

**CITY OF OTTAWA HERITAGE PLANNING BRANCH
HERITAGE ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION**

Building Name and Address: Iona Mansions, 1123-1131 Wellington Street W.

Construction Date: 1912

Original Owner: Donald Hector MacLean (McLean)



Front Façade Source: City of Ottawa, 2023

Executive Summary

Iona Mansions, 1123-1131 Wellington Street West was constructed in 1912 to the designs of W.E. Noffke. It is a three storey, mixed use building featuring elements of the Tudor Revival style of architecture, popular in the early 20th century. It is a neighbourhood landmark that is directly associated with the growth of Wellington Street West as the commercial heart of Hintonburg and local politician Donald MacLean who developed the site as an investment property.

The property has cultural heritage value for its design, associative and contextual values. It meets six of the nine criteria for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

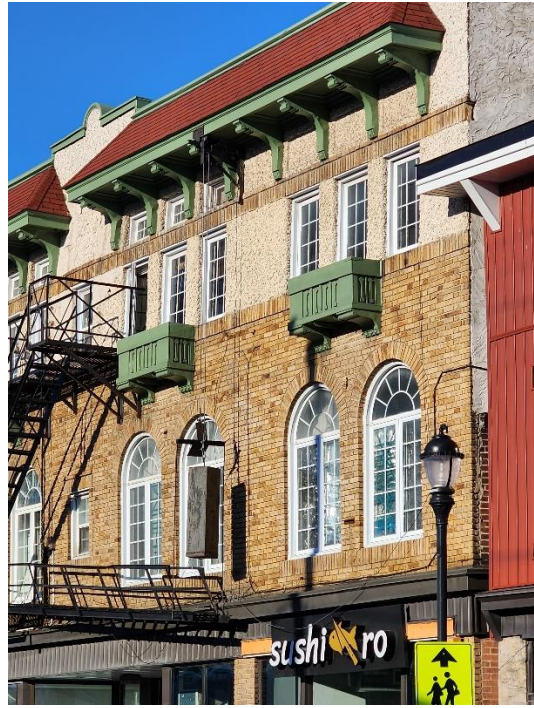
Architecture

The Iona Mansions, 1123-1131 Wellington Street West is three-storey mixed use building with retail units at grade and apartments on the upper levels constructed in 1912. 'Mansions' was a common early 20th century name for mixed-use buildings of this variety. As part of the Period Revival architectural movement that was popular in the twentieth century, the Iona Mansions displays elements of the Tudor Revival style. This style, most often used on houses, was inspired by English Cottages of the Tudor period and is usually recognized by its characteristic asymmetrical massing and steep rooflines.

Contrary to that image, the Iona Mansions has a mostly rectangular shape, balanced facade and flat roof, but the architect was able to evoke the essence of the style despite these contradictions. He accomplished this primarily through the addition of a steeply-pitched skirt roof and by suggesting half-timbering with the large wooden eaves and brackets that are framed by a brick belt course on the third storey. He also designed projecting oriel windows on the west elevation that break up the otherwise rectangular structure. Other features of the Tudor Revival style are found in the Mansions' casement windows, rounded arch windows, the use of brick and stucco and wood window boxes. The building also includes unique features including a chamfered corner on Carruthers Avenue, a decorative curvilinear pediment and bracketed eaves which all reflect the architect's future work in the Spanish Colonial Revival style. The ground floor retail units have large glass windows that provided both natural light and store display space. While the materials have been modified, the storefronts continue to reflect early 20th century arrangements including the large windows with bulkheads and recessed angled entranceways with transom windows.



West elevation
Source: City of Ottawa



Front façade details
Source: City of Ottawa



View from the corner of Wellington Street W and Carruthers Avenue
Source: City of Ottawa

History

The Iona Mansions is directly associated with local businessman, politician and military Colonel Donald H. MacLean who commissioned the building as an investment property in 1912.

MacLean was a prominent member of both the Hintonburg community and the larger Ottawa area. MacLean received a B.A. from the University of Toronto in 1890 and returned to Ottawa shortly after. He was reeve of Hintonburg from 1897-1899, the village solicitor in 1902, county Councillor for Carleton from 1900-1906, solicitor for Carleton County in 1911, member of the Board of Control for the City of Ottawa in 1914 and was appointed registrar of the County Registry Office in 1922. He ran unsuccessfully as a Liberal for the Legislative Assembly in 1902 and in the 1911 federal election for Carleton County he lost to Conservative candidate Edward Kidd. MacLean was also involved in many community clubs such as the Pickinock Fish and Game Club, Rivermead Golf Club, Ottawa Hunt Club, the Laurentian Club and Dalhousie Lodge, and he was a member of the Cyclist Touring Club (through which he toured extensively around Great Britain and France on a bicycle in the summer of 1890).

