

SA Heritage Register

Nomination form



Government of South Australia

Department for Environment
and Water

NOMINATION FORM

To help your nomination be successful, please fill out this form with as much information as possible.

Feel free to expand the answer fields as much as you require or append information to the form.

It is important that you attach images and a map of what you are nominating by email or by fax.

Please note that places which have been nominated during past three years will not be reconsidered by the South Australian Heritage Council unless you can provide significant new information not provided through the previous nomination and assessment.

For assistance with this form you may contact:

Your local historical society or heritage adviser may be of assistance OR you may telephone an assessment officer in Heritage South Australia on (08) 8124 4960.

A. Nominated Place

1. Name	
Name of Place / Object:	Former Gibb and Miller Engineering Ltd offices
Any other or former name(s):	Currently Howie and Organ Engineering Ltd
Is the place already on another heritage list?	No

2. Location					
Street Address:	290 Commercial Road				
	Suburb / Town: 290 Commercial Road Post Code: 5015				
Local Council Name:	City of Port Adelaide and Enfield				
Land Description: (if known)	Title: CT	Volume: 5229	Folio: 365	Parcel Type:	Parcel No:
	Plan Type:	Plan No:	Section:	Hundred:	
Also	CT 5229	366			
Also	CT 5229	367			
GPS Location/s: (If known)	Longitude / Easting / X 34°51'02.4"S 138°30'31.6"E			Latitude / Northing / Y (Datum =)	

3. Ownership	
Name of Owner(s):	
Contact person: (if different from owner explain relationship)	
Postal Address:	Street Address: Suburb / Town: Post Code:
Phone Number:	
Ownership History:	History of the Company's land purchases from 1915: 1895 Land purchases- Allotments 33 and 34 Commercial Rd were originally purchased by Frederick Charles WIDDOP, storekeeper, of Pt Adelaide on 3/7/1895. Widdop was the

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	<p>father-in-law of Alfred "Fred" Gibbs.</p> <p>1915 Sands and McDougall Directory shows Gibb and Miller Electrical Engineers on Commercial Road between Portland Hotel and Widdop's Grocer/Drapers business in 1915 [but not in 1914.]</p> <p>1916 17/2/1916 the above land was transferred to Gibb and Miller as tenants in common, and later transferred to Gibb and Miller Limited on 4/6/37.</p> <p>1917- Alfred John Gibb and Arthur Aitkenhead Miller, both engineers of Pt Adelaide, purchased Lot 35 between Clare St and Port Rd. (CT31/1250). This land was transferred on 2/6/37 to Gibb and Miller Ltd of 290 Commercial Rd Port Adelaide, and owned by the firm until 22/11/78.</p> <p>1927 8/7/27. Purchase of Lot 396 College St [Note: this adjoins Clare Street]. Transferred to name Gibb and Miller Ltd on 4 June 1937, owned by such until 1982</p> <p>1928 7/12/28 Purchases of Lot 104 Clare St Pt Adelaide by A. Gibb and R. Miller on 7/12/28, transferred to company name Gibb and Miller June 4/6/1937. Owned until 1982</p> <p>1943 30/7/43 Purchase of land at 45 Clare Street. [Allotments 108, 109, 110] CT 657/57</p> <p>1944 14/7/44 purchase of land at 21 Liddon Place Port Adelaide. [CT 163/24]. Used as a stockyard.</p>
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4. Nominator (your details)

Your Name/s:			
Organisation/Position:			
Daytime Phone:			
Fax:			
Postal Address:	Street Address:		
	Suburb / Town:		
	Post Code:		
Email Address:			

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B. Description

5. Description of nominated place or object	
<p>Description of the nominated place or object and its current condition:</p>	<p>Office Building of the former Gibb and Miller Engineering, 290 Commercial Road, Port Adelaide, excluding the factory part of the building at the rear. An extremely rare example of an industrial building designed and constructed shortly before the end of hostilities in WWII. The 1945 office of Gibb and Miller Ltd is a well-executed example of modernist design principles and Art Deco detailing.</p> <p>The building is now the offices and factory [at rear] of Howie and Organ Engineering Ltd. The exterior of the building is largely unchanged since it was constructed in 1945.</p> <p>Internally, what the February 1945 plan shows as a number of small offices have been converted to larger spaces. Importantly, what is referred to in the 1945 design as the Plan Room appears to be intact.</p>
<p>Are you aware of any modifications or additions to the place or object? Can you provide dates for these changes?</p>	<p>The exterior of the building is largely unchanged. Some minor changes noted include: the metal window frames do not appear to be original. A small air-conditioning unit has been added, as have grab rails above the front steps. The current lessee's business sign 'Howie and Organ Engineers' is an addition. Other than these changes, the façade is very intact.</p> <p>Drawings held in the Architecture Museum, University of South Australia, suggest some decorative metal detailing was to have been installed above the front door and in the windows to the right of the doorway. Either these have been removed, or as is likely, war-time regulations on materials meant they were never incorporated in the final building. Regarding the internal layout, what the February 1945 plan shows as a number of small offices have been converted to larger spaces. Importantly, what is referred to here as the Plan Room appears to be intact and still contains wooden plans files for the storage of Gibb and Miller's client records. These plan drawers retain their original handles and, possibly, also original labelling such as A.B.C., denoting Adelaide Brighton Cement] for Gibb and Miller records remain in situ.</p>
<p>Do you believe there may be historical items under the ground? Should an archaeological investigation</p>	<p>No</p>

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be considered?	
Date you inspected the place or object:	May 2023
Current use of the place or object:	Engineering offices and factory
Original or former use(s):	Engineering offices and factory
Are there any current or long term threats to the nominated place or object?	<p>Threats: [see attached photo in Appendices] Renewal SA has earmarked the area for public housing. The entire block immediately to the west of the office and factory (bounded by Clare Street/Providence place/Gracechurch Street) has recently been transformed into rows of attached townhouses. This land was in the past owned by Gibb and Miller Engineering Ltd and formed part of their factory complex.</p> <p>In addition, The Advertiser has reported on a proposed development of the former Smiths of Port Adelaide site at 271 Commercial Road Port Adelaide (on the opposite side of Commercial Road) into a 5,750 m2 retail precinct by Hans Ehmann of the Neville Smith group.</p> <p>There is likely to be strong pressure for the redevelopment of the site for new purposes in the not too far distant future,</p>
Name of Builder:	Designed in 1945 by architect Russell Ellis, then working for Russell and Yelland Pty Ltd.
Any other information:	

C. History

6. Origins and history		
Years of Construction:	Start: 1945	Finish: 1945
Name of Designer / Architect:	Designed from February 1945 by architect Russell Ellis of Russell and Yelland Pty Ltd. [As shown on original plan and drawings obtained from Architecture Museum, University of South Australia]	

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History of the nominated place or object:

Gibb and Miller Engineering was established in 1914 or 1915 by Alfred John Gibb and Robert Aitkenhead Miller. A 1916 newspaper report about the company states that it had been in operation for two years. The Sands & McDougall Directory for 1915 has an entry for the company at Commercial Road Port Adelaide between Portland Hotel and Widdop's grocers. This is the same location as the 1945 new office building. By 1940 the company employed 95 men and was producing essential items for both the war effort [munitions] and for industry and civil society: including rotary shears for T.J. Richardson and Ford Motor company, boilers for Royal Adelaide Hospital and girders for the new Bank of NSW building in King William Street Adelaide.

Documents from the National Archives of Australia indicate that Gibb and Miller carried out work on Naval ships during the period 1941-45.

Plans and design drawings for a new and very modern office building were drawn up by Russell and Yelland architects between February and May 1945, while Australia was still at war. These plans, held at the Architecture Museum, are reproduced in Section 9.

