008 Qu’Appelle Hall
Qu’Appelle Hall was the second residence hall built at the University of Saskatchewan. It is an excellent and characteristic example of Collegiate Gothic architecture, although the full scope and detail of the original design were never realized. Begun in 1914, Qu’Appelle was constructed during the First World War. The unfinished character of the building reflects the time period in which it was built and contributes to its heritage value. Qu’Appelle Hall was planned as part of the 1909 Master Plan, and its orientation on campus is integral to the framing of several courtyards intended by architects Brown and Vallance. Additions were carried out in 1962 by Izumi Arnott & Sugiyama Architects Ltd., and renovations by Melvyn Malkin Architect took place in 1972. The additions are beyond the scope of this report.
2. Character - Defining Elements

2.1 Materials

Qu’Appelle Hall closely followed the first wave of construction at the university, and was designed with a similar palette of materials to those of the MacKinnon Building and Saskatchewan Hall. The primary exterior material is rough-faced ‘greystone’. Cut stone trim and ornamentation is in Indiana Limestone (Figure 1), a subtle change from the MacKinnon Building and Saskatchewan Hall, where sandstone was used for this purpose. Granite was used for exterior staircases (Figure 2), although a concrete ramp has been poured over the granite stairs at the north-east entrance. Granite was also used as a base course for the exterior walls. (For further information on building stones used at the U of S, refer to ‘Appendix: Stone’)

Exterior doors on Qu’Appelle Hall are made of oak with inset glass. Other materials include slate roof tiles, copper drainage hardware and exposed wooden rafter ends. On the west façade, a series of ornate painted steel balconies distinguish the building from its predecessors (Figure 4). All of the original exterior materials are character-defining elements.

Figure 3. Qu’Appelle Hall as viewed from the ‘Bowl’ in 1923. Note that the Bowl is in the process of being landscaped. Saskatchewan Hall is visible to the left. Photo A-735, retrieved from http://scaa.usask.ca/gallery/uofs_buildings/

Figure 4. Steel brackets supporting a balcony on the west side of Qu’Appelle Hall.

Figure 5. Oak window and door surrounds, steel framed sidelites.
Oak is a primary interior material, used for doors, door transoms, windows, door and window trim, stair handrails, fireplace surrounds and decorative trim. Stair balustrades are constructed of steel and iron (Figures 5 & 6). Door and window hardware is brass. Originally the interior doors featured glazed transoms. These have all been replaced with a metal panel save for a few doors in the basement and exterior (Figure 5). Windows are single-glazed and framed in oak. The original storm windows have been replaced by permanently affixed aluminum framed storm windows with screens (Figure 7). The original oak features are character-defining elements.

Although rarely used in other early University of Saskatchewan buildings, marble is employed quite heavily in Qu’Appelle Hall. Stair treads and landings and window sills are typically made of marble. A few marble baseboards remain. Marble is also found in combination with terrazzo as a flooring material in the basement. As Figure 8 illustrates, the former pool deck was finished in marble and terrazzo. The marble is white in colour and is generally in good condition, however, some of the marble landings have cracked. Some of the marble has been replaced by a locally available green marble that is also found in Saskatchewan Hall (Figure 9).

The walls of this building were originally painted plaster. They have been stippled in the public spaces and covered with wallpaper inside the residence rooms. Most of the floors were originally wooden, but in 1972, concrete floors were installed and were finished in carpet. Ceilings have been altered with the addition of suspended ceiling tiles throughout the public corridor spaces.

Qu’Appelle Hall has three fireplaces that are visible and several others have been concealed within walls. As Figure 10 shows, these feature oak surrounds and brick hearths. The fireplaces are character-defining elements.
2.2 Form & Style

In plan, Qu’Appelle Hall was designed as a C-shaped building, opposite Saskatchewan Hall and forming a courtyard, now called Voyageur Place, between the two buildings. In the 1909 Master Plan, Qu’Appelle Hall figures essentially as the mirror-image of Saskatchewan Hall, but in the detailed elaboration of its design, and in the extent of its completed form, several differences developed. Ranging from three to four storeys above grade, it was designed to be one storey taller than Saskatchewan Hall. It was also never built to completion as its original plans intended. Its north-west wing was not constructed, and a kitchen and servants’ quarters were similarly postponed or abandoned.

Figure 11 shows the areas that were constructed, in relation to the original plans. Figure 12 is a sketch of the building, including the unbuilt portions, as conceived by the architects. Qu’Appelle Hall was also intended to feature extensive carved stone decoration, as indicated in the drawing in Figure 13, but much of this was never completed. Figure 14 shows stone blocks around the arched stone entries that were prepared for decoration but never carved.

