



## Nomination for Brickbat

### Façade Alterations to Previous David Jones Building

A brickbat has been nominated to Adelaide City Council, the Department for Environment and Natural Resources and Ministers for Heritage for failing to ensure that the iconic David Jones building, designed by architects Hassell & McConnell, was heritage listed and protected in a timely manner.

Built as a department store in 1962, the building was an exemplar of the *International Style*. It had no windows, allowing for controlled lighting of merchandise and the flexible positioning of products. The façade reflected the aim to be a store retailing to the rich (or those wanting to be rich) and was of high quality white marble giving a look of solidity and personal ambition, further exemplified by the statue *Spirit of Progress*. The ground floor shop windows were elaborately decorated, especially at Christmas, frequently changed and a major incentive for people to regularly visit the then Rundle Street to admire the displays.



Photo: D Hiles

Other innovations included the first escalators in South Australia. On completion, the building was considered the most modern department store in Australia.

Following David Jones' move to a new store further east, an unsuccessful attempt was made to have the building included on the Heritage Register and once ownership changed, windows were cut into the upper floors and subsequently much of the remaining marble was replaced with larger windows. The original surface may still be seen on the narrow vertical face behind the modern awning.

Modern cladding of a plaster-board look was later installed in place of the marble and the *Spirit of Progress* statue was moved to a less contrasting position.