

GOTHIC MAGNIFICENCE MOUNTFORT'S DESIGNS



WHY WE LOVE IT

PROVINCIAL COUNCIL BUILDINGS

A SURVIVOR: Our city's most important building – a true survivor, the only purpose built Provincial Government buildings still standing in New Zealand.

STYLISH: Gothic Revival...from humble timber beginnings to ornate masonry.

MAGISTRATES COURT

OF LEGAL AGE: The oldest purpose built court building in Christchurch.

CANTERBURY SOCIETY OF ARTS GALLERY

ART ON THE GO: The gallery reveals the possibilities for working in brick explored by Mountfort's plans for the original gallery and library built in 1890-1891, and a new extension designed in 1894 by renowned Christchurch architect R.D Harman.

STYLE GURUS

Benjamin Mounfort was New Zealand's most outstanding Gothic Revival architect.

WHAT WAS HERE BEFORE

Waitaha and Ngati Mamoe established the Pauri settlement here, while later Ngai Tahu used the area for mahinga kai (seasonal food gathering). Nearby were Urupa (burial grounds) where buildings on the corner of Hereford St and Cambridge Tce stand today.

WONDERFUL & WEIRD

PROVINCIAL COUNCIL BUILDINGS

The Stone Chamber - searching for William Brassington's carvings...famous heads, birds, frogs, creatures...

CANTERBURY SOCIETY OF ARTS GALLERY

Mountfort was a founding member of the Canterbury Society of Arts (CSA) formed in 1880. Purchasing at least 30 works within their first decade, the CSA soon needed more gallery space.

CHALLENGES

PROVINCIAL COUNCIL BUILDINGS

Mountfort designed the building in three stages in the 1850s and 1860s

1. Simple timber construction
2. Elaborate timber Gothic Revival style
3. High Victorian Gothic Revival Style: Stone Chamber and Bellamy's

MAGISTRATES COURT

Mountfort designed the 1880-1881 section, and in 1908-1909 a two storey addition was completed by a government architect, A.F McRae, who took his cue from Mountfort.

HOW TO FIND OUT MORE

Step inside the Stone Chamber of the Provincial Council Buildings to see the highly decorative interior.

<http://library.christchurch.org.nz>

<http://ccc.govt.nz/Christchurch/CanterburyProvincialCouncilChambers/>