

2100 First Avenue - St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church



St. Andrew's United Church 2009

### **Heritage Register - Building**

- 1) **Historical Name:** St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
- 2) **Common Name:** St. Andrew's United Church
- 3) **Address:** 2100 First Avenue
- 4) **Date of Construction:** 1898

## 5) Design, Style, Architecture, Architect:

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

#### Description:

Saint Andrew's United Church is located on the northeast corner lots of the intersection of First Avenue and Queen Street in upper Rossland, British Columbia. The large, white stuccoed building with its red, metal clad, peaked roof and steeple make it a prominent heritage building overlooking the Downtown. The main entrances to the Sanctuary and the adjoining Annex are reached by two sets of stairs coming from First Avenue below.

#### Heritage Value:

St. Andrew's is valued as a place of spiritual and religious importance to many Rosslanders since its construction and consecration in 1898. Originally built as a Presbyterian church, St. Andrew's became a United Church of Canada in 1925 when the Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational faiths amalgamated.

The Annex, adjoining the Sanctuary on its western side, is of social and cultural significant to Rosslanders since its construction in 1912. It was built to meet the recreational and social needs of both the congregation and the community and its large, open space (30'X50') has continued to be well used by a diversity of user groups for activities, events and gatherings.

Additions to the original Church, the Large Annex (1912) and the Small Annex (1920s), reflect increasing church attendance and involvement in a time when the population of Rossland was fairly static. Perhaps the greatest increase was in the number of children - when the final additional space was created at St. Andrew's by digging out a basement under the Large Annex for Sunday School rooms in the 1940s, there were close to 300 children attending St. Andrew's Sunday School.

Architecturally, St. Andrew's Church is a typical church of its time and the early churches of Rossland - pitched roof, steeple on the front of the building with a bell and windows of colored or stained glass. St. Andrew's embodies religious, spiritual, social and cultural aspects of the community's past and present.

#### Character Defining Elements:

- footprint including the Sanctuary, Large and Small Annexes
- Steeple with bell
- Colored glass in windows
- 1st Avenue entrances
- Red roof
- Siting on elevated property above the intersecting roadways
- Plaque identifying St. Andrew's as one of Rossland's significant heritage buildings

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St. Andrews United Church c.1907



St. Andrew United Church c.1951

## HISTORY

Saint Andrew's Church was built in 1898, first as a Presbyterian Church and later, in 1925 when the Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational Churches amalgamated across Canada, it became Saint Andrew's United Church.

St. Andrew's Church is located on the northeast corner of First Avenue and Queen Street. It's stately presence with tall spire, one block up the steep hill from the downtown, makes it a Rossland landmark. The red, metal-clad roof adds to the photographer's delight and is reason enough to make it one of Rossland's most photographed heritage buildings.

Rosland's population grew very rapidly from the winter of 1894/95 when the head count was a mere 350 people until the City was incorporated in March of 1897 with a population of 7,000. Along with the prospectors, miners, construction workers, business people, investors, etc., came ministers of different faiths. The first Protestant religious service in Rossland was given by Hugh J. Robertson, a Presbyterian minister, in 1895 and the following account appeared in the Rossland Miner newspaper of May of that year:

"There was no hall, no school building, no suitable room, but by ten o'clock on Saturday night, Mr. Robertson had secured permission from a Mr. MacNaughton to use a construction site on the corner of Sourdough Alley and Spokane, for a

service the next day. Seats were improvised from planks laid on nail kegs, shingle bundles and blocks.”

St. Andrew’s was built in 1898. The building has a footprint of 45’X60’ with an open ceiling rising to approximately 30’ and a steeple with bell, rising to approximately 45’. The roof was shingled and there were two large entrance doors to the Sanctuary that face First Avenue. Windows in the Sanctuary and Vestibule give the appearance of stained glass but the color has been painted on the glass.

The “Large Annex”, attached to the Sanctuary, was built in 1912 to meet the recreational and social needs of the congregation and the community. Its footprint is 30’X50’. In the 1920s, the “Small Annex” (18’X30’) was built as a Sunday School facility and meeting room. In the 1940s a basement was dug out under the Large Annex to create still more Sunday School space for the 300 children attending. The large open area of the Annex has never been altered and has served Rossland for a hundred years as an activity center for a very diversified group of community users - Cubs, Scouts, Playschool, Rossland Radio, etc., as well as the place for Church related events such as teas, dinners, funerals and wedding receptions.

The original shingled roof was replaced with the hallmark red, metal roof in the 1950s and the “Stairway to Heaven” project to replace the steps leading to the Sanctuary was completed in 2000. At some time in the past, the concrete walls on the frontage of Queen Street and First Avenue were constructed.

## **OTHER INFORMATION**

The chronological order of Presbyterian ministers known to have served in Rossland is as follows: Robertson, Wallace, Dodds, Gandier (responsible for the building of the present day church), Millen Robinson, Hugh Grant, Dow and Rev. Sarkisian (responsible for the Church Annex being built adjoining the church in 1912 and the last Presbyterian minister to serve the community). Rev. E. A. Chester is remembered as being the first minister of the United Church in Rossland.

Rossland also had a Methodist congregation in its early days. A Methodist minister was in Rossland as early as 1895. A Methodist Church was built but lost to fire and the Methodists then used the Presbyterian Church for their services. In 1916 discussions took place about amalgamating the Presbyterian and Methodist congregations in St. Andrew’s and in 1917 this union took place and a Methodist minister was chosen to lead the congregations on July 1st, 1917.

In 1889 the first St. George’s Anglican Church was built on the corner of Earl Street and Kootenay Avenue in Lower Rossland, and services were held there until early 1910. The first service in the new St. George’s Church (corner of Columbia Avenue and Monte Christo Street) was held on January 22, 1910 at which time the church was dedicated to the memory of the beloved Father Pat who had served the community so tirelessly from 1896 to 1899. In January of 1969, this church burned down and for a number of years, the Anglican congregation used St. Andrew’s United Church as their place of worship.