

**Statement of Significance
Ferry Building Gallery
101 14th Street at Argyle Avenue
West Vancouver, BC
May 2008**



Historic Place

The historic place is the Ferry Building Gallery, also known as the West Vancouver Ferry Building, a wood-frame building constructed in 1913. It is located on a narrow lot on the south side of Argyle Avenue, at the water, at the foot of 14th Street. The building was designated as a Municipal Heritage Property in 1987. The recent landscaping in front of it and the open space to the west side are not part of the historic place.

Heritage Value

The historic place has historical value for its associations with the municipal ferry and bus services, both of which were very important to the development of West Vancouver; and for its present use as a community art gallery, reflecting the municipal commitment to cultural presentation. It also has architectural value for its use of Arts and Crafts features. Its longstanding public use has made it part of the ongoing historical experience of countless residents and visitors.

The primary heritage value of the Ferry Building Gallery is in its association with West Vancouver's ferry and bus services, both of which were essential to the development of a community in which commuting has long been so important a way of life. Regular ferry service to and from Vancouver was initiated in 1906 by John Lawson; the service was acquired by the Municipality in 1912 in response to local landowners who wanted to promote property development. The acquisition coincides with the establishment of West Vancouver as a district municipality. The Ferry Building opened as the Ambleside terminus in 1913.

The completion of the Lions Gate Bridge in the late 1930s cut into ferry passenger traffic, and as a result ferries ceased operation in 1947. The historic place was adapted for use as a terminus for bus service, and it continued in this use until 1986. The building therefore symbolizes the active role played by the municipality in transportation, a purpose for which it was used for more than 70 years.

The building continued in public use. It has value for having been the first of the 'Arts on Argyle' buildings to be adapted for the arts, in 1989. It continues to be a popular public gallery that showcases local art. Council Policy is that it is 'to be used by community groups, Historical Society, local artists and other recreational users as appropriate,' representing a strong municipal commitment to cultural use.

The historic place has architectural value for using features of the Arts and Crafts style, here in a modestly-scaled public building. It was designed by architects Thompson and Campbell, with the waiting room located downstairs and the board room upstairs. The latter saw community use in early years. Its historical character was retained in the alterations for adaptive re-use in 1989, by Howard Yano, Architect.

Character-Defining Elements

The character-defining elements of the Ferry Building Gallery include:

- Setting on the water, which recalls its use as a ferry terminal
- The small, domestic scale, despite its original public use
- Continuous tradition of public use
- Arts and Crafts design, seen in features such as the structural and decorative use of wood
- Cross-gable roof with exposed rafters
- Smaller gables over the entrances
- Original multi-paned wood-sash windows
- Clock

Sources

Portals of Our Past: A History of the Ferry Building, 1997; West Vancouver Heritage Inventory, updated to 2003; West Vancouver Heritage Inventory Worksheets and Evaluation Sheet. Other information provided by District of West Vancouver.