



Morasch Block, Page 7

BRIDGELAND/ RIVERSIDE

Walking Tour



HERITAGE
CALGARY

INTRODUCTION

First established in the 1880s, Riverside was established by Russian-German immigrants during Calgary's first significant population boom. Originally referred to as Germantown, the community grew over time, with Italian and Ukrainian immigrants. Because the Dominion Bridge Company operated in the village, citizens started referring to the village as Bridgeland along with its formal name of Riverside.

Riverside incorporated as a village in 1903, and would form the Bridgeland-Riverside Community Association in 1908 as Calgary would begin the process of annexing the village in 1910. With the influx of Italian immigrants to the community, Bridgeland-Riverside lower area became known as Little Italy, with a huge concentration of Italian bakeries, restaurants and grocery stores providing the community with reminders of home. While Bridgeland's Italian community has declined as they grew

outwards into the rest of the city.

Bridgeland was also home to the Calgary General Hospital, a longstanding facility built in 1910 to replace the general hospital built in Victoria Park (now called the Rundle Ruins.) The hospital would serve the area until 1997, when it was closed and subsequently demolished a year later.

Bridgeland-Riverside also includes St. Patrick's Island, St. George's Island and the Calgary Zoo, which was built in 1929. Originally starting with only 26 mammals and 78 birds, the Zoo would go on to become one of the most significant Zoos in North America.

Despite the densification of the neighbourhood, much of Bridgeland-Riverside's heritage remains intact and it remains one of Calgary's most walkable neighbourhoods and has a high concentration of heritage sites.

Table of Contents

Bridgeland-Riverside

- 6 Reconciliation Bridge
- 6 Poffenroth Block
- 7 Gallelli Block
- 7 Morasch Block
- 8 Bridgeland/Riverside Vacant Lot Garden
- 8 St. Matthew Lutheran Church
- 9 Moravian Church
- 9 Fire Hall No. 4
- 10 Rothermal Residence
- 10 Alexander Befus Residence
- 11 George Befus Residence
- 11 Hilderman Residence
- 12 Cannibale Block
- 12 Mauch Residence
- 13 McDowell Duplex
- 13 Riverside Bungalow School No. 2
- 14 Gerlitz Block
- 14 8 Street NE Boulevards
- 15 Wiggins Duplex
- 15 Bridgeland School
- 16 Shuler's Grocery
- 16 Nurses Home, General Hospital
- 17 Calgary Zoo Conservatory - Tropical Aviary*
- 17 Dinny the Dinosaur*
- 18 Calgary & Edmonton Railway
- 18 Bridge (Bow River)
- 19 CPR Irrigation Block - Wester
- 19 Section Headworks and Canal

