criterion (f) (SHP 13205),

- Shri Ganesha Temple, 1990s, 3A Dwyer Road, Oaklands Park, criterion (f) (SHP 26361).

Of these, the Nunyara Chapel is the only post-war place of worship that has been listed for its architectural merit.



The Australian Institute of Architects South Australian Chapter consider Nunyara Chapel (SHP 14785) to be nationally significant.

Source: DEW Files add date

The Australian Institute of Architects South Australian Chapter has identified⁹ the following places of worship as significant examples of twentieth century architecture in South Australia:

- Catholic Church of the Holy Name, 80 Payneham Road, Stepney, 1959 (SHP 26519)
- St David's Anglican Church, 492 Glynburn Road, Burnside, 1962
- St John Vianney Catholic Church, Glynburn Road, Hazelwood Park, 1962*
- Woodlands Church of England Grammar School Chapel, 39 Partridge Street, Glenelg, 1962
- Nunyara Chapel, 5 Burnell Drive, Belair, 1963 (SHP 14785)
- American River Uniting Church, Ryberg Road, American River Kangaroo Island, 1966
- St Alphonsus' Catholic Church, 87 George St, Millicent, 1966* (subject of this assessment)
- St Saviour's Anglican Church, 596 Portrush Road, Glen Osmond, 1966*
- Holy Cross Catholic Church, 159-165 Goodwood Road, Millswood, 1969 (SHP 26498)
- St Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church, 41 Greenhill Road, Wayville, 1970
- Christian Reformed Church, now Hill Street Church, 55 Hill Street Campbelltown*
- St Martin's Anglican Church, 3 Gorge Road, Paradise, 1971
- St Peter's Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church, 23 Rose Terrace, Wayville, 1971
- Immanuel Lutheran College Chapel, 32 Morphett Road Novar Gardens, 1971

- Our Lady of Protection Ukrainian Catholic Church, Davenport Terrace, Wayville, 1975
- St Sava Serbian Orthodox Church, 677 Port Road, Woodville Park, 1983
- St Luke's Catholic Church, Honeypot Road, Noarlunga Downs, 1983*

*Identified during 1999-2000 review



American River Uniting Church KI, 1966

Source: UniSA Architecture Museum



Immanuel Lutheran College Chapel, 1971

Source:



Our Lady of Protection Ukrainian Catholic Church, 1975

Source: UniSA Architecture Museum



St Martin's Anglican Church, Paradise, 1971

Source: Google Street View

Cecil William Peters

C. William Peters designed numerous Catholic churches, chapels and schools from the late 1950s to the early 1980s, as well as commercial and residential projects. His work includes:

- Good Shepherd Catholic Church, 1964, 7 St Albans Place, Clearview
- St Peter Claver Catholic Church, 1964, 8 Stuart Road, Dulwich
- St Matthew's Catholic Church, 1966, 1 Wembley Avenue, Bridgewater
- St Michael's College Chapel, 1968, 15 Mitton Avenue, Henley Beach
- Tintinara Hotel, n.d., 41 Becker Terrace, Tintinara



**Good Shepherd Catholic Church,
Clearview, 1964**

Source: Google Street View (2022)



Tintinara Hotel, Tintinara n.d.

Source: Google Street View (2013)

Currently no places associated with the work of C. William Peters are listed in the South Australian Heritage Register, however, the South Australian Heritage Council has identified St John Vianney Catholic Church, Glynburn Road, Hazelwood Park, another critically noted post-war church, for assessment.

**Assessment against Criteria under Section 16 of the *Heritage Places Act 1993*.
All Criteria have been assessed using the 2020 Guidelines.**

(a) it demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should be closely associated with events, developments or cultural phases which have played a significant part in South Australian history. Ideally it should demonstrate those associations in its fabric.

Places will not normally be considered under this criterion if they are of a class of things that are commonplace, or frequently replicated across the State, places associated with events of interest only to a small number of people, places associated with developments of little significance, or places only reputed to have been the scene of an event which has left no trace or which lacks substantial evidence.

St Alphonsus' Catholic Church demonstrates two important aspects of the state's history, namely post-war regional development and post-war migration. Both aspects of South Australia's history are under-represented in the Register.

Post-war regional development was driven by the Playford government's industrialisation strategy for South Australia, and the emergence of non-metropolitan industrial towns was a key feature of the post-war boom. After the Second World War, the town of Millicent developed into a regional service centre for forestry and the associated pulpwood industries due to its proximity to the Mount Burr Forest and the nearby locality of Snuggery, where two large pulp mills were operating by July 1960. These industries drew an influx of workers and their families to Millicent, and the population of greater Millicent grew by 89% between 1947 and 1966.

Population growth in turn led to considerable commercial development and public investment in Millicent. Not only one of the largest and most conspicuous public buildings constructed in Millicent during the post-war decades, St Alphonsus' Church was also one of the largest regional churches constructed in South Australia after the Second World War and among the most architecturally adventurous. The physical fabric of the church demonstrates the rapid growth and rising prosperity that is associated with the post-war industrialisation of regional South Australian towns.

Many of those who moved to Millicent after the Second World War were migrants, including large numbers of British, Italian, Dutch and Polish workers and their families. Migrant families swelled the size of the Millicent Catholic congregation, directly resulting in the construction of the new St Alphonsus' Church. The scale of the church reflects both the large number of migrant worshippers and their collective prosperity, since the church was funded by donations from parishioners.

Post-war migration expanded many Catholic congregations in the years after the Second World War, and sometimes resulted in the construction of new churches. However, St Alphonsus' Catholic Church has particularly strong associations with post-war migration because of the dramatic demographic change that occurred in

Millicent after the Second World War, which resulted in the construction of an unusually large regional Catholic church.

Few places survive that represent post-war migration at the State level (see Comparability, Representation and Rarity). Currently, only Our Lady of Mount Carmel (SHP 26520) and St Margaret Mary's (SHP 26521) Catholic Churches are listed in the Register due to their associations with post-war migration. Compared with other places that have substantially the same associations, St Alphonsus' Church is considered to clearly demonstrate the theme of post-war migration.

It is recommended that the nominated place **fulfils** criterion (a).

(b) it has rare, uncommon or endangered qualities that are of cultural significance.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should demonstrate a way of life, social custom, industrial process or land use which is no longer practised, is in danger of being lost, or is of exceptional interest. This encompasses both places which were always rare, and places which have become scarce through subsequent loss or destruction.

Places will not normally be considered under this criterion if their rarity is merely local, or if they appear rare only because research has not been done elsewhere, or if their distinguishing characteristics have been degraded or compromised, or if they are at present common and simply believed to be in danger of becoming rare in the future.

St Alphonsus' Catholic Church is associated with the Catholic Church in South Australia, in particular the period of radical architectural experimentation that followed the opening of the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican (Vatican II). However, St Alphonsus' is one of many Catholic churches, one of many post-war churches, and one of many built after the opening of Vatican II.

Catholic worship is an ongoing practice in South Australia, and while some congregations have declined in recent decades, others have grown in strength and new Catholic churches continue to be built in South Australia. In addition, Catholic sacred art continues to be commissioned and created. Consequently, St Alphonsus' Catholic Church is not considered to demonstrate cultural qualities that are rare, uncommon or in danger of becoming lost.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (b).

(c) it may yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the State's history, including its natural history.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should provide, or demonstrate a likelihood of providing, information that will contribute significantly to our knowledge of the past. The information should be inherent in the fabric of the place. The place may be a standing structure, an archaeological deposit or a geological site.

Places will not normally be considered under this criterion simply because they are believed to contain archaeological or palaeontological deposits. There must be good reasons to suppose the site is of value for research, and that useful information will emerge. A place that will yield the same information as many other places, or information that could be obtained as readily from documentary sources, may not be eligible.

St Alphonsus' Church was built on a vacant site between St Alphonsus' Hall and the first St Alphonsus' Church. The first church was subsequently demolished and the land graded to make way for a carpark and church office building. Footings and rubble fill from the church are likely to remain in situ under the office building and carpark surface. However, the first earlier St Alphonsus' Church employed similar design characteristics and construction techniques to other churches built in South Australia during the late nineteenth century and which survive across the State. Therefore, any archaeological remains associated with the original church are unlikely to yield information that is considered of significance at the State level, particularly as so many similar places are still intact, and also because considerable documentary and pictorial evidence is available from a range of primary and secondary sources.

There is no evidence (documentary, oral history or physical) to suggest that the place may yield information that will contribute meaningfully to an understanding of the State's history beyond what is readily available.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (c).

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

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should be capable of providing understanding of the category of places which it represents. It should be typical of a wider range of such places, and in a good state of integrity, that is, still faithfully presenting its historical message.

Places will not be considered simply because they are members of a class, they must be both notable examples and well-preserved. Places will be excluded if their characteristics do not clearly typify the class, or if they were very like many other places, or if their representative qualities had been degraded or lost. However, places will not be excluded from the Register merely because other similar places are included.

St Alphonsus' Catholic Church is associated with, and is an outstanding example of, the class of place known as post-war churches.

The construction of new churches after the Second World War is associated with post-war population growth resulting from migration and the baby boom, suburban and regional development, and the evolving role of churches in community life due to liturgical change. As a result, over 650 churches were built between 1945 and 1990 in South Australia. Churches constructed during this time played a prominent role in South Australia's physical, cultural and spiritual development.

The principal attributes of the class of place 'post-war church' comprise a range of physical elements including the setting and exterior form of the building; materials; and the layout, furnishing and decoration of the interior spaces. Outstanding representatives of the class of place will possess a range of both exterior and interior attributes that define the class.

St Alphonsus' Catholic Church is the first South Australian church to respond directly to the *Instruction on the Liturgy*, a key document arising from the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican (1962-1965) (Vatican II). It did this by fanning the pews around the sanctuary by nearly 180 degrees, in order to bring the congregation as close as possible to the altar and to help the congregation feel a part of a unified family of people. St Alphonsus' is thus a pivotal example of a post-war church as it encapsulates a key evolutionary stage in the development of the class.

