

TOBuilt Walking Tour: The Annex

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44 Walmer Road

Estonian-Canadian architect Uno Prii's expressive apartment building embodies the exuberance and optimism of 1960s Toronto that began a move away from its traditional, conservative past. The balcony metalwork originally featured spheres that perfectly complemented the wave-like form.



44 Huron Street

Prii's defining work (check out 100 Spadina Rd. and the Brazil Towers at 485 Huron St.) scattered throughout the Annex remain modern, whimsical, sculptural alternatives to the city's more boxy, sleek towers of the modernist era.

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541 Huron Street

Huron Street Public School has a complex narrative. The school moved up Huron Street to the current site in 1890, the original school had been south of Bloor Street. The original 1890 Georgian Revival style building was designed by Charles H. Bishop, and an addition was added by Bishop in 1914, this one in a Queen-Anne style with a Flemish gabled roof. In 1958, the introduction of a Modern wing (designed by Irving B. Boignon) forced the demolition of the original 1890 portion of the building. The 1914 Wing was also threatened but Annex parents begged that the wing with its “big, airy and beautiful rooms” be saved. Today, the school is an interesting combination of the “Modern” wing and the 1914 “Old” wing.



83 Bedford Road

This boxy flat-roof black and white house appears like a modern jewel amidst the generous Victorian-Edwardian houses that characterize the Annex. This chic yet unassuming residence was built in 1948. Its black louvered shutters confuse its strictly modernist form, making it all the more interesting. Despite the fact that the modern house is distinct from its surrounding, its uniqueness was acknowledged in its designated within the East Annex Heritage Conservation District.