

Heritage Value:

The heritage value of 45 School Street lies in its architectural representation of the progressive education movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; in the history of community collaboration that characterized its inception and construction; and the significant roles the building and the people associated with it have played in the community of Mahone Bay for the past century.

45 School Street is a modest example of the “palace schools” which were built across the Maritimes during the late Victorian and early Edwardian period as sites for school consolidation and as symbols of civic pride. Although smaller than the brick or stone structures built in urban areas, the Mahone Bay Academy features the generous spaces and natural light which were considered requirements for the health and morale of the students in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Mahone Bay was praised in the local press in 1914 for the resourcefulness, high standards and community spirit that fostered the planning and funding of its new school. Having achieved the community’s financial commitment through the sale of debentures, the three elected school trustees (Charlie Lohnes, William Joudrey and Charlie Begin) arranged for the school’s design and construction by Boehner Bros. of West LaHave, Nova Scotia, a firm well-known for public buildings across the province.

The Mahone Bay Academy was built with community pride and financial commitment in 1914. The building has continued to play a significant role in community life as a focus for community events, as an educational setting where many prominent Nova Scotians worked or studied, and more recently as a community centre whose activities reflect and support the changing demographics of the modern town.

Character Defining Elements:

Character-defining elements of 45 School Street relate to features of its wood construction and details characteristic of progressive school architecture of the late Victorian and early Edwardian period in the Maritimes:

- Four storey bell tower located centrally in front façade;
- Neo-Classical cornices surmounting dormers and side entrance;
- Symmetrical window and door openings on all four façades;
- Italianate arches and steeply peaked roofline of bell tower;
- Two-over-two windows all topped by transoms;
- Transoms and sidelights at entrances;
- Frieze board, baseboard, and corner pilasters;
- Wood cladding;
- Modified mansard roofline.