

“INTERNATIONAL HOTEL” STONE-CAIRN

DESIGNATION REPORT

DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY:

The International Hotel cairn is a square sandstone structure with a hip style sandstone cap. It is located by the sidewalk at the north east corner of 311 Queen Street East. A brass plaque on the east side of the cairn provides the history and the significance of the cairn, the International Hotel and the fire that destroyed it in 1916.

X:	704,425.836
Y:	5,154,505.311
Civic Address:	311 Queen Street East

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST:

The cairn, the original corner post of the stone wall that completely surrounded the grounds, is all that remains from one of the city's grandest hotels. Built in 1888, the International Hotel was a 150 foot square, four-storey, wooden structure that was situated at the southeast corner of Queen and Bruce Streets and extended right down to Bay Street. Two wide verandas encircled the hotel's first two floors. At one time, the largest of the Algoma Central & Hudson's Bay Railway Hotel System, it had all the modern improvements including electric lights, electric bells and rooms with baths. Described as a park on the banks of the river, there were tennis courts and bowling greens. Canoes, skiffs, sailboats and Habitant guides were available at the hotel's own wharf on the river. The 225 room hotel with its magnificent view of the river, modern facilities, and fine cuisine had a great reputation with the Great Lakes passenger ships. The hotel was destroyed by fire on the night of January 10, 1916 in spite of the efforts of various groups including a brigade from Sault, Michigan and volunteers from the 119th Battalion who were waiting to join WW I. Lack of water pressure and frozen hoses prevented their success.

The construction of the hotel was concurrent with the completion of the International Railway Bridge (1887) and the C.P.R. (1885). The railroad era was upon us. For a time the hotel was owned by Fancis H. Clergue and his Lake Superior Consolidated Company. Clergue was the American entrepreneur behind the turn of the century industrial boom in Sault Ste Marie. The International Hotel is symbolic of the commercial optimism of the period.

Contextually the cairn is one of many structures in the city built of local red sandstone. It is situated close to other designated sites in the downtown core. Located adjacent to the sidewalk, the cairn is a definite part of the Queen Street landscape.

DESCRIPTION OF HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES:

Key attributes of the Cairn that reflect its value to the history of Sault Ste Marie include:

- last remaining structure of one of the city's grandest hotels
- a symbol of the optimism of the Clergue Industrial Empire
- local red sandstone construction