

# McKenzie-Sharland Grocery



<i>Date of Construction</i>	1912
<i>Address</i>	1113 Dominion Street SE
<i>Original Owner</i>	William J. McKenzie
<i>Architect</i>	William T. Williams
<i>Contractor</i>	Sackrider and Turner
<i>Neighbourhood</i>	North Flats
<i>Historic Neighbourhood</i>	North Yuill
<i>Legal</i>	481M;9;2

## Description of Historic Place

The McKenzie Sharland Grocery is a two-storey Edwardian commercial/residential building integrated into a residential context in the historic North Flats (now called River Flats) neighbourhood in Medicine Hat. The handsomely detailed wooden building features a false front flat parapet roof with a decorative wooden roof and storefront cornices, wooden siding and multi-paned storefront windows with a central recessed entryway. The building, now a residence, is located on the south side of Dominion Street.

## Heritage Value of Historic Place

Constructed in 1912 during the height of the Edwardian era boom in the 1910s, the McKenzie Sharland Grocery is valued as a reflection of the surge of development that occurred in the River Flats neighbourhood due to its proximity to the thriving local clay, milling, glassware, and greenhouse industries, among many others. The building represents the growth and evolution of the historic River Flats community and the integration of commercial buildings

into the residential context in neighbourhoods in Medicine Hat. The River Flats neighbourhood, established in the low-lying flats of the South Saskatchewan River, east of the CPR station, densified significantly in the 1910s. As the surrounding industries increased production, workers' housing, commercial buildings, institutional facilities, and community spaces were developed. The quality of the building reflects the optimism and rapid growth during the Edwardian era, prior to the subsequent downturn of the local economy and the outbreak of the First World War.

The McKenzie Sharland Grocery is also significant as a long-time community commercial venture and for its association with the first and second owners: the McKenzie and Sharland families. Commercial ventures such as this grocery served both residents and visitors, and helped establish the River Flats neighbourhood as a self-sufficient community.

William McKenzie and his wife Margaret (Ross) were born in Ireland, but migrated to the Glasgow, Scotland, area where they married and started their family. They emigrated to Manitoba in 1882 and

and farmed north of Winnipeg. In about 1912, they retired from farming and moved to Medicine Hat, which was booming at the time. In the first building permit, McKenzie and his son, also named William, a carpenter, planned to build a 1 1/2 storey house. However, the permit was amended three months later and McKenzie hired prominent local architect William T. Williams to design the store and local contractor Sackrider and Turner to build it. The McKenzies operated the store until 1924 when William passed away (pre-deceased by his wife in 1921). The building was designed and built for a cost of \$1,500 as a grocery with a residence above.

Leonard Arthur Sharland acquired the store from the McKenzie estate in 1926, bought a delivery truck, and painted Len. Sharland Grocery on the side of the building.

Len, who immigrated from Wookey, England, married Irish-born Jessie Knight Brannan (born in 1893) in 1912 and moved to a small cottage on Balmoral Street in the River Flats neighbourhood shortly after. Len delivered groceries by truck in Medicine Hat. The Sharlands raised four children in the three-bedroom upper floor and ran the successful Len Sharland Grocery on the ground floor until 1936, when they were forced to close

due to financial constraints caused by the Depression. The store was then converted to a living room and after Len's death in 1950, their son, Leonard Charles and his wife Laurie, who married in 1955, moved into the house. The Sharlands continued to own and occupy the house until 2013.

A former CPR icehouse served as a garage for the Sharland family. It may have been associated with the original CPR station on the west side of the tracks and became redundant when the station was moved to the east side. When Leonard Arthur Sharland acquired it, the building had been modified to serve as a two room residence on Balmoral Street. He hired Kinnaird Transfer to move it to its current location. In the 1950s, Leonard Charles Sharland widened and replaced the garage and man doors.

Furthermore, McKenzie Sharland Grocery is highly valued as an exquisitely preserved and superb example of Edwardian era vernacular commercial architecture of the pre-First World War period. It is typical of the practical, small-scale commercial/residential buildings.