The building may have gone unfinished due to the interruption of the First World War and its effects on the manpower of the construction industry and the finances of the university. (See also section 2.7)
Qu’Appelle Hall is an excellent example of Collegiate Gothic architecture, despite its incomplete ornamentation. Its elevations are playful, asymmetrical compositions featuring gabled walls, projecting oriel windows, pointed arches, turrets and towers. Gabled dormer windows punctuate the roof line. On the south elevation, tall arched windows adorned with limestone tracery indicate the former location of a dining hall. The south-west and north-west corners of the building are marked by turrets, with narrow archer-style windows, containing circular stairs (Figure 15). Stone piers between the tall windows on the southern façade reference those of gothic churches (Figure 16).

Indiana limestone string courses punctuate the façade on all sides of the building. On the west façade facing Palliser Garden, arched door and window openings and ornate painted steel balconies overlook the courtyard (Figure 17).
2.3 Location

Qu’Appelle Hall helps to define three outdoor courtyards: *The Bowl*, *Palliser Garden* and *Voyageur Place*. As indicated in Figure 17, Qu’Appelle Hall is located with its north façade facing The Bowl. Its east side frames the courtyard now called Voyageur Place. Along with Marquis Hall, Qu’Appelle forms an outdoor courtyard known as Palliser Gardens to its west. The shape and scale of this and other buildings of the period were carefully arranged to define intimately scaled outdoor spaces. The Campus Plan of 1909 was as much a landscape plan as it was plan for the arrangement of buildings, and the campus was conceived by its architects as a landscape of interconnected courtyards. The courtyards formed by Qu’Appelle Hall are therefore important character-defining elements, and its scale, material quality and detail are important features of these outdoor spaces.

Figure 18. Qu’Appelle Hall is highlighted in green on the 1909 Campus Plan. The yellow spaces show outdoor quadrangles which Qu’Appelle Hall helps to form. North is to the left.

Figure 17. Ornate steel balconies on the western face of the building.
2.4 Spatial Configuration

Most of Qu’Appelle Hall is organized as a series of residential rooms arranged along double loaded corridors (Figure 19), except for the south wing, which originally accommodated larger spaces such as a dining hall on the ground floor and a swimming pool in the basement.

This south wing has been substantially reconfigured over time. Its basement originally accommodated a common room, dressing room and a pool (Figures 11 & 20). The common room featured two fireplaces and ground level windows to let in natural light. One of the fireplaces, shown in Figure 10, was designed with oak seating and an intricate brick hearth. This fireplace and seating has been preserved and its commemorative integrity is intact. The configuration of the former pool and dressing rooms has been preserved, but their uses have not. The pool itself was drained in 1972 and filled with concrete in 1980. On the ground floor, the south wing was originally configured as a dining hall; a grand space, two storeys tall, with high windows to the north and south and fireplaces at either end (Figure 21). From the outset, however, the dining room was not used for its intended purpose. It was used initially as a gymnasium and was later subdivided for a number of other purposes (Figure 22).
Figure 22. 1972 renovations to the south wing. L to R: the second floor plan, the main floor plan. North is to the right. Retrieved from Facilities Management Division Asset Record System, File Q-271-AB.

Figure 23. The original second floor plan shows an open space above a dining area and a lounge hall. North is to the right. Retrieved from Facilities Management Division Asset Record System, File Q-30-T.
The second floor of the south wing was once the open space above the dining hall. This wing has been renovated by the insertion of a floor plate, and is now known as ‘Church’, owing to the gothic arched windows of its rooms. A comparison of Figures 22 and 23 demonstrate the changes made to this portion of the building.

The third floor of the south wing has become known as ‘The Rafters.’ The rooms here are named for their high, slanted ceilings that take the shape of the roof directly above. These rooms look out of the dormer windows that puncture the roofline of the south wing. Formerly, these rooms were accessible only by a spiral staircase in the turret on the building’s south west corner. This spiral staircase was removed as part of renovations in 1972, and the ‘Rafters’ are now reached by new stairs added at either end of the hall.

Figure 24. The Qu’Appelle Hall gymnasium ca. 1930. Photo A-8028, retrieved from http://scaa.usask.ca/gallery/uofs_students/image_detail_decade.php?image=a-8028

Figure 25. Lounges in Qu’appelle Hall where the former ‘dining hall’ existed. Photo A-3523, retrieved from http://scaa.sk.ca/gallery/uofs_buildings/.
The north wing of the building has almost completely maintained its original configuration. On the ground floor, the layout of the interior residence rooms has been preserved. Slight changes have been made to the interiors of some of the rooms: fireplaces have been enclosed in the walls of several ground floor residence rooms. The south east corner of the ground floor has been converted into an apartment style residence enclosing the bay window that once allowed sunlight into the south end of the ground floor corridor.

