



Find YOUR Adventure from Bonaventure

History *Describe the history of structure, past, present and Proposed Use*

Section 3

- **Estimated date of build: 1905**
- **Built for family home for the Charles O'Neill Conroy family (Please see supporting documentation following). The home was named 'Raheen' an Irish word meaning 'A Peoples Place'.**
- **1946: Willed/left to (?) The Order of the Presentation Sisters upon death of Charles O'Neill Conroy**
- **1960-1968 Sisters of Assumption Convent (Presentation Sisters) (Please see supporting documentation following) (Baby House to the Mother House located beside Basilica)**
- **1968 Acquired by Margaret Dunn, of Margaret Dunn Cosmetics, in which the Canadian band April Wine got their start from the basement Please see supporting documentation following)**
- **1974 (?) Reacquired by The Presentations Sisters of NL**
- **2019 February 22 - Purchased from The Order of the Presentation Sisters by Georgestown Inn Inc. (Cynthia & John Purtill)**

At some point in time during the life of this building, three additions were added to the original footprint of the structure. A front entry vestibule; the extension of the back dining & original kitchen area, and then addition of a back boardroom, 2 piece bath and second side entrance. An exterior set of stairs was added at some point (Please see supporting documentation following), which has been removed. A fire escape from both the third and second floors was also added to the rear of the property at some time.

Prior to the purchase by the Purtill's, an extensive renovation, interior and exterior was done by the Sisters to upgrade the property to code, for selling purposes. Since the Purtill's acquirement, 3 bathrooms; 2 shower stalls in existing bathrooms; laundry room and basement hallway have been added to a modified existing space. (Please see supporting documentation following.)

The Presentation Sisters not only lived in this house: it was used as a place of worship; a meeting place of community leaders; a gathering place; a refuge for families needing help and children needing respite.

Cont...



Find YOUR Adventure from Bonaventure

History

Section 3

Describe the history of structure, past, present and Proposed Use Continued:

50 Bonaventure Avenue now serves as The Georgestown Inn, a bed & breakfast Inn, and home to the Purtil's. The Inn provides an opportunity for the heritage and original features to be preserved and maintained, and for others to share in the history and culture of the home. A custom stained glass window was commissioned by the Sisters, and installed just prior to the selling of the property, and is a featured item of the home. The name of the Inn was chosen to pay homage to the heritage area in which it resides.

The Georgestown Inn is fully compliant with licensing with the City of St. John's; SJFD; the Province of NL & Canada Select as a 6 bed Inn.

A City of St. John's award for preserving, or restoring the original character of a building in Heritage Area 2 was granted jointly to The Presentation Sisters & Purtil's in February of 2020.

It has always been a People's Place, and the intention is that the property continues in this vein. The proposed use we would like to add to the current use as a bed & breakfast Inn is to open a Tea Room. We would like to use the open area of the kitchen and back Parlour as the dining room to host High Tea, and can potentially host 24 persons or 6 tables of 4. We would like to offer one scheduled sitting at 3pm, on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday's, from October 1 to June 1, only – total of 33 weekends. Sitzings will be by prior reservation only. We do not want to be a restaurant, rather a Tea Room that is opened off season from the on season of the Inn. It's to complement our down time, and keep us busy by using our resources - the house, Cindy's baking & hospitality skills, wisely.

Charles O'Neill Conroy

Charles O'Neill Conroy was a twentieth century Newfoundland solicitor born in Dublin.

Early life

He was born in Dublin in 1871 to James Gervé Conroy, a lineal male-line descendant of Fearfeasa O'Maolchonaire of the Four Masters, and Elizabeth O'Neill, who was the only daughter of Charles Henry (Cáthal Ainrí) Ó Néill, The O'Neill of Clannaboy. He was brought to St. John's, Newfoundland by his parents at 18 months, where his father became a teacher, lawyer, judge, founder of the Irish Catholic newspaper the "St. John's Advertiser", two term MHA for Ferryland and the Avalon Peninsula, and advocate of formal political ties between Ireland and Newfoundland.



O'Neill Conroy family photo

He was educated in St. John's and in London, where he rented a room from Mary, the widow of Dr. Weathers, who was the brother of William Weathers, Bishop of Amyclaw. After returning to Newfoundland, he proposed to Mary's daughter, also Mary, and she and her mother moved to St. John's. He educated William J. Higgins, who would later be his law partner, Speaker of the Newfoundland House of Assembly and a judge.

