



VANCOUVER
HERITAGE
FOUNDATION

25
YEARS

15th annual **HERITAGE HOUSE TOUR**

Sunday, June 4th 2017
10am - 5pm

Presenting Sponsor



STONEHOUSE
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THIS GUIDEBOOK IS YOUR TICKET

2017 is a milestone year for Vancouver Heritage Foundation. We are thrilled to celebrate both our 25th anniversary and our 15th annual Heritage House Tour. With wonderful support from many people, VHF has come a long way in our first quarter century, awarding the first *True Colours* grants in 1999, launching our first house tour in 2003, and now delivering over 70 events as well as projects each year. We are thankful to all those who have helped make VHF what it is today and who help us in our goals to increase public knowledge and appreciation of Vancouver's unique and diverse built heritage, and to provide support to those taking on heritage projects.

The Heritage House Tour offers a special opportunity to understand the history of Vancouver and its different neighbourhoods, and to explore first-hand some of our city's historic places. This year, nine stops take us from Strathcona to Kerrisdale, Kitsilano and Dunbar through 40 years of history. Each house has its story of early residents and later changes but all highlight different ways that heritage homes are being retained and enjoyed. As Vancouver continues to grow and change, historic buildings and places have an important role to play, contributing to strong, sustainable communities.

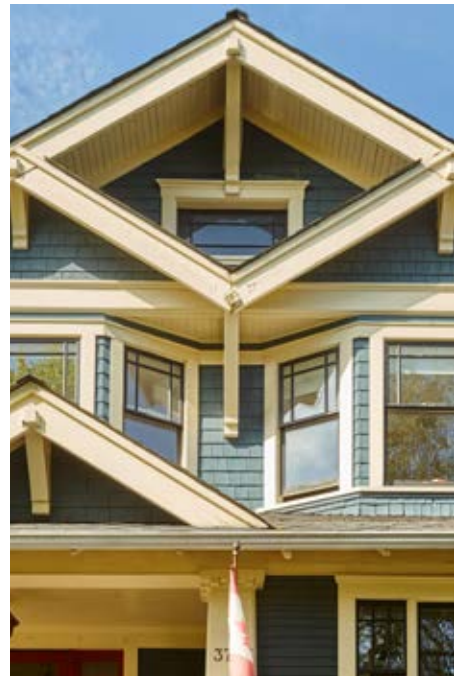
From connecting us to our neighbourhoods and the history of our city, to being adaptable to new uses and energy efficiency requirements, they have a lot to offer.

The tour is made possible by the generosity of many people, including the homeowners who open their doors, the many volunteers who contribute to research, writing and welcoming visitors on tour day, and the sponsors who support this key event in our calendar. If you are new to VHF, we hope you will explore our other tours, talks, workshops and the many online resources we offer. You can also get involved! Volunteer or make a donation. The successes in our first 25 years are a reflection of the passion of many Vancouverites for their historic places. Help us ensure a positive future for heritage buildings at the heart of our neighbourhoods.

We hope you enjoy the tour!

Judith Mosley
VHF Executive Director

To donate to VHF, please visit our website or stop by either of our Info Booths on June 4th.



Heritage House Tour Guidelines

Houses are open from 10am - 5pm only. No latecomers or early birds.

Photography on tour properties is strictly prohibited.

No children under 6 are permitted (infants in front carriers are allowed) and all attendees must have a ticket.

No food, drink, pets, smoking or cell phone use on tour properties.

Washroom facilities are NOT provided at tour homes. Check the map in this guide for recommended public facility locations.

We regret the tour is not mobility device accessible.

VHF reserves the right to refuse entry or ask any visitor to leave who does not adhere to these guidelines.

Please be patient as line-ups at homes are possible. Enjoy the opportunity to meet other visitors as you already share a common interest!

Please feel free to ask questions of any of our amazing volunteers.

What should I bring?

This guide. It is also your ticket. Show it at each house to get inside.

Appropriate shoes and a bag to carry them. You are required to remove your shoes at each home, so wear shoes that are easy to get on and off, and wear or bring socks. We also recommend bringing your own reusable bag to carry shoes, as we no longer provide them.

A Vancouver street map. The guidebook map is for illustrative purposes only.

You will need a Vancouver street map.

Vancouver Heritage Foundation

Vancouver Heritage Foundation is a registered charity supporting the conservation of heritage buildings and structures in recognition of their contribution to the city's economy, sustainability and culture.

www.vancouverheritagefoundation.org

Registered charity # 891765968

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Martin Knowles Photo/Media unless otherwise noted*





Built 1912

First Residents Charles & Elizabeth Wilson

Architect/Builder E.W. Falls

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New homes were much in demand in Vancouver during the boom years before the 1913 economic downturn and the First World War. Vancouver's population grew rapidly, resource industries were shipping their products across the globe, and the city was established as the financial and commercial centre of BC. Streetcar lines were extended to service new suburbs including here in Kitsilano which saw rapid development following the arrival in 1909 of the 4th Avenue line.

