

The Lord Residence – A Tribute

11748 University Avenue, Edmonton

Prepared by David Murray



Photo for the 2007 Capital Modern Exhibition by James Dow

George Lord designed this residence for his family in 1954. George was a prominent architect in Edmonton, after graduating from the University of Alberta in 1939 under the direction of Cecil Burgess. He joined the architectural firm Rule Wynn Rule in the late 1940s. This house is an excellent example of West Coast Regionalism Style that revered a close relationship with nature as reflected in the rustic, natural wide-board cedar siding, low horizontal roof profile with clerestory windows and large expanses of glass overlooking the sweeping front lawn and the distant North Saskatchewan River valley. The planning of the house, on this large urban lot is unusual with the living areas on the upper floor to take advantage of the views to the river valley and the bedrooms on the ground floor. Prior to the Groat Bridge opening (1955), University Avenue was not as busy as it is today. The residence was designed with a single-car front drive garage with an open-air deck above to supplement the upper floor living areas and take advantage of the views.

The residence was recognized in the 2007 Art Gallery of Alberta Capital Modern Exhibition and is listed on the Edmonton Inventory of Historic Resources.

George and Nancy Lord – Recollections

The historical significance of the house is not only associated with its modernist West Coast influences but also with its owners, George and Nancy Lord. George was born in Edmonton in 1917 and died on October 17, 1990 at the age of 73. Nancy (nee Corbett) was born in 1916 and died at the age of 102 on August 17, 2018.



George and Nancy on Jasper Avenue

Cathy Lord

George Willington Lord and Nancy Lees Corbett grew up on the same street in the Edmonton Garneau neighbourhood. Although they probably knew each other as children their marriage did not occur until June 1953.

George Lord was a graduate of Garneau high school and attended Mount Royal College in Calgary for one year. He then entered the architecture program at the University of Alberta and graduated in 1939, winning the First Award in the Class A section.¹ George was the son of Goldwin Smith Lord, principal of the Edmonton Normal School and professor in the U of A Faculty of Education until retirement in 1954.² George spent several wartime years in Montreal, Ottawa and Petawawa and then back to Montreal.³



George Lord in Ottawa, 1943

Cathy Lord

George's fellow U of A architecture classmates included Gordon Wynn in 1936 and Peter Rule in 1939. They soon formed the architecture firm Rule Wynn Rule (RWR) with Peter's brother John. There were deep and friendly connections between George and RWR. George's father was a member of Edmonton Lodge no. 7², Ancient Free and Accepted Masons and attained the 33rd degree. Gordon Wynn was also a Mason in the Edmonton Ivanhoe Lodge. George himself was the Worshipful Master of Ivanhoe Lodge No.142 in 1972.⁴ Another important family connection is that Nancy's sister Agnes married Gordon Wynn, George's business partner.

In the 1940s the RWR partners would occasionally use George's Montreal apartment as a base when on annual visits to Montreal seeking business. An invitation from John Rule to join the firm, coinciding with the oil discovery in Leduc, resulted in his return to Edmonton in 1947.³