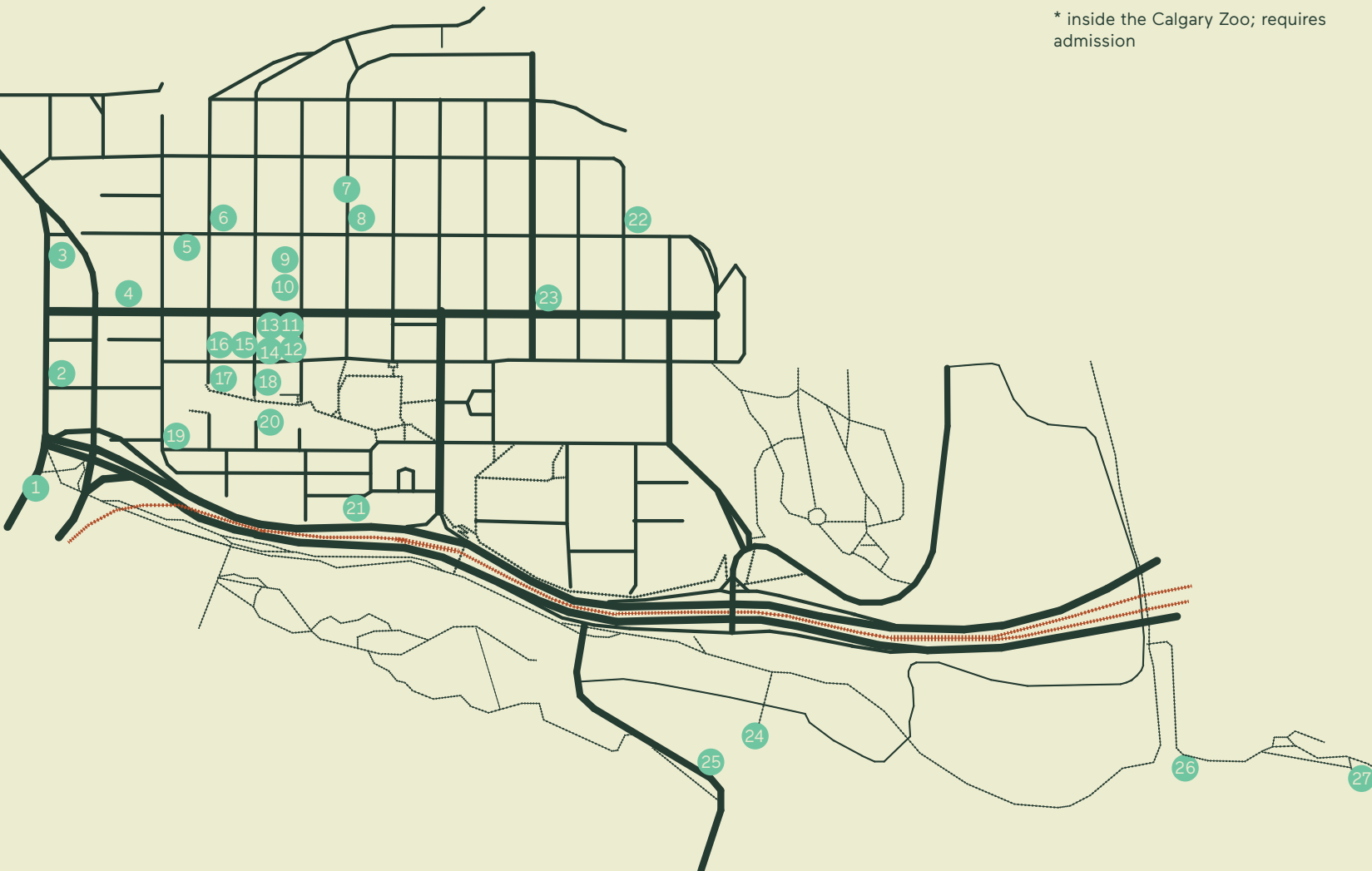
Bridgeland-Riverside

There is no starting point on this tour.
Pick a building to start on the map and explore!



- 1 Reconciliation Bridge
- 2 Poffenroth Block
- 3 Gallelli Block
- 4 Morasch Block
- 5 Riverside Bungalow School No. 2
- 6 Gerlitz Block
- 7 8 Street NE Boulevards
- 8 Wiggins Duplex
- 9 McDowell Duplex
- 10 Mauch Residence
- 11 Cannibale Block
- 12 Hilderman Residence
- 13 Alexander Befus
- 14 George Befus Residence
- 15 Rothermal Residence
- 16 Fire Hall No. 4
- 17 Moravian Church
- 18 St. Matthew Lutheran Church
- 19 John K Kaiser
- 20 Bridgeland/Riverside Vacant Lot Garden
- 21 Nurses Home, General Hospital
- 22 Bridgeland School
- 23 Schulers Grocery
- 24 Calgary Zoo Conservatory - Tropical Aviary*
- 25 Dinny the Dinosaur*
- 26 Calgary & Edmonton Railway Bridge (Bow River)
- 27 CPR Irrigation Block - Wester Section Headworks and Canal

* inside the Calgary Zoo; requires admission



Reconciliation Bridge

4 Ave SE - Camelback Through-Truss - 1910

Reconciliation Bridge, built in 1910 is a 116.58-meter-long and 14.02-meter-wide, two-span, Parker Camelback, riveted-steel through-truss bridge on a concrete substructure made up of one pier and two abutments. The bridge permits 4th Street North East to cross the Bow River and connects the communities of Bridgeland - Riverside to the downtowns area. The bridge holds symbolic value as the location of an ancient crossing of the Bow River on the Old North Trail, an ancient aboriginal transportation corridor; it perpetuates this historic transportation route.