In 1946, a newspaper report on upgrading of the infrastructure of Port Adelaide mentions that Gibb and Miller Engineers are manufacturing for several American firms.

By 1950, founding partner A.J. Gibb was president of the Metal Industries Association of South Australia.

In 1952 the Department of Supply awarded Gibb and Miller Engineering the contract to build a wind tunnel for Weapons Research Establishment at Salisbury.

In 1953, A.J. Gibb was made the South Australian representative on the Commonwealth Government's newly established Weapons Advisory Committee.

In 1954, Gibb and Miller Engineering undertook the design and construction of a factory at Whyalla for British engineering firm C.A. Parsons.

In 1958, Gibb and Miller Engineering was commissioned to manufacture luffing cranes, designed by the Melbourne firm of Southert, Pipp and Coates Ltd, for another major upgrade of the docks at Port Adelaide. These cranes are still extant at Number 2 Dock.

In December 1959 Mr A.J. Gibb died and the firm became a subsidiary of Perry Engineering Ltd, later a subsidiary of Johns and Waygood Ltd.

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	<p>The firm continued with numerous important engineering and manufacturing contracts until September 1978 when all the effects of Gibb and Miller were disposed of by public auction. At this time there were 127 employees.</p> <p>From 1989 onward, the office building was leased by Howie and Organ Engineering, associated with two gentlemen who were formerly senior employees of Gibb and Miller.</p>
<p>Historical sources used to support your nomination:</p> <p>Please attach copies of pages from publications or newspaper articles as appropriate.</p>	<p>Note: this is a selection of sources consulted. A fuller list can be supplied if required.</p> <p>News, Tue 18 Jun 1940 p. 24 Engineering Achievements at Pt Adelaide</p> <p>National Archives document MP138/1 Control symbol 603/247/1449</p> <p>National Archives of Australia. MP150/1 Control symbol 674/202/1294</p> <p>News, Sat 9 August 1941 p. 5, Appreciation of Anti-Tank Gun Work</p> <p>The Advertiser Fri 20 Feb 1942 P7 More Men for War Work [Gibb and Miller a protected industry as manufacturer of munitions.]</p> <p>Advertiser, Fri 6 July 1945 p. 14, Advertising [Gibb and Miller require boiler maker for urgent naval repairs]</p> <p>Architecture Museum University of South Australia. Drawings 1 to 8 Alterations to factory for Gibb & Miller Pty Ltd in Russell & Yelland file.</p> <p>Advertiser Fri 14 June 1946 p. 10 Expansion Plans for Port.</p> <p>Advertiser, Wed 23 Apr 1952 p. 1 80,000 pound wind tunnel for Salisbury</p> <p>Mail, Adelaide Sat 3rd Jan 1953, p. 29 4 new defence bodies announced</p> <p>Advertiser, Tues 28 Sept 1954, p. 3 Big Expansion Plan for new SA Industry</p> <p>Statement of Heritage Significance, No 2 Dock, Port Adelaide 26478 [Gibb and Miller manufacture of luffing cranes]</p>

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D. Heritage Significance

7. Statement of State Significance - Why is the place or object important to South Australia?

The office building of the former Gibb and Miller Engineering Ltd is of State heritage significance because it is very rare on three separate counts- firstly, for the year of its construction, secondly for the style of its construction and thirdly for its association with a prominent Modernist architect of the period.

1. Rarity as an industrial building designed and constructed during WWII.

The former Gibb and Miller Engineering building is an extremely rare example of an industrial building designed and constructed shortly before the end of hostilities in WWII. The new building, which replaced an earlier corrugated iron factory on the same site, was designed by the firm of Russell and Yelland. A plan for the building held in the collection of the Architecture Museum, University of South Australia is dated February 1945, while pencil drawings of designs for metalwork detailing on the façade are dated May 1945. In February 1945 the war in Europe had not yet concluded. The war in the Pacific, in which Australia was still so heavily involved, was not to end until September 1945 following the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki

The Department for War Organisation of Industry was established in 1942 and immediately took strong measures to control labour and resources, control building, prohibit the manufacture of certain articles, control new business, and rationalise industry. Construction, as a result, almost ground to a halt. In South Australia, the prolonged wartime controls led to 'an artificially-prolonged period of stasis that lasted well into the 1950s' [Marsden et al p.48]

That Gibb and Miller Engineering was permitted to build its new headquarters at such an early time can only be due to its work in supporting the war effort, as will be spelt out a little later, and to the importance of the products it designed and manufactured to business, commerce and civilian life in South Australia.

2. Rarity as an industrial building displaying modernist design principles with Art Deco detailing.

The 1945 office of Gibb and Miller Ltd is a well-executed example of modernist design principles and Art Deco detailing. The horizontal expression is emphasized by the narrow band of six rectangular windows inset into the red brickwork and contrasting with the vertical entrance statement in cream brick. The parapet capping in cream cement also emphasises the horizontal. There is some restrained fluting of the brickwork around the windows and the door, which is of the monumental type associated with buildings of the Art Deco period. The Moderne style projecting concrete hood, which runs above the windows and curves over the entrance to provide rain shelter, is an Art Deco element.

The metal ribbon lettering and monogram of the company name are key elements of the composition and were probably produced by Gibb and Miller's factory especially for this purpose. A saw-toothed roof with six bays appears to sit above the office building, disguised from the front by the parapet. Behind this sits the factory section.

The construction of this red brick office building provided a suitably modern and appropriately corporate appearance for a company that been in existence since 1915, had proved its credentials during WWII, had a growing workforce and was looking toward new industrial opportunities as the war years drew to a close.

Art Deco was still very much a new and modern style at the time of this building's construction.

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The earliest examples of Art Deco in South Australia are the Sands and McDougall façade [designed in 1933] and the Victa Cinema [opened December 1934], both recognised State Heritage places. The effects of the Depression which persisted until at least 1935, followed by the outbreak of World War II in 1939, meant there was relatively little construction during these years. Not all of what construction occurred was in the Art Deco style, and much of what was constructed in this style has been lost since then, for example with the demolition of Centennial Hall [constructed 1936].

Similar significant industrial and /or manufacturing buildings that once served to illustrate mid-20th Century industrial development in South Australia have also been lost, for example the complete loss of Perry Engineering's extensive site at Mile End, now the site of Mile End Homemaker Centre. Kelvinator's manufacturing operations at Keswick, also with Art Deco features particularly in the Head Office building, are in a very poor state of repair since the closure of manufacturing there. Another example of a loss of a uniquely South Australian factory, though not an engineering business, was the demolition, in the 1980s, of the 1922 AMSCOL ice-cream and daily products factory in Carrington Street.

3. Rarity as an example of the work of architect Russell Ellis.

Ellis, whose name appears on the elevation and plans of the building, was one of South Australia's pioneer modernist architects, designing in the International style soon after he began practicing in the late 1930s. The name "Ellis" appears on the bottom right-hand corner of some of the drawings held at the Architecture Museum and reproduced in Section 9.

8. Significance Criteria

The South Australian *Heritage Places Act 1993* lists seven criteria by which places are assessed as 'State significant.' Please tick the criteria you feel the place demonstrates and explain your reasons.

☒ It demonstrates important aspects of the evolution or pattern of the State's history.

Further history of the company Gibb and Miller Limited.

Gibb and Miller Engineering Ltd was in continuous operation from 1915 through until September 1978, continuing in business under this name even after the death of the remaining founding partner, A.J. Gibb in late 1959 and its transition to a subsidiary of Johns and Waygood Holdings Ltd [which also acquired Perry Engineering and Forward Down engineers]. Throughout its 60 years of operations, Gibb and Miller Ltd designed and manufactured items that made an essential

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contribution to the security of South Australia in war time and in peace, and to the development of its industrial base.