St Alphonsus' retains a high degree of integrity and intactness and displays many of the principal characteristics of the class at a higher quality than many other examples. St Alphonsus' also demonstrates many of the principal characteristics of the class in a way that allows the class to be readily understood and appreciated, including:

- a plan responded to liturgical change, in this case integrating sanctuary and nave into a single-volume worship space, with pews arranged in a fanned configuration, to bring as many people as close to the sanctuary as possible and foster a sense of community,
- a distinctive roof form, employed to set the church apart from secular buildings, with a clerestory roof and landmark spire,
- adoption of commonplace materials with domestic connotations employed to integrate the church into community, such as face brick, clear-finished timber, and unpainted concrete,
- adoption of newly-available materials, processes and technologies, including prefabricated reinforced concrete, welded structural steel, and a suspended ceiling system,
- expression in a late twentieth-century ecclesiastical style,
- provision of community facilities or amenities, in this instance by locating the church adjacent to the existing St Alphonsus' Hall as part of a larger master plan,
- considered engagement with site and context, in this instance by setting the church well back from the road, raising the church above street level on a platform and defining circulation space around the church for gathering and procession,
- the presence of bespoke sacred artworks created as an integral part of the church's design, in this case stained and coloured glass Stations of the Cross by Stephen Moor, and a carved crucifix by Hans Knorr created concurrently with the design and construction of the church.

In comparison to Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church (SHP 26520) and St Margaret Mary's Catholic Church (SHP 26521), both post-war churches listed under

criterion (d), St Alphonsus' Catholic Church is a similarly outstanding example of the class of place.

It is recommended that the nominated place **fulfils** criterion (d).

(e) it demonstrates a high degree of creative, aesthetic or technical accomplishment or is an outstanding representative of particular construction techniques or design characteristics.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should show qualities of innovation or departure, beauty or formal design, or represent a new achievement of its times. Breakthroughs in technology or new developments in design would qualify, if the place clearly shows them. A high standard of design skill and originality is expected.

Places would not normally be considered under this criterion if their degree of achievement could not be demonstrated, or where their integrity was diminished so that the achievement, while documented, was no longer apparent in the place, or simply because they were the work of a designer who demonstrated innovation elsewhere.

St Alphonsus' Catholic Church is an outstanding example of late twentieth-century ecclesiastical Modern Movement architecture in South Australia and demonstrates a high degree of aesthetic, creative and technical accomplishment. The church was constructed during a period of radical experimentation in the plan and form of Catholic places of worship following the opening of the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican (1962-1965) (Vatican II) but prior to the publication of the new Catholic Mass in 1970. St Alphonsus' is believed to be the first South Australian Catholic church designed to respond directly to the *Instruction on the Liturgy*, a key document arising from Vatican II that had a profound impact on the design of Catholic churches globally.

Peters' well-resolved design marks a clear break from traditional church architecture by enclosing functional space in a platonic volume, exploiting the available technology of the time and selectively expressing the framed structural system of the building. St Alphonsus' Catholic Church finely articulates many key attributes of late-twentieth century ecclesiastical architecture, namely,

- a radical plan-shape responding to liturgical change, designed to facilitate active participation in worship by bringing people as close as possible to the altar, in this instance by wrapping the pews in a fanned configuration around the peninsula-like sanctuary,
- unbroken straight lines emphasising verticality, notably in the lines of reinforced concrete columns supporting the front of the church, vertically proportioned window openings on three sides, brick infill panels and deliberately positioned drainpipes, all extending from ground level to eaves,
- clerestory windows, flooding the sanctuary with daylight,

- V-shapes reminiscent of Gothic pointed arches, in this instance expressed in plan, through the shape of the rear wall and clerestory,
- an element reminiscent of a Gothic flèche or spire, pointing 'heavenward,' in this case a slender, open-frame steel spire rising above the sanctuary,
- plain wall surfaces of unpainted, unplastered face-brick,
- architectural 'distinctiveness' employed to denote the purpose of the building as a place of worship, achieved through imposing scale, a triangular plan with prominent rounded corners, expansive areas of coloured glass and a flat clerestory roof over the sanctuary, surmounted by a slender, open-frame spire bearing a cross,
- community integration achieved through the use of familiar, 'humble' materials with connotations of domesticity, in this instance face-brick, unpainted concrete, and clear-finished timber,
- adoption of new structural materials facilitating dramatic shapes, in this case, a reinforced concrete frame holding aloft a steel structure that spans the vast volume of the worship space and supports a flat roof, clerestory and landmark open-frame steel spire.

In August 1966 St Alphonsus' Church was featured in South Australian architectural journal *Building and Architecture*, one of only seven South Australian churches to be so featured over a period of 20 years, a time when many new churches were constructed in South Australia. The church was noted for its 'imposing' appearance; orderly and 'up-to-date' plan informed by recent liturgical developments; the legible relationship between plan and external form; structural engineering; use of materials; sense of light; integration of its interior design; and the foresight of its master planning. Subsequently in 2000, the Australian Institute of Architects South Australian Chapter recognised St Alphonsus' Catholic Church as a significant example of twentieth century South Australian architecture.

Only minor changes have occurred to the church since it was completed in 1965, namely the removal of communion rails, painting the external concrete frame and carpeting the nave. Consequently, St Alphonsus' Catholic Church remains an outstanding example of twentieth-century ecclesiastical architecture and demonstrates a high degree of creative, aesthetic and technical accomplishment through the integrity and intactness of its design, choice of materials, and the use of reinforced concrete to support a steel structure that encloses an expansive volume with a flat roof.

In comparison to Holy Cross Catholic Church (SHP 26498) and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church (SHP 26520), both post-war places of worship listed under criterion (e), St Alphonsus' displays a similarly high degree of aesthetic and technical accomplishment.

It is recommended that the nominated place **fulfils** criterion (e).

(f) it has strong cultural or spiritual association for the community or a group within it.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place should be one which the community or a significant cultural group have held in high regard for an extended period. This must be much stronger than people's normal attachment to their surroundings. The association may in some instances be in folklore rather than in reality.

Places will not be considered if their associations are commonplace by nature, or of recent origin, or recognised by a small number of people, or not held very strongly, or held by a group not widely recognised, or cannot be demonstrated satisfactorily to others.

Since 1884, St Alphonsus' Catholic Church has been a place of worship for the local Catholic community, first in the original church and from 1966 in the new church (subject of this assessment). While the local Catholic community has a strong spiritual association with the church, it is one of many hundreds of Catholic churches in South Australia. Consequently, while the specific spiritual associations of Catholics who attend St Alphonsus' is of importance to the local community, the place is highly unlikely to resonate with the broader South Australian community.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (f).

(g) it has a special association with the life or work of a person or organisation or an event of historical importance.

Criterion arguments have considered the *Guidelines for State Heritage Places*:

The place must have a close association with a person or group which played a significant part in past events, and that association should be demonstrated in the fabric of the place. The product of a creative person, or the workplace of a person whose contribution was in industry, would be more closely associated with the person's work than would his or her home. Most people are associated with many places in their lifetime, and it must be demonstrated why one place is more significant than others.

Places will not generally be considered under this criterion if they have only brief, incidental or distant association, or if they are associated with persons or groups of little significance, or if they are associated with an event which has left no trace, or if a similar association could be claimed for many places, or if the association cannot be demonstrated. Generally the home or the grave of a notable person will not be entered in the Register unless it has some distinctive attribute, or there is no other physical evidence of the person's life or career in existence.

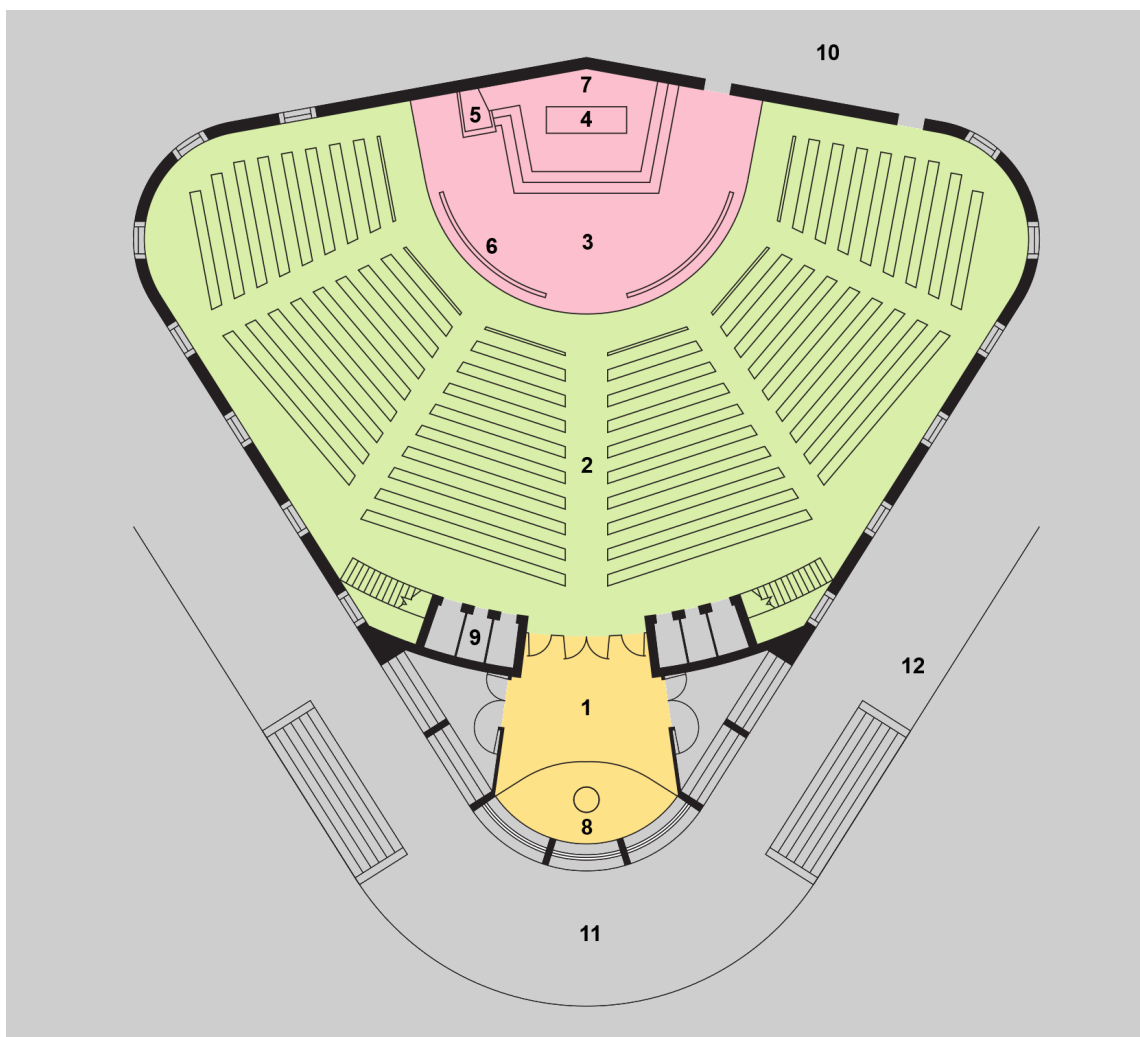
St Alphonsus' Catholic Church is associated with South Australian architect Cecil William (Bill) Peters, whose work included commercial, education and ecclesiastical projects, including numerous Catholic churches and chapels. However, aside from his designs for St John Vianney Catholic Church, Burnside and St Alphonsus' Catholic Church (subject of this assessment), both of which are recognised by the Australian

Institute of Architects South Australian Chapter as significant examples of twentieth century architecture, Bill Peters has received limited critical recognition. As such, there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that Bill Peters has made a strong, notable or influential contribution to South Australian history.

