480 MAIN STREET

ASHDOWN BUILDING ANNEX

City of Winnipeg
Historical Buildings & Resources Committee
Researcher: M. Peterson
June 2015
James H. Ashdown (1844-1924) arrived in the Red River Settlement from Ontario in 1869, a young man hoping to find his fortune in the West. Beginning in 1871, he began selling tinware from a small frame shop at the northwest corner of Main Street and Bannatyne Avenue, beginning almost 100 years of retailing by the Ashdown Company at this location.

By 1900, the old shop had been replaced and the new building expanded into a four-storey structure (Plate 1). In October 1904, the building was destroyed by fire,¹ but by mid-1905, a new, six-storey Ashdown Store had been completed (Plates 2-3). From these headquarters, Ashdown’s hardware empire grew dramatically throughout Western Canada, both retail and wholesale (which was run out of his large warehouse further east on Bannatyne Avenue – Plate 4). James Ashdown died in 1924 but the company continued to flourish under his son, Harry. His death, in 1970, marked the end of the company.

In 1951, at the beginning of the post-War economic boom, Ashdown’s demolished the Rialto Block immediately north of its retail store and built a one storey Annex and planning to stucco the ground and second floors of the existing building to match the cladding of the new Annex (Plate 5).² But the plans changed and the entire front (east) façade of the old building was redesigned into a more modern style (Plates 6-9).

In 2002, the redesigned Annex became part of the redeveloped mixed use structure (Plate 10).

**STYLE**

As constructed, the Annex did not feature a wealth of detailing; it was designed as a functional commercial structure with large display windows. Its straight lines and unembellished main façade suited the renovated, Brutalist Style main building to which it was attached.

¹ *Winnipeg Telegram*, October 12, 1904, p. 1.
² Architect’s drawing, Plan # 1205/1951, courtesy of the City of Winnipeg.
In 2001-2002, the building and annex were completely renovated, the new owners attempting to replicate the original 1904 Neoclassical design of the exterior and redesigning the front façade of the Annex to match this replication.

CONSTRUCTION
The irregularly shaped one-storey Annex originally measured 18.2 metres by 30.5 metres (see Appendix I for more construction information). The building was clad in stucco and rested on a 33.0-centimetre concrete foundation.

The 2001-2002 renovations entailed the redesign of the main (east) façade of both the original building and the Annex and adding a second storey to the Annex.

DESIGN
According to the original plans, the Annex was a simple retail block, with large display windows and an entrance near the north end of the main (east) façade (Plates 5, 11 and 12).

It would remain relatively unchanged until the early 2000s when the second storey was added, red tile cladding was added and the ground floor fenestration was completely altered and the door removed (Plate 13 and 14).

The south wall is hidden by the larger building, the north wall originally contained a single window and door but the renovations in 2002 have added several windows to both floors and an exterior metal staircase (Plate 15). The rear (west) façade includes large second storey windows (Plate 16).

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3 City of Winnipeg Assessment Record, Roll No. 608360-12-2.
4 Architect’s drawing, Plan # 1205/1951, courtesy of the City of Winnipeg.
5 City of Winnipeg Building Permit, #200994/2002.
INTERIOR
As described in the original plans, the Annex featured a large, open “Basement Sales Area” at the east end and storage rooms, washrooms and a machine room in the west end (Plate 17). A single opening gave access from this level to the larger building.

The original main floor featured a shipping office in the southwest corner, connecting to the existing loading area of the larger building, a centrally-placed staircase leading to the basement and two interior doorways to connect to the retail space of the larger building (Plate 18).

Today, the basement is used as a parking garage (portions of the original terrazzo floor still exist), the main floor as office and rehearsal space and the second floor (access unavailable) as offices and the Rachel Brown Theatre (Plates 19-21).

INTEGRITY
The building stands on its original site and appears to be in good structural condition. The front façade, as mentioned previously, has been completely remodelled.

STREETSCEAPE
This commercial annex has been a part of one Winnipeg’s primary downtown streetscapes for over 50 years (Plate 22). It is located in “Bankers’ Row” several blocks of pre-World War I banking halls in Winnipeg’s Exchange District National Historic Site. All buildings in this district are an essential part of the historic streetscape and as such, the Historical Buildings and Resources Committee has given them 60 points.

ARCHITECT/CONTRACTORS
Local architectural firm Moody and Moore were responsible for the design of this annex. Formed in 1936, this pair was responsible for many fine buildings in Winnipeg (see Appendix II for
biographical information). The Historical Buildings and Resources Committee has given them 20 points.

