

Heritage Guelph Meeting  
March 13, 2023

## **Item 2.4: 49 Norfolk Street - Notice of Intention to Designate a Property under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act**

### **Summary**

This report recommends that 49 Norfolk Street meets six of the criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest and that Heritage Guelph provide advice that City Council state its intention to designate the property municipally known as 49 Norfolk Street under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

### **Recommendations**

That Heritage Guelph recommends that City Council give notice of its intention to designate 49 Norfolk Street pursuant to Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act in accordance with the statement of significance provided with Item 2.4 of the Heritage Guelph agenda dated March 13, 2023.

### **Location**

The Albion Hotel is located at 49 Norfolk Street, on the corner of Macdonell and Norfolk Street (Figure 1).

### **Background**

The legal description of 49 Norfolk Street is PLAN 8 PT LOT 113. The property is approximately 346 m<sup>2</sup> in size and currently owned by Albion's Legacy Inc.

The subject area was part of the original Galt Plan and St. George's Ward, within the North Ward of the Town of Guelph. The property is located at the northeast corner of Norfolk and Macdonell Streets, across from the Basilica of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. The property is enclosed on the northeast and northwest sides by the former Guelph Mercury building. The hotel faces Norfolk Street to the west and Macdonell Street to the south. The limestone three storey building encompasses the majority of the lot with a small, paved portion at the southeast corner where a two-storey metal patio provides a fire exit and exterior access to the upper levels.

The Albion Hotel has been in constant use until 2020 when it was left vacant. The property has been used as a hotel, restaurant, bar and event space.

The Albion Hotel is currently listed on the Municipal Register of Cultural Heritage Properties. Recently, Heritage Guelph has provided their support for the individual

designation of 49 Norfolk Street. At their meeting of [November 14, 2022](#), Heritage Guelph passed the following motion: That Heritage Guelph supports City staff's proposal to undertake the process to consider designation of the following properties identified on the previous Council-approved work plan and/or previous Heritage Guelph motions under Section 29, Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act: 49 Norfolk Street (Albion Hotel), 47-49 Alice Street (Valeriotte Shoe Shop), 65 Delhi Street (Isolation Hospital) and 131 Ontario Street (Tytler Public School).

### **Historical Background**

The subject property is part of the booming hotel industry in Guelph during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1843, less than twenty years after Guelph was founded, the Town already boasted nine taverns to support a population of 700 people. The first church services were held at tavern, as well as dances banquets, meeting of agricultural societies and other social organizations. After an influx of Irishmen in the mid 19850s destined to building the railway, the need for taverns and hotels only grew. In fact, by 1888 there were twenty-two (22) hotels within a one-mile radius of the Old Downtown and Macdonell Street was sometimes referred to as "Whisky Street" because of its many taverns and inns. Unfortunately, once the automobile became more and more popular, the number of hotels in Guelph decreased as the ability to easily travel made staying in hotels unnecessary.

Lot 113 was first purchased from the Canada Company on May 17, 1833, by William Gregg and went on to be owned by multiple individuals (Figure 2). The 1828 Map of the Town of Guelph and the 1855 Plan of the property shows that the lot remained vacant in the mid 1800s (Figure 3 and Figure 4) but by 1872, the three-storey stone structure, along with its adjacent horse stables, can be seen in a Bird's Eye View of the Downtown core (Figure 5). Cooper's map from 1877 also illustrates that the Albion Hotel was built and in use (Figure 6). By the late 1800s, the Albion Hotel remains, as seen in the associated Fire Insurance Plan, although the horse stables have been removed (Figure 7)

