ONTARIO HERITAGE TRUST

An agency of the Government of Ontario

FIDUCIE DU PATRIMOINE ONTARIEN

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.**

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.**

TOWN OF
Vaughan

CIVIC CENTRE
2141 MAJOR MACKENZIE DRIVE, MAPLE, ONTARIO L0J 1E0 TELEPHONE (416) 832-2281

REGISTERED MAIL

Ontario Heritage Foundation
77 Bloor St. West
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2R9

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Please find a copy of By-law 11-85 designating Holy Trinity Church, Thornhill enclosed.

Sincerely,

Patricia K. Neal
Clerk/Researcher

RECEIVED
JAN 2 . 1985
ONTARIO HERITAGE FOUNDATION

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF VAUGHAN

BY-LAW NUMBER 11-85

A By-law to designate the property known municipally as 140 Brooke Street, Thornhill, in the Town of Vaughan, Regional Municipality of York, as being of architectural and historical value or interest.

WHEREAS Section 29 of The Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1980, authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact by-laws to designate real property, including all buildings and structures thereon, to be of architectural or historical value or interest; and,

WHEREAS the Council of The Corporation of the Town of Vaughan has caused to be served on the owners of the lands and premises known as Holy Trinity Church at 140 Brooke Street, Thornhill, being Part of Lot 30, Concession 1, in the Town of Vaughan, Regional Municipality of York, more particularly described in Schedule "A" hereto; 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 a newspaper having general circulation in the municipality once for each of three consecutive weeks; and,

WHEREAS no notice of objection to the proposed designation has been served on the Clerk of the Municipality;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of The Corporation of the Town of Vaughan ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. There is designated as being of historical and architectural value or interest the real property known as Holy Trinity Church situated at 140 Brooke Street, Thornhill, being Parts of Lot 30, Concession 1, in the Town of Vaughan, in the Regional Municipality of York, more particularly described in Schedule "A" attached hereto.

2. The reasons for the designation are set out in Schedule "B" attached hereto.

3. The Town Solicitor 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 proper land registry office.

4. The Town Clerk is hereby authorized 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 to cause notice of the passing of this By-law to be published in the same newspaper in which notice of intention to so designate was published once for each of three consecutive weeks.

READ a FIRST and SECOND time this 14th day of January, 1985.

MAYOR

TOWN CLERK

READ a THIRD time and finally passed, this 14th day of January, 1985.

MAYOR

TOWN CLERK

SCHEDULE "A" TO BY-LAW NUMBER 11-85

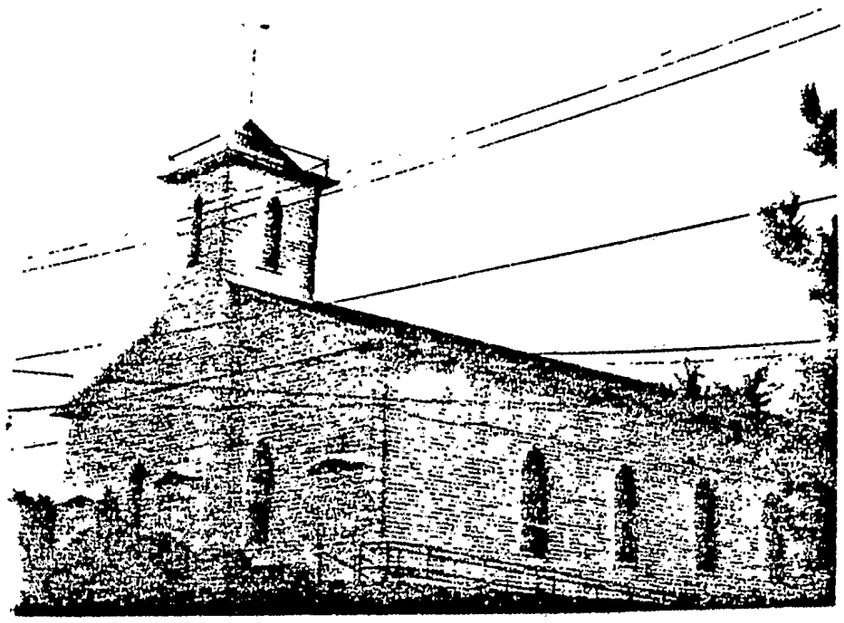
ALL AND SINGULAR that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situate, lying and being in the Town of Vaughan in the Regional Municipality of York and being composed of Lots 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26, on Plan 2273 and Lot 9 on Plan 4061, said Plans being deposited in the Registry Office for the Registry Division of York Region (No. 65).

SCHEDULE "B"
TO BY-LAW 11-85

Holy Trinity Church

Brooke Street

Thornhill



Prepared from the reports by:
Greg Radford, August, 1984 and
Phillip Townshend Carter n.d.

