

## PLYMOUTH: 20<sup>th</sup> century city

Plymouth city centre is the greatest built example of post-War British planning and architecture. The city was very badly bomb damaged in the war and the mayor, Lord Astor, appointed Patrick Abercrombie, the most distinguished town planner of the day, to prepare A Plan for Plymouth in 1943.

Abercrombie's plan, with the City Engineer, James Paton Watson, swept away all the old streets and replaced them with a rational, functionally zoned grid set about a major axis (Armada Way) running north-south from the Railway Station to The Hoe.

The new city was on a grand scale influenced by New Delhi and Canberra and by the 19th century Beaux-Arts planning that had re-formed Paris. The city authorities embraced the new plan enthusiastically.

Using some of the best architects of the day, Plymouth was the first British city to commence reconstruction in April 1947 and the first to open new buildings in 1951.

Separate architects, usually working for private developers, designed all the buildings but the city architect

and city engineer and their advisors, the architects Thomas Tait and William Crabtree, rigidly controlled their width, height, form and materials. Plymouth represented the architecture of the future – clean, bright, democratic and, most of all, optimistic. In addition to Abercrombie's Plan, there was a number of surviving 20th century buildings pre-dating the Second World War as well as notable additions that came later to Plymouth.

Plymouth is truly a 20th Century city, it was granted city status in 1928 and currently has the greatest number of post-war buildings listed by English Heritage in the country, outside of London.

Please note that over time, names of buildings and companies have changed and will continue to do so; in Plymouth: 20th Century City the original names have been used at the time the buildings were completed.

Please also note that the map is intended for use as a walking trail, the route shown on the map is a suitable sequence to follow on foot, it cannot be followed in a vehicle.

The inclusion of any individual building does not mean that it is open to the public, the majority of the featured buildings are in private ownership. Please respect the people living or working in these buildings or spaces.

Please refer to the website for additional resources including a larger version of the map, specific guidance on disabled access, terms and conditions and health and safety.

## 1 Braille Garden (c.1958)

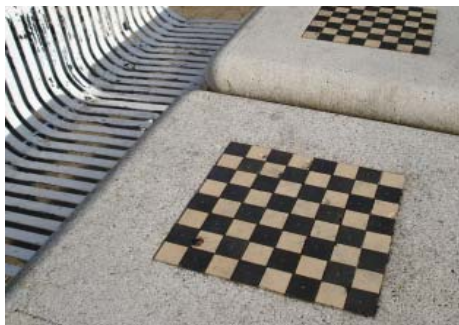
### Armada Way

H.J.W. Stirling, City Architect and J.Paton Watson, City Engineer

At the north end of Armada Way was the only planted garden of the main axis of the new city centre. It was intended to balance a great water cascade designed for the slope from the Hoe down to Notte Street. The garden was made from stone salvaged from old buildings.

Within this were concentric square beds of aromatic plants and, in the centre, an 8 metre (27 feet) diameter pool made from granite blocks from the old service reservoir at Roborough. The plants were labelled in Braille lettering on the sloping garden walls and permanent chess tables of precast Cornish granite and had Braille indentations.

The garden has been much altered but the chess tables, perimeter stone walls and the lines of trees remain.



## 2 Martins Bank (1955-57)

### 151 Armada Way

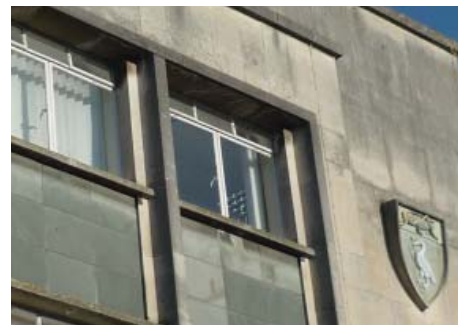
Lucas Roberts & Brown

In a grid plan, such as Abercrombie's Plan for Plymouth, the corner buildings have a great significance and Plymouth city centre demonstrates this in many different ways.

The headquarters of Martins Bank, designed by Lucas Roberts & Brown of Exeter, is made up of intersecting blocks; a main symmetrical block to Armada Way and a lower block facing Cornwall Street.

