

**St. George's Memorial Anglican Church  
51 Centre Street South  
Oshawa**

**LOCATION**

Part lot 11, Concession 1

**SITE DESCRIPTION**

Construction Date: 1924  
Architect: Eden Smith & Sons Company, Toronto  
Architectural Style: Gothic Revival  
Original Use: Church  
Current Use: Church

**GENERAL DESCRIPTION**

Exterior Wall: Credit Valley Sandstone  
Roof Type: Gable  
Windows: Stained glass, lancet-arched

**UNIQUE FEATURES**

Exterior: Sandstone with white stone detailing  
Flat-roofed bell tower with paired, arched openings  
Stone buttresses  
Windows: Lancet-arched, stained glass windows with tracery  
Doors: Lancet-arched, wood panelled, paired doors

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**HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The patent for all 200 acres of lot 11, concession 1, was granted to King's College on January 3, 1829. Joseph Gorham purchased the property from King's College in 1837 and sold 122 acres of the parcel to John McGrigor (also McGregor) the following month. Mr. McGrigor subdivided the acreage and sold off parcels throughout the 1840's. A plan for part of lot 11 was registered under Eunice McGregor's name on April 2, 1855. The Church is located on lot 2, block D, of E. McGregor's plan.

St. George's parish was founded in 1843. The first church, a frame building located at the northeast corner of King Street and Park Road, was built c.1848. It was opened as an outstation of St. John's Church, Port Whitby, and St. Paul's in Columbus. Ten years later a second church was built at the northeast corner of John and Centre Streets. This second church building featured a tall steeple and was described as "commodious" in church histories. (The site of this building is now marked by a granite stone in Memorial Park which was unveiled by the Archbishop of Toronto on St. George's Day, April 23, 1939.)

In November 1861 John Crawford, Hon. William Allan, and their wives, conveyed a half-acre to the church society to construct a parsonage. A frame building was constructed, which was later replaced by a brick building in 1876. This is the site of the present Church.

The Rev. C.R. de Pencier was inducted as rector on February 1, 1910. It was a period of tremendous growth for the congregation. Plans were made to construct a new church on the land occupied by the Rectory. The Pedlar People Ltd. agreed to buy the church property with a down payment of \$3,000. The rest of the money would be paid on possession - an anticipated period of three to five years. Three sets of plans for a new church building, with cost estimates, were presented to the church vestry in 1914. Pledge cards, carrying an architectural drawing of the proposed church, and space for five years worth of pledges, were circulated. The War delayed the building's construction, however. It was not until 1919 that sod was turned by His Excellency the Ninth Duke of Devonshire, Governor-General of Canada (1916 - 1921). The cornerstone was laid on October 7, 1922 by Major General J. H. McBrien of Ottawa, chief of the Canadian General staff and native of Port Perry. A parchment in memory of the soldiers who fought in the War was placed under the cornerstone.

The new church was opened in May 1924; the year Oshawa became a city. Trumpeters from the Oshawa Civic Band announced the opening. It had taken the congregation nearly twelve years to get their church built. Many fundraisers were held over the years. The Hat Committee of the Women's Guild raised over \$1,000 from the renovation, reconstruction, and sale of old hats to put towards the construction.

In 1952 the Most Reverend R. Renison, Archbishop of Moosenee, set the cornerstone for the construction of a new parish hall. Replacing the building of the 1880's, the Parish Hall was completed in 1953 and was dedicated by the Venerable F.J. Sawers, Archdeacon of York. The structure cost \$140,000, with a mortgage of \$40,000 when completed. The Women's Guild paid \$2,400. yearly from 1954 until the mortgage was burned in 1966. The new hall is constructed of Credit Valley sandstone and attaches to the church through the choir vestry. An auditorium downstairs houses a small stage; the upstairs houses meeting space. The gothic window located in the west end of the Parish Hall was salvaged from the old parish hall.