From the outset, Gibb and Miller's output was geared to the production of items important to the security, economy and development of South Australia. Formed during the First World War period by Alfred 'Fred' Gibb and Robert Aitkenhead Miller, one of the new company's earliest successful tenders was in 1915, to manufacture shells for the war effort.

From 1912, the South Australian government had recognised a pressing need for more railway engines and, in particular, for locally-built locomotives. In 1916, Gibb and Miller were engaged in the production of Quadro valves for railway engines.

In 1929, having earlier in the decade found ways of managing a crippling shortage of hard coke, Gibb and Miller constructed and erected a 100-foot diameter fuel tank at the Shell Oil Company plant at Birkenhead. In 1930, Robert Aitkenhead Miller left the partnership to form a new company, while Alfred Gibb became the sole Managing Director. Important events during the 1930s were Gibb and Miller's contribution to the infrastructure of Port Adelaide with the construction of a new 5-ton electric crane for the Port Adelaide wharves. This crane was the first to be manufactured locally for the Harbors Board. Also mentioned in the press at this time was the assembly of a new press for motor-body builders TJ Richards and Sons Ltd. According to the SA Historyhub website, T J Richards and Sons "remained solvent during the Great Depression; indeed, in 1930 it bought the large premises of the defunct motor body builder Duncan and Fraser Ltd. The first all-steel bodies were built in 1935." and "World War II ended imports of British chassis and introduced progressive conversion to war production (particularly manufacture of aircraft components)."

Gibb and Miller Engineering during the War Years 1939-1945

By 1940 Gibb and Miller Ltd was employing 95 men. Works mentioned in South Australian newspapers in 1940 [News, 18/6/40] include 5 rotary shears [there is an accompanying photo] for TJ Richardson and Ford Motor Co; a Lancashire boiler made for Royal Adelaide Hospital; ditto for Waikerie Distillery [3 boilers were contracted for Dept for the Interior according to the Government Gazette], Girders for new Bank of NSW building in King William Street and base plates for 25 anti-aircraft guns for the Defence Forces.

During WWII, Fred Gibb was Deputy Director of Munitions

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for SA for some time, with day-to-day management of the company in the hands of George Stevens and other members of the staff. The company was engaged in many munitions projects and worked round the clock on a three-shift basis. Harry Martin handled the electrical side of ship and corvette refitting work done by Gibb and Miller during WW2 [and was later, in 1956, to join Fred and Ken Gibb and George Stevens in setting up formed GM Industrial Electrics Ltd].

1941: Manufacture of Anti-tank guns. News, Sat 9 August 1941 p. 5, reports Gibb and Miller as major subcontractor for the anti-tank guns [with General Motors Holden at Beverley as the coordinating contractors] and also mentions Mr A.J. Gibb as Area Controller for South Australia on Ordnance production.

1941 National Archives document MP138/1 Control symbol 603/247/1449 refers to Gibb & Miller's work on warships. A pencilled note on the covering page states that document is 'in context of speeding up of warship production.' In the document, a letter from Commander RAN District Naval Officer SA to Secretary, Naval Board, Navy Office, Melbourne, a quality reference is provided thus: "The work carried out by Gibb and Miller is of a high standard and every possible assistance has been rendered by the firm to this Department."

Period 1941-45. National Archives document NAA MP150/1 674/202/1294 on pages 62 and 67 shows that Gibb and Miller carried out repair work on British Registered ship SS "Chios."

1942: Gibb and Miller Engineering was a protected industry in its capacity as a manufacturer of munitions. Employees were 'pegged' to their jobs and could not be redeployed elsewhere except for brief periods.

1945. Gibb and Miller Ltd advertised "Urgently seeking boiler makers for urgent naval shipping repairs" N.S.O. 1475 [National Service Office].

Gibb and Miller's 1945 expansion and modernisation of the factory, with its sleek new exterior, illustrates South Australia's post-WW2 change from primarily rural production to a community with an industrial focus. In particular, Gibb and Miller were soon to play important roles in the modernisation of Port Adelaide's port infrastructure, the development of Whyalla as an industrial and ship-building centre, the rapid expansion of the motor vehicle industry and

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had an on-going role in defence planning and defence materiel in the context of the Cold War.

Susan Marsden et al (2003-4) in 20th Century Heritage Survey: Stage 1, Post Second World War 1946-1959. "The most significant elements in the history of South Australia 1946-59 are the impact of the war and other external influences – notably, the expansion of Commonwealth power and technological advances – and the state's own circumstances, in particular, its geography and Sir Thomas Playford's role as premier (1938-65) [p. 9]"

Towards the end of WWII, Commonwealth and State governments were beginning to plan for a future beyond the end of hostilities. In March 1945, the Deputy Director of War Organisation of Industry (Mr. J. W. Wainwright) drew the attention of the Premier (Mr. Playford) to the necessity of factory expansion in South Australia. [Advertiser, Thur 15 March 1945 p. 5 Factory Space Problem]

It is possible to identify 4 main areas in which Gibb and Miller's engineering works assisted the State and Commonwealth's priorities:

Defence Materiel

In 1953, Gibb and Miller's on-going role in Defence Materiel, dating from the earliest days of the company in WWI, but much expanded during the course of WWII, was recognised when Alfred J. Gibb was appointed the South Australian representative on [National] Weapons and Equipment Industry Advisory Committee. This committee, in the context of the Cold War, was set up to meet the requirements of war relating to the production of weapons and their equipment in industry. Having been associated with ordnance production through two World Wars, Fred Gibb would have been an ideal choice for this role.

Work for the Weapons Research Establishment, Salisbury

In 1952, Gibb and Miller won a Department of Supply contract to build a wind tunnel for WRE Salisbury. The Minister for Supply, Mr H. Beale, stated that: "This work... when completed would ensure Australia facilities for research consistent with speeds of Jet aircraft now in general operation." [Townsville Daily Bulletin Fri 16 Jan 1953 p. 1 Intensify Woomera Testing]

Ports infrastructure

Changes in population and technology and industrial expansion brought the most important change in shipping since the 19th century. Containerisation markedly reduced

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waterside labour, speeded up loading and introduced much larger vessels, all of which required major changes in port infrastructure. As early as 1946, the Advertiser [Fri 14 June 1946 p. 10 Expansion Plans for Port] reported under the heading of "Busy Shipyards" that Gibb and Miller Engineering were manufacturing factory equipment for the Australian market under licence from two American companies and negotiating a similar arrangement with a third company." In 1958 in the context of the on-going major redevelopment of the docks, Gibb and Miller Engineering manufactured four Double Hook Level Luffing Electric Wharf Cranes, designed by the Melbourne firm of Southert, Pipp and Coates Ltd These were equipped with cactus grabs and electric magnets for the handling of scrap steel and pig iron. [Source: Summary of State Heritage Place #26478, p. 9.]

The motor vehicle industry.

During the 1940s four-fifths of Australian car manufacturing was concentrated in Adelaide, with GMH, Richards/Chrysler and many supplementary firms.

News [18/6/40] mentions Gibb and Miller's own design of rotary shears for cutting sheet steel with extreme precision. 5 units supplied to T.J Richards and Sons (car body makers, also established 1916) and 3 to Ford Motor Co Geelong.

During the period 1961 to 1965, General Motors Holden was the largest customer of Gibb and Miller Engineering. SLASA photographs BRG 213/77/53/vol14/27 [1967] and BRG 213/77/53/VOL 14/33 [1968] are captioned "General Motors Holden factory renovations with Gibb and Miller gantry above" and "Finishing Installation of Gibb and Miller's gantry in [new] die-casting building."

Contribution to industrial expansion in other parts of SA during the Playford years.

