

Ansett Tower (Former T & G Building)

16-22 Broadway Avenue, Palmerston North

NZHPT Registration Number: 7375
NZHPT Registration Type: Historic Place – Category II
NZHPT Registration Date: 13/02/97
City/District Council: Palmerston North City Council
District Plan Status: Category 1

Other Names: Broadway Towers, Ansett House



Brief History

This Art Deco inspired building was erected in 1938 by Melbourne-based insurance company The Temperance and General Mutual Life Assurance Society (T & G). T & G was established in Melbourne in 1876 in a take-over of the Assurance Branch of the Independent Order of Rechabites. The firm expanded rapidly throughout Australasia and brought its operations to New Zealand in 1903.

During the 1920s and 1930s the firm erected many new buildings and replaced existing ones throughout Australasia. Employing the services of Melbourne architectural firm A and K Henderson, a design style was developed during this period which included the distinctive ziggurat tower, a symbol of T & G. The Palmerston North building is typical of this style, with its strong vertical emphasis, shallow wall planes, articulated skyline and Stripped Classical elements.

The architectural drawings are dated January 1937. The four-storey building cost £46,000 to construct. This landmark building was the tallest in the city at the time of construction and was notable at the time for its modern facilities including fully automatic lifts housed in the tower along with a stairwell. The building was renamed Broadway Towers in 1987 and the exterior restored.

Another name change occurred in 1993 with the take-over of T & G by National Mutual Life Insurance, and again four years later to become Ansett House.

Principal Sources:

Bowman, I & Kelly, M, *Palmerston North CBD Heritage Inventory*, Palmerston North, Palmerston North City Council, 2003.

Pilkington, D, *Palmerston North City Heritage Trail*, Palmerston North, Palmerston North City Council, 1993.

Palmerston North City Library Photograph Collection: Sq 260, 268, 269, 272, 273, 285, 376, 377; Z 5183, 5187, 5188; St 99, 101; Bc 31, 212.