During the First World War MacLean took a leave from his role as Carleton County Solicitor and was a senior officer in the Governor General's Foot Guards and served as a Major in the 21st Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Forces. He was later promoted to Lieutenant Colonel. After the war he served as a conducting officer on transports and carried out work on behalf of the Four Minute Men. MacLean's wife, Edith Mary (nee Fry), was also active in the community as she served as the vice-president of the Women's Canadian Historical Society of Ottawa and was an active member of the Hintonburg branch of W.Y.C.A. Edith lived in the Iona Mansions while her husband was at war but moved back to Quebec some time after his death in 1924.

As a mixed-use building, the Iona Mansions is associated with Ottawa's population growth in the early twentieth century and the need for both retail and residential buildings within a limited space. The apartments and stores continued to be reconfigured, especially with the housing shortage after the Second World War, according to the needs of the community. One important tenant of the

Mansions was the Ottawa Public Library, which occupied 1125 Wellington from 1913 to 1919.

The Iona Mansions has been a part of Ottawa's west end community for over a century. It has contributed to the cultural landscape of Wellington Street West and was commissioned by a well-known community leader. The interior units have undergone reconfiguration over time in accordance with the residential and commercial needs of the community as many local businesses and citizens have called the Mansions home. The property was once the site of a small house until it was demolished in 1912. When it was constructed, Iona Mansions featured four ground floor retail spaces that included Victor Aubin's print shop, Thomas McComb's photography studio and John Clademeno's fruit store on the corner. The corner shop was taken over by West End Sweets in 1934, which operated until the 1970s, and later by Malham's Smoke Shop.

The storefront located at 1125 Wellington Street W. was occupied from 1913 to 1919 by the west end branch of the Ottawa Library (today known as the Rosemount Branch). The library was moved from the Rosemount School to the Iona Mansions building in 1913 due to exceptional growth in the library's use. This move allowed the library to extend its operating hours. Monthly use of the library continued to grow steadily over the years and by 1917 the space was subject to frequent overcrowding. It was decided that year that a purpose-built library in Hintonburg was required. The library received a Carnegie Grant – the last such award to be made in Canada – for construction of the Rosemount Library's present home at 18 Rosemount Avenue. It is the last remaining Carnegie library in Ottawa.



(Source: City of Ottawa Archives, 1991).

Architect

The Iona Mansions was designed by W.E. Noffke. Werner Ernst Noffke is one of Ottawa's most significant architects. In 1884, at the age of five, Noffke moved to Ottawa with his family from Stolp, in what is now Poland. He began his architectural studies early, apprenticing for local architect Adam Harvey when he was fourteen and later studying at Ottawa's Fine Arts Association. After finishing his apprenticeship in 1884, Noffke began working as a draftsman in the office of Moses Chamberlain Edey, another local architect. Noffke's own career began in 1901 when he set up a practice with George W. Norwood of Winnipeg. He practiced in Ottawa for over fifty years and his legacy can be found throughout the city in his many well-crafted buildings that have been designed in a variety of uses and styles. The last entry in his job book is dated 1960. He died four years later at the age of 86.

Noffke tended to follow mainstream architectural styles and so his buildings serve as important examples of the accepted architectural norms of their time. He is known for his high-end houses, such as those in the Clemora Park

development, as well as impressive commercial, office and religious buildings like the Medical Arts Building, 180 Metcalfe Street, Postal Station B at the corner of Sparks and Elgin Streets, St. Theresa's Catholic Church, 95 Somerset Street West and the Ogliv's department store at 126 Rideau Street (now part of the Rideau Centre), but he has also designed many modest residential and commercial buildings that display his versatility and widespread influence throughout all levels of Ottawa society.

The Iona Mansions represents the early years of Noffke's architectural practice and his work on modest commercial structures as opposed to the lavish homes and large commercial structures often associated with his name. Yet, despite the Mansions' modesty, they hold substantial detail and a distinct 'Noffke' impression, especially with the uncluttered stucco curvilinear pediment that foreshadows his later work with the Spanish Colonial Revival style.

