

Statement of Significance

850 University Drive

Neighbourhood: Varsity View
Date Constructed: 1911
Development Era: 1906 – 1913 (Pre-WWI)
Architectural Style: Queen Anne Revival
Architect: Unknown
Builder: Unknown
Designation: Municipal
Original Use: Residence
Current Use: Residence



Description of Historic Place

The building features a two and three-quarter storey home constructed in 1911 located at 850 University Drive in the Varsity View neighbourhood. The house was built for Andrew Smith as a single family dwelling and converted to four apartments in 1944. The building is associated with several prominent Saskatoon citizens, including Robert Buchanan.

Heritage Value

The heritage value of the property lies in its architectural style, its association with Saskatoon's economic prosperity in the early 1900s and its association with several prominent citizens. Robert Buchanan lived in the house from 1920-1938. Buchanan was involved in real estate during the boom years and is associated with the real estate firm that brought the Buena Vista subdivision to market and was responsible for the Robin Hood Flour Mill locating in Saskatoon.

Justice Emmett M. Hall owned and resided in the house from 1956-1960. Hall was born in Quebec and received his law degree at the University of Saskatchewan in 1919. He practiced law from 1927-1957 and formed the firm of Hall, Maguire and Wedge. Hall was appointed Chief Justice of Saskatchewan in 1957 and to the Supreme Court of Canada in 1962.

Dr. Allan Guy lived at the house from 1984-2002. Dr. Guy was a professor at the University of Saskatchewan and served as Deputy Minister of Continuing Education, in 1975.

The house exhibits a Queen Anne Revival style of architecture which is known for its decorative detailing, steeply pitched roofs and porches. The building features an asymmetrical plan, bay windows, a wrap-around verandah, deeply shadowed front entrance and the first and second storey portions of the round tower, originally topped with a circular turret. Designed to mix elements from various architectural styles in unique and decorative ways, the Queen Anne style was commonly used in the early-twentieth century to portray a sense of wealth and importance in the community.

The exterior of the house has been well cared for over the years. Historical photographs of the property show that some alterations have been carried out, most notably the removal of the circular turret, the addition of the front dormer and removal of the verandah roof.

Character Defining Elements

Key elements which contribute to the heritage value of this historic resource include:

- Queen Anne Revival style of architecture including its high irregularly shaped roofline, hipped roof with dormers, oriel windows, broad porch with shadowed entrance, asymmetrical front façade, brickwork, ornate details including white woodwork and the remaining portions of the round tower;
- Those features that relate to its historical and cultural significance such as its contribution to the streetscape on University Drive; and
- Those elements that relate to prominent citizens in Saskatoon including Andrew Smith, Robert Buchanan, Dr. Allan Guy and Emmett M. Hall.

Source: City of Saskatoon – Heritage Property Inventory, City of Saskatoon Archives