

The Queens Park Neighborhood

The residential area around Queens Park had begun to grow up the hill from the river and the downtown by the mid-1880's.

By 1912 New Westminster was known as the "City of Beautiful Homes ... the residences of the city stand for the most part in their own grounds, in which fruit trees and lilac and almond-trees are everywhere conspicuous."

Many of the area's early Victorian and Edwardian homes stand today and are being restored, while the fine Colonial houses of the 1920's, the Tudor Revival homes of the 1930's and the Cape Cod and other period styles of the 1940's lend their pleasing architectural styles to one of the most historic and attractive neighborhoods in the Lower Mainland.

Queens Park

When the Royal Engineers were surveying and clearing New Westminster they had the planning and foresight to set aside a number of areas for park reserves.

Grand dame of the parks system is the 75.5 acre Queens Park, reserved by Col. Moody in 1859-60 as the "People's Park".

Today's Queens Park entrance off First Street and Third Avenue bears little resemblance to the early days when handsome Provincial Exhibition buildings dominated the area which is now occupied by Queens Park Arena and adjacent playing fields.

Unfortunately, a fire destroyed the 1889 Agriculture Building with its towers and domes and the classically-styled Women's Building and Industrial Building, in 1929. A survivor of the fire that swept Queens Park was the 1909 Fisheries Building, now Vagabond Playhouse, tucked behind Queens Park Arenex.

Historic displays showing the former exhibition grounds are mounted in the arena.

Although there are few reminders left of its early grandeur Col. Moody's vision of Queens Park as the "People's Park" lives on.

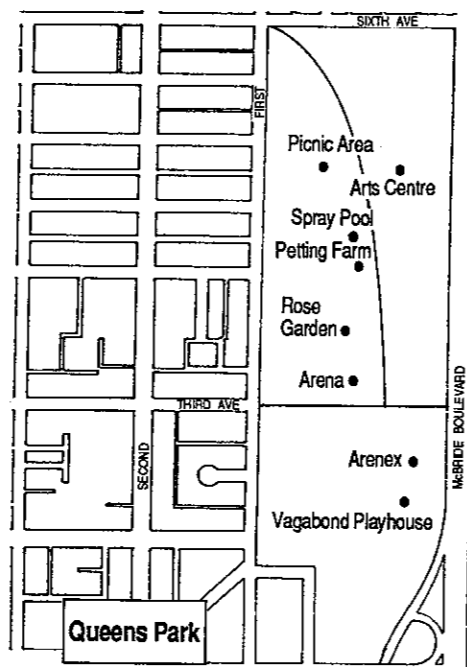
Graced by majestic trees with wonderful views of the Fraser River and local mountains, Queens Park has many amenities including a stadium, arena, arenex, tennis courts, playing fields, picnic areas,

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gardens, a children's petting farm, Rainbow playground and spray pool and the New Westminster Arts Council's Gallery in the Park. An authentic Salish Indian totem pole depicting the mythological symbols of thunderbird, killer whale and bear is located beside the Art Gallery.

Queens Park is also the home of the 10-day Hyack Festival's most historic and cherished events -- The Ancient and Honourable Hyack Anvil Battery's "21 gun" anvil salute to the memory of Queen Victoria (fired on Victoria Day) and May Day celebrations. New Westminster's May Day celebration dates back to 1870 and is the longest continuing celebration of its kind in the British Commonwealth. Royal visitors to May Days include King George and Queen Elizabeth in 1939 and Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip in 1959.



* On the Cover
1906 Italianate home of J.J. Johnston by architect C.H. Clow at 125 Third Street. Johnston was a mayor of New Westminster and was affectionately known as Mr. May Day for his long service to the City's historic May Day celebration. A plaque and fountain in Queens Park in front of the arena was installed by the Native Sons and Native Daughters Post No. 4 to honour his service.

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New Westminster The Beginnings

New Westminster was the heart and soul of early British Columbia. Rising from the shores of the Fraser River, the city stands proud today of its history and its unique role in the development of the province.

It was more than 125 years ago that the Royal Engineers were sent on an onerous mission by the Colonial Office in London to choose a site for the capital of the new colony and a base to maintain law and order among the gold seekers that combed the colony for its riches.

Col. Richard Clement Moody, commanding officer of the Royal Engineers, chose the site of New Westminster for the future capital. Named by Queen Victoria for her favored part of London, "Westminster", it has been fondly referred to since as the "Royal City".

From their camp site in Sapperton these select, skilled surveyors, engineers, architects and craftsmen planned a prosperous and busy port town.

Between 1858 and 1863 the Royal Engineers also laid the foundations for much of British Columbia. They surveyed land, established long-lasting trails and roads, produced maps, diverted rivers and settled disputes from Victoria north to Barkerville and east to the Rockies.

In 1860 New Westminster became the first city incorporated west of the Great Lakes and from 1866 to 1868 it served as the first capital of the United Colony of British Columbia.

