

2021 Sidewalk Stamp Tour of Crescent Heights

Welcome to our self-guided tour! There'll be a smattering of local history along the way, and for more detail on any of our stops, there'll be several attachments which you can read later on if you wish.

Two-hour parking is available on both sides of the 100 block of 7th Ave NW, which is where our tour begins.

Sidewalk stamps are comprised of street names and contractor logos imprinted in concrete sidewalks. In Calgary, the earliest ones that can still be seen are found in the Beltline and dated 1907- see below- although it's possible that even older ones might still exist underneath old asphalt repairs. While the City of Calgary no longer requires that street names appear on its sidewalks, to this day contractors continue to affix their logo to new sidewalks.



We'll begin on the southeast corner of 7th Ave and 1st St NW in Crescent Heights, due east of the LDS Church. At your feet, you'll notice a section of concrete sidewalk dated 1910, with a misspelled street identifier: Linclon Ave. The contractor "Mc-K Bros" for this section was the McKibbin Brothers. If you have time, you might wander a block south to 6th Ave NW, where there will be another old sidewalk stamp that's survived- "Somerville Ave". Both these names appear on a 1910 City of Calgary Engineering map- see below- for it was that year that the City decided to reverse its 1904 numbering policy in favor of named streets for all the new suburbs just being annexed. The 1910 street names didn't last long this time- just a year or two. (See attachment "A" for the full story.)



The house in front of us on the southeast corner of the intersection was built in 1906 for John Steinbrecker of the German-American Colonization Company. He's an intriguing character and more of his story can be found in attachment "B".

Let's now cross 1st Street NW at 7th Ave NW, where the LDS Church stands. Another McKibbin stamp can be found here, and the "Seventh Ave NW" stamp is a good indication that by 1912, the City no longer favoured calling 7th Ave NW "Lincoln Ave". It's also interesting that the contractor's name stamp was no longer abbreviated by 1912. A bit about the McKibbins can be found in attachment "C".

McKibbin Bros.