Multiple sources detail that the original structure on the property was built in the 1850s by the Stell family. John and Magdalene Stell owned Lot 113 for only a short period (1857-1858), but the family allegedly constructed the first timber framed structure, known as "Stell's Tavern". The construction of the current stone building was completed by Patrick and Rosanna Murphy after 1864 and thus the inn became the "Murphy House". By 1867, The Directory of the County of Wellington listed the establishment as the Albion Hotel, with Patrick Murphy as its proprietor. In 1871, Mrs. P. Murphy (Rosanna) became the proprietor of the hotel. In 1881, the Albion Hotel was sold to Rosanna Wait and John McAteer became proprietor (Figure 8). John McAteer went on to buy and manage the Western Hotel after retiring from leasing the Albion Hotel. Hugh Malone took ownership in 1889 and he managed the property until 1913 when Simon Fagel took over as proprietor (Figure 9). Fagel

maintained management until 1917 and enlisted multiple family members in running the business with Albert Fagel as the hostler and Carrie Fagel and Mary Fagel worked as waitresses. Multiple photos of the Albion Hotel from this time can be seen in Figures 10-15. In 1922, Mrs. Mary P. Thompson purchased the hotel from Hugh Malone and operated the premises for almost fifty years.

### **Architectural Description**

The hotel structure at 49 Norfolk Street is a three-storey building. The hotel was built in the Neo-Classical style and constructed of local limestone with 18-inch-thick timbers. It has an irregular hip transition to flat roof, and L-shaped floor plan (later addition) (Figure 16). The lot originally housed a two-storey frame inn that was demolished in the 1860s to accommodate the current three-storey stone structure. Horses' stables were located adjacent to the property, which formed the traditional whole of Lot 113 for the Albion Hotel.

The front entrance has an elaborate doorway with a transom window and is pegged by two other doorways, however both more modest in design (Figure 17 and Figure 18). The front entrance is oriented towards Norfolk Street, and with the L-shaped design adds an entrance facing Macdonell Street. Four two over two sash windows are mimicked symmetrically on all three exposed floors, on all elevations. Above the front entrance there are two former balcony door exits, smaller than the entrance below, but have in recent years been excluded from their original use. On the south façade on the second floor, there exists a small balcony. A stoned in portion of a former doorway on the south ground floor façade is visible to date.

The hotel has been changed from its original form which has included alterations to the windows, removal of a chimney and several balconies, canopies, a former entrance now stoned-in, extensive interior renovations and a rear addition. The hotel displays a round-headed centre opening on the second floor (formerly balcony access), a five bay above over seven bay (four bays above to Macdonell), balcony on the south façade and an extensive outdoor patio enclosing the L-shaped footprint (Figure 19). The hotel has always had a sign on the corner, as seen in Figures 12-15 and the current sign has been dated to the 1940s (Figures 20 and 21).

The L-shaped building footprint is closed off by a two-story patio that is servicing two former fire exits (possibly a wraparound gallery originally). Officially, ten exits exist for the hotel: five located on the ground floor, three exits on the second floor and two on the third. Currently, approximately forty windows exist on the façade, with the possibility of up to ten more prior the development of the adjacent structures. The quantity of windows is also iconic of the Neo-Classical design. Without the rear two-storey patio addition, the current footprint of the building is

consistent with the footprint as it was shown on the Fire Insurance Plan, 1897 (revised 1916).

### **Statement of Significance**

The subject property is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act as it meets six of the prescribed criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, according to Ontario Regulation 569/22 made under the Ontario Heritage Act. The heritage attributes of 49 Norfolk Street display design or physical, historical or associative and contextual value.

#### Design/Physical Value

The Albion Hotel building meets Criteria 1 of Ontario Regulation 569/22 being of design or physical value as a representative example of a local establishment built in the Neo-Classical style constructed with local limestone, a staple material of early Guelph construction.

#### Historical/Associative Value

The Albion Hotel building meets Criteria 4 and 5 of Ontario Regulation 569/22 being of historical or associative value in its contribution to the booming hotel industry in Guelph during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the overall development of Downtown Guelph.

#### Contextual Value

The Albion Hotel building meets Criteria 7, 8 and 9 of Ontario Regulation 569/22 being of contextual value as it is important in defining, maintaining and supporting the historical character of the Downtown Core of Guelph as well as the Norfolk and Macdonell streetscapes. As an early limestone building, the Albion Hotel is historically linked to the first wave of the hotel industry in Guelph. Additionally, the Albion Hotel is visibly linked to the Basilica of Our Lady Immaculate Conception and is an important business and landmark of the Downtown Core.