PERSON/INSTITUTION
The Annex functioned as part of the Ashdown Hardware Company’s Main Street retail headquarters for nearly 20 years. When the company finally ceased operations, the building was taken over by discount department store Big Four Sales Limited. In the early 1990s, the Off-Price department store used the building.

In 1995, the City of Winnipeg acquired the building, along with the Leland Hotel on William Avenue with plans to redevelop the structure as part of a new civic “campus” plan to bring more City of Winnipeg departments and their employees into the City Hall area. The initial plan was to demolish both buildings. The hotel burned to the ground in January 1999 and soon two years later, Ashdown Arts Exchange Consortium Limited, a subsidiary of Shelter Canadian Properties Limited bought the Ashdown Store with plans to convert it into a mix-use office, retail and studio facility.

In 2001, renovations began and the building was renamed the Crocus Building, after one of its major tenants – the Crocus Investment Fund, which had been created by the provincial government in 1993. A decade later, the Fund was mired in controversy that ultimately forced it into receivership.

Today, the building houses a number of arts groups including Winnipeg Folk Festival, Manitoba Conservatory of Music and Arts, Inc., Winnipeg’s Contemporary Dancers and the School of Contemporary Dancers, as well as the Winnipeg Police Service and several private firms.

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EVENT
There is no known significant historic event connected with this building.

CONTEXT
The Annex was built in the post-World War II expansion era when Winnipeg’s economy began to rebound and grow after the Great Depression and the War. Capital was readily available and the expansion of business required new headquarters for a wide range of companies. This translated into the construction of a large number of office and retail buildings in the downtown.

LANDMARK
Many older Winnipeggers would remember the Annex as an important part of the Main Street retail sector. Its redevelopment in the early 2000s has continued this familiarity.
APPENDIX I

CITY OF WINNIPEG - Preliminary Report

Building Address: 480 Main Street
Building Name: Ashdown Hardware Addition

Original Use: hardware store
Current Use: vacant

Roll No. (Old): 608360 (10056)

Municipality: 12
Ward: 2
Property or Occupancy Code: 00

Legal Description: 6/8^W St. John, Plan 3, Lot 2

Location: west side between Bannatyne & William avenues

Date of Construction: 1952
Storeys: 1
Construction Type: concrete

HERITAGE STATUS: ON NOMINATED LIST

Building Permits (Plans available: [CS] City Storage):
- 1205/1951 [CS] $165,000 (original); 162210/2001 $700,000 (construct 2 storey parkade);
175723/2001 $1,950,000 (interior & exterior alterations); 200994/2002 $1,550,000 (interior & exterior alterations);
210549/2002 $30,000 (interior alterations); 210550/2002 $150,000 (interior alterations);
211631/2002 (addition and interior alterations)

Information:
- 59’6” x 100’ x 29’ + = 21,851 cu. ft.

- Exterior – concrete-covered peg board

- 1986 – Floors terrazzo – small cracks; fluorescent lights

- Permit 175723/2002 – all new windows, exterior painted & re-stuccoed

- Permit 200994/2002 – construct 1 storey shell addition above Annex/parkade & interior alterations

- Permit 210549/2002 – studio/office in portion of 2nd floor for Conservatory of Music

- Permit 210550/2002 – studio/office in 2nd floor for Professional Dancers

- Permit 211631/2002 – 2nd floor addition & interior alterations to main and 2nd floors

ARCHITECT: MOODY & MOORE
CONTRACTOR: UNKNOWN

---MAIN STREET---
Moody and Moore

Herbert Henry Gaten Moody (Plate 23) was born in Winnipeg in 1903 and graduated with his architecture degree from the University of Manitoba in 1926 and then working in the Boston, MA office of architects Derby and Robinson. He returned to Canada in 1928, working as a draftsman in the Toronto, ON offices of Sproatt and Rolph until his return to Winnipeg in 1933. Three years later, Moody formed a partnership with Robert E. Moore as Moody and Moore.

Winnipegger R.E. Moore was born in 1909 and received his University of Manitoba architecture degree in 1931 and then apprenticed for two years with local firm Northwood and Chivers prior to forming the partnership with H.H.G. Moody in 1936.

The partnership, formed in the middle of the Great Depression started slowly, one of its earliest designs, the Hudson’s Bay Company Store in downtown Edmonton, AL (Plate 24), completed in 1937, showed the modernist leanings of the pair. Moody served overseas in World War II from 1940 to 1945 and in the post-War era, Moody and Moore grew rapidly, with commission throughout Western Canada and at one time a staff of 65, making it the largest prairie architectural firm.

