10. WEA Building

The WEA Building in front of the original 1885 mill. Strang invented and patented soluble coffee powder and contributed to the ambience of the area.

11. Don Street Facades

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.

12. First Church

The present St John's Presbyterian Church was designed by architect T J Marr in the Italian Romanesque style. Containing over one million bricks, it was opened on 09 February 1895 at a cost of £21,000.

13. Southland Masonic Centre

The Masonic Temple was opened in 1926 for Lodge St John of the Invercargill Masonic Centre. Architect F W Petre also designed the building in the Graeco-Doric style with red brick.

14. Opopuni Gardens

The Opopuni Gardens were first used as public reserves by J T Thomson, along with Queens Park and the town belt.

15. St Mary's Basilica

St Mary's Basilica, opened in 1906, was once described as “the prettiest church in Australasia” and is a dominant Invercargill landmark, giving it reunified with Otago business from there until it floating with Otago.

16. Stead Street Wharf

The New River harbour served Invercargill for many years, and this area now contains the Airport. Note the original dolphins which were used for ships’ moorings.
Heritage Trail

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

In the early days, Invercargill’s importance as a commercial centre increased as both was cleared and farming extended into the Southland Plains. This prosperity was established for the wealth of quality Victorian buildings built in the 1870s and 1880s. 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 this was known as Taureka in Te Reo Maori, Invercargill than in other centres. The wool boom of the 1890s and up to the economic prosperity of the 1920s with the invention of buildings in the style of the modernist movement. It is a parish, proximity and character of historic architecture that makes Invercargill unique.

In 1859, the Governor of New Zealand Sir George Grey 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 South Branch). Sir Thomas, chief surveyor of Otago, arrived at the location previously chosen for the town of Invercargill and selected a site in favour of the present location. The site of the Otawere Creek (Otawere Creek) was suitable for a wharf and was linked by Tweed and Clyde Streets to Tay Streets (see plaque on the Bank of New South Wales). J T Thomson proceeded to lay down the streets and roads in the new town, and the park was named after J T Thomson, chief surveyor of Otago, who served in the South African Boer War. The former Superintendent of Otago, Dr J A R Menzies, was appointed as the first Surveyor General of New Zealand in 1859. Sir Thomas appointed a lawyer, who served in the South African Boer War, as the first Surveyor General of New Zealand in 1859. Sir 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 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 of Arms, which incorporates a plough, a sheaf of corn and a sword, representing more than 400 centuries. The statue of the children’s playground features a life-size statue of the original owners of the land was J T Thomson.

1. Southland Museum & Art Gallery

The Southland Museum and Art Gallery, with its distinctive Georgian-style building and its 1940s brick structure, built as a millenium project. The town corner was named by Sir Robert Anderson in 1942. 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 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.

2. Queens Park

Queens Park invercargill was appointed as the first Surveyor General of New Zealand in 1859 and was named as Queens Park. J T Thomson proceeded to lay down the streets and roads in the new town, and the park was named after J T Thomson, chief surveyor of Otago, who served in the South African Boer War. The former Superintendent of Otago, Dr J A R Menzies, was appointed as the first Surveyor General of New Zealand in 1859. Sir 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 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 of Arms, which incorporates a plough, a sheaf of corn and a sword, representing more than 400 centuries. The statue of the children’s playground features a life-size statue of the original owners of the land was J T Thomson.

3. Water Tower

The foundation stone of the Invercargill Water Tower was laid in December 1888. The Water Tower was completed in 1889, and is the tallest building in Invercargill. The head tank is 30m high and can hold 6,000,000 litres of water. The original cupola was removed in 1994 and replaced in 1998 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

Thomson’s Bush is a remnant of the kahikatea-dominated swamp forest which once covered large areas of Southland. The Bush was named after the young tree which was planted by J T Thomson. It was unveiled in 1944. The site was originally determined by J T Thomson when he first laid out the city. It provides a link between Queens Park and Thomson’s Bush to the south and Anderson Park immediately to the north.

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 Thomson’s Bush to the south and Anderson Park immediately to the north.

6. Anderson Park

Anderson Park is a public open space in the city’s parks. It has an entrance which provides access to the bush walk. A wharepuni (carved house) is located to the south of 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 of Arms, which incorporates a plough, a sheaf of corn and a sword, representing more than 400 centuries. The statue of the children’s playground features a life-size statue of the original owners of the land was J T Thomson.

7. Railway Hotel

The Railway Hotel has a rich history of victorian, Edwardian and Baroque revivalist architectural styles. Built in 1899, 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 1861), a fine example of modernist architectural style.

8. Bank Corner

In the original plan of Invercargill drawn by J T Thomson, the Croquet Club was shown to be a tree lined avenue. F R Donovan was the architect responsible for designing the impressive set of buildings which once made up the Croquet Club. 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 an area of architectural importance. The Troopers Memorial was erected to remember those who served in the First World War. The Bank of New South Wales building stands on the site where commercial activity began in Invercargill in 1848. A feature wall has been constructed deep into the northeast corner to represent the Maori and Celtic roots of the city. The adjacent former Post Office was designed by government architect J T Mar.