

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT REPORT

NAME: Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ

PLACE: 26551

ADDRESS: Karna Country

539-541 Goodwood Rd, Colonel Light Gardens



Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ, 30 June 2023

Source: DEW Files

ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Statement of Heritage Significance:

As this place is not considered to meet any of the State criteria, a Statement of Heritage Significance has not been prepared.

Relevant South Australian Historical Themes

Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ demonstrates the following themes and subthemes in *Historic Themes for South Australia*:

4. Building Settlements, Towns and Cities

4.1 Shaping the suburbs (pre and post World War 2)

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

6.1 Supporting diverse religions and maintaining spiritual life

6.7 Continuing cultural traditions

6.8 Marking the phases of life

Comparability / Rarity / Representation:

The Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ is associated with the Churches of Christ in South Australia, late twentieth-century ecclesiastical architecture, A-frame frame churches, post-war places of worship, and South Australian architect W. Lance Brune. Each is considered in turn.

Churches of Christ in South Australia

At least 38 churches or chapels were built by the Churches of Christ in South Australia between 1945 and 1990, of which less than thirty retain a reasonable level of intactness. There are five State Heritage Places associated with the Churches of Christ in South Australia, all of which were built prior to 1945, namely:

- National Trust Centenary Hall Museum, known as Museum (former Lutheran Hall, former Balaklava Church of Christ), 1878, May Terrace Balaklava (SHP 12948, listed 1993),
- Religious Building - Church of Christ, known as Hindmarsh Church of Christ and Sunday School Hall, 1866, 1880, 1893, 26 Ormond Street, Hindmarsh (SHP 11803, listed 1989),
- Former North Adelaide Church of Christ, 1883, 150 Kermode Street, North Adelaide (SHP 13539, listed 1986),
- Queenstown Church of Christ (former Whittaker Memorial Primitive Methodist Church), 1869, 193-195 Port Road, Queenstown, criterion (f) (SHP 14343, listed 1994),
- Religious Building and Dwelling - Former Church of Christ, known as Masonic Hall (former Willunga Church of Christ) & Outside Toilet, 1870, 38 High Street, Willunga (SHP 14073, listed 1990).

There are also 16 Local Heritage Places associated with the Churches of Christ in South Australia, all of which were built before 1945, including:

- Church of Christ and Church Hall, 96-100 Grote Street, Adelaide,
- Balaklava Church of Christ, 1 Baker Street, Balaklava,
- Former York Church of Christ, 6 Jeanes Street, Beverley,

- Church (former Church of Christ), 44A East Avenue Black Forest,
- Former (Wampony) Church of Christ, Six Mile Well Road Mundulla West (located at cnr Rowney and Downing Roads, Mundulla West) (new 1953 church and 1968 extensions excluded from listing),
- Church of Christ, 242 Military Road, Semaphore,
- Church of Christ, Pt Lot 130, Tumby Bay (1960s additions implicitly excluded from extent of listing in 1985 Eyre Peninsula Heritage Survey),
- Church of Christ, 8 Margaret Street, Williamstown.

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.¹ 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'.²

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 the 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 postwar and late twentieth-century ecclesiastical styles are characterised by the following key style indicators:

- steel or reinforced concrete portal frames, especially when exposed inside the building as an architectural feature,
- distinctive roof shapes, designed to set churches apart from secular buildings and connote a religious function,
- aisles flanking a central nave,
- coloured glass windows with accentuated mullions,
- glazing with vertically proportioned panes,
- clerestory windows,
- plain wall surfaces, of undecorated face brick,
- play of light from unseen or unexpected sources to create a special mood,
- a side-lit wall behind the altar,
- unbroken straight lines emphasising verticality,
- inverted V shapes reminiscent of Gothic pointed arches,
- elements reminiscent of Gothic flèches or spires, pointing 'heavenward',
- 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,
- utilisation of newly available structural materials facilitating dramatic shapes.³

A-frame churches

In *Postwar Places of Worship in South Australia 1945-1990*, Burns identified nine common typologies associated with post-war churches in South Australia.⁴ Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ is a representative of the 'A-frame' typology, the most recognisable typology associated with places of worship constructed during the post-war church-building boom.

The A-frame was a 'versatile form'⁵ that could be built quickly and economically. A-frame churches were also instantly recognisable as churches, combining 'an unmistakable visual presence'⁶ with several possible symbolic meanings, such as praying hands, the Holy Trinity, or an inverted ark, besides pointing to Heaven, located 'up there'.⁷ A-frame churches are distinguished by steep gable roofs, with a pitch greater than forty-five degrees, a level ridge line, and a long, rectangular worship space. A-frame roofs are typically tiled.

Within the A-frame typology, Burns identifies two prominent sub-types, namely 'true' and 'raised' A-frames. In true A-frames, steel or reinforced concrete portal frames supporting the roof meet the ground at an angle identical to the pitch of the roof. The portal frames are typically exposed between the eaves and the footings. In raised A-frames, the roof is lifted off the ground to at least standard ceiling height by vertical structural members, typically achieved with integrated portal frames in steel, reinforced concrete or glued laminated timber.