The whole building is clad in Portland stone with a polished black granite plinth into which the entrance steps are cut and with panels of green Westmorland slate in the big stone-framed windows.

The rich surfaces are set off by the Bank's shield, set high on the wall of the main block with its distinctive grasshopper and Liver bird motifs. The building was well thought of and won a Premier Award at the Paris Salon in 1957.



## 3 Western Morning News Office (1937-39)

### New George Street

Herbert O. Ellis & Clarke

The Western Morning News is a rare survival from pre-War Plymouth. It is in the respectable neo-Georgian style which was common for institutional architecture in the 1930s and designed by a London firm who specialised in newspaper offices. Here, the red brick walls, carefully proportioned sash windows, carved stone surrounds, projecting cornice and pitched tiled roof with dormers, show how the academic study of the English 18th century influenced architecture in the 20th century.

The building survived the blitz because the printers working overnight could extinguish the incendiary bombs. The angle to New George Street marks the line of the old Frankfort Street which was obliterated by the Abercrombie plan.

The little building on the west side, also in red brick with sash windows, was added by the architects in 1954.



## 4 Pannier Market (1956-59) Grade II Cornwall St/New George St

Walls & Pearn. Engineer: Albin Chronowicz. Murals: David Weeks.

### Frankfort Gate (1955)

H.J.W. Stirling, City Architect/others

The Pannier Market was one of the great institutions of pre-War Plymouth and trading survived during and after the War on what is now the east side of New George Street. The new building was designed by local architects, Walls & Pearn, and their engineer, Albin Chronowicz, an expert on the design of reinforced concrete shell structures.

There are 7 great concrete portal frames with a series of concrete ribs which support thin concrete shells which form the great 'north lights' of the main hall. The north and south porches were decorated by David Weeks, a local artist who had trained at the Royal College of Art.

Frankfort Gate, to the west, with its London plane trees and paving designed by the City Engineer, was the only formal new square of the Abercrombie plan.



**5** Plymouth Co-operative Society Store (1950-52)  
New George St/Raleigh St/ Royal Parade (Derry's)

W.J. Reed Co-op' Wholesale Society

Co-operative Insurance Society (1960-61) New George Street  
W.J. Reed succeeded by R.C. Steel

The Plymouth Co-op was the only new store which occupied one whole block of the Abercrombie plan and its height and scale was intended to match the major buildings along Royal Parade. The façade was unique and made up of a repeating window and panels of translucent glass blocks. The upper floors were intended to glow at night.

The underside of the roof canopy was originally painted bright yellow. The original interior was equally exotic with a dome perforated with lights in the banking hall and a stage for a dance band in the café. The building was never finished and the insurance offices were added a decade later in a different style, facing New George Street. These were also elegantly designed with a smart aluminium curtain wall, originally with olive green panels and contrasting frames.



**6** Derry's Cross:

Plymouth & South Devon Trustee Savings Bank (1953-c.1956)  
4 Derry's Cross  
Alec F. French & Partners

Co-operative Building Society (1955-59) New Oxford House,  
6-7 Derry's Cross  
L. Blease, staff architect to Co-operative Building Society

Wallsend House (now Lancastrian House) (1955-57)  
8-9 Derry's Cross  
D. Ward & Son Surveyors

Anglia House (1951-c.1956)  
10 Derry's Cross  
F.C. Construction Ltd. of Derby

South Western Gas Board (1950-54)  
12-13 Derry's Cross  
Whinney, Son & Austen Hall

General Electric Company (1950-53) (Radiant House)  
2 Union Street  
Sydney R. Edwards



The plan west of Derry's Cross was intended to contain the nationalised industries and other small offices which could not be fitted into the city centre. The first, General Electric House, was partially Art Deco in style.

The design of the Gas Board building, was more confident in turning the corner from Union Street into Derry's Cross. Its brick staircase tower, which was intended to visually terminate the axis of Royal Parade (you have to step back to see it) sets the scale for the whole group.

Although designed by different architects, the other three buildings are remarkably similar with the same window shapes, Portland stone cladding and polished black granite bases and door frames.

The Trustee Savings Bank is also an attractive example of 1950s stripped classicism, similar to its Royal Insurance Building on St. Andrew's Cross (14).

