



ACT Heritage Council

BACKGROUND INFORMATION CANBERRA NATIONAL SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH (BLOCK 9 SECTION 38, TURNER)

At its meeting of 2 June 2022 the ACT Heritage Council decided that the Canberra National Seventh Day Adventist Church was eligible for registration.

The information contained in this report was considered by the ACT Heritage Council in assessing the nomination for the Canberra National Seventh Day Adventist Church against the heritage significance criteria outlined in s10 of the *Heritage Act 2004*.

HISTORY

During the 1950s the Seventh Day Adventist membership grew in Canberra so that by 1958 Canberra's first Seventh Day Adventist Church (SDA) was built at this location (see Canberra Times 1958). By the late 1960s, the congregation had grown again and the need for a larger church was identified. A prominent architect, Ken Woolley of Ancher Mortlock and Woolley, was engaged to design a new church and an associated complex of buildings, incorporating the existing church, in 1967. Building was completed in 1971.

The Architect

Ken Woolley (1933-2015) was one of Australia's most prominent architects in the second half of the 20th Century. Originally, he worked for the New South Wales Government Architect's Office, before he joined the firm Ancher Mortlock Murray and Woolley in 1964 (later Ancher Mortlock and Woolley). This was primarily a partnership of independent designers, but in the 1970s Woolley increasingly assumed design responsibilities and by the end of the decade he was the principal most engaged with design thus determining the direction and status of the firm (Taylor 1999).

Woolley designed, both individually and in partnership with Ancher Mortlock and Woolley, many prominent buildings in Australia and internationally. Several of his designs have received national and international recognition, for instance, Woolley House was nominated by the Australian Institute of Architects (AIA/RAIA¹) to the International Union of Architects' (UIA) World Register of Significant 20th Century Australian Architecture and to the Australian National Heritage List. Woolley was awarded the Gold Medal by the RAIA in 1993, which is the highest architectural honour in Australia. In 1988, he was made a Member of the Order of Australia for service to architecture² and he also received the Centenary Medal for service to Australian society in structural engineering in 2001³.

Despite being based in Sydney, from the 1960 to 1980s Woolley regularly engaged with architectural projects and planning that contributed to the development of Canberra. Notable buildings or planning that Ken Woolley undertook in Canberra include:

- Northbourne Avenue Housing (1964)*: Designed by Sydney Ancher within Ancher Mortlock and

¹ Prior to 2008 the Australian Institute of Architects (AIA) was known as the Royal Australian Institute of Architects (RAIA). Where references are specifically made to the AIA prior to 2008 the RAIA acronym will be used.

² <https://honours.pmc.gov.au/honours/awards/869652>

³ <https://honours.pmc.gov.au/honours/awards/1126693>

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Woolley. Appears on the AIA National RSTCA list. *Much of the original design has been demolished however a representative sample appears on the on the ACT Heritage Register.*

- F.C. Pye Field Environment Laboratory (1964)* Appears on the AIA ACT Chapter RSTCA (No: R142).
- RAlA Headquarters Building (1965): Designed by Bryce Mortlock within Ancher Mortlock and Woolley. Appears on the AIA ACT Chapter RSTCA (No: R87) and received the RAlA Act Chapter 25 Year Award in 2002. *Appears on the on the ACT Heritage Register.*
- Seventh Day Adventist Church (1967)* Appears on the AIA ACT Chapter RSTCA. *Currently being assessed for inclusion on the ACT Heritage Register.*
- Housing Research Project “Suburban Experiment” report for the NCDC
- Woden Churches Centre and Office Building (1970)
- Woden OA School for Intellectually Handicapped Children (1970)
- Philip Health Centre and Woden District Library, Woden Town Centre (1972)* *Appears on the on the ACT Heritage Register.*
- Woden Child Care Centre (1973)
- Kippax Health Centre (1973). *Currently nominated to the ACT Heritage Register.*
- Master Plan for the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (1973)
- Pettit House, Garran (1975)
- Academy of Science Master Plan and Site Development (1975)
- Central Area Lighting, Parliamentary Zone Lake Foreshore Promenade (1988)* Urban design project.
- Yarralumla Shores (1981)*
- Australian Defence Forces Academy Mess (1982)*
- Parliamentary Triangle Study with NCDC (1983)
- Beauchamp House renovations and restorations (1983)
- National Archives and Exposition Design Development (1985)
- The Australian Hellenic War Memorial (1986)*
- Health Centre, Tuggeranong (1987)
- Novar Street (1993)

The designs marked * prominently featured in the publication “The Master Architect Series IV: Ken Woolley and Ancher Mortlock & Woolley, Selected and Current Works” and a number of these works already appear on the ACT Heritage Register demonstrating that Woolley was an influential architect in Canberra during this period.

Woolley did not adhere to a particular visual style of architecture and the buildings were always particular to the conditions of the site and program (Taylor in Dobney 1999). This careful consideration of place was an explicit feature of the design of the Canberra National SDA Church and particularly its relationship to the neighbouring Holy Trinity Church.

Canberra National Seventh Day Adventist Church

Ken Woolley was engaged to design new buildings for the SDA Church in 1967. To begin the design process the church building committee provided Woolley with a brief that outlined the needs of the Church based on a typical Sabbath morning service (Canberra National n.d.). Using this brief, he prepared plans in consultation with the church building committee.

The setting

The re-design of the Canberra National SDA Church complex by Woolley needed to include a new church, church offices and amenities, as well as accommodate the existing conditions of the location which included the extant buildings on the site and the close proximity of the Holy Trinity Lutheran church.

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Original Church

Since its inception the original church was intended for use as a church hall. It was one of a group of buildings shown in designs for the church precinct by David W King and approved by the NCDC in 1957, but it was the only building that was built from that plan (Figure 1). Despite its intended use as a hall, from the time that it was built until 1971 it was used as a church.