St Alphonsus' Church is also associated with the Catholic Church in South Australia. However, St Alphonsus' Church is one of many Catholic Churches and so similar associations could be claimed for many places.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** criterion (g).

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION



St Alphonsus' Church indicative floorplan, based on architect's sketch.¹⁰

Source: Chris Burns, *Liturgy, Community, Modernity: Postwar places of worship in South Australia 1945-1990* (2020) p. 25

LEGEND

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Narthex (yellow) with gallery overhead | 7 Position of tabernacle |
| 2 Nave (green) | 8 Baptistery |
| 3 Sanctuary (red) | 9 Confessionals |
| 4 Altar | 10 Position of sacristies (not on plan) |
| 5 Position of lectern | 11 Platform |
| 6 Communion rails (removed) | 12 Position of belfry |

Site and Setting

St Alphonsus' Catholic Church is positioned on a sloping site at George Street, Millicent. Key features of the site include:

- church set back from George Street, with a sloping car park to the south,
- contemporary parish office (presbytery) building to the east,
- extensive retaining walls which create a level platform for the church and office building,
- older church hall located to the north-west,
- two sheds on the northern side,
- random-rubble retaining fence on south-western side.

Exterior

St Alphonsus' Catholic Church is a two-storey brick, steel and reinforced-concrete church with a flat steel roof, flat-roofed clerestory, and a wedge-shaped plan with prominent rounded corners. Precast reinforced concrete columns integrated into a visible in-situ reinforced concrete frame support steel roof trusses and bracing trusses. The roof structure in turn supports a 70 ft (21 metre) open-frame steel spire that passes through the roof and is surmounted by a cross.

Infill wall panels are predominantly cream face brick, however the curved front of the church facing George Street is predominantly comprised of glass with Hardie's Colorboard or similar (asbestos-bearing) spandrels. An additional fourteen tall, narrow window openings are positioned around the envelope of the church between concrete structural columns.

A single-storey sacristy and toilet block with a flat roof is attached to the northern side of the church.

The church exterior displays the following additional features:

- concrete frame rendered with thin screed coat,
- square profile gutters with no eaves,
- aluminium frames to most windows,
- stained or coloured glass to most windows, including six stained glass windows from installed in three bays enclosing the front of the church,
- porches with double entrance doors on western and southern sides, sheltered under structural concrete beams,
- granite foundation stone adjacent to porch on southern side,
- electric exhaust fans adjacent to porches on both sides (original fabric),
- single door on eastern corner with flat roofed verandah,
- flat-roofed porch on western corner (counterpart on opposite corner removed),
- steps from church to carpark level adjacent to porches on both sides,
- welded tubular steel fence guarding drop on south-western side,
- split-face concrete masonry blocks to retaining walls,

- original church foundation stone set in retaining wall on southern side,

The parish office is a single-storey flat-roofed building with wide eaves, an L-shaped plan and cream and chocolate brick walls.

Interior

The main worship space encompasses most of the interior and features a raised choir gallery supported on steel columns and beams, located to the south-west. Double-doors beneath the gallery lead to a narthex (foyer) and baptistery, with six confessional booths under the gallery – three on each side. The narthex is also located under the gallery and has a low ceiling. The lens-shaped baptistery is located one step down from the narthex with a void above, reaching the main ceiling.

The main worship space is comprised of nave, sanctuary and choir gallery in a single vast unified space. The sanctuary occupies a semi-circular peninsula. Fixed fumed (treated with ammonia gas) and clear-finished timber pews are arranged in a fanned configuration around the sanctuary. The sacristy is accessed from a door adjacent to the sanctuary.

The worship space displays the following features:

- cream face brick walls,
- suspended main ceiling with white tiles in stainless steel or aluminium frame,
- fibrous plaster clerestory ceiling to sanctuary,
- exposed steel frame supporting spire in clerestory,
- carpet in nave (not original fabric) covering blue vinyl tiles (original fabric),
- raised parquet floor to sanctuary,
- Hawkesbury River sandstone altar and tabernacle altar,
- vee-fluted oak matchboard reredos,
- hexagonal plywood veneer baldachin (canopy) over altar (some water damage),
- carved timber crucifix by artist Hans Knorr,
- suspended Australian oak and sheet metal fluorescent light enclosures,
- fourteen stained and coloured glass Stations of the Cross by Stephen Moor in window openings,
- steel stairs to gallery on either side,
- tiered gallery floor,
- vee-fluted oak matchboard and steel railing to gallery balustrade wall,
- hollow-core plywood internal doors,
- marble holy water stoups adjacent to entry doors,
- marble consecration stones positioned around worship space,
- bronze war memorial dedication plaque adjacent to sanctuary.

The narthex displays the following features:

- cream face brick walls,
- pine matchboard ceiling,

- crazy-paved slate floor,

The baptistery displays the following features:

- wrought and welded steel gates separating baptistery from narthex,
- white terrazzo floor with inlaid marble slabs,
- marble font and font cover (likely from 1935 rebuild of first church),
- suspended light fitting.

Elements of Significance:

Elements of heritage significance include (but are not necessarily limited to):

- Church building,
- Visibility of church from George and Short Streets, in particular the façade, clerestory and spire,
- Original exterior and interior material finishes, including face-brick walls; aluminium suspended ceiling frame; clear-finished reredos and joinery; terrazzo, slate and parquet floors; aluminium window frames and coloured glass; and Hawkesbury River sandstone altar and tabernacle altar,
- Original fittings including original door hardware and light fittings,
- Original fixed furniture, including pews and rails and configuration of pews and rails,
- Exterior form and original exterior material finishes of parish office.

Elements not considered to contribute to the significance of the place include (but are not necessarily limited to):

- Rainwater heads,
- Plywood Christmas decoration and lights on southern wall,
- Data projectors and screens,
- Suspended speakers and heating bars,
- Curtain fittings on sanctuary wall,
- Communion stations,
- Carpet to nave,
- New niche with devotional statue of St Anthony of Padua in northern corner,
- Interior of parish office,
- Landscaping.

HISTORY

Millicent: nineteenth and early twentieth century background

Bunganditj ownership and dispossession

The Bunganditj people are the traditional owners of much of the South East of South Australia.¹¹ Prior to European settlement, the landscape was comprised of low ranges running parallel to the coast, separating shallow valleys or 'flats.'¹² In winter, the flats flooded, leaving much of the landscape under standing water for several months of the year. During winter, the Bunganditj people lived in small permanent villages on the uplands of Mount Burr, the Woakwine Range and Mount Gambier, hunting kangaroos and wallabies and building weirs down on the flats to trap fish. During summer, community life moved to the coast to take advantage of the seasonal availability of fruit.¹³

European settlement began 'as an extension of the Western Victorian frontier' with pastoralists arriving from 1839,¹⁴ triggering a 'catastrophic' decline in the Bunganditj population.¹⁵ Europeans chose to settle in the preferred winter camping areas of the Bunganditj people, placing pressure on local food resources. When Bunganditj people took sheep, which they considered to be a shared resource, pastoralists retaliated with violence, beginning a cycle of frontier conflict.¹⁶

Following the Victorian gold rush in 1851, Bunganditj people filled the resulting labour shortage and Europeans learned to control the lives of Bunganditj people with rations.¹⁷ Some Bunganditj people were removed from the South East under 'restrictive and repressive' legislation from 1911, however others remained and today the Bunganditj community is 'actively involved in language and cultural revival programs.'¹⁸

Settlement and drainage

Drainage of the South East was considered from 1863, initially as a means of improving communication with Adelaide,¹⁹ however Surveyor General George Woodroffe Goyder recognised its potential to create new agricultural land.²⁰ The first coastal drains cut in 1864 in the vicinity of Mount Muirhead, north-east of present-day Millicent, were designed as 'precursors' to an 'ambitious scheme' for draining over 800 square miles of the South East.²¹ This plan languished, however, when Goyder was transferred to survey the Northern Territory.²²

Parts of the South East were declared Agricultural Areas under the *Waste Lands Amendment Act 1869* (Strangways Act), to placate local residents jealous of similar Areas created north and west of Adelaide. South East Agricultural Areas were opened for credit selection in August 1872²³ and in so doing, the Government 'unwittingly committed itself to extensive and immediate drainage activity' in those districts. Goyder's comprehensive plan was totally abandoned, and subsequent drainage works to the end of the nineteenth century focussed instead on opening up existing

watercourses draining towards the northern flats, rather than making new, direct drainage cuts through high ground to the sea.²⁴

Meanwhile, the government town of Millicent, located on a low limestone ridge above the recently-drained flats near Mount Muirhead, was surveyed in 1870.²⁵ The town was named after the daughter of Adelaide Bishop Augustus Short. Through the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Millicent was a service centre for surrounding farms.²⁶ Prior to 1900, the only area of the South East to be thoroughly drained was the Millicent/Tantanoola area.²⁷

Construction of new drains under the *South-East Drainage Act 1900* in the early twentieth century, including the major K-L and M drains, paved the way for comprehensive draining of the South East in the post-war period, with Commonwealth funding under the *War Services Land Settlement Act 1945*.²⁸ The 'intricate' system was completed by the early 1970s.²⁹

Post-war regional development with a focus on Millicent in the South East

The Playford government pursued a policy of industrialisation for South Australia which intensified after 1945. The Industrialisation of non-metropolitan towns was 'a key feature' of the post-war period in South Australia, with a proportionally 'greater impact' on regional South Australia than the city.³⁰

Industrialisation led to government investment in infrastructure and population growth in urban centres. Population growth was fed in part by post-war European migration. Instead of surveying many new settlements as was done previously, the state government focused public investment in industrial towns, notably Whyalla, Port Pirie, Port Augusta, Ardrossan, Mount Gambier and Millicent.³¹ Writing in 1970, the South Australian State Planning Authority considered Millicent to be a 'good example' of decentralisation.³²

Industrialisation

Regional industrialisation was predominantly associated with processing raw materials³³ and in the South East was especially associated with processing wood products.