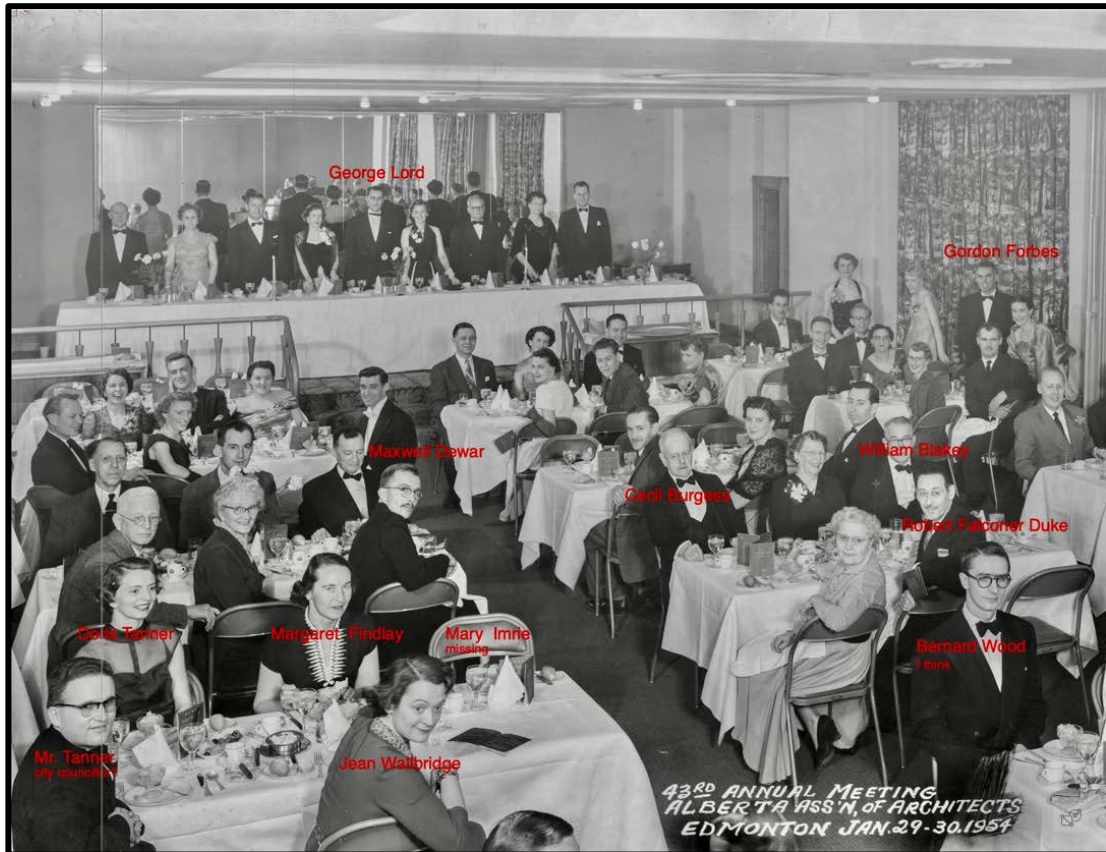
George handled the firm's Bank of Montreal portfolio of rural and civic projects. One notable project was the Bank of Montreal building (now demolished) at 101 Street and Jasper Avenue. Another Bank of Montreal project for which George was partner-in-charge is the former branch at 97 Street and Argyll Road. Although the bank has long since vacated the building it continues today as an important modern building dating from 1971.



1971 former Bank of Montreal at 97 Street and Argyll Road

George became a partner in the firm in the 1960s and the name was changed to Rule Wynn Forbes Lord. Norman Croll writes, "George handled the important (Edmonton) Journal work for many years. During his last ten years with the firm (1975-1985) he was the partner responsible for the extensive series of upgrading projects on the Edmonton and Calgary Jubilee Auditoria. Both these client groups offered an ideal outlet for George's interpersonal skills, and even his sometimes dreamy academic approach to a problem was totally appropriate when people with like interests were encountered among these user groups." ³

George was president of the Alberta Association of Architects in 1952-53 and the Standards Council of Canada in 1978-80. As well he was a Fellow of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (in 1967).⁵



43rd annual Meeting Alberta Association of Architects 1954

Source uncertain

George retired from the firm in 1985 but continued his community interests as President of the Friends of the University, a fund-raising organization from 1988 to 1989.⁵

George Lord designed city landmarks

Friendships and buildings called monuments to prominent architect

CORINNA SCHULER
Journal Staff Writer

Edmonton

The Kinsmen Fieldhouse, the Kaasa Theatre, M.E. LaZerte High School and a loving circle of friends and family are George W. Lord's monuments.

"He will be remembered for the permanent work he left behind and the friendships he made," his friend and co-worker Heinz Feldberg said Wednesday.

The prominent Edmonton architect died Tuesday at age 73.

Mr. Lord graduated from the University of Alberta's last architecture class in 1939. Soon after, he joined the firm of Wynn and Rule. It was the beginning of a 35-year-career with the firm, which became known as Forbes, Lord, Feldberg, and Schmidt.

His work is reflected in Edmonton's landscape. Among many buildings, Mr. Lord designed the old Bank of Montreal building on Jasper Avenue and 101st Street, the Confederation building two blocks west, and the new Journal



George Lord

production plant in southeast Edmonton.

Thousands of athletes swim, jog, and play ball in his best-known creation, the Kinsmen Fieldhouse.

"He was really proud of that one," said his stepson Peter Sharpe.