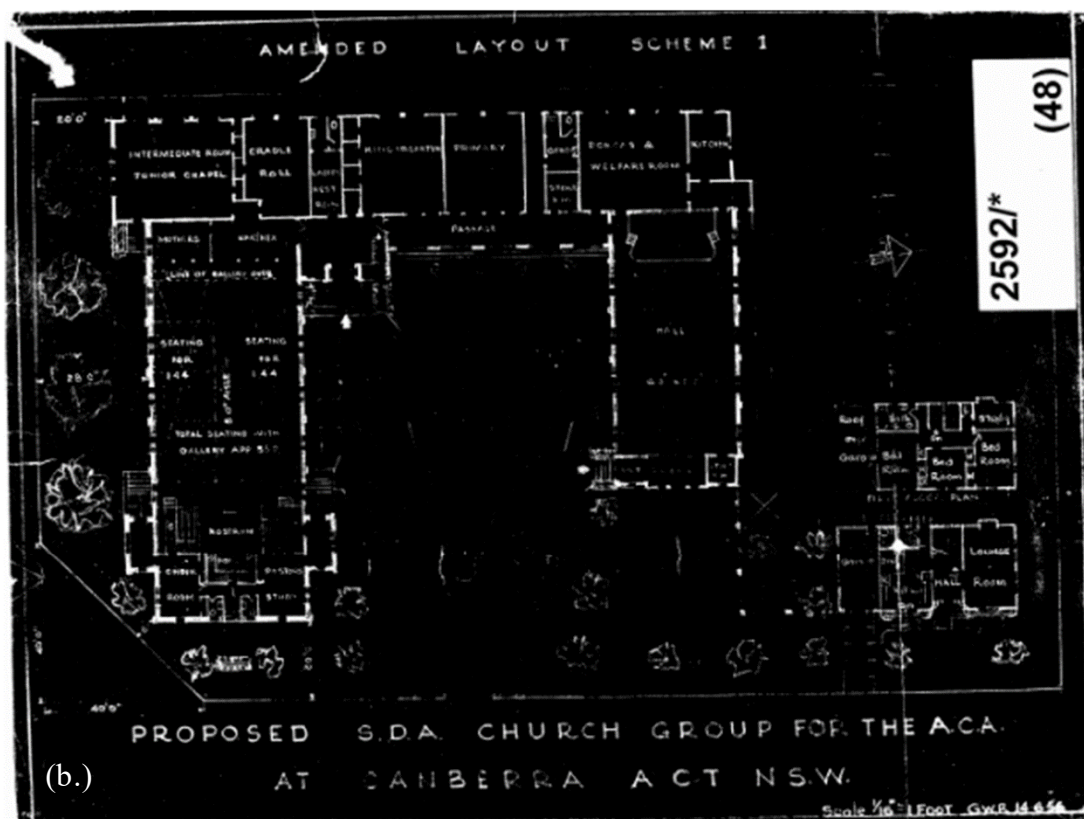
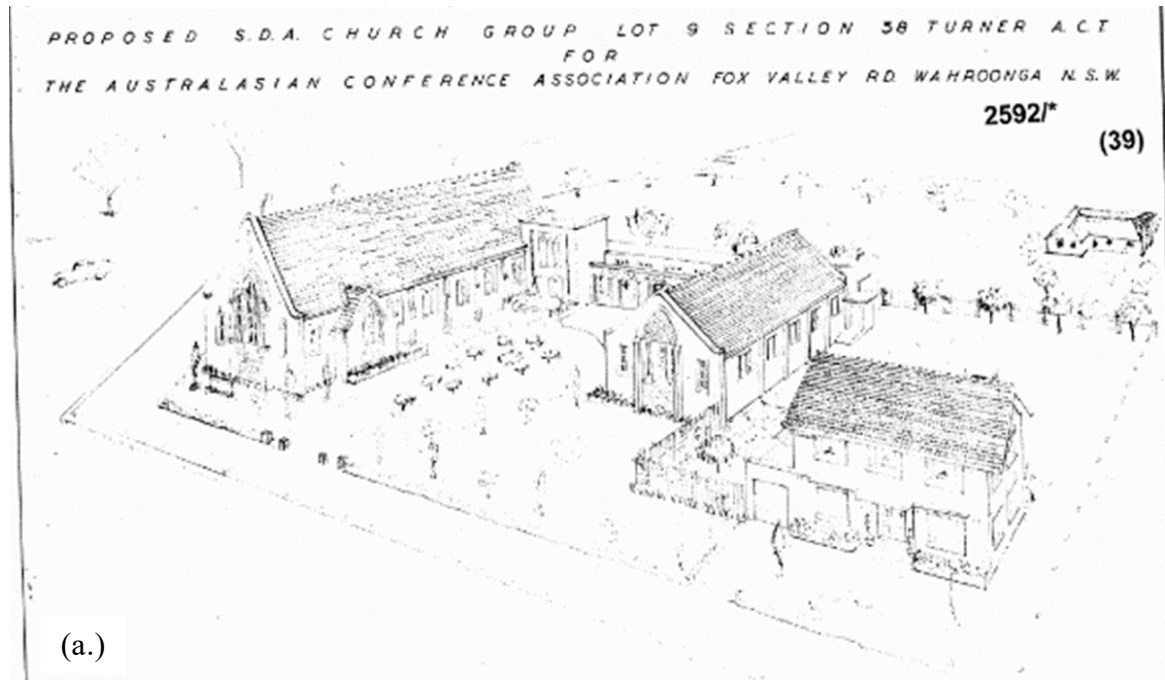


Figure 1 – The original plans for the SDA church complex (c. 1956): (a.) Perspective of the original church scheme; (b.) The proposed lay-out of the church complex (ACTPLA in Hyperspace 2020).

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The original church does not clearly fit within a specific architectural style but can be viewed as a simplified traditional design common at that time (Figure 2). Although it does not display a large number of the style indicators (see Apperly 1989), the building is generally consistent with the trends in the Post-War Ecclesiastical Style architecture of its time. Due to the austerity of the time, the churches built within the traditional strand of church architecture during this period tended towards an ultra-simplified version of a medieval church. Moreover, this building was intended for use as a hall within the larger precinct so it is possible that, had it been constructed, the original design for the church building would have more clearly fit with this style. Hyperspace (2020) describes the architectural style as vaguely 'Gothic' due to the use of pointed arches and elements which mimic buttresses. When the current church was completed in 1971, the original building was adapted for use as a church hall as had been originally intended.