Edgar Walter Falls and his younger brother Herbert Pitman Falls arrived in Vancouver in 1905 from Ontario, via Manitoba, and went into business building houses on Vancouver's growing west side. In 1907, they established the Terminal Construction & Investment Co. Ltd. and in 1910 built a sash and door factory on Yew Street, between 11th and 12th Avenues. Fire destroyed the factory a year later. They recouped and were soon back in business, erecting 2871 W 5th Ave in 1912. The war and subsequent depression took its toll and they were out of business by late 1919, though Herbert Falls continued to build houses into the 1920s.

This house is a front-gabled Craftsman with a full-width inset porch, brackets and a stained-glass transom over the front casement window. Rock-dash stucco in the

gable with shingles, siding and knee brackets are variations on a theme with its neighbour to the east. Houses such as this are adaptations of earlier styles that worked well on Vancouver's 33-foot lots.

The current owners bought the house in 2003 and set about restoring it, doing much of the work themselves. Previously a multi-bedroom rental for university students, it was in rough shape. Over the past 13 years, they hand-stripped paint from all the wood trim, wainscoting and built-ins. Whenever possible, they used heritage materials – when not, they tried to find appropriate pieces to fit in with the Arts and Crafts features of the home, from wood trim and floors to hardware, lighting and stained glass. The owner enrolled in VHF's *Old School* program to learn how to properly repair and restore the windows, many of which had been nailed and painted shut. Meticulous about preserving their heritage home, the owners are also very conscious of their environmental footprint. They insulated the attic and walls, and installed roofing made with recycled tires, a high-efficiency furnace that runs on reclaimed methane and a rainwater capture system. The home is an inspiring example of the possibilities for making historic homes part of a sustainable community.

*"Heritage conservation contributes to creating a sustainable built environment and resilient communities."**



Blower-door energy evaluation test

While some may not think of Vancouver's heritage homes as a pillar of sustainability, existing buildings do have a significant role to play in reducing our environmental impacts. Reusing older buildings and their materials makes smart use of our resources and reduces waste. It has been estimated that it can take decades for a new building to make up for

the energy used in creating it, compared to retaining and retrofitting an older building. Replacing older buildings without considering upgrading them is a missed opportunity.

There are key ways that homeowners can improve

energy performance and reduce environmental impacts, and it can be done very effectively with methods that are compatible with older construction and heritage value. Insulation, reducing air leakage and upgrading space and water heating devices are good places to start. Older buildings can perform poorly by today's energy standards often because they were not well insulated. Blown-in cellulose wall insulation, batt insulation in attics and rigid foam board against basement walls make a big difference. Draft-proofing reduces heat loss and makes older homes more comfortable while heating devices can be upgraded to high-efficiency units.

At House #1, several energy and water saving measures have been implemented and recycled materials used. It offers a valuable example of the possibilities. VHF's *Heritage Energy Retrofit Grant* program is designed to help homeowners take similar steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while also preserving heritage features and value. Homes participating in the pilot program reduced emissions by as much as 6 tonnes per annum. The program offers guidance on the best measures for

your home and financial support for implementation. There are many good reasons to keep historic buildings part of our city – for their cultural significance, architectural value, the connection to our history, the texture they bring to the places where we live, work and play, and their adaptability and, often, affordability for new uses, young businesses and the creative economy. As we work towards reducing our environmental footprint, we will need to combine both high tech new construction and the retrofitting of existing buildings. Heritage buildings can live long and sustainable lives as they continue to enrich our neighbourhoods and communities for many years to come.

To find out more about the Heritage Energy Retrofit Grant visit vancouverheritagefoundation.org/heritage-energy-retrofit-grant/

** Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Directors of Culture and Heritage in Canada have endorsed this statement. From "Building Resilience: Practical Guidelines for the Sustainable Rehabilitation of Buildings in Canada.", 2016.*



Built 1937

First Owners Robert & Aulena Campbell
Contractor Point Grey Realty Co. Ltd.

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Point Grey Realty Co. Ltd. built this MacKenzie Heights home for Robert and Aulena Campbell. This area between the Dunbar and Kerrisdale neighbourhoods had remained largely undeveloped until the 1930s but then rapidly filled in. The charming home has enjoyed just a few long-term owners. The Campbells stayed 15 years, followed by George and Ruth Thompson, owners of the Shannon Home Bakery on Davie Street (a bakery still operates at the same location today). After one more owner, the current owners purchased the house in 1983.

