

Heritage Value

The heritage value of 53 Edgewater Street lies in its long use as the rectory for St. James Anglican Church; in its association with Canon Edward (Ned) Harris and with his architect brother, William Critchlow Harris; in its representation of the Queen Anne Revival construction style; and, in its location as part of a group of heritage properties on Edgewater Street.

53 Edgewater Street has featured significantly in the history and development of the town of Mahone Bay through its use as the rectory of the Parish since the mid-1800's. An 1848 deed shows the sale of the lot to The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts “for the use benefits and purpose of erecting and establishing thereon a Parsonage house...” (Book 13 p. 418 #938.) A sketch of the building is shown on an 1857 expropriation plan. The property is labeled on an 1860 Plan of Division as “Rev. W. H. Snyder” who was the first Rector of the Parish. Over the course of history, it has been used for parish meetings, Masons’ gatherings and many special events as well as being the residence of the parish’s rectors.

Its most notable resident was Canon Edward (Ned) Harris who was Rector from c. 1889 until his death in 1931. Ned Harris is notable for the initiative he inspired to build St. James Anglican Church, for his design of the Mahone Bay Cenotaph, for his contribution to the design of the town’s Masonic Hall and for his contributions as a leading authority on the pioneer history of Mahone Bay. The 1905 renovations to the rectory were designed by Canon Harris in collaboration with his architect brother, William Critchlow Harris, via a series of letters which included Ned’s design sketches as documented in an Appendix of Robert Tuck’s book Ned Harris’ Letters Home from Mahone Bay 1884 – 1889.

Architecturally, although considerably modified since 1905, the building at 53 Edgewater Street retains important aspects of the Queen Anne Revival style popular in the early 20th century.

53 Edgewater is one of nine heritage properties set prominently along a main entrance road to the town at the head of the harbour. It is the only Queen Anne Revival style building in the Edgewater Street heritage grouping. Collectively these houses, churches and cemetery are a significant representation of aspects of Mahone Bay’s early history from mid - 1700’s to the early twentieth century.

Character-Defining Elements

The character-defining elements of 53 Edgewater Street, listed below, relate to its location adjacent to St. James Anglican Church; to its relationship to the larger grouping of registered heritage properties on Edgewater Street; and to its representation of the Queen Anne Revival building style:

- Situation of the rectory on its original site
- Open setting and prominent location within the Town
- Double bay second storey windows
- Symmetrical façade with central entry
- Decorative mouldings over first storey windows
- Patterned wood shingles on all gables
- Horizontal cladding
- Medium pitched roof structure.