

Blake's Funeral Chapel
200 May Street South



Year Built: 1935

Architect: R.E. Mason

Style: Colonial / Regency

Notable Features: Hip-roof, dormer and round arch windows

White stone arched entranceway, flanked with two bronze standard lamps

Designation Date: September 14th, 1992

By-Law No.: 257 - 1992

Legal Description: Plan 84 Lot 41 Lot 40 N Pt Lot 39

Current Owner: Blake Funeral Chapel Limited

Description:

Blake's Funeral Chapel Limited has been family owned and operated since 1924. The site of the first funeral home was on the first floor of the Fort William Temple Building. In 1935, George E. Blake commissioned R.E. Mason to design a new building to house his business. Much of the materials and workmanship used in the construction of Blake's Funeral Chapel was local. The new chapel was opened in November of 1935. It cost \$20,000 and is located next door to the Temple Building, on the corner of May and Donald Street.

Architecture:

This structure was designated as a Heritage Property for architectural reasons. It is situated on a prominent site, directly across from City Hall, and demonstrates the changing construction methods and approaches to style used by R.E. Mason.

Blake's funeral chapel was constructed in 1935, following the design of well-known local architect R.E. Mason. The building is seventy-five feet by thirty-eight feet and consists of a business area on the first floor, two apartments on the second and a large attic above. It is brick veneer construction, buff-coloured rug-brick with many red hearts,

trimmed in white stone around the rounded entrance and windows. The window shape is also reflected in the dormer. The white stone-finished steps are surmounted by two bronze standard lamps, which light the engraved bronze name plates on either side of the door. A side entrance to the chapel on the south wall was originally protected by a port cochere, but this area was replaced circa 1951 by a garage addition.

The interior of the chapel sits approximately 100 people, with French windows opening onto the hallway and slumber rooms, which provided space for overflow. On the wall at the front of the chapel plaster was used to create the effect of organ pipes. The music was provided over a loud speaker from the organ alcove. At the south end of the lounge was an open fireplace. The structure included many modern conveniences, from the attached garage, to the newly-equipped preparation room, the shower for the staff, the sound-proof ceiling, and the automatic coal fireman for the hot-water furnace.

An effort was made during construction to utilize local workmanship and materials.¹

¹ *Blake Funeral Chapel Ltd.* From Andrea Pedin's binder