Leonard (left) and his wife, Jessie, and their daughter posing in front of Sharland Grocery with their new delivery truck in circa 1926



Image courtesy of Len Sharland (Jr.), Medicine Hat, Alberta

constructed during this period for local retail services, and served the daily convenience needs of the area's residents for many years. The raised false front with decorative pressed wood cornice is a typical Edwardian commercial feature, which increased the prominence of the main façade and provided increased opportunities for signs, although this does not appear to be case for the Sharland Grocery where a sign was painted on the side wall. The large multi-pane glass display windows, flanking each side of the central, recessed entryway, displayed goods and are indicative of the building's historic retail function. Characteristic of small, neighbourhood retail establishments, the building contains a residence for the proprietor of the establishment above, and reflects the family-run nature of this type of business.

The McKenzie Sharland Grocery is situated in its original location and has a high level of intact historic integrity. The building is valued as a neighbourhood landmark that contributes to the heritage character of the River Flats neighbourhood as a colourful and varied working class community with a blend of industrial, commercial, and residential dwellings.

In 2013, coincidentally while a Municipal Historic Resource designation was in process, a devastating flood of the South Saskatchewan River impacted the River Flats district and the Sharlands had to evacuate. Hydrostatic pressure caused the concrete block foundation of the Sharland residence to collapse. Due to the designation, while neighbouring houses were demolished, the McKenzie Sharland Grocery was moved, a new concrete foundation poured and the building moved onto it. For flood mitigation and fire code requirements, the building was raised about 150 mm and moved slightly west. During this process, the rear single storey kitchen, brick chimney and mature cottonwoods were lost. Cube Development Ltd., a private company, acquired the property in 2017 and has renovated the buildings.



## Character-Defining Elements - McKenzie Sharland Grocery (1113 Dominion Street SE)



- Location on the south side of Dominion Street on a flat, grassed lot



- Situation with close set-backs to the street in a residential context in the River Flats neighbourhood in Medicine Hat



- Landscaping such as: mature trees; CPR icehouse converted to a garage on the west side of property



- Form, scale, and massing as expressed by its: two-storey height; rectangular plan; low-pitched front-gabled roof with no overhangs with flat roof parapet wall on front facade



- Wood-frame construction including its: drop and lapped wooden siding; wooden trim and cornice



- Edwardian vernacular commercial influences such as its: false front parapet wall; wooden roof and storefront cornices with scroll-cut brackets and dentils; cornice boards; bargeboards on rear gable; cornerboards; storefront at first storey with storefront windows flanking a central recessed entryway; wooden soffits above storefront entryway; wooden drip molding over windows; watertable



- Fenestration such as: single assembly, 1-over-1 single-hung wooden-sash windows; original wooden paneled doors with upper light and original hardware; fixed multi-paned wooden-sash storefront windows with exterior storms and hopper multi-paned wooden-sash windows above



- Interior elements such as interior trim and wooden flooring



## Statement of Integrity - McKenzie Sharland Grocery (1113 Dominion Street SE)

### Applicable Significance Criteria This site is significant because...

#### Theme / Activity / Cultural Practice / Event



Yes



No

-Constructed in 1912, during the height of the Edwardian era boom in the 1910s, the McKenzie Sharland Grocery is valued as a reflection of the surge of development that occurred in the River Flats neighbourhood due to its proximity to the thriving local clay, milling, glassware, and greenhouse industries, among many others (**Theme Value – Managing Growth in Medicine Hat**).

-The McKenzie Sharland Grocery is also significant as a long-time community commercial venture and for its association with the first and second owners: the McKenzie and Sharland families (**Theme Value – Oasis in the Prairie: Settling Medicine Hat**).

-Furthermore, McKenzie Sharland Grocery Store is highly valued as an exquisitely preserved and superb example of Edwardian era vernacular commercial architecture of the pre-First World War period (**Theme Value - Built in Medicine Hat**).

#### Institution / Person



Yes



No

#### Design / Style / Construction



Yes



No

#### Information Potential



Yes



No

#### Landmark / Symbolic Value



Yes



No

The McKenzie Sharland Grocery is situated in its original location and has a high level of intact historic integrity. The building is valued as a neighbourhood landmark that contributes to the heritage character of the River Flats neighbourhood.

#### Period of Significance

1906 to 1913 Pre-First World War Boom, Age of Optimism

#### Chronology of Alterations

During the flood of 2013, the concrete block foundation collapsed. As part of the restoration (2015-2020) the single storey kitchen, brick chimney and many mature trees were removed; a new concrete foundation was poured; windows, siding, doors and floors were restored.

