

352 Stephen Street - Pembina Hills Arts Centre



Designation Date: June 14, 1988
Designation Authority: The Town of Morden
Present Owner: The Town of Morden

The postal service was the responsibility of the federal government in Ottawa and the buildings erected to provide this service brought high quality architecture into the communities they served. What are usually identified as Dominion Post Offices were actually multi-purpose buildings that combined a number of federal functions, like customs and Inland Revenue. These various functions meant that the building was one of the busiest in town, and ultimately became a symbol for the community.

The Morden Dominion Post Office was designed by the Chief Architect's Office in Ottawa. The architect who supervised the work locally was W.D. Ford Blankenstein. The Brown Construction Company of Winnipeg erected the building between 1913 and 1915. While the Chief Architect's Office ensured that each post office building was unique, there was a familiar architectural vocabulary that was used. Like other post offices across the country, the Morden building is an excellent design, a sturdy block of brick with a mansard roof pierced with dormers. A tall corner tower, inset with a clock, was a familiar feature on many post offices, and the one created for Morden is a fine example.

A 1902 account places Hall Fruit and Confectionery at this location. In 1971, this building became home to the Morden Branch of the South Central Regional Library and the Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber offices became home to the Toy Lending Library in 1982. When the Library moved in 1997 to its location at 514 Stephen Street, "the Old Post Office" became home to the Pembina Hills Arts Centre, which features a Gallery, Giftshop and classroom space for a variety of year-round arts related activities.