



## Planning and Land Use Committee Report

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**Date:** January 22, 2014

**From:** Steve Barber, Senior Heritage Planner

**Subject:** **39 Lewis Street**  
**Heritage Designation Application #000138**  
Request for Heritage Designation by the owner  
Zoned: R-2 - Two Family Dwelling

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### Executive Summary

This is an owner request to designate an existing one-and-a-half-storey residence, located on Lewis Street in the James Bay neighbourhood, as a Municipal Heritage Site. The house was built in 1908 and contributes to the historic character of Lewis Street, a small dead-end street with an intact historic streetscape of houses of a variety of styles, built at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The application was reviewed by the Heritage Advisory Panel at its January 14, 2014 meeting and was recommended for approval.

### Recommendations

That Heritage Designation Application #000138 for 39 Lewis Street proceed for consideration at a Public Hearing and that City staff prepare the Heritage Designation Bylaw to designate the property as a Municipal Heritage Site.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Barber".

Steve Barber  
Senior Heritage Planner  
Community Planning Division

Att.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Deb Day".

Deb Day  
Director  
Sustainable Planning and Community  
Development Department

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:

A large handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jocelyn Jenkyns".

Jocelyn Jenkyns

SB/ljm

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to describe the heritage significance of the house at 39 Lewis Street which the owner has requested be considered for heritage designation as a Municipal Heritage Site. This report fulfills the requirements of Section 968(5) of the *Local Government Act*.

## 2. Background

An application for heritage designation from the owner was received on December 2, 2013. It was reviewed by the Heritage Advisory Panel at its January 14, 2014 meeting and was recommended for approval.

## 3. Issues

The issue is the voluntary heritage protection of a heritage building that is not on the Heritage Register.

## 4. Analysis

### Statement of Significance

#### Description

The historic place is a one-and-a-half storey, modified Colonial Bungalow style house, built in 1908, located in the James Bay neighbourhood of Victoria.

#### Heritage Value

This house contributes to the historic character of Lewis Street, a small dead-end street in the James Bay neighbourhood with an intact historic streetscape of houses of a variety of styles, built at the beginning of the twentieth century. The street is narrow with no sidewalks, and the proximity of the houses to the street creates a small, intimate urban scale which recalls the early years of the development of Victoria as a city. James Bay is significant as Victoria's oldest residential neighbourhood, and illustrates the early pattern of neighbourhood settlement as pioneer farms were subdivided to form the first suburbs. The close proximity and compact nature of this unusually intact historic streetscape offers a window into what a typical James Bay street might have looked like prior to the Second World War. Built in 1908 by William Knight, a carpenter, the house at 39 Lewis Street illustrates a modified Colonial Bungalow style with elements of the Edwardian Arts and Crafts style of architecture. The house is valued as a representative example of the modest working class homes which sprang up due to the close walking distance to the industrial activity around Ogden Point which was fueled by the economic boom prior to World War One.

#### Character-defining Elements

All elements of the modified Colonial Bungalow style including, but not limited to:

- Bellcast roof
- Angled bay window on front façade with cutaway brackets

- Proximity to the street
- Wood sash windows and art glass
- Exterior cladding of double bevel wood siding, wood trim and wood shingles
- Chamfered porch columns
- Second storey dormers
- Tall corbelled brick chimneys.

### **Official Community Plan/Neighbourhood Plans**

The conservation of this building is consistent with Chapter 8, "Placemaking (Urban Design and Heritage)" of the *Official Community Plan 2012* which states:

#### City Form

- 8.6 *Conserve and enhance the heritage value, character and special features of areas, districts, streetscapes, cultural landscapes and individual properties throughout the city.*
- 8.11 *Determine the heritage value of areas, districts, streetscapes, cultural landscape and individual properties using the Victoria Heritage Thematic Framework as identified in Figure 12.*

#### Streetscapes and Open Space

- 8.51 *Continue to give consideration to tools available under legislation to protect or conserve heritage property including, but not limited to: heritage designation bylaws; listing on the heritage register; temporary protection; heritage alteration permits; heritage revitalization agreements; design guidelines; and, the protection of views of heritage landmark buildings from public vantage points as identified in Map 8, and to be determined in future local area plans.*
- 8.54 *Continue to work with senior government, community and business partners to identify, protect and conserve property of heritage value.*