Beyond the firm, H.H.G. Moody also lectured at the University of Manitoba’s School of Architecture (1946-1949) and was active in the Manitoba Association of Architects as a council

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2 “Moore, Robert,” Architects’ Files, Manitoba Association of Architects.
member and president (1937, 1947, 1948 and 1961)\textsuperscript{5} and in the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC) as a committee member and Chancellor of the College of Fellows of the RAIC (1961 to 1964).\textsuperscript{6} His partner R.E. Moore was appointed chair of the local planning committee of the RAIC in 1941.\textsuperscript{7}

In 1969, Moody and Moore amalgamated with a younger firm to form Moody Moore Duncan Rattray Peters Searle Christie Architects, Engineers, and Planners, renamed “MMP / WINNIPEG Architects Engineers Planners” in 1974 with offices in Winnipeg, Vancouver, B.C. and Toronto, ON (Plate 25).\textsuperscript{8} Moody retired in 1970 and moved to Victoria, B.C. where he died in 1991,\textsuperscript{9} Moore stepped back to a consultant role in the new firm and left the City.\textsuperscript{10} MMP Architects Inc. continues to operate an office in Winnipeg.

A partial list of important local designs would include:\textsuperscript{11}

Samuel L. Wilson Residence, 106 Handsart Blvd. (1938)
Nurses’ Residence, Grace Hospital, 210 Evanson St. (1941)
Red Cross Lodge, Deer Lodge Military Hospital, 2109 Portage Ave. (1945)
Winnipeg Electric Company Osborne Street Substation, 265 Osborne St. (1947)
Red Cross Building, 226 Osborne St. North (1948)
City of Winnipeg Offices, 100 Main St. (1948) – demolished
Winnipeg Winter Club, 200 River Ave. (1950)
Regional hospitals in Virden, MB and Morden, MB (early 1950s)
Women’s Pavilion, Winnipeg General Hospital (Health Sciences Centre), Bannatyne Ave. (1951)
Children’s Hospital, Winnipeg General Hospital (Health Sciences Centre), Bannatyne Ave. (1952)

\textsuperscript{5} Loc. cit.
\textsuperscript{6} Moody – WAF.
\textsuperscript{8} Winnipeg Free Press, June 8, 1974, p. 35.
\textsuperscript{9} Moody – WAF.
\textsuperscript{10} Moore – WAF.
Moody and Moore designs, continued:

Ashdown Store Annex, 480 Main St. (1952)
Pigott Motors, 1290 Main St. (1952)
Churchill High School, 510 Hay St. (1953)
Winnipeg Stadium, 1465 Maroons Road (1953) – demolished
Harrow School, 550 Harrow St. (1954)
Princess Elizabeth Hospital, Morley Ave. (1954) – demolished
Sovereign Life Building, 287 Broadway (1956)
Great West Life Building, 60 Osborne St. North (with Marani and Morris, Toronto, ON – 1956)
St. John’s College and Chapel, University of Manitoba, 92 Dysart Road (1958)
Agricultural Research Building, 66 Dafoe Rd. (1958)
National Revenue Building, 391 York Ave. (1958)
University of Manitoba School of Dentistry Building, 780 Bannatyne Ave. (1959)
Manitoba Hydro Building, 820 Taylor Ave. (1960)
Chown Building, 753 McDermot Ave. (1962)
Manitoba Institute of Technology (Red River College), 2055 Notre Dame Ave. (1963)
Donnelly United Church, 1226 Waller Ave. (1964)
University College, University of Manitoba, 210 Dysart Rd. (1964)
Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce Branch, 140 Princess St. (1969) – demolished
St. Stephen’s Broadway United Church, 396 Broadway (1970)
Lockhart Hall, University of Winnipeg, 515 Portage Ave. (1970)
Medical Arts Building and Parkade, 233 Kennedy St. (1972-1974)
Can-West Global Park, 1 Portage Ave. East (1999)
Plate 1 – Ashdown’s Store, 476 Main Street, ca.1900. The Rialto Block is next door. (M. Peterson Collection.)
Plate 2 – Ashdown’s Store, 476 Main Street, ca.1929. (Archives of Manitoba, “Winnipeg-Buildings-Business-Ashdown, J.H. 1,” N9846.)
Plate 3 – Main Street, west side between McDermot and Bannatyne avenues, ca.1907. Ashdown Store is at arrow. (Courtesy of the Provincial Archives of Manitoba.)
Plate 4 – Ashdown Warehouse, 167 Bannatyne Avenue, no date. (M. Peterson Collection.)
Plate 5 – “East (Main Street) Elevation,” architect’s drawing, Ashdown Store Annex, 480 Main Street, 1951. Second storey windows are bricked in and the exterior is stuccoed. (City of Winnipeg, Plan #1205/1951.)
Plate 6 – The Ashdown Store, 476-480 Main Street, under renovation, 1951. (Reproduced from Winnipeg Free Press, November 3, 1951, p. 1.)
Plate 7 – Ashdown’s Store, 476-480 Main Street, 1964. (Courtesy of the University of Manitoba Archives, Winnipeg Tribune Collection, PC 18/3837A/18-3837A-001.)
Plate 8 – Ashdown’s Store, 476-480 Main Street, 1965. The main façade of the building has been renovated and painted. (Reproduced from the University of Manitoba “Winnipeg Building Index.”)
Plate 9 – Another view of the former Ashdown Store, 476-480 Main Street, 1970, the façade appears to have been painted since 1965. This image was taken when the Annex was still being used by Ashdown’s to sell off its remaining stock while the bigger structure was about to open as Big Four Sales. Shortly after, the new retailer took over the entire building. (Archives of Manitoba, “Architectural Survey”.)
Plate 10 – 211 Bannatyne Avenue, 2014.  (M. Peterson, 2014.)