PROPERTY:	Holy Trinity Church
ADDRESS:	Brooke Street, Thornhill Part of Lot 30, Concession 1 Town of Vaughan Regional Municipality of York
CONSTRUCTION DATE:	1830
ADDITIONS:	1840 1950
ORIGINAL OWNER:	Holy Trinity, Anglican Church
PRESENT OWNER & USE:	Holy Trinity, Anglican Church Church

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION

Holy Trinity, the oldest church in use by the Anglican Diocese of Toronto, has gained a mark for itself in both the history of York and the Anglican Church. The building, changed with church doctrine and with the growth of its congregation, has always played an important role in the community. It has retained certain architectural elements which are reflective of their time, and is a prime example of Georgian church architecture.

The structure, built in 1830, has remained intact since its expansion in 1840. (The church was dismantled and reconstructed with a 20 foot addition when moved to its present site in 1950). Important features include the roof configuration, placement of the entrance, symmetry of its elements, and the orientation of the main axis. It is all the elements pertaining to this period of expansion, and earlier, that give the church its architectural significance along with its historical value.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

From "The Journal of Mary O'Brien", on the opening of Holy Trinity:

> February 28 - We had service in the morning in our new church. Dr. Strachan came out expressly to officiate and read for the First Lesson The Dedication of the Temple. He preached for an hour and a half a sermon which, if not perfect as a composition, was so good in matter and feeling that most of the party left the church with the most chariable feelings towards the preacher.

So began the first day of Holy Trinity. Now located at Jane and Brooke Streets, it is the oldest original church still in use in the Anglican Diocese of Toronto. Founded in 1830 by William Parsons and his brother-in-law, Benjamin Thorne, its construction (originally located on the west side of Yonge Street what is now the intersection of Royal Orchard and Yonge Street) was financially supported by wealthy relatives and friends in England as well as by prominent local families.

By the 1830s, Thornhill had become a hive of pioneer industry. Among the many businesses were four grist mills, three saw mills, four tanneries, a brickyard, two distilleries, seven taverns and several stores. It was during this bustle of activity that the church was constructed. John Edey, who was a carpenter and member of the congregation known to have built St. Lukes Roman Catholic Church (1847) at the corner of Church and Colbourne Streets, may have been one of the builders of Holy Trinity.

By 1839-1840 the congregation had doubled in size. Thus, the church was widened, creating the present width of forty eight feet. It is thought that the balcony was added at this time and used as a choir gallery.

The church was originally furnished with box pews. These pews had two primary attributes. First, they helped to prevent freezing drafts on the lower limbs in winter. Second, they could be rented to parishioners to raise funds for parish expenses. With the expansion in 1840, additional pews were added.

In 1860, the second rectory was constructed. The original had been built at the time of Reverend Mortimer but he found it too small and uncomfortable and consequently built his own home at 8000 Yonge Street. The second rectory was more popular and was used by the rectors until it was sold, in 1976. A third rectory was then purchased at 2 Marie Court.

During the 1920s, the need for additional space became an increasing concern. Since the church had no basement there were no accommodations for a Sunday School or a meeting hall. In 1928, a drive shed was torn down to make room for a brick parish hall. (It was the later sale of this hall that helped defray the cost of moving Holy Trinity to the larger lot on Brooke Street).

The widening of Yonge Street in 1949 reduced the available parking space. There was increased traffic hazards to parishioners crossing Yonge Street when parked on the east side of the road. Tragically, two members of the congregation were killed and a former church warden was injured while crossing the street.

In 1950, the church was carefully dismantled and re-erected above a good basement. The architect for the removal of the church was the late Mr. W. Sydney Kertland, a member of the congregation and a great-grandson of one of the founders, William Parsons. Except for the additional length of twenty feet, it remained architecturally unchanged.

The basement hall soon became too small for a growing Sunday School. In 1960, a red brick hall designed by G.F.T. Rounthwaite, an architect and a member of Holy Trinity, was erected beside the church.

The rectors of Holy Trinity have also left their marks in history. Rev. Isaac Fidler was the unofficial rector for a short time in 1932 before Rev. George Mortimer. Rev. Fidler was a teacher of oriental languages who had come from the States with his wife. He was once described as "a remarkable person of tall West-morland mould resembling the common pictures of Wordsworth".[1] When Fidler returned to England he wrote "Observation on Profession, Literature Manners and Emigration in the United States and Canada" which included many references to Thornhill.

Rev. George Mortimer was Rev. Fidler's successor. He was from London and received his Master of Arts at Cambridge University. Rev. Mortimer arrived in Thornhill with his three sons before sending for his wife and three daughters. He was a frail man deformed by a childhood illness but was well respected and loved in the community. After his death in 1844, some of his correspondence was published, titled "The Life and Letters of Rev. George Mortimer".

