

Heritage Officer's Statement of Significance

Description of Historic Place

The 1913 Abram Residence is a two-storey, Foursquare style residential building. The house is located on the southeast corner of 87 Avenue and 98 Street in the historic Strathcona neighbourhood.

Heritage Value

Built in 1913, the Abram Residence is valued for its association with the early development of the Strathcona neighbourhood during Edmonton's population boom prior to the First World War. The Abram Residence is further valued as an early example of the Foursquare architectural style.

The Abram Residence is located in one of Edmonton's oldest settled neighbourhoods, Strathcona, dating from the arrival of the railways in 1892, and a separate city until amalgamation with Edmonton in 1912. The house was built within the Strathcona neighborhood during a time of development, just after its amalgamation with Edmonton in 1912, and is representative of the typical housing style built in the Mill Creek area during the pre-First World War boom period. Foursquare homes were common within the Strathcona neighbourhood for their budget conscious and simple designs in comparison to the earlier Victorian homes, and provided practical and comfortable living for modest middle class families in the region.

The Abram Residence features a Foursquare design on a square plan. The two-storey residence features a front medium-gabled roof and symmetrical front façade. The owners believe there may be original wood soffits underneath the current aluminum soffits. The front (north) elevation is characterized by an enclosed full length front verandah with four columns supporting a hipped roof. The front verandah features the original fenestration pattern and wooden windows. The overall fenestration is original on the home, but all windows, except for the verandah, have been replaced with vinyl windows. All four elevations are clad in vinyl siding and would have been originally wooden clapboard siding. The lower front portion of the verandah is currently clad in brick, and would have originally been clad in cedar shakes.

The Abram Residence had a range of owners throughout the early 1900s, with the two most notable residents being Benjamin Lawrence Abram and Frank Nurdling. The first owner of the home was Benjamin Lawrence Abram, who obtained the original building permits for the property in 1913, and moved into the home in 1914. He lived in the home with his wife, Jessie Matilda, from 1915 to

1919. According to the Henderson's Directories, Abram worked as a broker with Hulbert & Co. Real Estate and Mortgage Brokers, followed by work as a Manager at Account Metals Ltd. Abram was also a member and Secretary of the Strathcona Oddfellows Association and the Edmonton Oldtimers Association, now the Alberta Pioneers and Descendants Association.

Frank Nurning was the second long-term resident of the house and lived at the residence from 1920 until 1927. Originally from England, Nurning was a war veteran who returned from overseas with nervous system injuries. He worked initially as a Manager for the De Laval Company, and went on to work as a candymaker for the famous Pavey Candy Co., one of the first large-scale candy companies in Edmonton. Nurning was also a very accomplished musician and composer. He was an organist at the First Presbyterian Church, and was a founder of the Orpheus Choral Society in Edmonton.

Character-defining Elements

Key character-defining elements of the Abram Residence include:

- Form, scale and massing as expressed by its two-storey height
- Wood frame construction in a Foursquare design
- Location on the southeast corner of 87 Avenue and 98 Street, within the Strathcona Millcreek area
- Symmetrical front façade
- Front-gabled roof with projecting verges and eaves
- Original fenestration pattern of windows
- Original verandah with wood windows, wood pillars and trim