

Harrison Memorial Church – Statement of Significance

April 28, 2020

Other Name(s)

Crawford Bay Memorial Church
Crawford Bay Community Church
Harrison Memorial Community Church

Description of Historic Place

Harrison Memorial Church is one and a half storey, unadorned Carpenter Gothic Style wood-frame gabled church with a two storey square bell tower. It is situated on a wooded lot on Crawford Creek Road in Crawford Bay, British Columbia.

Heritage Values of Historic Place

Harrison Memorial Church has been a valued asset in the Crawford Bay community since its construction in 1920.

Harrison Memorial Church provides an important connection to its benefactor, Commander Matthew Harrison, who constructed it in memory of his departed family members - two sons who were killed in active duty during World War I, his first-born son Geoffrey (who had died of scarlet fever at age six), and his wife of 45 years, Lucy. More than just a place of



memory, this historic place provides insight into the prosperity of the Harrison family, which was unique to Crawford Bay and the East Shore of Kootenay Lake in the first decades of the twentieth century. The construction of the church can be seen as an extension of the affluent lifestyle that Harrison brought to the area from England, and which is also expressed in the family's nearby 80-acre estate with a large

manor (1908). The construction of the church is an important demonstration of the type of patronage expected of Britons of the Harrisons' social class and standing at the time.

The design of the church is a significant aspect of its heritage values. Drawing inspiration from nature, not only in its form but in its materials, it is noteworthy that the design, construction, and execution of this place were overseen by Matthew Harrison himself. The use of local skilled craftsmen and materials in its construction strengthens the connection of this building to the community and its location.

Architecturally, the building design is important as a vernacular church with Craftsman and Gothic elements, which although simpler than some more elaborate urban church designs, stands out in its scale and formal design within this rural community, making it a cherished landmark. Evidence of its high-quality craftsmanship, wood construction, and detailed finishes in the context of its remote area, speak to the use of local natural resources, local skills and the importance of this sacred site to the community.

Harrison Memorial Church holds a high level of significance for its social and community values in Crawford Bay. Since 1920 this place has been host to celebrations of life and love, community gatherings and events, worship services, and performances of all types. While not originally dedicated to any particular religious denomination, the church later became part of the Anglican Diocese of Kootenay for the use of "responsible Christian organizations" for a variety of purposes. This flexibility of use has ensured that this place has remained a centre for community in Crawford Bay since it first opened its doors. It also has a noteworthy association with the Crawford Bay Womens' Institute, which was started by Harrison's daughter, Anne, in 1926, and which cared for the church until 1974.

Further significance lies in the manifestations of community connections found in many of the church furnishings made by local artisans and benefactors. The altar, stained glass window, roll of honour, and embroidered kneelers are all special reminders of the importance of this place in the community, and the connection of community to this place.

Character-Defining Elements

The character-defining elements of Harrison Memorial Church include:

- The location of the church on its lot, and its situation in the context of Matthew Harrison's original estate.
- The physical relationship between the church and Wedgewood Manor, Harrison's manor house.
- The connection of the church to its natural surroundings and wooded landscape.
- The architectural design of the church, including its wood construction and finishes, steeply pitched gable roof, square prominent bell tower with hip roof, symmetrical design, and traditional church layout.
- The Craftsman tradition expressed in the exposed rafter tails in both roofs.

- The Gothic Revival tradition expressed in the window design (with pointed arches) along the sanctuary walls
- The formal design of the entrance with double staircase and pointed gable hood held up by brackets
- Church furnishings original to its 1920 design, and later additions such as the white pine altar carved with a unicorn by Wayne Worthington, the stained glass window depicting a cross and dove of peace created by Dick Wingate, the roll of honour for local war dead, and the kneelers designed by Kathleen Lymbery and embroidered by the Crawford Bay Womens' Institute members.
- The church bell, received from St. Andrew's on the Lake, another (now deconsecrated) church in the Anglican Diocese of Kootenay.
- The use of the church for worship and religious celebrations, community gatherings and events, and performances.