The rather fanciful, romantic Storybook architectural style became popular in North America in the Interwar years, reflecting a newfound love of the picturesque and a kind of whimsical neo-nostalgia associated with films and fairy tales. Variations were built to common plans with a variety of elements including French turrets, sweeping gables, arched windows and other exaggerated Gothic and Tudor cottage-like elements. Rolled eaves give the look of a thatched roof. Though modest in size, high-quality materials and craftsmanship persisted during this period. Many examples remain across the city but are threatened by redevelopment for larger homes and

are largely absent from the City's Heritage Register.

On moving in, the current owners undertook some immediate updates. The basement, a 1960s interpretation of "Ye Olde English Pub" with scorched wood beams, red burlap curtains and carpet, was an early renewal project. They were pleased to discover, beneath the carpet, painted fir flooring. Beneath carpets in the rest of the home was oak and more fir. A major renovation in the early 1990s expanded the kitchen and enlarged a tiny upstairs bedroom. The owners have been careful to preserve and restore many of the home's unique and original features, including the dark mahogany trim, fireplace surround, entryway light fixture, laundry chute and cast-iron bathtub. Much of the home retains the original textured walls, a popular feature of the era. The owners found period-appropriate light fixtures at thrift stores, rescued the basement fireplace surround from a demolition in Shaughnessy, and added a section of custom-made stair rail to match the original. Through their efforts and appreciation of the style, the house today retains the warmth and charm of this romantic form inside and out.



Water/Building Permit 1914

First Owner W. Fairey

First Residents Ernest E. & Phyllis Townsley

Architect (1923) Bowman & Cullerne

Builder (1923) R.C. Dawson

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ASSOCIATES

This unique home has seen three major renovations since its beginnings as a small cabin in the wooded area of the municipality of Point Grey, when 37th Avenue was known as Whitehead Road. Water and building permits were issued to William Fairey in January 1914. It is believed that he built the original structure sometime after this, although he was never listed as a resident at this address. William was the third of 12 siblings born in Liverpool, England. Emigrating with his family to Canada, he worked in construction first in Victoria, then in Vancouver. His younger brother, Francis Thrower Fairey, later became BC's Deputy Minister of Education and a federal MP. The rural cabin may have been a retreat from the crowded family home on E King Edward Avenue.

The first known residents were Ernest and Phyllis Townsley, who moved from North Vancouver to the little cabin in 1921. In 1923, they took out a building permit for \$3,000 for "repairs," which were likely the major renovations to enlarge the cabin and make it a proper home. The Townsleys hired architects Bowman & Cullerne, who designed a number of Vancouver-area schools from 1910 onwards, and builder R.C. Dawson. An accountant who had served in the military, Townsley

was known by neighbours as "The Colonel". He used the attic to display his extensive gun collection, reportedly the largest private collection in western Canada. Renowned shoe designer John Fluevog followed the Townsleys in 1983 and made further additions and modifications, and the house sold once more before being purchased by the current owners in 2009.

The current owners lived in the house for three years before they began their year-long renovations. With a deep setback from the road, the house does not conform to current zoning which made the design and permitting process difficult. Despite initial challenges, the owners were able to add a second-floor master suite, raise the ceilings in the dining room and study, upgrade the kitchen, overhaul each of the bathrooms and add the covered porch. The home was a collection of elements and additions so this was not purely a restoration project. Instead, the owners, architect and interior designer took cues from the unique vaulted ceiling of the living room, perhaps Fairey's original cabin, to create a characterful home that consciously highlights its historic roots.



Food Stop



VHF Info Booth

House 3 - 3549 W 37th Ave *One block east of Dunbar St*

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Goat's 1912, Plate 102: Sunset AM1594 -: Map 342b

Vancouver's street names reflect how the city was developed. Several of the homes open on this year's tour were built on roads that have changed names at least once. Converted to numbered streets, Shannon Road, Whitehead Road and Centre Road were once indicative of the early development of their respective areas. As the City explores ways to recover and place First Nations names within the context of the modern city, it's interesting to look back on the history found in lost street names, and the significance of honouring new histories in 2017.

The boundaries of the District Lots, carved out of the landscape by the first non-native settlers, set where many of the early streets appeared. Real estate promoters subdividing these large parcels for development named their new streets after themselves or relatives. The Vancouver Improvement Company, for instance, named the streets in their east side neighbourhood after the directors of the company, as did the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) on many of the new streets of their downtown holdings.

The West End streets named by the CPR's surveyor were picked from a nautical chart hanging on the office wall, while in the community of Eburne at the foot of Granville Street on the Fraser River many of the street names came from sources in Saskatchewan where a number of the residents hailed from.

The first non-native settlers used existing First Nations trails to move through the landscape. Probably the best known example is Kingsway, running from Main and 7th Avenue to the city of New Westminster. Kingsway is the name the road received in 1913 after it was widened, paved and became part of the Pacific Coast Highway. Kingsway in London, the major road works driven through Holborn's warren of streets and alleys in 1905, lined with impressive neo-Baroque style buildings, was the aspirational choice for officials here for their new road.

