

Address: 1012 Richardson Street

Description of historic place:

1012 Richardson Street is a two-and-one-half storey wood frame Italianate residence, part of the Vancouver Street cluster in the heart of Victoria's Fairfield neighbourhood.

Heritage value:

The historic place, built in 1892, has value for its architecture, how its construction illustrates foreign investment and speculative housing in the late-nineteenth-century, for its architect, for its reflection of the emerging heritage movement in the 1970s, and for its restoration that served as a catalyst for restoration in the neighbourhood.

1012 Richardson Street has heritage value as one of six extant examples of eight houses built at the end of the nineteenth century for British investor Hedley Chapman. The B.C. Land and Investment Agency, who at one time owned or controlled half the real estate in Victoria, acted as agents and arranged for the construction of the houses by contractors Bishop and Sherborne. Two years later, the Agency advised Chapman to sell due to a decline in property values. Mrs. Gertrude Chapman purchased all lots and houses as an investment and held title until 1908 when she subdivided the property into six lots, moved two houses further down Vancouver Street and sold the remaining six. This cluster clearly illustrates the early speculative rental market, a trend begun in Victoria's early building boom.

All the houses are identical in size and layout but have subtle differences in architectural embellishments. The Italianate styling reflects the architectural tastes of the late 19th century with these examples more modest expressions of the villas owned by more affluent owners. The occupations of early residents reflects the growth of the middle class. This building was rented by a succession of different tenants including a contractor, a drygoods merchant with a small store, and a widow.

The property is also valued as an example of modest domestic architecture by architect John Teague, better known for larger, institutional commissions in the City such as Victoria City Hall, the Church of Our Lord, and the Masonic Temple. That he was most comfortable with the Italianate idiom in residential architecture is evident both in these examples and his larger commissions for Victoria's elite.

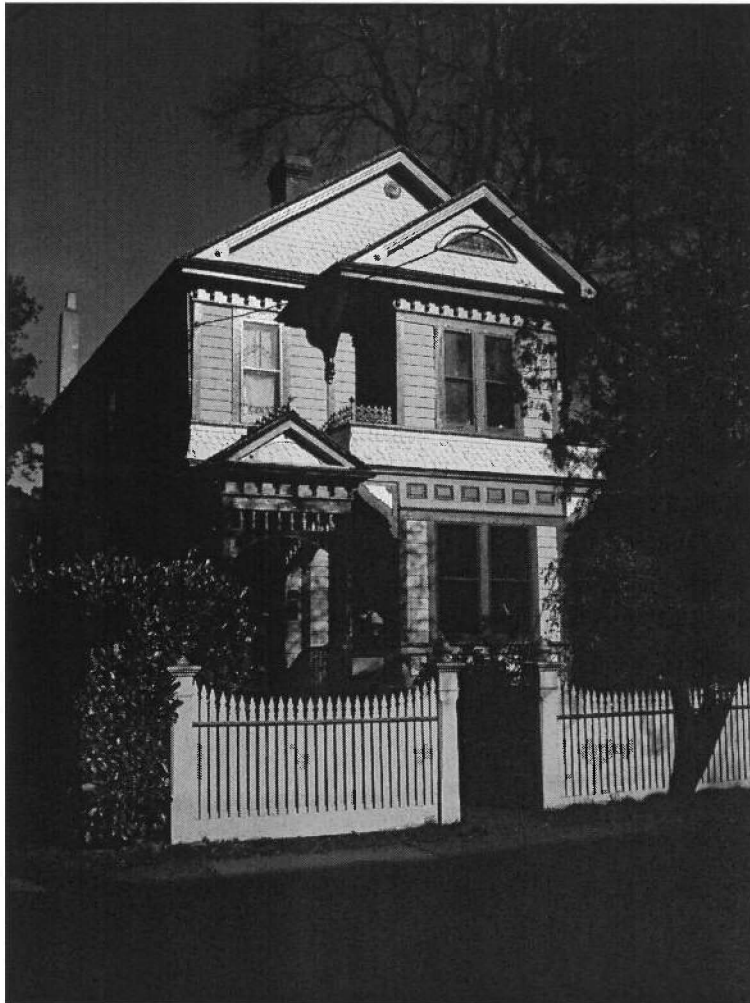
This cluster of houses is valued by the Fairfield neighbourhood. In 1977, the City, responding to a Fairfield Community Association request, designated five of the six remaining buildings: today, they serve as a reminder of the emerging heritage program in Victoria at that time.