**7** Theatre Royal (1978-82)  
Derry's Cross

Peter Moro Partnership

The Theatre Royal, in the 'entertainments precinct' of the new plan, replaced the original theatre which was demolished before the War. The new Theatre Royal was designed by the émigré German architect, Peter Moro, who had made his name working on the Royal Festival Hall in 1951 and who thereafter specialised in theatre design. The theatre contains two auditoria and a complex arrangement of offices, changing rooms and technical facilities.

The bar, restaurant and public foyers wrap around the main auditorium to form theatrical walkways, especially effective at night when they are seen through the great plate glass windows from Royal Parade.

The materials, grey concrete blocks, bronze anodised aluminium, suspended glass and bush-hammered concrete, illustrate how architectural style had moved on since the 1950s. The Victorian Derry's Clock, which survived the blitz, was re-erected behind the theatre.



## 8 Pearl Assurance House (1950-52)

Royal Parade/Armada Way

Alec F. French in association with Sir John Burnet Tait & Partners

Pearl Assurance and Dingles were intended to form the gateway to Armada Way from Royal Parade and the Great Square in front of the Civic Centre. Their towers are almost symmetrical and their external materials similar.

The building has a base (the shops and continuous canopy), middle (the offices) and top (a thin cornice) and the office windows are divided by classical fluted columns and by a mullion surmounted with a ball. This reveals the Classical origins of the structure and the effectiveness in making a strong, formal statement to both main streets.

The canopy (and other canopies in Plymouth) originally held vertical canvas blinds to protect shoppers from the elements. Note the original decorative features in the coat-of-arms over the main doorway and west door (on Courtenay Street) and the bold lettering on the tower.



## 9 Dingles Department Store (1949-51) (House of Fraser)

Royal Parade/Armada Way

Thomas S. Tait of Sir John Burnet Tait & Partners

Dingles is last built work of the distinguished architect Thomas Tait who headed the largest architectural firm in London and had made his name with many great buildings nationally and internationally. He designed the pylons for Sydney Harbour Bridge and you can see the influence of these in the towers for Dingles and Pearl Assurance. The composition of Dingles – strong horizontal bands asymmetrically balanced against the vertical tower – may reflect the influence of the Berlin architect Erich Mendelsohn.

Dingles is beautifully detailed in contrasting Portland and Ham stone. Note the bold moulding around the otherwise frameless shop windows, the exotic fruits and plants panels and the delightfully eccentric ball high up above the back staircase on New George Street. The upper floors were extended by the same architects in the 1960s and further altered after a fire in 1988. Although the materials contrast with the original, the dominance of the tower has been somewhat obscured.



## 10 New George Street:

Boots (1950-53)  
New George Street/Old Town Street  
C. St. C. Oakes, staff architect to Boots Pure Drug Co.

Marks & Spencer (1949-51)  
28 Old Town Street (now within Drake Circus shopping centre)  
Lewis & Hickey  
Sculptor: E. Bainbridge Copnall

Westminster Bank (1955-56)  
12-16 Old Town Street  
Body, Son & Fleury

11 New George Street (1955-56)  
Edgar Catchpole, City Architect and Arthur J. Ardin

15-17 New George Street (1955-56)  
Edgar Catchpole, City Architect and Arthur J. Ardin

19 New George Street (1954-55)  
Edgar Catchpole, City Architect and Edward Narracott

The group of buildings at the end of New George Street demonstrate the variations

permitted within the development rules established in 1948-49 by James Paton Watson, city engineer, and Edgar Catchpole, city planning officer. The City agreed all the widths, heights, cornice and canopy lines and external materials but different architects designed the buildings. Boots, Marks & Spencer and Westminster Bank were all faced in Portland stone.

Westminster Bank is exactly symmetrical to New George Street and Marks & Spencer was symmetrical to Eastgate Street (now part of Drake Circus) but Boots concave façade was one of the many geometries used to turn the corner of the grid plan. Boots' octagonal and porthole windows, M&S's gridded facade and the Bank hark back to the 1930s but, later, the City Architect allowed façades of brick, with the windows only framed in Portland stone.

