048

Dental Clinic
1. Statement of Significance

Designed by the firm Holliday-Scott Paine Architects, the Dental Clinic has been the home of the College of Dentistry since 1979. Its principle designer, John Holliday-Scott, was a particularly talented architect who adapted the modernist sensibility of his time to the context and historical traditions of the University, in a characteristically inventive way. In this and other buildings such as the Law-Commerce complex and the Lutheran Seminary, Holliday-Scott re-framed the familiar materials of the campus and re-interpreted the traditions of the Collegiate Gothic style. The Dentistry Building has heritage significance as a particularly successful and highly original example of late Modern architecture.

Note: The Dental Clinic is configured with floors numbered Basement, First Floor, Second Floor, Third Floor. This report follows the same convention.
2. Character - Defining Elements

2.1 Materials

The exterior of the dental clinic is a modernist composition mixing the traditional materials of the University of Saskatchewan campus with contemporary materials. Rough-faced ‘greystone’ (Figure 1) is used to form a base for the building and encloses the basement and ground floor. Cut Tyndall stone is used as a cladding material for the third floor (Figure 2). The second floor is enclosed in a glazed curtain wall, such that the Tyndall stone volume of the third floor appears to float above the heavier greystone base (Figure 2). These three primary exterior materials – greystone, Tyndall stone and glass – and the expressive manner in which they are deployed, are character-defining elements. The main entrance is accessed across a bridge made of cast-in-place concrete, with an exposed-aggregate finish (Figure 3). This material is also used on the interior.

(For further information on building stones used at the U of S, refer to ‘Appendix: Stone’)

Figure 3. Exposed aggregate concrete.

Figure 4. Red ceramic tile flooring.

Figure 5. The effect of the patterned flooring is visible in this 1979 photograph of the dental clinic. Photo A-8651 retrieved from http://sain.scaa.sk.ca/items/index.php

Figure 6. Exposed concrete waffle slab, oak ceiling bulkhead.

Figure 7. Exposed ribbed concrete block.

Figure 8. The Dental Clinic. Photo retrieved from Flaman, B. (2013), Architecture of Saskatchewan: A Visual Journey, 1930-2011.
The exterior materials are also used extensively on the interior of the building. The greystone walls of the ground floor wrap around and continue into the interior of the building at a glazed entrance vestibule (Figure 1). Floors in the ground floor lobby are red terra cotta tile (Figure 4). The floor of the dental clinic was originally patterned to relate the small scale of the individual work spaces to the large scale of the clinic, but has since been replaced (Figure 5). The ceiling in the lobby is an exposed concrete waffle slab. The underside of the structural floor slab is expressed as a feature in several other locations. Figures 2 and 6 show examples of the waffle slab exposed on the exterior and the interior respectively. A system of oak ceilings and bulkheads are used to conceal services (Figure 6). Oak is also used for some doors and window sills. Douglas Fir makes up the partitions between dental chairs on the second floor. Walls are composed of exposed-aggregate concrete or a ribbed concrete block (Figure 7). Oak, concrete and concrete block are character-defining materials.

Architect John Holliday-Scott often specified accent colours in his work. In the case of the Dental Clinic, the colour red was used to bring warmth to the architecture. The colour, most notably appearing above the central stainless steel stair (Figure 16), is a character-defining element.
2.2 Form & Style

In the Dental Clinic, John Holliday-Scott produced a work of architecture that exploits the full expressive possibilities of its materials, and manages to be of its time but also historically aware. The exterior form and expression of the building takes the familiar palette of materials traditionally used at the University of Saskatchewan, but re-frames them in new ways. Here, for example, rough-faced greystone is not used over the full height of the exterior walls, but to define a heavy base as a distinct element. Although used traditionally for trim and decoration, Tyndall stone is used here as a primary material, distinguishing the third floor as a volume separate from the other parts of the composition. Glazing is used not only for discreet window openings, but also as a visual separation between solid elements of the composition. This expressive use of materials is thoroughly modern in its impulse, but in other ways, the building alludes to the past.

The heavy stone base makes reference to the mediaeval castle in its form and detailing. Its corners are rounded like a turret and its walls are canted. Narrow windows allude to archery slots (Figure 11). The main entrance is reached by a bridge across a deep pit, like a drawbridge over a moat (Figure 14). Projecting concrete scuppers refer to earlier gothic precedents. Historical forms, like traditional materials, are re-imagined in a contemporary way.

The ways in which materials intersect and connect to one another is characteristically modern. The glazed wall of the entrance vestibule connects lightly to the stone walls, giving the impression that the stone wall passes through the glass, into the interior. The extension of material planes ‘through each other’ in this manner is a character-defining element.

Structural elements are used to particular expressive effect in the Dental Clinic. On the second storey, concrete columns are left bare as shown in Figure 15, and are finished to expose their stone aggregate. On all floors, portions of concrete waffle slabs are revealed. The central stair leading from the entrance lobby up to the Student Clinic on the second floor is designed such that its stainless steel handrails form its structure, and treads are suspended by their balusters. The effect is that the treads appear to float, without obvious means of support (Figure 16). Exposed and expressed structural systems are character-defining elements of the Dental Clinic.
At three storeys in height, and with a relatively small footprint, the Dental Clinic has a scale in keeping with the rest of the campus. It is somewhat lower than its neighbor, the old Health Sciences Building, which varies from four to five storeys in height. The design of the Dental Clinic was also intended to accommodate a fourth floor at some point in the future (Figure 17). Recently, the Academic Health Sciences E-Wing addition has been joined to the Dental Clinic, so that it is no longer a discreet object, but is now part of a larger complex. However, the addition has been designed to allow the original form of the building to remain legible.

