

**NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE
PROPERTY IN THE MATTER OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT**

R.S.O. 1990 (Ch.O.18, Sec. 29)

Take notice that the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Centre Wellington intends to designate the property municipally known as 300 St. Andrew Street West in the Township of Centre Wellington (Town of Fergus), as a property of cultural heritage value or interest under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, R.S.O. 1990, as amended, (Ch.O.18, Sec. 29).

Description of Historic Place: The subject property is located at 300 St. Andrew Street West, in the historic downtown core of the Town of Fergus, and is located on Plan 77, Lot 1 and Part Lot 2, in the Township of Centre Wellington. The property is located on the south side of St. Andrew Street West on the southwest corner of the Tower Street North intersection, extending to the Grand River. The property is approximately 1 acre and supports a large church, a moderately-sized parking lot and a concentration of trees, flora and other plants along the river to the south. There is a rubble stone wall that extends along the rear of the property and partly into the southern portion of the westerly property line adjacent to 350 St. Andrew Street West. The property is shown in the images below.



Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest: The cultural heritage value of 300 St. Andrew Street West lies in its historical/associative value, its design/physical value, and its contextual value.

Historical or Associative Value

The property is significant because it has direct connections to the congregation of the Melville United Church, Presbyterian Church and Presbyterianism in Fergus, as well as the merging of Wesley Methodist and Melville Presbyterian churches under the United Church of Canada. The church reflects the spiritual movements of 19th-century Scottish immigrants.

The history of Melville United Church, originally known as Melville Presbyterian Church, is deeply connected to the history of Fergus, Presbyterianism, the Disruption of 1843, the Church

of Scotland, the Free Church of Scotland, the United Church of Canada, the life of Reverend Doctor George Smellie, and other notable Fergus residents.

The church's history is deeply connected to the life and leadership of Reverend Doctor George Smellie, who led the congregation through the Disruption of 1843, when many broke away from the Church of Scotland to form the Free Church. Smellie's leadership not only resulted in the construction of the Old Melville Church in 1847, at the northwest corner of Union Street West and Tower Street South, but also in the establishment of several offshoot congregations in surrounding communities.

The congregation eventually outgrew their original church and construction on the existing church began in the 1890s and was completed by 1899. In 1925, Melville Presbyterian merged with Wesley Methodist to become Melville United Church under the newly formed United Church of Canada, reflecting a spirit of unity. The church is also associated with Harry J. Powell, a notable architect at the time of its construction, and many local tradespeople. Over the years, the church has continued to serve as a religious and community hub, undergoing various renovations while maintaining its historic character. Prominent local community members that formed part of the congregation included notable families, such as the Argos, Blacks, Allans, Ferriers, Russells, Beattys, Templins, Perrys, among others. Today, it remains a cornerstone of Fergus and a significant physical reminder of the community's past and present spiritual life.

Design or Physical Value

The church at 300 St. Andrew Street West is significant because it is a representative example of the Romanesque Revival and Gothic Revival architectural styles in a substantial ecclesiastical building, making it a historic landmark in Fergus. Constructed with rough-hewn Credit Valley sandstone and accents of locally sourced limestone, the church's design emphasizes strength and permanence. Its most prominent feature is the tall, large square tower, topped with crenellations and narrow lancet windows, which highlights the building's verticality, a hallmark of Gothic design. It currently stands as one of the tallest buildings in downtown Fergus. Large arched windows, detailed with ornate mullions, quatrefoils and stained glass fill the church with light, softening the stone exterior and adding an ethereal quality. The roof, a combination of flat and gabled sections with decorative finials, further enhances the vertical emphasis of the structure. Engaged buttresses provide both structural support and visual depth, reinforcing the Gothic aesthetic. The large 3-storey south addition from 1930 was constructed with sills, surrounds, buttress caps, and parapet caps that were made from precast concrete instead of stone which was the material used in the original 1899 structure. Despite practical expansions and modifications over time, the church has maintained its architectural integrity, reflecting its historical and spiritual significance within the community. Today, Melville United Church continues to serve as a focal point of worship and community life, preserving its architectural grandeur and historic legacy.

Contextual Value

The property at 300 St. Andrew Street West holds significant contextual value within Fergus and the broader Centre Wellington area due to its prominent location at the intersection of St. Andrew Street West and Tower Street North, along the Grand River, and its physical and functional linkage to the Town of Fergus and beyond. With its towering Romanesque Revival and Gothic Revival architecture, the church serves as both a religious and civic landmark, anchoring the historic fabric of downtown Fergus and contributing to the town's spiritual and community life.

Description of Heritage Attributes to be Protected

- Height, scale and massing of the original church structure and addition
- Credit Valley sandstone and limestone construction (limestone possibly from a Gow quarry)
- Limestone cornerstones, buttresses, banding, voussoirs and sills
- The pitch and overhangs of the roof, including the gables and finials
- The tower and belfry, large wooden louvred openings, and 2 remaining ornamental corner pinnacles topped with decorative tin crockets (northwest and southeast corners of tower)
- All facades, with the general fenestration configuration of door and window openings, all with stone surrounds and sills
- All windows that include stained glass designs with biblical references and commemorative dedication names
- Large 3-storey south addition that was added to the church in 1930, which includes entrance doors to access the addition and space that includes meeting rooms, a chapel, event space, archival and other storage areas
- Pre-cast concrete sills, surrounds, buttress caps, and parapet caps that are part of the 1930 large 3-storey south addition
- Original wood windows on church structure and 1930 addition, including original glass, stained glass, framing and decorative mullions (note: some wood framing has been repaired and/or replaced as needed)
- Wooden doors, including decorative transom (at front of church on St. Andrew Street West)
- Date stone on front St. Andrew Street West façade that states "A.D.1899"
- Stone wall fence along south and west perimeter of property

Excluded from the Heritage Attributes to be Protected

- Plexi-glass and tempered glass covering original windows
- Rubble stone chimney on the west façade near the centre between the original church and later 1930s addition
- Fire escape on west facing facade
- Vinyl siding clad addition built for barrier free access including elevator shaft facing the parking lot (west façade)
- Interior elements

For further information with respect to the proposed designation please contact Deanna Maiden, Senior Development Planner at (519) 846-9691, ext. 292.

Notice of objection to the proposed designation, together with a statement of the reasons for the objection and all relevant facts may be served to the Clerk of the Township of Centre Wellington on or before November 5th, 2025.



Dated at the Township of Centre Wellington this 6th day of October 2025.

Kerri O'Kane, Clerk
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