

## Statement of Significance



### 83 Cochrane Street – Emmanuel House

#### **Formal Recognition Type**

City of St. John's Heritage Building, Structure, Land or Area

#### **Description of Historic Place**

Emmanuel House is a 19th century, Queen Anne Revival, wooden house located at 83 Cochrane Street, St. John's, NL. This two storey wooden house has an asymmetrical facade with multiple roof lines and it sits on a mature lot surrounded by large chestnut trees. Bordered on the south side by Cochrane Street United Church, the house is located on a corner lot between Cochrane Street and Military Road. The designation is confined to the footprint of the building.

#### **Heritage Value**

Emmanuel House has been designated a Municipal Heritage Structure because it has historic and aesthetic values. Built in the late 19th century, this house is historically valuable for its age. Early city maps show a building on the site as early as 1879. This is particularly significant because it survived the devastating Great Fire of 1892 which leveled most of St. John's. This great conflagration was stopped directly across the street when it threatened another grand house. It had already moved up the street, leaving nothing but ruin in its path. Emmanuel House, the neighboring Cochrane Street Methodist Church and a few other houses were saved on the west side of the street.

Emmanuel House was used as a respite centre by the Canadian YWCA War Services for women serving in World War II. It is also historically valuable because of its more modern associations with the United Church of Canada and Dr. Stella Burry, Deaconess of the United Church of Canada. Dr. Burry, a native of Greenspond, Newfoundland, had moved to Toronto as a young woman to attend school, where she studied social work. Brief studies in New York also introduced her to methods of practice that she would introduce in Newfoundland, such as peer group discussion and the provision of secure, supportive housing in St. John's. In 1938 Dr. Burry moved back to Newfoundland and started a community centre, funded by the Women's Missionary Society (WMS) of the United Church of Canada. When this centre burned in 1945 the WMS moved to the Cochrane Street location; available for purchase and ideally situated next

to the Cochrane Street United Church.

A group of church lay people raised the money to secure the property and the national body of the WMS provided a maintenance grant. It became known as the United Church House, run by a volunteer board. In 1951, needing repairs and with money owing on the mortgage, Emmanuel House received its new name. Emmanuel United Church in Montreal, Quebec closed at that time. Money received from the sale of that church was committed by the WMS of the Montreal church, which helped pay off the mortgage on United Church House. The building was renamed in recognition of that support.

Emmanuel House is aesthetically valuable because it is a beautiful example of a Queen Anne Revival style building located in one of the oldest parts of St. John's. Features of the Queen Anne Revival style of architecture include the multi-gabled roof with dormers; the ornate decoration that surrounds all sides of the building; and the covered, open porch which reveals a highly decorative front entrance. With bargeboard decoration on the 1/1 windows, eaves brackets, dentil details and molded trims, this house expresses the Queen Anne Revival style quite well.

Source: City of St. John's council Minutes July 21, 1989.

### **Character Defining Elements**

All those features that reflect the Queen Anne Revival style of architecture, including:

- narrow, wooden clapboard;
- multi-gabled roof with dormers;
- heavy, molded trim on doors and windows;
- window shapes and types, including 1/1 wooden windows and rounded third floor windows;
- window sizes, openings and fenestrations;
- door sizes, openings and fenestrations;
- ornate decorations surrounding house, including the dentils, eaves brackets, bargeboard, etc.;
- covered, open porch with slim pillars; and
- dimensions, orientation and general massing.

All those elements that define the historic location of the building, including:

- location next to the associated Cochrane Street United Church; and
- location in historic area of the city, near the site of the boundaries of the Great Fire of 1892.

**Location and History**

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|----------------------|---|
| Community            | St. John's  |
| Municipality         | City of St. John's  |
| Civic Address        | 083 Cochrane Street   |
| Construction (circa) | 1879 - 1892   |
| Style                | Queen Anne  |
| Building Plan        | Irregular   |
| Website Link         | <a href="http://www.stellaburry.ca/">http://www.stellaburry.ca/</a> |

Additional Photos

