

Landmarks

Hartney's Significant Heritage Buildings

The Hartney Special Places project was inaugurated in 2009-10, with the first major component being a comprehensive and detailed inventory of 75 buildings and sites. Through rigorous analysis and assessment processes suggested to us by the province's Historic Resources Branch, we have identified a handful of buildings that most effectively define and illustrate key aspects of our history and heritage. The following list of 15 buildings and sites constitutes the Hartney Heritage Group's recommendations and reminders to the community about those places that have major claims for heritage significance. Each building listed below is also presented on the following pages, with an accompanying Heritage Value Statement that elucidates that building's key heritage attributes.

- Hartney Town Hall (220 W Railway)
- Former MTS Office (315 E. Railway)
- St. Andrew's Anglican (602 River)
- St. Paul's Presbyterian (401 E. Railway)
- War Memorial (East Railway & River)
- Riverside Cemetery (Highway 21)
- A.E. Hill & Co. Store (310 Poplar)

- Lewis Building (308 Poplar)
- Crawford Building (213 W. Railway)
- Merchant's Bank (221 E. Railway)
- Irene Hill House (207 King)
- Tribble House (504 River)
- Agnew House (402 Souris)
- Fry House (400 Souris)
- Galbraith House (600 River)

As noted, the development of this short list of significant sites was the result of careful and studied deliberations using standard heritage evaluation criteria, processes and scoring regimes. This work was carried out by the Hartney Heritage Group with assistance from staff of the Historic Resources Branch of Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism. We are grateful to the branch for their generous support and patient attention in this endeavour.

As a collection, these 15 buildings and sites define many aspects and themes from Hartney's past, and do so through places that are at once significant, but also interesting and

attractive. These are places that the people of Hartney can look to with pride. These places remind us of past glories, but also suggest an enduring sense of community, and are a beacon for its future.

In this exercise, the Town of Hartney was advised by the Historic Resources Branch (HRB) that it had an exceptional collection of houses and commercial buildings, which explains why four business blocks and five houses are included on this list. Many other Manitoba communities of our size are advised to try to limit the number of buildings on the List of Significant Sites, to make for a more concise focus, but in our case HRB felt these nine buildings were actually needed on the list to better reflect our truly exceptional built heritage.

At the same time, HRB staff advised that our main commercial thoroughfare (East Railway) as well as a stretch of large brick houses on Souris Street, were important concentrations of buildings that made those areas of particular heritage value, even if only a few buildings in each area could be noted for high claims for heritage significance. These districts are noted in a section called Districts of Heritage Interest. It was suggested that these two areas be noted for special attention when opportunities for heritage promotion and education arise.

Hartney Town Hall

220 W. Railway



Heritage Value Statement

The Hartney Town Hall, built in 1906 by contractor Mr. H Vaughan, is an impressive example of the kind of multi-purpose public facilities that many small Manitoba communities ingeniously combined under one roof. Thus the building not only housed offices and meeting rooms for civic and public functions (as well as a jail), it also served as a fire station. Thus the large arched door on the right originally opened into the fire hall, where beginning in 1906 a variety of equipment— fire engine, hoses, horse cart, ladders and water tanks—was stored. The building itself is modest in its details but grand in its size and proportions, as well in its variety of openings – small and large, arched and flat topped. It remains a fine civic landmark, set across the tracks and facing the impressively intact facades of Hartney’s commercial thoroughfare.

Former MTS Office

315 E. Railway



Heritage Value Statement

The Former MTS (Manitoba Telephone System) Office, a tidy building in an eye-catching Spanish Colonial Revival style, is a fine representation of the modest-sized exchanges erected by Manitoba Government Telephones in small rural centres in the early 1940s. Based on a standard design also applied to other exchanges throughout Manitoba, the ca. 1945 structure is distinguished by its well-defined rectilinear form, many windows and contrasting finishes of light-coloured stucco, tile and red brick. Its presence recalls the pre-automatic era of telephone technology when human operators were essential to daily communications in their communities, working switching equipment that made local and long-distance calling possible. Still in office use, this facility is a bright and familiar fixture in Hartney’s business district.

War Memorial

East Railway & River



Heritage Value Statement

Hartney's 1926 War Memorial is a notable example of the kind of affecting tributes that small Manitoba towns put up after World War I to honour those who gave their lives during that conflict. Hartney's memorial is an especially fine example of the type, with the tall shaft set on five stepped blocks and capped with an elegantly detailed feature. The 22 names inscribed on one side of the memorial recall "Our Glorious Dead" from the 1914-1918 Great War conflict, and a bronze plaque on the opposite side notes the 15 local dead lost in World War II. The base of the monument also identifies the major battles of World War I in which Hartney men fought and died: Amiens, Cambrai, Arras, Valenciennes, Ypres, Passchendaele, Somme and Vimy Ridge.