In 1953/4, Gibb and Miller were designers and manufacturers for a factory at Whyalla for C.A. Parsons Ltd., the British engineering company of which Sir Claude Gibb, youngest brother of AJ Gibb, was the Managing Director. The new factory cost half a million pounds in 1954, an enormous sum at the time and testament to the growing importance of Whyalla as an industrial centre for South Australia. In the first instance, the factory manufactured feed-heating equipment for turbo-generating plants but further expansions were planned. The factory was opened by the Premier of SA Mr Playford, the Chief Justice Sir Mellis Napier, Sir Claude Gibb and Mr

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R.K. Kleeman, Superintendent BHP Whyalla. [SLSA photo PRG 830-20-24]. Source: Advertiser, [14/9/1954 p. 1]
Plans for the factory are held at the Architecture Museum, University of South Australia [S254/105, Job no 235] The engineers were Gibb Miller Ltd of Port Adelaide. The former C.A. Parsons Factory in Whyalla is now used by Ferretti International [Australia].

Gibb and Miller contribution to the development of industry in South Australia from 1960 onward.

Major contracts worth over one hundred thousand pounds for the period of 1961 to 1966 won by Gibb and Miller Engineering. This information is derived from records of Perry Engineering in State Library of SA, BRG 200 Series 26/2. The figures do not include contracts enacted by the related firm of Gibb and Miller Electrical, which are listed separately in the Perry Engineering records. All figures are in Australian Pounds General Motors Holden 1,030,000; BHP Co Ltd 684,000; Stothert and Pitt (Aust) Ltd 414,000; Adelaide Cement Co 360,700; British Tube Mills 145,000; ICI of Australia 138,000; Broken Hill Smelters 129,000; James Hardie and Co Pty Ltd 116,000; Texas Instruments Aust Ltd 102,600.

☐ It has rare, uncommon or endangered qualities that are of cultural significance.

☐ It may yield information that will contribute to an understanding of the State's history, including its natural history.

☐ It is an outstanding representative of a particular class of places of cultural significance.

☒ It demonstrates a high degree of creative, aesthetic or technical accomplishment or is an outstanding representative of particular construction techniques or design characteristics.

The Gibb and Miller Engineering building has been recognised as an important contribution to twentieth century modern architecture in South Australia. It was selected for inclusion in the 2019 *Modernism & Modernist SA Architecture: 1934-1977* installed at the Office for Design and Architecture SA.

The building's current appearance dates to 1945 when the existing factory was altered to create a new frontage and offices with plans drawn up by the firm of Russell and

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Yelland. The name on the drawings of the front elevation is Russell Ellis, regarded as a pioneering early Modernist architect in South Australia. [See plans and drawings in Appendices].

The 1945 office of Gibb and Miller Ltd is a well-executed example of modernist design principles and Art Deco detailing. Art Deco was still very much a new and modern style at the time of this building's construction.

The horizontal expression is emphasized by the narrow band of 6 rectangular windows inset into the red brickwork and contrasting with the vertical entrance statement in cream brick. The parapet capping in cream cement also emphasises the horizontal. There is some restrained fluting of the brickwork around the windows and the door, which is of the monumental type associated with buildings of the Art Deco period. The Moderne style projecting concrete hood, which runs above the windows and curves over the entrance to provide rain shelter, is an Art Deco element.

The metal ribbon lettering and monogram of the company name are key elements of the composition and were probably produced by Gibb and Miller's factory especially for this purpose.

A saw-toothed roof with 6 bays appears to sit above the office building, disguised from the front by the parapet. Behind this sits the factory building.

The construction of this red brick office building provided a suitably modern and appropriately corporate appearance for a company that been in existence since 1915, had proved its credentials during WWII, had a growing workforce and was looking toward new industrial opportunities as the war years drew to a close.

Comparable buildings on the State Heritage Register.

The Balm Paints factory at 67 Lipson Street, Port Adelaide [Heritage Number 1769] was added to the State Heritage Register in 1995. It is described as "A well designed factory building constructed in 1939, which survives substantially intact and is part of the important industrial history of Port Adelaide. It is associated with the expansion of paint manufacture, particularly for the growing motor car industry, by BALM Paints. It is also an important example of the pre-War Functionalist style of architecture and was designed by notable South Australian architect Phillip R Claridge.

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Like the Balm Paints building, the former Gibb and Miller Ltd office building was a well-designed building by a notable South Australian architect, in this case Russell Ellis. Ellis was regarded as one of the pioneering modernist architects in South Australia. Like Balm Paints, the Gibb and Miller building is associated with South Australia's growing industrial base, from 1915 until 1978.

Unlike Balm Paints, which was constructed in 1939, the Gibb and Miller building was designed in 1945, at a time when the country was still at war. In this sense its construction represents even more of an achievement for the firm of Gibb and Miller, and makes it even rarer than the very few remaining Interwar Functionalist and Art Deco industrial buildings.

- ☐ It has strong cultural or spiritual associations for the community or a group within it.

- ☒ It has a special association with the life or work of a person or organisation or an event of historical importance.

The 1945 Gibb and Miller Engineering building is associated with **two** prominent South Australians during the middle years of the twentieth century. The first is the architect of the 1945 building, Russell Ellis. Ellis was one of South Australia's pioneer modernist architects, designing in the International style soon after he began practicing in the late 1930s. The second is Alfred Gibb, OBE, co-founder and Managing Director of the company.

First person of interest: Russell Ellis, architect, working with firm of Russell and Yelland.

Russell Ellis was one of the early architects in South Australia to design in the Modern style. Russell Stuart Ellis was born at Glanville, South Australia on 20 August 1912. Later, the family moved to Brown Street, Semaphore. It is quite likely that the young Russell Ellis knew members of the Gibb family personally. **This connection needs further research.**

The News in 1927 reported that the 14year Ellis was already working with Greg Bruer of Lionel G. Bruer, Norman Fisher and Philip Claridge, while studying for his Intermediate Certificate. (News. Sat 16 July 1927, p. 2 Advertising. Russell Ellis.)

Ellis studied architecture at the South Australian School of Mines and Industries (School of Mines) from 1930 and in 1934 graduated with an Architectural Draftsman's Certificate

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(Walkley 1976: 117) and Associateship Diploma, which entitled him to become an Associate of the SAIA in 1935 (Cheshire and Johnson 1987: 5). After graduation from the School of Mines and Industries, Ellis continued to work with Philip Claridge in the practice of P. R. Claridge and Associates with himself and Colin Hassell as associates.

Ellis' work during the War Years.

From 1941 until the end of the war Ellis worked for the Department of the Interior (Bird 2007a: 18) and also collaborated with Russell and Yelland [Designing for Communities: Russell and Yelland Architects, Alison McDougall 2011, p. 20.] In June 1943 he moved to Darwin, returning in April 1944 (Cheshire and Johnson 1987: 6). In 1945 Ellis took a job working with the Allied Works Council, Department of Public Works, Adelaide where he worked on the replanning of Darwin. In 1945 while he was employed with the Allied Works Council, Department of Public Works, Adelaide he worked on the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) Biochemistry laboratory building at the University of Adelaide, Adelaide campus. In 1947 when he joined the practice of F.K. Milne, Dawkins and Boehm as a junior partner, he contributed to the design of factories, showrooms and theatres including several Ozone Theatres in various locations through South Australia. Factories included those for Regina Appliances [a manufacturer of washing machines] at Edwardstown (1954), Nobby's Peanut Products, Bowden and Hindmarsh (1958-61) and for Commercial Motor Vehicles Salvage Pty. Ltd. (1966).

Russell Ellis and Modernist design

As a young architect Ellis assisted Claridge with the design for the Port Lincoln Town Hall (1935), designing the Art Deco style moulded plaster frieze (Cheshire and Johnson 1987: 5). He was an inaugural member of the Architects' Club in 1938. The club used newspaper articles, exhibitions and events to promote interest in architecture. Ellis was one of South Australia's pioneer modernist architects, designing in the International style soon after he began practicing in the late 1930s.

