

9. Civic Theatre

The Civic Theatre is one of the most significant historical buildings in Southland. Built 1906, it has undergone a \$15.8million upgrade. The work turned what was a rather tired "grand old lady" into a much-applauded performing arts and events facility that seats 1015 people. Originally built as municipal offices, it was designed by E R Wilson in the Edwardian Baroque style. The Governor General Lord Plunket laid the foundation stone and opened the building in 1906. In 1930 the Town Hall and Theatre was officially reopened to mark the proclamation of Invercargill as a city. The Town Hall façade is floodlit at night. Architect ER Wilson also designed St John's Anglican Church and adjoining hall. These buildings were designed in the Gothic style and the church contains the magnificent J T Thomson memorial window which was restored in 2001. As you walk through to Esk Street, note the stand of established trees (including elm, ash, beech and oak) planted in the 1870s.

10. WEA Building

The three storeyed WEA building was constructed in 1912 as a Coffee and Spice Mill for David Strang, in front of the original 1885 mill. Strang invented and patented soluble coffee powder and this business continued until 1966. Esk Street is the main specialty shopping street for the City, and you will notice that the building façades above verandah height contribute to the ambience of the area.



The Provincial Chambers in nearby Kelvin Street were originally built in 1864 as a Masonic Hall. The Provincial Council purchased the Hall in 1866 and conducted its business from there until it reunified with Otago

11. Don Street Facades

Don Street, between Kelvin and Dee Streets, contains an interesting collection of heritage buildings, from the Arts and Crafts style of Tudor House and Alexandra Building, to the Victorian architecture of the Invercargill Club, and the Art Nouveau/Deco architectural style of the Public Trust building and Law Courts. The large umbrella sculpture "Our People - Time and Place" illustrates Invercargill's geographical location and doubles as both a sundial and a planetarium. Under the cover of the umbrella are listed the family names of Invercargill residents in the year 2000. From the corner of Dee and Don Streets a NZHPT registered precinct on the west side of Dee Street can be viewed. This precinct commences with the former Grand Hotel and ends at the Briscoe and Co Ltd building on the corner of Dee and Spey Streets. William Sharp, C J Brodrick and F W Burwell were all notable Invercargill architects and their various styles are illustrated in this imposing precinct. Walking south down Dee Street you will notice that the original kerbstones



have been retained. The first contract for their supply to the Invercargill Town Board was awarded to CMcKinnon in 1863, making them the oldest European features in the city. Note also a remnant of historical cobblestones.

12. First Church

The present First Presbyterian Church was designed by architect J T Mair in the Italian Romanesque style. Containing over one million bricks, it was opened on 10 February 1915 at a cost of £18,181. First Church stands as one of the premier examples of church architecture in New Zealand. The campanile (bell tower) rises 32 metres above the street and draws attention to the elaborate patterns of the brickwork which are a testament to the skill of the bricklayer Arthur Sefton. Colourful stained glass windows are a significant feature of the interior of the church. Tours can be arranged from the church office.

Next to First Church is the Southern Institute of Technology, which is an excellent example of a modern building and sculpture blending with a significant historic building.

13. Southland Masonic Centre

The Masonic Temple was opened in 1926 for Lodge St John at a cost of £14,116. The architects, Brodrick and Royds, designed the building in the Graeco-Doric style with red brick and smooth plastered portico, supported by six fluted columns in the front. Regarded as one of the most impressive lodge buildings in Australasia, it received the silver medal award in 1934 from the New Zealand Institute of Architects.

14. Otepunu Gardens

The Otepunu Gardens were set aside as public reserves by J T Thomson, along with Queens Park and the town belt. The flood protection works, erected adjacent to the street after the devastating 1984 floods, provide a sense of shelter and enclosure to the gardens. The Otepunu Creek runs through the area, which includes a band rotunda and a fine example of turn of the century formal gardens.

