



JOHN WALTER MUSEUM AND HISTORICAL AREA

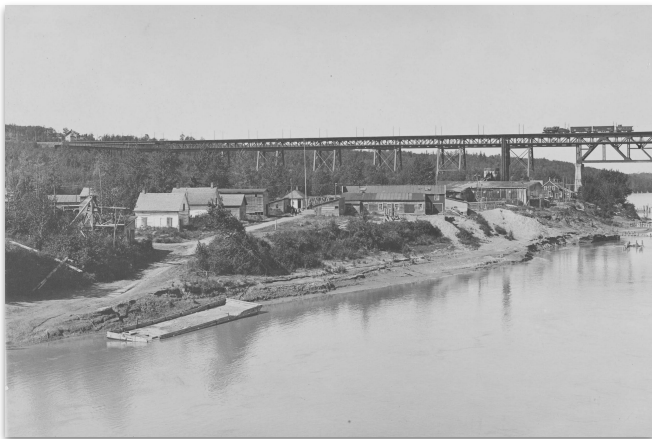
CITY OF EDMONTON HISTORIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Edmonton

9100 - WALTERDALE HILL NW

DESCRIPTION OF HISTORICAL PLACE

The John Walter Museum and Historical Area sit on a landscaped park west of the south entrance to the Walterdale Bridge, on the south bank of the North Saskatchewan River. The site is connected to the paths and trails of the Capital City Recreational park, while the large, modern Kinsmen Sports Centre stands across a parking lot immediately to the south. The site includes three early dwellings, two rustic cabins built of hewn logs, and one substantial Victorian-era residence.



These three dwellings were successively built and occupied by Walter, the first person to settle on the south bank of the North Saskatchewan River within Edmonton. Walter built the first cable ferry west of Winnipeg to connect the north and south sides of the river and started Edmonton's first industry here as a boat and cutter builder.

Walter later established Edmonton's largest sawmill and became known as Edmonton's 'First Millionaire' before losing his fortune to the great flood of 1915, which destroyed his mills and facilities. His wife, Annie Newby, continued to live in the third house until her death in 1942 and made a distinctive mark on its appearance.

Furthermore, the John Walter Museum and Historic Area provide rich evidence of the evolution of building techniques during the earliest years of Edmonton's history, from the most rustic of shelters to more refined and genteel accommodation.

HERITAGE VALUE

The John Walter Museum and Historic Area hold heritage value for its associations with one of the most important early businessmen and community builders, John Walter (1859-1920). The three houses as a unit reflect the Walter family's growing prosperity and the different facets of their family life. The first house is a hewn log structure built in 1875. The second, built in 1884, is larger and accommodated his growing family. The third, built in 1901, exhibits Queen Anne Revival characteristics.





CHARACTER DEFINING ELEMENTS

The 1875 and 1884 log structures were built with readily available materials, worked on site with little refinement, a reflection of the rough frontier conditions and isolation of the settlement.

The key character defining elements of the 1875 Residence and 1884 include:

1875 RESIDENCE

- + rough-hewn log construction with corner dovetail joints and chinking between the logs;
- + A-framed roof with horizontal ties;
- + simple flat board trim around the windows and door;
- + 12-paned wooden sash windows; and
- + internal red brick chimney.



▲ 1875 Residence



▲ 1884 Residence

1884 RESIDENCE

- + rough-hewn log construction with corner dovetail joints and chinking between the logs;
- + A-framed roof with horizontal ties;
- + simple flat board trim around windows and door, using fir for the first floor;
- + double-hung 4-over-4 wooden sash windows;
- + internal red brick chimneys at both ends; and
- + a door on the east side with transom





1901 RESIDENCE

The 1901 house demonstrates the rapid evolution of the local construction industry and the new availability of manufactured building materials. Milled lumber and lathe-turned decorative components demonstrate a sophisticated and progressive attitude and illustrate the rapid maturation of the settlement. These buildings provide valuable physical information about the history of local construction.

The key character defining elements of the 1901 Residence include:

- + cross-gabled roof;
- + double-height bay window on the north façade;
- + double assembly double-hung 1-over-1 wooden sash windows on the second-floor bay, flanked by double-hung 1-over-1 wooden sash windows;
- + large ground floor window with stained glass detailing in the upper portion;
- + double-hung 1-over-1 wooden sash windows;

- + wood drop siding with corner boards;
- + flat wooden trim with modest crowning detail around doors and windows;
- + stained glass casement window under the eaves above the open half-width verandah;
- + rear covered porch with gabled roof, decorative spindle work, and bargeboards;
- + elaborate pierced gable screens;
- + tongue-and-groove soffits;
- + diagonally set front door opening onto the front verandah;
- + wood shingle roof;
- + exposed brick foundation; and
- + two red brick internal chimneys with corbelling detail.

Designated as Municipal Historic Resources through Bylaw 13463 in August 2004.

Designated as Provincial Historic Resources in March 1996.



▲ 1901 Residence

Visit edmonton.ca/historicresources to learn more