Recommendations of the Calgary Aboriginal Urban Advisory Committee in White Goose Flying, A Report to Calgary City Council on the Indian Residential School Truth and Reconciliation (White Goose Flying Report) which included a recommendation to address the name of the Langevin Bridge.



Poffenroth Block

608 Meredith Rd NE - Edwardian Commercial - 1910

This brick building is a good example of Edwardian Commercial and features: recessed storefronts, display windows, bulkheads, clerestory glazing, double hung windows with sandstone sills and pressed tin cornices. The building was situated on the main road to Edmonton and is part of the main commercial area for the immediate community. Dairyman Henry Poffenroth built this apartment/commercial block shortly after Bridgeland/Riverside became part of Calgary. The de Waal family has owned the building since the 1930s.

The building appears to have been altered very little over time. During the 1930s, most of the suites were reportedly converted into single rooms with shared bathrooms. A new roof was installed in 1995, and the stairwell/balcony at the rear of the building was replaced in 1996.



Gallelli Block

212 4 St NE - 212 4 St NE - 1912

The 1912 Gallelli Block is a tall, narrow, two-storey Edwardian Commercial Style building with a parapeted flat roof and metal flag pole. The upper facade has a decorative pressed-metal upper cornice with dentils and signband above vertical sash windows. The wood-frame commercial building is clad in brick, currently faced in stucco on the south wall and painted on the others. The commercial building fronts the busy 4 ST NE traffic corridor and historic route from Calgary to Edmonton. The 1912 mixed-use block also has symbolic value for its association with the ethnic immigrant groups who settled and established businesses in Bridgeland-Riverside at the turn of the 20th century. From 1910-14 the first small wave of Calgary's ethnic Italians, settled in the community, especially between 1 and 3 Avenues, followed by a second influx of Italians in 1920.



Morasch Block

642 1 Ave NE - Edwardian Commercial - 1911

The 1911 Morasch Block is a two-storey, wood-frame Edwardian Commercial Style building clad in brick (currently painted). The upper façade of this flat-roofed building displays a very large moulded, pressed-metal upper cornice with signband above triple-assembly windows. On the lower storefront, brick piers define the building's original single and double storefront bays, and align with the decorative brackets on the pressed-metal lower cornice and signband. The mixed-use block is associated with many ethnic Germans - residents, owners, proprietors and its builder - and is symbolic of the ethnic immigrant groups who settled and established businesses in Bridgeland-Riverside at the turn of the 20th century. The block's first owner and builder, German-born Peter Morasch, immigrated to Canada with his wife Mary and their children in 1900 and worked for the CPR as a carpenter; they briefly lived upstairs in 1912.



John K. Kaiser Residence

34 6 St NE - Queen Anne Revival - 1910

The John K. Kaiser Residence, built in 1910, is a two-and-one-half storey single-family house in a simplified Queen Anne Revival style, with a hip roof with lower front cross-gable and an off-centre front entrance. The property exemplifies the working-class housing built in this neighbourhood and around Calgary for the burgeoning pre-WWI population.

Characteristics of the Queen Anne Revival style seen here are its steeply pitched hip roof with lower cross gable and asymmetrical facade with projecting front porch, all meant to evoke picturesque charm. Interior woodwork and leaded-glass windows are also common features. This house has a wood architrave mantelpiece flanked by built-in shelving. Original decorative leaded-glass window panes have been preserved, though are not installed.



St. Matthew Lutheran Church

60 7 St NE - Gothic Revival - 1912

A large number of German-speaking immigrants settled in this district of Bridgeland in the early years of the 20th century, and one of the names by which the area was known was Germantown. Many of these Calgarians were followers of the Moravian faith. The first Moravian congregation was organized in 1902; the church which is built at the corner of 7 Avenue and 3 Street is now the First Spiritualist Church. It is a very good example of the Gothic Revival style, with its pointed windows and tall buttressed tower. The building also features a very good interior. In 1945 it was realized that the Moravian congregation had dwindled and the neighbouring Lutheran congregation had grown in size. The two congregations then traded churches. Since that time this building has been known as St. Matthew Lutheran Church. With its neon-lighted cross atop the church spire, 100 feet above ground level, the church is a North Hill landmark.