15. St Mary's Basilica

St Mary's Roman Catholic Basilica, opened in 1905, was once described as "the prettiest church in Australasia" and is a dominant Invercargill landmark, giving vertical relief to a flat landscape. Airline pilots are said to navigate a course in and out of the city by noting the cross on its highest point. The copper clad dome is a notable feature, as are the many coloured glass windows, including a rose window with an unusual angel design (restored 2001).

Architect F W Petre also designed the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Christchurch, and both churches feature the neo-Classical architectural style. Petre favoured the use of concrete in his buildings and was often known as "Lord Concrete".



16. Stead Street Wharf

The New River harbour served Invercargill for many years, and J T Thomson's first plan of Invercargill terminated Tweed Street where the Stead Street wharf now stands. Ships using the harbour in the 1800s were in danger of running aground

due to ever changing depths of water. Once a railway was constructed to Bluff it became the dominant port. In 1910 work commenced on reclaiming the upper portions of the estuary and this area now contains the Airport. Note the original dolphins which were used for ships' moorings.

17. Sandy Point

Ten kilometres from the city, Sandy Point is a 2,000 hectare sand and shingle peninsula bounded by the Oreti River and Foveaux Strait. Maori found abundant supplies of bird life, fish and shellfish, along with extensive areas of totara, the bark of which was used for making pohatiti (kits for mutton birds). At the time of Pakeha (European) contact, Honekai, the principal chief of Murihiku (Southland) lived at Oue (Sandy Point). In 1863 a shore whaling station was established and one of the whalers, Owen McShane, gained a notorious reputation for distilling a kind of rum from the cabbage trees plentiful in the area. This rum was associated with the wreck of the Lynx in 1837. Drunken crew ran it aground while leaving the estuary with a cargo of whale oil. Flax mills operated until the 1970s. The Sandy Point Visitor centre is located on Sandy Point Road, providing information on walks, the local flora and fauna and human history of the site.

18. Oreti Beach

When arriving at Oreti Beach, Rakiura (Stewart Island) is directly ahead of you and the seaside resort of Riverton is to your right. Oreti Beach was the trail used by Maori when travelling between Riverton and Oue. The south end of the beach was called Ma te Aweawe (Misty Way). As people walk down the beach they appear to float above the beach and eventually disappear into the mist.

Te Ara a Kewa (Foveaux Strait) separates Oreti Beach from Rakiura. In Maori legend, Kewa the whale chewed through the isthmus that connected Murihiku with Rakiura. From his mouth fell crumbs, which form the islands in the Strait, and a tooth, forming Te Niho a Kewa (Solander Island).

