



61 HEATON AVENUE

GERMAN CLUB

PREPARED BY PETERSON PROJECTS – FEBRUARY 2007



61 HEATON AVENUE GERMAN CLUB

Date of Construction: 1904

Building Permit: 1427/1904

Architect: Schwab, Johann (John)

Contractor: Gauer, R.

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST:

This building, visually striking in comparison to the neighbouring structures, was for many years a clubhouse for German immigrants who made Winnipeg their home.

Stylistically, this is a classically inspired building, with much of the ornamental treatment reserved for the main (south) façade. These elements include rusticated stone base and light coloured brick superstructure, terra cotta quoins, square headed ground floor windows with stone lug sills and heads, arched second storey windows with connected brick drip moulding and a complete entablature with dentilled cornice and brick and stone parapet at the roofline. Most ornate is the projecting central portion of the façade that holds the main entrance (now with an enclosed entrance porch) and large second storey window. Both openings are arched and partially boarded up and filled with glass block. The second storey of this area features paired unfluted columns with Corinthian Order capitals and



Rear (north) and east façades, 2006

plain bases connected by a balustrade. The columns support a classical pediment under which is the year of construction of the building, “1904.”

The east and west sides and the rear (north) façades are much plainer, with minimal stone accenting and rusticated stone bases. Second floor windows on the side elevations are arched and square headed on the ground floor and on the rear façade. A one-storey addition is attached to the north wall.

The building stands on its original site and appears to be in good structural condition. The alterations to the main façade – the entrance porch and the filling of the entrance and second storey window openings – have negatively affected its appearance.

The designer of the building was Johann or John Schwab, who came to Winnipeg in the late 1890s. A German-born designer, Schwab worked in the city until 1910 and often partnered with Louis Pachal, a carpenter and contractor. Both men lived and worked extensively in the immigrant community of Winnipeg’s North End. Among his known works are: 368-70 Edmonton Street, Hoover and Town Duplex (1901, Grade III); Immanuel German Lutheran Church, 294 Stella Avenue (1903, demolished); Gould Hotel, 251 Jarvis Avenue (1904, demolished); Pulford Block, 398-98½ Portage Avenue (1904, demolished); German Lutheran Trinity Church, 392 Dufferin Avenue (1905, demolished); 339 William Avenue, Lauzon Block (1905); and Missler Terrace, 247-51 Manitoba Avenue (1909). He has been given 5 points by the Historical Buildings Committee.



West façade, 2006

HISTORICAL INTEREST:

From 1904 until World War I, this building operated as the German Club or *Deutsche Vereinigung*, described at the time as “the mother society” of the local German immigrant cultural clubs.¹ The club had been founded in the 1890s and by 1912 boasted 200 members.²

During the War, the club was forced to discontinue and the building was taken over by the Melotone Talking Machine Company, using the space as a gramophone factory. After the War, by the mid-1920s, the club was again functioning in the hall on Heaton Avenue. The Second World War marked the end of the German Club’s use of the building; it was taken over as the offices and showroom of the Empire Sash and Door Company, a long-time local firm that had operated a factory for many years just across Heaton Avenue.³



Northwest corner, 2006

RECOMMENDATION TO HISTORICAL BUILDINGS COMMITTEE:

Under the Historical Buildings By-law, this building meets a number of important criteria:

- its historical importance- one of the oldest extant immigrant clubhouses in Winnipeg and an important German institution that spawned other clubs across the city and beyond;
- its associations- its long-term connection to the German community as it developed and matured in Winnipeg;
- its design- an excellent example of a classically-inspired public structure;
- its architect- J. Schwab was a respected and important practitioner, especially in the immigrant community;
- its location- contributes greatly to the streetscape; and
- its integrity- despite some alterations, its main façade continues to display many of its original elements and design.



Front (south) and east façades, 1978

ENDNOTES:

- 1 Manitoba Free Press, December 7, 1912, Music and Drama Section, p. 1.
- 2 Ibid., p. 1.
- 3 City of Winnipeg Assessment Rolls, Roll No. 13-091155000, 1900-1970; and Henderson's Directory, 1904-1960.