Former Salisbury Methodist Church, 1961, is an example of a true A-frame church

Source: Google Street View



St John Vianney's Catholic Church, Burnside, 1962 (SHP 26543), is an example of a raised A-frame church

Source: DEW Files 2023

Of the nine common post-war church typologies, raised A-frame churches are visually closest to traditional churches, with a steep gable roof raised above four walls. True A-frame churches, on the other hand, represent a distinctly modern response to church architecture. Instantly recognisable, in South Australia A-frame structures are closely associated with the post-war church-building boom years of the early 1960s.

Currently there are two raised A-frame churches in the Register, namely Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church (SHP 26520) and St John Vianney Catholic Church (SHP 26543, provisionally entered 2023).

Post-war places of worship

Eleven post-1945 places of worship are State Heritage Places, namely:

- Coober Pedy Catholic Church and Presbytery, 1967, Hutchinson Street, Coober Pedy (SHP 10302, listed 1980),
- St Maximillian Kolbe Catholic Church, 1984, Agnes Street, Ottaway, criteria (f) and (g) (SHP 26473, listed 2019),
- Holy Cross Catholic Church, 159-165 Goodwood Road, Millswood, criteria (d), (e) and (g) (SHP 26498, listed 2021),
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church, 15 Pennington Terrace, Pennington, criteria (a), (d) and (e) (SHP 26520, confirmed 4 November 2021),
- Catholic Church of the Holy Name, 80 Payneham Road, Stepney, criterion (e) (SHP 26519, confirmed 18 August 2022),
- St Margaret Mary's Catholic Church, 286 Torrens Road, Croydon Park, criteria (a), (d), (e) and (g) (SHP 26521, confirmed 18 August 2022),
- St Alphonsus' Catholic Church, 87 George Street, Millicent, criteria (a), (d) and (e) (SHP 26544, confirmed 30 March 2023),
- St John Vianney Catholic Church, 544 Glynburn Road, Burnside, criterion (e) (SHP 26543),
- 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).



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

Source: DEW Files c.2018

The Australian Institute of Architects South Australian Chapter has identified⁸ 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 (identified for assessment)
- St John Vianney's Catholic Church, Glynburn Road, Hazelwood Park, 1962* (SHP 26543, provisionally entered 15 June 2023)
- Woodlands Church of England Grammar School Chapel, 39 Partridge Street, Glenelg, 1962 (identified for assessment)
- Nunyara Chapel, 5 Burnell Drive, Belair, 1963 (SHP 14785)
- American River Uniting Church, Ryberg Road, American River Kangaroo Island, 1966 (identified for assessment)
- St Alphonsus' Catholic Church, 87 George St, Millicent, 1966 (SHP 26544)*
- St Saviour's Anglican Church, 596 Portrush Road, Glen Osmond, 1966* (identified for assessment)
- Holy Cross Catholic Church, 159-165 Goodwood Road, Millswood, 1969 (SHP 26498)
- St Nicholas Russian Orthodox Church, 41 Greenhill Road, Wayville, 1970 (identified for assessment)
- Christian Reformed Church, now Hill Street Church, 55 Hill Street Campbelltown*
- St Martin's Anglican Church, 3 Gorge Road, Paradise, 1971 (identified for assessment)
- St Peter's Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church, 23 Rose Terrace, Wayville, 1971 (identified for assessment)
- Immanuel Lutheran College Chapel, 32 Morphet Road Novar Gardens, 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 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: Google Street View



Our Lady of Protection Ukrainian Catholic Church, 1975

Source: UniSA Architecture Museum



St Martin's Anglican Church, Paradise, 1971

Source: Google Street View

William Lancelot (Lance) Brune

William Lancelot Brune was an Adelaide-based architect active from c.1950 – c.1970. As Chair of the Churches of Christ Building Extension Committee, Brune designed numerous churches or chapels for the Churches of Christ during the 1950s and 1960s. His architectural practice W. Lance Brune Pty Ltd also designed churches for other denominations as well as residential, commercial and government projects. Examples of Brune's work include:

- Former Salisbury Methodist Church (now Salisbury Uniting Church), 1961, 59-61 Park Terrace, Salisbury,

- Naracoorte Church of Christ, 1966 (subject of a separate assessment), 64 Jenkins Terrace, Naracoorte,
- Whyalla Church of Christ, 1965, 74 Duncan Street, Whyalla Playford,
- RAOB Building (now Regency Apartments), 1954, 188 Morphett Street, Adelaide,⁹
- Port Lincoln Prison Stage 1, (1965, in assoc. with the Public Buildings Department), Pound Lane, Duck Ponds,¹⁰
- House, 1959, 329 Belair Road, Lynton,
- House, c.1960, 586 Military Road, Largs North.

There are no known places associated with the work of W. Lance Brune listed in the South Australian Heritage Register. Currently, Brune does not have a biographical entry in the Architects of South Australia Database.



Whyalla Church of Christ, 1966

Source: Google Street View



**A typical Lance Brune house, c.1960,
586 Military Road, Largs North**

Source: Google Street View

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.

Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ is associated with the historic themes 'Building Settlements, Towns and Cities' and its subtheme 'Shaping the suburbs (pre and post World War 2)'; and the theme 'Developing Social and Cultural Life (supporting and building communities)' and its subthemes, 'Supporting diverse religions and maintaining spiritual life', 'Continuing cultural traditions', and 'Marking the phases of life.'