#### Heritage Attributes

The following elements of the property at 49 Norfolk Street should be considered as heritage attributes in a designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act:

- all exterior stone walls
- all hip and flat rooflines
- outward facing stone walls
- west and south balcony design
- cross shaped sign on the southwest corner of the building, "Albion Hotel"

## Staff Conclusion

Staff have completed a review of the subject property and determined that the Albion Hotel at 49 Norfolk Street meets six of the prescribed criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest, according to Ontario Regulation 569/22. Staff recommend that the property should be designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Figure 1 - Subject property identified in City of Guelph GIS.



Figure 2 - Flow chart detailing the multiple owners of Lot 113 between 1833-1861

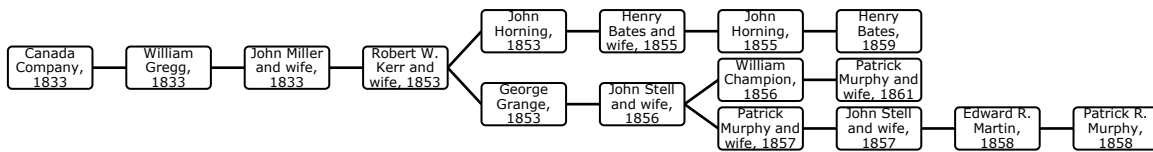


Figure 3 - Detail from John McDonald's Map the Town of Guelph, 1828 showing Lot 113. (Guelph Civic Museum)



Figure 4 - Plan 8 (registered c. 1855, John McDonald - Provincial Survey)

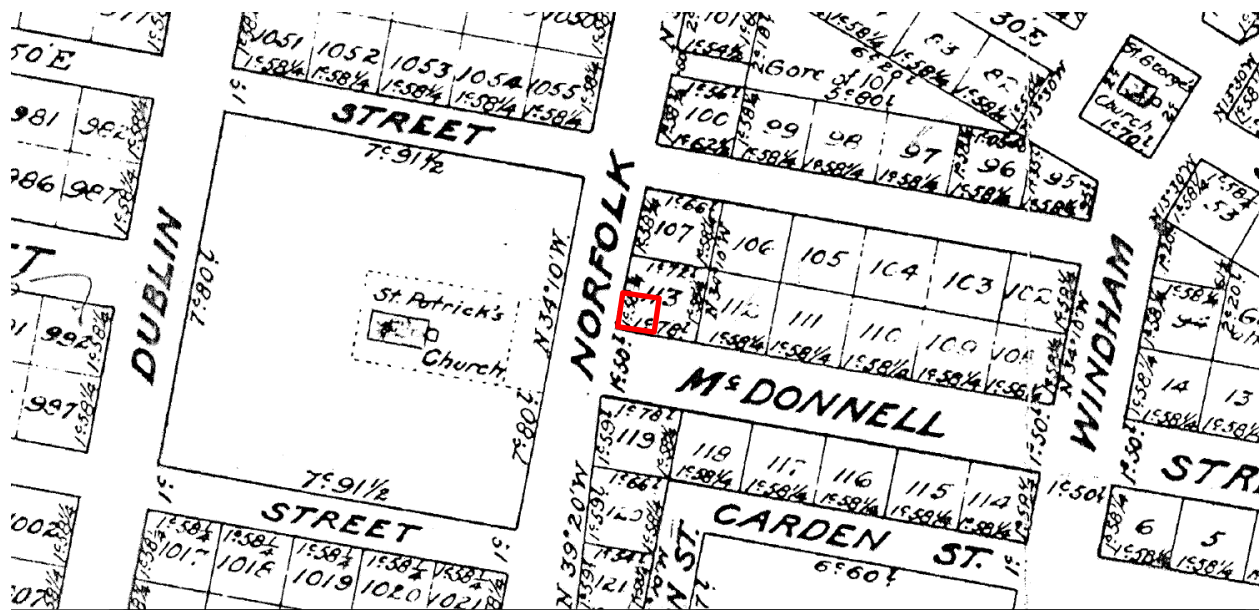


Figure 5 - Bird's Eye View of 1872 Downtown Guelph illustrating the Albion Hotel (Guelph Civic Museum)