Plate 11 – Big 4 Sales, 476-480 Main Street, 1978.  (City of Winnipeg.)
Plate 12 – Former Ashdown Store, 476-480 Main Street, ca.1999. Now vacant, the building awaits redevelopment. (City of Winnipeg.)

Plate 13 – Former Ashdown Store Annex, 480 Main Street, front (east) and north façades, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)
Plate 14 – Reclaimed brick cladding of the Former Ashdown Store, 476 Main Street (left) and tile cladding of the Former Annex, 480 Main Street (right), 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)
Plate 15 – Former Ashdown Store Annex, 480 Main Street, north façade, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)

Plate 16 – Former Ashdown Store Annex, 480 Main Street, rear façade, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)
Plate 17 – “Basement Floor Plan,” architect’s drawing, Ashdown Store Annex, 480 Main Street, 1951. (City of Winnipeg, Plan #1205/1951.)
Plate 18 – “Main Floor Plan,” architect’s drawing, Ashdown Store Annex, 480 Main Street, 1951. (City of Winnipeg, Plan #1205/1951.)
Plate 19 – Former Ashdown Store Annex, 480 Main Street, basement parkade, 2015. (M. Peterson, 2015.)
Plate 20 – Former Ashdown Store Annex, 480 Main Street, Winnipeg’s Contemporary Dancers School of Contemporary Dances, common room, 2015. (M. Peterson, 2015.)
Plate 21 – Former Ashdown Store Annex, 480 Main Street, Winnipeg’s Contemporary Dancers School of Contemporary Dances, studio space, 2015. (M. Peterson, 2015.)

Plate 22 – Main Street looking south from William Avenue, 2014. (M. Peterson, 2014.)
Plate 23 – Herbert H.G. Moody, no date. (Reproduced from Manitoba Historical Society website, “Memorable Manitobans: Herbert Henry Gatenby Moody (1903-1091)”)

Plate 24 – Hudson’s Bay Company Store, Jasper Avenue at 102 Street, Edmonton, AL, ca.1940. Designed by Moody and Moore, Winnipeg. (Image courtesy of darrellincyvr.)
MMP / WINNIPEG Architects Engineers Planners

Moody Moore Duncan Rattray Peters Searle Christie Architects Engineers Planners are pleased to announce a change in name to MMP / WINNIPEG Architects Engineers Planners, and the following organizational changes.

MMP / WINNIPEG
Architects Engineers Planners
295 Broadway,
Winnipeg, Canada
R3C 0C4


MMP / VANCOUVER
Architects Planners
506-1075 Melville Street
Vancouver, Canada
V6E 2W4

James H. Christie and H. Trevorco, D. Tanner will be resident partners in the new Vancouver practice.

Wilson Newton
Roberts Architects
Duncan Planners
702-495 York Street
Toronto, Canada M4Y 2A7

Q. Everett Wilson, Frank D. Newton, Michael, F. Roberts, and John H. Duncan will continue as resident partners in the Toronto practice.

These organizational changes reflect our continuing efforts to provide diversified and personalized service to our clients.