

750 Allison Avenue Strand House – 1940s



Front Elevation



Rear and North Elevation



South Elevation

Description

Strand House is a small single storey wood framed house built in the 1940s that was moved from Downtown Quesnel to this location on the west side of Allison Avenue in West Quesnel, BC. The historic place is confined to the building's footprint.

Heritage Value

Strand House is located in West Quesnel which developed as a rural community with small houses and family farms. The growth of West Quesnel was moderate until a single-lane bridge across the Fraser River was constructed in 1929. The bridge provided a permanent link between the two Quesnel communities. These communities were amalgamated into one city in 1958. In 1971, the two-lane Moffat Bridge was built and growth in West Quesnel increased steadily. Many houses of pioneering families have been moved to new locations in Quesnel as the community has experienced growth. While not in its original form or location, the house is a physical reminder of the people who shaped the development of Quesnel.

The house is named for John and Mary (Barlow) Strand who were two enterprising pioneers of Quesnel. John was a well-known contractor and carpenter who built many of Quesnel's buildings. He was born in 1868 in Norway and came to the Cariboo via San Francisco in 1892 during the Gold Rush. On a visit to England in 1903, John met Mary Barlow. The couple were married in 1904. In 1910, John built the Cariboo Hotel. Unfortunately, the hotel was completely destroyed in the fire of 1916. The fire broke out around midnight in the Empress Theatre located in the Cariboo Hotel. Eight buildings were lost including the Cariboo and Occidental Hotels and the Northern Crown Bank. Not only did John reconstruct his hotel, he built the first hospital in Quesnel, a Catholic church, and a steam sternwheeler named 'The Quesnel' for Telesphore Marion. In addition to his construction business, John was also a fur trader along the Mackenzie River, the weather recorder for the Dominion Government for forty-four years, and he owned mining rights on Lovett Creek and Beaver Pass.

Mary was also very active in the community. She ran the Cariboo Hotel with her husband, was a member of the Anglican Church, and organized the WWI Soldiers Comfort Fund, Tobacco Fund, and Red Cross. During the flu epidemic of 1918, Mary assisted Dr. Baker in caring for the afflicted. This house was the last building that John constructed before his death in 1955. The northeast corner of Carson Avenue and Front Street has a small park named for John Strand. Mary's family is recognized for their contribution to the development of the community with a street named in their honour.

Character-Defining Elements

The character-defining elements of Strand House include:

- characteristic of the small single storey wood framed houses built in Quesnel during the 1940s;
- major renovations in 1972 after it was relocated to this location from Downtown Quesnel;
- stucco exterior;
- low pitch roof with large overhanging eaves;
- large picture window on façade.