

THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF BURNABY  
REPORT OF THE HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TO: HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN  
FROM: BURNABY HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: EVALUATION OF TWO METROTOWN HERITAGE BUILDINGS

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT Council receive the report for information and authorize staff to initiate discussions with the affected property owners in order to pursue the heritage designation of the properties.

REPORT

The Heritage Advisory Committee at its meeting of 1990 May 23 received the following report from the Director Planning & Building Inspection providing an evaluation of two Metrotown heritage buildings for the Committee's consideration.

At that time the Committee amended the recommendations contained in the staff report and adopted the following:

- "1. THAT the Heritage Advisory Committee endorse the evaluation of St. John the Divine Church and the Andy Johnson house as primary heritage structures.

THAT the Heritage Advisory Committee forward this report to Council for their information and request that they authorize staff to initiate discussions with the affected property owners in order to pursue the heritage designation of the properties."

In accordance with the Committee's direction the report of the Director Planning & Building Inspection is herewith attached.

ALDERMAN D.P. DRUMMOND  
CHAIRMAN

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1990 MAY 15

TO: BURNABY HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING &  
BUILDING INSPECTION  
SUBJECT: EVALUATION OF TWO METROTOWN HERITAGE BUILDINGS

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On 1990 April 25 the Committee passed the following resolution:

"That staff prepare an evaluation of the historical significance of St. John the Divine Church and the Andy Johnson House for the Committee's consideration."

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT the Heritage Advisory Committee endorse the evaluation of St. John the Divine Church and the Andy Johnson House as primary heritage structures which should be designated under the Heritage Conservation Act.
2. THAT the Heritage Advisory Committee forward this report to Council for their information and request that they authorize staff to initiate discussions with the affected property owners in order to pursue the heritage designation of the properties.

REPORT

1.0 BACKGROUND

The "Burnaby Metrotown, a development plan" report prepared by the Burnaby Planning Department in June, 1977 recognized the important historic role this area played in the development of Burnaby and identified two heritage buildings. St. John the Divine Anglican Church and the Andy Johnson House were considered to "have significance in the history" of Burnaby. The report recommended that "For these particular structures, support should be given for their retention or incorporation within a redevelopment project." As part of the report's final recommendations to Burnaby Council it was suggested that part of the Ongoing Work Programme include the designation of Heritage Buildings to be part of the technical discussions necessary to implement the report's proposals. On February 20, 1978, Burnaby Council authorized staff to initiate the work program as outlined.

Since then, the Burlington Square redevelopment incorporated the Andy Johnson House, three sequoia trees and portions of the granite fence. These are protected through a legal covenant signed between the developer and the Corporation of the District of Burnaby. The St. John the Divine Church property has so far escaped redevelopment, although the congregation has expressed interest in using its property for other purposes.

This report explores the current status of these buildings and their suitability for heritage designation. Both buildings have been researched and evaluated to assess their architectural and cultural value to Burnaby using established guidelines. The importance of these buildings to the community has determined that the Heritage Advisory Committee should consider their formal designation as Heritage sites under the Heritage Conservation Act.

## 2.0 ST. JOHN THE DIVINE ANGLICAN CHURCH

### 2.1 IDENTIFICATION

Address: 3895 Kingsway  
Roll #: 2690-3895-0000  
Zoning: Neighbourhood Institutional District (P1)  
Use: Church

Historic Name: St. John the Divine Anglican Church  
Original Owner: St. John's Church Building Co.  
Construction Date: 1905  
Architect: Joseph H. Bowman  
Builder: Unknown

### 2.2 DESCRIPTION

Style: Gothic Revival (See Figure 1)  
Design:

This Church has been designed by the architect following traditional forms found in English country churches. This particular design form was copied from Christ Church in Surrey, B.C., which was built in 1885 and still stands at 16603 Old McLelland Road. Elements of the Gothic Revival style which are evident in the building's design are the tall narrow bell tower and spire, pointed lancet windows and vents and the vertical emphasis of the steeply pitched roof. When compared with all of Burnaby's surviving pioneer church buildings St. John the Divine is revealed as an outstanding example of its type.

