

## 1466 WILLIAM AVENUE – FIRE HALL NO. 9

*Alexander R. & William N. Melville, 1909*



This brick and stone fire hall, completed in 1909, is a familiar and landmark neighbourhood structure, similar in design to over a dozen built throughout the City based on a set of standard plans developed in 1904. The William Avenue fire hall was built as a response to the growth of the Weston neighbourhood as a major residential, commercial and industrial area and its need for fire and emergency protection. It is also illustrative of the growth in civic services and facilities during the frenetic growth phase experienced by Winnipeg from 1900 to World War I.

Built on the south side of William Avenue, the building, along with its 1950s additions, stretches from Cecil Street to Champion Street. The original hall includes three large, arched equipment doors and a smaller personnel door, all topped by delicate brick drip moulding. The second floor features slightly recessed paired arched windows with limestone lug sills and keystones. The exception is the large triple window set under the front facing gable which holds a round window

opening with four limestone keystones at the top, bottom and sides. The hose-drying tower rises 21.3 metres and includes arched windows, brick drip moulding, stone accents, a metal cornice and a crenellated brick parapet. The rear of the building held a one-storey stable area which at some point in its history had a second floor added. Two additions, in 1951 and 1958, were completed on the hall's east side. The major alteration to the building's exterior was the replacement of the equipment doors with windows.

On the interior, the ground floor entrance, personnel stairs and the garage areas appear to be in fairly original condition. The remainder of the ground floor has been renovated. The second floor is in remarkably original condition. The original layout remains, as does many of the finishes and accents, including transom windows, ornamental tin ceilings, original radiators, carved moulding and wood baseboards. The narrow wooden stairs to the attic is also still present.

Scottish born and trained brothers A.R. and W.N. Melville were responsible for the 1904 standard plans and for overseeing the construction of this hall. They were an influential partnership that began in the City around 1900 and lasted until just before World War I. They were responsible for the design of 10 fire halls and many fine local buildings.

This building no longer functions as a fire hall; much of the building is vacant or used as storage and part of the ground floor has been converted into daycare facilities.

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

Exterior:

- Multi-storey building facing north with main façade fronting William Avenue on the southeast corner of Cecil Street;
- Boxy, rectangular, structure with a low rusticated limestone base and common clay brick superstructure;
- Front (north) façade with three large arched equipment doors all topped by brick drip moulding and brick keystones, personnel entrance at west end topped by brick drip moulding and a metal sign with the words "FIRE STATION NO. 9", arched windows on the second floor with limestone lug sills and keystones, a front facing gable with a round bricked in opening with stone keystones at the four compass points and a prominent hip roof; and
- Hose drying tower in the southwest corner with a door on its south face and windows on the lower levels with limestone lug sills topped by arches with brick

drip moulding and limestone keystones, a brick belt course, and the highest level with pairs of arched windows below the heavy overhanging cornice topped by a crenellated parapet.

Interior:

- Personnel entrance in the northwest corner with its staircase and ornamental tin ceiling; and
- Second floor layout, ornamental tin ceiling, wood baseboards, carved moulding, transom windows and stairs to attic.