The fronts of 11, 15-17 and 19 New George Street were based on Ernö Goldfinger's important 1930s Modernist house, 2 Willow Road, Hampstead (now owned by the National Trust).



## 11 Post Office (1954)

St. Andrew's Cross

Christopher J. Woodbridge Ministry of Works

Official buildings were the responsibility of government architects working for the Ministry of Works. The Ministry was seen as an opportunity for young architects to gain good experience on different building types and they often produced well-designed, innovative architecture. Such was the Post Office and the design was exhibited at the Royal Academy and published in various architectural magazines. It demonstrated a lighter, more elegant architecture than the earlier Plymouth buildings, probably influenced by the architecture of the Festival of Britain.

Like the Royal Festival Hall in London, the front of the Post Office is lifted up on round columns and the main façade is framed in Portland stone. Here this façade is concave, reflecting the geometry of St. Andrew's Cross. It is faced in contrasting green Westmorland slate panels. This stone was approved of by the new city architect, Hector Stirling, and it was used on many Plymouth buildings.



## 12 National Provincial Bank (1955-58) Grade II

St. Andrew's Cross

B.C. Sherren, staff architect to National Provincial Bank

The Bank's headquarters terminated the axis of Royal Parade in a great portico of granite-clad columns which formed the porch to the treble-height banking hall. Twin bronze doorways placed within white travertine marble are set in an extraordinary façade made of Venetian glass mosaic tiles. The tiles are studied with gold motifs of fish, anchors, castles and squirrels taken from the Bank's coat-of-arms. At night, the whole face is lit from behind the portico sending a shimmering light out into the city.

The mixture of exotic materials – the curved copper roof, lantern clock tower, the glass of the north porch with motifs based on ancient Greek and British coins, the fluted flower boxes and the back elevation of brick and stone, make this one of the greatest 1950s buildings of the city centre. It shows what could be done on an unlimited budget. Although it is a stripped classical composition, it is surely influenced by Italian rationalism and South American modernism appearing in contemporary British architectural magazines.



## 13 Royal Insurance (1949-53)

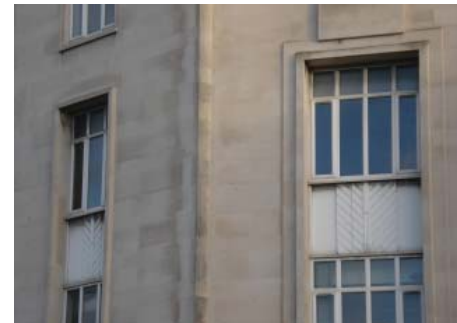
11 St. Andrew's Cross

Alec F. French in association with Sir John Burnet Tait & Partners

Royal Insurance was the third Plymouth building to be designed by Thomas Tait. It was intended to form the angle between Kinterbury Street and the Hoe Approach road and set the scale for the southern part of the city centre. The new Hoe Approach was never built and the Victorian buildings along St. Andrew's Place survived. It is of the stripped classicism style that Tait favoured.

It is beautifully detailed in Portland stone with subtly different surface finishes for the ground floor, upper floors and its prominent cornice. It is one of the few city centre buildings that was designed not to have a shop front.

The office windows of the first and second floor are designed together to suggest the greater scale of a piano nobile (although both floors are the same height), and this pattern was originally intended for all three elevations. This was a typical Tait feature (see Tait's Pearl Assurance (8) and French's Devon Savings Bank (6))



## 14 Norwich Union House (1950-52)

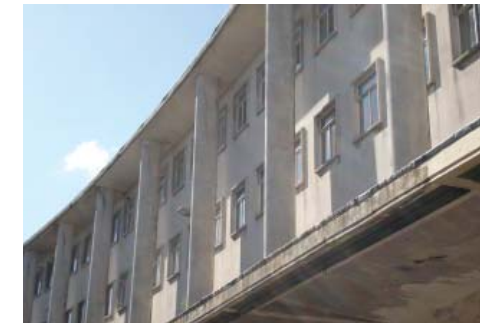
Old Town Street/Royal Parade

Donald Hamilton Wakeford & Partners

Donald Hamilton Wakeford were London-based commercial architects who designed offices for Norwich Union in many cities including Exeter. This is by far their best and most interesting building, perhaps due to the City's design rules and the insistence on the use of Portland stone. The building is a series of five symmetrical façades of similar composition but different scales.