Career

Conroy worked as a solicitor for the City of Saint John's, and while in that role he launched a writ against the government of Newfoundland to secure funding for the city during the Great Depression. He was Grand Knight of the Knights of Columbus and launched a successful but non-punitive libel lawsuit against a citizen who had been misled by the "orange" element, and was circulating lies regarding the nature of the organisation and a supposed oath, so that future repetitions of the malicious rumours could be prosecuted. He was also Lieutenant-Colonel and commanding officer of the Newfoundland Catholic Cadet Corps. Several pictures survive of him in the Newfoundland archives. He was an avid photographer and salmon fisherman himself, and many of his photographs survive in the Newfoundland Quarterly Journal, particularly of the salmon rivers of Newfoundland. There is a pool named Chas. O'Neill Conroy's Pool after him in the Salmonier River.

Personal life

An only son, he lived at Raheen at 50 Bonaventure Avenue, and left a large family, with several sons and grandsons serving the executive of the Benevolent Irish Society of St. John's.

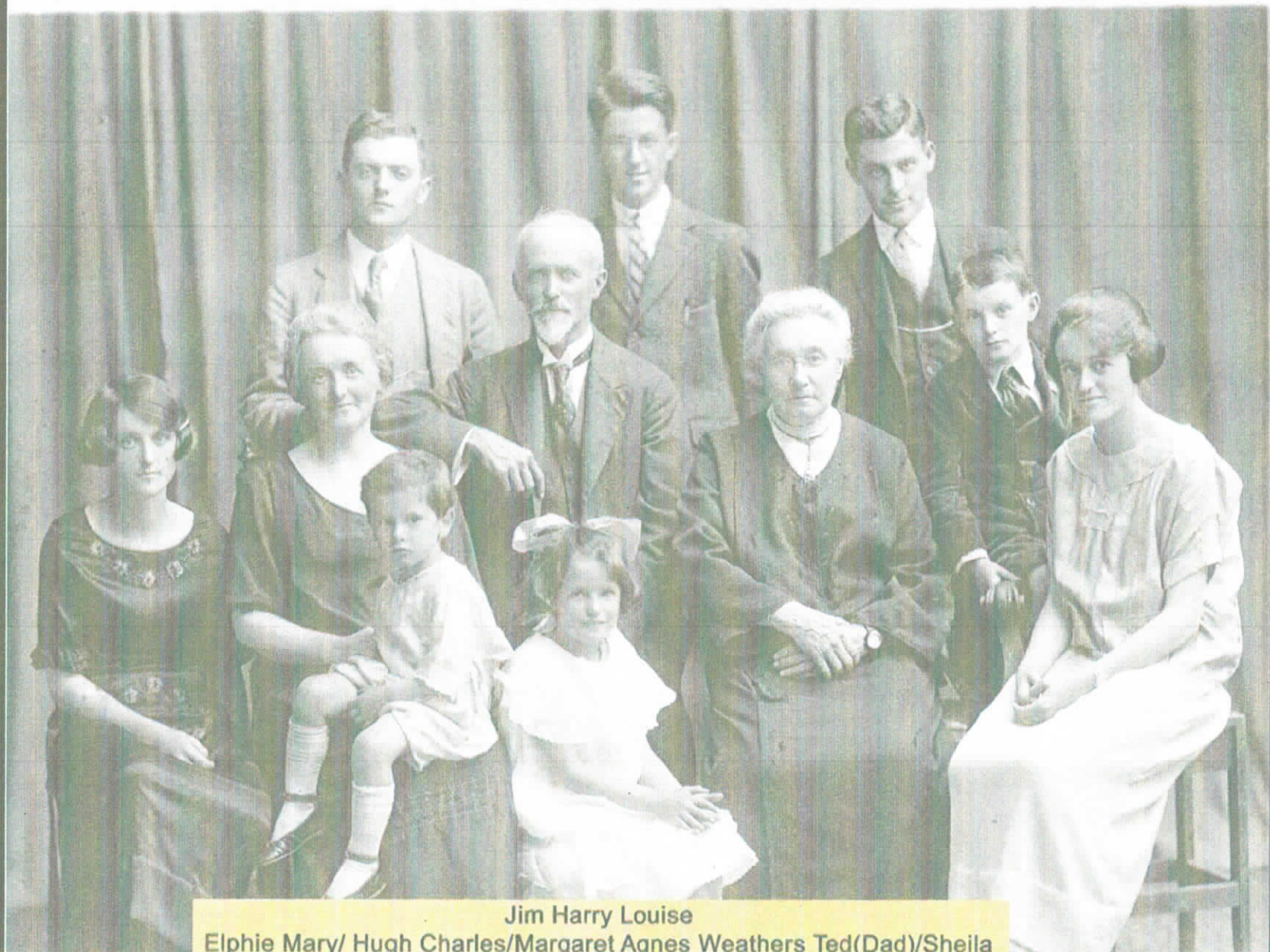
The eldest, James O'Neill Conroy, married Elizabeth Anne McGrath, daughter of James Francis McGrath, whose sons included James M. McGrath and John William McGrath, Theodore Roosevelt's Secretary who was with him at the assassination attempt on him. Jim and Betty had a boy Padre Carlos O'Neill Conroy, who was a Priest in Monsefú and for a time made mayor before he died tragically in 1966 in an auto accident, and a girl Sister Margaret O'Neill Conroy who still teaches in Uganda.