Figure 6 - Detail of Thomas W. Cooper's 1877 map of the City of Guelph, the subject property indicated with a red polygon (Guelph Civic Museum)

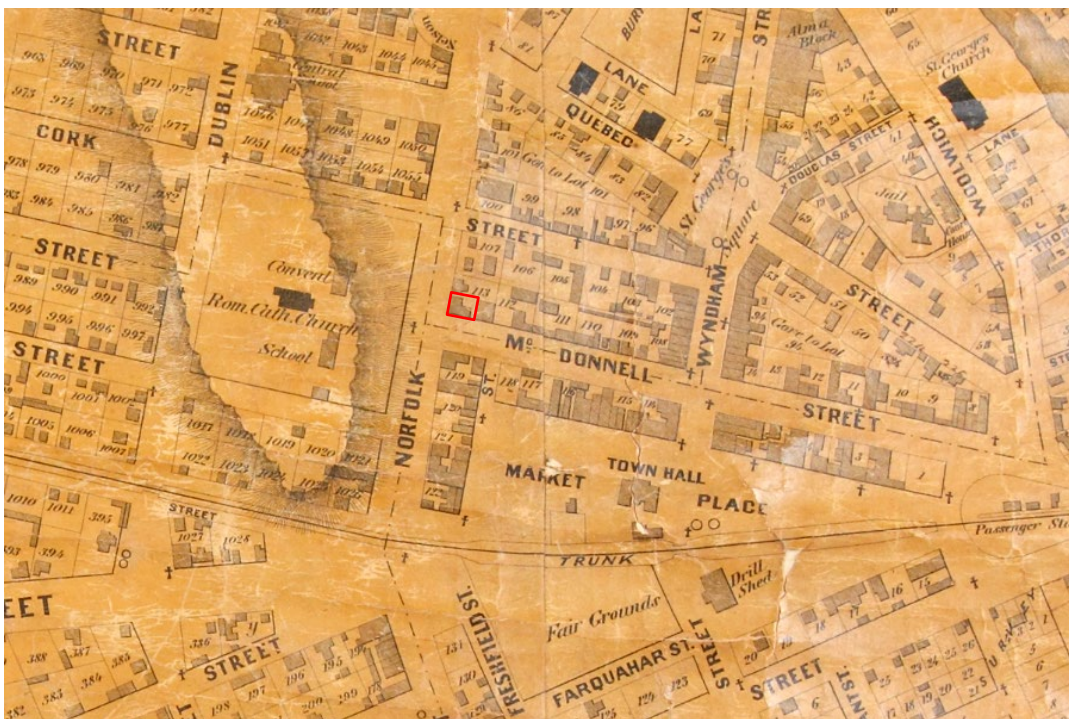




Figure 7 - Detail from Sheet 22 of the Fire Insurance Plan of Guelph, 1897 (revised 1916) (Guelph Civic Museum)