Between 1947 and 1953 Russell Ellis designed a residence for Charles Wright in Meadowvale Road, Springfield. The house is regarded as an early local example of residential Modernism in Adelaide.

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The above information from Collins, Julie, 'Ellis, Russell Stuart', Architecture Museum, University of South Australia, 2008, Architects of South Australia:

http://www.architectsdatabase.unisa.edu.au/arch_full.asp?Arch_ID=41]

Second person of interest: Alfred ['Fred] Gibb, OBE, Co-founder and Managing Director of Gibb and Miller.

Fred Gibb was born Queenstown 1892 and educated at the local public school. This was followed by studies at the School of Mines and Adelaide University.

Alfred Gibb trained at Greys, a small engineering firm at Port Adelaide. His colleague and founding partner of the firm, Robert Miller, began his career at Union Engineering, where he had risen to the position of foreman. Fred Gibb, eager to add to his knowledge, continued his studies at the SA School of mines each night after starting work.

1914-15 Managing director and co-founder of Gibb and Miller Engineering. Alfred John Gibb and Robert Aitkenhead Miller set up in business as fitters, turners, engineers and ship repairers on a small block of land at 290 Commercial Road Port Adelaide, the site of part of the current office premises.

1938-39 Chairman of Adelaide Division of Association of Engineers [Aust].

1950s President of Metal industries Association of SA and a member of Executive Committee of SA Chamber of Manufacturers.

1953 Coronation Medal, 1953 awarded to GIBB, Alfred John. (AMIE Aust). C/O Adelaide School of Mines. [GRG 24 Series List Special List Page]

1959 Order of the British Empire (OBE), Civil Division, for services to commerce and industry.

Alfred Gibb was the elder brother of Sir Claude Dixon Gibb [1898-1959]. The numerous achievements of Sir Claude Gibb are recognised in South Australia with a footpath plaque on North Terrace Adelaide. While he lived and worked in the UK from 1924, he did his mechanical and electrical engineering training at the SA School of Mines from 1914-17 and got practical workshop experience in his elder brother's firm Gibb

NOMINATION FORM

and Miller Engineering Limited.

In 1954, Sir Claude Gibb entrusted the design and building of the C.A. Parsons factory at Whyalla to his brother's firm.

E. Additional Information

9. Images/Maps/Diagrams/Site Plans

15 images supplied below, Please redact the names of the photographers.

Image 1: the Commercial Road premises of Gibb and Miller Engineering before the 1945 upgrade.

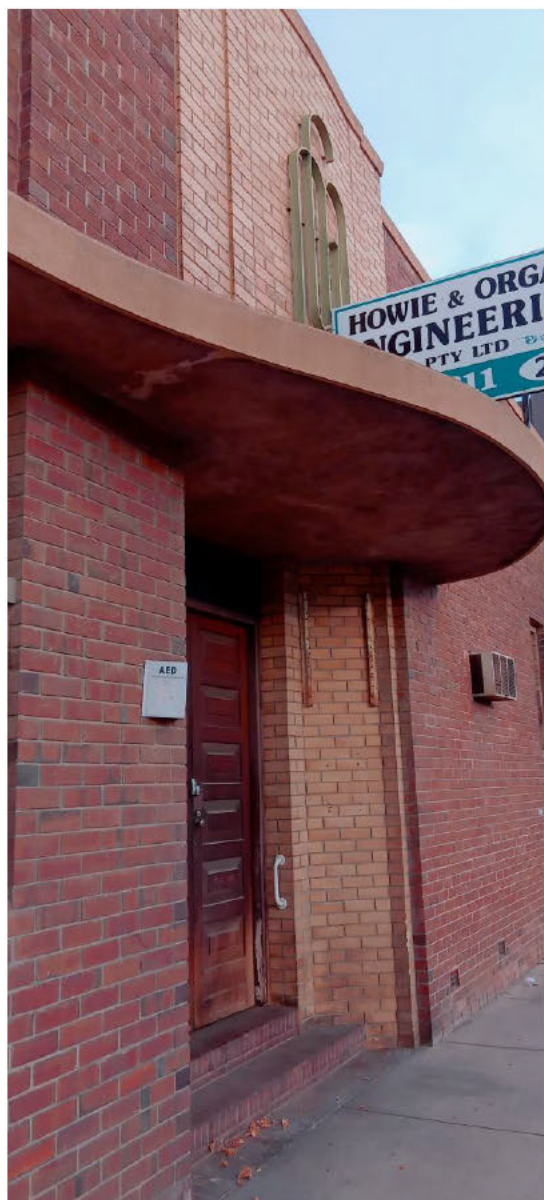


Image 2: The former Gibb and Miller building, now Howie and Organ Engineering, 290 Commercial Road, Port Adelaide.



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Image 3: The curved, cantilevered canopy over the front door.

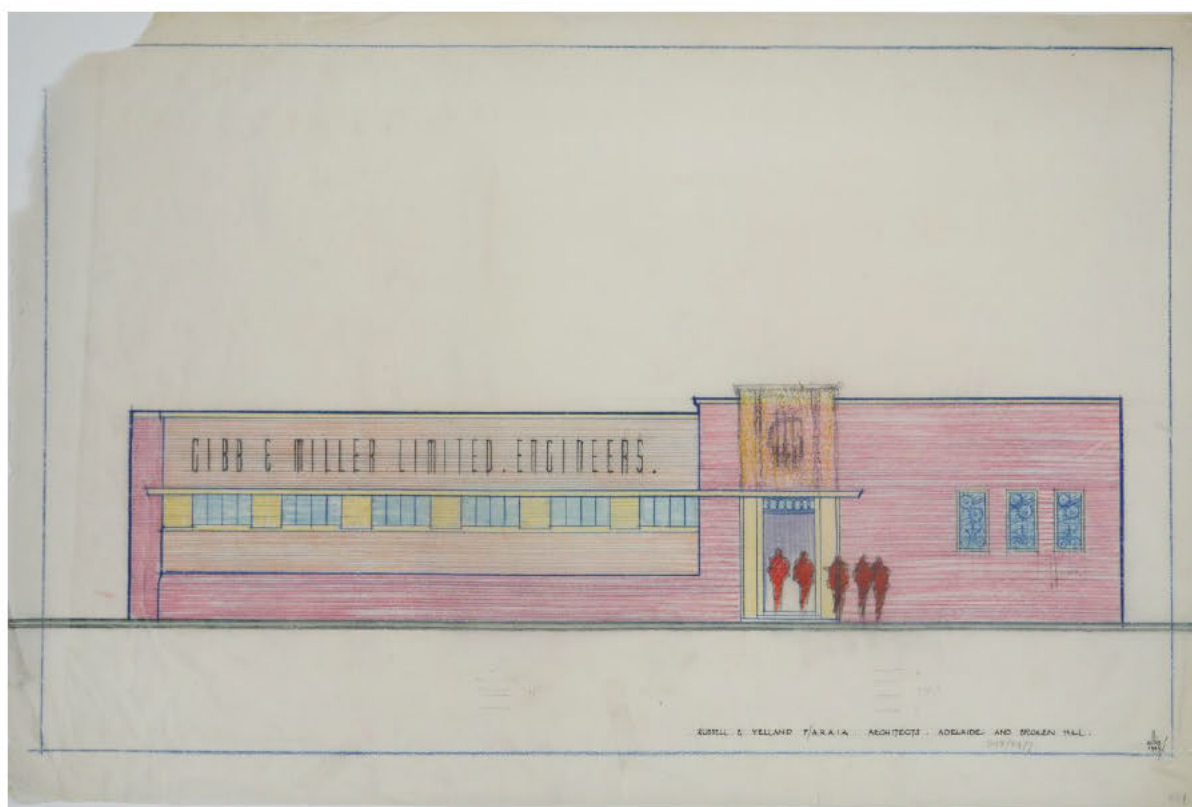


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Image 4: Interior of the Plans Room showing the drawers in which plans were stored.