Riverside Cemetery

Highway 21



Heritage Value Statement

Riverside Cemetery is an important site in Manitoba, one of the last remaining small-town burial grounds with an intact Victorian-era design. Still defined by its elaborate filigreed gates, original wire fence (from The Stewart Iron Works of Cincinnati, Ohio), broad paths lined with concrete curbs, lush lawns, specimen trees, and studded with fine marble and granite gravestones, the cemetery is a rare survivor. Where many other similar cemeteries have been updated by the removal of many of their original architectural features, Hartney's designed landscape is still intact. And with its impressive memorial tower, constructed by Albert Henry in 1936 to honour the area's pioneers, the site is an important and memorable place.

St. Andrew's Anglican

602 River



Heritage Value Statement

St. Andrew's Anglican Church (now known as the Old English Church), built between 1893 and 1894, is an exceptional expression of some of the basic and most familiar traditions of Anglican church architecture. Beginning with its steep roof, continuing through to its stolid brick walls and buttresses, and concluding in its sublime internal features and details, many carried out in delicate wood carvings, the church is a textbook example of the type. Constructed by local artisans and church members, this picturesque church gained a chancel echoing the same roofline in 1907, while the prescribed furnishings appeared as funds were raised by the Ladies' and Girls' auxiliaries as well as private endowments, a co-operative approach typical of small towns in southwestern Manitoba. In later years, the church languished for lack of a permanent pastor but has recently found new life with a new faith community and is being restored in the same progressive manner in which it was built.

St. Paul's Presbyterian

401 E. Railway



Heritage Value Statement

St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, from 1896, recalls an important church-building initiative from the late 1890s. The brainchild of Rev. James Robertson, Superintendent of Western Canada, this initiative ensured that Presbyterian congregations in Manitoba could have a well-designed building (from standard plans from noted Winnipeg architects) at a reasonable cost. Rev. Robertson's program involved grants up to one-fifth the amount of the building cost and loans up to 50%. Robertson even secured from the Canadian Pacific Railway the right to transport all building materials at two-thirds their ordinary rate. Several of these churches still stand, including St. Paul's at Hartney. Likely derived from designs by Winnipeg architects Chesterton and McNicol, the church features a simple rectangular plan, a high basement, small but detailed Gothic windows and the little belltower on its ridge. Like others of its type, it is a church of much distinction.

A.E. Hill & Co. Store

310 Poplar



Heritage Value Statement

The A.E. Hill and Company Store, from 1902 (and its adjacent neighbor, the Lewis Building), form a distinctive and important focal point at the south end of Hartney's main street: East Railway. With their excellent Romanesque Revival forms, features and details—so typical of commercial buildings at the turn of the 20th century—the buildings form a striking pair. Built by local mason James McArter, with a complete kiln of brick from the local Kirkland operation, the Hill Store was an industrious place, offering dry goods on the main store and providing dress-making services on the second floor for many years, all under the direction of Irene Hill. Now used as the Hart-Cam Museum, the building has recently been featured in Hollywood films, first as a bank in *The Lookout* and then as Currie's General Store in *The Stone Angel*. The building's interior is also notable, with its intact pressed tin ceiling and hand-powered, counterweighted lift.

Lewis Building

308 Poplar



Heritage Value Statement

In 1901 Walpole Murdoch and F.G. Lewis bought the *Hartney Star* newspaper from Dr. Woodhull, with Mr. Lewis supplying the capital and Mr. Murdoch serving as editor and manager. This fine building was constructed in 1902 to house the *Star's* operations. With its fine brickwork (presumably by James McArter with brick manufactured locally), variety of arch shapes and intact cornice, the building is a dandy little example of the Romanesque Revival style, so popular for commercial buildings at this time. It is worth noting that when the *Star's* first woman owner, Annie Playfair, ran the newspaper she lived on the upper floor. This building has served a variety of purposes since its original newspaper office function, including the Union Bank, Bank of Montreal, telephone office, post office, credit union building and a Liquor Commission outlet.

Merchant's Bank

221 E. Railway



Heritage Value Statement

The old Merchant's Bank, from 1914, is a very good example of the kind of simple but effective designs that many bank corporations used to impress and inspire their customers. With its red brick, noble classical details (like the white cornice, quoins at the edges, mildly arched openings), all raised above street level with this and that, the building continues to do something. The building also was used by the Bank of Montreal and now serves as a residential this and that.