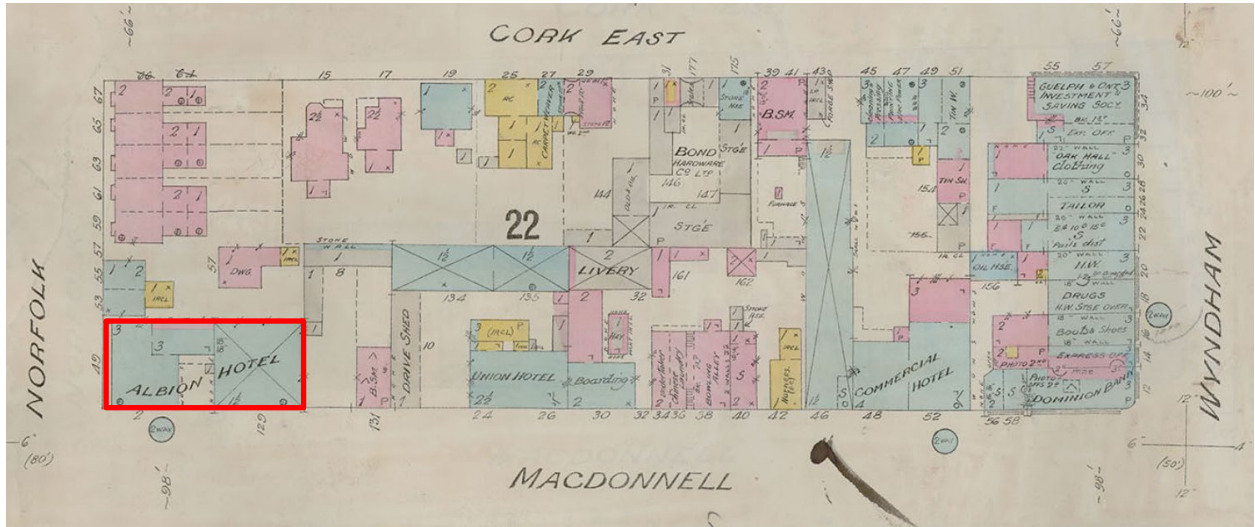


Figure 8 - Pictures of past proprietors of the Albion Hotel, Hugh Malone (left) and John McAtter (right) (DuCharme 1985)

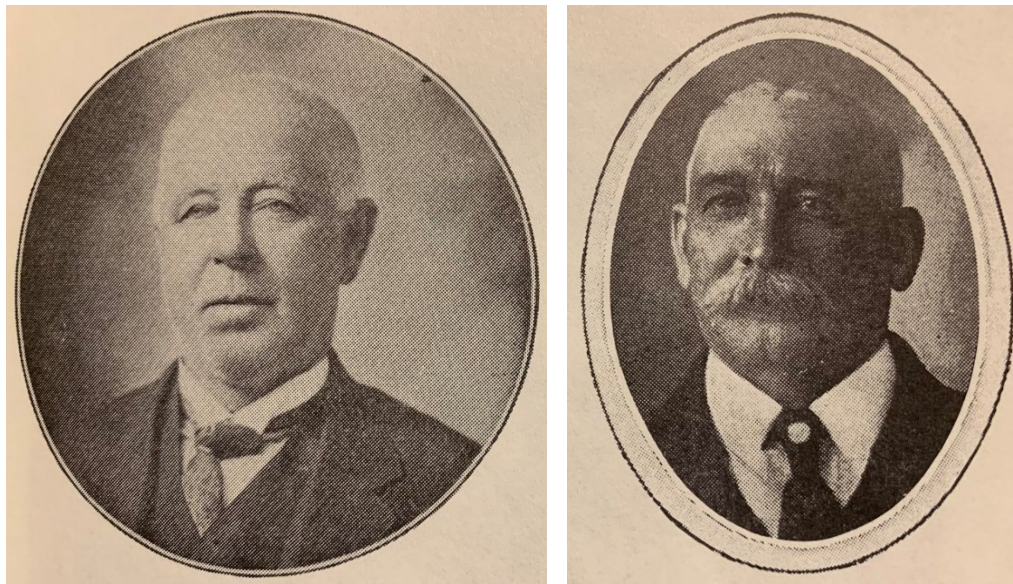


Figure 9 - Image of Simon Fagel, manager of the Albion Hotel, in front of the Albion Hotel with his horse "Albion Hal" (DuCharme 1985)



Figure 10 - Black and white slide of group of men standing in front of the Albion Hotel, c. 1895 (Guelph Civic Museum 2009.32.2163)



Figure 11 - Black and white photo of the interior of the bar at the Albion Hotel, c. 1900 (Guelph Civic Museum 2014.84.342)



Figure 12 - Black and white slide of the Albion Hotel with striped awnings over each of the windows and a sign on the corner, c. 1917 (Guelph Civic Museum 2009.32.2161)