Like many other churches built in South Australia after the Second World War, the construction of Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ was precipitated by rising church attendance brought about by the baby boom. As this reflects a typical pattern of post-war suburban development, Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ is not considered to meet the threshold for listing for this association at the State level.

Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ is only one of many Churches of Christ in South Australia (see Comparability, Rarity, Representation), and one of numerous Churches of Christ built after the Second World War and prior to 1990. Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ is one of many places representing the theme of 'Developing Social and Cultural Life' and its subthemes. Consequently, it is considered to demonstrate a typical pattern rather than an important aspect of the evolution or pattern of the State's history and is not considered to meet the threshold for these associations at the State level.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** 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.

Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ is associated with the Churches of Christ in South Australia. However, Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ is one of many Churches of Christ chapels in South Australia, and one of many post-war churches.

Worship and evangelism by the Churches of Christ is an ongoing practice in South Australia, and while some congregations have declined in recent decades, others have grown in strength. Consequently, the Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ 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.

The Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ was built in 1965-1966 on the site of an earlier 1920s Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ chapel. A galvanised iron Independent Order of Rechabites Hall (c.1925) and tennis courts also previously stood on the site. None of these structures are known to have been particularly unusual in their design characteristics or construction techniques. Any archaeological deposits associated with these structures and their use which may exist on the site are likely to be similar to those from many other places across the state, and so are not considered to meet the threshold for listing at the State level.

Prior to 1921 Colonel Light Gardens was the site of the Mitcham Army Camp, and before that, a large property called Grange Farm. Archaeological deposits on the Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ site associated with either the Mitcham Army Camp or Grange Farm, if any, are likely to be isolated artefacts or artefact scatters. These deposits are unlikely to be any different from similar archaeological deposits which could be discovered anywhere across the present-day suburb and are also not considered to meet the threshold for listing at the State level.

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.

Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ is associated with 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. 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.

Outstanding representatives of the class of place will be either churches built in a single construction phase or on several stages according to a preconceived master plan. Outstanding representatives will also demonstrate a considered engagement with site and context.

The built fabric of Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ evolved over a period of time. The new chapel and associated annexes were built in 1965-1966, to adjoin an existing hall built some years previously. One wall of the original chapel was also partly re-used as the rear wall of one of the Sunday School rooms. The existing hall on the site made it necessary to build the new chapel hard up against the northern boundary, so that the standardised plan would fit on the allotment. This also resulted in an awkward arrangement of internal spaces, including a long passage with limited natural light between the chapel and Sunday School rooms, which in turn reduced penetration of natural light into the chapel along the eastern side.

As the built fabric Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ evolved in unplanned stages over time and does not demonstrate a considered engagement with site and context, it is not considered to meet the threshold for listing at the State level.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** 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.

The Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ was one of at least nine A-frame churches designed by Adelaide architect W. Lance Brune between 1961 and 1966 and was based on his earlier 1961 A-frame design for the former Salisbury Methodist Church.

The new Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ chapel and its associated annexes was designed around a church hall already standing on the site. The presence of the existing hall placed limitations on the footprint of the new church and resulted in an awkward arrangement of internal spaces. Brune's design for Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ also omitted key features that made his other A-frame churches distinctive, such as 'flying' rolled steel buttresses, coloured glass feature windows and/or a feature reredos. As a result, the place is not considered to demonstrate a high degree of creative, aesthetic or technical accomplishment.

It is recommended that the nominated place **does not fulfil** 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.

From 1925 until 2023, the Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ was a place of worship for the local Churches of Christ community. While this community has a strong spiritual association with the church, it is one of many dozens of Churches of Christ in South Australia. Consequently, while the specific spiritual associations of Churches of Christ members who have attended Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ are of importance to the local community, these associations are 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.

Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ is associated with South Australian architect W. Lancelot (Lance) Brune. Through his association with the Home Mission and Building Extension Departments of the Churches of Christ Evangelistic Union Inc., Lance Brune is believed to have designed over 30 new places of worship during the post-war period, including at least 28 chapels for the Churches of Christ. As such, he is believed to have been one of the most prolific architects of South Australian churches during the post-war period.

So far Brune's work has received limited critical recognition, and insufficiently detailed research has been undertaken to critically evaluate Brune's role, influence and significance within the broader context of South Australian architectural practice during the post-war period. While future research may demonstrate that Lance Brune has made a strong, notable or influential contribution to South Australian history, there is currently insufficient evidence to demonstrate that this is the case.

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

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ is a steel and brick church complex. The chapel (main worship space) has a rectangular plan and is covered with a prominent terracotta-tiled gable roof, which nearly reaches the ground at the northern end. The chapel roof is supported by five pairs of rolled steel rafters which are in turn bolted, plated and welded to rolled steel stanchions that hold them aloft. Non-load bearing cavity-brick walls and timber-framed floor-to-ceiling window units form the external envelope of the complex. Floor slabs throughout are reinforced concrete.

