



An agency of the Government of Ontario



Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

This document was retrieved from the Ontario Heritage Act e-Register, which is accessible through the website of the Ontario Heritage Trust at **[www.heritagetrust.on.ca](http://www.heritagetrust.on.ca)**.

---

Ce document est tiré du registre électronique, tenu aux fins de la *Loi sur le patrimoine de l'Ontario*, accessible à partir du site Web de la Fiducie du patrimoine ontarien sur **[www.heritagetrust.on.ca](http://www.heritagetrust.on.ca)**.

BY-LAW NUMBER 47-2007  
OF THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF CHATHAM-KENT

A By-law to designate the property known as 29785 Zone Road 7, Geographic Township of Zone, as being of historical and architectural value or interest.

FINALLY PASSED the 5<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2007.

WHEREAS the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter 0.18 as amended, provides that the Council of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent may designate a property within the boundaries of the Municipality to be of cultural heritage value or interest;

AND WHEREAS Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent has appointed the Heritage Chatham-Kent Advisory Committee and the said committee has recommended that the Municipality designate the hereinafter described property pursuant to The Ontario Heritage Act;

AND WHEREAS given Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent has given Notice of Intention to Designate the hereinafter described property to be of cultural heritage value and interest pursuant to the Ontario Heritage Act;

AND WHEREAS no Notice of Objection to the proposed designation has been received by the Corporation of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent;

AND WHEREAS the reasons for designation are set out in Schedule "B" annexed hereto;

NOW THEREFORE the Municipality of Chatham-Kent enacts as follows:

1. That the property more particularly described in the attached Schedule "A" be designated to be of cultural heritage value and interest pursuant to The Ontario Heritage Act.
2. The Clerk be authorized to register the by-law against the property described in Schedule "A" hereto in the proper land registry office.
3. That the Clerk be directed to cause a copy of this by-law to be served on the owner of the aforesaid property and on the Ontario Heritage Foundation and cause notice of the passing of this by-law to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the municipality.

THIS By-law shall come into full force and effect upon the final passing thereof.

READ A FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD TIME this 5<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2007.

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor – Randy R. Hope

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk – Elinor Mifflin

SCHEDULE 'A'

North half Lot 7, Concession 8, Geographic Township of Zone, County of Kent,  
now in The Municipality of Chatham-Kent.

## SCHEDULE 'B'

### REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

The reasons for designation are:

#### **Description of Property**

The Barnes Powerhouse property is located at 29785 Concession 7 in Zone Township, Municipality of Chatham-Kent, and comprises the east half of lot number seven and that part of lot number eight south of the former Grand Truck Railway and contains in all fifty-five acres more or less. The property consists of a rectangular single story frame building of board and batten with a concrete block addition. The structure with a subtle sloped shed roof, built in 1896, is referred to as a powerhouse or rig. The structure encloses all the period equipment used to power the working field of oil pumps throughout this and adjacent properties.

#### **Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest**

##### **Historical/Associative (OHA Reg 9/06):**

The Barnes Powerhouse property is an exceptionally important, original, and well preserved example of a late 19<sup>th</sup> century oil field with its complex of reservoirs, wells and pumps operated by an elaborate series of jerker rods connected to a central enclosed power unit. The property has associations to the earliest discovery of oil in Canada when, in 1795, Lt. Governor John Graves Simcoe observed it seeping into the Thames River near this site (the native Canadians at Moraviantown had, in fact, known about it earlier than this). It has a strong historical association of international significance through the development, by Abraham Gesner, of an oil refining process resulting in the production of kerosene which dramatically changed the method of lighting in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. This led, through subsequent refining developments, to the oil based culture of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The initial demand for lamp oil and by-products caused a rush of entrepreneurs/speculators to areas known to have oil such as Petrolia, Oil Springs, and Bothwell. So great was this boom that Bothwell expanded overnight to become, for a brief period, the second largest populated centre in Ontario next to Toronto. This property has direct associations with renowned distiller and entrepreneur Hiram Walker. He developed a similar system on adjoining property beside this site of Francis Carmen and partner J.H. Fairbanks. The site is an important representation of the technology of the period and, with the exception of a change from steam to electric power, was used in its original form until 1989 and is still completely functional. The central powerhouse structure (rig) is the only remaining in situ example of the earliest style powerhouse known in Canada.

##### **Design/Physical (OHA Reg 9/06):**

The Barnes Powerhouse is unique, original, well preserved and reflects the simplistic, utilitarian, and even makeshift wooden framed construction built with no foundation as basic protection for the equipment inside. Because of the nature of construction, the survival rate of such buildings is very low making this a rare and significant example.

Principal design elements include:

- A long rectangular roofed single storey shed, constructed of wood framing and board and batten cladding covering the drive equipment. Connected to the structure is a room made of concrete block, built in 1914 to house the first electric motor.
- A series of wood and metal "jerking" lines running from the power source to several oil pumps.
- A wooden separator (in-ground) on the northeast portion of the property
- An original wooden pump connected to jerking lines on the west side of the property (near the concession road).

##### **Contextual:**

The relationship between the Barnes Powerhouse property and its broader setting, with its prominence at the centre of a large series of still-operating oil wells on this

and adjacent properties, has remained largely unchanged in the last one hundred years. The main powerhouse's location in relation to the jerker lines (some of which extend under the road through conduits to wells across the road), and extraneous equipment and discarded machinery, is an important part of its authentic feel. The complex's context is enhanced by its proximity to the gravel concession road and adjacent rail line, other working oil wells, and the low lying wooded terrain, all of which are visually unaltered from the original development period. The site, together with its surrounding terrain, functioning wells, smells, and sounds, gives a visitor the rare and unique sense of truly stepping back in time as opposed to visiting a restored or re-created historic site.

## **Description of Heritage Attributes/Character Defining Elements**

Key exterior elements of the Barnes Powerhouse property that contribute to its value as a well preserved example of an early industrial site:

- Original wood framed board and batten structure
- Concrete block structure addition to the frame building
- Remnants of concrete enclosure for original steam boiler and blacksmith shop
- Original door and window placement
- Original doors and window frames and sash
- Long rectangular shed roofed structure with low pitch roof
- Jerker lines, framing, and connectors
- In ground oil separator reservoir

Key interior elements of the Barnes Powerhouse property that contribute to its value as a well preserved example of a rural industrial site:

- Narrow oak tongue & groove cladding on walls and ceiling in engine room
- Concrete wall on west side of engine room, designed as protection from heat of the engine and blacksmith's shop
- Original earth/sand floors
- All interior mechanical components, many of which were cast by Stevenson Boiler Works in Petrolia. Individual components include:
  - four wooden (ash) wheels composed of the bull wheel, two reduction wheels and a clutching wheel
  - cast fly wheel
  - canvas belts
  - belt bridge (designed to protect worker as they passed through moving belts)
  - wooden frame with bent with Pullman arms
  - field wheel
  - electric motor
  - steam cylinder (including piston)
  - hand clutch
  - piston pump
  - jerker lines
  - miscellaneous hand tools, hanging cupboards, etc., most of which were made on site

Key elements of the Barnes Powerhouse property that support its contextual value include:

- Location of the property in relation to the road, railway line, oil fields, and adjacent wooded area