

## 691 Front Street Douglas Fraser House - 1933



Front Elevation



South Elevation



Rear Elevation

### Description

Douglas Fraser House is charming single storey wood frame house built in 1933 located on the west side Front Street in North Quesnel, BC. The historic place includes the building and the parcel of land it occupies.

### Heritage Value

Douglas Fraser House is located in North Quesnel which is an older residential neighbourhood in the city. Over the years, major renovations have occurred, however the house supports the other buildings on the street that have experienced change. While not in its original form, the house is a physical reminder of the people who shaped the development of Quesnel. The house was built by local contractor and next door neighbour, G. E. Baynes in 1933.

The house is named for Douglas A. Fraser. Douglas was the oldest son of pioneers, John and Ursula Fraser. He was born in Quesnel in 1901 and attended school in a log building on the northeast corner of where Helen Dixon School is located today across the street from the first Quesnel School where his father taught. Doug's mother, Ursula, died in 1911 when Douglas was fourteen. He moved to Vancouver to work at Kelly Douglas after he had finished school. Douglas returned to Quesnel where he owned and operated a men's clothing store on Carson Avenue. Douglas Fraser died in the 1950s.

Giovanni Acasto Lazzarin Sr. and his wife Carlotta purchased this house in the 1950s to be used as a rental property. Giovanni was known locally as 'John'. He and Carlotta were childhood sweethearts who came to Quesnel at different times from Italy. John was a blacksmith and maintained the Barnard Express Stage. The Barnard Express, known as the BX, began in 1864 by Francis Barnard to deliver mail, people and supplies. It was the longest single stage line on the continent. As travel technology improved, the express expanded to include steamboats which moved freight and people along the Fraser River. The Barnard Express ended when the Inland Express Company was awarded the mail contract.

In the early 1900s, John was the only person in town who could fix wagons, buggies, and ploughs. Harry Joyce built a workshop for John in 1919 which was the first shop in Quesnel to have electric lights. Carlotta was an enterprising businesswoman who was a well-respected seamstress and property owner. She saw a need for more rental accommodations in Quesnel as the city grew. Together the couple purchased and built several rental units. Carlotta and John became the landlords to many people seeking opportunity in Quesnel. John had the mail route to Barkerville and sold his repair shop to Johnston Brothers Motors in 1925. John was the Agent for Home Oil where he hauled products to the Cariboo Gold Quartz Mine and the Island

Mountain Mine, as well as to homeowners in the area until he retired in 1956. Carlotta died at the age of 81 and John died at the age of 93. The Lazzarin 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 Douglas Fraser House include:

- a utilitarian type house with simple features common to the modest houses built in Quesnel during the 1930s;
- the original form is evident even though some renovations have been made to accommodate commercial uses;
- a covered veranda with posts and bracket supports that give it the appearance of a western saloon;
- a varied roofline with wood shake materials on the covered veranda;
- the lower half of the building clad in horizontal wood siding;
- the upper half of the building has vertical wood siding;
- a glazed porch at the rear of the building.