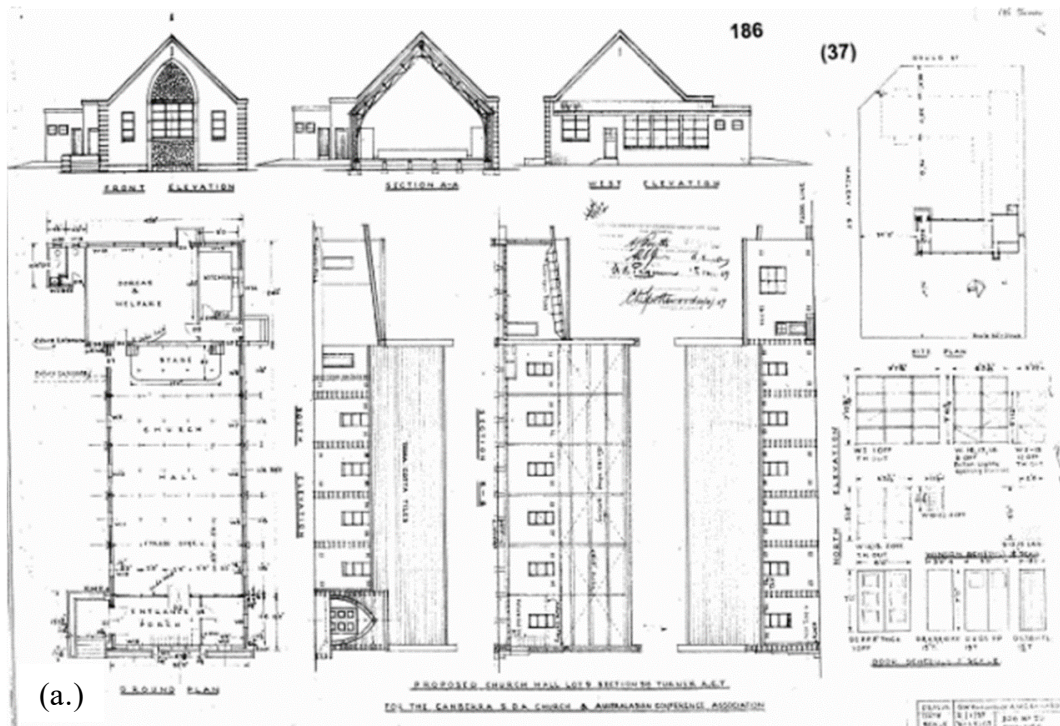


Figure 2 - The hall, which was used as the original church building: (a.) Plans for the constructed portions of the church hall and welfare room (ACTPLA in Hyperspace 2020); (b.) The hall before the development of the church was completed in 1971 (Chad Clarke, Canberra National SDA, in Hyperspace 2020).

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It is notable that, although the original plans for the precinct did not come to fruition, the buildings completed to Woolley's design in 1971 maintained the same U-shaped lay-out.

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church

The Holy Trinity Church is located directly next door to the Canberra National SDA Church (Figure 3). It was designed in 1959 by Frederick Romberg of Grounds Romberg and Boyd and construction was completed in 1961. This church is listed on the ACT Heritage Register and is a widely acknowledged example of the Late Twentieth-Century Ecclesiastical style (for instance, it is an example used in Apperly *et al's* outline of the style characteristics). This church is an earlier example of the style than the Canberra National SDA Church and already existed at the time that Woolley was engaged to design the latter church. Woolley's design specifically took into consideration the presence of the Holy Trinity Church, as he deliberately selected the colour and form of the church exterior to avoid overpowering the neighbouring church (Dobney 1999).

Recently it has been argued that the urban setting of the two churches located adjacent to each other can be viewed as representative of the post-War development of Canberra and they may be considered together as an informal "cultural-religious precinct" notable for the related style, but unique architectural interpretations (Hyperspace 2020).



Figure 3 –Holy Trinity Church: Street view showing the relationship between the Canberra National SDA Church and the neighbouring Holy Spirit Lutheran Church (Google street view from Hyperspace 2000).

Residence

At the time that Woolley was engaged to re-design the SDA complex, a church residence existed on the site. The plans for the residence were approved on 28 July 1965 and it was subsequently constructed during 1965-1966 (Hyperspace 2020). A residence had been included on King's 1957 plan, but the constructed building bears no similarity to his drawings. Also, although the current residence is located in the general vicinity shown on King's original designs for the church precinct, it is set-back from the street somewhat further. The residence that was constructed is a generic suburban, four-bedroom house (Figure 4). There was no apparent attempt to match this building to the architectural style of the other buildings at the site.

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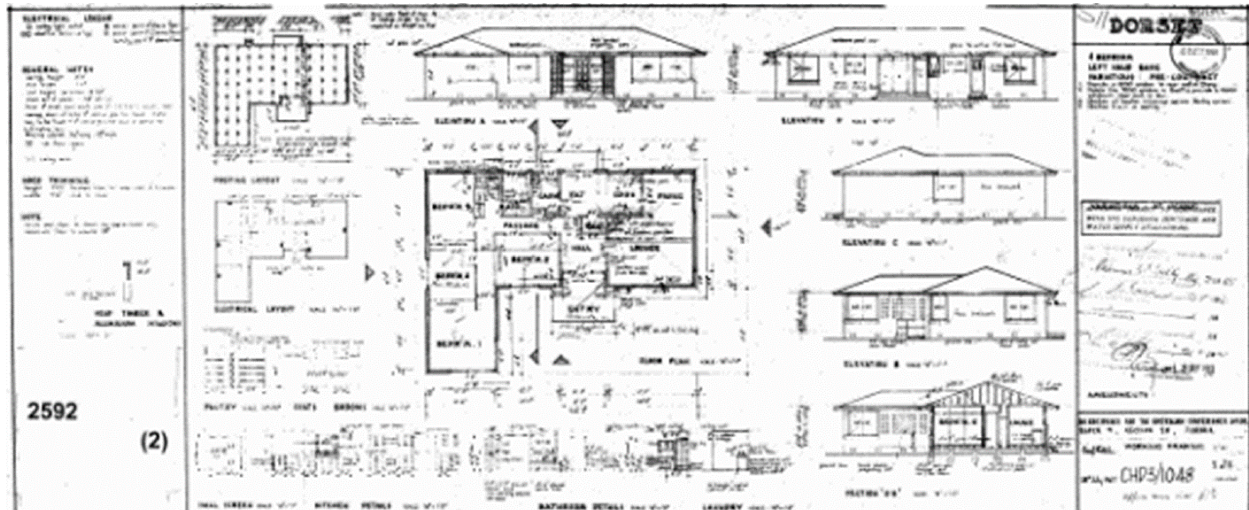


Figure 4 - The approved plans for the residence (ACTPLA in Hyperspace 2020).

Church

Although it was designed to integrate with the overall building complex, Woolley's design for the church building was a Modernist design, very different to that of a traditional church building (Figures 5 and 6).

