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Ontario Heritage Trust

## Notice of Intention to Designate a Heritage Property

Take notice that the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Grey Highlands intends to designate a dwelling located at 400085 Grey Road 4, Ceylon as a property of cultural heritage value or interest under section 29 Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter O.18.

### Description of the property

The property at 400085 Grey Road 4, Ceylon, Grey Highlands fronts on Grey Road 4 at the eastern border of Ceylon, on the northwest corner of the junction with West Back Line. The 1887 school building is a 27'x42' rectangle with 4 buttresses evenly spaced between the three windows on the east and west sides.

### Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest

Ceylon Public School has design value and physical value because:

- It is a representative example of early one-room schoolhouses constructed of local brick and oriented with classroom windows on east & west side to provide natural light for the entire day.
- It is rare for a local brick schoolhouse to have buttresses of contrasting brick colour and/or contrast banding both above and below the windows. The random yellow bricks scattered on the exterior north wall are also unusual but are likely due to an economical use of what remained available.
- It is very unusual for any one room schoolhouse of the 1800s to have only one entry door instead of one each for girls and boys. That this single entry is on the east side of the original narthex which had a solid wall on the west side is likely because with the school located on a hilltop, the entry was subject to strong winds blowing rain and snow from many miles of open fields to the west of the village.

Ceylon Public School has historical value and associative value because:

- It has many associations to the community of Ceylon including Agnes McPhail who would have been very supportive of the school and the many generations of students who subsequently went on to be part of the community.
- It yields interesting details of life in small rural hamlets and the importance of these schoolhouses not just to students, but to the community at large:

- From 1870's to 1930, students had to draw and then carry water from the town pump for use at school, with that water being regularly tested for safe drinking
- Evenings the schoolhouse did double-duty as a community center used for concerts and other social events, especially during the wars when events were used to raise money for items that could be sent to local boys serving overseas
- A small single classroom attended for 8 years meant that students formed strong bonds not just with children their own age, but to their older and younger siblings. Because teachers normally stayed for many years, many students also became very attached to teachers. One of the last teachers prior to the school closing in 1968 was Mrs. Marion Duncan who remained a long-standing influence in the life of Sharon Sinclair, first poet laureate of Grey Highlands

Ceylon Public School has contextual value because:

- It is a landmark on a hill, visible when approaching from the east
- It is historically and physically linked to the location on "main street" that hundreds of students would have walked to over the 90+ years for grades K-8.

## Description of Heritage Attributes

Key exterior attributes that exemplify the typical and/or the unique design value of Ceylon Public School include:

- All original brickwork which includes foundation wall, decorative banding and contrast buttresses.
- Original windows as placed in the brick walls
- Wooden corbels, many original, the rest replaced in kind.

Key attributes that contribute to the contextual value:

- The size and massing of the structure and additions as originally located on the property.

## Objection to proposed designation

In accordance with Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, a Notice of Intention to Designate the property will be published in the Flesherton Advance on Wednesday, January 28, 2026. Any person may send by registered mail or deliver to the Clerk of the Municipality of Grey Highlands a notice of objection to this proposed designation, setting out the reason for the objection and all relevant facts. This must be done before 4 p.m. on Friday, February 17, 2026. If a notice of objection is received, the Clerk shall refer the matter to Council for consideration and decision in accordance with Section 29(6) of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.18.

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### The Municipality of Grey Highlands

Dated at Grey Highlands this 26<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2026 by Amanda Fines-VanAlstine,  
Municipal Clerk, Municipality of Grey Highlands

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**The Municipality of Grey Highlands**

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