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**ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION**

St. George's Memorial Anglican Church was designed and built by Messrs. Eden Smith & Sons Company of Toronto. It is constructed of Credit Valley sandstone in the Old English gothic revival style. Window and door openings are constructed of white stone. The structure rests on a concrete foundation. A heavy, flat-roofed tower, stone faced over a concrete skeleton, sits at the southwest corner. A white stone cornice adorns the top. Paired, arched vent openings with tracery are located at the top of each of the four walls of the tower.

St. George's features a cross plan with a north-south transept. Lancet-arched, clerestory windows are positioned between stone buttresses. A chapel is located on the south wall at the east end of the structure. Wood-panelled, lancet-arched, entrance doors, positioned on the west and south elevations, provide access to the building. Stained-glass window openings depict religious figures and stories.

The interior of the building features high ceilings and massive oak beams. The columns and arches that run the length of the church are constructed of Indiana limestone. The stained glass windows, in memory of the rectors, wardens and families who built the church, depict the life of Our Lord and honour the saints. Frederick and Lily Cowan furnished the carved oak chancel and donated two seven-branch candle standards from Italy. The Sisters of St. John embroidered the altar frontals. The narthex screen and antique brass sanctuary lamp were later donations.

Edgar and Alice Houston in memory of Edward and Rebecca Carswell, original members of the congregation, donated the church tower and carillon of fifteen bells. The largest bell, the tenor, weighed 5200 pounds. (A tenor bell is hung for ringing. The others are fixed. Chiming hammers, operated by a hand-rotated barrel, strike the fixed bells.) The tower had to be reinforced to accommodate it. The bells were cast at the Whitechapel Bell Foundry, and shipped from London, England. The bells and tower were unveiled and dedicated by Right Reverend Edward J. Bidwell on Sunday, November 9, 1924. W.C. Smith was the carillonneur.

The south chapel was, until its renovation, an exact replica of the former St. George's church and even the furniture, i.e.: the pulpit, reading desks and seats, was reused. The renovations in 1958 in memory of Dr. Franklin J. Rundle included a new altar, carpet, pews and a stained glass window in memory of Canon Rose. The old altar and pews were relocated to the children's chapel. The new chapel was dedicated on Easter Sunday in 1958.

The organ from the old church was reconstructed, improved, and relocated to the new church. In 1929 a new, three manual Cassavant organ was donated. The former organ was given to Holy Trinity Church, the former St. George's Mission. In 1965 a new Cassavant organ with over 3,000 pipes and 5,000 miles of wire was purchased. The new organ resulted in the rearrangement of the interior of the transept and new pews were added. The old organ was sold in Peterborough for \$3,000.

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**CEMETERY**

St. George's Memorial Anglican Church Cemetery is located on Park Road North, lot 12, concession two. This parcel was first granted to John B. Warren on September 4, 1864. On November 21, 1864, the Right Reverend John Strachan, Lord Bishop of Toronto, received 1.75 acres of lot twelve East Whitby, from Mr. Warren and his wife to be held in trust in perpetuity for the congregation. Bishop Bethune consecrated the ground for burials. Forty burials were recorded prior to the deed being registered in 1864; the earliest burial in 1841.

The cemetery is located just west of "Warren's Creek" at the former town line dividing East Whitby and Oshawa. The parcel now encompasses 2.85 acres of land. It has 679.75-foot frontage and is 204.5 feet deep. Thomas Trigg was an early caretaker of the grounds. In appreciation of his faithful work, Mr. Trigg was granted a free lot upon his death. Granite, marble and stone obelisks, pulpits and scrolls or modest tablets, mark the graves. Many of the markers are embellished with hearts, ribbon, fruit, lilies, crosses, vines, flowers, angels, wreaths, doves, hands, animals, trees and other symbols of nature and religion.

In 1891, a new enclosure was built to replace the run-down fences that no longer prevented livestock from roaming. Tombstones were recorded 'for posterity' in 1895 by Messrs. Carswell and Cowan. Today, some headstones today are broken and there are signs of erosion. A locked, chain link fence now keeps out intruders.

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