Figure 13 – Photo of Albion Hotel from around 1889, while Hugh Malone was proprietor (DuCharme 1985)

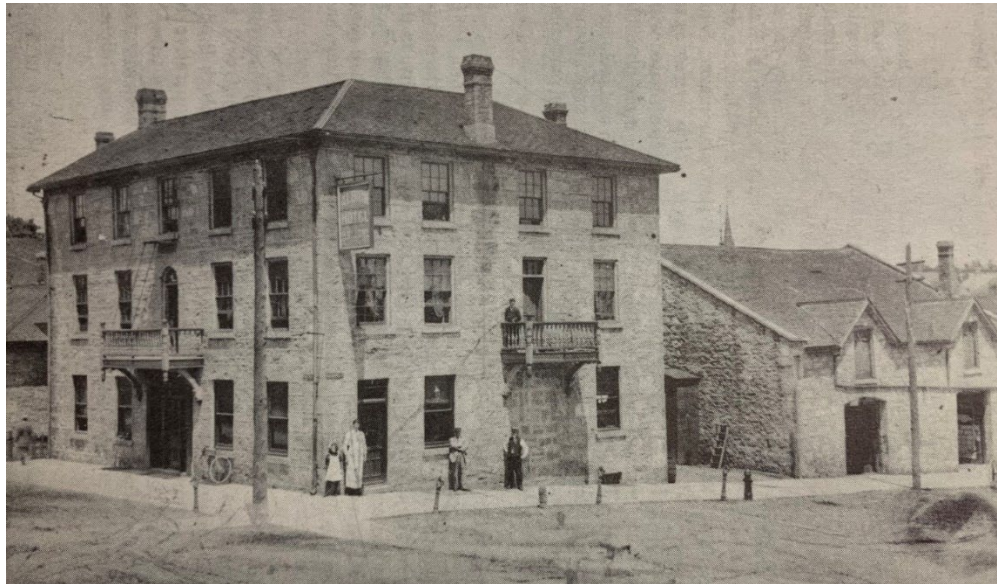


Figure 14 - View of Carden Street, facing northwest, showcasing the Albion Hotel with its associated horse stables, c. 1905 (Guelph Civic Museum 1980.114.37)