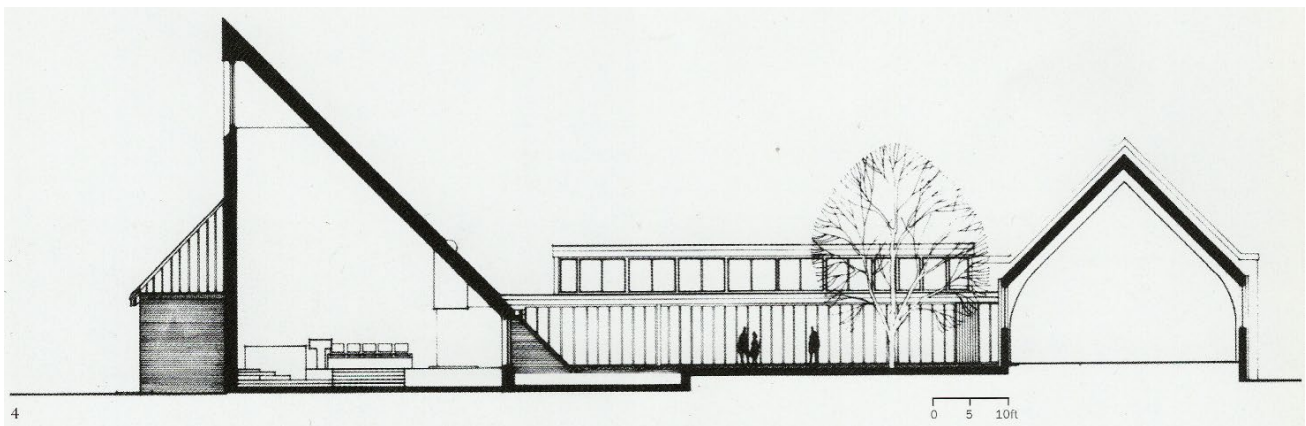


Figure 5 – A profile of the main buildings in the SDA complex, as designed by Woolley (Dobney 1999).

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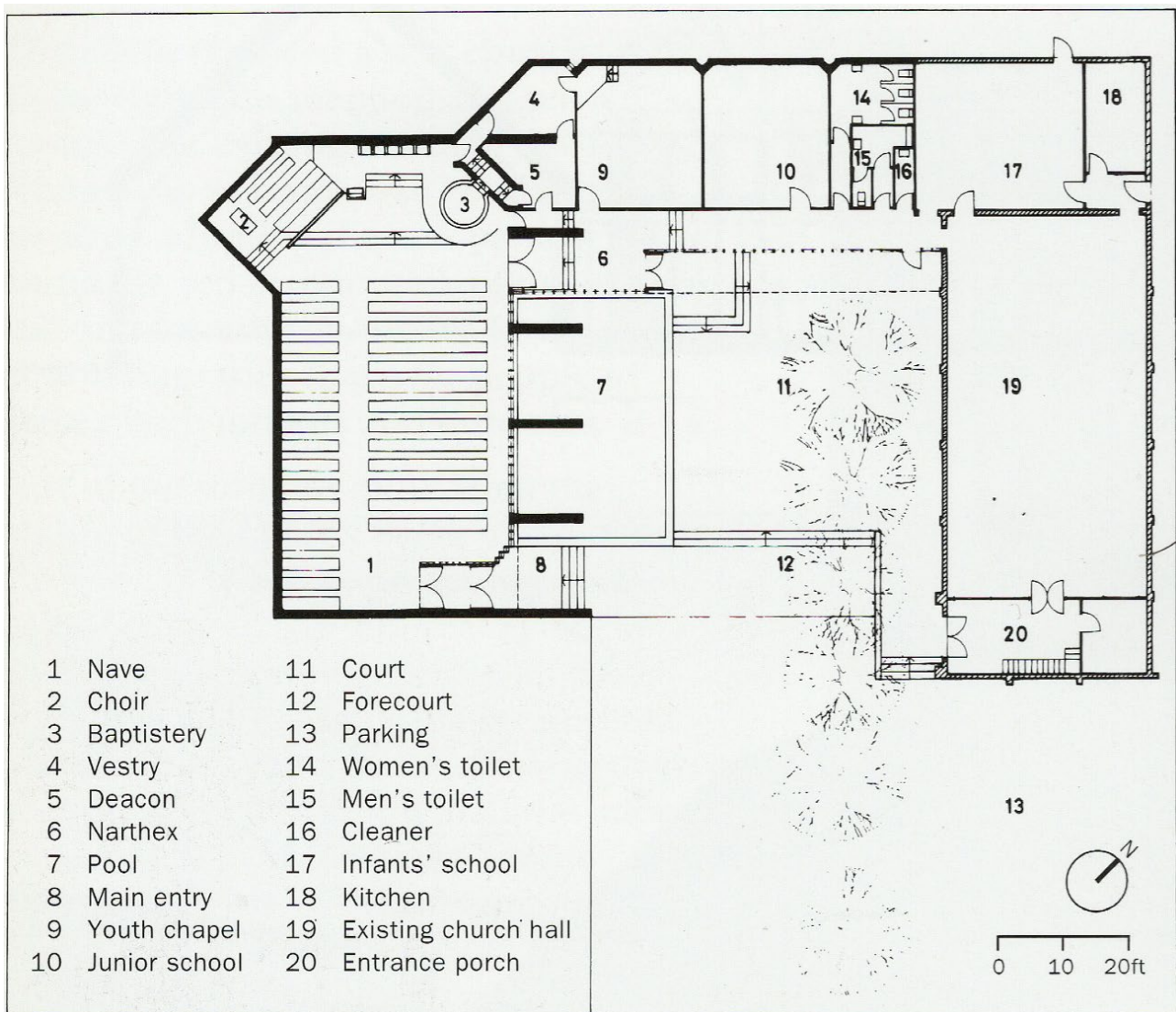


Figure 6 – The layout of the SDA Church re-development (c.1967-1971) (from Dobney 1999).