Four flat-roofed annexes are located to the east, west, and south of the chapel, comprising two Sunday school classrooms (east), a vestry and foyer (west) and a toilet block (south). A gable-roofed hall adjoins the chapel building on the south-western corner. An original flat-roofed verandah with slab floor adjoins the toilet block on the south-eastern side of the main chapel. Newer flat-roofed verandahs have been added to the northern and eastern sides of (not original fabric) and a pergola has been added to the eastern side of the hall (not original fabric).

The church exterior displays the following additional features:

- Brownbuilt steel decking to flat roofs,
- red face-brick walls with square raked pointing,
- red brick base courses,

- symmetrical feature wall under northern gable, comprising a vertical band of random Carey Gully stone, flanked either side in red face bricks, with projecting header bricks in a grid pattern,
- large welded-steel cross mounted on feature wall,
- steel barge shoes supporting bargeboards under northern gable,
- amber glass, plain glass and Porcipanel enamelled-steel spandrels (originally turquoise) in window units,
- black granite foundation stone on wall of foyer annexe,
- concrete slab porch roof, with tubular steel supports, to front of hall.

Interior

The chapel, with a high ceiling covered under the A-frame roof, is the largest internal volume. A glazed wall at the rear of the chapel separates the nave from a crying room, with a standard-height ceiling, and foyer space, also with a standard-height ceiling, which wraps around the western side of the chapel as a flat-roofed annexe.

The sanctuary at the front of the chapel is raised two steps above the floor of the nave forming a large dias. Two service rooms or vestries are located at the front of the sanctuary, flanking a full-immersion baptismal font.

Other internal spaces include two large classrooms in the Sunday School annexe; a corridor between the Sunday School classrooms and the chapel, leading from the western vestry to the church yard on the southern side; a hall, with a storeroom and kitchen at the rear; and toilets and a kitchen at the rear of the chapel, with a servery to the hall.

The church interior displays the following additional features:

- stamped cream face brick walls to chapel interior,
- suspended chapel light fittings,
- timber screen in chapel above crying room and foyer,
- tiles to inside of baptismal font,
- steel cross suspended from wall above sanctuary,
- fibrous plaster ceiling to chapel, with structural members selectively exposed,
- fibrous plaster ceilings to annexe rooms.

A domestic house serving as manse stands to the South-east of the church complex and a Besser brick toilet block stands on the southern boundary.

Elements of Significance:

No elements of significance have been identified, as it is recommended the place does not meet any of the State Heritage criteria at the State threshold.

HISTORY

The Churches of Christ in South Australia¹¹

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.¹² English society was 'deeply divided'¹³ between supporters of the established Church of England and Dissenters, comprised of British Protestant denominations that had formed outside of the established Church.

Notable planners of the province of South Australia were Dissenters and other nonconformists who envisaged a 'Paradise of Dissent,'¹⁴ based on the principle of religious freedom. These individuals, such as George Fife Angas, deliberately recruited other nonconformists for migration. The Churches of Christ in South Australia originated as one of numerous small Dissenting Christian groups¹⁵ drawn to the fledgeling province due to the values of religious freedom espoused by its founders.

The Churches of Christ emerged from the Restoration Movement, a Protestant reform movement which sought a return to the practices of the early church in part through the rejection of 'divisive,' 'man-made' creeds and denominational traditions.¹⁶ Irish miller and Dissenter Thomas Magarey arrived in South Australia in September 1845, bringing with him the 'seeds' of the Restoration Movement. In 1849, he helped establish the first Church of Christ in Australia in Franklin Street, Adelaide.¹⁷ Early leaders of the Churches of Christ included the 'founders' of notable South Australian families including the Burfords, Charlicks, and Vercos.¹⁸

Organisationally, the Churches of Christ emphasise congregational autonomy and lay leadership. Worship is characterised by weekly observance of Holy Communion, an informal worship style and evangelism (persuading people to become Christians by preaching the gospel).¹⁹ The latter resulted from the appointment of American evangelist T. J. Gore to the Grote Street, Adelaide congregation in 1867 and 'the subsequent acceptance of evangelists as a key element of effective ministry and church growth.'²⁰

An Evangelistic Union of Churches of Christ in South Australia was established in 1884²¹ (known as the Churches of Christ Evangelistic Union Inc. South Australia by 1955). The Churches of Christ grew during the late nineteenth century, accompanied by a shift away from their 'exclusive' and sect-like denominational roots towards a more 'accommodating outlook' aligned with the Protestant mainstream. The 'democratic organisation' and 'egalitarian style' of the Churches of Christ, and their claim to represent 'a non-denominational pure Christianity,' proved attractive to small business owners, tradespeople and 'battling farmers.' By 1914 the Churches of Christ had become 'a familiar part of the religious landscape of South Australia,' with more members than either the Congregationalists or the Baptists.²²

After a peak in membership during the early 1930s, the Churches of Christ experienced a 'deplorable decline'²³ in church membership and attendance during the late 1930s and early 1940s due to depression and war. Following broader South

Australian trends,²⁴ membership gradually increased after 1951.²⁵ American Baptist evangelist Dr. Billy Graham visited Adelaide in 1959, bringing an 'influx'²⁶ of new parishioners to the Protestant denominations and triggering 'phenomenal growth' in the Churches of Christ during that year.²⁷

Meanwhile, 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. Each denomination sought to establish footholds in the newly subdivided neighbourhoods by building churches. At the same time, the congregations of established churches swelled, leading to the replacement or augmentation of some smaller buildings with new churches.²⁸

During the post-war years, most South Australian Protestant denominations offered Sunday school, a specialised religious instruction class that occurred on Sundays either during or after worship. As the Catholic Church operated its own comprehensive education system with integrated religious instruction, it did not typically operate Sunday schools nor require distinct Sunday school facilities on church premises.