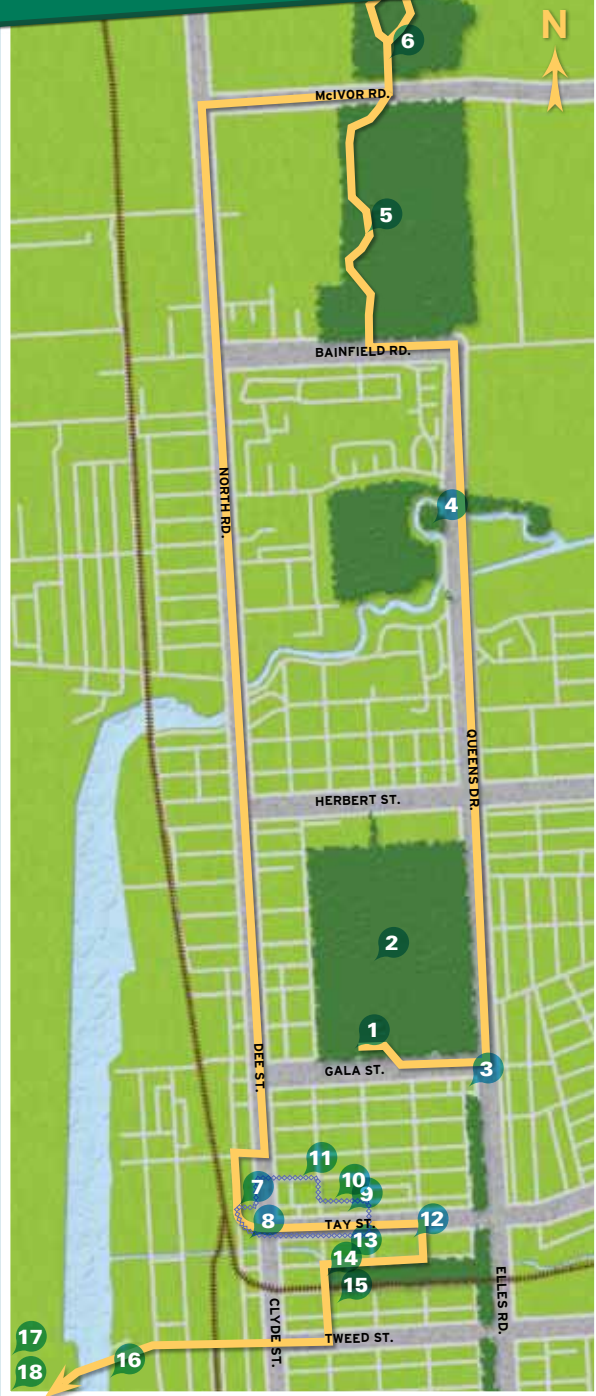


Invercargill Heritage Trail



the Real
Discover New Zealand

Heritage Trail



welcome to the Invercargill Heritage Trail

Invercargill offers visitors an interesting tour of heritage sites and diverse open spaces. This half day tour is best undertaken by vehicle, with stops for walking in gardens, bush and the Invercargill city centre. The tour can start at any point.

In the early days, Invercargill's importance as a commercial centre increased as bush was cleared and farming extended into the Southland Plains. This prosperity was responsible for the wealth of quality Victorian buildings built in the 1880s and 1890s. At the turn of the century, Southland's timber and coal industries contributed to the growth of the town, and the many examples of Edwardian architecture are testimony to this prosperity. The large number of Art Deco style buildings indicates that the Depression of the 1930s arrived later in Invercargill than in other centres. The wool boom of the 1950s led again to economic prosperity, with the erection of buildings in the style of the modernist movement. It is this variety, proximity and coherence of historic architectural style that makes Invercargill unique.

In 1856, the Governor of New Zealand Sir Thomas Gore Browne gave approval for the establishment of a principal town in the south. Sir Thomas suggested it be called Invercargill - "Inver" meaning the meeting of the two waters (Oreti and Makarewa Rivers) and "Cargill" after Captain William Cargill, Superintendent of Otago. When J T Thomson, chief surveyor of Otago, arrived at the location previously chosen for the town of Invercargill he rejected this site in favour of its present location. The mouth of the Otago Creek (Otepunu Creek) was suitable for a wharf and was linked by Tweed and Clyde Streets to Tay Street, where Kelly's huts already stood at the corner of Dee and Tay Streets (see plaque on the Bank of New South Wales). J T Thomson proceeded to lay out his plan for Invercargill, a "mile" square with four reserves just inside the boundaries. A fifth reserve ran down the Otago Stream. Just over the northern boundary, deep in the heart of the Taurakitewaru wood, he reserved 200 acres (80 hectares) for Queens Park. J T Thomson was appointed as the first Surveyor General of New Zealand in 1876. This heritage trail explores some of J T Thomson's legacy, including the 40 metre wide streets in the City Centre, the grid street layout and the town belt reserves.

1. Southland Museum & Art Gallery

The Southland Museum and Art Gallery, with its distinctive pyramid shape, encases the original 1940s brick structure, built as a Centennial project. The foundation stone was laid by Sir Robert Anderson in February 1941. The building contains the Visitor Information Centre, a unique Roaring 40s Gallery featuring the sub-Antarctic Islands, and technological displays. The museum has the largest public display of live tuatara in the world. Henry, at over 110 years, is the oldest.



