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# The Town of Niagara-On-The-Lake

1593 FOUR MILE CREEK ROAD  
P.O. Box 100  
VIRGIL, ONTARIO  
LOS 1T0



IN THE MATTER OF THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT, R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER 0.18

AND IN THE MATTER OF THE LANDS AND PREMISES KNOWN MUNICIPALLY AS **5 WALNUT STREET, LAURA SECORD MEMORIAL SCHOOL** (CP1, Lot 164 to 165), IN THE TOWN OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE IN THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO

## NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE

TO: THE ONTARIO HERITAGE TRUST, 10 ADELAIDE STREET EAST,  
TORONTO, ONTARIO, M5C 1J3

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake intends to designate the property, including the lands and building known municipally as **5 WALNUT STREET, LAURA SECORD MEMORIAL SCHOOL** as a property of cultural heritage value or interest under Part IV of The Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter 0.18.

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

The cultural heritage value of the Laura Secord Memorial School consists in its long standing importance to the community and the community groups which contributed to its construction; its importance as a significant green space in the centre of the community; its imposing Edwardian design by one of Niagara's leading architects; and the significant use of Queenston Limestone in its construction.

Without the contributions of the Queenston Women's Institute and John D. Larkin, a wealthy Buffalo businessman, construction of Laura Secord Memorial School may well have been delayed and the building may have been a less impressive and functional structure.

The Queenston Women's institute, formed in 1908, advocated building a community hall as a suitable memorial to Laura Secord. The group began fundraising in the hope that the building would be completed in 1912, the centennial of the War of 1812. The Institute had raised \$3,000.00 when the school board indicated that a new school was needed. In response the Women's Institute provided the money they had raised for the purposes of constructing the school. Mr. Larkin provided an additional \$3,000.00

for furniture and equipment stipulating that all of the children from his surrounding farms were to be educated at the new school.

The school was designed by A.B. Nicholson from the architectural firm of Nicholson & Macbeth. The firm designed the Craftsman style houses in the Yates Street Heritage Conservation District and other neighbourhoods in St. Catharines as well as Greystone Manor in Queenston and 117 Victoria Street in Old Town. The plans developed by the firm included a large auditorium with a stage and a kitchen for community as well as school use.

The community and the school board used the auditorium and kitchen facilities jointly and the Queenston Women's Institute provided hot lunches for the students until 1924 when the School Board requested that the Institute vacate the auditorium and returned the original \$3,000.00 contribution.

The school is a one storey red brick structure with a raised basement clad in rusticated broken range ashlar with prominent sill stones and raised mortar joints. The windows, which have been altered, have stone sills and the front steps are stone. Recent research indicates that the raised base of the building is constructed of Gasport and Goat Island limestones and dolomites (the Queenston stone). The building is located in close proximity to the Queenston Quarry. The Lowrey interests of St. Davids operated the quarry between 1905 and 1924 and the building may represent one of the few remaining local buildings attributed to their period of ownership of the quarries at Queenston.

The most striking feature of the building, apart from the rusticated stone base, is the central or main entrance which has a deep classical portico with 4 pairs of Tuscan columns on raised stone bases. The bases carry a stylistically classical pediment with dental moulding. The pediment contains Neo-classical swag and cartouche decoration containing the date "1914". The door surround consists of relatively plain sidelights and transom. The door is surmounted by a large semi-circular fanlight. The geometric tracery and details such as the small square lights at the bottom of the transom give the door case an Arts and Crafts feel.

### **Description of Heritage Attributes**

Key exterior attributes include:

- The exterior form and mass of the original 1914 school.
- The window openings.
- The raised Queenston Limestone base of the building.
- The entrance portico, stone stairs, columns and cartouche.
- The doorcase, transom and fanlight.

Any person may, not later than the 12<sup>th</sup> day of March 2010, send by registered mail or deliver to the Clerk of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake notice of their objection to the proposed designation, together with a statement of the reasons for the objection and

all relevant facts. If such a Notice of Objection is received the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake shall refer the matter to the Conservation Review Board for a hearing.

Dated at the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake the 11<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2010.

  
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Holly Dowd, Clerk