Sunday school was 'a religious institution which touched the lives of many young South Australians.'²⁹ Prior to the mid-1960s most South Australians were at least nominal Christians,³⁰ and as the Churches were still considered to be 'moral guardians' of society,³¹ even those parents who were not regular churchgoers³² often sent their children to Sunday school.³³ For the churches, Sunday schools represented important recruitment grounds, from which Protestant congregations expected to draw the next generation of adult adherents, and so considerable resources were invested in accommodating and staffing Sunday schools.

Due to the baby boom, Sunday school attendance in South Australia skyrocketed³⁴ during the postwar years, reaching a peak between 1959 and 1964.³⁵ Many congregations struggled to cope with the demand, and in some places it is reported that 'classes [were] obliged to meet in motor vehicles.'³⁶ Within the Churches of Christ, Sunday school membership increased 60% between 1950 and 1959, while adult membership increased 33% during the same period.³⁷

Provision of services such as kindergartens, youth groups and sporting clubs and club facilities, especially tennis and netball courts, were ways in which Protestant churches contributed to building community during the post-war period. In turn, these services encouraged greater community involvement in the churches.

Following nineteenth and early twentieth century precedents, post-war Churches of Christ buildings, typically known as chapels, were simple, relatively unadorned structures, with large baptismal fonts in the sanctuary to facilitate full-immersion baptism. As with the places of worship of other denominations with roots in nineteenth-century Dissent, Churches of Christ chapels rarely displayed figurative religious artwork, but usually featured coloured glazing in geometric and/or stylised floral patterns. Decorated wall hangings, cushions and other soft furnishings, specially crafted for the Chapel by parishioners, were also commonplace.

The Protestant mainstream was less influenced by post-war liturgical reform than the Catholic Church. While architects of Catholic churches experimented with radical floorplans in the post-war period, especially after the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican (1962-1965), most post-war Protestant churches were designed with traditional rectangular naves.

As with other Protestant denominations, Churches of Christ congregations aspired to possess ample purpose-built Sunday school accommodation. Ideally, accommodation was comprised of a large hall with Sunday school classrooms arrayed down one or both sides. Halls provided a venue for Sunday school assembly, sport, games, performances and film screenings, as well as social events, fetes and craft activities not associated with Sunday school. Halls typically possessed kitchen facilities. Some churches also possessed dedicated kindergarten facilities in a separate wing. When dedicated classrooms were not available, transportable buildings provided Sunday school facilities.

After c.1953, Churches of Christ sites were typically master planned in several stages, with chapels built first, followed by activity halls and Sunday school facilities. Sometimes, as at Risdon Park (Port Pirie) (1962) and Naracoorte Churches of Christ (1966), an entire complex including chapel and other facilities was built all at once. Later, in the wake of the religious crisis of the 1970s, which decimated church attendance, the Churches of Christ Evangelistic Union Inc. South Australia Building Extension Committee is understood to have encouraged its member congregations to build multi-use buildings that could later be adapted for non-church purposes.³⁸

W. Lance Brune LRAIA

William Lancelot (Lance) Brune was born William Lancelott Bruhn in Brunswick North, Victoria, in 1909.³⁹ During Brune's childhood his family moved to Kensington North, South Australia, and attended Dulwich Church of Christ, where Lance Brune subsequently worshipped until its closure in 1971. The family name was anglicised during the First World War.⁴⁰ Brune married Bertha Mary (Mollie) Ludbrook (b. 1909 – d. 1965) at Dulwich Church of Christ in 1934. Mollie was a daughter of Albert Milton Ludbrook, notable Churches of Christ minister, and Florence Ada Verco.⁴¹

Brune initially trained as a carpenter⁴² and began practicing as an architect in c.1938.⁴³ During the Second World War, while his brothers served in New Guinea, Lance Brune is reported to have worked on the design or documentation on South Australian munitions factories built for the Australian Department of Defence. Sometime after the war, with his brother Harry and a friend, Donald Gordon (Don) Dewar⁴⁴ (b. 1924 – d. 2019), Lance Brune established the private architectural firm W. Lance Brune Pty Ltd.⁴⁵

Family connections with the Churches of Christ are believed to have played an important role in Brune's success in that organisation. During the 1950s and 1960s Brune served on the committee of the Churches of Christ Evangelistic Union Inc, South Australia Home Mission Department and on the Building Extension Committee,

sometimes serving as chair of the latter group. Through this association, Brune served as honorary architect for the Churches of Christ in South Australia, participating in most architectural work for the denomination until c.1970, which included 60 building projects between 1953 and 1965.⁴⁶ This is believed to have included at least 28 new chapels which were wholly designed by either Lance Brune or his firm W. Lance Brune Pty Ltd. Brune also designed at least three places of worship for other denominations and is understood to have been one of the most prolific designers of churches during the post-war period in South Australia.