#### Construction:

St. John the Divine was constructed using some early and unique methods of building construction and materials. The structure is supported by cross-bracing along the steeply pitched roof. This structural feature is exposed at the gable ends and through the nave and also serves as a decorative element. The congregation has acquired a beautiful collection of stained glass windows which form one of the most pleasing features of the interior. This collection includes multi-coloured scene panels and older panels of leaded geometric designs.

#### History:

St. John the Divine Anglican Church is Burnaby's oldest community organization. The congregation was established in 1898 to serve the growing Central Park Community located on Kingsway and the Interurban Tramline. Originally the Anglicans in the area met for services in various members homes served by Rev. A.J. Greer. A group of residents met on August 19, 1898 and formed the "St. John's Church Building Company". The St. John the Divine Parish was organized in 1899 and the property on Kingsway was purchased from Ed Mahon for a \$100.00 and a church building was constructed. However, it remained in a unfinished state and was destroyed by fire in 1904.

In 1905 the original portion of the present church was constructed on the same site. The building was designed by Joseph H. Bowman, a well respected British Columbia architect and a member of the congregation. Throughout its time the Church has been the center of many social events for residents and has contributed greatly to the surrounding community.

#### Context:

The Church building is still sited on its original location on Kingsway and across from Central Park. Today this location is at the gateway to Burnaby's Metrotown and visible from SkyTrain. This prominent siting has made St. John the Divine Church a landmark heritage building in South Burnaby. Around the Church is a mixture of modern residential units and some small scale retail space.

#### Condition:

The Church appears to have been well maintained by the congregation. Because of its apparent stable condition, the building would qualify for available restoration programs. However, a professional assessment would be needed to determine the present structural condition of the building.

#### Alterations:

The original design of St. John the Divine has been significantly altered by additions to the initial structure. Fortunately, the oldest portion of the building has not been destroyed through renovations. (See Figure 2) In 1914 the original nave was enlarged and a vestry added on to the north side of the building. Some beautiful stained glass windows were installed on the north elevation which remain today. During renovations in 1949 the chancel was enlarged, the exterior stuccoed and a basement added. During the 1950's the most extensive alterations were made. The original section was detached from the bell-tower and turned on its foundation. The chancel which had been the east elevation was turned to face north. The nave was extended on the east side and a new entrance was built to face Kingsway and replace the old bell-tower entrance. These alterations do not appear to have compromised the future restoration of the building.

### 2.3 EVALUATION

Through reviewing the history and architectural features of St. John the Divine Anglican Church it can be determined that the building has considerable heritage value to Burnaby. The Church was established in 1898 and remains as the oldest community organization in the Municipality. The building which was constructed in 1905 is the oldest church in Burnaby and an excellent example of its architectural type. The preliminary heritage inventory has identified this building as one of Burnaby's most important historic structures. Despite many alterations the integrity of the historic structure remains intact and could be restored at a future date. It is expected that the proposed heritage resource inventory of Burnaby will place St. John the Divine Anglican Church among the Municipality's "A Class" heritage buildings.

### 3.0 ANDY JOHNSON'S "GLENEDWARD"

#### 3.1 IDENTIFICATION

Address: 5152 Kingsway

Roll #: 2690-5152-0000

Zoning: Comprehensive Development District (CD) using Multiple Family Residential District (RM5) and General Commercial District (C3).

Use: Restaurant

Historic Name: "Glenedward"

Present Name: Andy Johnson House

Original Owner: Andrew M. Johnson

Construction Date: 1911-1912

Architect: Unknown

Builder: J.C. Allen

#### 3.2 DESCRIPTION

Style: Craftsman (See Figures 3 & 4)

Design:

"Glenedward" is one of Burnaby's best examples of an Edwardian mansion designed in the Craftsman tradition. In many respects the house has been influenced by the American Craftsman bungalow form developed in California. The unusual red tiled roof imported from Texas particularly adds a southern influence to the buildings design. Other elements of the Craftsman Style are the half-timbering in the gables, extended eaves, and the granite foundation, pillars and chimney.