The aspirational aspect of street naming is also evident in those areas where property developers used Drives and Crescents to create an ambience for what were in many cases rough-hewn roads through a

recently cleared but stump-strewn landscape.

Throughout the emerging city, small-scale subdivisions, sometimes no more than a couple of blocks, were named by their owners and particularly on the east side this piecemeal pattern of development contributed to a crazy quilt of short streets with a multitude of names. However, with the amalgamation of South Vancouver, Vancouver and Point Grey in 1929, the new city administration set about rationalizing street names. Numbered avenues now ran east and west while named streets ran north and south. Lost in all this was much of that early quirkiness of street names, though the chopped up grid remained.

Street names had always been an informal process but in 2012 the *Civic Assets Naming Committee* was created to recommend appropriate names to City Council. The citizen advisory body has worked to increase the diversity of names to better reflect today's city. Lanes in the West End, which are seeing townhouse development, have been named after prominent West End women and AIDS activists, Black labour history is honoured with Pullman Porter Street in the Olympic Village area, while the first South Asian name on a city street, Jack Uppal Road, was named in



Coal Harbour Road, 1923. AM 1559 - CVA 258-15

2016. The first Chinook language name, Lahb Avenue was set in 2017. As the city moves forward, the naming culture continues to change and evolve. Working relationships with the three host nations will create a new protocol that will see a greater presence of First Nations culture within the city.

While the early street names are a fascinating look at where our city began and the goals of early development, the potential in the new naming process is to highlight more aspects of our history and to leave a legacy that is inclusive of the mosaic of people who have helped build Vancouver.



Water/Building Permits 1912
First Occupant Homer C. Adams
Builder Alex Mains
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Located on the former Centre Road in the Strathcona Heights subdivision – the hillside above the extensive Canadian Pacific Railway gardens (now Point Grey School) – this lot offered an attractive opportunity for builder Alex Mains. He obtained a building permit for \$3,500 in 1912 for a 1½ storey frame residence with furnace. The house was a short walk from the *Strathcona* interurban rail stop at 37th Avenue on the line that connected Kerrisdale, the centre of the new Point Grey municipality, to downtown and to Steveston via Marpole. The first-known occupant was Homer Adams in 1917, an accountant working downtown at W.H. Malkin & Co., a large wholesale grocer on Water Street.

Mains was an active builder across Vancouver, constructing more than a dozen houses during the building boom from 1911 to 1913. He built twin homes at 3555 and 3561 W 5th Avenue and 2744 and 2750 Prince Edward Street, in Craftsman style with a distinctive half-timbering design in the front gable. Several of his houses were demolished for redevelopment near Vancouver General Hospital some decades ago but others still stand across the city. This one on W 36th Avenue is in the classic Craftsman style with side gables, a full-width inset porch, shingle cladding and

second-floor sleeping porch.

The house had seen at least 10 different owners before the current owners purchased it in 1990. It was advertised as land value only but they were experienced in restoration and saw the potential to save it. Working in stages over several years, they began with a new roof and wiring. They reconfigured the second floor, subdivided by a previous family with eight children, and rebuilt walls that had been removed in the living room. Throughout, original mouldings, wainscoting and windows were stripped of layers of paint and refinished. The sleeping porch was opened up again where it had previously been enclosed as a small office, and a rear sleeping porch was converted to a bedroom during a renovation that also enlarged the kitchen and created a master ensuite. The basement was dug out to accommodate a guest suite. Furnishings and wallpapers have been chosen to complement the era and style of the house and their consistency belies the many modifications it had seen over the years. A steady process of updating and careful restoration has revealed the character and craftsmanship of this century-old home.



Built 1913-14

First Owner See House #6

Architect Somervell & Putnam (1913);
Robert Lemon Architect Inc. (rehabilitation)

Builder Dominion Construction

Heritage Register A (M)

In late 1912, when sugar refinery owner B.T. Rogers purchased the 10-acre parcel of land that would become his *Shannon Estate*, his first priority was the grounds. The Rogers had the land cleared and began laying out plantings and vegetable gardens, the perimeter wall soon enclosed the land (built by contractor John Stout & Co.), and the gatehouse, named on the architectural plans as the Gate Lodge, was the first of three buildings to be constructed. Located in the northeast corner of the estate, it was designed with the mansion and coach house by the American architects Somervell & Putnam and built with the same red brick. It was followed in 1915 by the coach house, originally the garage and stables designed to accommodate four cars as well as horses, boiler room, workshop and an upstairs apartment. While the completion of the mansion was delayed by wartime labour and material shortages, and then by B.T. Rogers' death, the Rogers daughters used the coach house apartment as a rural weekend retreat away from the busy West End.