Brune often preferred to design repeatable, standardised buildings with some elements of modularity, achieving variety between buildings through differences in materials, visual features and the arrangement of modular wings. From the early 1960s, Brune designed a series of distinctive A-frame churches, and 'his name remains associated with [this type] in the memories of older churchgoing Adelaideans.'⁴⁷ Brune's first A-frame church is understood to have been the former Salisbury Methodist Church, now Salisbury Uniting Church (1961, subject of a separate assessment).

Following the success of his design for Salisbury Methodist Church, Brune replicated its basic plan, form and structure across numerous sites in South Australia and interstate, employing different variations in stone, brick, terracotta tile and façade detail to make each church distinctive. At least eight such churches were built, namely Risdon Park (1962), Nedlands WA (1962), Croydon (1964, demolished), Colonel Light Gardens (1965, subject of this assessment), Cheltenham (1965, demolished), St Mary's Baptist (1965,⁴⁸ demolished), Brighton (1966, altered), and Naracoorte (1966, subject of a separate assessment).

Salisbury Methodist Church also formed the basis for the design of St Peters' Collegiate Girls' School Chapel at Stonyfell, designed by Brune and completed in c.1965. Collectively, these churches spawned imitations by other architects, such as St Luke's Lutheran Church, Snowtown, designed by Norman Drogemuller and opened in 1966.

Brune's A-frame churches fulfilled a need for functional and economical chapel buildings that could be built quickly and presented a progressive, modern image, but which were nevertheless instantly recognisable to casual observers as places of worship.

Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ

Colonel Light Gardens is associated Charles Compton Reade, a journalist who played a key role in popularising town planning and the Garden City Movement in South Australia prior to the First World War.⁴⁹ Designed by Reade in 1917, Colonel Light Gardens was subdivided on the site of the Mitcham Army Camp, previously known as Grange Farm, from 1921. To address a severe housing shortage, the South Australian government announced Australia's first affordable mass housing program, the Thousand Homes Scheme. This scheme was built at Colonel Light Gardens based on Reade's plan.⁵⁰

The Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ congregation arose from the suggestion of Mrs. H. F. Schmidt that a Sunday school should be opened to meet the needs of families in the area. This idea gained momentum when a house-to-house canvass of the Colonel Light Gardens district revealed 29 children in three families alone. Worship began on 21 January 1925 in the home of W. J. Harris, with 23 adult members and 20 children. Gifts, loans and a small bank mortgage funded a church building, which opened on 26 August 1925.⁵¹

For several weeks from February 1926, A. E. Forbes and J. Warren, from the Evangelisation Society of South Australia,⁵² operated an open-air 'tent mission' at Colonel Light Gardens. The tent mission increased membership of the Church of Christ congregation enough that Warren was subsequently employed as the congregation's first full-time minister, with a subsidy from the Churches of Christ Home Mission Committee.⁵³ This position was lost during the 1930s Depression.⁵⁴

In March 1955, the Colonel Light Gardens congregation acquired an adjoining block to the east, followed by the adjoining block to the south in February 1956. A galvanised iron hall stood on the latter block, which was previously owned by the Albert District No. 83 Independent Order of Rechabites Salford Unity.⁵⁵ This hall was used when the Sunday school overflowed from the church. Aerial photography indicates the Colonel Light Gardens congregation was already using all three blocks by April 1949. At this time, tennis courts associated with the church extended across all three blocks, with a prominent 'goat track' leading from the chapel to the Rechabite Hall.

During the late 1950s, a new brick hall with kitchen facilities was built along Goodwood Road facing Piccadilly Circus. At this time, the Colonel Light Gardens congregation was noted for its large Sunday School.⁵⁶

Design and Construction

The new Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ was designed by Lance Brune through the Churches of Christ in South Australia Building Extension Department. Brune's design was based on his earlier, 1961 design for Salisbury Methodist Church, also an A-frame church (see W. Lance Brune, above).

The presence of the late-1950s hall on the site limited options for the arrangement of the new buildings built in 1964-1965. Unusually for a post-war church, the northern wall of the chapel abuts the northern site boundary, when typically, post-war suburban and rural churches were deliberately set back from the street.