The preservation of this building is consistent with the *James Bay Neighbourhood Plan* policies which state:

#### Objectives

1. *Encourage the conservation and rehabilitation of buildings, lands and structures of heritage significance which contribute to the neighbourhood's attractive character.*
2. *Promote positive public awareness of the value of heritage resources.*
3. *Encourage retention of clusters of heritage houses, including streetscapes.*

### **Zoning/Land Use**

The proposed designation is consistent with the policies for neighbourhood conservation and maintains the residential land use.

### **Condition/Economic Viability**

The building appears to be in reasonable condition.



### **Need for Financial Support**

The owner may apply for the Victoria Heritage Foundation House Grant Program.

#### **4.a. Options**

Council can approve or decline the request for heritage designation.

#### **4.b. Resource Impacts**

Financial assistance is provided through the Victoria Heritage Foundation, which receives an annual grant from the City.

#### **4.c. Conclusions**

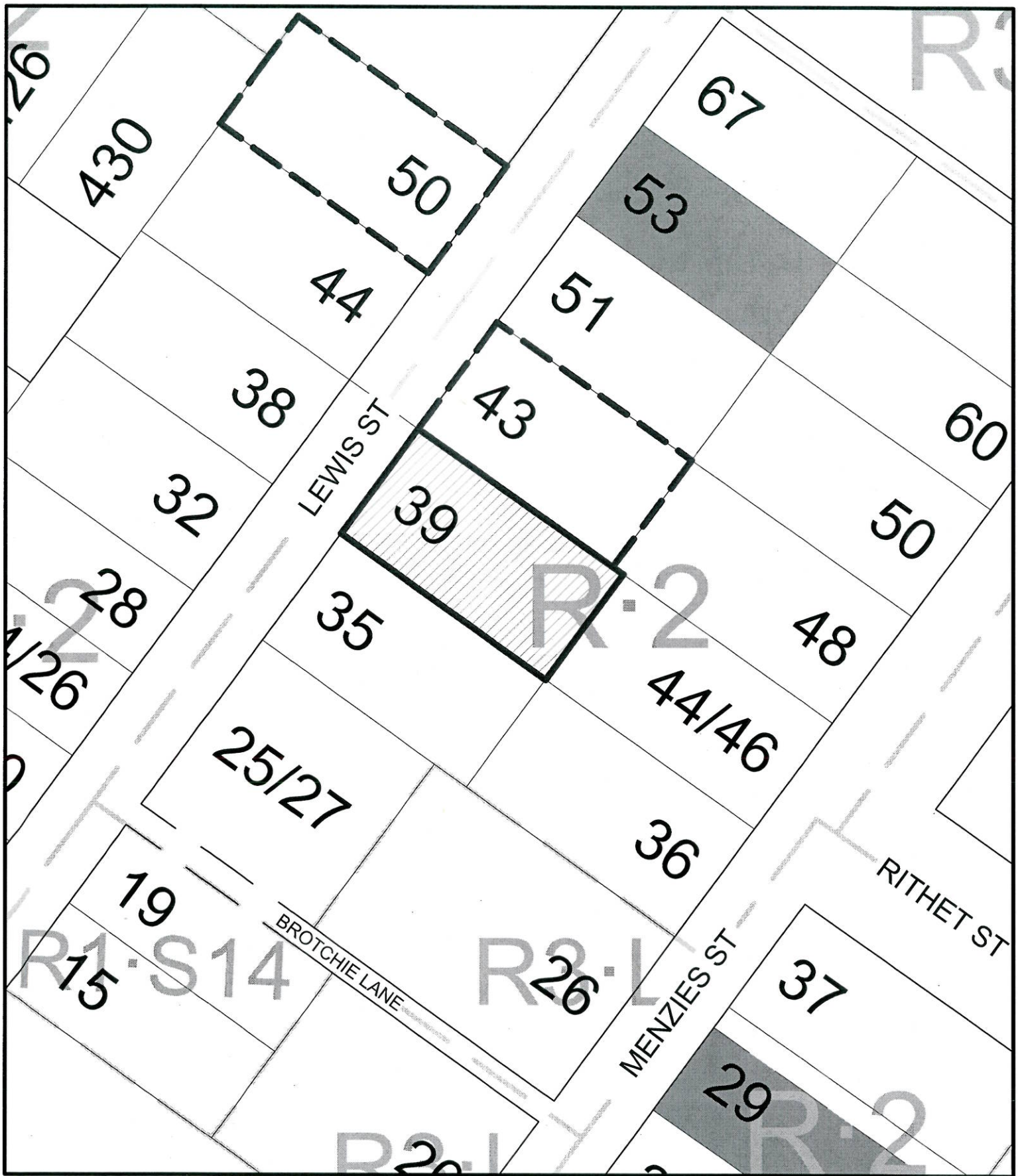
The heritage designation of this building is justified in view of the significance of the structure as outlined in the Statement of Significance.

