003

Archaeology Building

University of Saskatchewan Heritage Register

November 2014
1. Statement of Significance

Located between the Engineering Building and 'The Bowl,' and facing the landscaped courtyard known as the 'Engineering Bowl,' the Archaeology Building is a handsome stone building in the Collegiate Gothic style. The building incorporates an original portion built in 1929 and an addition built in 1937. Its initial cost in 1929 was $260,000. In 1973 a small stair tower was built on the north end of the building, in 1987 a new elevator tower was added, and in 1990, a link was built between the Archaeology Building and the new Agriculture Building. The stair tower and link are beyond the scope of this report; this assessment is concerned only with the portions of the building constructed in 1929 and 1937.

The building holds significant heritage value in its history as the home of the department of Field Husbandry, and in its material, formal and stylistic character. This heritage value is amplified by the building’s excellent state of preservation and commemorative integrity.
Note: The Archaeology Building is configured with floors numbered Basement, Ground Floor, First Floor and Attic. This report follows the same convention.

2. Character - Defining Elements

2.1 Materials

Constructed principally of ‘greystone’ with Indiana or Bedford limestone trim, the exterior materials of the Archaeology Building are characteristic of the early buildings of the University of Saskatchewan campus. (For further information on building stones used at the U of S, refer to ‘Appendix: Stone’.) The original roofing material for the sloped roofs is called up on the drawings as ‘Barrett Mineral Surfaced Shingle’, in green; an early asphalt shingle. The original material is no longer in place; however, in this instance the current asphalt shingles are not historically out of character. There is a base course of granite where the building meets grade. Copper gutters and downspouts are carefully placed so as to be inconspicuous among the stone facades. Figure 1 shows the principle stone materials and the copper drainage. The facades are punctuated by steel-framed windows.

The original exterior and vestibule doors at the two main entrances were constructed of quartersawn oak with glass panels (Figure 3). The vestibule doors and both sets of door frames and transoms remain, but the exterior doors have been replaced with new doors which do not match the original design. Interior doors are typically of stained douglas fir, and feature wood-framed glass transoms. The original door and transom glass has a distinctive striated texture (Figure 4). On the ground floor, the door transoms are set into brick arches.

Figure 2. Archaeology Building after expansion ca. 1950’s. Photo A-282 retrieved from http://scaa.sk.ca/gallery/uofs_buildings/

Figure 3. Quartersawn oak vestibule door with glazed panels. Brick and plaster clad wall, cast iron radiator.

Figure 4. Textured door and transom glazing.
The entrance vestibules feature red clay tile flooring. This material is also found in the hallways adjacent to the stairs; however, in these locations it has been painted. Stair treads and landings are of black slate, a character-defining element distinct from the slate used in other U of S buildings of this period, which is typically green in colour. The slate stair treads are worn from decades of use (Figure 5). The stairs have painted steel and cast iron balustrades and stringers, with oak handrails. Cast iron can also be found throughout the building in the form of painted radiators.

In the basement, exterior walls are clad on the interior in brick, which has typically been painted. The interior walls of the upper floors are clad in a wainscoting of unpainted brick, with painted plaster ceilings (Figure 3). Some of the exterior walls of the attic and basement levels are faced in painted brick on their interior surface.

The steel framed casement windows consist of an interior and exterior set. The exterior windows are divided by mullions into multiple panes, while two larger panes of glass make up the interior window. Window sills are either in black slate or wood which has been painted black. Both doors and windows have brass hardware. The larger windows have wooden surrounds on the interior.

The materials of this building generally exist in an excellent state of commemorative integrity, with a few exceptions, such as the exterior doors, and a few transoms which have been replaced. In all of the classrooms and offices the ceiling has been hidden by the addition of dropped ceiling tiles.

The attic and basement are both treated as ancillary spaces, with more utilitarian finish materials. On both levels flooring consists of painted concrete. The walls are plaster or painted brick, the ceilings are generally a rough-textured plaster, and in some instances have been concealed with dropped tile. In the attic, only a few original wooden doors exist; the rest are pressed steel doors of no heritage significance. Some of the skylights have been replaced, others have had their wooden frames painted obscuring the original material. A character-defining material of the attic is the steel forming the exposed trusses shown in Figure 7. (See section 2.6).
2.2 Form

The Archaeology Building consists of a single mass, rectangular in plan. Figures 8 and 9 show the building as it was before and after the 1937 expansion. The long and narrow floor plans of this building are characteristic of early University of Saskatchewan buildings. The Archaeology Building consists of two storeys above ground, an attic, and a half exposed basement. At three storeys in height overall, the Archaeology Building is sympathetic to the pedestrian environment of the campus core. The form of this building maintains a high degree of commemorative integrity; the link added to its north side is relatively discreet, and the form of the original building and its 1937 addition are both readily apparent.