The fourth rector of the church was Rev. Robert Shanklin. Rev. Shanklin was described as a witty Irishman and a musical genius. He established the Farmer Club during the 1860s which held the Penny Weekly Readings. These meetings, a series of helpful discussion between farmers, performed a great service to the community.

[1] Dr. Henry Scadding, Page 32, Thornhill 1793-1963

Twelve other rectors succeeded Rev. Robert Shanklin in Holy Trinity's history. Rev. Robert Grisdale is the present rector.

> "The history of Holy Trinity Anglican Church is a history of Thornhill itself; the church has gone through the ups and downs of the village. In essence, Holy Trinity is a testimony to the generations of loyal and dedicated people who have served God well and in so doing have contributed immeasurably to their community".[2]

[2] Bentzen, P., Enterprise, Bolton, June 4, 1969, Pg. 15

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Now set at the site of Jane and Brooke Streets, the church was moved from the west side of what is now the intersection of Yonge Street and Royal Orchard. It faces east to Brooke Street down Jane, flanked to the south by the parish hall which was built in 1960. There is an approach up 11 steps to the front and a ramp on the north down to parking. To the back is the open field of the Macdonald House. To the north of the parking lot is residential housing. The plan is rectangular and reflects the layout of current church idealogy.

The style of the church is Classical in transition to Gothic. The Classical elements are seen in the fluted pillars and pilasters, the flat arches between the pillars, the pediments over the exterior doors and the quoins simulating stone on the exterior corners of the building. Gothicization appears in the pointed arch of the windows. However, the original windows in the front of the building retain a Classical element in the form of delicate tracery; this detail can also be seen in the modern window added in the sacristy on the north side in 1950. All of the other windows gradually lost their Classical tracery and clear glass when they were replaced with stained glass in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The church bell, which summons modern-day parishioners to church at the 9:15 and 11:00 morning services, is also rung at weddings and tolled at funerals. It was cast in bronze and, according to the inscription around the centre, was made by Thomas Mear of London in 1841. The bell, which was imported from England after the consecration, is 23½ inches in diameter and twenty-one inches in height; it is mounted in the belfry on a great wooden wheel.

The original pulpit in the church stood much higher than the present pulpit and was reached by several steps. It was located on the north side of the church, near the present-day memorial chapel. There was no chancel at that time. In 1914, the original altar was replaced with the present one as a memorial to Joseph Robinson and his family. In the same year, the present pulpit replaced the old high pulpit.

SOURCES

Bentzen, P., Enterprise, Bolton, June 4, 1969 - Pg. 15

O'Brien, Mary, The Journals of Mary O'Brien, Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1968

Byers, Mary, Rural Roots, University of Toronto Press, 1976

Fitzgerald, M., Doris, A Chronical of the Parish of Holy Trinity Church, Thornhill, ed. S.A.R. Wood

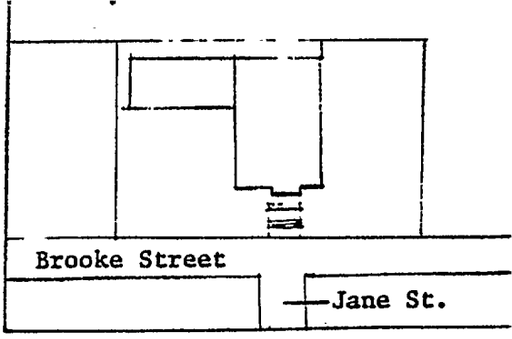
Fitzgerald, M. Doris, Thornhill 1793-1963: The History of an Ontario Village, Thornhill, Ontario, 1964

MacRae, M. and Adamson, A., The Ancestral Roof, Toronto Clarke Irwin and Co., 1963