Image 5: Front elevation drawing. Architecture Museum, University of South Australia, R and Y S98_89_7



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Image 6: Further elevations, signed Ellis, 1945. Architecture Museum, University of South Australia, R and Y S98_89_8.

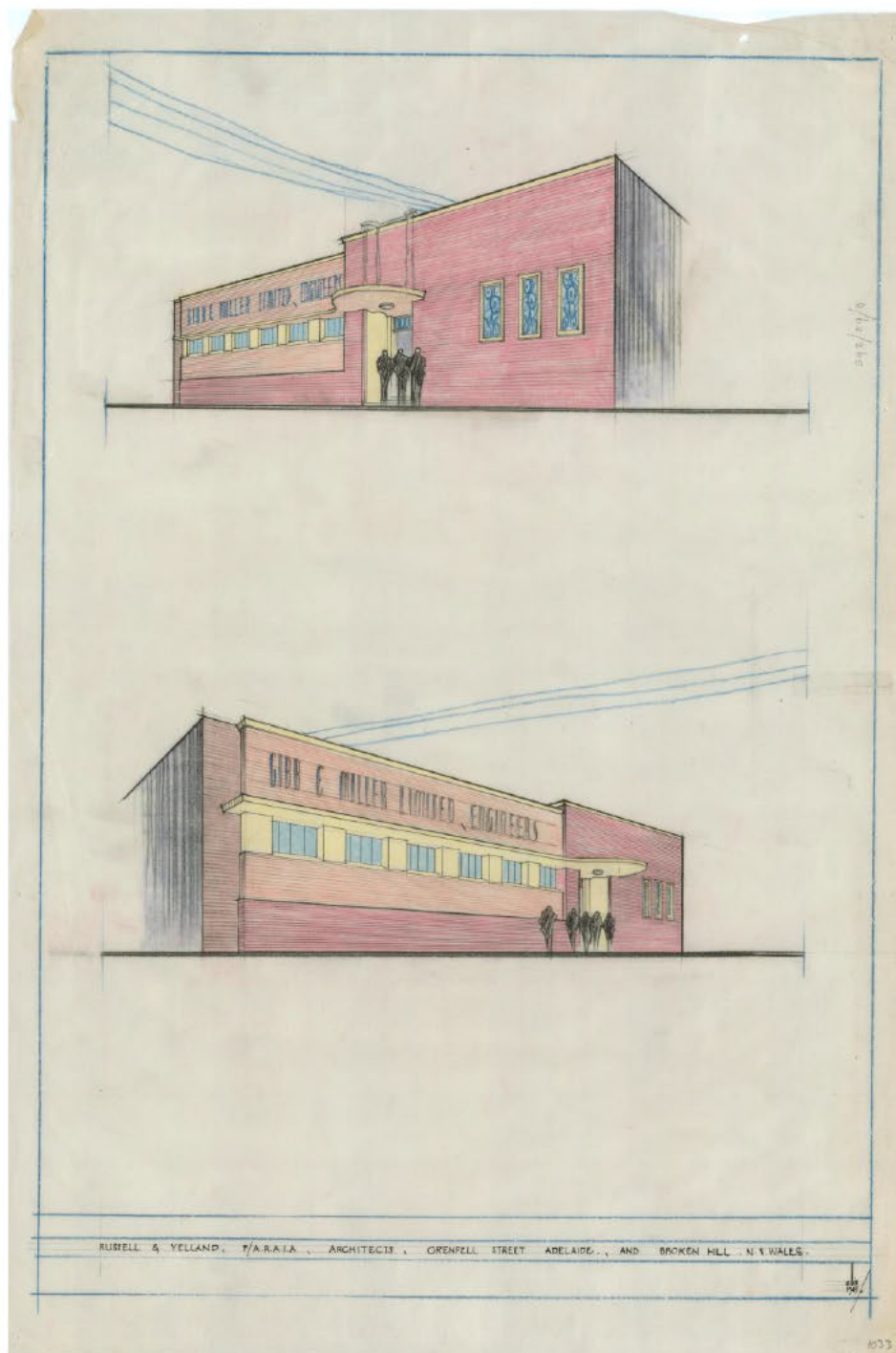


Image 7: Close-up of bottom right-hand corner of the above, showing characteristic signature, "Ellis". Architecture Museum, University of South Australia.

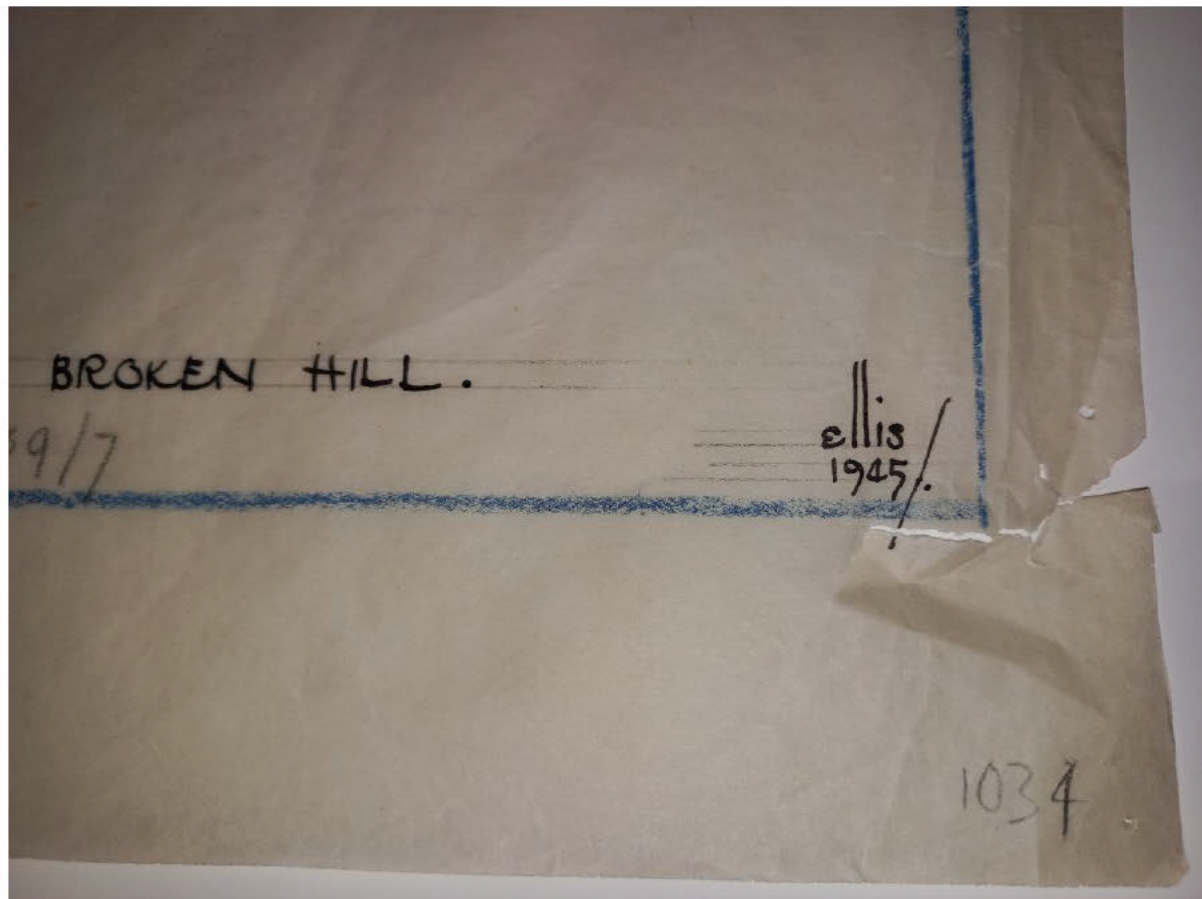
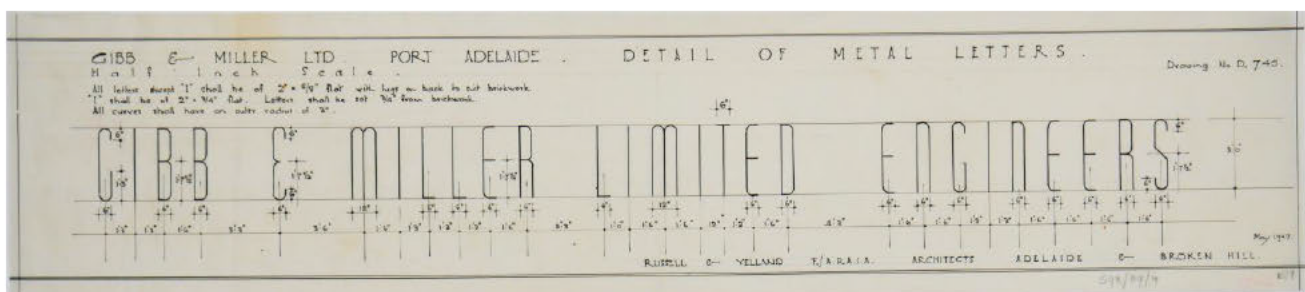