#### Construction:

"Glenedward" was constructed using some of the best local and imported construction material and decorative elements. All of the granite used in the construction of the house and garden wall were obtained from "two large chunks of rock" from Royal Oak Avenue, according to Mr. Lobley a Burnaby pioneer. The two tons of patented red roof tiles were imported from Texas and remain as one of the mansions more unique features. Only a few other Edwardian homes in British Columbia have been identified with similar roof tiles. The house contains an impressive collection of stained glass designed and crafted by the Royal City Glass Company of New Westminster.

#### History:

Andy Johnson was a native of Norway who came to Vancouver just six months after the great fire of 1886. He was the proprietor of the Burrard Hotel and formed a transfer company in partnership with Oille Atkins. The Atkins and Johnson partnership later became the nucleus for the large Mainland Transfer Company. Andy Johnson purchased Burnaby's Royal Oak Hotel in 1910 and soon acquired property on the opposite corner to build "Glenedward".

It has been said that Andy Johnson built the house to fulfill a promise to his wife Margaret, who had left a refined homelife to follow her husband to the rugged west. The Johnson's named the estate "Glenedward" after a son which died in childhood. The Johnson's spared no expense to beautify their home and it has been estimated that the entire estate cost \$35,000.00. One of the largest expenditures was the development of the garden which included plants imported from around the world.

Andy Johnson died at "Glenedward" in 1934 and his wife remained in the home until she sold it in 1943 to Dr. Hector MacKenzie. In 1946 Charles E. Atchison purchased the estate and developed the Royal Oak Funeral Chapel. This well-known Burnaby firm operated at this location until it was sold in 1981. Through extensive negotiations the house, three large sequoia trees, and portions of the granite wall were preserved as part of the Burlington Square redevelopment.

#### Context:

The Andy Johnson House has been a prominent landmark on Kingsway since its construction in 1912. The building was moved from its original site to the north-west corner of the Burlington Square redevelopment. The house and three redwoods form a sharp contrast to the urban development along Kingsway. Despite these changes the building is still an important landmark and is part of the eastern "gateway" to Metrotown.

#### Condition:

The total renovation of "Glenedward" as part of the relocation in 1981 has left the home in excellent structural condition.

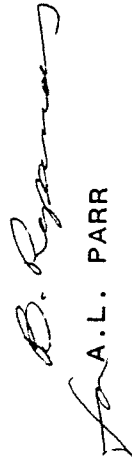
Alterations:

The exterior of "Glenedward" was restored as part of the covenant arrangement between the developer and the Corporation of Burnaby. The building now appears mostly as it did in 1912. However, some changes were made to the east and north elevations. The sunroom on the east side of the house was rebuilt using aluminum window casings and a new side entrance was installed. On the north elevation it appears that an addition was made to house the restaurant's kitchen facilities. However, this addition blends in well with the rest of the building. The most significant changes were made to the interior of the home. Most of the original details have been removed or extensively modified to blend with the restaurant's current decor.

3.3 EVALUATION

In 1981 many Burnaby citizens rallied to support the preservation of the Andy Johnson when it was threatened with demolition. Through negotiations with the developer of the property Wales-McClelland, the Corporation of Burnaby was able to have the building preserved. On September 2, 1981 the legal agreement creating the covenant to preserve the property's heritage elements was signed by both parties.

The importance of the Andy Johnson House as a primary heritage building in Burnaby has been secured. However, the property should be recognized through designation under the Heritage Conservation Act.

  
A.L. PARR

DIRECTOR OF PLANNING &  
BUILDING INSPECTION.