The start of the Gold Rush Trail, New Westminster was the mainland berth for a fleet of sternwheelers that paddled their way up the Fraser River to Yale, the beginning of the Cariboo Wagon Road.

As the city grew and flourished a prosperous downtown developed occupying grand brick and wooden buildings on Columbia Street. The area grew to become the mercantile centre of the Fraser Valley.

Then, on September 10, 1898, the Great Fire swept Columbia, reducing to ashes this first historical commercial district. The merchants were back in business in tents the next day and by 1899 had rebuilt most of the downtown.



A. At the entrance to Queens Park at 238 First Street is "Bunachie", the 1904 Mrs. George McKay home. In 1905 the Columbian newspaper notes that the city's climate is so mild that Mrs. McKay was picking apple blossoms at Halloween in the garden of her "...handsome residence, so greatly admired."



D. 207 Third Avenue is an excellent example of the large, square Craftsman homes built for comfortable family living around 1910. These homes usually have a narrow clapboard lower storey and shingle upper storey, with wide verandahs and Tudor board trim in the gables. 207 was built for lawyer W.G. McQuarrie about 1914.



G. 307 Fifth Street is a very fine Queen Anne Revival home built in 1891 from a pattern book by architects Samuel Maclure and Richard Sharp for businessman J.A. Cunningham. The property was part of Pelham Gardens, laid out by James' father Thomas for fruit and cattle in 1885. Thomas Cunningham won many prizes for his orchard produce at agricultural exhibitions across Canada and because of his interests was instrumental in setting up the early Provincial Exhibition in Queens Park.

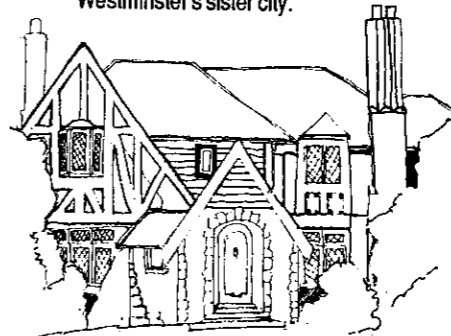


J. 417 Fifth Street is an outstanding example of the Colonial Revival style popular during the 1920's and 30's. 417 is the work of architects Townley and Matheson, designers of Vancouver City Hall, and was built in 1936 for lumberman John H. McDonald.



M. 237 Fifth Avenue is one of the city's finest Victorian Queen Anne houses. It was built in 1894 for contractor David Bain and has been beautifully restored.

Other notable houses in the area include 309 Fifth Avenue, a 1910 Classical Revival home built by contractor William Lane, 436 Third Street, a 1925 Colonial house built for R.C. Galbraith, 431 Third Street, a 1929 Colonial house built for police chief John Cameron, a pair of 1894 Victorian houses at 418 and 416 Third Street and 333 Third Street, a 1907 Queen Anne house built by carpenter William Trueman.



Q. 413 Queens Avenue is an outstanding example of the Tudor Revival style. 413 was built for J. Solater in 1938 and features elaborate Tudor wood trim designs, leaded windows, massive brick chimneys, a steep roof and masonry detailing in stucco, brick and stone.

Other fine homes in this block include the 1939 Tudor style Captain John Macmillan home at 505, "Thrushvale" built in 1899 for Major John Peck at 431, the 1927 Colonial style home of Dr. W.A. Clarke at 411, the 1892 Queen Anne house of builder Samuel Dawe at 405 and "Villeray" the 1906 home of engineer Narcisse Belleau Gauvreau at 401.



O. 501 St. George Street is another fine Victorian Queen Anne house, built in 1891 by J. Carter Smith, contractor and alderman.



P. The Armoury at 530 Queens Avenue is the only large drill hall of

wood construction in Canada and is recognized as a nationally significant heritage building. It was started in 1895 and features wide fir siding with a cedar shingle gable, corner turrets and arched windows. The Armoury is the home of the Royal Westminster Regiment and contains the regimental museum. In 1929 the Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill was honored at a luncheon here after he had opened the last provincial exhibition in Queens Park.

The Armoury adjoins City Hall and Friendship Gardens designed in 1963 to honor Moriguchi, Japan, New Westminster's sister city.



S. 212 Queens Avenue is a fine Craftsman style home built in 1911 by architects Gardiner and Mercer for William B. Johnston of Johnston's Shoes, a pioneer city business.

Other Craftsman homes in the block are the 1907 home of businessman and alderman W.E. Vanstone at 220, the 1910 home of banker H. Davidson at 218, and the 1908 home of lumberman A.L. Johnson at 210.

Outstanding homes in the 100 block Queens Avenue include the 1912 Craftsman style home of brewery owner Nels Nelson at 127 and the 1938 Colonial style home of clothier E.M. Phillips at 111. The Tudor house at 109 Queens Avenue was designed by architects McCarter and Nairne in 1938 for lawyer George Cassady. Architect R.A. Berwick designed the Tudor home at 101 Queens Avenue in 1939 for B.C. Premier Byron Johnson.



