Community grew in stages

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Special to The Journal

 Edmonton

Most newer suburban neighborhoods in Edmonton completed their develoment within 15 years.

But in Newton, in the city's northeast, development has been spread out over several decades.

It started back before World War I, when impatient developers subdivided southern Newton before it was part of the city.

"A booming Edmonton soon absorbed Newton through two annexations," says a neighborhood fact sheet from the City of Edmonton.

"The portion north of 123rd Avenue was annexed along with the town of North Edmonton in 1912 and southern Newton joined Edmonton a year later.

"Until Edmonton annexed the Town of Beverly and a large block of land to the northeast, 50th Street formed the boundary of both Newton and the city."

The neighborhood is named after Canon William Newton, who arrived in Edmonton in 1875 and established the first Anglican church in the city on land bought from Malcolm Groat for $5 at Jasper Avenue and 121 Street.

While southern Newton contains homes built before World War II, the northwest corner of the neighborhood saw development as recently as the early to mid-eighties. This happened as part of the realignment of Yellowhead Trail, which curved in the area and gave some additional residential land to Newton, says Scott Pragnell of the City of Edmonton Planning and Development.

Housing construction occurred mainly from 1980 to 1985.

"There may be the odd lot or two (available)," Pragnell says.

"But for the most part, it's all built up."

This newer development brought new residents and families to Newton. Linda Wall, vice-president of Newton Community League, moved into this area in 1985. Larger bungalows and two-storeys are found in this part of the neighborhood, which has been settled predominantly by young families, Wall says.

The establishment of a Portuguese Roman Catholic Church also drew Portuguese-speaking families, she said.

NEWTON

NEAT FEATURE

Community playground at 55 Street and 121 Avenue beside Newton Elementary School. Two years ago an army of 100-plus volunteers transformed this small playground into a larger and better equipped place that's become a well-used neighborhood spot year-round.

Ken Orr *The* Journal

Antonia Panchuk has lived in Newton for 48 years

The older section of Newton has a "fair number of newer homes" where old houses were torn down and new ones constructed on the same lot, says community league president Maureen Southwick.

As well there has been a lot of renovating, Southwick notes.

She moved into Newton 22 years ago, into a bungalow built in the '40s.

Calling it "a small community . . . with pleasant surroundings" she included the mature trees that form a canopy over the streets and the "strong sense of family" throughout the neighborhood as plus factors.

It's also close to the river valley for cycling and close to downtown, Clarke Stadium, Rundle Park and Eastglen Pool.

"It's not really far from anything, except the International Airport," she says.

Two elementary schools are located within the neighborhood and a junior high is nearby.

Antonia Panchuk has lived in Newton for 48 years. Her grandson lives in the first home she owned there.

"I just love it — the people are really nice," she says of her home neighborhood, adding she enjoys visiting back and forth with other longtime residents.

Newton at a glance

Population (1992 Census):	3,320	Residential
Median age:	35	Commercial
YTD price (for single) family home:	$87,050	Industrial
Average property taxes (1993 assessment):	$1,341	Institutional Transportati Utilities Recreation, open space Vacant, undevelope

LAND USE (based on Revised Area Structure Plan)

Source: Courtesy Edmonton Planning and Development and Edmonton Real