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# THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF OAKVILLE

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## REGISTERED MAIL

August 14, 1992

ONTARIO HERITAGE FOUNDATION  
77 Bloor Street West  
2nd Floor  
Toronto, Ontario  
M7A 2R9

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE  
AUG 24 1992  
HERITAGE POLICY BRANCH  
*Nancy S*

Dear Sir/Madam:

RE: DESIGNATION OF 3128 SENECA DRIVE, OAKVILLE

Pursuant to Section 29(6)(a) of the Ontario Heritage Act, attached is a certified true copy of By-law 1992-167 being "A by-law to designate 3128 Seneca Drive as a property of historical and architectural value and interest".

Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Yours very truly,

*for* *A. Provost*  
Carol Provost  
Committee Co-ordinator  
TOWN OF OAKVILLE

CP/gc  
CORR-417

cc: Joanne Magee, Heritage Planner  
Planning Services Department

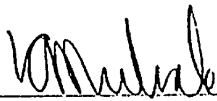
THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF OAKVILLE  
BY-LAW 1992-167

A by-law to designate 3128 Seneca Drive  
as a property of historical and  
architectural value and interest

THE COUNCIL ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

1. The property municipally known as 3128 Seneca Drive is hereby designated as a property of historical and architectural value and interest pursuant to the Ontario Heritage Act for reasons set out in Schedule "A" to this By-law.
2. The property designated by this By-law is the property described in Schedule "B" attached to this By-law.

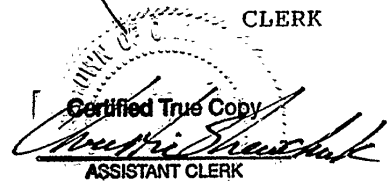
PASSED by the Council this 11th day of August, 1992.



MAYOR



CLERK



Certified True Copy  
Assistant Clerk

SCHEDULE "A" TO BY-LAW 1992-167

The house at 3128 Seneca Drive was built in 1919 by Dalt McDonald for Fred and Ida Belyea. Dalt McDonald was one of Bronte's most well-known shipbuilders. Dalt was born in Bronte in 1878 and apart from a brief period in the 1920's when he went to Florida to seek his fortune, he spent most of his life in the Village.

In 1896, at the age of eighteen, Dalt and his brother decided to build a boat and join the thriving Bronte fishing industry. After 2 or 3 years of "hauling the lines" he settled down to a dry land career as a carpenter. Over the next 35 years, Dalt built some 30 fishing boats at the Bronte Gore, where the cenotaph is now located. He is reputed to have been able to build a 35 foot boat in about 6 to 8 weeks for between \$300 and \$400, and he built both sailing boats and gas boats, often working 10 hours a day including Saturdays.

Dalt was involved in many building projects in the Bronte area during the early part of the century. Besides being a prolific boat builder, he was also involved in the building of some 22 houses in the area through the years, including 3128 Seneca Drive (originally Chisholm Street).

In the book The Story of Bronte Harbour, by Phillip Brimacombe, McDonald recalled working on the covering boards of the Old Toronto Island ferries "Primrose" and "Mayflower", sister ships of the "Trillium", which is still in operation today. At one time, the Toronto Island ferry boats would winter at Bronte and Oakville. He also built the forms for the concrete bridge, built in 1918 and 1919 to replace the old iron "Jubilee Bridge" across the Twelve; which was built in 1897. Dalt, his brother and Fred Stansbury also constructed the iron frame for the bridge, during the mild winter of 1918 - 1919, when it was

recorded that the three men regularly worked with their shirts off. The bridge was torn down in 1970. After an eventful life, Dalt McDonald died in 1975 at the age of 97.

The original owners of the house at 3128 Seneca Drive were Fred and Ida Belyea. Both Fred and Ida had been born and raised in the Bronte area and were married in Toronto in 1915.

The Belyea family, of which Fred Belyea was a member, were among the earliest settlers in the Bronte area. Fred's great, great grandfather, John Belyea, was a United Empire Loyalist of Dutch or Palantine German extraction from Philipsburgh, New York. John fought for the British Army during the War of Independence, and upon its defeat in 1783, the Belyea family travelled by boat to New Brunswick, and then pressed on to Upper Canada, where they settled a large tract of land on the east side of Twelve Mile Creek. Over succeeding generations, the Belyea Family continued to play an active role in the Bronte community.

In the late 1800's, the Belyea family became involved in the sailing and fishing trades out of Bronte Harbour. Fred's father, Emanuel, was a mariner for many years on the Great Lakes, while Fred and his brothers, Wilbert and John established a commercial fishing business. At the outset, the business was probably small in scale, working with sail boats and based in one of the numerous fisherman's shanties along the east side of Bronte Harbour, below the Old Steam Mill. By 1907, however, the catch at Bronte was in decline, so with the advent of gasoline engines in the fishing boats, Fred Belyea and other Bronte fishermen journeyed down to Main Duck Island off Prince Edward County during the summer. Soon a small seasonal community was established by Bronte families. Several frame houses were erected along a main street, known as "Broadway". This "Bronte of the East" on Main

Duck Island became the summer "home away from home" for Fred Belyea and a number of other Bronte families for over a decade.