The gatehouse was flanked by two driveways, with the main drive providing the formal approach to the mansion for family and guests, emulating

arrival at an English country estate, while the service drive ran along the north edge of the property. In the 1970s, the gatehouse was renovated as a self-contained residence as part of the Shannon Mews development.

With the 2011 rezoning of the estate to accommodate greater density of housing, the gatehouse was added to the Heritage Designation of the site along with the coach house, Italian garden, ornamental landscape elements, several mature copper beech trees and some interiors of the mansion. The gatehouse exterior has now been fully restored and the interior rehabilitated and reorganized as an individual residence. On the exterior, the brickwork has been cleaned and repointed, the Welsh slate roof repaired and the original copper rain water system replicated. The ornamental wrought iron gates of the formal estate entrance have been carefully repaired. The reconfigured interior was designed by the owner and retains the original staircase and historic windows along with custom interior design to create a uniquely modern yet historic home.

*Access to both House #5 and #6 is by foot via the gatehouse entry way. On-site parking is not permitted, however street parking is available on neighbouring roads.



Built 1913-1925

First Owner Benjamin T.
& Mary I. Rogers

Heritage Register A (M) (I)

Builder Dominion Construction Sponsored by

Architect Somervell &
Putnam (1913); Bernard
Palmer (1925); Robert Lemon
Architect Inc. (rehabilitation)



**Please note only the mansion ground floor and gardens are open on tour*

In 1911, Benjamin Tingley Rogers, owner of Rogers Sugar, travelled to Britain for an extended holiday. Upon his return, inspired by the estates he had seen, he immediately began searching for a bigger home with room for extensive gardens and livestock. Many of his neighbours were leaving the West End, where he and his family lived in the splendid *Gabriola* on Davie Street, for the newly opened Shaughnessy Heights. In 1912, with the assistance of CPR superintendent Richard Marpole, Rogers bought 10 rural acres on Granville Street at Shannon Road (57th Avenue). The site offered an idyllic location with sweeping views to the south.

Rogers hired American architectural firm Somervell & Putnam to design his estate and by late 1913 plans were in place for over 30,000 square feet of living space with a three-storey Beaux Arts-style mansion. Rogers bought several animals and immediately began laying out formal gardens, vegetable plots and trees, drawing on 20 years experience with the extensive gardens planted at his previous homes. However, construction was seriously delayed by labour and supply shortages during the war. In 1917, the coach house, nicknamed *Bohemia*, was completed and occupied by the two elder Rogers daughters.

The exterior of the house, erected by Charles Bentall's Dominion Construction, was complete when 52-year-old B.T. Rogers died suddenly in June 1918. His widow Mrs. Rogers continued to live at *Gabriola* for another seven years while maintaining the livestock and gardens at *Shannon*, sometimes using it for charity events. She appeared to have little desire to finish its interior until 1925, when Charles Bentall convinced her to sell *Gabriola* to him for conversion into apartments. She engaged architect Bernard Palmer to complete *Shannon* and commissioned Charles Marega to create ornamental garden elements, several of which are still on the grounds, as well as interior plasterwork. In August 1925, Mrs. Rogers and her three youngest children moved in, making it their family home and hosting numerous events there over the

next 11 years.

The subsequent owner, financier Austin Taylor, lived here with his family for 30 years and made few changes. In the late 1960s, Wall Financial Corp. purchased the property. Renowned local firm Erickson/Massey Architects were retained to develop townhouses and apartments in 1973 while the original structures were maintained. The mansion and perimeter wall were designated as part of the zoning deal that allowed multi-family buildings in a single-family area.

In 2016, a full heritage rehabilitation of the mansion, auxiliary buildings and key landscape elements was completed following the rezoning of the site for greater housing density. The mansion's now designated principal reception rooms have been restored with reference to photographs of the home in its 1930 heyday including wallpapers, lighting, glass, paneling and plasterwork with careful preservation of original fabric. The dramatic stone columns, archways and carvings of the exterior are once again flanked by formal gardens, including the elaborate Italian garden. While the setting of the grounds has changed with the new density, public views to the mansion have been revealed and the original splendor of the *Shannon* estate can be appreciated.

Sweet Success: The Legacy of the Rogers Family by *Donald Luxton*



Benjamin Tingley Rogers was a brash American entrepreneur who saw promise in the struggling new city of Vancouver, and just a few years after the Great Fire established a business that still thrives after 127 years. A number of schemes had been promoted to develop a local sugar industry but none succeeded until B.T. Rogers arrived in 1890. Rogers immediately recognized the potential to refine sugar in Vancouver, strategically located to take advantage of raw sugar shipments from the Pacific. Twenty-four-year-old Rogers established the British Columbia Sugar Refining Company in 1890, which continues to produce almost 10% of Canada's total sugar output.

