

## 464 STRADBROOK AVENUE – BANK OF MONTREAL

*Samuel Frank Peters (1905)*



The neighbourhood of Fort Rouge developed in the 1890s as a comfortable residential district which expanded greatly after 1900. Its many tree-lined streets filled with large, comfortable single-family dwellings, apartment blocks and churches. Along its major commercial thoroughfare – Osborne Street – businesses operated to supply its citizens with all description of goods and services. Banking was an important part of these services and the Bank of Montreal moved to supply the demand in the area by constructing this ornate branch in 1905 in the heart of the commercial district, the southwest corner of Osborne Street and Stradbrook Avenue.

The one-storey (a second storey was added to the rear in 1933) solid Menominee brick structure with stone accenting rests on a foundation of stone on concrete footings. It measures 12.2 x 17.4 metres and the original construction cost was \$22,000.

The building has two main façades, north and east, both feature rough-cut stone cladding at grade

with the red brick walls above, accented with stone at the corners and around the rectilinear window and door openings. The front (north) elevation includes a raised central entrance flanked by quoined pilasters rising to the entablature (which encircles the entire building) and two tall windows in rectilinear openings with radiating stone voussoirs. A clock is located above the entrance as are the words “BANK OF MONTREAL” carved in the stone frieze. Above the cornice is a brick parapet capped in stone which includes decorative stone elements now partially hidden by signage. A second raised entrance is located on the east façade.

These design and finishes carry around to the west elevation as well. The rear (south) elevation includes a one-storey portion and a brick chimney. The building has not suffered extensive alteration to its exterior, although the main entrance has been renovated and now includes an access ramp.

The interior, typical of banks of the era, included office and teller space and several vaults. Its use as a retail store has meant the renovation of the layout and removal of original finishes. The partial upper storey is used as a residential suite.

Samuel Frank Peters (1847-1926), the designer of this bank branch, was born in England and studied and practiced in Toronto before settling in Winnipeg and opening a private practice in 1892, despite losing an arm during the Riel Rebellion of 1885. He had a long, successful career, among his recognized works are: Wesley College (co-designed by George Browne), now part of the University of Winnipeg, 515 Portage Ave. (1896) – Grade II; Ashdown Warehouse, 157-179 Bannatyne Ave. (1896) - Grade II; F.W. Alloway Building, 179 McDermot Ave. (1898) - Grade III; McClary Block, 185-187 Bannatyne Ave. (1899) - Grade III; Miller and Richard Warehouse, 121 Princess St. (1904) – Grade III; and Cornish Library, 20 West Gate (1914) – Grade II.

The contractor for the building was local builder Robert W. Watson.

The Bank of Montreal, established in Winnipeg in 1877, built its first permanent building here in 1881. It did not adopt the approach of the other established banks and only operated a few suburban branches – the Stradbrook Branch closing in the late 1990s. Since 1999, it has been used

by a kitchen equipment retailer, the Happy Cooker, which had been established in Osborne Village in 1975.

Elements of the building that would require approval if alterations were planned are:

Exterior-

- The dark Menominee brick and stone building with flat roof located on the southwest corner of Stradbrook Avenue and Osborne Street, its main façade facing north onto Stradbrook Avenue, its east façade facing Osborne Street, its west façade facing another retail structure and its south façade facing a small open area;
- The front (north) façade with its raised stone clad foundation, central, raised entrance in stone frame between quoined pilasters raising to a complete entablature with ornamental capitals, large windows in rectilinear openings with radiating stone voussoirs, stone frieze with carved panels and the words “BANK OF MONTREAL” and brick and stone parapet with decorative stone accenting, balusters and ball-style finials;
- The east façade with its raised stone clad foundation, large windows in rectilinear openings with radiating stone voussoirs, entrance at the rear, complete entablature and brick and stone parapet;
- The west façade with its raised stone clad foundation, large windows in rectilinear openings (bricked in) with radiating stone voussoirs, complete entablature and brick and stone parapet; and
- Its south façade with one-storey portion and brick chimney.

Interior:

- The volume of space of the front portion of the ground floor.