Family tree of the O'Neill Conroys of Newfoundland and Canada, descended

[More details](#)

 Sir Bernard Burke - Arms Authorised by the Laws of Heraldry



Jim Harry Louise
Elphie Mary/ Hugh Charles/Margaret Agnes Weathers Ted(Dad)/Sheila

Charles O'Neill Conroy, wife Mary Agnes (née Weathers) and the O'Neill Conroys.

[More details](#)

 Rían Ó Maolchonaire - Own work

A House named "Tearmann"

96 years at 46 Bonaventure Avenue, St. John's, NL

The Neighbourhood

Georgetown, St. John's first suburb, began to be developed in the early 1800s, starting in the Hayward Avenue/Fleming Street area, followed by subdivisions in the Hayward/Mullock Ave and Catherine/William St. areas. The suburb eventually extended the "Old Town" of St. John's from Military Road north to Empire Avenue, including Bonaventure Avenue.

46 Bonaventure

Mary (Minnie) Aylward McGrath, prominent Water Street business woman, had the house built (for \$5,000.00!) in 1917. Her businesses included the Tremont Hotel, one of the City's fashionable hotels in the late 1800's and early 1900's, and the nearby Osborne House.

At the time of its construction, 46 Bonaventure was on the northern fringe of the city. Belvedere Orphanage, convent and farm lay across the field to the west and development was proceeding to the east, but land to the north was largely rural and agricultural.

Mary was the third wife of James Francis McGrath (1859 – 1902), politician and Governor of the Newfoundland Penitentiary. They were married in 1896 and had three children; Margaret, born in 1897, who died of polio at the age of nine, Elizabeth Anne (Betty), born in 1900, who married Lawyer James O'Neil Conroy and later became Newfoundland's second female lawyer, and James Michael Francis (1902-1975), medical doctor and politician, who raised his family, first in the town of St. Mary's, then at 44 Bonaventure Avenue.



20s - Mary McGrath
Jim's mother

Mary finished rearing her children at 46 Bonaventure and remained there until her death in 1942 (in her late years, the dining room became her bedroom). Her daughter Betty lived for a time next door with her in-laws at 50 Bonaventure Avenue (now home of the



Evening Telegram, July 24, 1935

Presentation Sisters). Following the death of her husband James in 1931, Betty, at the early age of 33, passed her law exams and took over his law office. She then lived for a short time at 46 Bonaventure with her two children, Charlie and Margie.

Both Charlie and Margie would distinguish themselves as missionaries abroad (and Margie continues to do so). Charlie became a Franciscan Reverend and served in South America for six years. He was Mayor of Monsefú in northern Peru before his untimely death at age 38 in a motor vehicle accident, in 1966. Margie has served the under-

privileged as a Religious of the Sacred Heart Sisters in Uganda and Kenya, remarkably, since 1971 through very trying times that have seen repressive regimes and civil wars. At age 82, she has vivid memories of 46 Bonaventure Avenue, despite having lived there for only a few of her early years.