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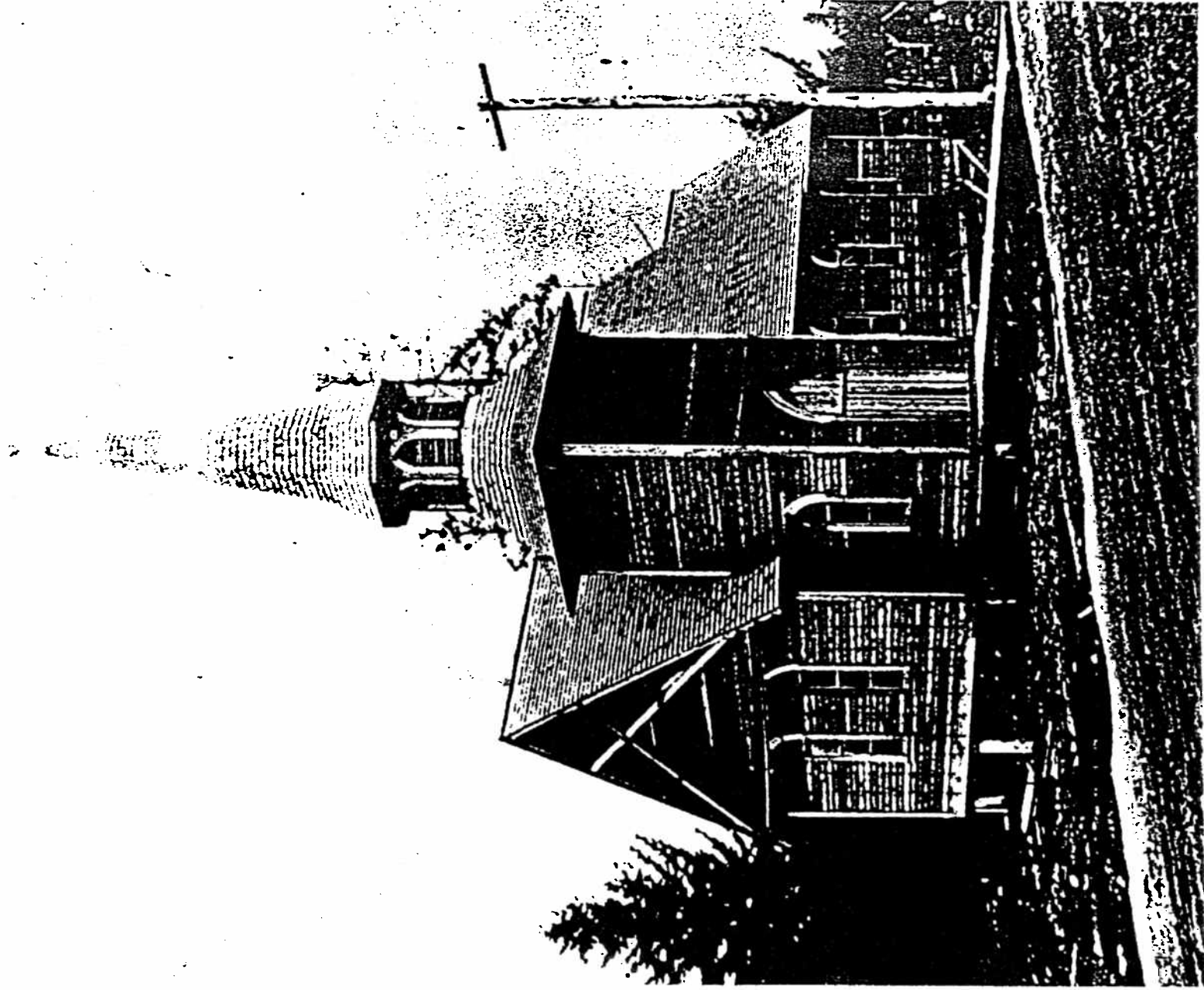