Externally the church has an asymmetrical shape, which forms a simple triangular prism rising from the internal courtyard (Figures 7 & 8). This created a very high, but unadorned, wall facing Gould Street, adjacent to the Holy Spirit Lutheran Church. High, vertically orientated windows in that wall served to provide light to the internal space. Lower on this wall is a protruding triangle room formed to create a choir. This was located out of the direct line of sight of the congregation inside. It too has vertically orientated windows, although these did not provide direct light to the inner hall. The exterior of the church is built of red-brown Bowral brick, which was chosen to match the original church building. The roof is constructed from roll-formed, brown, steel decking. The 45-degree roof pitch of the original church was used for the angled side of the church building as well, so as to form an integrated and coherent complex. Massive buttresses which support the roof rise from a rectangular pool situated in the inner courtyard. The water in this pool also reflects light through the low-set, vertically orientated windows located along the lower walls of the church facing the interior courtyard. The walls and window joinery are stained western red cedar.

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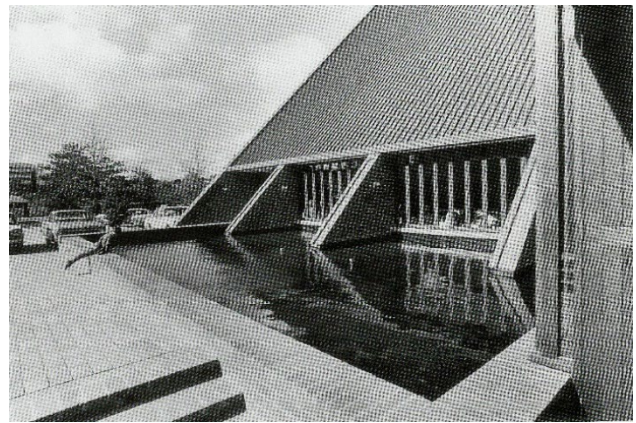
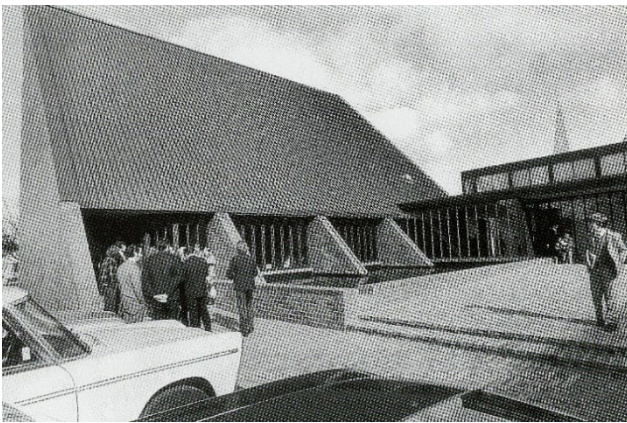
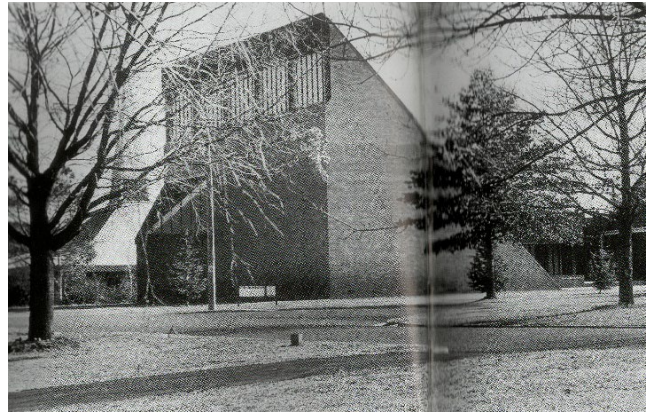
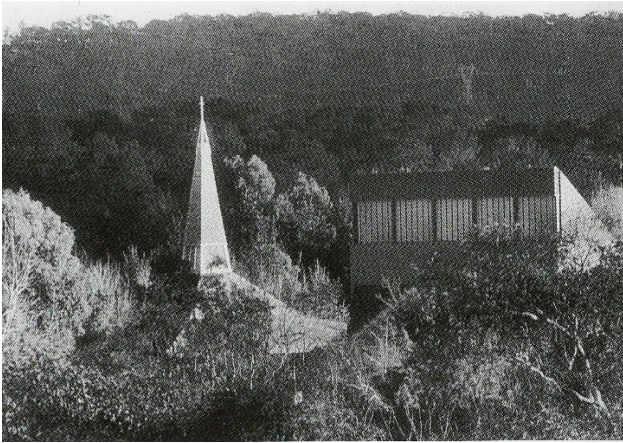


Figure 7 - The Church Building: Exterior photos of the completed construction, presumably taken soon after completion in 1971 (Dobney 1999).



Figure 8 – Recent exterior views of the church building: (a.) High wall facing Gould Street; (b) View of main church from courtyard, including the pool (ACT Heritage, 2 December 2021).

The internal courtyard is surrounded by buildings on three sides, including the church, a low-profile link building containing church amenities and offices, and the hall (original church). Together these are designed to create an inward looking complex, with the courtyard serving as an entry point as well as a central space for people to gather outdoors. Situated in this courtyard, directly abutting the church wall is the aforementioned pool. The courtyard and pool are higher than the floor of the church. Entry to the church is by descending steps located on the open side of the courtyard next to the pool.

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The main entrance leads to a partitioned foyer, with entrances to a small crying room as well as the main auditorium (Figure 9 & 10). The seating in the interior is orientated in a traditional rectangular fashion, at a right-angle to the high outer wall of the prism. Internally all walls are rendered brick and painted white. The interior lacks obvious adornment or use of Christian symbols.



Figure 9 - The Church Building: Interior photos of the completed construction, presumably taken soon after completion in 1971 (Dobney 1999).

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Figure 10 – Interior of views of church, as of 2020: (a.) View of rostrum from main entry; (b.) Baptismal font; (c.) View from rostrum towards main entry (Hyperspace 2000).

The interior furnishings included in the church, including the wooden pews and the lectern, are simple and have straight, clean lines. The pews are made of Mountain Ash. There are five large pendant lights hanging from the ceiling. These are white, plastic spheres. Six smaller round white light shades are attached to the walls. The floor is wooden and carpeted in a dark colour. The rostrum has been spotlighted and a white painted, concrete pulpit is located on the left side, with the baptismal font on the right.

The visual focus of the congregation is on the baptismal font, which is a large, round immersion pool located on the rostrum. Above the pool, mirroring the same circular shape, is a skylight. The skylight has a large circular shaft that focuses the eye on the front of the room and the light on the immersion pool below. There is a free-standing angled white dividing wall behind the pool that serves to hide the doorways to the vestry and doors to the link building behind it.

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To the left of the rostrum is the relatively concealed choir space, which was described above in the exterior description of the building.