Context

The Iona Mansions, 1123-1131 Wellington Street West is located in the Ottawa's Hintonburg neighbourhood. Until the middle of the 19th century, Hintonburg was a small working-class village, home to many of the labourers that worked in the rail or lumber yards and mills in the area, that evolved as a ribbon development off of Wellington Street West (formerly known as Richmond Road, Carleton County's earliest road built in 1818). Today, Hintonburg is bounded by the Wellington Village neighborhood to the west, the O-Train Trillium Line to the east, the O-Train Confederation Line (originally the CPR main line) and Mechanicsville to the north, and the Queensway to the south (originally the CNR main line), with Wellington Street West continuing to run through the centre of the neighborhood. Hintonburg is now a mixed-use area, with a small commercial pocket south of Scott Street to the west of Parkdale Avenue and larger residential sections to the north-east, where many of the homes are small and reflect the typical workers' housing from the end of the 19th century. The Iona Mansions reflects this mixed-use character, combining residential housing with retail space. The property is also important in its strong connection to D.H. MacLean, an important person in the community of Hintonburg who helped to shape the character of the community into what it is today.

Hintonburg was incorporated in 1893 and, in only a few short years, was experiencing rapid growth and settlement. The Iona Mansions was built in response to this growth and the need for both retail space and residential housing. The property represents an important part of the community's historical evolution from a small suburb to a thriving village. The Iona Mansions is part of an important grouping of historic buildings in this area including the former Bethany Hope Centre, the present location of the Rosemount Library and the Magee House.

The property, with its unique architectural design, irregular massing that follows the curve along Wellington Street West and its position on the corner of Wellington Street W. and Carruthers Avenue and prominent three-storeys serves as a notable landmark within the community.



1928 Aerial photo showing irregular footprint of the Iona Mansions

Source: GeoOttawa



Streetview looking east along Wellington Street West

Source: Google Maps

Evaluation using Ontario Regulation 09/06

1	<p><i>The property has design value or physical value because it is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method.</i></p> <p>Rationale:</p> <p>The Iona Mansions is a rare and unique example of an early 20th century mixed use building located on a traditional commercial main street. It has design value for its architectural expression utilizing elements of the Tudor Revival style.</p>	Y
2	<p><i>The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit.</i></p>	N
3	<p><i>The property has design value or physical value because it displays a high degree of technical or scientific merit.</i></p>	N
4	<p><i>The property has historical or associative value because it has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community.</i></p> <p>Rationale:</p> <p>The Iona Mansions is directly associated with Donald H. MacLean, prominent local politician in early 20th century Ottawa. The building is also associated with commercial main street development and speculative real estate development associated with Ottawa's population growth in the early 20th century. The property is associated with the Rosemount Public Library and several commercial longstanding commercial tenants that are significant to the neighbourhood history.</p>	Y
5	<p><i>The property has historical or associative value because it yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture.</i></p>	N
6	<p><i>The property has historical or associative value because it demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.</i></p>	Y

	<p>Rationale: The Iona Mansions reflects the work of Ottawa's most famous 20th century architect, W.E. Noffke. Noffke tended to follow mainstream architectural styles in his work and as such his buildings serve as important examples of the accepted architectural norms of their time. This building represents his early, more modest work in Ottawa and remains recognizable for its use of Revival style elements, with its uncluttered stucco curvilinear pediment foreshadowing his extensive later work in the Spanish Colonial Revival style.</p>	
7	<p><i>The property has contextual value because it is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area.</i></p> <p>Rationale: The Iona Mansions is important in defining this section of Wellington Street West between Bayswater Avenue and Carruthers Avenue where which is characterized by mixed use buildings that evolved into the commercial core of Hintonburg over the course of the 20th century.</p>	Y
8	<p><i>The property has contextual value because it is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings</i></p> <p>Rationale: The property represents an important part of the Hintonburg's 20th century evolution from a small suburb to a thriving village. The Iona Mansions is part of an important grouping of historic buildings in this area including the former Bethany Hope Centre, the present location of the Rosemount Library and the Magee House.</p>	Y
9	<p><i>The property has contextual value because it is a landmark.</i></p> <p>Rationale: This property is a local landmark in the Hintonburg neighbourhood for its distinct architectural expression and its location on a corner.</p>	Y

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