Bridgeland/Riverside Vacant Lot Garden

46 7 St NE - Community Garden - 1930

The Bridgeland / Riverside Vacant Lot Garden is significant as an excellent example of a community garden, and is the oldest of its type in Calgary. It is also valuable as the only known remaining community garden that was once part of the Vacant Lots Garden Club.

The Garden was established sometime between 1924 and 1930 on vacant land that was purchased by The City of Calgary in 1922 under a City programme known as the Vacant Lots Garden Club. The Vacant Lots Garden Club was an offshoot of a national movement of the same name that was inaugurated in Calgary in 1911 and formally organized in 1914. The club allowed residents to garden on empty civic property for a small fee with a twofold purpose: beautification and food supply.



Moravia n Church

70 6A St NE - Vernacular - 1912

A large number of German-speaking immigrants settled in this district of Bridgeland in the early years of the 20th century, and one of the names by which the area was known was Germantown. This small wood-frame church was erected in 1912 by a Lutheran congregation which had been organized earlier, which was originally known as Jehovah Lutheran Church. In the subsequent decades, the Lutheran congregation grew quickly while the neighbouring Moravian congregation dwindled, and so, in 1945 the two traded churches.

The present building is a good example of a smaller, rural sort of church, somewhat unusual for an urban building. It is part of a good streetscape, although only a fair historic grouping, and has excellent historical significance for its association with Calgary's German community.



Fire Hall No. 4

104 6A St NE - Edwardian Classical - 1909

Fire Hall No. 4, built 1909, is a two-storey, red-brick building built in a reserved Edwardian Classical style. Two large arched doorways distinguish the primary façade. In 1926 Fire Hall No. 4 was made available to the YMCA and became the Calgary YMCA's first official branch. The facility offered a variety of social and educational programmes to young people as well as numerous physical activities. The YMCA initially focused on activities for boys, but later gained a large membership of girls, offering classes in sewing, tap-dance and art, as well as a physical training programme. When the Riverside branch was established, one of its major purposes was to promote the assimilation of the largely German speaking Russian population of the neighbourhood. The building served as a YMCA until 1948 when it was returned to the City of Calgary.

The property was protected as a Municipal Historic Resource in 1999 and as a Provincial Registered Historic Resource in 2003.



Alexander Befus Residence

104 7 St NE - Edwardian Cottage - 1911

In October of 1911, brothers Alexander and George Befus obtained a permit to build two identical brick-clad, one-and-one-half-storey woodframe residences in the Edwardian Cottage style. By December their families were living in their new homes. While living in the home with his wife Katie and children, Alex worked as a carpenter, teamster and CPR car repairman.

The 1911 home has a medium-pitched, hipped roof with a nested front-gable, and a full-width verandah. The asymmetrical facade features a bay window with leaded glass upper lights on the south side, and the front entry on the north.

Edwardian Cottages were attractive, low-cost homes, and generally the only housing type which the salaries of the community's working class residents allowed



Rothermal Residence

105 7 St NE - Edwardian Cottage - 1911

In the fall of 1911, having obtained a 43-foot lot close to the commercial street as well as a \$700 mortgage, Alexander Rothermal (born 1877) constructed a modest 6-room, one-and-one-half-storey woodframe residence with bevelled-wood siding. He was working as a labourer at that time, and held various positions with the CPR's Ogdens shops including blacksmith's helper.

The Rothermal Residence is a modest one-and-one-half-storey, woodframe Edwardian Cottage with a steeply-pitched, hipped roof with a nested front gable.

1930s black and white quartz pebble-dash stucco covers the home's original wood siding, and the original full-width front verandah has been enclosed with multi-light windows to create a sunroom.



George Befus Residence

102 7 St NE - Edwardian Cottage - 1911

The George Befus Residence is a one-and-one-half-storey, Edwardian Cottage with a high-pitched, hipped roof with a nested front-gable and a full-width verandah with decorative frieze and columns. The 1911



woodframe home has red-brick cladding and wooden shingles in the gable peak and on the balustrade.

The asymmetrical lower facade features a bay window with leaded glass upper lights on the south side, and the front entry on the north side.