The architectural form of the church, the reflections off the courtyard pool and the white walls of the interior all function to emphasise the play of light in the interior space.

The link building

The link building was designed by Woolley as part of the complex. It contains meeting rooms and church amenities. It was designed to be sympathetic to the church, utilising vertically proportioned windows with similar materials and treatment and the same roof materials. However, apart from the exterior treatment and relation to the other buildings, the link building does not possess any architecturally significant features in its own right.

Changes to the buildings after 1971

The Hyperspace (2000) report documents a number of changes to the buildings in this complex as related by members of the SDA church.

In the late 1990s, two carports were added to the residence. Changes were also made to the carpets, window furnishings, fans, gas heating and sound system within the complex and residence. Within the church, the choir seats were removed and the pews were refinished. The roof of the link building was replaced in 1997 and the kitchen upgraded in 1998.

In 2001, major changes were proposed for the buildings within the church complex. Plans were prepared by Martin Poels, but the scheme was not built in its entirety. Those plans that did proceed included a covered foyer and youth room located in front of the link building within the courtyard (Figures 11 & 12). The design used window and glazing elements that were intended to be sympathetic to the original Ken Woolley design.



Figure 11 - Exterior photo of extension building in 2020 (Hyperspace 2020)

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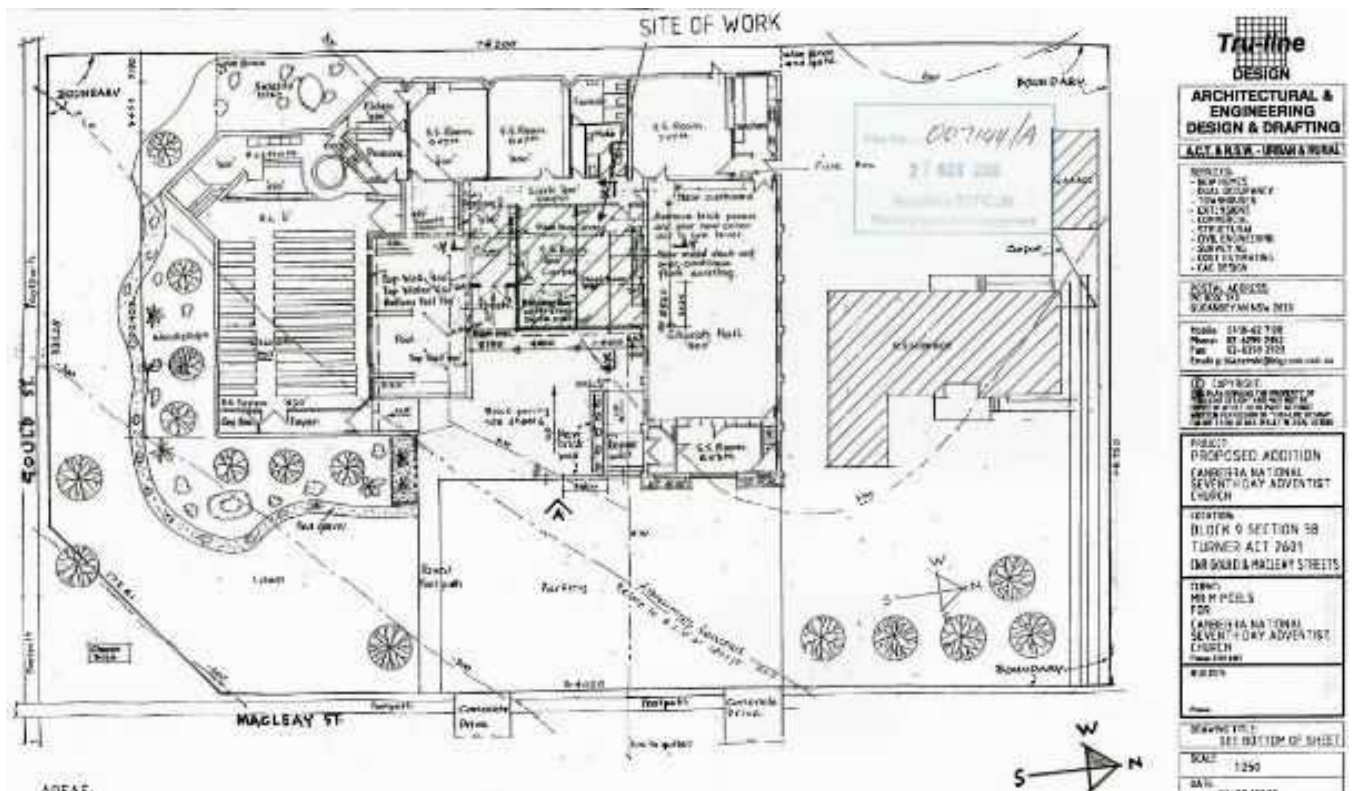


Figure 12 - Plans showing the extension to the buildings. These were approved in November 2000, with construction completed in 2001 (ACTPLA in Hyperspace 2020)

Architectural Style

The church building, designed by Woolley, integrates a combination of architectural elements belonging to two prominent architectural styles from the time in which it was designed, the Late Twentieth-Century Ecclesiastical Style and the Late Twentieth-Century Sydney Regional style (Apperly 1989). Unique influences on the final design were the architectural interpretation of elements of the SDA liturgy and considerations of the existing setting.

Late Twentieth-Century Ecclesiastical Style

The Late Twentieth-Century Ecclesiastical Style is predominantly seen in the architecture of buildings for the Roman Catholic and Protestant denominations, which had very large congregations in Australia and were well-established before the period in which this style was characterised (Apperly 1989). Many of the changes characteristic of this style were driven not by architectural innovations *per se*, but by liturgical changes, especially that seen in the Roman Catholic denomination after Vatican II. However, although fewer in number, the SDA and Mormon denominations did build new churches that had characteristic elements of this style.

The architecture of the Late Twentieth-Century Ecclesiastical Style tended to focus on the preaching space and not on the ritualistic aspects of religion that were emphasised in the past (Apperly 1989). This characteristic was particularly relevant to SDA church design as, compared to many of the other Christian denominations, the liturgy of the church lacked ritual in the service (Canberra National n.d.). The Canberra National SDA Church is in fact the only known church in Australia that incorporates aspects of the SDA doctrine into its design (Hyperspace 2020), a unique characteristic which we will discuss further below.