T. 107 Park Row is a late Victorian home built in 1907 for the Rogers family. Captain Oliver Hazard Perry Rogers was a mariner, while his sister was principal of the Central Girls' School.

Park Row was laid out as a diagonal street on Col. Moody's original city plan.

Around the corner at 125 Bonson Street is the 1885 Italianate house built for R.W. McIntosh, proprietor of the Caledonian Hotel downtown. Straight down Bonson Street at Royal Avenue is the 1891 home of salmon cannery owner M.M. English, designed by architects Richard Sharp and Samuel Maclure in the Queen Anne style.

Granville Street, which parallels the lower part of Queens Park, is the site of two historical but unrestored homes, 126 the 1896 home of A.J. McColl, third chief justice of B.C., and 112, a Queen Anne cottage designed in 1890 by architects Samuel Maclure and C.H. Clow for clothier E.W. Ogle.

At 408 First Street is one of the B.C. Mills Timber and Trading Co. prefabricated houses displayed at the 1905 Provincial Exhibition in Queens Park. These houses were built of 4' x 10' clapboard panels in different styles and floor plans and shipped all over western Canada for use as homes, banks and offices.



B. 105 Third Avenue, a 1912 Prairie style house, was designed by architect E.G.W. Sait for accountant T.H. Barbaree.

Among other interesting homes in this block is 109, a Shingle style house built in 1911 by architect E.J. Boughen for store owner G.R. Speck. The two oldest houses on the block are 115, the 1892 Homestead style house of contractor George Turnbull, and 117, a Queen Anne house built in 1889 for government agent Sidney Fletcher.



C. 314 Second Street is a handsome Classical Revival home built in 1908 for excise officer G.A. Allen. A cameo window with leaded sunburst lights the entrance.

William Wolfenden, the owner of the 1910 Craftsman style house at 322 Second Street, was a descendant of a member of the Royal Engineers. Across the street are two fine 1910-11 homes, 325 that of R.J. Rickman, manager of Royal City Mills, and 329, "The Hawthorns", that of H.C. Major, financial broker.



E. Warren Street contains one of the small, almost hidden enclaves typical of the Queens Park area. 312 Warren is a Shingle style cottage designed by E.J. Boughen for George Grimston in 1913. 310 Warren was built in 1904.

Looking east along Warren is another enclave, Townsend Place, originally the estate of city mayor W.B. Townsend. After Townsend's fine Victorian home "Rose Lawn" was burned, the property was purchased and subdivided in 1905 by developer F.J. Hart. 233 Townsend Place, the house visible at the end of the street, was built in 1906 for farmer and ironworker Thomas Kennedy.



F. Carlton Court at 317 Third Avenue is one of several interesting early apartment blocks in the area. Carlton Court is a 1925 Mission Revival building in stucco by architect Ralph Berrill.

303 Third Avenue, now Canadian Dance World, was the 1898 home of hardware merchant H.T. Kirk.



H. 335 Fourth Street is a Homestead style house built in 1892 for tailor Alex McRae. The tent shape of the house, patterned shingle gable, bay window and porch with turned columns are characteristics of this once prevalent type of Victorian family home.



L. 408 Sixth Avenue is an excellent example of the popular Tudor Revival cottages of the 1930's. It was built in 1930 for lumberman Harold Culter and features leaded windows, Tudor board trim and a cedar shingle roof rolled at the edges to imitate an English thatched roof.

I. Four imposing homes mark the intersection of Fourth Street and Fourth Avenue. 403 Fourth Avenue, "Melbourne", is the 1901 Queen Anne style home of real estate owner J.A. Montgomery. 321 Fourth Avenue, "Eldora", was designed in

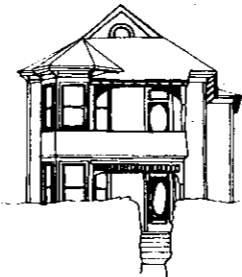


K. 431 Fourth Street is a very decorative Queen Anne cottage built in 1890 for court registrar W.H. Falding.

Other early homes in this block are the 1894 Alexander Gunn and Mrs. John Campbell houses at 439 and 427, "Inglenook", the 1892 L.P. Eckstein home at 428, "Avalon", the 1906 F.N. Sinclair home at 418 and the 1892 William Beadle home at 413.



N. 227 St. Patrick Street is an 1892 Queen Anne house built by architects Samuel Maclure and Richard Sharp from a pattern book design. The original owner was Dominion Lands agent John McKenzie.



O. 501 St. George Street is another fine Victorian Queen Anne house, built in 1891 by J. Carter Smith, contractor and alderman.



R. 328 Queens Avenue is one of the few remaining examples of Queen Anne homes designed by architect G.W. Grant, the city's most prominent architect of the Victorian era and also considered Vancouver's first architect. The home was built in 1892 for clothier J.E. Phillips.

Another interesting house in the block is at 303 Queens, the 1926 home of James L. Galbraith, president of the family millworking business.