Fig. 1 St. John the Divine Church, 1905



Fig. 2 St. John the Divine Church  
Chronology of structural changes





Fig. 3 Andy Johnson House, 1912

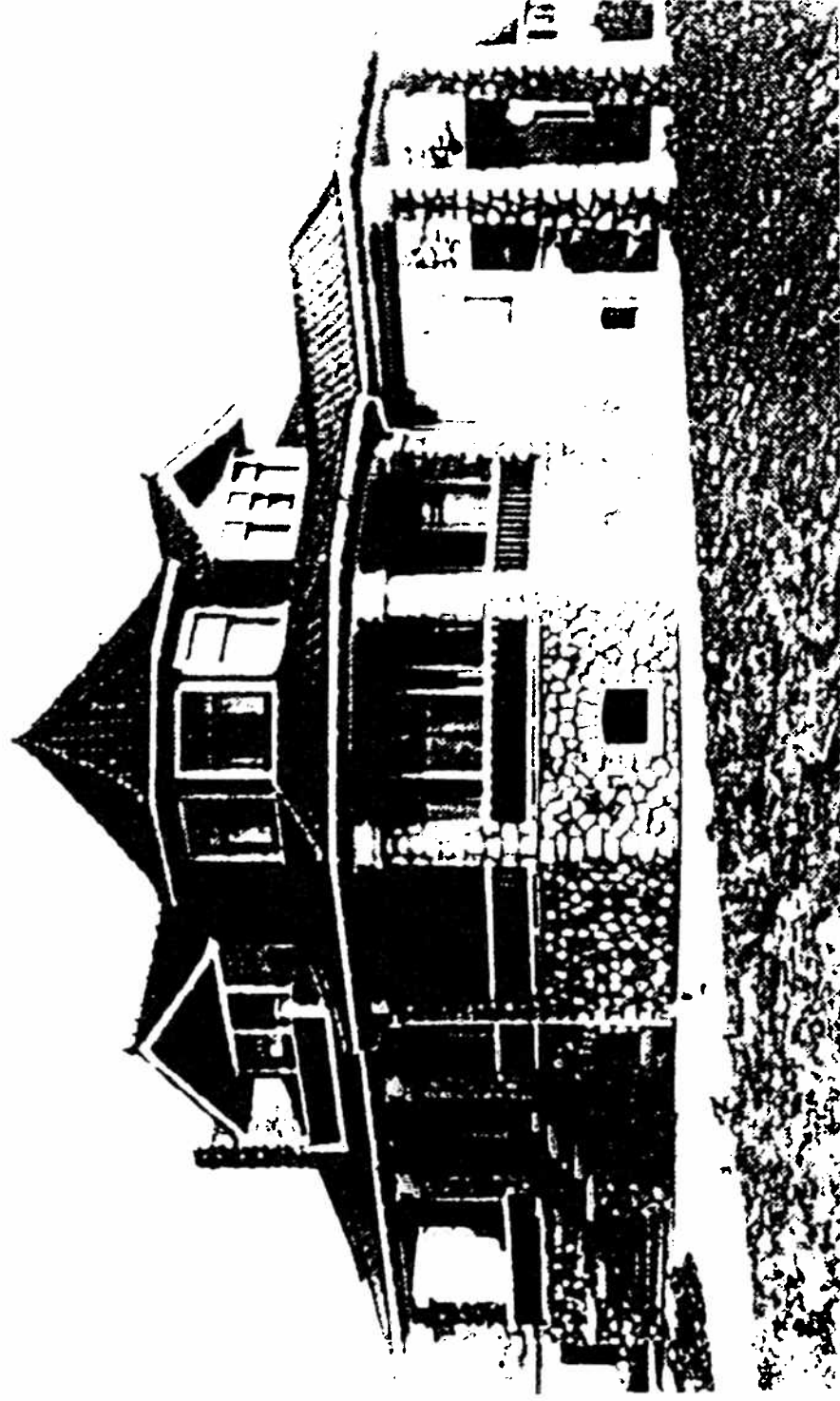


Fig. 4 Andy Johnson House, 1912