



WALLBRIDGE RESIDENCE

12606 - 104 AVENUE NW

CITY OF EDMONTON HISTORIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Edmonton

DESCRIPTION OF HISTORICAL PLACE

The Wallbridge Residence, built in 1910, is a two and one-half storey dwelling with a low hipped roof and wooden shingle and clapboard siding. It has partially enclosed first and second storey verandahs and a central front entrance with a flared hip roof. It is located on the corner of a residential street and occupies two city lots in the neighbourhood of Westmount. The Wallbridge Residence is significant as an example of early residential development in Groat Estates, and for its association with architect Jean Wallbridge.

HERITAGE VALUE

Built in 1910, the Wallbridge residence is valued as one of the oldest surviving residential buildings in Groat Estates. The Wallbridge Residence, like most homes built in Edmonton in the early 1900s, does not adhere strictly to historically defined architectural styles, but rather was built to suit the tastes of the owners. Design elements which make this building stand out in the neighbourhood

include the contrasting clapboard and cedar shingle cladding, the flared verandah, pilasters, engaged piers, and paired square columns supporting the porch roof and the first and second storey verandahs. The splendid home was an attractive addition to Groat Estates, a community established in 1905 by James Carruthers, who attracted prominent Edmontonians by placing a caveat on sales ensuring no home could be built with a value less than \$5000. Larger, older, and with more interior and exterior ornamentation than neighbouring building, the Wallbridge Residence continues to speak to this early period of development.

The Wallbridge Residence is significant for its association with well-known Edmonton architect Jean Wallbridge. Jean Wallbridge was the third female architect registered in Alberta and, along with partner Mary Louise Imrie, was a pioneer in the area of small spaces and multi-family dwellings during the post-WWII period. Jean was the daughter of James Wallbridge, a prominent Edmonton lawyer who purchased the home in 1919 and lived there with his wife until his death in 1942.



According to Jean's nephew, after James' death, Jean converted the family home into a multi-family residence to provide extra income for her widowed mother. At this time the main entrance was moved from the east elevation to the south elevation, and the original doorway was replaced with a window. The hip-roofed porch was moved from the east elevation to the new south entrance, and the solid balustrade was opened up to allow for the new ingress. The main staircase was totally removed, and the centre of the second-floor balcony was enclosed to accommodate a new staircase which connected the first, second, and third-floor suites.





Dormers were installed on the third floor to allow for more light, including a large hip-roofed dormer on the south elevation and shed-roofed dormers on the north and east elevations. An exterior staircase was also added to the rear (north) elevation. After the conversion, the home was known as the Kildonan Apartment Block and served as a multi-family residence until 1979 when it was converted back to single occupancy.

CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS

The heritage value of the Wallbridge Residence is expressed in such character-defining elements as:

EXTERIOR:

- + the house's orientation on its original lot;
- + residential form, scale, and massing, as expressed by its two and one-half storey plus basement height;
- + architectural details typical of the stripped-down classical Edwardian style, such as tapered square verandah columns with simplified capitals and bases;
- + bellcast hipped roof with sawn cedar shingles, five dormers with sawn cedar shingle cladding, broad overhangs, and closed eaves;
- + modifications to convert the single-family house into the 1942 Kildonan Apartments including the relocation of the main entrance to the midpoint of the south elevation, construction of a three-storey entrance and stair enclosure in the middle of the south verandah, and a series of wood frame stairs and landings on the north elevation;
- + broad verandahs on either side of the south entrance and stair enclosure with glazed weather-protection, screens, and canvas awnings;

- + wood frame construction;
- + three red brick chimneys with corbelled tops;
- + wood entry doors with bevelled glass fenestration on the south and north elevations;
- + exterior wall finishes including rustic, unpainted, stone dash stucco, bevel cedar siding, vertical wood siding inside the verandah parapets, fir flooring on the verandahs, sawn cedar shingles on the dormers and the face of the verandahs, and painted wood trims, soffits, and fascias; and
- + pattern fenestration and construction of windows that include painted wood sashes with a combination of configurations including fixed and double-hung sashes, single and multiple units, multi-pane sashes, bevelled glass, and storm windows; and wooden storms.

INTERIOR:

- + wood trims throughout the house around the windows, doors, and baseboards;
- + circa 1942 room layout on the main floor and the arrangement of the main floor bathroom and second and third-floor bedrooms and closets;
- + built-in dining and living room cabinets with bevelled glass doors;
- + fireplaces and associated decorative mantles and the tile work in the living room, main floor rear study/bedroom, and second-floor bedrooms; and
- + portico between the living room and hall with its tapered square columns and wood trim.

Designated as a Municipal Historic Resource through Bylaw 15011 in November 2008.

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