In 1875, the South Australian government established a Forest Board with power to proclaim forest reserves,³⁴ and the following year forestry commenced with trial plantings and a tree nursery at Mount Gambier.³⁵

The first successful plantings in the South East were achieved at the Mount Burr Forest Reserve, east of Millicent, in 1882,³⁶ coinciding with the *Woods and Forests Act 1882*. The Woods and Forests Department was created under regulations of the Act in April the following year.³⁷

Pinus radiata soon emerged as the species most suited to local conditions.³⁸ Regular government plantings commenced at Mount Burr and Penola from 1907,³⁹ and commercial plantings from the 1920s.⁴⁰ Local private sawmills unfamiliar with *pinus*

radiata were reluctant to handle the species. Consequently, the Woods and Forests Department built a sawmill and associated town at Mount Burr, about ten kilometres east of Millicent, which opened in May 1931.⁴¹ Forestry expanded through the late 1930s⁴² and another mill and associated town was opened in 1941⁴³ at Nangwarry, about 45 kilometres east of Millicent,⁴⁴ to handle logs from Penola.⁴⁵

Meanwhile, in February 1938, the South Australian government contracted newly-formed Cellulose Australia Limited to build a pulp mill at Snuggery, about 10 kilometres south of Millicent, to handle thinnings, a forestry waste product. The mill was completed in 1941, 'a considerable achievement' during wartime, and supplied pulpwood for explosives manufacture until 1945.⁴⁶ Subsequently, the Cellulose Mill produced cardboard and wrapping paper products.⁴⁷

Forestry expanded during the post-war decades and with it, forestry-based industrial production. In July 1960, Apcel Limited, a joint venture between Australian Paper Manufacturers (APM) and Cellulose Australia Limited, opened a second pulp mill at Snuggery⁴⁸ to manufacture tissue products.⁴⁹ The following year APM acquired Cellulose Australia's interests in the Apcel Mill and in 1963 became equal partners with United States-based Kimberly Clark Corporation in Kimberly-Clarke (Aust.) Limited. This firm pursued a 'vigorous expansion programme' of the Apcel Mill through the 1960s.⁵⁰

By 1965, the Mount Burr Forest comprised one-quarter of the acreage of all State Forests in the South East.⁵¹ Ten years later, the South East supported a population of 6,000 people who derived their livelihoods from forestry and the processing of forestry products.⁵² The Cellulose Mill employed 450 and the Apcel Mill 600, including 160 women.⁵³ Most of the Cellulose and Apcel workers lived at Millicent. The Cellulose Mill closed in 1998,⁵⁴ while the Apcel Mill now operates as the Kimberly-Clarke – Millicent Mill.

Population growth and migration

The South East was the only large rural area in South Australia to experience net in-migration between 1933 and 1947. Subsequently, in the early post-war years, the South East enjoyed 'record' net in-migration due to the expansion of forestry and associated industry and soldier settlement, facilitated in part by the 'comprehensive' artificial drainage of the region.⁵⁵ Between 1947 and 1961 the population of the South East grew from 27,812 to 46,111, a 66% increase.⁵⁶

In the South East as elsewhere, industrial expansion led to labour shortages which were addressed using migrant workers.⁵⁷ For the first time, this included people from non-English speaking backgrounds who were deliberately recruited by state and federal governments.⁵⁸

Between 1947 and 1953, more than 170,000 non-British European refugees came to Australia under the Commonwealth Mass Resettlement Scheme for Displaced Persons (DPs).⁵⁹ On arrival, DPs entered into a two-year contract with the Commonwealth government to provide unskilled labour.⁶⁰

Initially the Commonwealth selected 'young, fit and single' individuals from countries such as Poland, Latvia and Lithuania – people considered more likely to 'blend in' with White Australia.⁶¹ Large-scale migration from Italy, another predominantly Catholic country, began in 1951⁶² and was perpetuated into the 1970s through chain migration.⁶³

The 1947 census recorded 128 British and only 18 non-British Europeans living in Millicent. By 1966, from a total population of 4,533, the census of urban Millicent recorded 455 people born in the UK and Ireland (10% of the urban population), 137 people born in Italy (3%), 141 people born in the Netherlands (3.1%) and 20 people born in Poland (0.4%), as well as smaller groups of people born in numerous other countries. The 1966 census also recorded 1,025 Catholics living in urban Millicent, an increase of 320 in the five years from 1961.⁶⁴

Italian migrants Ralph Zanello and Tony Buffon established a Millicent-based building firm responsible for numerous homes in the area as well as renovations to St Alphonsus' Church Hall (1956) and building the new presbytery (1967) (see St Alphonsus' Catholic Church below). The number of Italian families living in the South East continued to increase into the early 1970s⁶⁵ despite the end of Italian mass migration.⁶⁶

Demographer Graeme Hugo considered movement of people into 'major non-metropolitan centres' a 'striking' feature of the post-war period, especially when set against a general trend of rural depopulation.⁶⁷ Overall, between 1947 and 1966 the population of greater Millicent (including urban and rural areas) experienced a population increase of 89%, from 3,121 to 5,912.⁶⁸ The urban centre grew at a rate of 6.07% per annum between 1954 and 1961 and 5.90% per annum between 1961 and 1966, from 3,401 to 4,553, representing proportionally larger increases than Mount Gambier during the same period (5.85% and 2.31% respectively).

By 1966, Millicent was the second-largest town in the South East region after Mount Gambier,⁶⁹ and in 1970, the South Australian State Planning Authority forecast a population of 10,000 for the urban population of Millicent by 1991⁷⁰ (the 2016 Census recorded a population of 4,734⁷¹).

Public and private investment

In 1943, under pressure from the Playford government,⁷² the South Australian Housing Trust (SAHT) built its second group of country houses (23 timber single units) at Millicent, ostensibly to house Cellulose Australia Limited employees but 'not tied to company employment.'⁷³ SAHT 'greatly expanded' its country building program after 1947, often in association with particular industries.⁷⁴ By 1979, SAHT had developed a large area on the western side of Millicent,⁷⁵ completing 638 houses.⁷⁶

Millicent emerged as a thriving service centre for forestry and associated industry as well as agricultural and pastoral production, which also expanded during the post-war boom.⁷⁷ Rising prosperity led to an upsurge in commercial investment in the Millicent urban centre during the 1950s and 1960s, with expenditure on construction peaking at around £400,000 pounds in July 1960.⁷⁸

Population growth led to public and private investment in community facilities, including new classrooms at St Anthony's Catholic School (1958);⁷⁹ new Methodist Church Hall (1962);⁸⁰ hospital extensions (1964);⁸¹ new Congregational (c1950s), Seventh-day Adventist (1956) and Baptist (c1950s) churches; the Glen-Vu Drive-in theatre (1959, demolished);⁸² Swimming Lake complete with artificial beach (1969);⁸³ and the Millicent Civic and Arts Centre (1970).⁸⁴

The new Catholic Church (1966, subject of this assessment) was one of the largest public buildings constructed in Millicent during the postwar period. Improved roads and rising car ownership also gave rise to tourism in the South East, with new motels increasing the number of serviced accommodation beds in Mount Gambier, Naracoorte and Millicent from 628 to 1229 between 1960 and 1967.⁸⁵

The Roman Catholic Church⁸⁶ in South Australia

South Australia was established at a time of religious ferment in Britain when the established Church of England had recently lost its effective monopoly over religion.⁸⁷ English society was 'deeply divided'⁸⁸ between supporters of the established Church of England and Dissenters comprised of British Protestant denominations that had formed outside of the established Church. Catholics, who fell outside both of these opposing camps, were seen to owe allegiance to the Pope rather than the Queen and were sometimes regarded with suspicion.⁸⁹

Notable planners of the province of South Australia were Dissenters and other nonconformists who envisaged a 'Paradise of Dissent,'⁹⁰ based on the principle of religious freedom. They recruited other nonconformists for migration, while in some cases simultaneously opposing Catholic migration. Nevertheless, Catholics were among the first colonists who arrived in December 1836. While the fledgling colony 'prided itself' on religious tolerance, 'popular anti-Catholicism'⁹¹ was prevalent and was continued by some well into the twentieth century.

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, South Australian Catholics were predominantly working-class labourers from Irish, English, Scottish or Silesian backgrounds.⁹² Catholics remained 'a small minority'⁹³ prior to the Second World War, and South Australia possessed the lowest number of Catholics in Australia, as a proportion of the total population.⁹⁴

Post-war migration had a profound impact on the cultural and religious composition of the South Australian population. After 1945, Catholic numbers in South Australia increased dramatically, from 12.5 percent in 1947 to 15.8 percent in 1954 and 20.1 percent of the population by 1966.⁹⁵

Post-war Catholic church-building

Between 1945 and 1990, the Catholics built the largest number of new churches of all denominations in South Australia, followed by the Lutherans and the Anglicans.⁹⁶

The end of building restrictions in January 1953 heralded the beginning of a post-war church-building boom in South Australia. Migration and the baby boom led to

suburban expansion and regional development, and each denomination sought to establish footholds in the newly subdivided neighbourhoods by building churches.

Following the Second World War, donations towards the construction of war memorials were tax-deductable⁹⁷ and as a result, many post-war Catholic churches were dedicated as war memorials, including St Alphonsus' Catholic Church (subject of this assessment).