### **5. Recommendations**

That Heritage Designation Application #000138 for 39 Lewis Street proceed for consideration at a Public Hearing and that City staff prepare the Heritage Designation Bylaw to designate the property as a Municipal Heritage Site.

### **6. List of Attachments**

- Map of subject property
- Photos
- Draft description from *This Old House, Volume Two: James Bay*
- Letter from owner, dated December 2, 2013
- *History of Lewis Street: A Historic James Bay Street*, dated December 2, 2013.



39 Lewis Street

Heritage Designation #000138



- Designated
- Registered
- Designation Application Pending

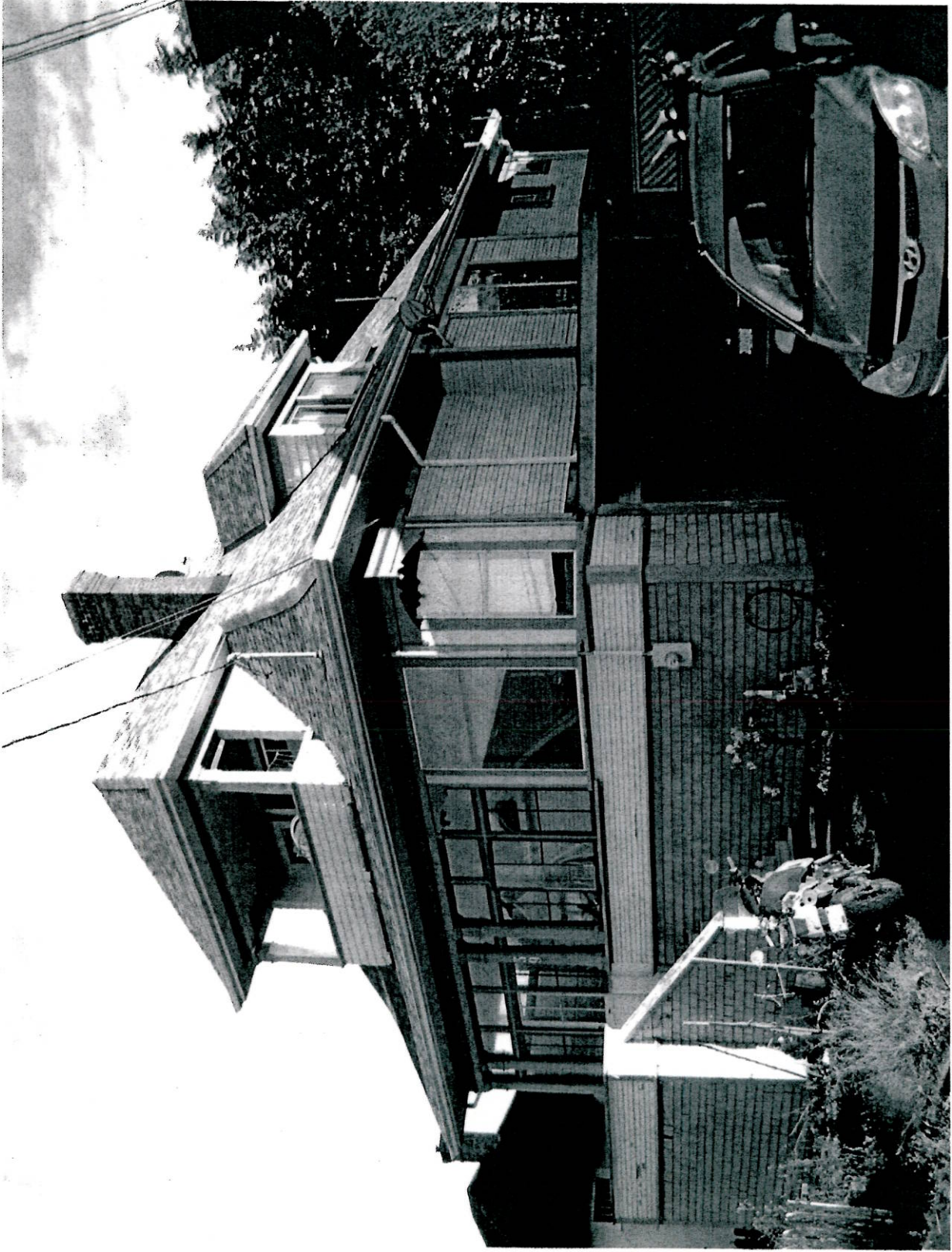






39 Lewis Street





39 Lewis Street



39 Lewis Street





39 Lewis Street







39 Lewis Street



**39 Lewis Street**  
**For: William Henry Knight**

**1908**

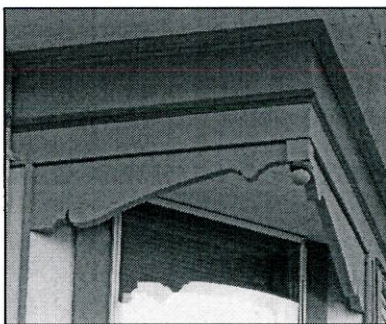


*39 Lewis St, 2013*

*VHF / Nick Russell*

Although William H. Knight appears to have only had a short career as a carpenter, he showed considerable skill with this house, which he built in 1908 at an estimated cost of \$1,800.

The style of the house is reminiscent of a Colonial Bungalow, but with earlier Queen Anne features such as the cutaway bay with sawn brackets. The 1½-storey house has a steep bellcast, hipped roof with a dominant bellcast



