



PHOTOGRAPHY • TOMASZ ADAMSKI

Time Travelling *on* Grand Avenue

McDougall Cottage, built in 1858, has become a museum of local Scottish heritage

Grand Avenue South in Cambridge is a kilometre-long, 175-year architectural timeline. Its buildings range from simple stone cottages of the early 1800s to the Dunfield Theatre of 2013. It's fitting the University of Waterloo School of Architecture is located just one street over.

Stone cottages are quintessential Cambridge architecture — and the city has its fair share — but few are as lovely as McDougall Cottage. Built around 1858, McDougall Cottage is named for the Scottish family who first

occupied it. Even though, at about 1,000 square feet, the tidy little cottage embodies the adage “small is beautiful,” there was a time when 20 people lived in it simultaneously.

On its Grand Avenue façade, neatly coursed granite blocks contrast with limestone-framed windows and limestone quoins. Additions in the early 1900s, including a handsome semicircular portico, were the work of another Scottish family, the Bairds, McDougall's second owners. But the Bairds added something that makes McDougall a treasure on the inside as

well: charming, hand-painted trompe l'oeil ceilings and scenic landscape friezes, all by the owner's brother, Jack Baird.

By the mid-1980s, McDougall was recognized as the rare and precious place it is, and heritage groups, citizens and municipal governments collaborated to carefully and authentically conserve and restore the cottage, inside and out. McDougall Cottage is now a museum of local Scottish heritage and culture, open five days a week.

Karl Kessler, Doors Open Waterloo Region

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