GENERAL CONTRACTORS

PHONE 3297

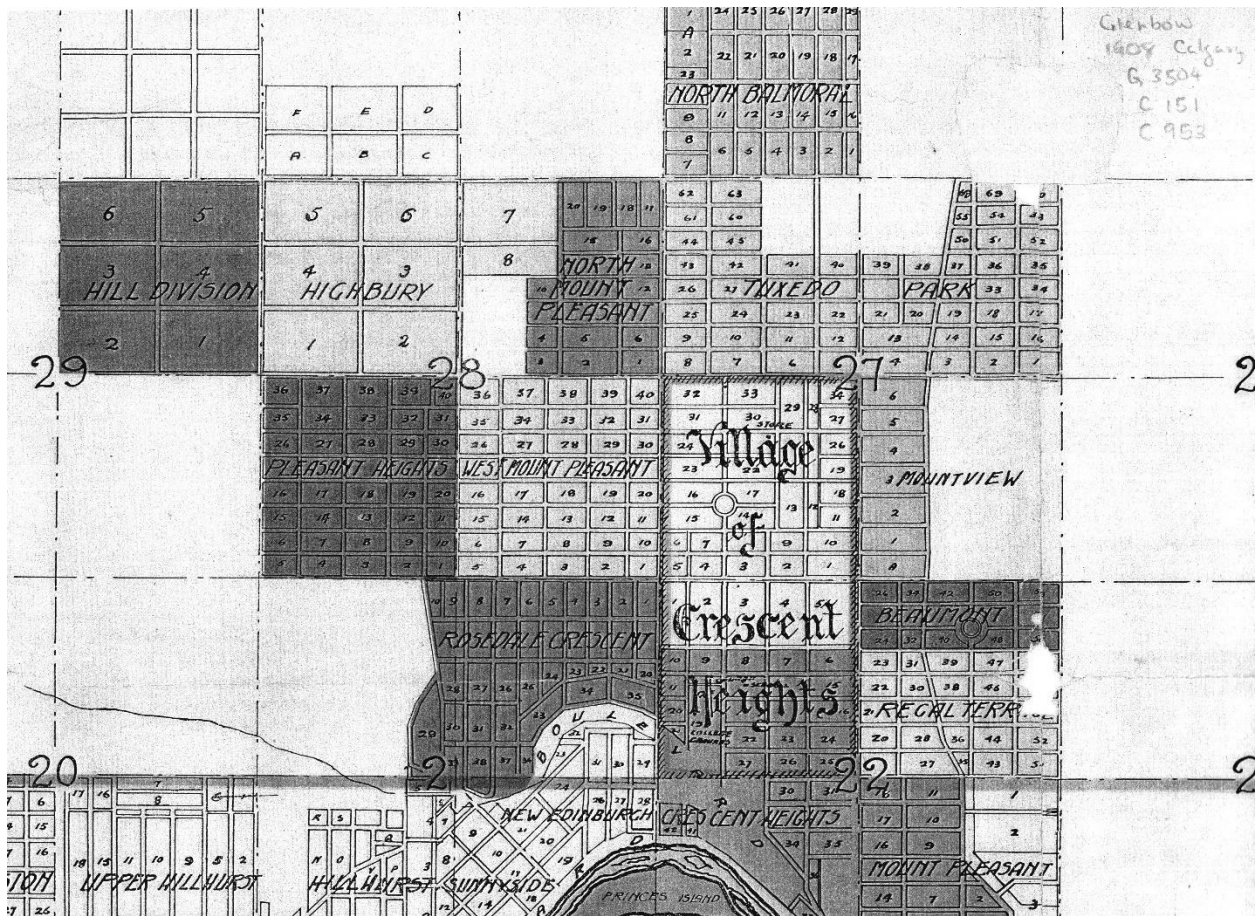
CALGARY

Head north to 8th Ave and 1st Street NW. On the way, pause to look at the parking lot behind the LDS Church. A lovely brick and sandstone home once stood there; the home of A.J. and Catherine McArthur, who owned a large land parcel that would become the nucleus of Crescent Heights. The McArthur's residence was designed by local architect Leo Dowler, and appears in the inset below (photo source: the McArthur family).



On the southwest corner of the 8th Ave and 1st St NW intersection is a 1928 CMPD stamp. CMPD is an acronym for the Calgary Municipal Paving Department, and we've provided a brief history of CMPD in attachment "D". You might be wondering though, why there are sidewalks dating back to 1910 running along 1st St NW, while this one on 8th Avenue is dated 1928. The answer is that the land in Crescent Heights didn't develop at the same time and in the same manner as did the baby-boomer suburbs after WW2. After the real estate boom faded in 1913, there were very few concrete sidewalks built in Calgary until 1925. The construction slowdown continued not only during WW1, but during the depressed years following the war.

8th Avenue North was the southern boundary of the short-lived Village of Crescent Heights, which existed from 1907 until it was annexed in 1910. Land south of 8th Ave had already been annexed by the City in 1907. A 1908 map appears below, and for more on the village itself, we've provided yet another attachment: "E".



Our tour will now take us kitty-corner from the southwest corner to the northeast corner of 8th Ave and 1st St NW. Those with eagle eyes will have already spotted two of the old Herald/Greyhound Building gargoyles in the front yard of the house on the corner. The pair are known as "Mrs Mopp" and "The Typesetter", and were snapped up from an estate sale last year by the homeowner, who is well-known in local heritage circles. Further evidence of that is the Heritage Calgary historic plaque out front. Before we move on, we should also point out the 1913 sidewalk McKibbin Bros contractor stamp on the corner. (We have yet to discover a 1914 contractor stamp anywhere locally as new sidewalk construction in Calgary had slowed by then, as noted before.)

Let's walk east on 8th Ave NW, and carefully cross Centre Street (it's a busy spot) to stand on the northwest corner of 8th and Centre. Right on the corner is a sidewalk stamp that we haven't yet encountered on our tour- a 1926 "G.B. Wood".