In 1892 Rogers married Mary Isabella Angus; the sugar plant produced great wealth, and the Rogers family enjoyed a baronial lifestyle. Rogers built two mansions during his lifetime that remain Vancouver landmarks: *Gabriola* on Davie Street, and *Shannon* on Granville Street.

Gabriola was the largest and finest mansion in the city when it was completed in 1901. It was one of Samuel Maclure's largest early commissions, and was built entirely of stone quarried on Gabriola Island, topped with a high-hipped bellcast slate roof, and featuring a prominent projecting porte cochère and circular corner veranda. The highlight of the house is a spectacular stained glass panel that crowns the main staircase landing, the work of Henry Bloomfield & Sons. *Shannon*, an ambitious 40-room mansion, was once the largest residence west of Toronto.

In addition to these two spectacular mansions, other members of the Rogers family built grand homes that remain as a significant part of Vancouver's architectural legacy. The Rogers sugar refinery also survives in its original location; although much expanded over time, it is one of the most significant surviving early industrial plants in the province.

B.T. Rogers in the Cariboo, 1897. CVA 2011-092.3806



Built 1910

First Owner James H. Bushnell

Heritage Status Within First Shaughnessy
Heritage Conservation Area

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Lying at the heart of First Shaughnessy, this large Tudor Revival home was built soon after the Canadian Pacific Railway planned the neighbourhood and launched development in 1907. Designed as an exclusive enclave of curving avenues, grand homes and spacious gardens far from the industry of the city, Shaughnessy Heights drew many wealthy residents from the West End. The first owner of this house was no exception, moving here from Bidwell Street with his wife Christina and their son. A highly respected land surveyor, James Henry Bushnell (1867-1950) worked in Vancouver, throughout BC and in Alaska.

In 1916, the home was purchased by Bryce W. Fleck (1884-1969) who, with his brother J. Gordon, owned Fleck Brothers Mill, Marine & Mine Supplies. Coming to Vancouver from Ontario in 1906, they founded the company by 1908; its success is a testament to the scale of BC's economically important industries of the time – logging, mining, shipping and construction. Moving through a succession of expanded warehouse spaces, from Seymour Street to Homer Street, Alexander Street and later Powell Street, the business flourished and Bryce Fleck clearly did well. He moved here from the West

End where he was living with his brother and in 1923 hired builders Coffin & McLennan to add the garage. In 1924, he commissioned architects Honeyman & Curtis to build him a new mansion at 1296 The Crescent for \$40,000.

Subsequent owners kept the house largely intact and it avoided conversion to a rooming house or other use, a fate that befell many large Shaughnessy homes in the Depression and wartime period. Owners renovated and updated, including enclosing a portion of deck as living space, but the superb original features were largely retained including the vestibule with its stained glass, oak floors, banister, built-in cabinetry, doors and hardware. The service stair also remains, giving an insight to the Bushnells' 1910-era lifestyle. Over the past 13 years, the current owner has made a number of updates to the home, including the kitchen and master suite, and has restored landscaping, all with a respectful approach to the historic character and details of the house. Over 100 years later, the tranquility and elegance that attracted Vancouver's elite to this neighbourhood is still evident in this well-preserved Shaughnessy home.





Built 1906
 First Owner David Inches
 Builder John Walter McMeekin
 Heritage Register B (M)
 Sponsored by



This gabled vernacular-style home with its wide porch and 2½ storey profile was typical of the working-class housing built in Strathcona in the first decade of the 20th century. The neighbourhood was home to many different immigrant communities who found work in the mills and railyards nearby or in the growing downtown to the west. The house was built in 1906 by Ontario-born carpenter John Walter McMeekin who had built his own home next door in 1903. By the following year, he had sold both houses and moved a couple of streets away. 658 Keefer's first resident was David Inches, a foreman and later an engineer at the Post Office Building on W Hastings Street, who stayed until 1920.

While typical of the style of the Strathcona neighbourhood, this house has special historic significance as the home of Walter and Mary Chan. They moved here with their family in 1956 after their previous home was purchased and demolished by the City as part of the plan for "urban renewal" that intended to clear much of their neighbourhood for a new freeway and social housing. Walter and Mary Chan were instrumental in organizing grassroots resistance to the plan, forming the Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association (SPOTA) and ultimately halting the destruction. This

home was a frequent meeting place and plans of action were hatched at the kitchen table. Through the efforts of the Chans and SPOTA, the scheme was abandoned but not before many homes were expropriated and demolished. The uniquely diverse Hogan's Alley, with its cafés and clubs catering to the local Black community, was also lost to the construction of the Georgia Street viaducts, the only part of the freeway to be built. The home is one of Vancouver Heritage Foundation's 125 Places That Matter in recognition of the significance of Walter and Mary's contributions.