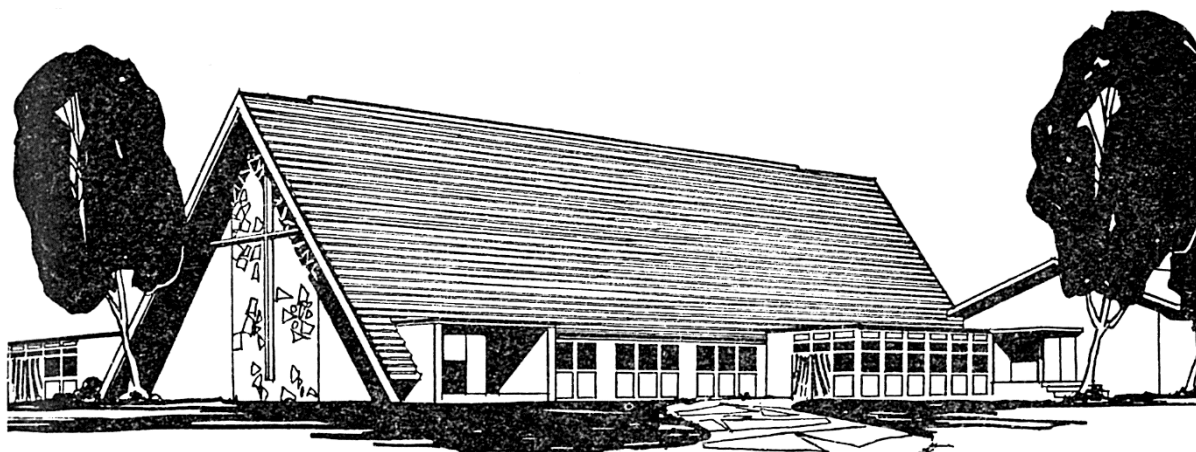
Unlike Salisbury Methodist Church, where A-frame rafters carry their full structural load in a straight line to the ground, in Brune's subsequent A-frame chapels the main roof joists terminated at eave level, at which point they were mitred and bolted to vertical stanchions and welded all round.⁵⁷ Steel 'flying' buttresses, made from the same gauge of steel as the rafters, were plated, bolted and welded to the rafter stanchions. The stanchions were then hidden from the outside by external non-loadbearing cavity brick walls of the chapel. This change may have been made as an economy measure

to reduce the rafter length, and in turn, the gauge of steel⁵⁸ required to bridge the span.⁵⁹

At Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ, while the bargeboards on the northern gable reach almost to the ground and are supported by steel barge shoes like the other chapels, the main A-frame beams supporting the tiled roof terminate at eave level, and the structural 'flying' buttresses are omitted entirely. This was most likely done due to the placement of the kindergarten wing on the eastern side of the church, which precluded the use of structural flying buttresses on that side. To simplify structural calculations, instead of designing a building with buttresses on one side only, the gauge of the rafters and stanchions was simply increased, making structural buttresses on the western side redundant. At the later Brighton, St Mary's and Naracoorte sites, where the chapel was freestanding on three sides, structural flying buttresses were still employed to resist the outward thrust of the rafters.

Otherwise, Brune's Colonel Light Gardens chapel was similar to his other A-frame churches, with a terracotta tiled roof, flat Brownbuilt steel deck roofs over the porches and utility rooms, and enamelled steel 'Porcipanel' spandrels below windows throughout the church instead of brick. As at the later Brighton, St Mary's and Naracoorte chapels, the cavity brick walls at Colonel Light Gardens were built with different coloured internal and external leaves, in this case, red face brick outside and contrasting biscuit-coloured face brick inside. Again, Brune created a symmetrical feature wall under the main gable to differentiate the Colonel Light Gardens chapel from his other A-frames, this time comprising a vertical band of random Carey Gully stone flanked either side in red face brick, with projecting header bricks in a grid pattern. A large steel cross was also mounted on the feature wall.

Construction was financed by the Churches of Christ in South Australia Home Mission Department,⁶⁰ through a £6000 loan from the Building Extension Mutual Fund during the 1963-1964 financial year.⁶¹ To build the new chapel, the Rechabite Hall and most of the original chapel on the site were demolished,⁶² while the late 1950s hall was incorporated into the new scheme. The rear wall of the old chapel was partly reused as the back wall of one of the Sunday School rooms, and the original baptismal font is said to remain under the floorboards. The foundation stone of the new church was laid on 14 November 1964 and the chapel opened the following year. Colonel Light Gardens was one of five new chapels built for the Churches of Christ during the twelve months before September 1965, along with those at Bordertown, Cheltenham, Croydon, and Goolwa.⁶³



Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ, perspective by Lance Brune, c.1964

Source: *Churches of Christ in South Australia Ninety-First Annual Conference, September 7th to 14th, 1965* (1965) p. 39

Construction of the new chapel was 'conditional' upon the congregation employing a full-time minister.⁶⁴ With financial support from the Churches of Christ Home Mission Department, George Matheson Jnr, AUA commenced his ministry at Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ in 1965 on a £10/0/0 weekly salary.⁶⁵ Landscaping included a cedar tree was planted on the Goodwood Road/Piccadilly Circus corner (removed c.2010). The cedar, a tree with Biblical connotations, was a popular planting choice for post-war church congregations.



Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ soon after completion, c.1965

Source: William Arthur Robjohns, PRG 287/1/23/113, State Library of South Australia

Subsequent history

A year after opening, the Colonel Light Gardens congregation was considered to be a 'success story' thanks to 'intense pastoral oversight', with 'several fine families [moving] in and giv[ing] helpful leadership.' The congregation became financially self-supporting during the following financial year,⁶⁶ and was even able to purchase an adjoining house to serve as manse.⁶⁷ In 1976, a new manse was built on the church

site facing Winchester Avenue.⁶⁸ In recent times the Bethel International Church worshipped in the chapel. For many years the venue for a weekday community op-shop, due to a dwindling congregation, the Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ closed in early 2023.