If the stamp seems familiar, you might have seen it already in Scarborough and Bankview.

Looking north from the corner, you'll see the colorful mural on the south side of the Pettit Block- which once housed a Jenkins Groceteria- and further down, the neon sign of the Tigerstedt Block. A brief history of the

Tigerstedt Block can be found in attachment "F". But while you're here, you might grab a coffee at Sought X Found, or even a microbrew at Two Pillars, depending on your preference and the time of day.



Our tour now takes us a block south to the southeast corner of 7th Ave and Centre St NE, which features a faux sandstone arch announcing the entrance to Rotary Park. It was originally known as Mount Pleasant Park, since this part of Crescent Heights was first known as Mount Pleasant. It became Rotary Park in the early 1930s when local Rotarians requested that William Reader suggest a suitable site for building a well-equipped children's playground in Calgary. Reader suggested this site- which became the first of the Rotary's model playgrounds- and it was visited by kids from all over the city in its early years. See attachment "G" for more on Rotary Park.



We'll shortly be walking east along 7th Ave NE, but we should mention a few points before we begin. You can't help but notice the canopy of stately elms, and 7th Avenue is one of six streets in Crescent Heights that's been designated a "Historic Streetscape" by the City of Calgary. William Reader supervised the construction of boulevards and tree planting in the area, which began in 1929 and continued through 1932. You can find out more on the City's site "Conserving Calgary's Historic Streets", and if you're really keen, the Parks Department detailed Annual Reports are also online, many of which were also prepared by William Reader.



Let's now head east along 7th Ave NE, where you'll see some late 1920s bungalows, many of which have been replaced on the south side by new homes which back onto a lawn bowling green. One bungalow that's managed to survive is 119 7th Ave NE, which lives on by virtue of the laneway house out back. Until the mid-1920s, there was only one house in the 100 block of 7th Ave NE, and it's now gone. Continuing east along 7th Ave NE, you'll see more 1920s bungalows, and toward the end of the block, some pre-WW1 houses. On the south side, stop and admire a cute little yellow bungalow at 235 7th Ave NE. It was once the home of an axe murderess- Eva Coo- and Eva's story was uncovered by the homeowner during the 2012-13 Century Homes Calgary event. More about Eva can be found on attachment "H".

When you've reached the intersection of 7th Ave and 2nd St NE, we'll take a short trip halfway up 2nd St NE- west side- to a home at 813 2nd St NE. The old sidewalk in front of the home contains a pre-WW 1 private contractor stamp: "Baxter Bros". These old stamps can be found in older districts all over Calgary. For more on the Baxters, see attachment "I".

Please return to the intersection of 7th Ave and 2nd St NE. Sidewalks on 7th Ave NE in this area were once dated 1912, and were replaced in 2008. Not far from here is a home with a collection of old sidewalk "stamps" dating back as far as 1907, the full story of which we'll relate another time. For a peek at the collection- and some background- see attachment "J".

Let's now proceed east along 7th Ave NE toward Edmonton Trail. You'll probably notice that this block has a good collection of pre-WW 1 era homes. Many of these houses were built when the streetcar first ran on Edmonton Trail beginning in 1911. North of the Bow, the Crescent Heights streetcar service ran up 10th St NW, east along 16th Ave, and then south on Edmonton Trail- then 3rd St NE- where it became 4th St NE at the bottom of the hill in Bridgeland. Very early on, there was more development along Edmonton Trail than there was on Centre Street, since the present Centre Street Bridge wasn't completed until 1916-17, well after the building boom had ended.

