

34

W.K. Smith House
681 Okanagan Avenue NE
Salmon Arm, B.C.
1938

Description

W.K. Smith House is a one-and-a-half storey, wood frame house located on its original lot fronting the north side of Okanagan Avenue at the base of what was historically referred to as 'Merton Hill Road' in Salmon Arm, British Columbia. The house is identified as a relatively small, blue-grey coloured residential structure that is clearly visible from the road. The historic place includes the site and the building.

Values

Constructed in 1938, W.K. Smith House is valued by the community for its historic, cultural and aesthetic significance, particularly for its association with William Reader and William Kirkwood (W.K.) Smith.

W.K. Smith House is valued for its historic association with its builder William Reader, a local and well known contractor. William Reader also built the current Salmon Arm Arts Centre (historically the Post Office), the Old Courthouse, and the original Municipal Hall along Hudson Avenue NE downtown, all of which are considered important historic buildings in the community and are listed on the Community Heritage Register.

The house is a good example of the low, pre-World War II style bungalow commonly constructed in British Columbia during this era. The house is significant for its siting on one of the original lots of the Lyman Addition to the 'McGuide Annex', one of the early subdivisions that contributed to the development of the Salmon Arm townsite near the downtown. The house plays an important role in contributing to the heritage character of the subdivision extending north and northeast along 2 Avenue NE (historically Harris Street) and adds to the reputation of this area as a valued piece of Salmon Arm's heritage.

W.K. Smith House is valued for its association with its first owner, and the person to whom it owes its name, W.K. Smith. William and his wife Jean Bisset Smith were well known and influential community members during their tenure in Salmon Arm. Upon their arrival to Salmon Arm, the Smiths opened and operated a bakery on Lakeshore Drive (historically called Front Street) from 1938 to 1944. W.K. Smith served in a civic capacity for nearly 15 years, representing the community as an Alderman from 1940 to 1951 and as Mayor from 1952 to 1955. Smith also played a part in the community's acquisition of its first fire truck and served on the Fire Brigade. As the unofficial ambassador for Salmon Arm, Smith would often place welcome cards on the windshields of tourists.



City of Salmon Arm photo

Character Defining Elements

Key elements that define the heritage character of the W.K. Smith House include:

Site:

- One of the original lots of the subdivision referred to as the Lyman Addition
- Located directly south of a series of heritage homes along 2 Avenue NE (Harris Street)
- Fronts the north side of Okanagan Avenue, one of the key transportation corridors in the history of Salmon Arm (located at the base of what was historically referred to as Merton Hill Road)

Building:

- Association with its builder William Reader
- Association with its first owner and occupant William Kirkwood Smith
- Representative of the low, bungalow form of residential construction occurring in the pre-World War II era
- Cross-gable roof form with gable dormer on north side of the house
- Setback from the road and surrounded by mature trees