After the First World War, the fish catch at both Bronte and Main Duck Island had declined significantly. As a result, around the year 1923, Fred and his brothers moved their entire fishing operation to Simcoe Island, near Kingston.

On this 15 acre island, the Belyea brothers established a fishing station which contained houses, cottages and a packing plant. Although from this point in time they resided primarily at Simcoe Island, Fred and Ida Belyea continued to own their home in Bronte at 3128 Seneca Drive.

For the next quarter of a century, until after the Second World War when the house was sold to the Patterson family, the house at 3128 Seneca Drive was occupied by the Belyea's when they returned to Bronte to visit friends and relatives, and by families who would rent the house as a summer home. Among the people who rented the house at 3128 Seneca Drive as a summer home were, Mr. A.P. Taylor, owner of the Many Flowers Soap Company, and Eileen Fell, daughter of Bronte Postmaster Ally Flummerfeldt and wife of the Manager of the Canadian Abrasive Corporation.

On Tuesday, March 10, 1936, Fred and Ida Belyea opened their home on Seneca Drive for a Golden Wedding celebration in honour of Ida Belyea's mother and father, William and Lucy Speers. The Speers were prominent citizens of Bronte, so the celebration was a major community event at the time. The large brick house was extravagantly decorated for the occasion, and over 70 relatives and 200 friends and members of the Bronte Community came out to join the celebration. The highlight of the day's festivities were two radio broadcasts over

the Hamilton station, CKOC, arranged by their son, Charles Speers, which honoured William and Lucy Speers with messages of congratulations and their favorite songs. This was the first time ever in Canada that an entire radio program had been chartered in honour of a private individual, and as a result of this Canadian Radio History being made, the event was a feature story in the newspapers of the day, including the Toronto Star.

William H. Speers was the owner of the property at 3128 Seneca Drive, prior to it being sold to his daughter and son-in-law (Fred and Ida Belyea). He had been born in Palermo in 1867, and after his father John Speers died one year later, W.H. Speers moved to Bronte, where his mother became the housekeeper of Charles Sovereign. After attending school, and marrying Miss Lucy Bumby of Appleby, in 1886, W.H. Speers was placed in charge of logging operations carried on by William McCraney M.P. for Halton. In 1900, W.H. Speers purchased from McCraney the property on which 3128 Seneca Drive stands today. For a long period Speers operated a farm on the west bank of the Twelve Mile Creek, where his land extended from Lakeshore Road to the Radial tracks (Rebecca Street), but in 1916 he decided to retire and he sold the property. In 1919, to supplement his retirement income Speers subdivided his property on which 3128 Seneca Drive now stands and created the Mississauga Heights subdivision. Speers did very well financially, but unfortunately Mrs. Speers took ill and the money made from Mississauga Heights was soon lost in medical bills. Mrs. Speers recovered and lived to the ripe old age of 96, but W.H. Speers was never again a wealthy man.

William H. and Lucy Speers were both very community spirited people in the Bronte Area. W.H. was a long time Liberal supporter. He campaigned with Dr. A. Buck, parliamentary representative from Palermo, and at one time Speers held a seat on the Township Council. For over 30

years he was a director of the Oakville Fair and was president of the Farmer's Institute. Mrs. Speers was a valued leader in the women's work of Walton Memorial United Church, of which she was a member for 70 years. For a long period she was Vice President of the Women's Missionary Society, and she was on the first executive of the Halton County Women's Institute.

The house at 3128 Seneca Drive is a good example of the Edwardian Classicism and late Queen Anne styles and is virtually unaltered from the original. The basic form of the house is that of a two storey square, brown brick dwelling, with a pyramidal roof, and hipped roof dormers. With the exception of the dormers, all windows are round headed and contain multiple paned sections. The living room has a 3 sash picture window with double hung wooden framed windows. The upper half is multipaned, while the lower half is single paned. The windows in the dormers are square headed with a multiple pane/single pane division similar to the other windows. The broad front porch supported by "Tuscan" columns on masonry pillars is typical for the period. A single chimney is located on the western face of the house on either side of the chimney are two small windows which are diagonally paned.

Of special note, inside the house are the many oak features created by the skilled shipbuilder Dalt McDonald. These include the floors, fireplace, kitchen cabinets and the staircase banister, the end of which is reminiscent of a post that a mariner might use to tie up his ship. On the inside of the window frames, McDonald engraved Roman numerals so that they would match with the correct window openings.



SCHEDULE "B" TO BY-LAW 1992-167

ALL AND SINGULAR that certain parcel or tract of land and premises situate, lying and being in the Town of Oakville, in the Regional Municipality of Halton, more specifically described as Part of Lot 46, Plan M-11 (Town of Oakville) being Parcel 46-4, Section M-11 designated as Part 1, Plan 20-R-9058.

Plan M-11 is not a Plan of Subdivision within the meaning of the Planning Act.

Plan BA-151 registered 68 03 13 as Plan M-11 confirms the true location on the ground of all the boundaries of this parcel pursuant to an order of The Director of titles under The Boundaries Act dated 67 05 31.

TOGETHER with an easement over Part of Lot 46, Plan M-11 designated as Part 3, Plan 20R-9058 until such time as the lands are dedicated as a Public highway. As in 403030.