2. Queens Park

When J T Thomson laid out the town of Invercargill in 1857, he set aside 80 hectares of land for a reserve. Queens Park is a well established public park, with the main entrance through the Feldwick Gates, named after



John Feldwick who bequeathed the sum of £20,000 in 1913 to develop the park. They feature Invercargill's original Coat of Arms, which incorporates a plough, a sheaf of corn and a bale of wool to depict the prosperity of the province, and a ship to indicate overseas trade. The park contains two specialised rose gardens. The Jessie Calder collection of old shrub and climbing roses includes over 900 individual plants representing more than 400 cultivars.

The statuary in the children's playground is by Sir Charles Wheeler, an English sculptor. It was unveiled in 1966 by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, The Queen Mother.



3. Water Tower

The foundation stone of the Invercargill Water Tower was laid in December 1888. Retiring Mayor Mr E A Tapper said at the time "Instead of a huge iron skeleton, we will now have an



ornamental and useful structure from the summit of which we can show visitors a view which would gladden their hearts". The original cupola was removed in 1934 and replaced in 1988 with the assistance of New Zealand Aluminium Smelters. The tower contains 200,000 common bricks, 80,000 red pressed bricks, 10,000 to 15,000 pressed yellow bricks and 4,000 pressed black bricks. Tours of the tower can be made on Sunday afternoons.

4. Thomsons Bush

Thomsons Bush is a remnant of the kahikatea-dominated swamp forest which once covered large areas of Southland. This vast forest was known as Taurakitewaru by the tangata whenua (local Maori) who had strong spiritual ties to the forest which helped sustain their physical and cultural needs. One of the original owners of the land was J T Thomson.

5. Donovan Park

Donovan Park forms part of the north/south pattern of open space that was originally determined by J T Thomson when he first laid out the city. It provides a link between Queens Park and Thomsons Bush to the south and Anderson Park immediately to the north.

6. Anderson Park

Anderson Park is unique among the city's parks. It has an entrance which winds through native bush before opening into a well groomed and formal garden area. Visitors then find their eyes attracted to the magnificent neo-Georgian style residence which was built in 1924/1925 for Robert Anderson (knighted in 1934). The architect was Cecil Wood of Christchurch. The property was gifted to the City by the family of the late Sir Robert and Lady Anderson in 1951. It now houses the Anderson Park Art Gallery, which has an extensive collection of New Zealand art and is open daily to visitors. Sir Robert collected fine art, Maori artefacts

and greenstone, some of which were gifted to the gallery. A wharepuni (carved house) is located to the south of the house and has a sprung dance floor which was used by the Anderson family for informal dances and social occasions. The park also features a playground, picnic area, duck pond and bush walk.

7. Railway Hotel

The Railway Hotel is a gem, with elements of Victorian, Edwardian and Baroque revival architectural styles. Built in 1896, it is one of the last remaining hotels in New Zealand still being used for its original purpose. On the opposite corner is the Menzies Building (opened 1966), a fine example of modern movement architecture. The building is named in honour of the first Superintendent of Southland, Dr J A R Menzies.



8. Bank Corner

In the original plan of Invercargill drawn by J T Thomson, The Crescent was shown to be a tree lined avenue. F W Burwell was the architect responsible for designing the impressive set of buildings which once made up The Crescent. Sadly, only some of the original buildings remain. Invercargill's Bank Corner, at the junction of Dee and Tay Streets and The Crescent, has long been a place of architectural importance. The Troopers' Memorial was erected to remember those who served in the South African Boer War. The former Bank of New South Wales building stands on the site where commercial activity began in Invercargill in 1856. A feature wall has been constructed on the northwest corner to represent the Maori and Celtic roots of the city. The adjacent former Chief Post Office was designed by government architect J T Mair.