The house has remained in the family. Walter and Mary's son and daughter-in-law completed a dramatic restoration of the home in 2016, receiving a 2017 City of Vancouver Heritage Award. As part of a Heritage Revitalization Agreement, the house was fully preserved, the basement suite finished, and a strata-titled coach house was built behind the home. Exterior restoration work included removing asphalt shingles to reveal much of the original cladding and trim. Once repaired, rather than returning to a 1906 colour palette, the exterior was repainted in the familiar pink of Walter and Mary Chan's time.



Food Stop



Heritage & Sustainability



"The East End." "China Valley." "The blighted area on the edge of Chinatown." "Trendy Strathcona." No area in Vancouver has endured such a roller-coaster ride over 130 years while preserving most of its historic buildings intact.

Architecturally, Strathcona is the only survivor of 19th-century Vancouver, with 25-foot lots and a significant number of Victorian-style buildings. Narrow, tall houses almost touch, their eaves overlapping. A few tiny cottages survive. Although there are some row houses, most builders erected detached houses.

The vanished working-class neighbourhood south of the city's commercial downtown – today's Downtown South / Yaletown area – once looked much the same, whereas other early neighbourhoods – the West End, Kitsilano, Fairview, Mount Pleasant and Grandview, were platted out in 33-foot lots, giving builders the opportunity for more expansive floor plans.

The level streets east of Gore Street disguise a hilly topography. Look closely – many houses on Pender near Heatley Street, for example, are a half-storey below street level; houses on Union are a steep climb above the sidewalk. The back lanes, which follow the humps and the hollows, give a more accurate picture of the original neighbourhood than the streets, which were cut, graded and filled by the city.

A lifetime ago, unlike the rest of homogeneous, British-White Vancouver, Strathcona was a rich mixture of cultures embodying the "League of Nations" tag applied to Strathcona School at Pender and Jackson Streets. Until the dispossession of WWII, Japanese-Canadian children were about half the school population but lived primarily north of Hastings Street in "Little Tokyo" a.k.a. Japantown. Union was the Italian street, Pender the Jewish one. (The hulking condo conversion at Heatley and Pender is a repurposing of the 1917 Schara Tzedek synagogue.) The area's Black Canadian community congregated at Fountain Chapel at Jackson and Prior.

The Chinese-Canadian community only began to expand eastward from Chinatown in the 1950s after immigration and citizenship restrictions ended in 1947, leading to the brief use of the “China Valley” nickname for the area. Recent gentrification, as well as the dispersal throughout the city of both Chinese and other groups such as Jews and Italians, have undone much of the earlier diversity.

Strathcona has the additional distinction of being the best neighbourhood in the city to witness unfettered small-scale capitalism, 19th-century style – many lots have more than one house, and apartment buildings, some with operating corner stores or cafés, are mixed in among them. Its richly textured urbanism is perfect for today’s mindset but was considered a fledgling slum by planners from the 1920s through the 1960s.

In the legendary 1960s fight led by residents against urban renewal and freeway expansion, as described on page 15, Strathcona played

a key role. The immediate effect was a complete overhaul of federal government housing policies. Authorities shelved further modernist tower-



Keefer and Jackson, Feb 1966. AM 1135-: CVA 1135-35.

block developments following the completion of the MacLean Park and Raymur Park housing projects, instead putting money into small-scale

improvements and grants to homeowners, a policy that expanded in the 1970s into other Vancouver areas such as Kitsilano.

Strathcona has a distinctive character, telling a slightly different, slightly older story from the other vintage neighbourhoods in the city. It continues to reflect its beginnings 130 years ago along with the changes that have come incrementally, each generation of residents leaving a mark. Its character is protected now by good zoning and some certainty about its future as a heritage area, leading families to invest and settle. This is what a sustainable urban village looks like in the 21st century.



How many of us can say we know our local history well? Our everyday routines take us across the city: into buildings for work and errands, shopping at local cafés and businesses, enjoying live music at a historic venue or walking the dog in our neighbourhood parks. How well do we know the layers of history each place holds, or the stories and meaning of a single address or site, especially one where the original structure no longer exists? Do we remember the people and diverse cultures that have built this city and continue to contribute, but are often missing from the main narrative?

Whether you were born in Vancouver or are a newcomer, a recent transplant or just visiting, there is always more to learn about this city's history and heritage. VHF's *Places That Matter* plaque project was created to raise awareness about the people, places and events that tell the stories of Vancouver's history, recognizing the need for lesser-known or unrecognized sites to be marked and commemorated. VHF is very excited to launch our *Places That Matter Community History Resource*, a new website that tells the 125 stories from public nominations celebrating Vancouver's 125th anniversary of incorporation in 2011.

After celebrating and commemorating 85 sites with a physical plaque, we are able to devote individual webpages to each site (with or without a plaque) with a gallery of current and archival images, a map, historical context and personal information, history resources and a "submit your story" section. We look forward to watching the project grow as stories and images are added. We hope to hear from you, as we're certain you will have a story to submit for at least one of our *Places That Matter*!