This house was the first of the group to be restored. A local carpenter and early heritage conservationist completed a historically accurate restoration in 1979, serving as a catalyst for the remainder of the grouping.

Character-defining elements:

The heritage character of 1012 Richardson Street is defined by the following elements:

- characteristics of the Italianate style including deeply overhanging eaves with ornamental brackets, wooden arcaded porch, double storey box bay windows, prominent front entrance with wood stairs, decorative bargeboards, and bands of fish scale shingles
- eyebrow window in peak of gable
- form and pattern of fenestration
- relationship between this house and the rest of the cluster
- uniformity of setbacks, building height, and mass throughout the cluster



1012 Richardson Street, oblique view from the southwest, 2007

1012 Richardson St (ex-8 Richardson) 1892
Hedley Chapman
Architect: John Teague
Contractors: Bishop & Sherborne

British investor Hedley Chapman had this house built as part of a group of eight houses in 1892 (see **725-43 Vancouver St**, Fairfield). This house's front bay is on the right, and it has a full side gable. It has sunburst brackets with seven rounded-end sunbeams, and strapwork on its bargeboards. There are roundels on the bargeboards and on the entry-porch face. It has fretwork on the peak of the porch roof, and ironwork decorations above the corners of the first-floor pent roof. There is a ceramic bearded face in the gable peak, likely a modern addition. (see c.1900 photo)

The earliest known occupant of this house was William Spencer Hampson, who lived here in 1894. Hampson was a drygoods merchant. He left Victoria with his family the following year. In 1895 Gertrude Cunningham bought all eight houses, and lived in this house briefly with her husband, Robert A. Cunningham and son Jeffrey. William G. Pinder lived here in 1897 (**1139 Burdett**, Fairfield).

From 1898-c.1908, this was home to Mrs Katherine Eliza Wallace (Raymur, c.1818-1909), widow of Capt Marshall Wallace. Kate was born in Halifax, NS, and came to BC possibly in the 1870s, likely as a widow. She lived here with her two grandchildren, Frances (**1564 Rockland**, Rockland) and Cecil Tyrwhitt-Drake. Kate's



1012 Richardson St, 2002

VHF / Derek Trachsel

daughter Cecilia Isabella (c.1853-1889) married coal merchant William H. Tyrwhitt-Drake, brother of Justice Montague Tyrwhitt-Drake (c.1836-1898) in 1882. Kate became guardian of the children following the death of her daughter and son-in-law in 1889 and 1898. Kate was sister of Capt James Arnold Raymur (1823-1882), who commanded vessels in the West Indies before entering the lumber industry in BC. He came to Victoria in 1864, and in 1869 became manager of Hastings Mills on Burrard Inlet.

Between 1909 and 1925, various people occupied the house, but it was vacant for some time in the early 1920s.

The Bigelow family bought the house by 1926 and lived here until moving to Florence Lake in the early 1940s. William (1863-1945) and Rose Ann (Gray, 1863-1957) Bigelow were born in Quebec and Chatham, ON, respectively. William was a farmer and labourer. Daughter Blanche G. Bigelow lived here until 1930 when she married John G. Thomson.

George W. and Margaret Steele lived here in 1946, followed by Gordon and Laura Slater in 1949. Gordon was a salesman at Les Palmer. Boilermaker J. Louis Bowman and his wife Edna bought this house in 1951 and lived here for two years.

In 1979 owner Bill Murphy won a Hallmark Society Award for his meticulous restoration of this house.



1012 Richardson St, Bunny Thompson is small boy on left, c.1900
 coll Murphy family



1012 Richardson St, rear, 1984
 VHF / Norm Spanos