



## Dr. William & Ruth Baldwin House

<https://search.heritageburnaby.ca/permalink/landmark534>

Repository: Burnaby Heritage Planning  
Civic Address: 6543/45 Deer Lake Drive  
Associated Dates: 1965  
Formal Recognition: Community Heritage Register  
Enactment Type: Council Resolution  
Enactment Date: 26/05/2003

Description: The Dr. William & Ruth Baldwin House is a two-storey modern post-and-beam structure, located on the southern shore of Deer Lake in Burnaby's Deer Lake Park. The site is steeply sloped, and the main entrance of the house is at the top of the slope facing onto Deer Lake Drive.

Heritage Value: The Baldwin House is valued as a prime example of Burnaby's post-Second World War modern heritage and progressive architectural style, as well as for its personal connections to internationally-acclaimed architect, Arthur Erickson. Inspired by the modern domestic idiom established earlier in the twentieth century by Frank Lloyd Wright and Richard Neutra, Erickson conceived his architecture as responding directly to the site. A cohesive expression of simple orthogonal lines and ultimate transparency, this structure reduces the idea of post-and-beam West Coast modernism to its most refined elements. A fine example of the evolving talent of Erickson's earlier work, this house is a landmark modern house in Burnaby and is unique in terms of siting and context. Having just won the 1963 competition for the new Simon Fraser University in Burnaby with his partner, Geoff Massey, and having built fewer than half a dozen homes previously, Erickson's reputation was growing and his skill as a designer of modern buildings was in great demand. The same year that Erickson/Massey Architects designed SFU, Dr. William Baldwin and his wife, Ruth, personal friends of Erickson, commissioned him to design this house. Erickson was already familiar with the site; as a child he had spent time at this spot when his family visited friends who lived on Deer Lake. Both the Baldwin House and the university were completed in 1965. SFU became internationally famous; the Baldwin House was also considered an architectural success and was recognized in publications of the time. Only a single storey of this two-storey house is visible from the road, as it is built into the hillside in response to its steep site and proximity to Deer Lake. Like many other Erickson designs, this structure was conceived as a pavilion. Constructed of glass and wood, its transparency facilitates visual access to the lake's edge, acting as an invitation, rather than a barrier, to the landscape. The house blends into the natural surroundings and the site includes other man-made landscape features such as a reflecting pool. As a reaction to the often grey quality of light in the region, Erickson exploits flat planes of water as a source of borrowed light. The refined and purposeful design, transparency, openness of plan and adjacency to the lake combine to give the house a floating appearance at the water's edge. The concept of a floating house set within an accompanying garden was inspired, in part, by the palaces and house boats of Dal Lake in Kashmir and the famed nearby Mughal Gardens. Although Erickson never visited Dal Lake, he travelled extensively throughout India, and specifically mentions the Kashmir reference in relation to this house. There is a rich complexity of other allusions worked into the fabric of the house, unified by a feeling for the conjunction of light, water and land at this special location. Widely renowned as Canada's most brilliant modern architect, Erickson's reputation is important to the development and growth of modern architecture in Canada and North America.

