

BROWN FALCONER

MOUNT GAMBIER LIBRARY

architectural+interior review

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ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICE

Brown Falconer

PROJECT

Mount Gambier Library

AWARDS

2010 AIA Interior Architecture Commendation, SA; 2010 AIA Collaborative Design, SA; 2010 AIA Adelaide Review 'The People's Choice' Award

PRACTICE PROFILE

With a broad and diverse base of project experience, Brown Falconer is one of the most dynamic and innovative multidisciplinary architectural, interior design and services engineering practices in South Australia. In operation for over six decades, the firm continues to produce outstanding projects.

PROJECT ARCHITECT

Peter Woolman

DESIGN ARCHITECT

Peter Moeck

INTERIOR DESIGNER

Antonia Derotaeché

ELECTRICAL ENGINEER

David Wilson

MECHANICAL ENGINEER

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BUILDER

Kennett Pty Ltd

PHOTOGRAPHY

Don Brice



More than just a place of study and books, it seems the civic nature of public libraries has taken a dominant role in a move towards becoming part of the information technology revolution. Game rooms, computer labs and online resources are a few features of the modern library that not only demonstrate a conscious move towards technological literacy, but also the importance of involving and reaching out to the community.

While Brown Falconer's Mount Gambier Library is a definite reflection of this revolution, it also displays an

emphasis on developing communal spaces that express the regional city's identity. The library is not only a resource for the locals, but also a place to identify with. For the Brown Falconer team, it was important that the library stand proudly as an institution unique to Mount Gambier, somewhere locals could identify as a place of their own.

Essentially a multi-purpose communal facility, the library's spatial and circulatory organisation draws its relaxed and informal undertones from retail strategies. Like bookshops, the library's zoning system is based on

categories tied together by an intuitive clockwise circulation pattern that revolves around a central adult collection area. The children's zone is conveniently visible from the entry, while the accompanying zones – fiction, non-fiction, movies and music, newspapers and magazines – are kept open and airy, with the process of finding books and resources kept simple.

The treatment of these zones are kept characteristic to the region's unique landscape and heritage. Even the one-of-a-kind themed children's library incorporates elements of Mount



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1. Brown Falconer's multidisciplinary and hands-on initiatives are prevalent throughout the library. Works by local graphic designers, metalworkers, sculptors, photographers, furniture and industrial designers all add a Mount Gambier flavour to the library.
2. Local ponds, sink holes and caves are matched with vibrant aquamarine colours in the themed children's zone. The explorative nature of the space keeps the atmosphere playful and engaging for children of all ages.
3. The exterior's 'lattice of letters' playfully screens the library's interiors from direct sunlight.



Gambier's unique landscape, with the region's local ponds, sink holes and caves all making appearances throughout the vibrant aquamarine interiors. Seating areas, shelves, parenting facilities and computers are integrated into the whimsical interior which easily disguise the educational environment with a fun mix of learning and play.

Part of the communal appeal of the library, which renders it as more than just a place of books and study, is its tactile nature. Brown Falconer's strong ethos on collaborative work, backed by their established group of architects, interior designers and engineers was extended to include artists and artisans who each played a key role in developing the library's aesthetics. Metalwork, furniture design,

sculpture and photography were just a few of the home-grown professions that assisted in adding a personal, one-of-a-kind touch to the library's completion.

With interactive customer service points, meeting, training and multi-purpose rooms, as well as local heritage rooms and a café within a youth area, an everyday visit to the library can involve anything from a dancing session to a catch-up with friends. Mount Gambier Library's mix of flexible and permanent interiors means that there is inevitably a space for anyone to enjoy. Commercial outlets are also co-located with the library to enrich and integrate a multitude of everyday activities into the unique library experience.

In addition to integrating the library

with the Mount Gambier community, steps were taken to minimise the library's carbon footprint by utilising the region's sustainable resources. Materials were reused from the demolished previous library, while energy is derived from wind turbines in the southeast coastal region. The library's roof design also collects rainwater and stormwater, drawing it to a greater filtration system connected to the local Blue Lake town water supply.

Brown Falconer sought to pack Mount Gambier Library with facilities that would provide information in all its forms to people of all ages and cultures. The result is a prototype of the future library, one not only filled with character, but one that stands as a celebration of its community. +

4. Purpose-designed furniture using native timbers and veneers add to the library's unique personality.
5. Natural regional tones, colours and textures dominate the core zone.
6. A mixture of flexible and hard-wearing spaces appeal to a broad range of ages.
7. Abundant sunlight and custom-designed furniture keep spaces feeling communal and relaxed.
8. Open seating areas maintain a connection with the outside and give an active viewing point for visitors and passersby. The library title's lively red concertina fold is just one of the visually intriguing custom-made elements of the library.
9. The work of local artisans add a cultural and historical touch to the library's landscaping.
10. The exterior's sweeping lines, lattice of letters and open interiors reach out to locals to activate the library as a multi-use communal hub. Reconstituted materials are used alongside native metals and timbers to easily identify with the region's landscape.



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PRODUCTS

Walls Bianco Precast Concrete sandblasted and polished **Roof** Spanform and KingKlip® 700 roof decking from Fielders **Doors & Windows** Capral Narrowline **Floor Finishes** Boral Timber Spotted Gum; InterfaceFLOR 7090 range carpet tiles; Forbo Marmoleum Vivace range vinyl **Wall Linings** CSR plasterboard **Ceiling Linings** Perforated ZINCALUME® from Fielders **Sanitaryware** Caroma Flora/Integra/Leda **Joinery** Laminex® **Hardware** Lockwood lever handles from Assa Abloy **Furniture** Collections Shelving from Resource Furniture **Lighting** Moonlighting **Artwork** Collaborative Design by Groundplay