

**MARCH 2025**

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## **WHAT WILL BE THE FATE OF DARESBUURY ?**



### **Daresbury in 2010 when it received the Supreme award from the Civic Trust**

Daresbury is a historic grand house on Fendalton Road in Christchurch.

It was designed by renowned architect Samuel Hurst Seager in the English Domestic Revival style and built between 1897 and 1901 for George Humphries.

The house originally sat on 10 hectares of land and featured 50 rooms with five live-in staff. Over time the land was subdivided leaving the mansion on .91 hectares.

Daresbury was the Governor General's residence 1940 - 1950. Distinguished guests included Lords Newell and Freyburg (Governors General), the Duke of York (later King George VI) Lord Fisher and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

**[Story continued on page 3]**

## From the Chair



I hope the first newsletter of the year finds the Membership well. Christmas and New Year seem like a distant memory now.

This is the first Newsletter of 2025, and we're nearly done with March already. Too quick!

However there has been plenty to keep the CCT Board busy over the holiday period.

Firstly, and uppermost on the minds of the board over Christmas and New Year, was the threatened destruction of Daresbury House, which has had its heritage listing rescinded in a vote by City Councillors. A devastating blow to the protection of this beautiful house and against the Independent Hearing Panel's advice. (Read more about what actions we are undertaking to save this unique and beautiful Christchurch treasure in the following Newsletter article)

Secondly, Hagley Park continues to feature in the thoughts of the CCT board. Thanks, in particular to Anne Dingwall, who has been liaising with the council regarding the council's oversight of commercial activity in the park. The obvious example being the recent 'Electric Avenue' Festival.

A well run and well organised event with an undoubted financial benefit to the economy and culture of Christchurch, the concern is that the Park could be victim of the exponential growth of this festival. Given the Council's obligations under the Hagley Park Management Act, CCT will be watching how the council manages the potential further expansion of the festival with public access, heritage, environmental and aesthetic aspects of the park, in mind.

As well as the future management of Hagley Park and Open Spaces, CCT have been monitoring decisions made by the council, and how they have voted on a slew of new planning rules which will affect

Christchurch's Housing intensification, Business development, and Zoning to be included into the District Plan, as recommended by the Independent Hearings Panel (58 decisions in total involving nearly 40 city wide shopping/business precincts) which will have considerable effects on how we live and work in our city.

A good deal of time and effort has been dedicated to the complex topic of PC 13 & 14 by the **Heritage, Urban and Resource Management** subcommittee, particularly by Anne Dingwall. So, another big thank you to her for keeping across this matter for CCT.

For a council overview of these changes, I have included a link (below) to the Council's Newline which provides a comprehensive summary of these changes and is worth a look.

<https://www.newline.ccc.govt.nz/news/story/major-new-planning-rules-approved-for-christchurch>

As always, when we learn about issues, events and activities, we will continue to keep you all advised throughout the year in upcoming newsletters.

Take care and Nga Mihi

**Hamish Gilchrist**

Chair



**Daresbury 1902**

## **DARESBUY'S CURRENT STATUS**

The house suffered major damage in the 2010/11 earthquakes and has been closed since. The current owner sought de-listing of the property's Category 1 Heritage status with his wish to demolish this stunning property.

The Christchurch City Council granted this, and subsequently Christchurch Civic Trust board has written to Chris Bishop, Minister of Resource Management Reform, Paul Goldsmith, Minister Arts, Culture and Heritage and Mary Richardson questioning how the Council arrived at this decision.

A reply from Mary Richardson C.E.O of the Christchurch City Council, was received from an Official information manager, and a reply should be received within 20 working days.

Paul Goldsmith has replied, stating that it is not his area and has passed the Civic Trust's letter to Chris Bishop (which he already has).

We have received an acknowledgement of receipt of our letter from Minister Bishop.

It is a sad state of affairs when lack of will and money puts such a treasure at dire risk. One doesn't have to look far to find the Christ Church Cathedral and McLean's Mansion in the same position. Not that the latter two are at risk of demolition but the fact that they are closed up, with restoration work having ceased, is a dreadful shame

A combination of lack of money, and lack of will!