Image 8: Design for metal lettering across the front of the building. Architecture Museum, University of South Australia. R and Y S98_89_4



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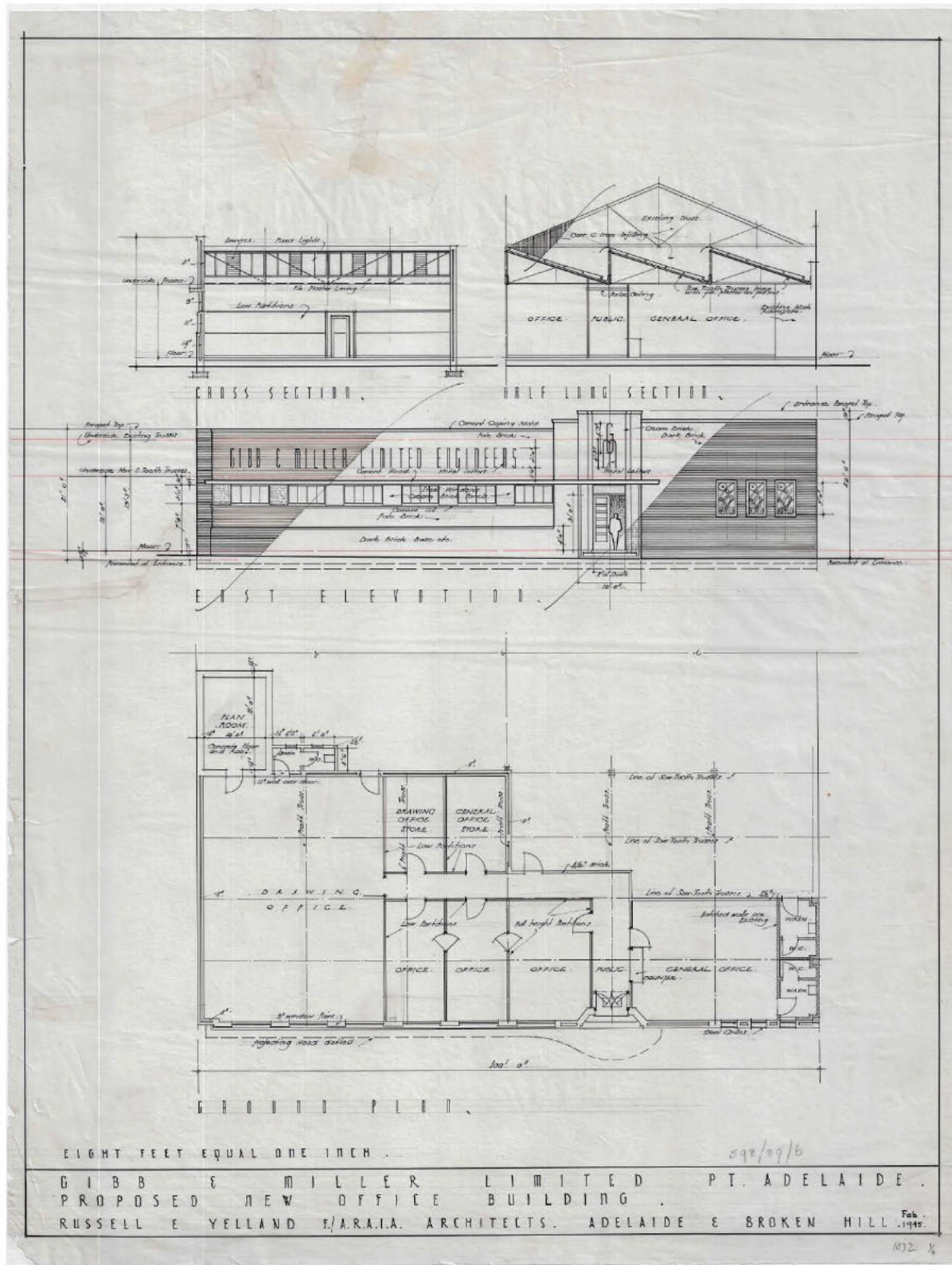


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Image 9: Plans for the 1945 building. Architecture Museum, University of South Australia, R and Y S98_89_6.



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Image 11: 1943 Gibb and Miller repairs to SS Chios, for Navy. NAA MP 150/1674/202/1294, .62

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NAA: MP150/1, 674/202/1294

DEFENCE
A674/202/1294
NAVY

EFFICIENCY CERTIFICATE OF DEGAUSSING EQUIPMENT

In respect of S/S Chios
Chios (Greece)

Port of Registry British Ministry of War Transport

Owners

To ship repairs H. Martin & Co, Gibb & Miller Ltd.
Messrs. Port Adelaide
Yard

CERTIFICATE.

I am satisfied that the D/G Work in the above
D/G Repair Work
Vessel has been efficiently carried out as follows:-
20.1.43

(a) completed.
or (b) XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
partially completed.

WORK CARRIED OUT:
Fault on compass corrector coils located and cleared, Resistance boxes
reinsulated.
Defective turn on forward end of switch 2 and defective turn on after end
of switch 6a disconnected. Coil regrouped.
Reversible magnet holder fitted to steering compass.
Broken bollard on port side aft removed for repairs and to relieve pressure
on coil.

WORK OUTSTANDING:
Three turns low in insulation resistance left in circuit as insufficient
time available to rectify this fault.