The second and third floors of the building have also retained their original double loaded configurations. Served by three stairwells, the rooms all adjoin a spacious hallway. At the southern end of the hall a bay window allowed light into an open area with a fireplace. The bay window featured a built-in gathering area that has been maintained. Renovations have removed the three southernmost rooms with the effect of creating a large lounge with a kitchenette and a set of washrooms. The fireplace and bay window have both remained, however, they have been enclosed in a TV lounge.

The fourth floor of Qu’Appelle Hall is known as the ‘Tower’, and is no longer used because it is served by only one staircase, and therefore does not conform to the current fire code. This area consists of a suite of four rooms in the north east corner of the building.

Figure 26. Original third floor plan. ‘The rafters’ are in the upper left (south west) corner, accessible here only by the turret staircase. North is to the right. Retrieved from Facilities Management Division Asset Record System, File Q-29-T.

Figure 27. ‘The Tower’ as it was originally configured. It has since been divided into residence rooms. Retrieved from Facilities Management Division Asset Record System, File Q-14-T.
2.5 Systems

The original structure of Qu’Appelle Hall consists of cast-in-place concrete slabs supported by concrete beams and columns. The roof rafters are wooden, and are supported by the concrete frame. The exterior walls of Qu’Appelle Hall are of stone, supported on concrete foundation walls and footings. At the exterior stone walls, the concrete structure is buried within the masonry construction and is not visible, but is evident in photographs taken during construction (Figure 28). This early concrete structure proved problematic, and in 1972, an extensive rehabilitation project was undertaken to reinforce it. Excessive deflection in the concrete beams was addressed by the addition of steel supporting columns at the midspan of each structural bay. An additional structural concrete slab was poured over top of the existing one both to strengthen it and to level the floors, which had sagged due to structural deflection.

2.6 Use(s)

Qu’Appelle Hall was built to function as a residence hall and still functions in this capacity. Other functions within the building have seen some change.

The basement of Qu’Appelle Hall used to house a swimming pool (Figure 29). The pool was 18 feet wide, 45 feet long and about 8 feet deep with a spring diving board. For several years after the pool was shut down the change room area was used as a gym. The pool has since been filled in and the room is now used as storage for the book store. The ground floor of Qu’Appelle Hall was built with a dining hall. From the outset, the spacious, naturally illuminated room was used as a gymnasium (Figure 24). Subsequent renovations converted the space into study lounges and meeting rooms.

The third floor, often referred to as the ‘Tower’, is in disuse. Traditionally the area housed staff and then residents. It has become uninhabited due to fire safety issues.

Because Qu’Appelle Hall has functioned continuously as a residence hall, its original spatial configuration has remained substantially unaltered, and its commemorative integrity is generally intact.
2.7 Cultural & Chronological Associations

The configuration of Qu'Appelle Hall, and its uninterrupted history as a residence hall has contributed to a strong sense of place. Different wings and floors have become nicknamed, often according to their unique spatial attributes. The places that have evolved within Qu'Appelle Hall include 'Kelsey,' the 'Rafters,' 'Church,' and the ‘Tower.’ Kelsey refers to the central portion of the building. The rooms in ‘Church’ have gothic arch shaped windows with tracery, which were formally the upper windows of the dining hall. The rooms in ‘The Rafters’ have sloped ceilings and dormers. The ‘Tower’ is so named for its form and for the single staircase which serves it.

As discussed in Section 2.2 above, the unfinished character of Qu'Appelle Hall associates it with the First World War.

3. Supporting Documents


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

Snell, G. Personal communication, August 12, 2011.


5. Summary of Character - Defining Elements

Materials
- steel and iron balconies, balustrades and steps
- slate tile roofs
- copper drainage hardware
- ‘greystone’ walls
- Indiana limestone trim and decoration
- granite stairs and base
- oak-framed windows and transoms
- quarter sawn oak doors, door surrounds, fireplace surrounds, and stair handrails
- marble floors, landings, stair treads and partitions
- terrazzo floors
- brick hearths

Form
- framing of outdoor courtyards
- narrow floorplates
- 3-4 storey scale
- pitched roofs & gables

Style
- arched windows, entries, doors and fireplaces
- stone quoins
- stone string courses
- slate tile roof
- dormer windows
- archer windows
- spandrels
- decorative drainage spouts
- gothic arch windows and doors
- stone tracery
- turrets
- exposed rafter ends
- decorative balconies
- stone piers
- vaulted ceilings
- arched transoms
- crenellated parapet
- bay & oriel windows
- faux balconies
- carved stone brackets
Spatial Configuration
- narrow footprint
- double loaded corridors
- turrets
- wide corridors
- high ceilings in upper floor rooms and ground floor corridor
- formation of outdoor courtyards

Uses
- student residence
- swimming pool
- ‘dining hall’ gymnasium

Cultural & Chronological Associations
- unfinished cut stone ornaments
- First World War