Chronology

Year	Event
1845	September, Thomas Magarey arrives in South Australia.
1849	Thomas Magarey helps establish the first South Australian Church of Christ in Franklin Street, Adelaide.
1867	American evangelist T. J. Gore appointed to the Grote Street, Adelaide Churches of Christ congregation.
1884	An Evangelistic Union of Churches of Christ in South Australia is established.
1909	William Lancelott Bruhn, later William Lancelot (Lance) Brune, is born in Brunswick North, Melbourne, Victoria.
1917	Charles Compton Reade designs Colonel Light Gardens.
c.1918	Bruhn family changes the spelling of their name to Brune.
1921	Subdivision commences at Colonel Light Gardens.
1925	1 January, Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ congregation begins worshipping in the home of W. J. Harris.
	26 August, first Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ opens.
1926	February, A. E. Forbes and J. Warren operate an open-air tent mission at Colonel Light Gardens, growing the local Churches of Christ congregation and allowing J. Warren to subsequently be employed as a full-time minister.
1930s	South Australian Churches of Christ experience 'a deplorable decline' in membership.
	Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ loses its full-time minister.
1934	Lance Brune marries Bertha Mary (Mollie) Ludbrook at Dulwich Church of Christ.
c.1938	Lance Brune begins practicing as an architect.
c.1946	Lance Brune establishes W. Lance Brune Pty Ltd with his brother Harry Howard Brune and a friend, Donald Gordon (Don) Dewar.
1951	South Australian Churches of Christ membership begins to increase after the Second World War.
1953	January, the end of post-Second World War building restrictions heralds the beginning of a post-war church-building boom in South Australia.
1955	March, Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ acquires an adjoining block to the east.

- 1956 February, Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ acquires an adjoining block to the South.**
- c.1957 Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ builds a new brick hall with kitchen facilities along Goodwood Road.**
- 1959 American evangelist Dr. Billy Graham visits Adelaide, bringing an influx of new parishioners to the Protestant denominations and 'phenomenal growth' in the Churches of Christ.
- 1961 Salisbury Methodist Church opens.
- 1962 Risdon Park (Port Pirie) Church of Christ opens.
Nedlands (WA) Church of Christ opens.
- 1964 Croydon Church of Christ opens.
- 14 November, foundation stone of new Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ laid.**
- 1965 Cheltenham Church of Christ opens.
St Mary's Baptist Church opens.
- Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ opens.**
- George Matheson Jnr, AUA commences his ministry at Churches of Christ with financial support from the Churches of Christ Home Mission Department.**
- 1966 Brighton Church of Christ opens.
Naracoorte Church of Christ opens.
- 1967 Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ becomes financially self-supporting.
- c.1965 St Peters' Collegiate Girls' School Chapel opens.
- 1971 Dulwich Church of Christ closes.
- 1976 New manse for Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ is built facing Winchester Avenue.**
- 2023 Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ closes.**

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Interviews

Linda Wilsdon pers. comm. 12 June 2023

SITE RECORD

NAME:	Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ	PLACE NO.:	26551
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DESCRIPTION OF PLACE: Single-storey steel and brick A-frame church

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: 1964-1965

REGISTER STATUS: Nominated 4 November 2021

LOCAL HERITAGE STATUS:

CURRENT USE: Vacant

2023

PREVIOUS USE(S): Churches of Christ place of worship

1965-2023

ARCHITECT: W. Lance Brune, W. Lance Brune Pty Ltd

1964-1965

LOCAL GOVERNMENT City of Mitcham

AREA:

LOCATION:

Street No.: 539-541

Street Name: Goodwood Road

Town/Suburb: Colonel Light Gardens

Post Code: 5041

LAND DESCRIPTION: **Title** CT 6036/892

Reference:

Lot No.: A1

Plan No.: D81201

Hundred: Adelaide

PHOTOS

NAME:	Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ	PLACE NO.:	26551
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All images in this section are from DEW Files and were taken on 30 June 2023, unless otherwise indicated.



Front view of late 1950s cavity-brick hall, with chapel foyer on left



Rear view of chapel with hall on left

PHOTOS

NAME: Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ **PLACE NO.:** 26551



Interior view of chapel



Sanctuary area showing dais and immersion font (white tiles under cross)

PHOTOS

NAME: Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ **PLACE NO.:** 26551



Side view of chapel showing amber glass and 'Porcipanel' spandrels



Foundation stone



Foot of northern gable showing barge shoe on left



Interior of hall



Western side of chapel



Foyer annexe

SITE PLAN

NAME: Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ

PLACE NO.: 26551



Colonel Light Gardens Church of Christ (CT 6036/892 D81201 A1 Hundred of Adelaide)

N ↑

LEGEND

 Parcel boundaries (extent of place considered by this assessment)

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- ⁶⁵ Churches of Christ Evangelistic Union Inc. South Australia, *Ninetieth Annual Conference* p. 48
- ⁶⁶ Churches of Christ Evangelistic Union Inc. South Australia, *Ninety-Second Annual Conference* (1966) Adelaide SA: Churches of Christ Evangelistic Union Inc. South Australia p. 32
- ⁶⁷ Churches of Christ Evangelistic Union Inc. South Australia, *Ninety-Second Annual Conference* p. 41
- ⁶⁸ Robert J. Miller, *Communities* p. 212