

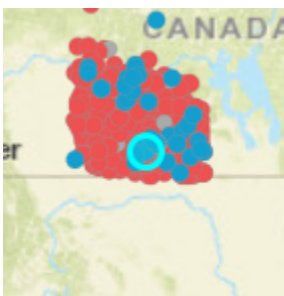




Heritage Property - Claybank Brick Plant

Street Address	Municipality	Designation Type	Designation Date
	Provincial	Provincial Heritage Property	March 26, 1998
			
			

Statement of Significance

The Claybank Brick Plant is a Provincial Heritage Property consisting of approximately 132 hectares in the Rural Municipality of Elmsthorpe No. 100. It is located on the northeast end of the Dirt Hills, 1.6 kilometres southeast of the Village of Claybank. The property features over 20 elements, including a brick plant, clay-pits, houses, rail spur and a rail siding.

The most intact twentieth-century brick making complex in Canada, Claybank Brick Plant's heritage value lies in its high degree of heritage integrity. Largely constructed between 1912 and the early 1930s, the Claybank Brick Plant retains every key element used in each stage of brick manufacture. The pits from which clay was extracted still exist, as do buildings such as clay storage sheds, the brick press room, hand mould shop and downdraft kilns with chimneys. This heritage property also houses a complete collection of nineteenth and early twentieth-century brick manufacturing equipment such as clay bins, brick presses, transfer tracks and grinders. The combination of these integral elements affords a complete view of the process of brick making in the early twentieth-century, from beginning to end.

Heritage value also resides in the arrangement of elements that reflect the design and layout of industrial complexes during the early twentieth-century. The arrangement of the brick plant into functional areas, including resource extraction, production, brick storage, administrative and residential areas, displays an assembly-line approach to brick making that was prevalent during the early twentieth-century. The range of employee dwellings, from the single mens' bunkhouse to detached residences for owners, married managers and married workers reflects the roles and relationships of members of this industrial community.

The heritage value of the Claybank Brick Plant also lies in its association with 70 years of brick production. Clay deposits in the area were mined as early as 1886, and commercial brick production was established prior to 1920. Because of its unique composition, local clay proved especially suited to the production of refractory clay products such as heat resistant fire brick and tiles that were manufactured at Claybank Brick Plant, and marketed nationally and internationally. They could withstand high temperatures and were used to line chimneys, furnaces and boilers and in other industrial applications. Brick was a popular building material in the early 20th century, and by 1916 Claybank Brick Plant was supplying face brick to rapidly expanding Saskatchewan communities. Claybank brick was used on prominent public, ecclesiastical, and institutional buildings across Saskatchewan such as the courthouses in Humboldt and Swift Current, the Gravelbourg Cathedral and the Weyburn Mental Hospital. The brick was also used on a series of luxurious residences and

hotels, such as the Balfour Apartments in Regina, the Bessborough in Saskatoon and the Chateau Frontenac in Quebec City. As a result of reorganization of the brick market and changes in production technology, Claybank Brick Plant closed in 1989.

Source:

Province of Saskatchewan, Notice of Intention to Designate as Provincial Heritage Property under the Heritage Property Act, March 26, 1998.

Province of Saskatchewan, Order to Designate as Provincial Heritage Property under the Heritage Property Act, September 30, 1998.

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The heritage value of the Claybank Brick Plant resides in the following character-defining elements that speak to the status of the plant as a whole, and elements associated with each of five functional areas of the property (resource, production, brick storage, administrative, and residential).

Key elements of Claybank Brick Plant as a whole include:

- its location at the foot of the Dirt Hills;
- the collection of early 20th century wood and brick structures related to brick making, located on their original sites;
- the overall form and layout of the plant that illustrates the functional relationships on the site as defined by resource, production, brick storage, administrative and residential functions.

Key elements of the resource area include:

- the elements linked to extraction and transport of the raw clay, such as the clay pits in the dirt hills and the narrow gauge rail track.

Key elements of the production area include:

- the interior transfer track system, which moved both clay and bricks;
- those elements linked to storage and preparation of the raw clay for brick formation, such as the wood-frame clay storage sheds, the crushing, grinding, sifting and mixing machines, systems for elevating and conveying prepared clay through the plant, and the storage bins that held different grades of prepared clay;
- those elements linked to pressing and moulding bricks, such as the brick press rooms, the hand mould shop, the dye room, existing mould and dye equipment, and the brick press machines;
- those elements linked to the drying and firing of bricks, including ten brick, beehive-style down-draft kilns, the waste heat-drying tunnel system that is constructed of bricks, and the square-shaped brick smoke stacks;
- those elements linked to the maintenance and construction of brick plant machinery and buildings, such as the machine shop that housed the main electrical generating equipment for the plant as well as machines such as a metal lathe and drill press;
- the simple and hastily-constructed brick support buildings, such as the carpenter shop and the brick laboratory building complex and associated equipment.

Key elements of the brick storage area include:

- those elements linked to the storage, finishing, and transport of brick, such as the wood-frame stock sheds that have side walls made from railway grain box car doors, the grinding room, and the railway spur-line to Claybank.

Key elements of the administrative area include:

- those elements linked to brick plant administration and product marketing, such as the brick office building that features the word OFFICE above the front door in bricks of contrasting colour, and includes brick fireplaces, which heated the building in the years before waste heat was piped in from the drying tunnels;
- those elements associated with the storage of brick plant vehicles, including the wood frame garage.

Key elements of the residential area include:

- those elements that reflect the roles and relationships of members of this industrial community, such as the location of the detached residences and the bunkhouse relative to the plant;
- those elements linked to the heritage integrity of on-site housing of members of the Claybank industrial community, including the three detached residences on the east side of the property that are distinguished by hip roofs, dormer windows and verandahs;
- the wood-frame Goodman Cottage;
- the wood-frame Oakley Property;
- the brick building known as the Brick House;
- also including the wood-frame Southwest Cottage on the west side of the plant that is less planned than the east residences with its original gable-roofed style and numerous additions;

-those elements that speak to the use of the two-storey brick bunkhouse as a multiple-dwelling residence during the time of brick plant operation, including its brick construction, remaining dormitory-style fixtures such as the basement lockers, high ceilings, and tall windows.