The tallest faces St. Andrew's Cross with a great bronze staircase window flanked by fluted pilasters, originally marking the main entrance to Norwich Union's offices. The most impressive is the long, curved elevation to Old Town Street with its detached oval columns and sweeping canopy and cornice, based on stripped classicism.

The problem of producing buildings of four storeys, the original scale conceived for the city, resulted in the upper floors being almost false. You can see this from the service courtyard behind.



## 15 Lloyds Bank and Pophams (1955-57)

8-14 Royal Parade

Easton & Robertson  
Sculptor: Amyas Munday

Lloyds Bank and Pophams (one of Plymouth's pre-War department stores) combined to make one large building, hence the twin doorways. Pophams was to the west and Lloyds to the east. Easton & Robertson were a distinguished London firm who had produced many important public buildings. Both had won the Royal Gold Medal for Architecture (in 1955 and 1949 respectively). They were also involved with teaching architecture and Robertson had published books on architectural history and theory.

Fundamentally this is an American office building. It is symmetrical, with seven equal bays divided by Portland stone pilasters, a huge cornice (which aligns with Norwich Union) and a plain attic storey above. Uniquely, the bays are infilled with a cedar wood curtain wall with (originally) cedar-framed windows. The ground floor shop windows were framed in bronze, the remains of which can still be seen. The attic wall was decorated with sculptures of a sea-horse and a dolphin by local artist, Amyas Munday.



## 16 St. Andrew's Church Grade I

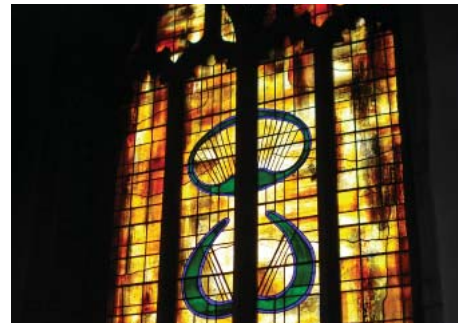
Royal Parade

Rebuilt by Frederick Etchells (1948-57).  
Stained Glass: John Piper and Patrick Reyntiens (1958, 1964)

St. Andrew's, the parish church of Plymouth, was left a roofless shell after the blitz and its restoration was a symbol of the survival of the city and of the post-War reconstruction. The architect, Frederick Etchells, was an artist and the translator of the books of the important Swiss modernist architect, Le Corbusier.

Etchells reinstated the rooflines of the medieval church but constructed thin concrete vaults over the nave and aisles (you can just see the bolt holes for the shuttering) which are camouflaged by appliqué oak ribs. All the woodwork – pews, lectern and organ case – although apparently ancient, is to his designs.

His new interior might have been rather plain had it not been for the commissioning of John Piper to install six stained glass windows. Piper was one of the most famous British artists of the day and had designed glass for many churches, including Coventry Cathedral.



## 17 Guildhall Grade II

Royal Parade/Armada Way

Norman & Hine / E. Godwin (1870-74), rebuilt by H.J.W. Stirling, City Architect (1954-59). Ext sculpture: Amyas Munday. Int glass & artwork: F.H. Coventry, David Weeks & Wyn George

The lavish Victorian Guildhall was also reduced to a ruin by the blitz and Abercrombie planned to remove it. However, by 1951, the Council voted to keep it, perhaps due to concern that too much of the old city was disappearing. The city architect's plan was for a total redesign rather than restoration. He produced what must be one of the finest 1950s interiors outside London. A new main entrance was cut into the west elevation, facing the Great Square, and modelled in a characteristically 1950s manner – a wavy coffered canopy painted Festival (of Britain) blue and yellow.

The walk to the main hall was marked with a marble and mahogany foyer, a white marble staircase with blue quilted leather balustrade and bronze hand-rail under a lozenge-shaped coffered lit ceiling. The restored Gothic windows hold Coventry's painted glass, depicting scenes from Plymouth's history.



