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Angus, Ontario  
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*Simcoe*

## TOWNSHIP OF ESSA

December 8, 1999

Ontario Heritage Foundation  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 10 Adelaide St. E.  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5C 1J3

Dear Sir/Madam:

Pursuant to Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, please find attached a certified copy of By-law 99-77, a By-law to designate the property known municipally as "Bell Gristmill" at the Utopia Conservation Area on Part Lots 29 and 30, Concession 7 as being of architectural and historical value or interest.

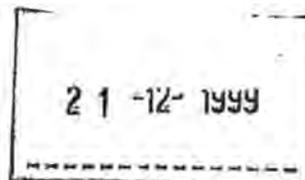
With thanks.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brenda Sigouin".

Brenda Sigouin  
Clerk-Administrator

BS:bs  
att.



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RC

**THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESSA**

**BY-LAW NO. 99-77**

A By-law to designate the property known municipally as the "Bell Grist Mill" at the Utopia Conservation Area on Part Lots 29 and 30, Concession 7 as being of architectural and historical value or interest.

WHEREAS Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.O.18 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 historic value or interest;

AND WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Essa has caused to be served on the owners of the lands and premises known municipally as the "Old Bell Mill" at the Utopia Conservation Area on Part Lots 29 and 30, Concession 7 and upon the 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;

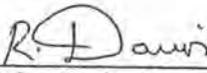
AND WHEREAS no notice of objection to the proposed designation has been served on the Clerk-Administrator of the municipality;

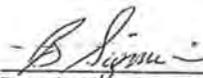
NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Essa enacts as follows:

1. That there is designated as being of architectural and historical value or interest as set out in Schedule "A" attached, the real property know municipally as the "Bell Grist Mill" at the Utopia Conservation Area on Part Lots 29 and 30, Concession 7.
2. That the Municipal Solicitor is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be registered against the said property in the proper Land Registry Office.
3. That the 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 having general circulation in the municipality.

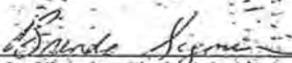
READ A FIRST AND SECOND TIME on this the 1<sup>st</sup> day of December, 1999.

READ A THIRD TIME AND FINALLY PASSED on this the 1<sup>st</sup> day of December, 1999.

  
Robert Davis - Mayor

  
Brenda Sigouin - Clerk-Administrator

I hereby certify under my hand and the corporate seal that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of By-law 99-77 which was duly passed in Council on December 1, 1999. Dated at the Township of Essa this 8<sup>th</sup> day of December, 1999.

  
Brenda Sigouin, Clerk-Administrator

## **SCHEDULE "A"**

### **REASONS FOR DESIGNATION**

#### **OLD BELL MILL**

##### **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The original mill which was established in 1864 on Bear Creek in Utopia was burned to the ground in May 1903 and reopened on January 1, 1904. It had originally been operated by James Spink and later by Richard Bell as a grist and flour mill at night and a saw mill during the day. The scheduling of work night and day is an indication of how important water-run mills were in that era.

The new mill was constructed upon a permanent foundation of stone which was approximately 30 feet down because of the quicksand at the site. The stones used for the foundation were horse drawn and the cement mixed by hand.

The timbers used in the construction were hewn and framed by Dave McFarland and the farmers in the surrounding area gave freely of their spare time to help in the mill's reconstruction.

The Bell Mill provided an important service in Essa by producing flour and feed for the farmers which was distributed to many communities in the area. It also processed grain from the prairie provinces.

The mill operated successfully until the early 1940's when it was scaled down to one water turbine from two. As a result of Hurricane Hazel, the dam was damaged and the water receded from the mill. Eventually a diesel engine was installed to power the mill. The mill was finally closed in 1965, a victim of changing times.

##### **ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE**

The Bell Mill is a unique vernacular water-run mill, forty feet square, built on Bear Creek, Utopia, at the turn of the century. Its local granite fieldstone foundation, two and a half feet thick, fifteen feet high, on a four and a half foot deep stone and concrete raft that withstood hurricane Hazel, is in excellent condition. The gambrel roofed, wood faced of heavy timber super structure, three stories high, is constructed of hand hewn framed timbers which were drawn from a nearby forest and skillfully cut and notched for a perfect barn-raising fit. The building stands fifty feet high from raceway level to roof ridge. Proportionate balanced twelve pane windows are at each floor on all elevations. The mill houses four floors of the original assembly of milling process machinery in excellent condition for easy restoration.

##### **ITEMS PROPOSED FOR DESIGNATION**

All parts of the building, both inside and out that are deemed to be original to the mill.

All components of the original assembly of milling process machinery.