The South Australian post-war church-building boom peaked in 1959 and came to an end in the late 1960s.⁹⁸

Liturgical change

The Liturgical Movement was an international movement for liturgical and theological reform that was felt most strongly within the Roman Catholic Church. The Liturgical Movement brought about liturgical reform and revolutionised church architecture in the twentieth century.

In the Catholic Church, it culminated in the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council of 1962-1962 (Vatican II). Vatican II was the most significant event in the life of the twentieth century Catholic Church. It comprised a revision of the church's previously insular viewpoint to one that aimed to engage with the modern world. This new attitude had profound and wide-reaching implications for many aspects of Catholic worship and, in turn, Catholic architecture.

Prior to Vatican II, the Tridentine or Latin Mass was the obligatory liturgy of Catholic worship. The new Mass of Paul VI, which replaced the Latin Mass, was the most substantial reform to the Catholic liturgy since the sixteenth century and addressed perceived shortcomings in the Latin Mass. In essence, the laity were no longer perceived as spectators,⁹⁹ and became 'full, conscious and active participants'¹⁰⁰ in the liturgy.

Aspects of traditional Catholic architecture impeded the active participation of the laity and reflected the requirements of the Latin Mass and the hierarchical nature of the Catholic Church, namely:

- the nave was long and narrow with pews arranged in ranks, meaning that those at the back saw and heard less than those at the front,
- the sanctuary and nave were separated by a rail or screen, with a considerable distance between the sanctuary and the front pews; in larger churches this separation was reinforced by positioning the sanctuary in a separate room behind the chancel arch,
- the Latin Mass was celebrated in ecclesiastical Latin with the priest facing the high altar and his back to the congregation. Parts of the liturgy were also spoken *sotto voce* (quietly),
- the laity did not speak, and, due to the spatial arrangement of the church, could not clearly see or hear, and

- traditionally, the choir and organ were positioned either aloof from the congregation in a loft, or in the chancel between nave and sanctuary, increasing the perceived separation between priest and laity.

Post-Vatican II Catholic Churches

Changes to the physical form of Catholic churches after Vatican II were informed by the guidelines for the 'proper construction of churches and altars' as outlined in the *Instruction on the Liturgy*,¹⁰¹ issued on 26 September 1964. Subsequent documents refined liturgical requirements for churches, which remained in flux until the promulgation of the new Catholic Mass in 1970.

While older churches were retrofitted to accommodate the new liturgy, modified churches were inevitably less satisfactory than new churches that were purpose-built to align with post-Vatican II principles.

In new churches built after Vatican II, active lay participation in the liturgy was achieved through measures such as:

- the sanctuary and nave were designed as one integrated worship space instead of separate rooms,
- pews were arranged to bring people as close to the sanctuary as possible, typically, in a fanned configuration,
- the altar was free standing, enabling the priest to celebrate the Mass facing the congregation,
- the tabernacle, a box where the Blessed Sacrament (or consecrated bread and wine) was reserved, no longer stood on top of the main altar but was positioned on a separate altar, ensuring clear line of sight between priest and congregation,
- from 1969, when the new rite of baptism was issued, the baptismal font was positioned in the main worship space, usually in or near the sanctuary, enabling the sacrament of baptism to be celebrated by the entire congregation,
- the words of the priest were electronically broadcast throughout the church, ensuring that every member of the congregation could hear,
- the organ console and choir were positioned in the main worship space, among the laity, so that they appeared to be a part of the congregation,
- the overall layout of the church was designed to include internal and external circulation space, facilitating processions in which the congregation could participate.

In South Australia, experimentation with the plan and form of new Catholic churches was driven by liturgical changes that began prior to and continued after Vatican II. After Vatican II, canon law as it related to churches was 'effectively suspended' and during this time architects and clergy enjoyed 'increasing freedom' until the new Mass was approved and made compulsory in 1970.¹⁰²

Thus, the first five years following the conclusion of Vatican II (1965-1970) resulted in the most radical experimentation in the design of Catholic churches in South Australia. This freedom was expressed in revolutionary plan forms, designed to facilitate active

participation; and innovative roof shapes, typically upward-pointing and designed to set religious buildings apart from their secular counterparts.

St Alphonsus' Catholic Church

The first Catholic Masses in the Millicent area were celebrated in private residences, first in the home of Philip Boyle at Snuggery, south of Millicent and later at Gum Park homestead, the residence of W. T. Kealy.¹⁰³ From 1877, the Millicent congregation worshipped in a 'miserable'¹⁰⁴ weatherboard building, built as a butcher's shop, which stood on the approximate site of the present-day St Alphonsus' Hall.¹⁰⁵

The first Church of St Alphonsus' was designed by Michael McMullen, a prolific Adelaide architect of the late nineteenth century. The church was designed in a Gothic Revival style and built by G. Giddings¹⁰⁶ using local stone quarried on-site. McMullen designed a church with a nave seating 350¹⁰⁷ and a temporary chancel and vestry at the north-eastern end, with plans for a future transept and chancel¹⁰⁸ that would allow the church to house about 500 worshippers.¹⁰⁹ The church was dedicated on 1 March 1884,¹¹⁰ with a 'good-sized bell' of 'fine tone' presented by local farmer¹¹¹ James Dunn.¹¹²

Previously part of the Mount Gambier Parish, Millicent was declared a parish in its own right on 20 September 1898. In 1918, the Parish purchased land behind the church on Railway Terrace¹¹³ and built a presbytery. At the same time a skating rink west of the church on George Street was purchased, renovated and reopened as St Alphonsus' Hall.

The first St Alphonsus' Church was gutted in a fire that occurred before dawn on 7 January 1935. The church was rebuilt by contractor H. R. Barber of Woodville, supervised by architect H. H. Jory¹¹⁴ and reopened on 26 May 1935, with new stained-glass windows donated by parishioners.¹¹⁵ The front retaining fence was probably built around this time.

Prior to the Second World War the population of Millicent was small and the Catholic congregation predominantly comprised families of English or Irish ancestry.¹¹⁶ After the war, the expansion of forestry and associated industrial development in the South East drew a 'steady stream' of new Italian, Dutch, Scottish and English migrants who swelled the size of the Millicent Catholic congregation.¹¹⁷ It is also likely that most people of Italian and Polish descent living in Millicent in the 1960s were Catholic and attended St Alphonsus' Church on a regular basis.

Design and construction of the new church

Fr James MacSweeney was appointed Millicent Parish Priest in July 1954.¹¹⁸ By 1965 the first St Alphonsus' Church was 'bursting at the seams'¹¹⁹ each Sunday, with no standing room available¹²⁰ and only able to seat about half the weekly Millicent congregation.¹²¹ Meanwhile, Vatican II began in October 1962 with the *Instruction of the Liturgy* issued on 26 September 1964 and coming into effect on 7 March 1965.

Fr MacSweeney recognised that the new liturgy emerging from Vatican II made the first church 'obsolete.'¹²² Despite opposition from some parishioners, who argued the church should be completed along the lines of McMullen's original design with a transept, the Church Council led by Fr MacSweeney chose to replace the first church with a new building.

The new church was designed by C. William (Bill) Peters, with engineering by Kinnaird, Hill, DeRohan & Young.¹²³ Given the timing of its construction, it was probably the first South Australian Catholic church to be designed in direct response to the *Instruction of the Liturgy*.¹²⁴ Peters also prepared an earlier scheme for a new St Alphonsus' Church in 1963 that did not proceed.¹²⁵

During the building project, MacSweeney 'sought much advice and support' from Mount Gambier Parish Priest Mgr Richard Redden.¹²⁶ Redden acquired considerable practical experience in church-building during his time at Mount Gambier and was 'frequently consulted by brother priests' undertaking building works.¹²⁷ Redden may have recommended architect C. William Peters for the Millicent project, since Peters had already designed large and architecturally progressive Catholic churches at Burnside (1962), Clearview (1963) and Dulwich (1964). Subsequently, while Parish Priest at Dulwich, Redden served on the Diocesan Sites and Architecture Committee (1967-1974)¹²⁸ that approved all new churches and renovation work in the Diocese of Adelaide.¹²⁹

The Millicent church was conceived as an 'imposing' landmark at the eastern end of George Street, elevated above street level and integrated into a 'harmonious'¹³⁰ master plan for the site including church, presbytery and landscaping, with the church the 'dominant feature.'¹³¹ This master plan was in turn one part of an 'extensive'¹³² parish building program under MacSweeney that included renovations and extensions to St Alphonsus' Hall (adjacent to the first St Alphonsus' Church); incorporating a new porch and supper room (1956);¹³³ new classrooms at St Anthony's School, Millicent (1957-8); St Brigid's Church, Beachport (1967);¹³⁴ and St Thomas the Apostle Church Interdenominational Church at Greenways (1968).¹³⁵

While some earlier South Australian Catholic churches of the 1960s were designed with seating fanned around the sanctuary, such as Peters' Church of the Good Shepherd at Clearview, St Alphonsus' possessed the most radical arrangement to date, with pews fanned nearly 180 degrees around the sanctuary. This arrangement was most likely suggested by the *Instruction on the Liturgy* and was intended to instil 'a feeling of closeness of the celebration of Mass' and to help the congregation 'realis[e] that they should be a unified group of family or people.'¹³⁶ Peters in turn shaped the external envelope of the church to accommodate the fanned arrangement of pews. He also placed a clerestory lantern and spire over the altar, the liturgical focus of the church, so that its position would be expressed in the external shape of the church.¹³⁷

Two unusual engineering challenges were associated with the design of the church, namely compensating for vibration and deflection in the spire and supporting the 'long external walls ... without the help of internal stiffening walls.' Both problems were

solved by employing steel roof trusses and bracing trusses, supported by precast and in-situ concrete columns and beams which together form the structural frame of the church.¹³⁸ Curved brick corner walls also contribute to lateral stability.¹³⁹

In contrast with 'the gloom and dimness of older churches,'¹⁴⁰ Peters deliberately created a luminous interior environment, achieved through artificial lighting with custom-designed fluorescent light enclosures 'arranged to be an integral part of the interior design'¹⁴¹; through material selection, including cream face brick walls, clear finished fumed timber furniture and joinery and white ceiling tiles; and through careful arrangement of fenestration, with a large expanse of glass enclosing the baptistery and gallery and clerestory windows above the sanctuary.