We're now at the intersection of 7th Ave and Edmonton Trail NE, where a small retail hub had formed just before WW1, and there are 4 business blocks nearby

which still stand from that time period. We've profiled one of them- the Colvin Meat Market- as attachment "K", and the block is now home to a Blowers and Grafton restaurant, known for its Halifax street food. And before we cross the street, we should mention that the northwest corner of 7th Ave and Edmonton Trail NE was once the home of Alberta Trailer Sales- later ATCO- and the residence of the Southern family. And so, we'll provide yet another attachment- "L"- which provides more background on Ron and Marg Southern, who first met in the 1940s at Crescent Heights High School.

Our tour will run along 7th Ave east for just a few more blocks, where we'll finish up. But if you're in need of refreshment at this point, this might be good place to stop, since there are a fair number of eateries within a block or two from here. Or you could always finish the tour and return!

At Edmonton Trail, 7th Ave takes a slight jog south. Walking east along 7th, we'll encounter another old McKibbin sidewalk stamp. This one- on the southeast corner of 7th Ave and 4th St NE- is special since it was preserved in place by the City of Calgary in 2012. Attachment "M" provides more info on the preservation of old sidewalk stamps in Calgary.

Continuing our progress eastward on the south side of 7th Ave NE, we'll mention that while 7th Ave west of Edmonton Trail was briefly Lincoln Ave, on the east side it was known as Lauder Street. Lauder was John D. "Doc" Lauder, a medical doctor who'd come west with the NWMP in the 1880s. He was also friends with ex-NWMP sergeant James Barwis, who had subdivided land in the area in 1887, and who had chosen to honour his friend with a street name. A later owner of land in the immediate area was Captain Emilio Sereni, and the area where we stand now was briefly known as the Sereni Estate. The Sereni cottage school could once be found on 4th St NE between 7th and 8th Avenues NE. Attachment "N" relates more of the Sereni story.

Our tour concludes with one final stop, below.

Continuing east, we'll come to face a church where 7th Ave meets 6th St NE, on the east side of the street. It's known as the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church (ABVM). It was recently vandalized, as were a number of other Catholic churches in Canada following the discovery of unmarked mass Indigenous graves at Industrial School sites. A July 2, 2021 letter to the Calgary Herald about this vandalism- from the Ukrainian Canadian Civil Liberties Association- appears on the right. The 1955 ABVM church appears below, and to lighten the mood a bit, we've also included an ad for an ABVM perogy supper, held in 2018. More on the Church's history can be found in attachment "O". This concludes our self-guided historic walk- we hope you've found it interesting!

Hooligans ignorant of damage caused

The cretins who vandalized a Ukrainian Catholic church in Calgary also damaged a historical marker recalling the victims of Canada's first national internment operations of 1914-1920. Thousands of Ukrainians and other Europeans were unjustly branded as "enemy aliens" and many were forced to do heavy labour for the profit of their jailers, including in the national parks at Banff and Jasper.

Some died in captivity and were buried in unmarked graves, including those transported to Spirit Lake in Quebec's Abitibi region.

To this day, Ottawa has ignored repeated pleas for restoring this internee cemetery, doing nothing to help hallow the remains of the men and children who were left there. The hooligans who spray-painted our plaque at the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Ukrainian Catholic Church obviously know little about Canadian history and demonstrated only cowardice as they perpetrated this hate crime.

*Lubomyr Luciuk,
Ukrainian Canadian Civil
Liberties Association, Calgary*



Pyrogy Supper & Bazaar

FRI. 16 NOV. 5 PM – 9 PM

Ukrainian Plate \$15
 Pyrogies, Cabbage Rolls, and Sausage Served Fresh
 Eat In or Take Out – Cash Only Please

Get Prepared for Christmas!

Frozen Pyrogies (Potato & Cheese)	\$8 per dozen
Frozen Cabbage Rolls (With meat)	\$15 per dozen
Frozen Cabbage Rolls (Without meat)	\$13 per dozen
Frozen Borscht (Ukrainian Beet Soup)	\$10 per litre

Bake Sale & Gift Shop
 Cookies, cakes, pies, preserves, Ukrainian sausage, Christmas presents, and much more!

Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
 Ukrainian Catholic Church
 704 - 6th Street NE • Calgary

