1. Statement of Significance

The University Club was originally built as the Residence of the Dean of Agriculture. It was completed in 1912 at a cost of $20,742 and was among the first buildings constructed on campus. Its status as an early priority for the university reflects the importance of the College of Agriculture to the institution. The University of Saskatchewan was the first in Canada to incorporate an agricultural college as an integral component. The house was initially occupied by William Rutherford, the first Dean of Agriculture. The building’s current use as a club derives from its previous function as a venue for receptions and entertaining. The residence was vacated in 1961 in order for it to become home to the Faculty Club.
Although originally planned as a wooden building, the University Club was ultimately constructed in ‘greystone’ to match the rest of the campus. Other shared features are its arched door and window openings, and the human scale and form of the building. Although many features have been changed, the building maintains a degree of heritage value due to its age and association with the history of agricultural education at the University of Saskatchewan. The building was extensively renovated in 1966. In September 1972 the building suffered a fire and underwent further renovations in 1975. The fire did not do catastrophic damage to the building; however, the renovations removed many of the original interior finishes. The portions that were added in during alterations are beyond the scope of this document.

Note: The University Club is configured with floors numbered Basement, Ground Floor and First Floor. This report follows the same convention.

2. Character - Defining Elements

2.1 Materials

The primary exterior material of the University Club is rough-faced greystone, a form of dolomitic limestone local to the area around Saskatoon. Greystone is an important material with respect to the University of Saskatchewan as it was gathered from lands surrounding the site and defines many other buildings on the main campus. Window surrounds are fashioned from both greystone and sandstone (Figure). (See ‘Appendix: Stone’ for further information on stone materials used at the U of S). Stucco has been added as an exterior material in more recent renovations. The roof was originally finished in slate tile, but is now clad in asphalt shingles. Exposed wooden rafter ends were formerly visible beneath the eaves, but have since been covered by a stucco soffit. Wooden window frames have been preserved in a number of locations. However, extensive renovations have removed or replaced many of the original windows.

![Figure 2. The Dean of Agriculture Residence (now the University Club), as it appeared before 1925. The MacKinnon Building is visible in the background to the left. Photo A-413, retrieved from http://scaa.usask.ca/gallery/uofs_buildings/](attachment:image)
The interior of the building has been altered to a great degree, and much of the commemorative integrity of the original interior is lost. A greystone wall in the building’s basement shown in Figure 3 has been well maintained and integrated into the building’s new use.

On the ground floor, a former porch has been made into an enclosed corridor, such that the greystone wall of the original front elevation is now an interior feature. In this case, the material exists in a good state of commemorative integrity. The only other original materials on the ground floor are the windows, most of which retain their original wooden frames, single glazed lites and original hinges and clasps. The windows on the first floor are in similar condition.

The floor finishes throughout the University Club have been changed since its days as a residence and no longer hold any commemorative integrity. The original flooring may however still exist under the carpet and tile added by later renovations.

2.2 Form

The University Club has a very human scale of two storeys above ground. Its original footprint has been expanded to more than double that of the original. The additions remain low in scale with heights below that of the original form. The south and east elevations have been maintained; however, the expansions to the north and west have compromised the integrity of the original form. An elevator shaft, visible in Figure 4, has been appended to the east side and the south facing porch has been enclosed. Figure 5 shows the addition to the west of the building and the enclosed porch on the south side. Figure 6 shows the original building with its open porch. The numerous additions to this building have partially obscured the heritage value of its original form.

Figure 3. A greystone wall which now forms part of a basement meeting room.

Figure 4. An elevator shaft and the deletion of several windows have greatly changed the eastern facade.

Figure 5. L to R: The addition to the western facade, the enclosed porch.
2.3 Style

The style of the University Club is Arts & Crafts, a domestic style of architecture of the latter half of the 19th century affiliated with the Victorian Gothic revival. The Arts & Crafts movement favoured traditional forms of craftsmanship, simple forms, manual production techniques and decorative motifs recalling mediaeval art. The style shares many characteristics with the Collegiate Gothic used elsewhere at the university; however, the University Club was detailed with a more residential palette of forms, including arched openings, dormer and bay windows. Figure 6 shows a drawing of the primary façade, featuring these elements.

Slate tiles, a character-defining material of many early University of Saskatchewan buildings, have recently been replaced by asphalt shingles. The exterior of the building originally featured two dormer windows punctuating the roofline on the south elevation. With renovations in the 1960’s and 1970’s these dormers were replaced by a single large dormer forming a first floor addition (Figure 7). A dormer window was also removed from the east roof. Figure 4 shows the current eastern facade. Figure 8 shows the original configuration of the east and west facades.
Some windows have been replaced while others have been altered in form and function. For example, some exterior windows on the ground floor now form part of an interior corridor and have been modified to become display niches. The windows still feature the arches that are a characteristic of the Arts & Crafts style, and are recognizable as elements of the original exterior wall.

The bay window on the building’s south side has been converted into an entrance. The form of the bay is still intact; however, the central window has been replaced with a door. The exterior of the building has maintained much more of its character definition than the interior, although major renovations have been made. The building features greystone quoins along its corners; a character-defining element of the Arts & Crafts style. On the east façade, a few windows in arched greystone openings exist in a good state of commemorative integrity. A few have been deleted due to the addition of the elevator shaft. On the north elevation, most windows have been removed or filled in by greystone or wood siding. The arch of a large original window is still visible in the stonework despite being filled in. Another smaller arched window is now an exhaust duct, but its keystone and arched shape are still discernible.
The west elevation has been greatly changed as it now faces into the interior dining space. The windows and doors no longer exist. Originally, this façade featured a greystone chimney with diamond shaped decorations cut into the stone. The form of the chimney is still visible, but the only other remaining element of this façade is the arched porch. Figure 8 shows the original west elevation with the chimney detail. The elevator shaft, which was added in a later renovation, pays tribute to the diamond cutouts as shown in Figure 9.