Defining Elements:	The elements of the Baldwin House that define its character are those materials and details which respond to the location of the building and determine the relation between landscape and building, combining to create a single cohesive site. These include its: - close proximity to water - orthogonal plan and massing, with flat tar-and-gravel roof - stepped down massing orienting the house towards the water - post-and-beam construction, with the width of the beams matched to the width of the posts - wood and glass used as primary building materials - transparency and light achieved by the abundant use of glass - large undivided sheets of single glazing - butt glazed glass corners - abundant and generous balconies, which blur the transition from interior to exterior - horizontal flush cedar siding - use of salvaged brick for chimneys - use of chains as downspouts - built-in rooftop barbeque - built in furniture and fittings dating to the time of construction, such as original hardware, benches, bathroom vanities and kitchen cabinets - landscaped site including reflecting pool, plantings and a dock protruding into the lake
Locality:	Deer Lake Park
Historic Neighbourhood:	<a href="#">Burnaby Lake (Historic Neighbourhood)</a>
Planning Study Area:	<a href="#">Morley-Buckingham Area</a>
Function:	Primary Current--Single Dwelling Primary Historic--Single Dwelling
Community:	Burnaby
Cadastral Identifier:	P.I.D. No. 011-946-032 and P.I.D. No. 011-946-067
Boundaries:	The Baldwin House is comprised of two municipally-owned lots located at 6543 and 6545 Deer Lake Drive, Burnaby.
Area:	6,070.20
Contributing Resource:	Building Landscape Feature
Ownership:	Public (local)
Other Collection:	Canadian Architectural Archives, University of Calgary, Collection: Original Plans No. ERI 4A/76.13
Documentation:	Heritage Site Files: PC77000 20. City of Burnaby Planning and Building Department, 4949 Canada Way, Burnaby, B.C., V5G 1M2
Geographic Access:	<a href="#">Burnaby - 6543 Deer Lake Drive</a> <a href="#">Burnaby - 6545 Deer Lake Drive</a>

## Images

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## Baldwin House Dining Room

<https://search.heritageburnaby.ca/permalink/archivephoto37347>

Repository:	City of Burnaby Archives
Date:	1966
Collection/Fonds:	Baldwin family fonds
Description Level:	Item
Item No.:	357-002
Accession Number:	BHS998-3
Storage Location:	AV Storage
Physical Description:	1 photograph : b&w ; 16 x 19.3 cm
Media Type:	Photograph
Access Restriction:	No restrictions
Reproduction Restriction:	May be restricted by third party rights
Scope and Content:	Photograph of the dining room and interior of the Baldwin House at Deer Lake.
Photographer:	King, Basil
Subjects:	Buildings - Heritage Furniture
Notes:	Title based on contents of photograph.
Geographic Access:	Burnaby - 6543 Deer Lake Drive Burnaby - 6545 Deer Lake Drive Burnaby - Deer Lake Drive Burnaby Lake (Historic Neighbourhood)
Historic Neighbourhood:	
Planning Study Area:	Morley-Buckingham Area

### Images

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## Interior of the Baldwin House

<https://search.heritageburnaby.ca/permalink/archivephoto37348>

Repository:	City of Burnaby Archives
Date:	1966
Collection/Fonds:	Baldwin family fonds
Description Level:	Item
Item No.:	357-003

Accession Number: BHS998-3  
Storage Location: AV Storage  
Physical Description: 1 photograph : b&w ; 19.5 x 25 cm print  
Media Type: Photograph  
Access Restriction: No restrictions  
Reproduction Restriction: May be restricted by third party rights  
Scope and Content: Photograph of the interior of the Baldwin House, taken from the exterior courtyard. The dining room of the home is visible and two people can be seen seated in chairs. One of the people may be Susan Baldwin. This home was designed for Dr. William and Ruth Baldwin by their friend, Arthur Erickson.  
Photographer: [King, Basil](#)  
Subjects: [Buildings - Heritage](#)  
[Furniture](#)  
Names: [Baldwin, Susan](#)  
Notes: Title based on contents of photograph  
Photograph is the same as item no. 357-007  
Geographic Access: [Burnaby - 6543 Deer Lake Drive](#)  
[Burnaby - 6545 Deer Lake Drive](#)  
[Burnaby - Deer Lake Drive](#)  
Historic Neighbourhood: [Burnaby Lake \(Historic Neighbourhood\)](#)  
Planning Study Area: [Morley-Buckingham Area](#)

## Images

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### **Pond in front of the Baldwin house**

<https://search.heritageburnaby.ca/permalink/archivephoto37349>

Repository: [City of Burnaby Archives](#)  
Date: 1966  
Collection/Fonds: [Baldwin family fonds](#)