The residence possesses symbolic value for its association with its ethnic German builders, owners and residents. The river flats south of

Centre Avenue and area nearby were known as "Germantown" from the late 1800s for their many ethnic German immigrants, especially those from Russia. The home is located at the corner of 7 (originally Munich) Street and Centre Avenue, the boundary between Bridgeland and Riverside. The Befus brothers were ethnic Germans who emigrated from Russia around 1903.

Hilderman Residence

113 7A St NE - Queen Anne Revival - 1912

In April 1912, Henry Hilderman gained title to a fifty-foot lot on 7A (formerly Douglass) Street, one lot south of the 1st Avenue streetcar route and just north of the Calgary General Hospital. Having acquired a building permit in February and a \$2,000 mortgage, he constructed a one-and-one-half-storey, brick-veneered, woodframe residence for about \$2200 using day labour.

The Hilderman Residence is a one-and-one-half-storey, Queen Anne Revival-style woodframe house with red-brick cladding. The 1912 home has a steeply-pitched, front-gable roof with decorative woodwork in the gable peak and an upper balcony centred below the gable. The asymmetrical lower façade has a bay window on one side, the main entry and stairs on the other and a full-width verandah with classical columns.



Mauch Residence

215 7A St NE - Queen Anne Revival - 1911

The Mauch Residence is a well-preserved and well-crafted example of the Queen Anne Revival Style in Bridgeland-Riverside. Elements of this style which are displayed by the home are its steeply-pitched roofline and asymmetrical lower facade with bay window on one side and main entry and stairs on the other.

As with approximately twenty percent of homes of this style in North America, it employs the gable-front variation, characterized by its prominent, full-width front gable with decorative patterned shingles in the gable peak framed by a wooden frieze. The home's quality is shown by the craftsmanship in the ornamental woodwork, as well as its upper balcony and full-width wooden verandah.



Cannibale Block

815 1 Ave NE - Edwardian Commercial - 1912

The 1912 Cannibale Block is a two-storey, wood-frame commercial-residential building with stucco covering the original cladding. The upper façade of this flat-roofed, Edwardian Commercial Style building has tall, segmental-arched windows as well as a pressed-metal upper cornice and signband with block letters 'C.ANNIBALE BLOCK 1912'. On the lower storefront façade, piers define the two original symmetrical single storefront bays.

The Corradetti family, its builders and long-time owners for five decades, were just ahead of the first wave of Calgary's ethnic Italians who arrived in 1910-14 and settled in Bridgeland-Riverside, mainly along 1, 2 and 3 avenues. Annibale, a long time Bridgeland resident and 35-year City employee, was a founding member of the Loggia Giovanni Caboto in 1918 (later Calgary Italian Club) which held their meetings in the community.



McDowell Duplex

219 & 221 7A St NE - Queen Anne Revival - 1912

The McDowell Duplex has design value for its unconventional plan and execution. It is a rare example of a two-storey duplex constructed north of the Bow River prior to the First World War, and one of only two surviving duplexes built during the period in Bridgeland/Riverside. It has further style value as a rare example of the restrained Queen Anne Free-Classic architecture found in working class neighbourhoods of the period. Elements of the Queen Anne Revival style are most strongly expressed in the structure's contrasting wall textures, its bay windows, and its full-width front verandah. The squared porch supports and hipped roof with twin false gables are reminiscent of the Free Classic variation of the style. The modest decorative detailing, such as patterned shingles in the gables and flat sawn balusters on both verandahs, embodies the vernacular, working-class character of this structure.



Riverside Bungalow School No. 2

711 2 Ave NE - Arts and Crafts - 1920

The Riverside Bungalow School No. 2 is valued as a well-preserved example of a later phase of 'bungalow' school designs in Calgary. Unique to Calgary, the 'bungalow' school originated with the 'cottage' school in 1910, originally conceived by Alberta Public Works.

Typical elements of the bungalow school design were one to one and one-half storey massing, low-pitched side gabled or hipped roofs with central front gable, central entryway and banked multi-pane wooden windows to allow ample light and air circulation. In the interior, spaces were demarked by four symmetrical and often nearly identical classroom spaces on each side of a central hallway. Separate boys and girls entryways were accessed from the sides or rear of the building.