Meanwhile Daresbury stands alone as one of the amazing and beautiful examples of grand mansions which were once prevalent.

**Sandra Shaw**

## **BROOKSFIELD HOUSE**

**82 BEALEY AVENUE,  
CHRISTCHURCH**

We purchased Eliza's Manor in May 2024 (now renamed Brooksfeld House) as a premises for our property development business Brooksfeld.

When we took it over it was in need of quite a lot of repairs inside and out. Because we are actively using it as an office, we elected to start on the exterior by replacing many timber weatherboards, easing all the windows so the double-hung sashes are working again, painted it back to its original colours and redesigned the landscaping with Robert Watson. Robert has done a fantastic job of taking the house back to having a more grand residential feel, with a large lawn and gravel driveway out the front, whilst also making it usable as an office with requirements such as lots of parking.

We will now begin on the renovation of the interiors. We will be keeping all the original features intact, but replacing some of the darker heavier fittings such as the carpets, curtains and wallpapers with lighter but still in-keeping, options.

**Vinnie Holloway.**

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### **BROOKSFIELD HOUSE VISIT**

Vinnie Holloway has kindly invited Christchurch Civic Trust members to visit the house on:

**Saturday April the 5<sup>th</sup> at 10.30am**

**Address: 82 Bealey Avenue**

**(On site Parking)**

**PLEASE EMAIL:**

[secretary@christchurchcivictrust.org.nz](mailto:secretary@christchurchcivictrust.org.nz)

to register your attendance or phone  
Sandra (Secretary) **0274 463 240**



## HISTORY OF BROOKSFIELD HOUSE

The original house was built in 1861 by Charles Wyatt, solicitor and Provincial Council member. It was a grand private residence and was owned over time by a list of Christchurch's prominent citizens, including the original owner Charles Wyatt, merchant Maurice Harris, and Frederick Pyne (from 1906 to 1915) founder of stock and station agents Pyne, Gould and Guinness. It later served as a boarding house for St. Margaret's College, a maternity home, and a private hospital, and flats. In 1981 the manor house was converted into a boutique hotel.



**Brooksfield House c1930**

The grand house has high architectural significance as a large gentleman's residence and was enlarged in 1877 and again in the early 1900s.

The staircase is a notable feature of the interior, and is similar to that at Otahuna. Research has not been able to establish the designer of any stages of the house. Architecturally it is a rare survivor of Victorian townhouses on Bealey Avenue which was once lined with similar residences.

Large houses at 80,100,103,107 and 118 once defined Bealey Avenue's architectural character, but the devastating earthquakes of 2010 and 2011 saw their demolition.

Its post-quake survival enhances its importance as a fine example of Christchurch's 19<sup>th</sup> century heritage.

**Sandra Shaw**



**Brooksfield House 2025**



## Aotearoa’s largest independent Festival of Architecture returns on

2nd to 4th May 2025.

For this weekend only, you can experience many of the city's best buildings and spaces from the inside, for free. It's for everyone in Ōtautahi Christchurch.

Building owners/kaitiaki will throw open their doors so that you can have a nosy and experience great design.

With behind-the-scenes access and unique experiences or activities on offer, this is a chance to connect with Christchurch's story as you uncover its special places, encounter new landscapes and over 40 activities. This is the largest programme to date, with 51 buildings, 5 guided walks, 2 designed spaces or get up close to the ones you love. You'll discover the city in a new way.

This year’s festival celebrates the work of **Benjamin Mountfort**, the pre-eminent exponent of the Gothic Revival Style, in recognition of the bicentenary of his birth. Get up close to a range of his works over the weekend; hear from pre-eminent experts; take in Mountfort's original architectural drawings and more. Be some of the first to experience the new **Court Theatre** from the inside, designed by Athfield Architects in collaboration with English practice Haworth Tompkins. Explore a variety of other spaces, from the **Isaac Theatre Royal** to **The Piano**. Have you seen the fabulous film Maurice & I? Take another look at the Douglas Lilburn Auditorium at the Town Hall during the festival weekend. **Pop 20<sup>th</sup> March in the diary to find out more – the date of the programme release.**

## THE DUX DE LUX BUILDING

Follow the link below to discover the long awaited plans by the Christchurch Arts Centre for this building.