Resources

Harrison Memorial Community Church (Anglican) Timeline – received from Brenda Panio

Memory BC – Kokanee Parish: <https://www.memorybc.ca/parish-of-kokanee>

Harrison Church: A Memorial to Tragedy – by Steve White and Frances Roback




Harrison Memorial Church – Document to Transfer to the Diocese of Kootenay, 1944

Harrison Memorial Church display panels texts

Harrison Memorial Church



Legend

-  Electoral Areas
-  Cadastre
-  Civic Address

Map Scale:
1:4,514

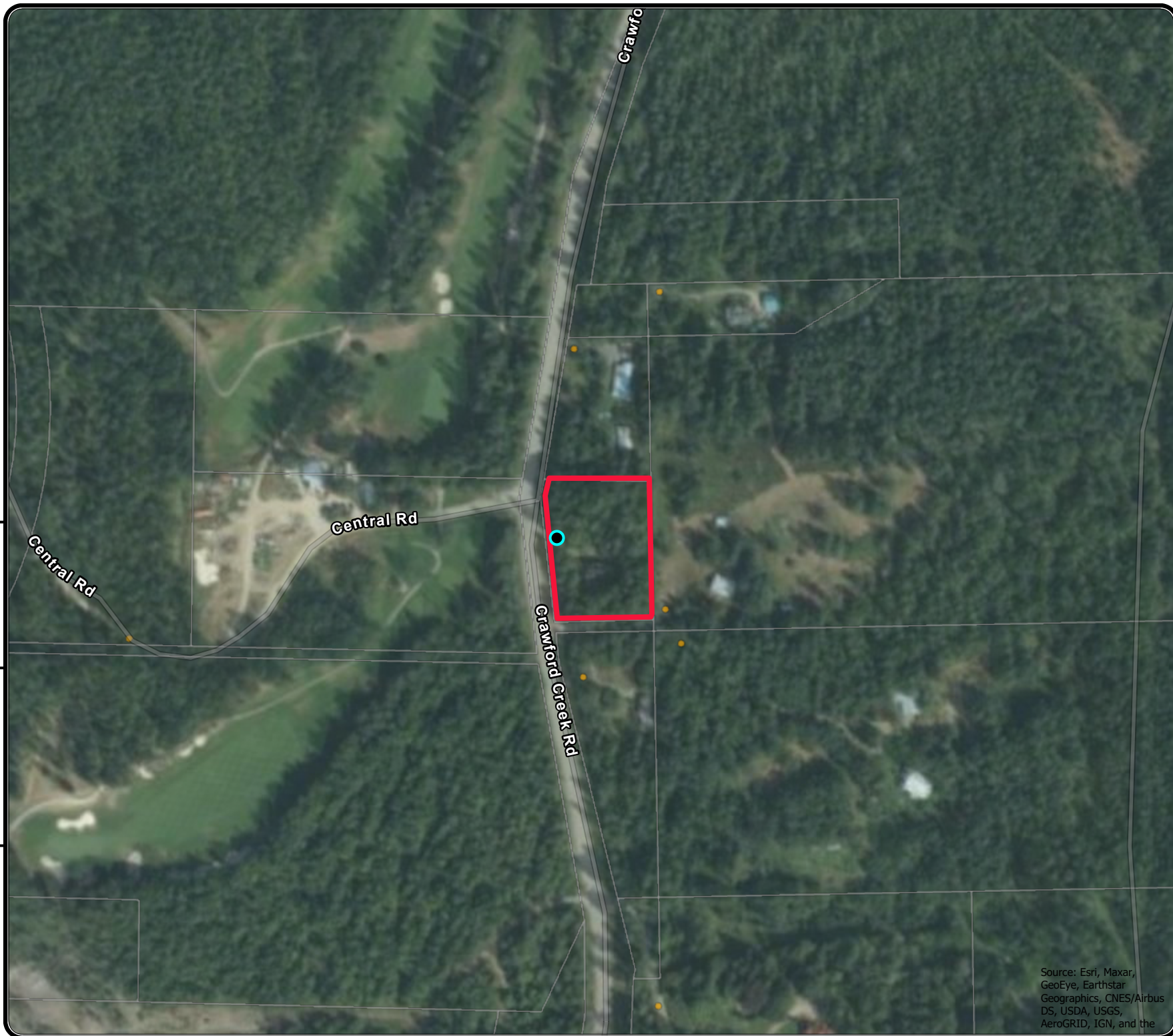


Date:
July 29, 2020

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