2.3 Style

The architectural style of the Archaeology Building is Collegiate Gothic. As shown in Figure 10, the ground level of the building features limestone door and window surrounds in the form of both pointed and standard arches. The four corners of the building are marked with prominent stone buttresses and quoinied stonework. Cut stone string courses decorate the stone walls at the window sill levels. Narrow limestone archer slots adorn the low parapet roofline. All of these features are character-defining elements.
The building’s most commanding façade is illustrated in Figure 11, although it is now somewhat obscured by later construction. On this west face, the location of the main staircase is expressed with a prominent double-height window with a pointed arch and mid-height spandrels. This window and an adjacent decorative element referencing a Norman tower, both form part of an asymmetrically composed elevation, and are important character-defining elements. The central staircase offers a view out of this window from each of its landings as shown in Figure 12. On the interior, the arch of this window is framed in a shallow vault.

On both lengths of its façade, the Archaeology Building features blank stone blocks around its entrances. These blocks were originally intended to be decorated with cut stone ornamentation. Shields and reliefs were also intended for the blank spandrels or stone panels that accompany the windows. These finishing touches were never carried out and the stone ‘blanks’ are now character-defining elements in their own right. Figure 13 shows the architect’s original specifications for carved stone decoration around the west entrance, and the incomplete work is illustrated in Figure 14.

Figure 12. The main staircase.

Figure 13. Elevation of the west entrance. Retrieved from Facilities Management Division Asset Record System, File CB-21-T.

Figure 14. Unadorned stone blocks above the west entrance where cut stone ornamentation was originally intended. Photo taken ca. 1960. Photo A-288, retrieved from http://scaa.sk.ca/gallery/uofs_buildings/
The public spaces of the building have received particular attention to detail and help define the character of the building. Four arches, with corbels at their ends, frame the area where the two principle entrances intersect with the central staircase (Figure 15). This character-defining element is repeated on the ground and first floors. The staircase, shown in Figure 12, has several ornamental features, including cast-iron newel posts and slate treads. The main corridor is defined by doorways featuring arched transoms that are framed in brick. These arched brick surrounds have limestone keystones at their crowns. Figure 16 shows an arched transom above a set of doors in one of the vestibules. The repetition of these arched openings throughout the interior is an important element in defining the character of the building. The ground floor also features arched windows. The arches are visible from the exterior; however, dropped ceiling tiles have been applied in many locations, obscuring the arches from view on the interior.

### 2.4 Location

Originally constructed as the Field Husbandry Building, the Archaeology Building does not appear on the 1909 Campus Plan, but was located immediately to the west of the original Engineering Building. It appears to have been placed with the intention of defining the western end of the courtyard that is now known as the 'Engineering Bowl'. As Figure 18 shows, it is orientated in a linear fashion along a roughly north-south axis, with entrances from the east and west. Notably, the building’s more active west façade now faces onto a parking lot and loading area, somewhat compromising its commemorative integrity (Figure 19). At the time of its construction, this elevation addressed an area of open fields.
2.5 Spatial Configuration

The general spatial configuration of the Archaeology Building is typical of the configuration of other academic buildings built on campus prior to the Second World War. On the ground and first floors, it features a simple floor plan with central double loaded corridors providing access to a series of discreet rooms - offices, classrooms and laboratories - on either side. Figure 20 shows the original layout of the ground floor. Notably, a small elevator was provided for and is visible in the drawings. The shaft still exists, but the elevator is no longer in use. (See Section 2.6 Systems). The original layout on these floors has been generally maintained. The original plans show the basement and attic as having open floor plans, as is shown in Figure 21. Both floors have since been divided into separate rooms, albeit to different degrees. The basement has been arranged around a double loaded corridor. The attic has also been divided into separate rooms; however, a large open area has been maintained. Figure 22 shows the shape of the attic in section.
Figure 21. The attic floor plan of the original Field Husbandry (now Archaeology) Building. Retrieved from Facilities Management Division Asset Record System, File CB-17-T.