## 18 Civic Centre Grade II

Armada Way/Royal Parade

H.J.W. Stirling, City Architect (1954-57) Allan Ballantyne of Jellicoe Ballantyne & Coleridge (1957-62)

The Civic Centre marks the completion of the major phase of rebuilding the city and expresses the aspirations of a confident authority at the height of its powers. At fourteen stories it was by far the tallest building and on its roof, under a dramatic 'V'-shaped concrete canopy, was a public restaurant. The arrangement of asymmetrical tower and podium was designed by Stirling and much influenced by Lever House in New York.

The façade was redesigned with two-tone granite aggregate panels by Jellicoe and Ballantyne who also introduced local materials like Delabole slate cladding and the more 'international' Italian glass mosaic tiles on the columns. Using coloured marbles, exotic hardwoods and veneered plywood wall panels, the interior was influenced by the new architecture of Scandinavia, in particular the work of Arne Jacobsen. The Council House is especially rich and brought together the work of significant artists, carefully selected fabrics, and Scandinavian furniture and light fittings.



**19** Crown Courts (1960-63)  
& Great Square (1960-62)  
Armada Way/Princess Street

H.J.W. Stirling, City Architect and  
Jellicoe Ballantyne & Coleridge.  
Stained glass: James Powell

Great Square  
Stirling and Geoffrey Jellicoe

Stirling intended a Concert Hall attached to the Guildhall to face the Council House across the Great Square. When this proved financially impossible, the City agreed to the Crown Courts which were government funded. The building was only two storeys high so that it lacked the necessary scale to enclose the Great Square, but Stirling faced it in green Westmorland slate and added a great stained glass panel and coat-of-arms in an attempt to give it some civic grandeur.

The Great Square was not included on Abercrombie's original plan but the idea emerged in the 1950s, guided by Stirling. The landscape was eventually designed by Geoffrey Jellicoe, one of the greatest contemporary British landscape architects. The abstract, curvy patterns and the two rectangular ponds are based on drawings by the artist Ben Nicholson whom Jellicoe admired.



**20** Barclays Bank  
(1949-52) Grade II  
Armada Way/Notte Street

W. Curtis Green RA, Son & Lloyd.  
Sculptor: William McMillan

Barclays is the most academically classical of all the early 1950s Plymouth buildings. It was designed by William Curtis Green, a distinguished London architect who won the Royal Gold Medal in 1942, and had made his name with the modernist Dorchester Hotel. This example is delicately proportioned and detailed in fine Portland stone with a polished granite plinth and granite columns to the two semi-circular porches.

These columns have characteristic capitals with raised circle motifs (also seen on the Barclays branch at 162-164 Armada Way). The design integrated McMillan's sculptures of the Elizabethan and contemporary sailor and the more abstract gods on the main elevation, representing the business of the Bank. The building was never completed – it was intended to have two more floors and a classical pediment. Eventually, in 2005, glass upper floors were added when the redundant building was converted to flats. The banking hall is now a bar, but the remains of the marble-faced hall and its coffered ceiling can still be seen.



**21** Churches:  
Baptist Church (1956-59)  
Catherine Street Grade II  
Louis de Soissons RA & Partners.  
Mural: Hans Feibusch.

Unitarian Church (1955-58)  
Notte Street Grade II  
Louis de Soissons RA & Partners.  
Mural: Jack Pickup.

Louis de Soissons, a French Canadian, was the chief architect to Welwyn Garden City. In the 1950s, he designed housing and schools for Plymouth and Exeter City Councils. The firm was also known for its many non-conformist churches. These may both be called neo-Georgian and take their inspiration from St. Paul's Church in Covent Garden and also from the colonial architecture of New England which de Soissons much admired.

Externally, the buildings are modest except for their fine copper spires, the pretty courtyard of the Baptists and other subtle details. Internally, they both have huge murals. The Baptist Church especially has a fine set of limed oak furnishings, pendant light fittings and original colours - characteristic of the era. These two churches together with the Synagogue, St. Andrew's and the Catholic Church form a 'churches precinct' in the Abercrombie plan.