### Aspects of Integrity

#### LOCATION

Yes ☒No ☐☐ Not Applicable

The location of the commercial/residential building on Dominion Street has not changed.

#### DESIGN

Yes ☒No ☐☐ Not Applicable

The design of the building not been altered and expresses an excellent degree of integrity.

#### ENVIRONMENT

Yes ☒No ☐☐ Not Applicable

The building continues to be located in a residential neighbourhood on a tree-lined street.

#### MATERIAL

☒ Yes☐ No☐ Not Applicable

The authentic materials of the building are intact

#### WORKMANSHIP

☒ Yes☐ No☐ Not Applicable

The quality of workmanship is evident in the wood building's handsome detailing and condition.

#### FEELING

☒ Yes☐ No☐ Not Applicable

The feeling of the structure has not changed. It continues to convey an elegant aesthetic and historic identity

#### ASSOCIATION

☒ Yes☐ No☐ Not Applicable

The association of the building has not changed; however, it is no longer a grocery.

Statement of Integrity continued on next page...

## Statement of Integrity - McKenzie-Sharland Grocery (1113 Dominion Street SE)

### Statement of Integrity

*McKenzie-Sharland Grocery maintains all the aspects of integrity necessary for it to convey its significance / heritage value.*

The McKenzie-Sharland Grocery is a highly intact resource and is a rare example of a vernacular Edwardian commercial/residential building in Medicine Hat. The house is in nearly original condition, retaining its original location, design, and wooden materiality. The wooden siding, both drop and lapped, has been replaced where defective and painted with linseed oil paint. One of the main areas to monitor is the roofline, as it provides little protection from the elements on both the gable and the parapet. Areas of deteriorated wood on parapet and bargeboards have been replaced and a modern eavestrough and downspout system ("distinguishable") added for future protection. The original windows were not in good condition and have been rebuilt, including wooden storm sashes visible in old photos to replace later aluminum additions.

## Additional Images - McKenzie Sharland Grocery (1113 Dominion Street SE)

Detail of the storefront of McKenzie Sharland Grocery


Donald Luxton & Associates  
September 2012



Image courtesy of Len Sharland (Jr.), Medicine Hat, Alberta

Leonard A. in front of Sharland Grocery with his delivery truck in circa 1926

**Heritage Evaluation Form - McKenzie Sharland Grocery (1113 Dominion Street SE)**

 <b>Medicine Hat</b> <b>The Gas City</b> <b>Heritage Evaluation Form</b>	Site Number	Category A
	Community District River Flats	
	Designation	

<b>Site Name(s):</b> McKenzie Sharland Grocery			
<b>Municipal Address:</b> 1113 Dominion Street SE		Date of Construction:	Y 1912
<b>Consultant(s):</b> Donald Luxton & Associates Inc. <b>Heritage Committee:</b> Heritage Resources <b>Committee Heritage Planner:</b> Jeanie Gartly		Evaluation Date:	Y 12 M 09 D 06
			<b>Total</b>
			95

History (H)	E	VG	G	F	P		(H) SCORE
H.1 Associations/Patterns		X				20	35
H.2 Age		X				10	
<b>Comments:</b> H.1 The wood building is unique for its commercial/residential construction outside the city's downtown core and represents a surge of Edwardian era development in River Flats. H.2 Constructed 1912.							

Architecture (A)	E	VG	G	F	P		(A) SCORE
A.1 Style/Type/Design	X					40	40
A.2 Designer/Builder			X			5	
A.3 Construction Technology				X		3	
A.4 Interior Details		X				8	
A.5 Alterations		X				-5	
<b>Comments:</b> A.1 The building is representative of an Edwardian era commercial structure. A.2 Architect – William J. McKenzie. Contractor – Sackrider and Turner A.3 Building is a strong example of period construction practices. A.4 Wood trim and flooring intact. A.5 No major alterations to the building.							

Urban Context (C)	E	VG	G	F	P		(C) SCORE
C.1 Landmark/Character			X			5	20
C.2 Streetscape/Landscape		X				10	
<b>Comments:</b> C.1 The building is unique for its placement within a residential neighbourhood of River Flats. C.2 The building's architecture varies, but is compatible with the residential streetscape.							