2.4 Location

The location of the University Club, shown in Figure 10, reflects its history as a residence for the Dean of Agriculture. The home was located so as to be near the University Farm and allow the Dean of Agriculture good access to the barns and paddocks. The University Club also exists in close proximity to the MacKinnon Building as this building was originally intended to become the College of Agriculture building. The proximity of the University Club to the agricultural buildings is thus a character-defining element.
2.5 Spatial Configuration

The spatial configuration of this building has changed considerably with its transition from private residence to a club. The interior initially consisted of a closed floor plan characterized by individual and distinct rooms accessed by hallways. Figure 11 shows the original ground floor. With renovations, the interior has become a series of much larger and more open spaces. The footprint has been greatly expanded by additions. Access has been increased by the addition of another stairwell and an elevator. The result is greater circulation through the original building. As previously discussed, numerous windows and doorways have been removed to accommodate renovations.

2.6 Systems

The University Club has load bearing exterior stone walls supporting wooden floor joists and roof rafters. The basement walls are also constructed of stone, and are supported on concrete footings. Two rows of wooden posts and beams in the basement support the ground floor joists at their midspan (Figure 12). On the ground floor, this function is served by wooden stud walls.
2.7 Use(s)

This building served as a residence for the University’s Deans of Agriculture from its construction until 1961. Since 1961, the building has served as a Faculty Club, first for members of the Faculty Club and then evolving to become inclusive of others members of the university community. Membership was open to non-faculty for many years before the club was renamed in 2012 to coincide with its 50th anniversary year. As Figure 13 attests, the Dean’s Residence was often host to outdoor receptions and events. The building’s use as a club is therefore generally consistent with its original purpose and the building form is well suited to this new function; however, the uses of individual rooms and spaces has changed considerably.

Originally the building’s ground floor had multiple residential uses. These are indicated in the floor plan (Figure 11), and include a library, kitchen, dining room, sitting room, vestibule, pantry and several closets. The majority of the original ground floor area is now used as a kitchen and as circulation space. The additions are used as dining areas.
The upper floor of the Dean of Agriculture Residence formerly housed four bedrooms, two restrooms, and servants’ quarters. The first floor plan (Figure 14) indicates these uses. The first floor now features a large event room complete with a bar. The basement, formerly a service area, is now used as a series of meetings rooms.

2.8 Cultural & Chronological Associations

The University Club building can broadly be associated with agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan. The house was built to be part of the University Farm with proximity both to the Stone Barn and to the MacKinnon Building. The purpose of the house was driven by the university’s incorporation of an agricultural college. Culturally, the University Club represents the importance placed on the study and practice of agriculture by the University of Saskatchewan in its early years.

The University Club is also associated with its first resident, Dean William Rutherford. Rutherford was the University of Saskatchewan’s first Dean of Agriculture and Saskatchewan’s first agricultural scientist. The original drawings for the building were labeled ‘Rutherford Residence.’ Rutherford lived in the building from its completion in 1913 until his unexpected death in 1930. Prior to joining the university, Rutherford had been Deputy Minister of Agriculture and had endorsed the idea that a College of Agriculture should become an integral part of the university – an idea unique in Canada at the time. In 1909 Rutherford left the civil service to become a member of faculty at the newly established university. He is credited with having created the College of Agriculture and with having significantly shaped the agricultural policies of the Province of Saskatchewan. He was posthumously inducted into the Canadian Agriculture Hall of Fame in 1966 and the Saskatchewan Agriculture Hall of Fame in 1972.

The University Club can be associated with its former namesake: the institution of the Faculty Club. As a social organisation, the Faculty Club existed long before a building was assigned to it. The Faculty Club first met in room 143 of the MacKinnon Building on December 9, 1927. A Faculty Club building was first discussed on November 2, 1928. Consideration was given to locating the club in the Arts Building that was being planned at the time. A committee with the purpose of erecting a building for the club was formed by motion of the university’s first president, Dr. Walter Murray. The committee’s efforts were cut short by the Great Depression. In the 1940’s the Faculty Club again pursued the idea of a ‘Faculty Club House.’ Accomodations in the planned Memorial Union Building were pursued and then dismissed. The Faculty Club finally gained a formal home in 1961 when the Dean of Agriculture’s Residence was offered. The building was renamed the Faculty Club and was know by that name for over 50 years.
The Faculty Club saw a steady decline in membership in the 1970’s and evolved in response, to become more inclusive. Membership in the Faculty Club is now open to anyone. The University of Saskatchewan Archives does not have records of Faculty Club meetings after 1978.

3. Associated Objects

A wooden cabinet (Figure 15) with a mirrored backing has unknown origins. The cabinet may be associated with the University Club or one of the previous families who resided in the house when it was the residence of the Dean of Agriculture.

4. Supporting Documents


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


5. Summary of Character - Defining Elements

Materials
- greystone walls
- wooden window frames
- sandstone trim
- exposed wooden rafter ends

Form
- domestic scale

Style
- elements associated with the Arts & Crafts style
- gabled roofs
- arched openings
- dormer and bay windows
- quoins
- diamond details

Location
- original to 1909 campus plan
- proximity to University Farm

Spatial Configuration
- former porch (now enclosed)

Structural Systems
- stone walls

Use(s)
- residence for Dean of Agriculture
- entertaining and receptions
- faculty club

Cultural & Chronological Associations
- agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan
- Dean William Rutherford