*Cutaway bay brackets VHF / Nick Russell*

dormer over a sleeping porch. The front façade originally featured a shallow angled bay on the right and a recessed porch and front door on the left. Handsome chamfered columns on the porch are matched on the dormer. The

effect has been somewhat flattened by later glazing, which partly obscures the ornate brackets on the cutaway corner. The transom on the bay features art glass, with a matching window on the inner entry. The original sash windows have horns.

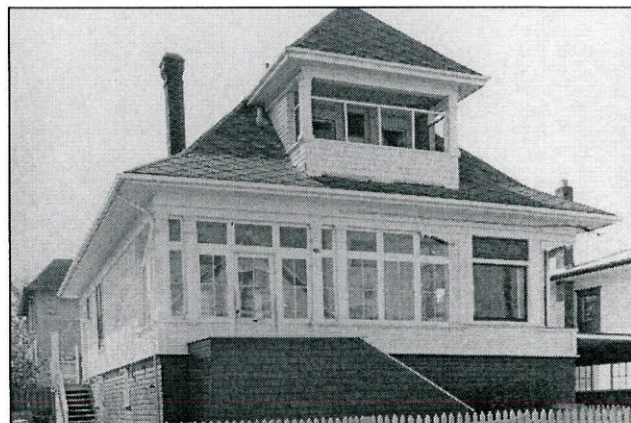
The house has a surprisingly large footprint. The main floor is covered in double-beveled siding, while the basement and stairway walls are shingled. Side-facing steps with low cheeks access the front porch.

The right side features a full-height box bay, with a dormer above, and a matching dormer on the rear. On the left, there is a side-facing back door near the rear corner, with front-facing steps. There are two tall, corbelled chimneys.

Lewis Street forms an intimate streetscape where the houses are built in close proximity to the street with no sidewalks or boulevards. The one-block long dead-end street is connected to Menzies St to the east by a narrow walkway known as Brotchy Lane and to Luxton Av to the west through a small playlot.