Mr. Lord was a leader in the world of architecture, taking the presidency of organizations such as the Alberta Architects Association (1952-1953), the Standards Council of Canada (1978-1980) and the Construction Specification Writers of Canada. As well, he was also a fellow of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada.

"He was involved in much more than his work... He was more of an artist than an engineer and that carried through in his personal life," Sharpe said.

Mr. Lord loved the theatre, opera, and symphony. He was president of the Friends of the University, a fund-raising organization, from 1988 to 1989. He was a member of the Kinsman Club's Ivanhoe Lodge and K-40 Club.

In the last decade, Mr. Lord devoted much personal time to Fort Edmonton Park, first as a city-appointed member of the management committee and then as a di-

rector on the board of the park's historical foundation.

"He was chairman of the planning and construction committee until last year, he did a lot of good work," Charles Cripps, his friend and president of the foundation, said.

"He was a gentle, gentle man. People like him are few and far between."

Travel was his favorite hobby and he vacationed in the exotic lands of Nepal, India, and China.

"He probably saw more than all others who travelled with him because of his enthusiasm and curiosity," said Feldberg.

Mr. Lord retired six years ago.

He leaves his wife Nancy; daughters Susan and Cathy Lord of Edmonton; stepson Peter Sharpe and his wife Nancy of Vancouver and stepdaughter Marnie Swanson and husband Chuck of Victoria; and his grandchildren Paul and Andrea Sharpe and Jeff and Scott Swanson.

A memorial service will be held at 2 p.m. Saturday at Garneau United Church, 11148 84th Ave.

ments. Telephone: 563-3736.

LORD, George Willington

On October 17, 1990, Mr. George Willington Lord of Edmonton, died at the age of 73 years.

He is survived by his wife, Nancy; two daughters, Cathy and Susan Lord of Edmonton; one step-son, Peter and his wife Joyce Sharpe of Vancouver; one step-daughter, Marnie and her husband Chuck Swanson of Victoria; four grandchildren, Paul and Andrea Sharpe, Jeff and Scott Swanson. Mr. Lord was a member of Ivanhoe Lodge No. 142 A.F. & A.M. G.R.A. and the Edmonton Scottish Rite Bodies.

A Memorial Service will be held on Saturday at 2:00 p.m. at Garneau United Church, 11148 84 Avenue. Reverend Rob Hankinson will officiate and cremation will take place in the Foster and McGarvey Crematorium. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Fort Edmonton Historical Foundation at Box 8645, Station L, Edmonton, T6C 4J4. **Foster and McGarvey Limited, Funeral Directors and Licensed Crematorium. 428-6666.**

LORD, George Willington



The members of Ivanhoe Lodge No. 142 are called to attend a Memorial Service for our late Brother, Worshipful Brother, George Lord, to be held on Saturday,

October 20, 1990 at 2:00 p.m. at Garneau United Church, 11148 84 Avenue, Edmonton. No regalia. Neil Scheidow, W.M.

Edmonton Journal October 19, 1990

Nancy Lees Lord



Nancy at the opening of Lynn Malin Exhibition, December 1987

Ann Pope

Daughter Cathy Lord recalls, “Mom grew up in the Garneau neighbourhood on the same street that Dad grew up on. She was the eldest of five children. Her father, William Corbett, was one of the first lawyers practising in Alberta. His brother, Ned Corbett, was the director of the University of Alberta Extension Department and in that position founded CKUA in 1927 and the 1933 Banff School of Fine Arts. Corbett Hall at the U of A is named after Ned Corbett in 1963.” It was originally called the Alberta College of Art.

1933 *The University of Alberta's Department of Extension, under the helm of Ned Corbett, establishes the Banff School of Drama. 190 students enrol in the two-week course.* banffcentre.ca/history

George and Nancy were married on June 22, 1953.

Principals Of Saturday Wedding



MR. AND MRS. GEORGE W. LORD
—Photo by Kensit Studio.

Nancy Sharpe, George Lord Pledge Vows Of Marriage

An early summer wedding of wide interest was solemnized at Garneau United Church at mid-afternoon on Saturday when Mrs. Nancy Lees Sharpe became the bride of Mr. George Willington Lord.

