



Built Heritage Award

153 Manitoba Street, Wayne Kitchen

“It was a pleasure to watch the transformation of this ‘tired’ late nineteenth century Victorian frogged brick home at 153 Manitoba Street, a charming cottage with a distinctive window over the front porch, into its present repurposed commercial property.

Little is known of its earliest owners, but W.E. Towns informs us that his maternal great grandparents, Fletcher and Martha Phillips lived there at the very end of the nineteenth century. It was longest owned by a dentist, Dr. Paddy Ryan and his family; and the Duncan family.

Wayne Kitchen bought the property a decade ago, initially intending it as a rental or residential resale. Work began several years ago, and various contractors were employed for different processes. Eventually he changed his mind, decided to use it as his own office building and engaged local heritage building restorer Aaron Sturgeon and his team. They gutted the interior transforming it into a functional and airy office space, keeping many original features and window placements. The original rubble stone dirt-floored cellar was hand dug deeper to allow for more head space. It was lined, insulated, and painted. A concrete floor was poured and then tiled. A dormered addition was added at the rear but, so subtly, that, at first glance, the house looks entirely as it once did.

Windows were replaced with replicas in black vinyl which work perfectly with the shade of brick. The unique upstairs front window was sent away to Niagara on the Lake to be restored and has been re-installed.

The significant changes were the removal of a small ante room at the front left and the glassed part of the porch facing the street to create an open front porch. The main staircase, narrow and cramped, was broadened, replaced and relocated to the south wall. The roof shingles were replaced. At the front, exterior cedar shakes were hand-cut and stained to replicate the originals.

Landscaping is very natural with shavings, earth and pinecones. A sidewalk of large flag stones leads in from the town sidewalk.

It serves as a model to anyone seeking to develop and preserve a unique older home for commercial purposes. It deserves a Built Heritage award.”