Crawford Building

213 W. Railway



Heritage Value Statement

The Crawford Building, which originally housed W.E. Crawford's jewelry store beginning in 1902, is an important element in Hartney's impressively intact commercial district. Although the building never boasted a clock, it had a high clock tower at the southwest corner that the *Hartney Star* declared "lent to the store a certain novelty and grace." Many school children of the day were noted as standing before Mr. Crawford's store window to admire the rings, brooches and clocks displayed there, with most interest focused on a miniature golden steam engine that Mr. Crawford constructed with tiny wheels and pistons, which they were told would actually run. When, in 1906 the Union Bank sought to enlarge its premises Mr. Crawford sold this store to the bank and built beside it a one-storey building for his jewelry operation. Mr. Crawford was a notable local citizen, serving on the school board, town council and as mayor in 1909. He took a leading and vocal part in planning the town hall and was one of the company who started the Lyceum theatre.

Irene Hill House

207 King



Heritage Value Statement

With its sturdy brick walls, tall box-like form and delicate wooden porch details (some in obvious Italianate forms), the Irene Hill House is a terrific expression of turn-of-the-twentieth century architectural aesthetics. And the fact that one of the community's most beloved characters—Irene Hill—lived here for so many years makes it even more important. Irene attended the University of Toronto, where she received a Bachelor of Arts, and where she spent 12 satisfying years in different departments, and in her spare time typing manuscripts for one of Canada's most renowned scholars. She ultimately returned to Hartney in 1940 upon her father's death, to take over the family business – the A.E. Hill Store. For many years, Irene Hill was a fixture in the town's business community, as well as in its vibrant social life. She was secretary-treasurer of the Hartney Figure Skating Club, president of the Hartney Golf Club, secretary of the Hartney-Cameron Chamber of Commerce and librarian of the Hartney-Cameron Library for 30 years.

Tribble House

504 River



Heritage Value Statement

This small house is a very good example of the type of modest residence that many families in Hartney would have lived in at the turn of the twentieth century. With its solid brick walls—likely of local manufacture—and simple form under a basic gable roof, the house is a textbook example of the type. With its elegant bay window on the front face, the house also suggests the kind of modest architectural pretensions that also attended such designs.

Agnew House

402 Souris



Heritage Value Statement

The large and impressive Agnew House was built around 1905, and is considered the oldest house on Souris Street, the location of an important concentration of large houses in Hartney. The house was built for Neil and Mary Agnew, farmers in the area who raised five children here, and who were active in community politics, curling, golf and social clubs. Mary, who died in 1970 at age 92, was also active in the Presbyterian Church and was a fervent hockey fan. The Agnew House is an exceptional example of its type, in this case featuring many features of the Queen Anne Revival style. The complex floor plan, the many window openings and variety of window shapes, and the detailed bargeboard at the roofline, are all hallmarks of that important style, popular in Manitoba in the early 1900s.

Fry House

400 Souris



Heritage Value Statement

Another important Queen Anne-style house on Souris Street, the site where Hartney can boast an exceptional concentration of large brick houses, is the Fry House. Probably built around 1910, the house was built for James Fry, an important local businessman involved in men's clothing for many years. Based on a four-square form—thus a squarish plan, two storey height and truncated pyramidal roof—the house also boasts some important Queen Anne details, especially visible on the elaborate verandah, where the richly turned wooden elements are a sight to see.

Galbraith House

600 River



Heritage Value Statement

The Galbraith House, from 1906, is one of Hartney's finest houses, architecturally impressive and also sited along River Avenue to give it great prominence in town. The house was built for W.H. Galbraith, a hotel owner, and also seems to have functioned for some time as a local maternity hospital. The house is an excellent example of the Queen Anne style of architecture, one of the most popular styles for houses in Manitoba between 1890 and 1910, an expression of great sophistication. The Galbraith House is a very fine example of the type, with its grand form, fine brick walls, broad porch with Classical columns, and in the gable end facing the street, wooden shingles and a distinctive Palladian window. The house also still boasts many of the original features and details.

District of Heritage Interest: **The East Railway Commercial Strip**

As noted in the introduction to this section, Historic Resources Branch staff advised that Hartney's main commercial thoroughfare (East Railway) was an important concentration of buildings that made this area of particular heritage value. The business street has an impressively intact number of buildings defining the typical styles, forms and details that once graced nearly all small-town Manitoba commercial thoroughfares.

It was suggested that this area be noted for special attention when opportunities for heritage promotion and education arose. The following images are used to highlight this important area in Hartney.



View of Hartney main business street—East Railway—from the west looking across the old railway right-of-way.



View of East Railway, from the west looking south.

District of Heritage Interest: **Souris Street**

As noted in the introduction to this section, Historic Resources Branch staff advised that a stretch of large houses on Souris Street was an important concentration of buildings that made this area of particular heritage value. The set of Queen Anne-style houses along Souris is exceptional for a community of our size, and a real tribute to the ambitions and taste that defined Hartney even at an early stage.

It was suggested that this area be noted for special attention when opportunities for heritage promotion and education arose. The following images are used to highlight this important area in Hartney. The “tour” starts at the north end of Souris and continues to the south, concluding at something – it is quite amazing to see impressive house after house in just one row.



408 Souris Street.



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