**22** NAAFI (Navy Army &  
Air Forces Institution)  
(1949-51) Notte St/Armada Way  
Messrs. Joseph

The NAAFI was a very important building in a military city. The design is uniquely eclectic; it captures the influences and changes that were occurring with British architecture in the early 1950s. Messrs. Joseph, had previously designed the contemporary NAAFI in Portsmouth. For Plymouth they chose a style of architecture made popular by the famous 1930s City Hall in Norwich: Classically based, and built in brick with 'Georgian' windows and an asymmetrical tower.

This style was based on various Swedish classical buildings including the influential Town Hall in Stockholm. The elongated classical columns, which flank the stair window over the entrance of the NAAFI, are a direct reference. The tapering shape of the tower resembles buildings designed by Willem Marinus Dudok, the important city architect of Hilversum, in The Netherlands who won the Royal Gold Medal in 1935. The rear of the building closely resembles the 1930s brick buildings in London of another architect represented in the Plymouth, Thomas Tait. The building was converted to the School of Architecture for the Polytechnic in 1980.



**23** Roman Catholic Church of  
Christ the King (1960-62)  
Notte St/Armada Way Grade II

Sir Giles Scott, Son & Partner

The Church was the last work of Sir Giles Gilbert Scott and completed after his death in 1960. Scott had devoted his life to building the great Gothic Anglican Cathedral in Liverpool for which he received the Royal Gold Medal in 1925. He was a prolific designer of smaller churches and known for Bankside (now Tate Modern), Battersea Power Station and the design of the K6 red telephone box.

This church is also Gothic with highly stylised Gothic tracery windows set in plain brick walls (presumably chosen to match the NAAFI). The pitched Roman tiled roofs to the nave and tower give it an Italianate feeling, oddly out-of-scale with its position opposite the NAAFI and against the slope up to the Hoe. The interior is very spare but with a beautiful timber boarded roof, painted blue and grey with red, gold and black embellishments based on an Arts and Crafts interpretation of medieval decoration of a type that might have been promoted much earlier by William Morris. The presbytery and hall, adjoining the church to the south, were added in 1963 to the designs of Sir Giles' son, Richard.



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**24** Naval Memorial  
Grade II  
Hoe Park

Sir Robert Lorimer (1920-24) & Edward Maufe (post-1945).  
Sculptor: William McMillan

The memorial of an obelisk supporting a globe was designed by the great Scottish architect, Robert Lorimer, to a standard pattern which was also repeated on the memorials at Portsmouth and Chatham. In addition, Lorimer was also designing the Memorial Chapel in Edinburgh at about the same time.

The lower walls and terraces on the north side were added by Edward Maufe, the designer of Guildford Cathedral, after the 2nd World War but using similar materials: Ashlar Portland stone with cast bronze plaques. He also added the life-size sculpture by McMillan. Often adorned with commemorative wreaths and flowers, is powerfully moving and both architects have captured the gravitas of the memorial, a sanctuary of contemplation amid an area of the city otherwise devoted to leisure. It is worth pausing and reading the many forgotten names, places and dates where the British Navy intervened in world history.



**25** Tinside Lido (1929-35)  
Grade II  
Hoe Road

W.J. Wibberley, City Architect.

The Hoe foreshore was the only part of the water's edge of Plymouth to be devoted to leisure and, from the 19th century, was used for bathing in the natural rock pools. Permanent buildings, changing rooms and a pier were added but it was not until the 1920s that Tinside Lido was built. The lido was a new building type and therefore it was appropriate that the contemporary 'jazz modern' style should be used and this was the first example in Plymouth.

Access to the seawater pool was via a staircase tower (complete with etched window depicting bathing scenes) from the newly constructed Hoe promenades and the colonnade (which is also listed) and which cantilevered from the rock face. The pool itself was adorned with fountains and surrounded with a series of pavilions with semi-circular forms, flat roofs, battered walls and ships' handrails all borrowed from the Art-Deco Exhibition in Paris of 1925 or the Wembley Exhibition of 1924. Generations of Plymothians learned to swim here and when it closed in 1992 there was a public outcry leading to its restoration and reopening in 2005 and a further lift extension in 2009.