The street was named after the well-respected Capt. Herbert George Lewis. He began his career with the Hudsons Bay Co. arriving in Victoria in 1847. He married Mary Langford, daughter of Capt. E.E. Langford in 1870 and in 1878 they built a substantial house facing Dallas Rd on the southeast corner of Lewis St. The house was demolished in the 1960s.

39 Lewis Street was built by first owner William Henry Knight (b. Cornwall, ENG, c.1884). William married Jennie (née Beatty, Toronto, ON, c.1883) in New Westminster in 1904. William also built **1560 Gladstone Av**, Fernwood, where they lived from 1905-08 while William worked as a bicycle manufacturer. The Knights lived



*39 Lewis St, 1970s*

*Hallmark Heritage Society Archives*

at 39 Lewis for two years before building an Edwardian Vernacular house at 149 Medana St.

By 1911 William Stephen (b. London ENG, 1878-1947) and Hanna Caroline (née Brandon, ENG, c.1878-1945) Brown were the owners. William came to Victoria in 1899. He spent two years in the navy as a ward room steward. During his early years in Victoria he was employed as a waiter and then chief steward at the Pacific Club in the Yarrow Building. Hannah arrived in Victoria in 1905 when she married William in Vancouver. In 1915 William enlisted in the Armed Forces at the age of 37. He returned by 1918 and spent the rest of his career as an insurance agent. His last job was as annuities representative for the Canadian Government. William and Hannah had two children: William James Charles (b. Victoria, BC, 1907-87) and Ethel Hannah (b. Victoria, BC, 1909-92). Ethel worked as a stenographer for the BC Government. William James started out as a bookkeeper for Cameron Motors and then became an agent with his own insurance company. Both lived at 39 Lewis until their father's death in 1947, when they moved to 21 Wellington Av in Fair-

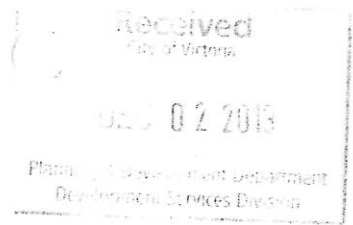
field.

From 1949-52 Don B. and Kathleen Sharp were the occupants. Don was an accountant at BC Cement.

By 1953 Jack and Rea Vanderbyl were the occupants of the house. Jack was employed as an orderly at the Royal Jubilee Hospital and then as a waiter at the Empress Hotel.

During the 1980s and 90s this was the home of Carole James and her family. Carole served as a Trustee on the Greater Victoria School Board before becoming the leader of the BC New Democratic Party from 2003-10. She has been the MLA for Victoria-Beacon Hill since 2005.





November 202013

City of Victoria  
Planning and Development Department  
1 Centennial Square  
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

Attention: Mayor and City Council

Dear Sirs:

Re: Heritage designation – 39 Lewis Street, Victoria, B.C.

As the registered owner of 39 Lewis Street, Victoria, B.C., I am submitting this letter in support of a request that the subject property be designated heritage.

The primary reason for this request is a desire to preserve the architectural flavour of the neighbourhood. To the best of my knowledge, Lewis Street is one of the few remaining streets in the city of Victoria that features predominately heritage housing. Retaining the historical fingerprint of our beautiful city is an asset, particularly in light of the commercial impact of Victoria's tourist industry.

Maintaining the street-front and interior integrity of an architecturally exceptional residence is costly. With this in mind, it is only logical to designate 39 Lewis Street as a heritage home. This would provide me with access to financial incentives available for the maintenance and upkeep of what many would consider to be an irreplaceable piece of Victoria's history.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William Robert Lafaut".

William Robert "Bud" Lafaut

## **Lewis Street**

### **A Historic James Bay Street**

Lewis Street, 1 block long, runs north from Dallas Road with no northerly street exit. The street is narrow and without sidewalks, the lots are small and the houses are situated close to the street. The majority of the houses were built before the Second World War with many dating from the turn of the century to the outbreak of the First War. The variety of styles includes Victorian Vernacular, Edwardian Vernacular Arts and Crafts, Colonial Bungalow, California Bungalow and English Arts and Crafts Bungalow. The close proximity and compact nature of this unusually intact historic streetscape offers a window into what a typical James Bay street might have looked like prior to the Second World War.