There was a dual desire in church designs belonging to the Late Twentieth-Century Ecclesiastical Style to create a distinctive design that was also an integral part of the community (Apperly 1989). Apperly (1989)

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noted that this 'distinctiveness' was often achieved through "contorted manipulations of shape and space to create drama, with an almost Baroque play of light from unseen and unexpected sources to create a spatial mood." This is clearly demonstrated in the Canberra National SDA Church where the strong asymmetrical shape and the distinctive play of light was intentionally manipulated to reflect the liturgy of the church.

Use of familiar materials, such as brick and timber, was an aspect of the Late Twentieth-Century Ecclesiastical Style intended to integrate the church into the community (Apperly 1989). In the case of the Canberra National SDA Church, the choice of building materials integrated the church with the urban setting, the neighbouring church, and the existing buildings in the SDA complex.

Broad characteristics of this style represented in the church are the vertical emphasis, dramatic manipulation of space and shape represented by the unusual asymmetrical prism shape and the use of familiar materials.

Exterior characteristics of the style are the unbroken straight lines emphasising verticality and the vertically proportioned windows. Although there were some radical variations, the traditional rectangular plan-shape for churches was common in this style. Despite the dramatic external shape of the Canberra National SDA Church the floor plan of the internal space is traditionally orientated in this fashion.

The Canberra National SDA Church demonstrates five of the nine indicators for the Late Twentieth-Century Ecclesiastical (1960-) style as defined by Apperly (1989): Traditional rectangular plan-shape, unbroken straight lines emphasising verticality, glazing with vertically proportioned panes, clerestory windows, plain wall surfaces.

Late Twentieth-Century Sydney Regional style

Ken Woolley is identified as a key practitioner of the Late Twentieth-Century Sydney Regional style (Apperly 1989, p243). Although the style emerged within domestic architecture it is clear that key indicators of this style have been adapted to the setting and design requirements of the Canberra National SDA Church.

The Canberra National SDA Church demonstrates three of the fifteen indicators for the Late Twentieth-Century Sydney Regional (1960-) style as defined by Apperly (1989), these being: asymmetrical massing, skillion roof (although within the style these were more often tiled, the roof of this church is steel), and clerestory windows. Other exterior characteristics belonging to this style are the natural or neutral textures, along with the fact that little concern was given to the façade as a presentation front.

Seventh Day Adventist Liturgy

There are no specific design guidelines or requirements specified by the SDA doctrine for its church design. However, the liturgy of the SDA church emphasises baptism, preaching, singing and discussion; so Woolley intentionally chose to reflect fundamental aspects of these within the architecture of the building. This is the only church in Australia in which the architectural design reflects the symbolism of the SDA doctrines (Hyperspace, 2020).

Water is used to emphasise the central place of baptism by immersion within the SDA doctrine. Because of the placement of the massive external buttresses rising from the courtyard pool, it can be interpreted that the building itself is rising from the water. To enter the church each person must descend steps located in the courtyard to reach the main doors that are situated lower than the external pool. Once inside the church the seating for the congregation is also situated lower than the external pool and the focus of the congregants is upon the baptismal font on the right side of the rostrum at the front of the room.

The deliberate play of light within the interior combined with the white walls was intended to symbolise

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purity. The clerestory windows in the high wall facing Gould Street provided very high light. Light was also reflected from the water of the exterior pool providing movement through the reflections on the inner walls which served both a symbolic function and softens the internal light. Light was also focused on the immersion font through the prominent and dramatically shaped skylight.

Recognition in the Architectural Community

Since it was built, the Canberra National SDA Church has received recognition for its architecture in architectural publications and professional awards.

It has featured in “The Master Architect Series IV: Ken Woolley and Ancher Mortlock & Woolley, Selected and Current Works” and “Canberra Architecture” by Andrew Metcalf.

Canberra National SDA Church was awarded the RIAA Twenty-five Year Award in 1996 by the ACT Chapter in recognition of the architectural significance of the building when designed and that continued demonstration of these architectural qualities over twenty-five years. In 2001, this same professional organisation, included the Church on the Register of Significant Twentieth Century Architecture (RSTCA No. R114) as a notable building in the ACT.

In 2002-2003, the RIAA received an ACT Heritage Grant to produce 20th Century Architecture Tour brochures of the ACT. This place was included in the lists produced for those brochures and its inclusion on the ACT RSTCA as well as nomination to the ACT Heritage Register also occurred at this time.

Comparative Analysis of the Canberra National SDA Church with other places in Canberra

Ecclesiastical Architecture in Canberra

There are thirteen other examples of significant ecclesiastical architecture currently included on the ACT Heritage Register. The places listed have been identified by the Council as good or excellent examples of certain styles of ecclesiastical architecture, are still occupied or in use, are in good condition and are adequately maintained. Although all ecclesiastical in nature, these churches represent a range of different styles.

- St John the Baptist Church Precinct, Reid (Anglican, built 1841): First church built in Canberra strongly associated with 19th Century settlement in the ACT region. Designed by Edmund Blacket.
- St Ninian’s Church, Lyneham (Presbyterian, built 1873): The second church to open in Canberra, strongly associated with 19th Century Scottish landholders.
- Sacred Heart, Calwell (Catholic, built 1902): This was built before the formation of the Federal Capital territory in the Federation Carpenter Gothic Style.
- Shakespeare Hall, Braddon, formerly the St Columbia’s Presbyterian Church Hall (Presbyterian, built 1927): The first permanent ecclesiastical building built in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). In the years after the formation of the FCT many churches set out to establish designated ‘cathedral’ sites, in addition several bought blocks to build less expensive and quicker to erect churches to service the immediate needs of the congregation. Although several churches had similar intentions, Shakespeare Hall and the Uniting Church, Reid were the only buildings constructed at these sites in the early years of the FCT. Shakespeare Hall was designed by the architectural firm of Messrs Oakley and Parkes with Kenneth Oliphant as the chief architect in Canberra. It was built in the Inter-War Gothic Style.
- Uniting Church, Reid (currently Canberra Korean Uniting Church, built 1927): One of the first churches in Canberra to service the needs of an urban congregation. Designed by J.C.R. Mills and reflecting elements of the Inter-war Gothic Style.
- Canberra Baptist Church Precinct, Kingston (Baptist, 1929). This church was designed by F. W.

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Peplow in the Inter-War Gothic Style. It was the first Baptist church in the region and the second permanent church built after the formation of the Federal Capital Territory. It was built on one of the designated 'cathedral' sites offered by the Federal Capital Commission.

