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# City of Orillia

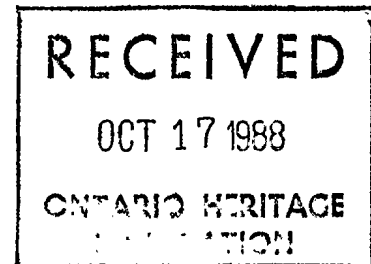
BOX 340—ORILLIA, ONTARIO  
L3V 6J1  
(705) 325-1311

OFFICE  
OF THE  
CLERK-ADMINISTRATOR

September 23, 1988

REGISTERED

The Ontario Heritage Foundation  
77 Bloor Street  
TORONTO, Ontario  
M7A 2R9



Dear Sirs:

Re: City of Orillia Designating By-law 1988-129

Please find enclosed the following:

1. Copy of By-law Number 1988-129, a By-law to designate the St. James Court as being of architectural and historical value or interest, together with a copy of the Reasons for Designation.

These documents are forwarded to you pursuant to the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1980, Chapter 337, Section 29(6).

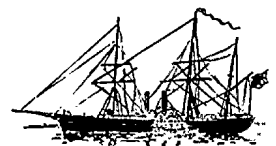
Yours truly,

for Ronald J. Ellett, A.M.C.T.  
Deputy Clerk

:jb  
Encl.



CITY ON THE LAKES - BIRTHPLACE OF CENTRAL ONTARIO



BY-LAW NUMBER 1988-129 OF THE CITY OF ORILLIA

A BY-LAW TO DESIGNATE ST. JAMES COURT AS BEING OF ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL VALUE OR INTEREST

WHEREAS the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1980, Chapter 337, authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact by-laws to designate real property, including all buildings and structures thereon, to be of architectural and historic value or interest;

AND WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the City of Orillia has caused to be served on the owners of the lands and premises known as St. James Court and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation, notice of intention to so designate the aforesaid real property and has caused such notice of intention to be published in the same newspaper having general circulation in the municipality once for each of three consecutive weeks;

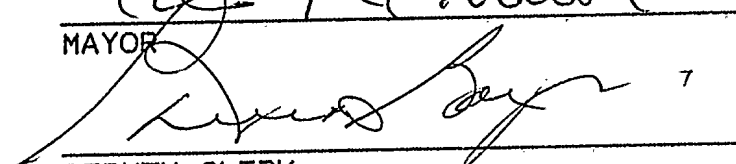
AND WHEREAS one notice of objection to the proposed designation has been served on the Clerk of the municipality, which objection was subsequently withdrawn.

NOW THEREFORE THE COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF ORILLIA HEREBY ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. THAT St. James Court, more particularly described in Schedule "A" attached hereto, be and it is hereby designated as being of architectural and historic value or interest.
2. THE Clerk is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be registered against the property described in Schedule "A" attached hereto in the Registry Office for the division of Simcoe.
3. THE Clerk is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be served upon 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 the same newspaper having general circulation in the municipality once for each of three consecutive weeks.

BY-LAW read a first, second and third time and finally passed this 25th day of July A.D. 1988.

  
MAYOR

  
DEPUTY CLERK

SCHEDULE "A" TO BY-LAW NUMBER 1988-129 OF THE CITY OF ORILLIA

ALL AND SINGULAR that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situate, lying and being in the City of Orillia, in the County of Simcoe, and being composed of part of Lot 6 and 7 on the north side of Mississaga Street according to Registered Plan No. 238, and more particularly described as Part 1 on a Plan of Survey deposited as Number 51R-12081.

IN THE MATTER OF The Ontario  
Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1980,  
Chapter 337

- and -

IN THE MATTER OF By-law Number  
1988-129, a by-law to designate  
certain property pursuant to  
the Act.

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

ST. JAMES COURT

HISTORY

The corner stone of the Y.M.C.A. building located at 18 Peter Street North, Orillia, Ontario was laid on July 30th, 1906. The general contractor was Mr. J. R. Eaton of Orillia. The Credit Valley Red Free Stone encases a box containing the following: copies of the Orillia Times of July 12th and 20th, 1906, the Orillia Packet, the Orillia Newsletter, the Toronto Globe, the Toronto Mail and Empire, Association Men, a brief historical sketch and current coins of the realm in 5, 10, 25 and 50 cent pieces.