Margie's first cousin Margaret (Conroy) Henley lived at 46 Bonaventure during WWII with her three small children while her husband Ted was serving overseas. Their youngest child, Peter, died of tuberculosis during this time. After living in Gander for a period, they returned to St. John's, bought 44 Bonaventure from the McGraths and finished rearing their family there.

46 Bonaventure was sold to Robert and Douglas Templeton in 1947, and they lived there for the next 28 years, rearing their 4 daughters. During this time, Robert was co-owner of R.A. Templeton's Ltd, the long established Water Street business. He was also an avid gardener and collector of rare books on Newfoundland and Labrador, some of which were unfortunately burnt in a fire at the Water Street premises.

The Templetons sold the property to Rosalie Fowler and Ian MacDonald, Memorial University Professor, in the mid-1970s. Ian died on Christmas Day, 1978 and Rosalie subsequently moved to Corner Brook. In 1979, she sold the property to Dennis and Susan Knight.

Seventeen years earlier, in September, 1962, Susan (Dyer) Knight was preparing to move to Montreal to attend the Royal Victoria Hospital School of Nursing. The evening before her departure, her friend Kathryn Templeton hosted a surprise going away party for her at 46 Bonaventure. In 1979, Susan returned to the house as the owner.

Over the next 34 years, Susan and Dennis raised their family in the house. They named it *Tearmann*, Irish for Refuge. Dennis operated a consulting business there and Susan went back to school, starting at Memorial University, then St. Paul's University in Minnesota and finishing with her doctorate at the University of London. She was a music teacher, founded Shallaway and Festival 500 and, in 2012, was appointed the Chancellor of Memorial University.

Ninety-six years after its construction, Mary McGrath's creation stands proud within an extended neighbourhood which includes The Rooms, Memorial University and the historic downtown. It has been a refuge for six families and stands ready for the next chapter.

D. Knight
26 May, 2013

April Wine

April Wine is a Canadian rock band formed in 1969 and based in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The band enjoyed international success in the 1970s and 1980s, releasing more than 20 albums since 1971.^{[1][2]}

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History

Early years

Although April Wine officially began in late 1969 in Waverley, Nova Scotia, their roots can be traced back to St. John's Newfoundland in 1967/68. David and Ritchie Henman moved there when their father took a job at a local furrier company, Mitchell Furs. They would be heard jamming in a house on the corner of Bonaventure Avenue and Fleming Street in St. John's before relocating to Nova Scotia.^{[3][4]} The original members were brothers David Henman on guitar and Ritchie Henman on drums. Their cousin Jim Henman joined in on bass and Myles Goodwyn completed the sound on lead vocals and guitar. The band quickly realized that Halifax did not provide immediate opportunities to play and record, so the band sent a demo tape to Aquarius Records. Company managers Terry Flood and Donald K. Tarlton returned a rejection letter but the members mistook it

April Wine



April Wine in concert in 2008

Background information

Origin	Waverley, Nova Scotia, Canada
Genres	Hard rock
Years active	1969–1986, 1992–present
Labels	Aquarius, MCA, Capitol
Website	www.aprilwine.ca (http://www.aprilwine.ca)

Members	<div>Myles GoodwynBrian GreenwayRichard LanthierRoy Nichol</div>
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Past members	<div>Jim HenmanDavid HenmanRitchie</div>
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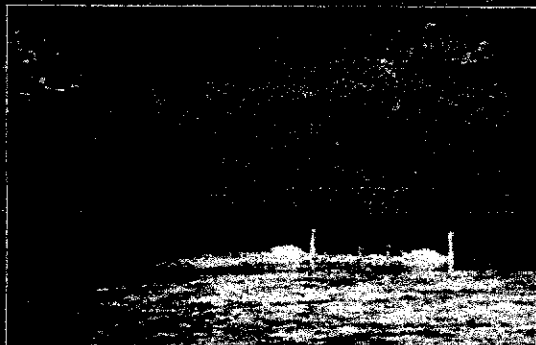
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Presentation Sisters