In the nave, Peters employed a suspended tile ceiling, a new, modern product¹⁴² that had not yet become negatively associated with commercial office fit-outs. Regularly employed in institutional and commercial buildings, suspended tile ceilings were also used in numerous private residences in South Australia during the 1960s by notable architectural firms including Cheesman Doley Brabham and Neighbour; Taylor & Navakas; and Berry, Gilbert and Polomka.¹⁴³ As well as being substantially lighter and cheaper than a conventional fibrous plaster or timber matchboard ceiling, suspended ceilings reduced echo and enabled access to services in the roof space from any point in the ceiling.¹⁴⁴ In the specific case of St Alphonsus' Church, the white suspended ceiling also contributed to a bright interior.

Six stained-glass windows salvaged from the first St Alphonsus' church were re-used in the baptistery at the front of the new church. Reusing elements of old churches in new ones as a nod to continuity was a commonplace practice during the post-war period.¹⁴⁵ Given the difficulties¹⁴⁶ MacSweeney faced in building the new church, the old windows were likely re-used specifically as a way of placating some parishioners, especially the families who had paid for their creation.

Night-time artificial lighting was a feature of St Alphonsus' Church. The coloured glass wrapped around the front of the church was likely a deliberate choice to capitalise on night-time lighting possibilities. A spotlight also illuminated the landmark spire.¹⁴⁷ Artificial lighting was frequently employed in churches of the post-war period as a means of advertising the presence of the church in the local streetscape,¹⁴⁸ competing with similarly-illuminated commercial interests¹⁴⁹ and attracting the attention of passers-by.

The new church was built by Mount Gambier-based¹⁵⁰ Max Mann Constructions on vacant land between the church and hall, allowing worship to continue in the old church during construction of the new.¹⁵¹ The foundation stone was laid on 21 March 1965 and the church was consecrated nearly a year later on 10 March 1966.

The final interior layout evolved through construction, with Peters producing a sketch plan of the sanctuary in August 1965.¹⁵² The total cost of construction was \$98,441, funded in part by a loan of £56,000 (approximately \$112,000) from the Savings Bank

of South Australia to build both church and presbytery.¹⁵³ As the church was registered as a war memorial, donations towards its construction were tax-deductable.

The first church was subsequently demolished to enable construction of a new presbytery and parish car park next to the new church, a decision that 'did not meet with universal approval.'¹⁵⁴ The new presbytery was built by local contractors Messrs Zanello and Buffon for \$41,497.11 and opened on 30 April 1967.¹⁵⁵

Prior to demolition, the original St Alphonsus' bell was removed by local resident Tom McCourt for 'safekeeping' and presented to the Beachport National Trust Museum.¹⁵⁶ The bell was returned for the Parish centenary in 1998¹⁵⁷ and mounted in a freestanding belfry adjacent to the entrance.

Sacred art

Bespoke sacred art was also a feature of St Alphonsus' Catholic Church. Peters included fourteen windows into the envelope of the nave to accommodate the traditional fourteen Stations of the Cross that were created in stained and coloured glass by Sydney-based Hungarian émigré artist Stephen Moor (1915-2003). At the time of their completion, the Stations were considered 'a departure from tradition.'¹⁵⁸ Moor created Stations of the Cross and other artworks for numerous Australian churches,¹⁵⁹ however the Stations at St Alphonsus' represent his only known work in South Australia.

A large carved timber crucifix suspended on the reredos was created by Dandenong Ranges-based German émigré sculptor Hans Knorr (1915-1988).¹⁶⁰ Knorr designed works for other South Australian churches including Mater Dei Catholic Church at Woodville Park (opened 1963).

A carved timber statue of Mary and the infant Jesus is believed to have been created by Melbourne-based Austrian émigré artist Leopoldine Mimovich (1920-2019) and was installed sometime after the opening of the new church.¹⁶¹

Reception

In March 1966, South Australian Catholic newspaper *Southern Cross* hailed the new St Alphonsus' as 'one of the most striking churches in South Australia.'¹⁶² Later that year in August, St Alphonsus' Church was featured in South Australian architectural journal *Building and Architecture*, one of only seven South Australian churches to be so featured over a period of 20 years, from 1962.¹⁶³ The article noted the church's 'imposing' appearance; orderly and 'up-to-date' plan informed by recent liturgical developments; the legible relationship between plan and external form; structural engineering; use of materials; sense of light; integration of its interior design; and the foresight of its master planning.¹⁶⁴

In 2000, the Australian Institute of Architects South Australian Chapter recognised St Alphonsus' Catholic Church as a significant example of twentieth century South Australian architecture.

St Alphonsus' Catholic Church was one of the largest regional churches constructed in South Australia after the Second World War, and among the most architecturally adventurous.¹⁶⁵ Writing in recent years, the Catholic Archdiocese of Adelaide clergy biographies research group described St Alphonsus' as "a rather magnificent church of which parishioners are still proud."¹⁶⁶

Subsequent History

Fr Jack Boog, who became parish priest in January 1976, found the acoustics of the church 'a great worry.' Assisted by assistant priest Fr Tony Densley, he 'rearranged the microphones and speakers on numerous occasions.' In 1978, the nave was carpeted which dampened echoes and 'also... made the church warmer at the same time.'¹⁶⁷

The original St Alphonsus' Hall adjoining the church was sold and demolished in 1986 to make way for a commercial carpark, leaving only the 1956 porch and supper room additions, now known as St Alphonsus' Hall.¹⁶⁸

A Canary Island date palm was planted in front of the church on 9 November 1986 marking 150 years of European settlement in South Australia. A time capsule buried next to the tree is due to be opened in 2036.¹⁶⁹

Chronology

Year	Event
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- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 1836 | December, first Catholics arrive in South Australia. |
| 1839 | Victorian pastoralists arrive in the South East. |
| 1864 | First drains cut in the vicinity of Mount Muirhead. |
| 1869 | Parts of South East declared Agricultural Areas under <i>Waste Lands Amendment Act 1869</i> (Strangways Act). |
| 1870 | Government town of Millicent surveyed. |
| 1874 | South Australian government establishes Forest Board with power to proclaim forest reserves. |
| 1875 | Forestry commences in South Australia with trial plantings and tree nursery at Mount Gambier. |
| 1877 | Millicent Catholic congregation, part of the Catholic Parish of Mount Gambier, begins worshipping in former butcher's shop on site of current St Alphonsus' Hall. |
| 1882 | <i>Woods and Forests Act 1882</i> , first successful forestry plantings achieved at Mount Burr Forest Reserve. |
| 1883 | April, Woods and Forests Department established. |
| 1884 | 1 March, first St Alphonsus' Church dedicated. |
| 1898 | Millicent is declared a parish in its own right. |
| 1900 | South-East Drainage Act 1900 leads to construction of new drains, including the major K-L and M drains. |

- 1907 Government forestry plantings of *pinus radiata* commenced at Mount Burr and Penola.
- 1920 Commercial plantings of *pinus radiata* commence.
- 1931 May, Mount Burr Sawmill and township established.
- 1935 7 January, first St Alphonsus' Church gutted by fire.**
26 May, first St Alphonsus' Church reopens after fire.
- 1938 Cellulose Australia Limited established and contracted by South Australian government to build a pulp mill at Snuggery south of Millicent.
- 1941 Cellulose Australia Limited Mill completed at Snuggery.
 Sawmill and associated town established at Nangwarry.
- 1943 SAHT builds its second group of country houses (23 timber single units) at Millicent.
- 1947 SAHT expands its country building program.
- 1953 January 30, end of building restrictions heralds beginning of post-war church-building boom.
- 1954 July, Fr James MacSweeney appointed Millicent Parish Priest.**
- 1956 Renovations and extensions to St Alphonsus' Hall completed.**
- 1958 New classrooms opened at St Anthony's Catholic School, Millicent.
- 1959 South Australian church building boom peaks.
 Millicent Glen-Vu Drive-In opens.
- 1960 July, Apcel Limited opens pulp mill at Snuggery.
 July, Expenditure on construction in the urban centre of Millicent peaks at £400,000 pounds.
- 1962 APM acquires Cellulose Australia's interest in Apcel Mill.
 October, Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican (Vatican II) commences in Rome.
- 1963 APM becomes equal partners with United States-based Kimberly Clark Corporation in Kimberly-Clarke (Aust.) Limited.
 C. William Peters prepares scheme for St Alphonsus' Church which does not proceed.
 4 December, *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* promulgated.
- 1964 23 August, Catholic Church of the Good Shepherd, designed by C. William Peters opened at Clearview, with a fanned seating plan, foreshadowing the plan of St Alphonsus' Church.
 26 September, *Instruction on the Liturgy* issued.
- 1965 **First St Alphonsus' Church is 'bursting at the seams.'**
 7 March, *Instruction on the Liturgy* comes into effect.

21 March, foundation stone of new St Alphonsus' Church laid.

Mount Burr Forest comprises one-quarter of the acreage of all State Forests in the South East of South Australia.

1966 10 March, new St Alphonsus' Church consecrated.

30 October, new presbytery foundation stone laid.

August, St Alphonsus' Church appears in *Building and Architecture*.

Millicent becomes the second-largest town in the South East after Mount Gambier.

1967 30 April, New St Alphonsus' presbytery opened.

St Brigid's Church opens at Beachport.

1969 New rite of Catholic baptism issued.

Millicent swimming lake opens.

1970 Millicent Civic and Arts Centre opened.

Italian mass migration to South Australia ends.

South Australian State Planning Authority forecasts a population of 10,000 for the urban centre of Millicent by 1991.

New Catholic Mass is promulgated by Pope Paul VI.

1974 South East region of South Australia supports a population of 6000 persons who derive their livelihoods from the forestry industry, including 450 at the Cellulose Mill and 600 at the Apcel Mill.

1978 St Alphonsus' nave is carpeted.

1979 SAHT has built 638 houses at Millicent over nearly 40 years.

1986 9 November, Canary Island date palm planted and time capsule buried in front of St Alphonsus' Church.

Original St Alphonsus' Hall demolished.