[https://www.thepress.co.nz/a/nz-news/360600713/restoration-former-dux-de-lux-building-now-priority?lid=4ze788e7utvj&utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=press](https://www.thepress.co.nz/a/nz-news/360600713/restoration-former-dux-de-lux-building-now-priority?lid=4ze788e7utvj&utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=press)

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## CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL

### Christ Church Cathedral Restoration Shutdown.



### Christchurch Cathedral Mothballed

It is ominous and deeply disturbing that recovery of the Cathedral has stopped, and the project indefinitely mothballed. The decision to stop was due to excessive costs, looming budget shortfalls, failure to Fundraise sufficient funding, and Government and key benefactors declining to contribute additional funding.

**Mark Belton**

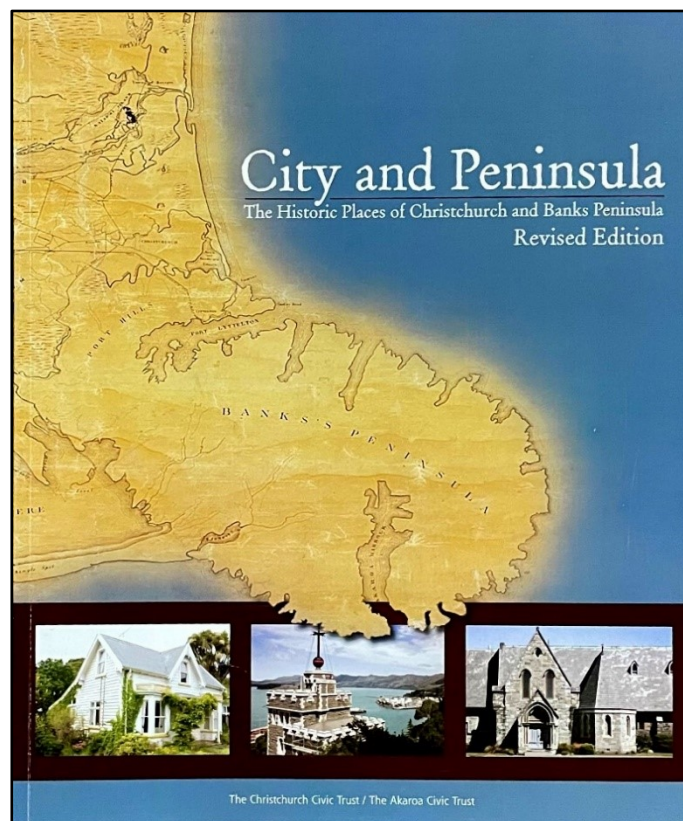
## The revised City and Peninsula Book

The C&P book is a wonderful but sad record of the buildings lost or demolished in the city and surrounds. It was written just before the 2011 quakes and therefore has much information which is now out of date.

The Civic Trust approached the Heritage Team of the Christchurch City Council and were granted an amount of money to reprint the book with updated information, which John Wilson, the original author, has very kindly done.

The book is at the printer, and we expect the new copies to be completed soon.

**Sandra Shaw**



**200pp with over 290 full colour illustrations**

**Available from Christchurch Civic Trust**

Orders to: PO Box 2632 Christchurch or: [secretary@christchurchcivictrust.org.nz](mailto:secretary@christchurchcivictrust.org.nz)  
for **\$49.99** plus **\$ 12 postage and packaging** (within NZ) **\$4.80** extra for Rural Delivery.

**Copies are also available at the following book shops:**

**Scorpio Books**, City **Smith's Bookshop**, The Tannery **Leslie's Bookshop**, Lyttelton

**University Bookshop**, University of Canterbury **Piccadilly Bookshop**, Avonhead Mall

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Christchurch Civic Trust