

## 782 MAIN STREET – INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER BUILDING

*August C. Wilmanns (1904)*



Built at a cost of \$75,000 in 1904, this large sturdily-built warehouse was for many years the Canadian headquarters for farm equipment and truck manufacturing giant International Harvester, who built this structure two years after its founding in Chicago, IL.

The warehouse is built with the mill construction system – solid brick walls connected via a system of square wood beams and posts and wood plank flooring. It was very popular in Winnipeg’s warehouse district because of its strength and fire resiliency and the ability to add more floors. This warehouse includes dark brick cladding on the front (east) façade wrapping around and running a bay along the north façade. The remainder of the building is clad in plain common clay brick. Window openings are both rectilinear and arched, and numerous wide, arched loading doors are found on the south wall. The roof is finished with a metal cornice on the front and a short distance along both side elevations.

On the interior, renovations and re-use have altered much of the space, but there are many examples

of the original finishes and layouts – such as open spaces, high ceilings and heavy wood beams/posts.

The company hired Chicago, IL architect A.C. Wilmanns to design the warehouse. It is the only Wilmanns work in Winnipeg and it appears he did not practice extensively in Chicago.

International Harvester (IH) grew quickly in the early decades of the 1900s, producing a wide variety of agricultural machines, delivery vans and trucks and by the 1930s IH was the leading truck manufacturer in North America. The company would remain at its Main Street warehouse until the mid-1940s, replaced by Walter Woods Limited, wholesale hardware. In 2002, the building was purchased by the Winnipeg Centre Vineyard Church and is presently used for church services, office space, social assistance programming and transitional housing.

Elements of the building that would require approval if alterations were planned are:

Exterior-

- The dark and common brick and stone accented four-storey building on raised basement with flat roof on the southwest corner of Sutherland Avenue, its front (east) façade facing Main Street, its north façade facing Sutherland Avenue, its south façade facing a parking lot and open space and its rear (west) façade facing a parking lot;
- The symmetrical front (east) façade with its raised stone-clad foundation with rectilinear window openings, dark brick superstructure (which wraps around and runs one bay on the north and south facades) with windows in rectilinear openings accented with stone on all floors, an “INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER COMPANY OF AMERICA” sign above the stone framed entrance, stone belt course and heaving overhanging metal cornice with metal sign fence;
- The rear portion of the north façade with common clay brick cladding, windows in arched openings, main floor entrance and flat roof;
- The rear portion of the south façade with its common clay brick cladding, large raised loading doors in arched openings on the ground floor, windows in rectilinear openings on the upper floors and the flat roof with raised sections with metal roofs; and
- The rear (west) façade with windows in rectilinear openings at the south end of all floors with metal lintels and painted signage at the flat roofline.

Interior-

- Heavy timber mill structural system.