This ceremony was the culmination of a local public subscription that raised \$23,500.00 to complete the initial phase. The first phase of the original building contained a lobby, reception room, reading room and meeting rooms. A 30' x 50' gymnasium was located at the rear on the main floor. The upper floor contained residential rooms. The second phase which was added in 1911-12 contained the only indoor pool north of Toronto, a larger gymnasium with menzantine running track, meeting rooms and additional residential rooms.

Originally the building had an attractive classical portico over the main entrance on Peter Street. The present owners, St. James Court Apartments Corporation have removed the inappropriate modern entrance and reconstructed the original so that the restored building has been returned to its original appearance at the turn of the century.

The Chairman of the Building Committee was William Sword Frost. When the second phase subscription fell short of the objective, Frost sought financial assistance from Lord Strathcona, the British High Commissioner and from the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, the Honourable Sir William Mortimer Clarke. The completed building was opened in 1912 free of debt.

The building was in continuous service to Orillia as a Y.M.C.A. for 75 years. Among the thousands of Orillians who were closely associated with the building were George Gray, Shot-put Champion of North America, Harry Gill, All-round Champion Athlete of America, Jake Gaudaur Sr., World Champion Singles Sculler, Walter Knox, the All-round Track and Field Champion of Great Britain. Leslie Frost, Premier of Ontario and his brother Cecil and John and Robert Curran, Double Skulls Champions of Canada and North America. The much loved Gordon "Skid" Watson was Orillia's "Mr. Y.M.C.A." serving the Y as General Secretary from 1927 until 1968.

An unfortunate fire in 1982 ended its usefulness as a Y.M.C.A. but an engineering examination of the resulting damage indicated that the building was fundamentally sound and could be restored to a further useful life.

The St. James Court Non-Profit Apartment Corporation began restoration in December, 1984 to provide 37 apartments and to preserve the exterior facade. In May, 1985, as the conversion neared completion, the building was destroyed by fire leaving only the exterior walls standing. Arson was suspected. Work re-commenced immediately to reconstruct the interior and restore the exterior. The building finally opened for occupancy in August, 1986. A strongbox was incorporated within the left side of the reconstructed front porch at this time. It contains current papers and magazines, a list of Board members and contributors. The pool originally a part of the 1911/12 addition is currently being restored for the use of the tenants and the Orillia community.

### ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

This project represents an interesting resolution to the issue of simultaneous preservation and new construction. Two consecutive fires resulted in the demolition and subsequent reconstruction in new materials of the upper level exterior shell and roof. It is important to note, however, that the resulting construction maintains the original building form in plan and elevation with considerable attention to details and thus to its original relationship to Peter Street and the surrounding buildings. In terms of utilizing the original construction it is important to note the preservation almost in its entirety of the foundation and the first level brickwork fittingly defined by the original limestone banding. Only at the rear has the foundation and brickwork been replaced or re-worked. In the new construction considerable attention to maintaining brick colour and patterning has been achieved for ultimate compatibility.

The notable features of the building are listed below.

### FOUNDATION

The foundation is a random coursed irregular sized limestone capped with a consistent and regular limestone watertable. Recent and poorly defined pointing covers a more precise black mortar. The rear structural system of the interior pool is expressed externally with a series of five buttresses in regular intervals expressed both in the foundation and brick work. The buttresses are completed in the new construction below the line of the top windows and capped in concrete.

### BRICKWORK

The exterior of the first level of the building is of orange/red brick set in uncoloured mortar. Rustication is achieved through a rhythm of courses of four protruding bricks alternated with one recessed brick band. The first floor is completed with a regular limestone banding.

### GLAZING

Windows within the first level brickwork range from the basic rectangular at the rear to rounded or arched windows at the sides and front. Windows are defined by both protruding sills and decorative lintels for the rectangular windows and segmented arches for the rounded windows. The sills are predominantly of limestone but in many cases have been replaced by concrete aggregate sills with smooth or rough finish. The segmented arches vary from cut limestone on the front large windows to vertical patterning of brick on the side and rear windows. In each case a central keystone is represented in a triangulated limestone block in the front windows and in three rows of protruding triangulated vertical brick elsewhere.