1998 St Alphonsus' Parish centenary original bell installed in freestanding belfry

2036 St Alphonsus' time capsule due to be opened.

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SITE RECORD

NAME: St Alphonsus' Catholic Church

PLACE NO.: 26544

DESCRIPTION OF PLACE: Two-storey reinforced concrete, steel and brick church

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1965-1966

REGISTER STATUS: Identified 4 November 2021
[\[Date of Provisional Entry\]](#)

LOCAL HERITAGE STATUS: Nil

CURRENT USE: Catholic Church
1966–present

ARCHITECT: C. William Peters
1965–1966

BUILDER: Max Mann Constructions
1965–1966

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA: Wattle Range Council

LOCATION:

Street No.:	87
Street Name:	George Street
Town/Suburb:	Millicent
Post Code:	5280

LAND DESCRIPTION:

Title Reference:	CT 5767/931
Lot No.:	A712
Plan No.:	FP192084
Hundred:	Mount Muirhead

MAP REFERENCE -37.596351, 140.355948

PHOTOS

NAME: St Alphonsus' Catholic Church

PLACE NO.: 26544

All images in this section are from DEW Files and were taken on 20 April 2022, unless otherwise indicated.



Overall view church and presbytery



Rear view, showing sacristy block, clerestory section and spire

PHOTOS

NAME: St Alphonsus' Catholic Church

PLACE NO.: 26544

All images in this section are from DEW Files and were taken on 20 April 2022, unless otherwise indicated.



Overall view of nave towards sanctuary from gallery



Overall view of nave, towards narthex, choir gallery and confessionals

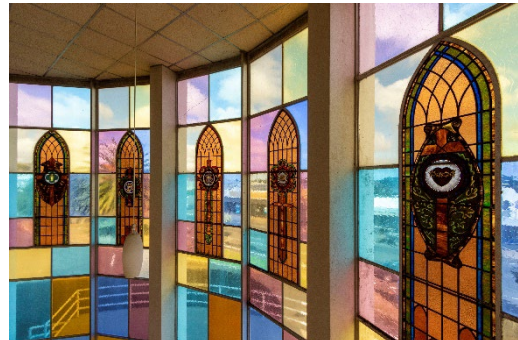
PHOTOS

NAME: St Alphonsus' Catholic Church

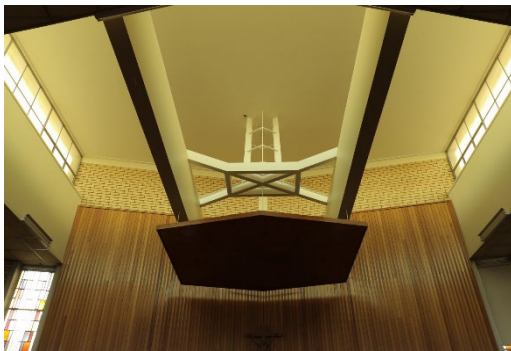
PLACE NO.: 26544



War memorial consecration plaque



Stained glass windows from first church incorporated into baptistery fenestration



Steel structure supporting spire with baldachin below



Underside of baldachin showing water damage



Overall view of sanctuary



Flourescent light enclosure and suspended ceiling

PHOTOS

NAME: St Alphonsus' Catholic Church

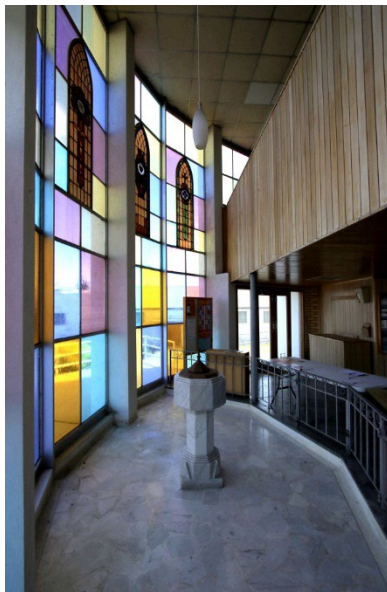
PLACE NO.: 26544



Crucifix by Hans Knorr



Station of the Cross in stained and coloured glass by Stephen Moor (detail)



Baptistery with font

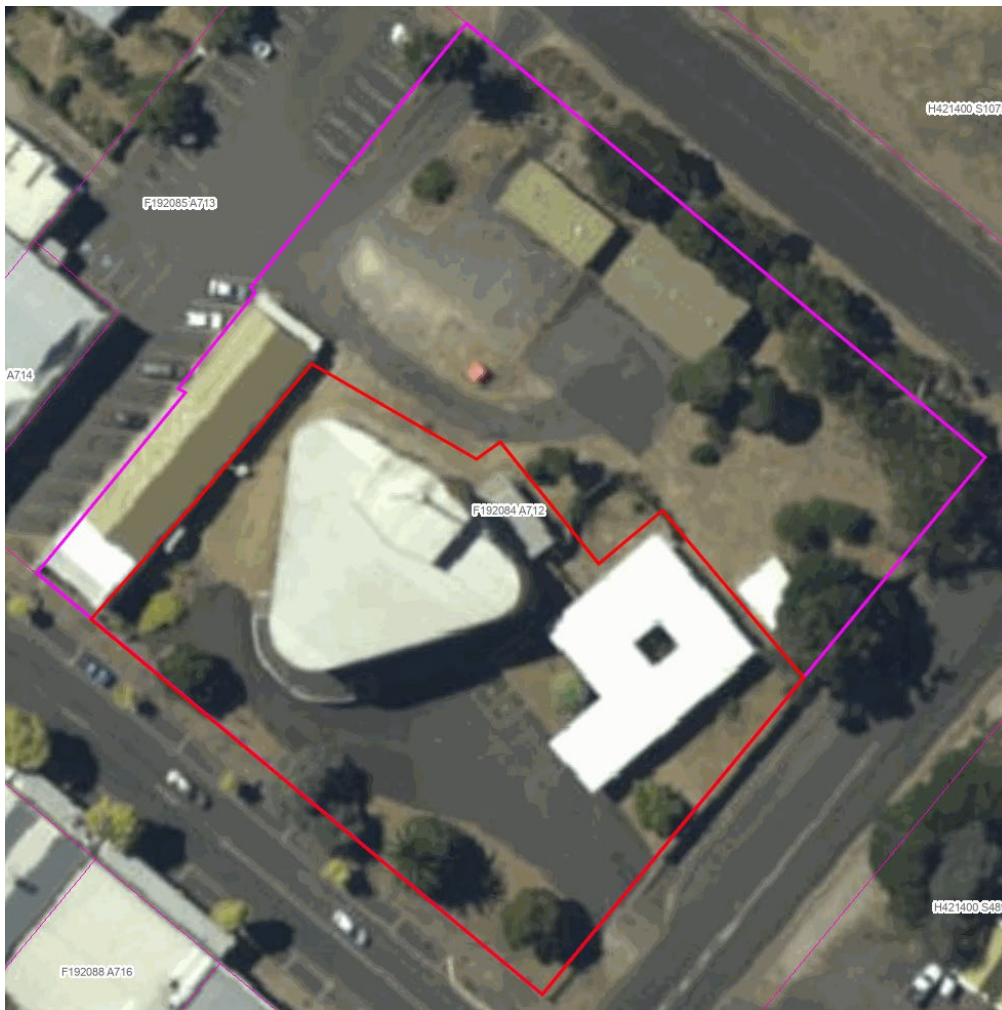


Belfry with bell from first church

SITE PLAN

NAME: St Alphonsus' Catholic Church

PLACE NO.: 26544






**St Alphonsus' Catholic Church, 87 George Street, Millicent (CT 5767/931 FP192084 A712
Hundred of Mount Muirhead)**

- Significant components of the SHP include the flat-roofed church, original exterior and interior material finishes and fittings, fixed pews in present configuration, and exterior form and material finishes of the parish office.
- The non-significant components of the site include the St Alphonsus' Hall, sheds and landscaping.

N ↑

LEGEND

-  Parcel boundaries (Indicates extent of Listing)
-  Existing State Heritage Place(s)
-  Outline of Elements of Significance for State Heritage Place