The origins of Lewis Street go back to the 1870's. In 1876 William Charles Robinson, an English born wholesaler and customs broker built his home, *Gladys Villa* facing Menzies Street on two acres of land at the north end of present day Lewis Street. Two years later Captain Herbert George Lewis a native of Hertfordshire, employee of the Hudson's Bay Company and skipper of the *Beaver* purchased property on Dallas Road and built a substantial residence at the south end of what is now Lewis Street.

The first tentative route for Lewis Street was deeded in 1889 and may have originally been a driveway through the Captain Lewis property. Travelling north from Dallas Road for 30 metres, the street turned east and connected with Menzies Street. In 1904 the easterly section became Brothie Lane and Lewis Street itself was extended north from Dallas Road to the southern boundary of the *Gladys Villa* estate.

Ten houses were built along Lewis Street before 1911. The residents at that time included four ships captains, two carpenters, a dressmaker, a stores man, an engineer, a labourer and a curiously entitled woman of "own means".

In 1911 two brothers and a cousin from Manitoba purchased *Gladys Villa*. John and George Playfair and George Cramer subdivided the property into 12 lots. Lewis Street was extended north again and the end of the street was connected by a footpath to Menzies Street. Four of the lots fronted on Menzies Street. *Gladys Villa*, now situated in the middle of the subdivision was moved to a new lot on the northwest corner of the property and became 66 Lewis Street.

50 Lewis Street was constructed in 1912 and was the first new house to be constructed in the subdivision. 53 Lewis Street, Heritage Designated in 2011, was the last to be built and was completed in 1929. It was the home of George Cramer, one of the developers. The North Lewis Street subdivision development was interrupted by the economic downturn in 1913 and the onset of First World War. Work resumed again in the 1920's.



The architectural design of most of the 12 houses in the 1911 subdivision reflect the fashion of the period in which they were constructed. Edwardian Vernacular Arts and Crafts before 1914 and English Arts and Crafts during the 1920's. However, the style of the first three houses built after the war harken back to the era before 1914. Each of these three were constructed in 1922 and are located at 44 Lewis and at 60 and 64 Menzies Street. 60 Menzies received Heritage Designation in 2013 and was the home until 1925 of subdivision developer George Playfair.

The Captain Lewis House was demolished in the late 1960's making way for an apartment tower. Two turn of the century homes at the south end of Lewis Street disappeared in the 1980's with the development of the Dunn Elm Village townhouse complex. In the 1970's the working class 1911 cottage at 34 Lewis was bequeathed to the city by its last owner and was removed to make way for Lewis Park which has become a focus for the street and a well used neighbourhood amenity.

The 1913 house at 62 Lewis and the 1876 *Gladys Villa* at 66 Lewis were demolished in the early 1970's in favour of a parking lot for the Albion Court apartment building. In the 1990's two new houses were constructed on subdivided lots at 15 and 27 Lewis Street. Most of the remaining pre Second World War houses retain their original facades and for the most part the feeling of an early 20<sup>th</sup> century Victoria streetscape has been maintained.

Several years ago the neighbourhood marked the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1911 Lewis Street extension and subdivision. During the event temporary historic informational signs were installed on each property indicating the date the house was built, the first residents name as well as their occupation. In the future we hope to create more permanent versions of these signs. We have also been discussing the possibility of installing a plaque at the end of the street which would outline in text and photos the history of the street and its early residents. Many people, both local and visitor, walk along Lewis Street each year. It is clear from many casual conversations that the historic ambiance of the street is often the reason that they choose this route.

We recognize that the historic flavour of a street can disappear very quickly. Descriptive signage, plaques and photos greatly enhance the experience for a visitor but offer little value if that flavour has been tarnished and the balance tipped by the disappearance of one too many heritage buildings. We trust that in choosing to seek Heritage Designation for our three homes we are beginning the process of helping to protect this small piece of historic James Bay. We also think that as more neighbours join us in the years to come Historic Lewis Street can become a valued community heritage asset preserved for the enrichment of all.