As you travel the city enjoying this year's tour, you may notice some of these nearby *Places That Matter*:



House # 8: The Walter and Mary Chan House

As we admire the restoration of the Walter and Mary Chan House, we also remember the wonderful story of family legacy and one of our city's important moments of activism. The story of SPOTA and the campaign to halt the redevelopment of Strathcona for a freeway is one of our city's lasting legacies of community engagement.



Near House #1: The Naam

Founded in 1968 as a vegetarian food store and café, the Naam still occupies its wooden storefront at 2722 W 4th Avenue and connects to Kitsilano's hippie community of the psychedelic and "back to the land" era of the 1960s and '70s.



Near Houses #5 and #6: Arbutus Corridor

At 57th Avenue and East Boulevard, you can cross and follow part of the Arbutus Corridor, a remnant of the historic interurban train line that spurred development across the west side. It also became a site of impromptu community gardens. Now owned by the City, it is being transformed into public space.



Want to learn more about the *Places That Matter Community History Resource* and the *Heritage Site Finder Interactive Map*? Visit us on tour day at the Discover Vancouver's Heritage Info Stop at 2020 W 36th Avenue, House #4.



Water Permit 1908
First Owner John R. Jacobs
Sponsored by



Sited high above the street, this home has yielded a few clues to a century of change on its doorstep. The flight of stairs to the front door reminds us that the streets were levelled in this naturally hilly neighbourhood after the house was built. The discovery of horseshoes and part of a bridle in the yard suggest a small stable once stood at the back, as motorized transport was cutting-edge in 1908. Granite cobblestones found throughout the garden were likely salvaged from the streetcar line that ran down East Georgia until it was taken up in the 1970s.

Built in 1908 for John R. Jacobs, manager of the East End Brokerage Co. at 245 E Hastings Street, the house saw a succession of residents who reflected the diversity of the neighbourhood through the decades. In spite of the changes that have taken place around it, the house is remarkably well-preserved. Yet the block narrowly escaped demolition in the City's campaign to raze Strathcona in the heyday of freeway building in the 1960s. Across the street was a similar dense cluster of houses, apartments and small shops until the inhabitants were forced out and MacLean Park was created. When plans to sweep away old housing in the neighbourhood were abandoned, the City instead offered grants that encouraged homeowners to stucco their homes and install aluminum windows as a

way of repairing and updating them. This house is believed to have been an early beneficiary of the program.

The current owners bought the home almost 30 years ago, lived here for more than a decade, then rented it out while working in the BC Interior for many years. Returning to Vancouver, they completed major renovations in 2014 working with local architects, contractors and designers. As professional historians, the owners have enjoyed preserving a combination of original features of the home as well as later additions and changes such as the mid-20th century front door and stove that came with the house, and the enclosed front porch, tracking the evolution of the home over more than a century. Wood windows were reinstated and the stucco removed on the front facade but retained on the rear and sides of the house to preserve this piece of the home's more recent history. Though frequently made to choose between preservation, rationalization and restoration, their "finished product" is a bright and well-loved combination of old, new and in-between.



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Peter Wall acquired the Shannon Property in 1966 and wanted to preserve the beautiful Mansion, Gatehouse and Coach House. He fell in love with the gardens, trees and lily pond. In the late 1960s, he met with City Council and after considerable negotiation, the vision for the estate was accepted and the project approved. Now in 2017, he is very proud of the rehabilitation of this historic house and gardens and of the community that surrounds it.

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British Columbia City Directories 1860-1955: Vancouver Public Library
vpl.ca/bccd

Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1800-1950 (online)

City of Vancouver Archives

Heritage Vancouver Building Permits Database
permits.heritagevancouver.org

Kluckner, Michael. *Vancouver: The Way It Was*. Whitecap Books Ltd, North Vancouver, 1984.

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Royal BC Museum, BC Archives: Genealogy
royalbcmuseum.bc.ca

WALKING TOURS

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\$15/per walk incl. tax

Join an experienced guide for a walk through Vancouver's neighbourhoods and architecture. Learn about the social history that shaped neighbourhoods or hear how art movements, zoning and city planning influenced the look and feel of our city.



photo credit: VHF

HERITAGE SITE FINDER Interactive Map

Find out more about the listed homes on this year's tour, and all of the over 2,200 sites on the Heritage Register, using our interactive map. Over a year of development and a dedicated team of volunteers have made this project possible, with new images and research added all the time. The map is also mobile friendly. Visit the map at vancouverheritagefoundation.org/map



The Heritage House Tour takes a large team of people to organize and put on each year. This year's tour has involved the efforts of over 180 volunteers. A big thank you to our 2017 homeowners for welcoming us into their homes!

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2



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5

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