



Swanbury Penglase

#96 In our last issue for this year, we are excited to finally share our recently completed Redevelopment of Union House at the University of Adelaide!

Union House Redevelopment

Parties, shows and concerts are essential ingredients of a well-rounded university education. At the University of Adelaide, Union House was long the epicentre for such things, hosting all kinds of social and wider community events like the Big Day Out, Fringe and Festival performances. The iconic building featuring the distinctive arched cloisters holds a special place in many people's memories.

But it was also much more than that; for many decades, it was effectively the centre of student social life and its offerings included food, a bar, art and craft (former art studio), sports (squash courts, games room), meeting rooms, a base of student organisations and clubs, a bookshop, a travel centre, a barber and even a bank.

It has been our great privilege to work on a major redevelopment of Union House and we feel the weight of responsibility working with material so dear to many hearts. Material is the operative word here with the building representing a fine example of what might be called sensitive modernism.

Unlike many modernist buildings, this one was developed as an extension to existing heritage buildings and architects Dickson & Platten went to a great deal of effort to honour them. A big part of that was the careful choice of materials to complement the heritage building fabric. This project is considered one of the best examples of their work.

Materiality has been a key theme in our work on the building and has seen a focus on the development of the fine work done in the original construction.

One notable element in the material palette is the straw panel system used for ceilings throughout the building. They have performed very well over the years despite being an organic material that might have been expected to degrade over time or become host to various types of vermin. Boasting excellent acoustic and thermal properties, they continue to play a significant role in setting the warm and human atmosphere that characterises the interiors.

A unique challenge that arose for us is the fact that the panels have not been manufactured for some time in any quantity, especially in Adelaide. Fortunately, the machinery used in their fabrication is still intact and operative and we were able to track it down to its current home in Murtoa Victoria. Obtaining panels similar in visual appearance to the original was an important aspect of our design approach. To help achieve this, the manufacturer sought the original workforce for advice and know-how that had lain dormant for decades.

We're delighted with the result, even more for the fact that it is helping to keep old skills alive.



Photographs by Brad Griffin



Ted, Debbie, Aaron & Nathan



Cameron Burfield

Office News

Although another year is ending, we've been making sure to pack in as many social events as possible! In November, we held our office Golf Day at the beautiful Echunga Golf Club. Twenty-three staff members competed in teams for a chance to have their names etched on the Swanbury Penglase Open Championship perpetual trophy. Congratulations to the team of Architects Ted Bouchier, Aaron Fox and Nathan Purdie and Interior Designer Debbie Wood for taking home the chocolates with an impressive score of 68 (2 under par)!

Longest Drive Winner – Nathan Purdie

Nearest to the Pin Winner – Dion Byas

This year we added a twist to our annual SPA Family Picnic with a new Halloween theme to suit the October occasion. Staff wore their spookiest outfits for the day before heading to the Princess Elizabeth Playground to enjoy dinner and drinks. Great efforts were made with the costumes, with Graduate of Architecture Daniel Butcher and Interior Designer Beatriz Chamsay winning the prize for best dressed.

The Blackfriars project team was thrilled to celebrate the official opening of The Albert Centre on November 15th, the Feast of St Albert The Great. This formally marks the completion of the biggest transformation of the school campus in decades, with The Albert Centre and the adjoining Aquinas Centre forming the centrepiece of the school's Masterplan. It was a beautiful sunny day to celebrate this milestone in the school's history.

We are proud to announce that one of our projects was successful at the 2024 Learning Environments Australasia Design Awards (South Australian and Northern Territory Chapter), held on the 24th of October. Our project, Woodcroft College New Junior School, won **Category 3: New Building/s or Facility/s - Large**. Congratulations to the team for your efforts!

Cameron Burfield recently passed the Architecture Practice Examination to become a Registered Architect. Well done on your fantastic achievement and reaching this milestone in your career!

Architect Ted Bouchier recently returned from an adventure across Spain and Italy with his wife. They spent most of their time exploring Calabria. Ted's wife's family travelled over at the same time and were based in the village where their grandparents were from (Caulonia).

This year, our Christmas Party will be held at Union House. Befitting the venue, staff will be encouraged to dress in a 1970s theme. We would like to wish our clients, consultants and staff a wonderful festive season - what a year it has been!



Ted in Scilla, Italy



Halloween Picnic costumes



Albert Centre Opening



Albert Centre Opening

Staff Notes



Name: Cassie Feng

Position: Interior Designer

Current projects: St. Ignatius' College Magis Centre and UniSA Aviation Academy

What inspires you? A deep reflection on the complexities and detail of design

Design you wished you could take credit for: The interior design of Google's headquarters, the Googleplex. The way they've created such an innovative and fun workspace, with themed meeting rooms, slides, and open areas for collaboration is amazing. It really shows how design can make work more creative and enjoyable.

Pencil vs computer (your preference): I enjoy sketching my design ideas by hand, then using the computer to bring those ideas to life and refine them further.

Best thing about living in Adelaide: The balance of city life and access to stunning natural landscapes.

A laid-back lifestyle with effortless access to nature.

Superpower (if you could have one): The ability to time travel and witness the evolution of architecture across different eras.

Growing up you thought you would be: I've loved drawing since I was a kid and I've always been passionate about design, especially interiors. There's something really rewarding about turning my ideas into something real.

Memorable SP (Swanbury Penglase) moment: Being able to earn my team's recognition through my hard work and results on different projects.