### 2.3 Location

The Dental Clinic is located immediately south of the Health Sciences ‘A Wing’ on the west side of the Wiggins Avenue entrance to the University of Saskatchewan. Figure 19 illustrates the location of the building. The Dental Clinic can be considered a part of the medical precinct of buildings at the University of Saskatchewan. With the construction of the Academic Health Sciences E-Wing, it now forms part of a complex of medical buildings. Its grouping with other medical buildings such as the Health Sciences Buildings and Royal University Hospital is a character-defining element.
2.4 Spatial Configuration

A signature feature of John Holliday-Scott’s architecture was the creation of a dramatic central space, around which the building is organised. In the Dental Clinic, the second floor Student Clinic is the central space forming the heart of the building. In the Student Clinic, dental students practice their craft, in an open plan layout of cubicles arranged in a grid, each containing a dentists’ chair and equipment (Figure 23). At the centre of the grid is a reception desk and dispensary, with support functions contained within a circular room expressed as an oak-clad cylinder (Figure 20). The clinic is a soaring double-height space, overlooked by the corridor and faculty offices of the third floor. Various rooms on the third floor are expressed as bays, projecting into the upper space of the Clinic (Figure 21). A large piece of artwork, mounted in the south wall of the clinic, is an integral part of the space and a character-defining element. See also Section 3 - Associated Objects.

The Student Clinic is accessed via a large open stairwell placed at the centre of the ground floor plan directly visible upon entry into the building. Secondary access is provided by an elevator and fire stairs at the north and south ends of the building. The central staircase between the first and second floors is a character-defining element (Figure 16).
The basement is accessed by a wide staircase in the entrance vestibule. The basement consists of large enclosed rooms used for stores and mechanical equipment. At the foot of the wide staircase natural daylight penetrates the floor through a glazed wall that looks out into the excavated area under the entrance bridge.

The ground floor of the building is divided into reception and waiting room space and patient care rooms for the Faculty Clinic. The third floor is organised around a corridor overlooking the space of the Student Clinic on the floor below. Offices and seminar rooms and laboratories are arranged in a ring around the upper portion of the Student Clinic space (Figure 24). The third floor corridor also features a series of bays that accommodate seating and display cabinets.

Figure 24. Third floor plan. Retrieved from Facilities Management Division Asset Record System, File DC-376-C.

Figure 25. The main Student Clinic in use, January 1979. Photo A-6548 retrieved from http://scaa.sk.ca/gallery/uofs_buildings/
2.5 Systems

The Dental Clinic was constructed with a cast-in-place concrete structural frame and concrete waffle floor slabs. In areas where an open plan spatial configuration was used, the concrete columns were left exposed, with an exposed aggregate finish (Figure 15). The expression of structural elements such as concrete columns and waffle slabs are character-defining elements. See Section 2.2 Form & Style.

2.6 Use(s)

The establishment of the College of Dentistry was approved in March of 1965, making it the ninth dental school in Canada. The first students were admitted to the program in 1968 but construction of a building did not begin until 1978. Since its opening, the Dental Clinic has been used by the College of Dentistry for education and practice. The ground floor houses a Faculty Practice Clinic as well as administrative offices. The second floor is entirely occupied by the 64 chair Student Treatment Clinic. Here students perform dental work on patients to fulfill the clinical requirements of their program (Figure 25). The third floor consists of offices, classrooms, laboratories and lounges. The Dental Clinic is still used for the purpose for which it was built and has been altered relatively little. The use of the building for dental education and practice is a character-defining element.

2.7 Cultural & Chronological Associations

The Dental Clinic can be associated with its designer, architect John Holliday-Scott of the firm Holliday-Scott Paine. Holliday-Scott was born in the UK, and immigrated to Canada in 1957 after receiving his architecture degree from Kingston College of Art. In the UK he worked with the firm Chamberlin, Powell and Bon whom he respected for their ability to integrate historical context into contemporary architecture. In Canada, Holliday-Scott first worked with the Saskatoon Firm Kerr and Cullinworth for two years before starting his own firm. His first building for the University of Saskatchewan was the dining hall at Emma Lake, Kenderdine Campus. Holliday-Scott was also the architect for the Law Building and the Lutheran Seminary, both on the University of Saskatchewan campus.
3. Associated Objects

Mounted on the upper south wall of the clinic is a large piece of artwork that is original to the building (Figure 26). This work was designed by architect John Holliday-Scott as part of the building project, and is integral to the architecture of the space.

The third floor houses numerous objects significant due to their age and their relation to the practice of dentistry (Figure 27). These dental items include a gold crown from the late 1800's, numerous model sets of teeth, several photographs and a full X-Ray unit that was operated by foot pump (Figure 28).

In the basement are more objects that have not been displayed including a full dental cabinet made of marble and oak with instruments, medicines and surgical tools, and early X-Ray equipment. Some of these artifacts are dated as early as 1910.

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
- aluminum-framed glazing
- greystone walls
- tyndall stone cladding
- oak ceilings and millwork
- brick flooring
- concrete
- stainless steel stair
- red accent colour

Form & Style
- scale
- projections
- canted walls
- references to castle walls
- bridge
- flat roof
- scuppers
- archer style windows
- rounded corners, bulkheads, partitions
- bays
- stair details

Location
- medical precinct

Spatial Configuration
- central atrium
- view into atrium
- open plan Student Clinic
- main staircase
- associated artwork

Systems
- exposed concrete columns
- exposed concrete waffle slab

Uses
- dental education and practice

Cultural & Chronological Associations
- John Holliday-Scott