Figure 22. Section through the Field Husbandry (now Archaeology) Building. Retrieved from Facilities Management Division Asset Record System, File CB-51-T.
Eight years after its initial form was completed, the Archaeology Building (Field Husbandry Building at the time) was extended. The building’s double loaded corridors were extended and more rooms were added. In 1973 and 1987, further changes to the spatial configuration of the building were made with the addition of a stair tower and elevator shaft to the north end, and subsequently a link to the Engineering and Agriculture Buildings. Despite these changes, the interior configuration of the building has been maintained to a very high level of commemorative integrity.

2.6 Systems

From the original architectural drawings, the structure of the Archeology Building appears to be a hybrid system. The exterior walls are load-bearing concrete, faced in stone on their exterior face and brick on their interior face. On the interior of the building, a structural steel frame encased in cast-in-place concrete supports the floors. Floors are typically cast-in-place concrete supported on open web steel joists. The surface of the concrete is painted and used as a finish material in many locations. Parts of the roof structure are visible in the attic storey, and consist of a series of arched steel trusses (Figure 24). The drawings indicate cast-in-place concrete foundation walls and reinforced concrete footings.

The building was the first on campus to be designed with an elevator. The elevator has not been maintained; however, its shaft still exits. The elevator was located directly adjacent to the staircase on its south side.

2.7 Use(s), Cultural & Chronological Associations

The Archaeology Building was initially constructed as the home of the Field Husbandry Department. The Field Husbandry Building, as it was first known, held offices, classrooms and separate labs for forage crops, cereals and plant breeding. A room for seed testing, as illustrated in Figure 25, was located on the ground floor and an exhibit library was located on the first floor. The basement served as a seed work room and the attic was used as a seed fair and short courses lecture room.

The 1937 expansion of the building brought new uses. The School of Medical Science occupied the building from 1937 until 1950. This brought entomology uses to the basement, a physiology lab, optical lab and preparation room to the first floor and a histology lab and dissecting room to the attic. Figure 26 shows the building being used for the study of medicine.
An undated drawing, presumably from the Second World War, indicates an office of the RCAF was located in the building.

In 1997 the Department of Anthropology and Archaeology moved into the building and the building was renamed accordingly. In 2002, Anthropology amalgamated with the Department of Religious Studies and relocated; the building was renamed the Archaeology Building in 2005. Since then, a single Department of Archaeology and Anthropology has been re-established, but the building name has not been changed. In its current use the building houses offices, labs, an archaeology library and lounge spaces. In the attic, spaces for art students are allocated.

3. Associated Objects

A chalkboard is still existing in a ground floor classroom. The chalkboard is of heritage value for its materials and age. (See also Section 2.1 Materials, and Figure 27).

The building contains a few pieces of furniture of possible heritage interest which are associated with its current use as the Archaeology Building. Several oak display cabinets appear to be roughly contemporary with the age of the building, although their dates of manufacture are unknown. A small plaque on each of these indicates that they were donated by 'Charles A. Murphy, Jeweler', of Saskatoon in 1968, but they appear to be older than this date. They also feature the words 'Museum of Anthropology and Archaeology' on brass plates. One of these cases is shown in Figure 28.

4. Supporting Documents


Facilities Management Division (2011). Asset Record System [Data File]. Retrieved from \usask\fmddfs\files\iis\IIS_Public\ARS


5. Summary of Character - Defining Elements

Materials
- greystone walls
- granite base course
- Indiana limestone trim and ornamentation
- copper drainage hardware
- brass fixtures
- steel window frames
- cast iron radiators
- steel and cast iron staircase, with black slate treads
- brick walls and wainscoting
- textured door and transom glazing
- black slate floor and chalkboard
- quarter sawn oak and douglas fir doors and surrounds

Form
- single massing
- pedestrian scale

Style
- gothic arched doorways
- arched windows and transoms
- string courses
- piers
- archer slits
- parapet roofline
- double height arched window
- tower
- unfinished stone ornamentation
- plaster and brick interior arches
- arched transoms
- ornamented staircase
- oak and fir window details

Location
- west side of Engineering Bowl

Spatial Configuration
- double loaded corridors
- skylights
- elevator shaft

Systems
- exposed arched steel roof trusses
- shaft for original elevator
Uses(s)

- field husbandry, crop science (offices, labs, classrooms, work rooms)
- medical education (labs, preparation rooms, dissecting rooms)
- anthropology and archaeology research
- medical education