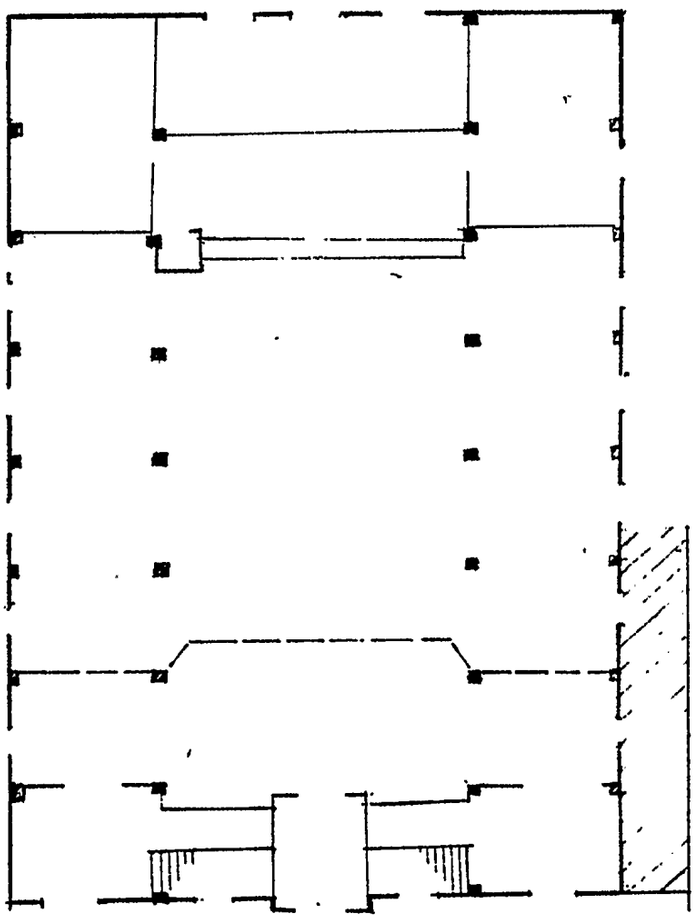
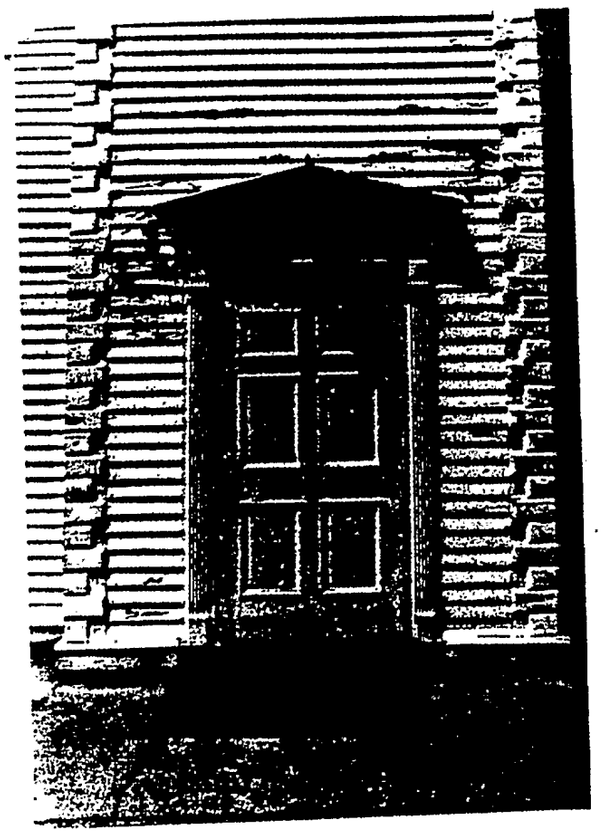
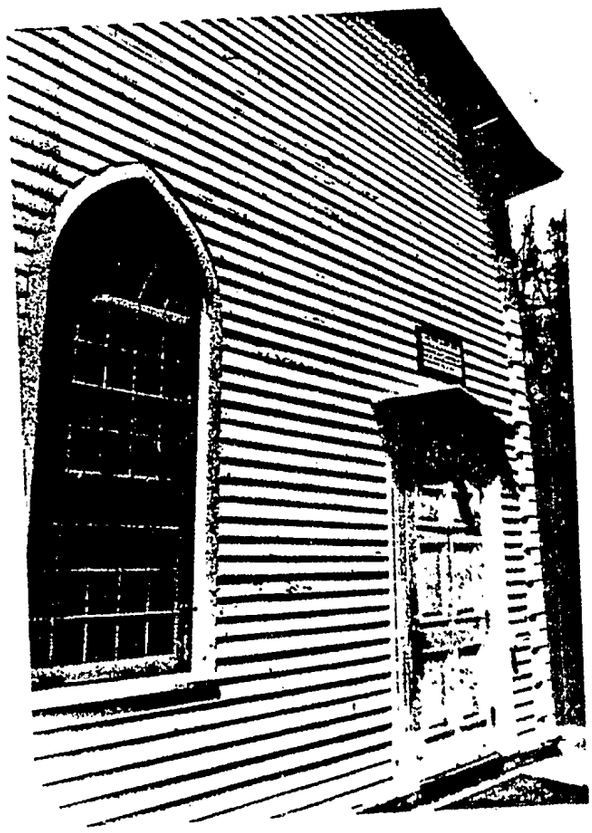
MacRae, M. and Adamson, A., Hallowed Walls, Church Architecture of Upper Canada, Toronto, Clarke Irwin and Co., 1975

Plander, Barbara, Vaughan Heritage Inventory, Town of Vaughan, 1975

Rempel, John, Building with Wood, Toronto, University of Toronto, 1967



Thornhill



HOLY TRINITY