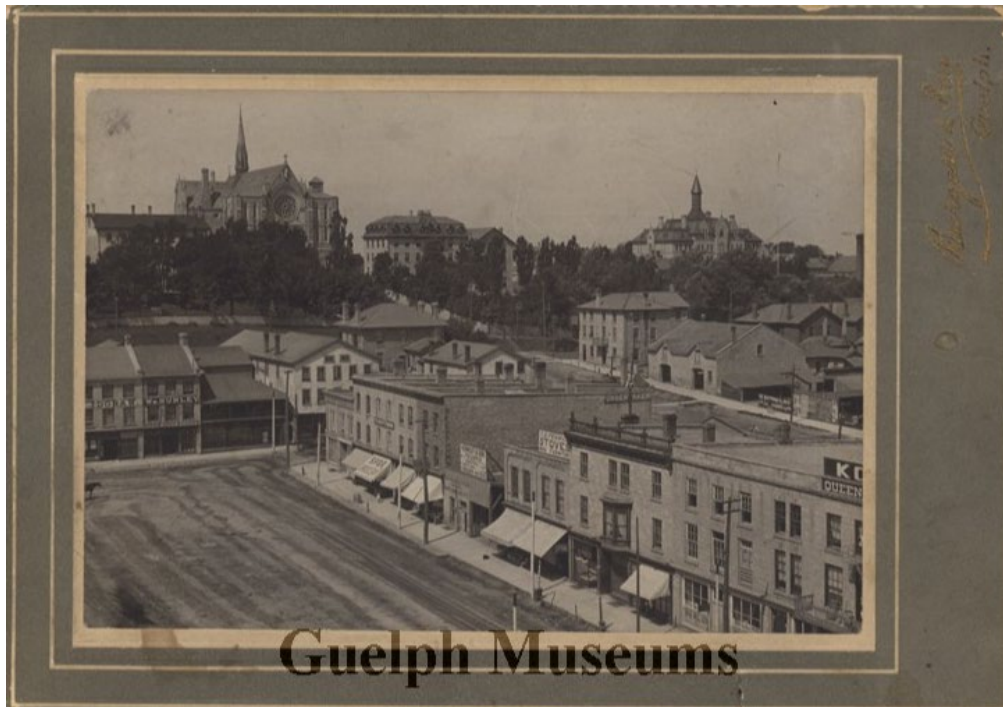


Figure 15 - Postcard of view of Macdonell Street showing the Basilica of Our Lady and the Albion Hotel, c. 1911 (Guelph Civic Museum 2020.45.1)

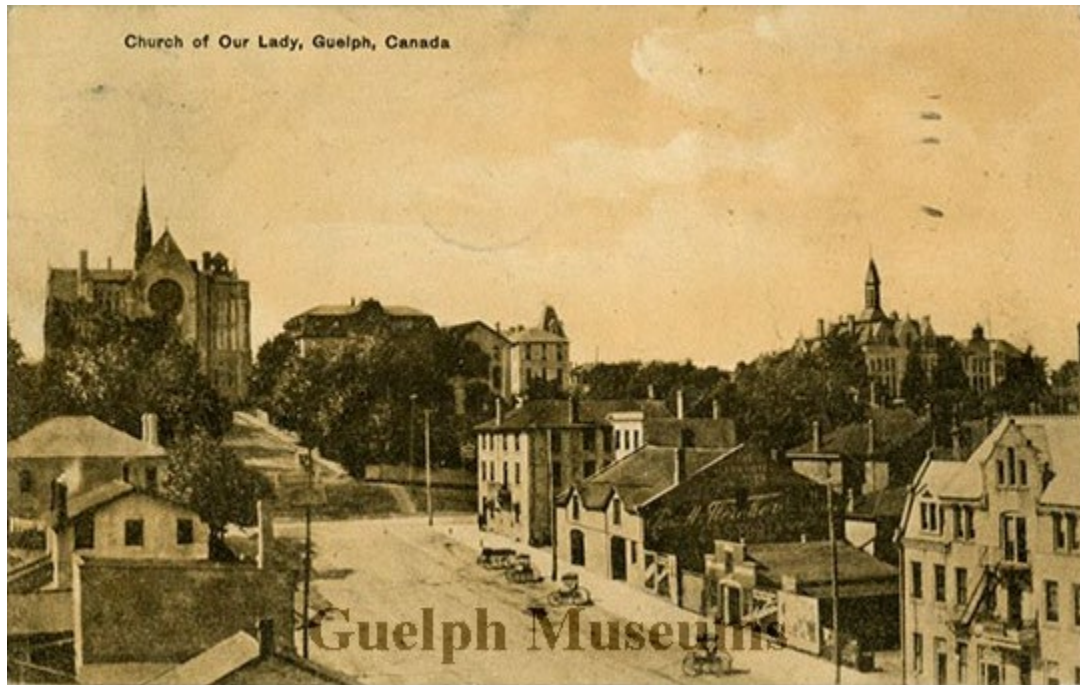


Figure 16 - 49 Norfolk Street (facing northwest) (Photo 2023 - V. Nagy)



Figure 17 - 49 Norfolk Street (facing northeast) (Photo 2023 - V. Nagy)



Figure 18 - 49 Norfolk St, entrance off Norfolk Street (facing northeast) (Photo 2023 - V. Nagy)



Figure 19 - Underneath covered patio attached to east wall of 49 Norfolk Street (facing northwest) (Photo 2023 – V. Nagy)



Figure 20 - Current sign adhered to southern edge of building (facing east) (Photo 2023 – V. Nagy)



Figure 21 – Black and white image of the Albion Hotel with the current iconic sign on the corner (Guelph Civic Museum 2009.32.3945)



Figure 22 – View from Macdonell entrance towards the Basilica of Our Lady Immaculate Conception (facing southwest) (Photo 2023 – V. Nagy)

