

342 Kinchant Street Harper House – 1939



Front Elevation



North Elevation



South Elevation

Description

Harper House is a single storey small utilitarian type house built in 1939 located on a large lot on the eastern side of Kinchant Street in North Quesnel, BC. The historic place includes the building and the parcel of land it occupies.

Heritage Value

Harper House is located in North Quesnel which is an older residential neighbourhood in the city. While not in its original form, the house is a physical reminder of the people who shaped the development of Quesnel.

The house is named for Lloyd and Mary Harper. From 1946 to 1990, Lloyd and Mary owned and operated the Willis-Harper Hardware and Furniture Store on the southeast corner of Reid Street and Barlow Avenue in Downtown Quesnel with Bill and Dorothy Willis, and Ron and Pat Mattison. The business prospered and became known as 'Willis-Harper' and synonymous with shopping in Quesnel. The store lived up to its motto 'Willis-Harper, first with the best', by providing residents with the latest products. It offered shoppers with lively advertisements featuring anecdotes, cartoons, and jokes along with sale items. It was the first business in Quesnel to offer coupons, called the 'Willis-Harper Buck', that were available in many different denominations.

Even though the store has changed hands over time, the original Willis-Harper Hardware and Furniture Store sign continues to be proudly displayed on the corner of the building. Prior to opening the legendary hardware store, Lloyd Harper owned a sheet metal business. The Harper family is recognized for their contribution to the development of the community with a street named in their honour. The Harper family lived in this house until the 1980s. Since Lloyd and Mary sold the house, it has provided space for commercial and residential uses.

Character-Defining Elements

The character-defining elements of the Harper House include:

- a unique contribution to the streetscape;
- a flat topped wood frame utilitarian style house common to Quesnel in the 1930s;
- the ground floor is used for business with living quarters in a walkout basement;
- a connecting breezeway addition to the attached garage situated under the living quarters was built in 1950;
- an interesting contrast to the other houses on the street;
- clapboard siding.