Description Level: Item  
Item No.: 357-004  
Accession Number: BHS998-3  
Storage Location: AV Storage  
Physical Description: 1 photograph : b&w ; 19 x 25.5 cm  
Media Type: Photograph  
Access Restriction: No restrictions  
Reproduction Restriction: May be restricted by third party rights  
Scope and Content: Photograph of two women, one standing in the doorway and another seated on a rock at the edge of the water, outside the Dr. William and Ruth Baldwin House at Deer Lake. A note on the back of the photograph indicates that one of the women may be Susan Baldwin.  
Photographer: [King, Basil](#)  
Subjects: [Buildings - Heritage](#)  
[Buildings - Residences - Houses](#)  
Names: [Baldwin, Susan](#)  
Notes: Title based on contents of photograph.  
This photograph is the same as item no. 357-006  
Geographic Access: [Burnaby - 6543 Deer Lake Drive](#)  
[Burnaby - 6545 Deer Lake Drive](#)  
[Burnaby - Deer Lake Drive](#)  
Historic Neighbourhood: [Burnaby Lake \(Historic Neighbourhood\)](#)  
Planning Study Area: [Morley-Buckingham Area](#)

#### Images

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## Baldwin House, Deer Lake Drive

<https://search.heritageburnaby.ca/permalink/archivephoto37346>

Repository: [City of Burnaby Archives](#)  
Date: 1966  
Collection/Fonds: [Baldwin family fonds](#)  
Description Level: Item  
Item No.: 357-001  
Accession Number: BHS998-3  
Storage Location: AV Storage  
Physical Description: 1 photograph ; b&w ; 19.5 x 25 cm print  
Media Type: Photograph  
Access Restriction: No restrictions  
Reproduction Restriction: May be restricted by third party rights  
Scope and Content: Photograph of four children (unidentified) playing in the water, in front of the Baldwin House. The Baldwin House was built in 1965 and was designed by architect Arthur Erickson for his friends Dr. William and Ruth Baldwin.  
Photographer: [King, Basil](#)  
Subjects: [Buildings - Heritage](#)  
[Buildings - Residences - Houses](#)  
Notes: Title based on contents of photograph  
Geographic Access: [Burnaby - 6543 Deer Lake Drive](#)  
[Burnaby - 6545 Deer Lake Drive](#)  
[Burnaby - Deer Lake Drive](#)  
[Burnaby - Deer Lake](#)  
Historic Neighbourhood: [Burnaby Lake \(Historic Neighbourhood\)](#)  
Planning Study Area: [Morley-Buckingham Area](#)

### Images

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## Deer Lake from the Baldwin House

<https://search.heritageburnaby.ca/permalink/archivephoto37350>

Repository: [City of Burnaby Archives](#)  
Date: 1966  
Collection/Fonds: [Baldwin family fonds](#)  
Description Level: Item  
Item No.: 357-005  
Accession Number: BHS998-3  
Storage Location: AV Storage  
Physical Description: 1 photograph : b&w ; 19.5 x 21.5 cm  
Media Type: Photograph  
Access Restriction: No restrictions  
Reproduction Restriction: May be restricted by third party rights  
Scope and Content: Photograph of Deer Lake from the corner of the Baldwin house. Two women can be seen standing on the deck at the upper level of the home, but neither are identified.  
Photographer: [King, Basil](#)  
Subjects: [Buildings - Heritage](#)  
[Buildings - Residences - Houses](#)  
[Geographic Features - Lakes and Ponds](#)  
Notes: Title based on contents of photograph  
Geographic Access: [Burnaby - 6543 Deer Lake Drive](#)  
[Burnaby - 6545 Deer Lake Drive](#)  
[Burnaby - Deer Lake Drive](#)  
[Burnaby - Deer Lake](#)  
Historic Neighbourhood: [Burnaby Lake \(Historic Neighbourhood\)](#)  
Planning Study Area: [Morley-Buckingham Area](#)

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