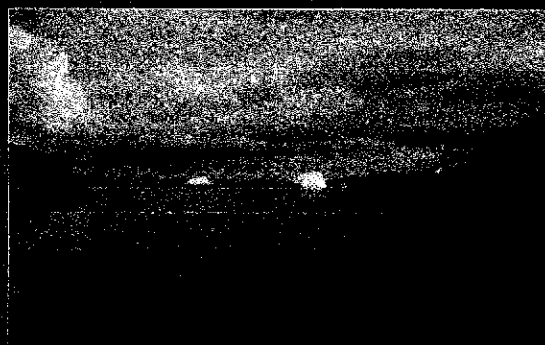


Newfoundland and Labrador
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*Blackwater Valley, Ballygriffin, Ireland,
Nano's birth place*

from Ireland to
Newfoundland
with an ocean
in between



*The Narrows,
entrance to St. John's harbour*

In the early 18th century new seeds of God's creative dream were planted in the heart of a young Irish woman named Nano Nagle who went on to become the Foundress of the Presentation Sisters in Ireland in 1776.



"She was a woman who, in her simplicity, dared greatly...
dared to let herself be guided by the Spirit of God.
And when he, like some will o' the wisp on the mountains,
led her from the warmth of what was safe and comfortable,
out past the four walls of what was "enough" and "reasonable",
away from the security of the familiar, tried and proven,
she followed with laughter in her heart.
For she had caught a glimpse of the Divine delight
in reversing human logic, in drawing power from weakness,
wisdom from folly, life from death.
In this lay her strength.

This is Nano Nagle."

— Raphael Consedine PVB

Four pioneering Sisters among Nano's followers, Sisters Bernard Kirwin, Magdalen O'Shaughnessy, Xavier Maloney and Xaverius Lynch, carried her vision and spirit to the shores of Newfoundland in 1833. They came at the invitation of Bishop Michael Fleming to establish a school that would offer improved educational opportunity for girls and young women in St. John's. Nano's vision had birthed a response

that was both broad and penetrating. For the next 175 years our sisters continued to respond to this call. Academic learning, spiritual development/religious education and a deep appreciation for the arts and music were central to our education ministry among students, teachers and parents.



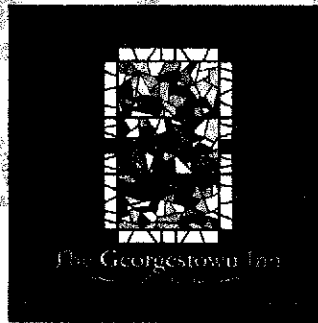
Mother Bernard Kirwan, Sister Magdalene O'Shaughnessy, Sister Xavier Maloney and Sister Xaverius Lynch

Nano's spirit, the spirit of these first four women and those who followed them, continue to guide us as we endeavour in new ways to meet today's emerging needs.

Presentation Sisters, P.O. Box 2100, St. John's, NL A1C 5R6, CANADA

Telephone (709) 753-8340

Email Sister Lois Greene



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Structural Changes

Section 4

The original footprint of the property is still here. At some point, the addition of a front entrance vestibule; an extension of the back dining room & kitchen, and addition of a board room, half bath and side entrance were added to the original footprint.

The ceiling in the dining room shows where the extension of the back of the house was added, and the rooms on each floor above were included in this extension. Continuance of the plaster work to maintain the original ceiling look in the dining room, and the concrete basement wall extension is what allows the knowledge of this. We anticipate this was prior to the Convent days, due to the lathe and plasterwork of the walls. (Please see attached supporting documentation).

Georgetown Inn
50 Bonaventure Ave.
Heritage Designation App.