Rev. Dr. D. C. Ramsey read the marriage lines for the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. M. Corbett and the son of Dr. and Mrs. G. S. Lord all of Edmonton.

Baskets of pink peonies and white daisies were arranged at the altar and guest pews were marked with clusters of pink and white daisies.

Given in marriage by her father, the bride wore an afternoon frock of petal pink silk shantung.

Her dress was fashioned with a bouffant skirt and portrait neckline. She wore a matching flower trimmed hat and white kid gloves. A single strand of pearls and matching ear-ring completed her ensemble and she carried a colonial bouquet of lily of the valley and Pink Delight roses.

The bride was attended by her sisters, Mrs. G. K. Wynn as

matron of honor and Miss Rhona Corbett, bridesmaid.

Similar frock of ice blue antique taffeta styled with a draped shawl collar and bouffant-skirts were worn by the attendants and they wore matching hats trimmed with Sweetheart rosebuds. Pink roses and cornflowers fashioned their colonial nosegays.

Mr. John C. Scott was best man and ushers were Mr. C. R. Cummins and Dr. E. Graesser.

Wedding music was played by Mrs. Joyce Lees Moore and Mrs. Elizabeth Cameron, cousin of the bride, sang "The Twenty-Third Psalm" and "Still As The Night."

For her daughter's wedding Mrs. Corbett wore a rose crepe afternoon dress with matching lace jacket. Her hat was a white straw model trimmed with flowers.

The groom's mother wore a two-piece powder blue dress complemented with a navy Milan straw hat. Her corsage was of cornflowers and stephanotis.

A white summer organdie frock was worn by the bride's small daughter, Margaret, and she wore a wreath of white daisies in her hair.

Following the service a reception for 100 guests was held at the Garneau home of the bride's parents.

Mixed bouquets of snapdragons and daisies decorated rooms throughout the house and the bride's table was laid with a white linen embroidered cloth and centred with a triple-tiered wedding cake. Lighted tapers and bouquets of Sweetheart roses and lily of the valley completed the table decorations.

Sharing honors at the tea urns were Mrs. John Michaels and Mrs. F. A. Keillor.

Mr. S. H. McCuaig proposed a toast to the bride.

For a honeymoon to the mountains and Spokane the bride donned a navy shantung dress with white stand-up collar. She wore a large white picture hat and her corsage was of deep red roses.

On their return Mr. and Mrs. Lord will be at home in Edmonton.

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Cathy Lord continues, “Mom worked at CKUA when she was young, cleaning the lantern slides used by the professors when they gave lectures on the road in rural areas. Mom was dedicated to CKUA all her life and particularly loved listening and dancing to Mulligan Stew on Saturday evenings.



Edmonton, October 1941.

U of A Archives

Nancy loved playing golf for decades at nearby Royal Mayfair Golf Club. She also downhill and cross-country skied. Sometimes she would cross-country across the road from our house along Saskatchewan Drive. She was a dedicated member of Garneau United Church... Mom died in 2018 at the age of 102. Dad died (too young) at the age of 73 in 1990. Mom lived in the house on her own for many years after Dad died. She really loved the house and took good care of it as Dad did too during his life.”⁶

Designer Furniture

George and Nancy were art and designer furniture collectors and among their furniture collection was an original chair designed by Alvar Aalto. George and Nancy had 4 children, the latest in 1958. They were serious collectors of Scandinavian Modern in the 1950s.

Photos by David Murray at the Lord Residence in 2007



The "Tank" Lounge Chair by Alvar Aalto model no., 400 1936



Danish Children's Highchair by Nanna Ditzel for Kold Savvaerk, 1950s

Nancy and George's furniture was featured in the 2007 Art Gallery of Alberta Capital Modern Exhibition.



1950s Scandinavian chair, designer undetermined



Living Room record player cabinet designed by George Lord



George and Nancy at their farm near Peers Alberta

Mike McKenow

References

1. Edmonton Journal, March 30, 1939
2. City of Edmonton Archives AR-MS-61 · Person · 1884 - 1977
3. Rule Wynn Rule - Schmidt Feldberg, Croll Henderson, 50 years in Architecture
Researched and written by Tony Cashman and Norman H. Croll,
November 1988
4. Recollections of Michael Mott, July 2025
5. Edmonton Journal, October 19, 1990
6. Recollections of Cathy Lord, July 2025