## ABOUT

In 2009, the Architecture Centre Devon and Cornwall received Your Heritage funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

Plymouth: 20th Century City is a two year project based on the unique architecture and built environment of Plymouth. The main aim of the project is to encourage people to look again at the important 20th Century architecture of Plymouth. The project was devised with Plymothians in mind, as well as the wide range of people who visit the city every year.

The project intention is to show how the city centre of Plymouth was shaped through its distinctive 20th Century planning, design, art and Architecture.



Supported by:



## A Colin Campbell House (1938-40)

Colin Campbell Court

Barron & Rooke

Colin Campbell House or Car Sales is a rare survival from 1930s Plymouth. It was designed by local architects as a car show room and petrol station, facing the narrow Summerland Street.

The chosen style – Jazz Modern or Art-Deco – was the style of the 1930s, modern and streamlined with horizontal bands of metal windows, curved corners and vertical fin ‘features’. The modish façade concealed a standard concrete-framed shed with a pitched steel-trussed roof but the original interior had a stylishly decorated staircase. The angled sign outside marks another era when the building was briefly a Habitat store in the 1980s.



## B Gaumont Palace (Cinema) (1931)

Union Street

W.H. Watkins & Partners

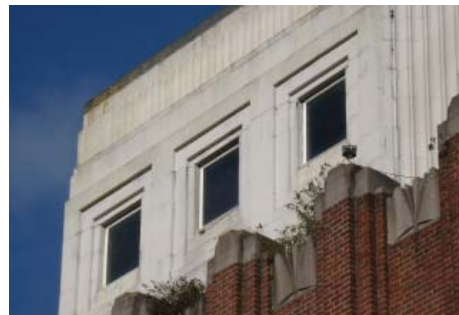
The Gaumont replaced the Andrews' Picture Palace of 1910 and was designed by Percy Bartlett of the Bristol architects W. H. Watkins for Provincial Cinematograph Theatres. At the same time he also de-

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signed Gaumont Cinemas at Coventry, Exeter and Barnstable, which it resembles. The interior was thoroughly Art Deco in style. The exterior to Union Street was in solid brick with applied brick patterns in stripe and chevron motifs.

The Gaumont closed in 1961 to become a Top Rank Entertainment Centre which in its later years finally turned into a club which is now closed.

Information on cinemas from:  
Richard Gray Cinemas in Britain.  
London: Lund Humphries 1996



## C Athenaeum (1958-61)

Derry's Cross

Walls & Pearn

The Athenaeum replaced the original neo-Greek building designed by John Foulston (1819) which was damaged in the blitz and demolished in 1959. The new building was another influenced by the Royal Festival Hall and its front is a similar structure to the Civic Centre's Council Chamber. It is faced in Portland stone and raised on round columns with a grand room above the portico. Originally, the room

faced directly across Derry's Cross to Raleigh Street before it was blocked by more recent development which also obscures the axis and symmetry of the plan.

Internally, the theatre auditorium is roofed in an innovative steel space frame structure and there is an attractive double-height library on the east side



## D Royal Cinema (now Reel) (1936-38)

Derry's Cross

William R. Glen

The Royal Cinema, which replaced Foulston's classical Theatre Royal (built 1810-13), was one of many cinemas designed by Glen for the ABC circuit. In the 1930s Glen designed some 80 ABC cinemas, including the Ritz in Edinburgh, the Regent in Birmingham and Savoy in Wandsworth. Glen was known for his stylistically reserved but well-planned interiors and for his restrained exteriors. Here the building is faced in Portland stone with columns in antis - recessed within a portico structure and which is possibly a precedent for 1950s Plymouth. It was originally symmetrical with the adjoining Royal Hotel, which was destroyed in the war.



## E Money Centre (1975)

Mayflower Street

Marshman Warren & Taylor

The building is composed as a podium and tower. It adopted a different posture on the periphery of the Abercrombie grid signalling a new commercial centre for the city. The precisely detailed unbonded white tiling and tinted horizontal banding of windows would have been a very striking addition to the Plymouth skyline. The interlocking spaces at ground level including the ramps, terracing, the curved column bases very distinctive. Marshman Warren & Taylor was one of the largest architectural practices in the UK at the time and also designed the apartment building Ocean Court 1976 on Richmond Walk.