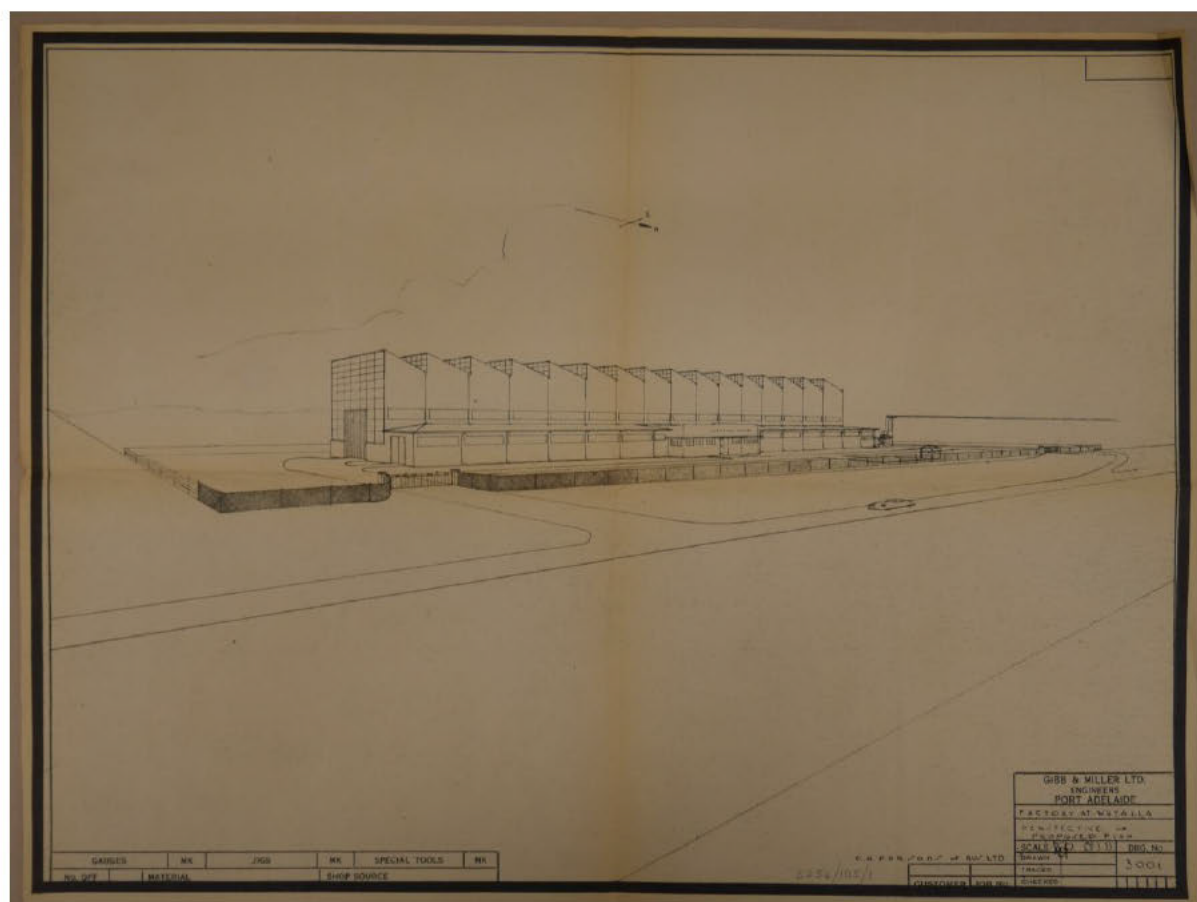
A. H. M. Boultby
Engineer Lieutenant
INSPECTOR OF DEGAUSSING.

674
202
1294

1664
12 FEB 1943

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Image 12: Gibb and Miller design for the C.A. Parsons factory, Whyalla, 1954. Architecture Museum, University of South Australia, S254/105/1



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Image 13: 1958 Luffing hook at No 2 Dock, Port Adelaide.

SLSA BRG201_13_2_97 Used with permission of the copyright owner



NOMINATION FORM

Image 14 . 1967 New extension to General Motors Holden, Woodville, [a die-casting plant] showing the Gibb and Miller gantry above. SLSA BRG213_77_53_VOL14_27 Used with permission of the copyright holder.

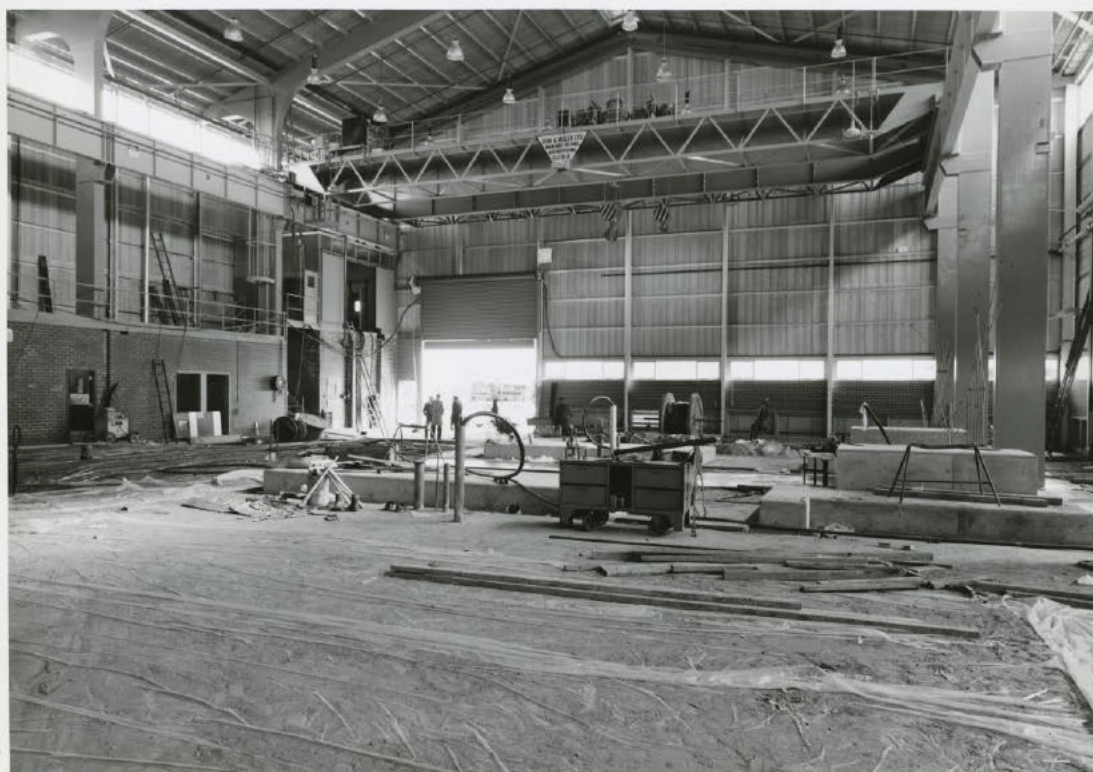


Image 15. 2023 Clare Street, Port Adelaide townhouses redevelopment, former Gibb and Miller/Howie and Organ Engineering is the corrugated iron building on the left-hand side of the road.



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NOMINATION FORM

Paste images here:

The South Australian Heritage Council is committed to transparency in relation to the listing process and wishes to enhance public confidence in the nomination, listing and decision-making process. The Council's policy is to make nominations for State heritage listing and submissions on provisional entries publicly available via webpage or to interested parties. The Council will adhere to the Privacy Principles and your name and personal details will not be released.

we, [REDACTED] nominate the former premises of Gibb and Miller Engineering, now Howie and Organ Engineering, located at 290 Commercial Road, Port Adelaide to be heritage listed.

The information I/we have provided is correct to our knowledge.

Your Signature/s:

[REDACTED]

Date:

[REDACTED]

A heritage officer may contact you to discuss aspects of the nomination.

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Please check that your nomination includes:

- ☐ A clear indication of the location of the place or object (including map/s). Where a number of features are nominated, show the location of each and/or a boundary surrounding the significant elements of the site.
- ☐ A history of the place or object explaining important aspects relevant to the nomination.
This should generally help support arguments of cultural significance.
- ☐ A clear description of the nominated place or object/s.
- ☐ A statement of significance and indication on how the place or object satisfies one or more of the significance criteria.
- ☐ A heritage officer may contact you to discuss aspects of the nomination.

Email: DEWNRHeritage@sa.gov.au

Post: Executive Officer, South Australian Heritage Council

Department for Environment and Water

GPO Box 1047, Adelaide 5001