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- ¹ Grieve Gillett, City of Charles Sturt Local Heritage Places Review (2013)
 - ² Chris Burns, "Postwar Places of Worship in South Australia 1945 – 1990, Report for the Environment and Water South Australian Built Heritage Research Project 2018-2019" (2019) Adelaide: Architecture Museum, University of South Australia p. 86
 - ³ Chris Burns, *Liturgy, Community, Modernity: postwar places of worship in South Australia 1945 – 1990* (2020) Adelaide SA: Architecture Museum, University of South Australia p. 21
 - ⁴ Richard Apperly, Irving and Reynolds, *A Pictorial Guide to Identifying Australian Architecture* (1989) North Ryde NSW: Angus and Robertson pp. 230-231
 - ⁵ Chris Burns, "Postwar Places of Worship in South Australia 1945 – 1990" p. 87
 - ⁶ Chris Burns, *Liturgy, Community, Modernity: postwar places of worship in South Australia 1945-1990* p. 50
 - ⁷ Chris Burns, "Postwar Places of Worship in South Australia 1945 – 1990" p. 116
 - ⁸ Nunyara Chapel (SHP 26122) has a low-pitched roof with wide eaves and is therefore associated with the gable-roof typology, rather than the flat-roof typology.
 - ⁹ RAI A Significant 20th Century Architecture Card Index (RAIA Collection S301/2 AM); https://web.archive.org/web/20160304002703if_/http://www.architecture.com.au/docs/default-source/act-notable-buildings/120-notable-buildings.pdf accessed 31 January 2021
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 - ¹³ Robert Foster, "The Lower South-East of South Australia" pp. 201-202
 - ¹⁴ Robert Foster, "The Lower South-East of South Australia" p. 203
 - ¹⁵ Robert Foster, "The Lower South-East of South Australia" p. 210
 - ¹⁶ Robert Foster, "The Lower South-East of South Australia" p. 205
 - ¹⁷ Robert Foster, "The Lower South-East of South Australia" p. 207
 - ¹⁸ Robert Foster, "The Lower South-East of South Australia" p. 213
 - ¹⁹ Michael Williams, *The Making of the South Australian Landscape* p. 183
 - ²⁰ Michael Williams, *The Making of the South Australian Landscape* p. 185
 - ²¹ Michael Williams, *The Making of the South Australian Landscape* p. 189
 - ²² Michael Williams, *The Making of the South Australian Landscape* p. 190
 - ²³ Michael Williams, *The Making of the South Australian Landscape* pp. 190-191
 - ²⁴ Michael Williams, *The Making of the South Australian Landscape* pp. 201-202
 - ²⁵ South Australian State Planning Authority, *South East Planning Area Development Plan* (1970) Adelaide SA: The Authority p. 2
 - ²⁶ Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together: the History and Memories of the Catholic Faith and Education in Millicent* (1998) Millicent SA: Millicent Catholic Centenary Committee p. 13
 - ²⁷ Michael Williams, *The Making of the South Australian Landscape* p. 201
 - ²⁸ Michael Williams, *The Making of the South Australian Landscape* p. 217-219
 - ²⁹ Michael Williams, *The Making of the South Australian Landscape* p. 222
 - ³⁰ Susan Marsden (Marsden Russell Historians) assisted by Carol Cosgrove and Robyn Taylor, "Twentieth Century Heritage Survey Stage 1: Post Second World War (1946-1959) Overview History" (2003-2004) Adelaide: Department for Environment and Heritage p. 28
 - ³¹ Susan Marsden, "Twentieth Century Heritage Survey Stage 1" p. 48
 - ³² South Australian State Planning Authority, *South East Planning Area Development Plan* p. 30
 - ³³ Susan Marsden, "Twentieth Century Heritage Survey Stage 1" p. 28
 - ³⁴ South Australian State Planning Authority, *South East Planning Area Development Plan* p. 3
 - ³⁵ South Australian State Planning Authority, *South East Planning Area Development Plan* p. 3; Rob Robinson and Peter Johnston, "Forestry" in Wilfred Prest (ed), *The Wakefield Companion to South Australian History* (2001) Kent Town SA: Wakefield Press p. 211
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 - ³⁷ L. T. Carron, *A History of Forestry in Australia* (1985) Canberra: Australian National University Press p. 211
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- ⁴⁰ D. R. Douglas, *Forestry and Associated Industry* p. 12
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- ⁴⁵ L. T. Carron, *A History of Forestry in Australia* p. 233
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- ⁴⁹ D. R. Douglas, *Forestry and Associated Industry* p. 26
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- ⁷⁶ Susan Marsden, *Business, Charity and Sentiment* p. 209
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- ⁸² Joy Melano, *Walking Tall* p. 217
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- ⁸⁵ South Australian State Planning Authority, *South East Planning Area Development Plan* p. 20
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- ⁸⁷ Barry Rowney, "Type Profile of Churches", report to the Australian Heritage Commission (1991) p. 3
- ⁸⁸ David Hilliard and Arnold D. Hunt, "Religion" in Eric Richards (ed), *The Flinders History of South Australia: Social History* (1986) Netley SA: Wakefield Press p. 195
- ⁸⁹ John Whitehead, *Adelaide: City of Churches* (1986) Magill: M. C. Publications p. 21
- ⁹⁰ Douglas Pike, *Paradise of Dissent: South Australia 1829 – 1857* (1967) Melbourne: Melbourne University Press (2nd Ed)
- ⁹¹ David Hilliard, "Religion" in *Wakefield Companion* p. 452
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- ⁹⁶ Chris Burns, "Postwar Places of Worship in South Australia 1945 – 1990" Appendix 1
- ⁹⁷ Josie Wilkinson, *The Silver Anniversary of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church* (1985) Pennington SA: Mount Carmel Church p. 3
- ⁹⁸ Chris Burns, "Postwar Places of Worship in South Australia 1945 – 1990" p. 22
- ⁹⁹ Katherine Massam, *Sacred Threads: Catholic Spirituality in Australia 1922-1962* (1996) Sydney: UNSW Press pp. 155-162
- ¹⁰⁰ Walter M. Abbot (ed) and Joseph Gallagher (translation ed), *The Documents of Vatican II* (1966) London/Dublin: Geoffrey Chapman p. 59; cited in Aldo di Santo, "The Changing Face of Worship: Post-Vatican II Catholic Church Architecture in Adelaide 1965 – 1979" (2009) unpublished Architectural Research 2 thesis (AM) p. 44
- ¹⁰¹ Floyd Anderson (ed), *Council Daybook, Vatican II, Session 3* (1965) The National Catholic Welfare Conference Inc. p. 154 <https://archive.org/details/VCIIDaybook3/page/n167> accessed 25 January 2020
- ¹⁰² Robert Proctor, *Building the modern church: Roman Catholic Church architecture in Britain, 1955 to 1975* (2016) Routledge p. 198
- ¹⁰³ Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together* p. 6
- ¹⁰⁴ "Dedication of St. Alphonsus' Roman Catholic Church, Millicent" in *Border Watch* 5 March 1884 p. 2 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article77508706> accessed 19 May 2022
- ¹⁰⁵ Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together* p. 7
- ¹⁰⁶ Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together* p. 14
- ¹⁰⁷ "Church of St. Alphonsus, Millicent" in *Advertiser* 3 March 1884 p. 5 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article35955192> accessed 1 June 2022
- ¹⁰⁸ "The New Roman Catholic Church at Millicent. Laying the Foundation Stone." in *Border Watch* 2 May 1883 p. 2 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article78994645> accessed 19 May 2022
- ¹⁰⁹ A discrepancy exists in figures cited for the capacity of the original church in contemporary newspaper articles. The *Advertiser* (3 March 1884 p. 5) reported a capacity of 350 while the *Border Watch* (5 March 1884 p. 2) reported a capacity of 500. It is presumed that the larger figure corresponds to the projected capacity of the church when planned additions were complete.
- ¹¹⁰ "Dedication of St. Alphonsus' Roman Catholic Church, Millicent" in *Border Watch* 5 March 1884 p. 2 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article77508706> accessed 19 May 2022
- ¹¹¹ "Obituary. Mr James Dunn." in *South Eastern Times* 5 October 1926 p. 3 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article200998322> accessed 12 July 2022
- ¹¹² "Dedication of St. Alphonsus' Roman Catholic Church, Millicent" in *Border Watch* 5 March 1884 p. 2 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article77508706> accessed 19 May 2022
- ¹¹³ Most likely located on the opposite side of Railway Terrace.
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- 114 "St Alphonsus' Church Re-opened. Magnificent Edifice. Sunday's Impressive Services." in *Border Watch* 28 May 1935 p. 4 <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article77969683> accessed 19 May 2022
- 115 Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together* pp. 12, 16
- 116 Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together* p. 13
- 117 Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together* p. 13
- 118 Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together* p. 14
- 119 Joy Melano, *Walking Tall* p. 233
- 120 Joy Melano, *Walking Tall* p. 233
- 121 "New Church of St Alphonsus" p. 21
- 122 "New Church of St Alphonsus" p. 21
- 123 "New Church of St Alphonsus" p. 21
- 124 Chris Burns, "Postwar Places of Worship in South Australia 1945 – 1990" Appendix 1
- 125 Aldo di Santo research files, University of South Australia Architecture Museum
- 126 "Fr James MacSweeney" <https://adelaide.catholic.org.au/view-biography?guid=10816> accessed 12 July 2022
- 127 "Mgr Richard Michael Isidore Redden" <https://adelaide.catholic.org.au/view-biography?guid=10349> accessed 12 July 2022
- 128 "Mgr Richard Michael Isidore Redden"
- 129 Aldo di Santo, "The Changing Face of Worship" p. 53
- 130 "New Church of St Alphonsus" p. 23
- 131 "New Church of St Alphonsus" p. 23
- 132 Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together* p. 17
- 133 Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together* p. 16
- 134 Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together* p. 16
- 135 Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together* p. 16
- 136 "New Church of St Alphonsus" p. 22
- 137 "New Church of St Alphonsus" p. 22
- 138 "New Church of St Alphonsus" p. 22
- 139 Michael Queale pers. comm. 23 June 2022
- 140 "New Church of St Alphonsus" p. 23
- 141 "New Church of St Alphonsus" p. 23
- 142 The modern suspended tile ceiling was introduced from the late 1950s.
- 143 See for example:
<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/BRG+346/28/KEALANDJURY/1/4;>
<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/BRG+346/28/NAVAKASANDTAYLOR/15/2;>
<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/BRG+346/28/BERRYGILBERTANDPOLOMKA/44/4;>
<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/BRG+346/28/CHEESMANANDCO/20/2>
- 144 Kevin O'Sullivan pers. comm. 6 June 2022
- 145 Examples include Holy Cross Catholic Church at Goodwood (SHP 26498), where tabernacle, rose window, wall and altar stone were reused; and Strait Gate Lutheran Church at Light Pass and St Petri Lutheran Church at Nuriootpa, where towers were retained.
- 146 "Fr James MacSweeney"
- 147 Visible in B 64310/65, State Library of South Australia collection
<https://collections.slsa.sa.gov.au/resource/B+64310/65>
- 148 Chris Burns, "Postwar Places of Worship in South Australia 1945 – 1990" p. 88
- 149 Chris Burns, "Postwar Places of Worship in South Australia 1945 – 1990" p. 49; Milo Dunphy, "Aspects of Church Design" in *Architecture in Australia* May-June 1958 vol. 47 no. 2
- 150 *Sands & McDougall's South Australian Directory* 1966 p. MB 63
- 151 "New Church of St Alphonsus" pp. 21-22
- 152 Aldo di Santo research files, University of South Australia Architecture Museum
- 153 Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together* p. 16
- 154 "Fr James MacSweeney" <https://adelaide.catholic.org.au/view-biography?guid=10816>
- 155 Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together* p. 16
- 156 Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together* p. 21
- 157 Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together* p. 21
- 158 "New Church of St Alphonsus" p. 23
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- ¹⁵⁹ Stephen Moor interviewed by Barbara Blackman [sound recording]
<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-196666200/listen> accessed 1 June 2022
- ¹⁶⁰ Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together* p. 16
- ¹⁶¹ This statue is not present in photographs taken at the time of opening.
- ¹⁶² "Millicent has a New Church" in *Southern Cross* 18 March 1966 p. 2
- ¹⁶³ *Building and Architecture Index*, University of South Australia Architecture Museum
- ¹⁶⁴ "New Church of St Alphonsus" pp. 22-23
- ¹⁶⁵ Chris Burns, "Postwar Places of Worship in South Australia 1945 – 1990" Appendix 2
- ¹⁶⁶ "Fr James MacSweeney" <https://adelaide.catholic.org.au/view-biography?guid=10816>
- ¹⁶⁷ Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together* p. 17
- ¹⁶⁸ Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together* p. 17
- ¹⁶⁹ Glenise Cull (ed), *Towards Christ Together* p. 19