- St Andrew's Church Precinct, Forrest (Presbyterian, 1934): This church, designed by John Barr, is one of the largest and most ornate Inter-War Gothic Churches in the ACT. Moreover, the manse is a notable example of Inter-War Georgian Revival Style. The style and location of the church reflect the Presbyterian Church's aspiration to provide a denominational monument in the establishing capital city. It is associated with notable individuals.
- St Paul's Church, Griffith (Anglican, 1939): A church existed on this site since 1914, but the current church dates to 1939. It was designed by Kenneth Oliphant and contains elements of the Inter-war Gothic Revival Church with Art Deco influences. It has landmark qualities in the Manuka precinct. The church is strongly associated with the Anglican church that influenced the development of Canberra in its early years and also provided a focal point of community activity during WWII.
- St Christopher's Cathedral Precinct, Forrest (Catholic, 1939): Although the church dates to 1939, the precinct has been the focus of Catholic worship in the ACT since 1928. The buildings variously exhibit a mixture of Inter-War architectural styles, Spanish Mission, Georgian Revival and Romanesque. The Cathedral has become a well-known landmark of the city.
- Free Serbian Orthodox Church, Forrest (Serbian Orthodox, built 1955): This church represents a distinct phase in regional history marked by mass migration in the years after World War II. The Post-WWII nostalgic style architecture and the internal murals were aimed at recreating a worship environment similar to the homeland of the congregation.
- All Saints Church, Ainslie (Anglican, 1868/1958): This church was originally built as a mortuary railway station for the Rookwood Necropolis in Sydney. The external character of the building was designed by James Barnet in the Gothic Revival Style. In 1958 the building was dismantled from its former location and moved to Ainslie. Relatively minor changes were made to adapt it for use as a church.
- Holy Trinity Church, Turner (Lutheran, built 1961): This building has strong associations with the Lutheran church, in particular the Finnish community who migrated to Australia after WWII. It was designed by Frederick Romberg of Grounds Romberg and Boyd and is the earliest building in Canberra to demonstrate the Late Twentieth-Century Ecclesiastical Style (1960–). It has been widely acknowledged for its architecture and aesthetic characteristics.
- St Joseph's Church, O'Connor (Catholic, built 1973): An example of Late Twentieth-Century Ecclesiastical Style (1960–), designed by a prominent local architect, Kevin J. Curtin of Kevin J. Curtin & Partners.

Similarly to the Canberra National SDA church, the last two churches listed above represent the Late Twentieth-Century Ecclesiastical Style (1960-). Both were built before the Canberra National SDA church, but as noted above this church has a number of notable features.

It is interesting to note that these churches also reflect the background of the architect. The Canberra National SDA Church incorporates architectural aspects of the Late Twentieth-Century Sydney Regional style (1960-), reflecting the close association between that style and the architect. By contrast the Holy Trinity Church, Turner was designed by a Melbourne based architect and it incorporates architectural features specific to the Post-War Melbourne Regional style (1940-60).

SDA Churches in ACT and NSW

According to the SDA (in Hyperspace 2020) there were 13 buildings constructed in NSW that were specifically designed as SDA churches. The date and designer for most of these is unknown, however based on the visual vocabulary it is claimed that most were constructed between the 1950s to 1970s and display characteristics of the modern ecclesiastical style (Hyperspace 2020).

The most similar SDA church is that in Chatswood that was built in the same year. It possesses all the

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indicators of the Late Twentieth-Century Ecclesiastical (1960-) style displayed by the Canberra National SDA Church, but it lacks the unique symbolic architectural elements shown in the latter design.

The Sydney Chinese SDA Church was designed by James O'Young and built in 1974. It too is reflective of the Late Twentieth-Century Ecclesiastical (1960-) style. There are clear symbolic features incorporated into the buildings design. However, these do not reflect specific aspects of the SDA doctrine, but rather links to the Chinese community.

Late Twentieth-Century Sydney Regional style in Canberra

The RAI Headquarters in Red Hill are a notable example of the Late Twentieth-Century Sydney Regional style that can be found in the Canberra region. It was also designed by Ancher Mortlock and Woolley, although the lead architect in this case was Bryce Mortlock.

DESCRIPTION

The Canberra National SDA Church is located on a corner block in Turner with street frontages towards Gould and Macleay Streets. The main entrance to the church complex is on Macleay Street. It is directly adjacent to the Holy Trinity Lutheran Church.

There are four buildings on the site, these being the church, link building, the hall (original church) and the residence (Figure 1). The first three form a focused complex of buildings used for regular church activities and are arranged in a u-shape surrounding a paved courtyard. On left right side of the courtyard, adjacent to the wall of the church is a rectangular pool.

The church is located to the left of the courtyard. It is a rectangular shape with an asymmetrical roofline sloping towards the courtyard. It was designed by the prominent architect, Ken Woolley. It reflects characteristics of both the Late Twentieth-Century Ecclesiastical Style and Late Twentieth-Century Sydney Regional style architectures, as well as incorporating unique architectural elements symbolic of the SDA liturgy.

The link building runs along the back of the courtyard. It connects the church building and the hall. It was designed by Woolley to be sympathetic to the church in appearance, but it is not architecturally unique in its own right. This building has been extended into the courtyard to accommodate a foyer and youth room. The design of the extension is similar into appearance to the original façade.

The hall is located to the right of the courtyard. It has a simplified, traditional ecclesiastical architectural style.

The church is the most architecturally unique building within this group. However, it has been designed to work together with the hall and the link building to create a visually cohesive U-shaped complex.

The residence is located separately from the other buildings, to the right side of the hall. Its design is common to 1960s suburban houses and it was not designed to integrate with the other buildings in the complex.

Physical condition and integrity

The structure of the buildings is fair, without any noticeable structural defects. There is also reasonable integrity relating to the designs made by Ken Woolley in 1967, with the addition of the foyer and library building within the courtyard being the only significant structural change.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – CANBERRA NATIONAL SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

Internally the finishes and fabric of the buildings are currently showing wear and tear and appear dated. In 2021, ACT Heritage provided advice allowing for the replacement of the carpet and re-painting of the spaces.

The congregation of the SDA church has grown significantly since the re-design in 1967. There is no longer enough space for their services and events and at this time they are looking for ways to upgrade the spaces.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – CANBERRA NATIONAL SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

SITE PLAN



Image 1 Canberra National Seventh Day Adventist Church site boundary

BACKGROUND INFORMATION – CANBERRA NATIONAL SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

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