Current
Front
door

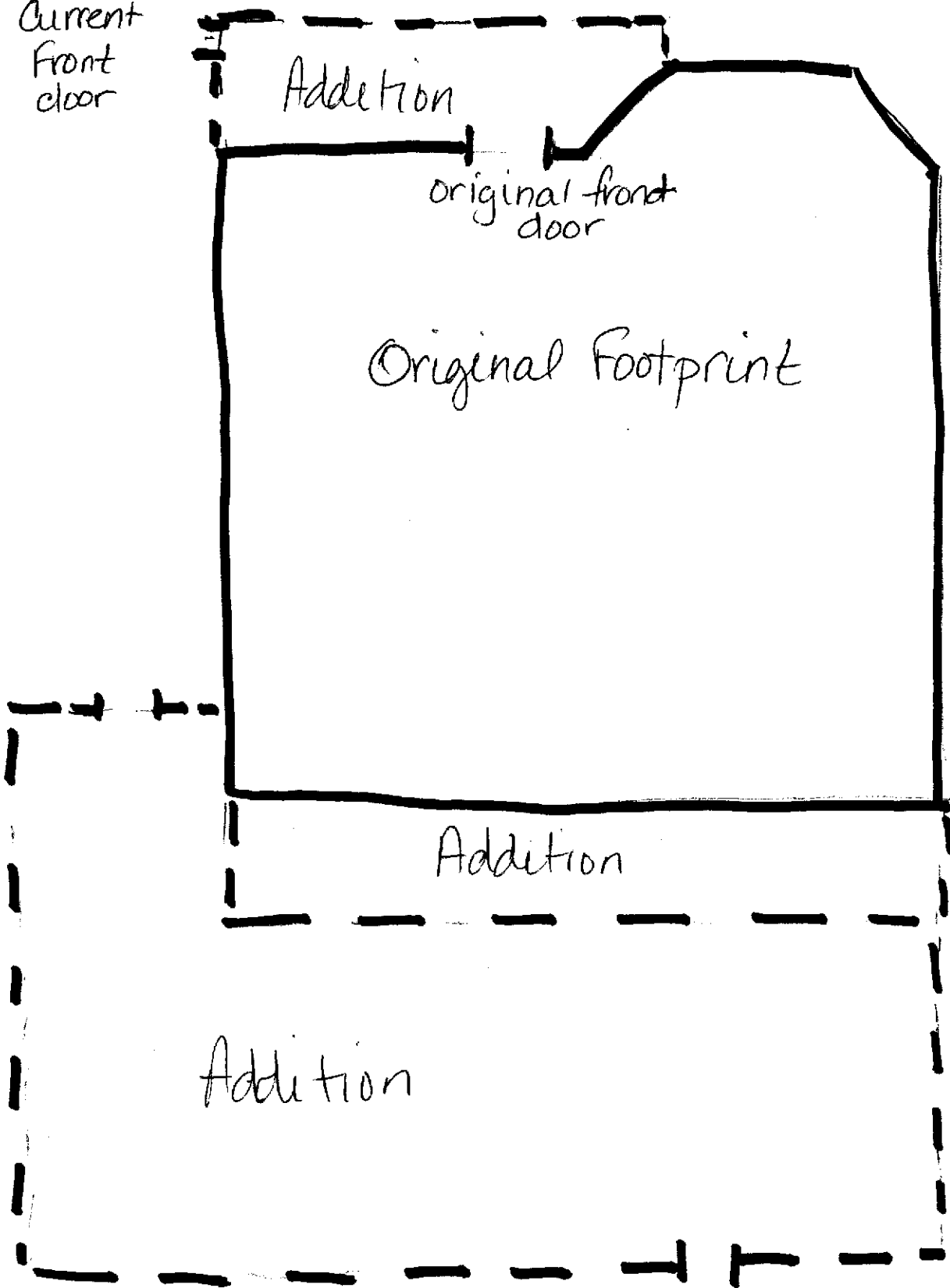
Addition

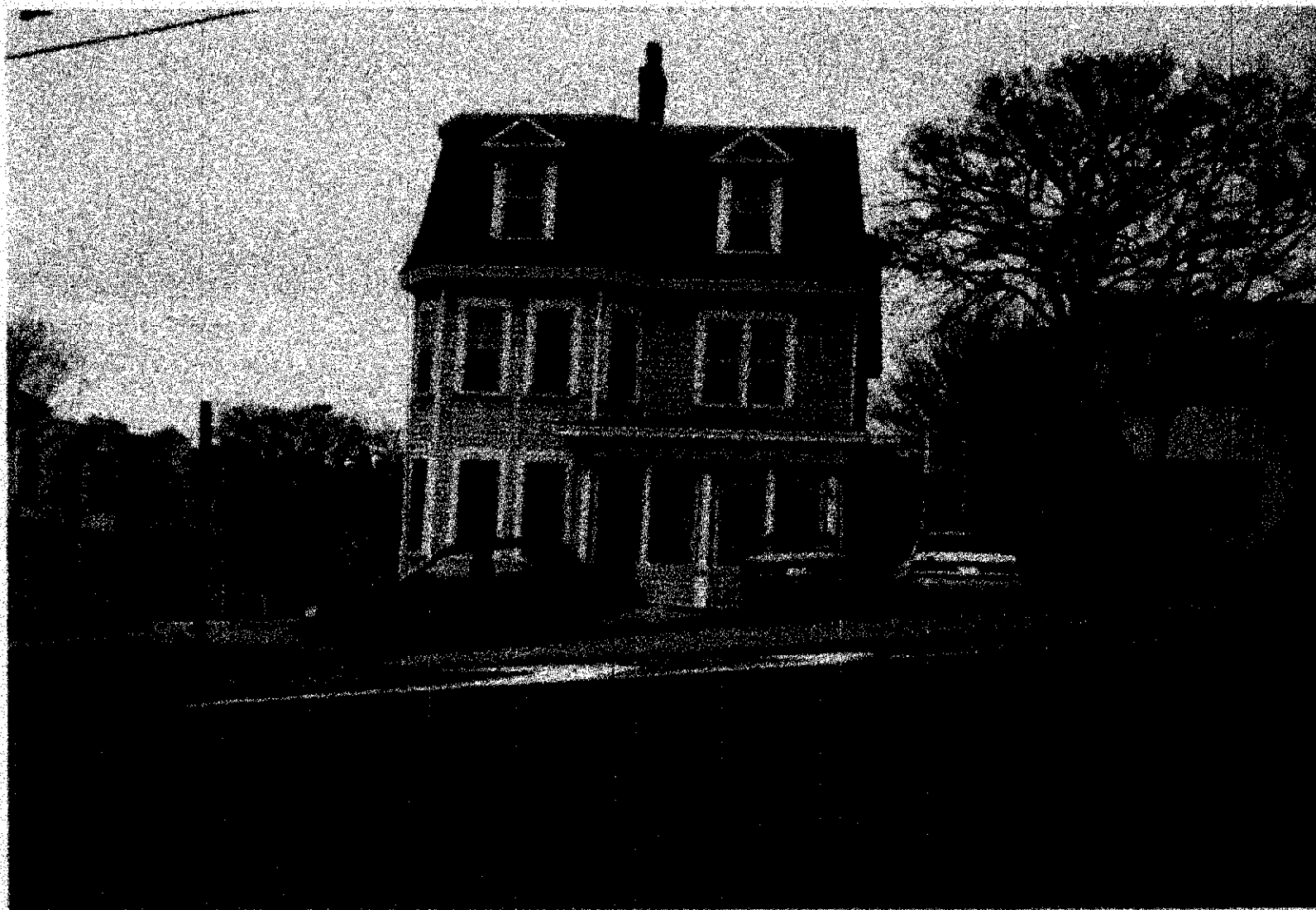
original front
door

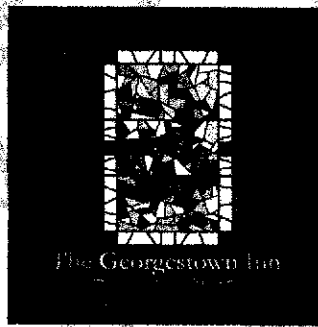
Original Footprint

Addition

Addition







Find YOUR Adventure from Bonaventure

Architectural Details & Setting

Section 5

Describe noteworthy features and details about the property. Is this considered a landmark; why?

Located in Heritage area 2, in historic Georgetown, 50 Bonaventure Avenue is a mansard roofed house, which has maintained its original window profile. A three story Edwardian, built circa 1905, the house may include an interior Southcott staircase. 4 original marble fireplaces – one embossed with the original family crest - remain including the original clay chimney pots; have been Wett Certified, and are working.

Once considered the Baby House to the Mother House or Convent of the Presentation Sisters, the property is located steps from the Basilica, Holy Heart of Mary High School; Brother Rice Intermediate School; St. Bonaventure's College, among others.

Positioned right on the corner of Fleming Street, 50 Bonaventure Avenue is a well-known landmark that looms into view as the gateway property to the first settled area – Georgetown, named after George Winter - of historic St. John's.