

George Little House

General Information

Type of Resource: Building

Also Known As: n/a

Civic Address: 3100 Kalum Street

Legal Property Description: Parcel A, District Lots 361 and 369, Coast District, Plan PRP41812

Construction Date: 1914

Architect/Builder: Will Little, Builder

Current Owner: City of Terrace

Designated Municipal Heritage Site:

Heritage Designation (George Little House Municipal Heritage Site) Bylaw No. 1828-2005



Statement of Significance

Description of Historic Place:

The George Little House is a large two-storey Craftsmen Bungalow-style building of wood frame construction, with a basement and an attic. There is a large, covered front veranda with wide stairs on the right-hand side that leads to the front door on the north façade. There is a back door on the south façade and two second floor dormers, one on the east façade and one on the west façade. A second storey door on the north façade, flanked by one large window and two smaller windows, leads to a small wood porch. This porch sits directly above the front veranda. This building is currently located at the south end of Kalum Street, on the north side of the railroad tracks in Terrace, British Columbia.

Heritage Value of Historic Place:

The George Little House is valued for its association with the life of a person of local historical importance. George Little is referred to as the founder of Terrace. The house was built in circa 1914 on his 160 acres of pre-empted land. In 1912, George Little had this pre-emption surveyed and registered to lay out the original Terrace Townsite. George Little gave a portion of his original pre-emption to the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, in order to secure a train station in the area, thus solidifying Terrace as a regional centre. The current location and use of the house is of particular significance and has historical importance, as it sits next to the railroad tracks on the original pre-emption and operates as a VIA Rail passenger station and tourism facility for the City of Terrace.

The George Little House is also valued as a symbol of the incorporation of north-western British Columbia into a larger global capitalist economy. It was built at a time when the local economy had been burgeoning due to external influences. Around 1911 there had been a boom in the regional economy, partially due to the construction of the railway. George Little had started the first mill in the area; a railroad tie and lumber mill, which would eventually establish Terrace as a primary industry

town typical of many northern British Columbian communities. The railway not only provided jobs and established a new economy in the region, it also allowed for the export of trees and lumber. People were no longer as isolated in the north as they had been, and travel was easier, faster and more accessible. The wealth brought into the region, as a result of these factors, enabled George Little to build this large and elaborate home for his family.

This house is also valued for its historical architecture. This was the first ‘grand’ house built in Terrace and was one of the few houses in northern British Columbia that had both a furnace and a bathroom. These features, along with the fine craftsmanship and quality of both the exterior and interior of this home, illustrate the wealth that was being generated in the region. The continued maintenance of the exterior and interior architectural features indicates the high heritage value the local community places on this structure.

Character Defining Elements

Key character-defining elements that contribute to the heritage value of the George Little House include its:

- wood construction, including wood exterior siding
- wide eaves with triangular brackets
- numerous windows, including leaded glass windows, bay window and dormers
- wide and covered front veranda with thick, square columns and exposed roof rafters
- small uncovered porch located over the front veranda entry
- open floor plan and historic woodwork, including the dark wood staircase, mouldings and doors, its original wood floors and its built-in cabinetry
- exterior paint scheme of white with black trim similar to its original construction
- location adjacent to the railway line and within the original per-emption lands

Additional History Information

History:

George Little first arrived in the Terrace area in 1905, having walked overland from the Douglas Channel and what is now the location of Kitimat. His first dwelling was a log cabin located near the present day “Old Skeena Bridge”. His second dwelling was a small cottage built on the same site as the original location of the George Little House on Lakelse Avenue.

The George Little House was built by George Little’s brother Will Little for George and his wife Clara on Lakelse Avenue. Clara Little (nee Beste) had moved to Terrace from Seattle as George’s new wife in 1912 and she designed this house to accommodate their growing family.

The George Little House has been moved a number of times over the years. After being the Little’s primary residence, it was owned by the Osborne family and used as a guesthouse. It then belonged to a number of non-profit societies that operated community organizations out of the house including a transition house and an emergency shelter. Currently, this heritage building is owned by the City of

Terrace. The building was relocated to the south end of Kalum Street just around the corner from its original location on Lakelse Avenue in 2004. The main floor is used as a VIA Rail train station for passenger service and as a regional tourism facility offering retail and community event space, the second floor contains office and conference/meeting room rental spaces and the basement houses a First Nations carving studio.

Images



George Little House circa 1916



George Little House circa 1930