Symmetrical design and Arts & Crafts detailing were central to many of the bungalow school designs.



8 Street NE Boulevards

200-500 Block 8 St NE - Streetscape - 1942

8 Street NE consists of 2 landscaped boulevards that run from 1 Avenue NE to 5 Avenue NE and dates from 1942. The boulevards include the regularly spaced, alternating Elm trees, Lilac shrubs, and Dogwood shrubs with a manicured turf understory that separates the side walk from the carriage way on both sides of the street.

The formal, ordered design of the boulevards reflects the influence of the City Beautiful Movement in urban development/planning. The movement supported beautification and formality to encourage order and harmony within society. William Roland Reader, Calgary's Superintendent of Parks and Cemeteries from 1913-1942, was



influenced by the City Beautiful Movement in the establishment and early growth of Calgary's parks and open space system. One of his principle initiatives was the creation of streets lined with trees and developed with landscaped boulevards and medians.

Gerlitz Block

618 Confluence WY SE - Edwardian Commercial - 1912

The Gerlitz Block is a two-storey red brick commercial structure with a single-storey rear shed extension. Constructed in 1911 in the Edwardian Commercial style, its symmetrical façade is dominated by large display windows, a recessed entrance and prominent pressed metal upper and lower cornices.

This structure is significant as a representative example in Bridgeland/Riverside of the modest Edwardian Commercial blocks built in Calgary's outlying residential subdivisions during the economic boom of 1906-13. The Gerlitz Block has landmark value as one of the few commercial buildings constructed outside of Bridgeland/Riverside's main retail strips on Edmonton Trail and 1st Avenue NE. The red brick structure stands out as one of the more substantial buildings in the area, occupying a large corner lot in a predominantly residential neighbourhood.



Wiggins Duplex

414 8 St NE - Edwardian Cottage - 1911

The Wiggins Duplex, built in 1911, is one-and-one-half storey Edwardian Cottage style duplex faced in wood lap siding. Its symmetrical facade features a pair of outer-edge front entrances with shallow porches, and a large central dormer.

This property exemplifies the entry of speculative, small-time builders into Calgary's hot real estate market during its pre-WWI population boom. The portion of Bridgeland where this duplex sits was subdivided by the CPR in 1909 in its typical grid pattern. The building was owned by and built for Wiggins & Co., grocers, who had had their own and other stores built in the neighbourhood.

This property appears to be Wiggins' only venture with freestanding rental housing.



Bridgeland School

414 11A St NE - Modern Classical - 1921

The Bridgeland School is a two storey brick building with a simple and restrained style built in 1921 and includes a matching 1930 west wing addition. The principal facades of the original 1921 building and 1930 addition are formally symmetrical and simple in their form with tall narrow window openings and extensive fenestration on the rear (east) elevation. The building reflects some Edwardian Commercial elements with its brick construction, stone trims, parapets, central pediment, and pressed-metal cornices. The classroom interiors feature broad expanses of windows that create light and airy spaces. A unique component of this specific school's design is its spiral slide fire escape, a rare

example of an emergency evacuation route is not seen in any other extant Calgary schools.



Nurses Home, General Hospital

845 McPherson Rd NE - Foursquare - 1911

This building is an excellent example of a Foursquare, popular throughout North America and a common pre-WWI house style in Calgary, it is rare in this neighbourhood. This plain, practical style has a rectangular, mainly symmetrical form, low-pitched (usually hip) overhanging roof, and a horizontal emphasis. A wrap-around porch and prominent central entryway are also common features. Typically used for single-family houses, this is a less common instance of the style employed for a larger, multi-tenant building.



This house reflects the influence of the Calgary General Hospital, in the community, as a major local employer. The third General Hospital, a four-storey brick building, was started in 1908 and opened in 1910, replacing both a cottage

hospital opened in 1890 and a sandstone structure from 1894.

Schuler's Grocery

1104 1 Ave NE - Edwardian Commercial - 1912

Schuler's Grocery is significant as a well-preserved example in Bridgeland of the modest Edwardian Commercial blocks built in Calgary's outlying residential subdivisions during the economic boom of 1906-13. Its symmetrical façade features large display windows on either side of a recessed front entrance. As is characteristic of the style, this block was constructed with an economy of materials and has few ornamental details, aside from dominant pressed metal upper and lower cornices.

One of the few such blocks still standing on 1st Avenue NE, Schuler's Grocery has further activity value for its use for more than one century as a neighbourhood corner store. Its first owner, Sam Schuler, operated a grocery from 1913 to 1918, but continued living in the upstairs suite until 1929. Like all of his successors until 1977, Schuler was a member of Calgary's Jewish community.



Calgary Zoo Conservatory - Tropical Aviary

1300 Zoo Rd NE - Aviary Greenhouse - 1962

The Calgary Zoo's Conservatory, originally built as the Conservatory-Aviary and later renamed the Tropical Aviary, is a steel-and-glass structure built in the 1960's at the central point of St. George's Island. It was originally located on an axis with St. George's Bridge and the Zoo's formal entrance gate, which has since been relocated.



Between the 1963 and 1967 phases of the aviary stands a single-storey brick building originally designed as a commissary or teahouse. The original building is designed as three interconnected greenhouses with a large central unit and a smaller unit on each gable end. This design configuration results in dramatic varying spatial volumes, each portraying a different climatic zone.

Dinny the Dinosaur

1300 Zoo Rd NE - In-Situ Sculpture - 1935

Dinny the Dinosaur is a concrete Brontosaurus sculpture that was built at the west end of St. George's Island in 1937. The model is twelve metres tall and thirty-six metres long, and it weighs 110 tonnes. It is the only remnant of the Calgary Zoo's original Natural History Park that was conceived and developed during the Great Depression. Dinny the Dinosaur is the sole remaining in-situ sculpture of the original Dinosaur Gardens; the first of its type in North America. It is constructed of hand formed concrete placed on a steel and wire mesh armature with a hollow interior cavity. It was/is highly visible and became the symbol of Calgary being superceded by the Husky Tower in 1968.



Calgary & Edmonton Railway Bridge (Bow River)

17A St SE - Pratt Through-Truss Bridge - 1925

The Calgary & Edmonton Railway Bridge (Bow River), built 1925, spans the Bow River between the communities of Inglewood and Bridgeland adjacent to the Bow River/Nose Creek confluence. Three spans in length, the steel bridge is a distinctive example of a Pratt through-truss bridge. The bridge continues its original railway function and forms part of CPR branch line that runs north from Calgary to Edmonton. The bridge is a recognized and distinctive landmark to motorists using adjacent Memorial Drive and Deerfoot Trail. The bridge is also well-known to pedestrians utilizing the regional pathways that run under the bridge on both sides of the Bow River. Its prominent location adjacent to Pearce Estate Park and the Harvie Passage River Park, make it a regular stopping point for pedestrians who are interested in getting an up-close view of a passing freight train.



CPR Irrigation Block - Western Section Headworks and Canal

933 Deerfoot Tr SE - Canal Headworks - 1912

In 1903, the Canadian Pacific Railway embarked on a massive project to divert water from the Bow River and to irrigate the company's consolidated land holdings east of Calgary. The purpose was to make irrigation farming possible and sell parcels of land to agricultural settlers.

The original diversion works were constructed between 1903 and 1906, at a point of the Bow River that was incorporated into Calgary's city limits in 1910. The original structures included: a temporary timber weir built across the river to control its flow and contain water for diversion; timber headworks, comprising 20 gate openings; and the Western Headworks Canal, which exited the city to the east and supplied water to Reservoir No. 1 (later named Chestermere Lake). The main canal was constructed with a bed width ranging from 40-60 feet and carried ten feet of water to discharge 2100 cubic feet per second. The canal remained essentially unchanged from 1913 until a major rehabilitation project from 1988-93. That project saw the canal widened and upgraded, with the addition of an adjacent recreational pathway along the entire length of the canal.



About us:

Heritage Calgary is a charitable Civic Partner of the City of Calgary that identifies, preserves, and promotes Calgary's diverse heritage for future generations. We believe heritage is a dynamic process by which identity is experienced, interpreted, and represented and we take pride in working with Calgarians to honour the fabric that we are all a part of.

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