



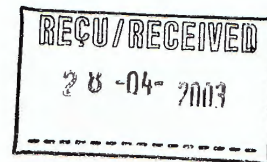
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NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE

To: Ontario Heritage Foundation
77 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2T9

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Petrolia intends to designate the property including lands and buildings, at the following Municipal address as a property of architectural and historical value or interest under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act 1990, Section 29 (1) Chapter 0.18.

- a) John Henry Fairbank (Sunnyside)
4248 Petrolia Line,
Petrolia, Ontario N0N 1R0

Reasons for Proposed Designation

Historical Reasons:

Date of Construction: 1891

Architects: Jones and McBride, London, Ontario

Source (s) for date given: Article: London Free Press
November 28th, 1959 C.B. Whipp

Occupancy / Role record:

J.H. Fairbank was born in 1831 in Rouses Point, Champlain, New York State and came to Lambton County in 1860 as a surveyor. After purchasing oil producing properties in Oil Springs, he is credited with the invention of the "jerker-line system" of field production, which made wells with low flow rates, economically viable. When oil was discovered along the valley of Bear Creek in 1860 (the Kelly Field), and the subsequent village of Petrolia arose in 1866, J.H. Fairbank was a major investor in the new community opening the largest hardware store west of Toronto, and with his wife Edna Crysler Fairbank, provided the mortgage capital for many of its first homes. He was a founding pioneer of the Canadian Oil industry, Canada's largest single oil producer (by 1900) and a prominent leader in the economic development of Petrolia. With partner L.B. Vaughn in 1869, he founded the "Little Red Bank", which played a key role in financing the oil industry. In 1882, he was elected to the National Parliament of Canada. (John A. Macdonald, Prime Minister). His home became the venue of important social and cultural events in the history of Petrolia, with notable guests such as Earl Grey, Lord Lascelles, Pauline Johnson and Guy Lombardo. After his death in 1914, Sunnyside continued to play an important role as the residence of one of its most prominent families and his heirs have continued to be significant leaders and benefactors in their community. Fairbank Oil properties continue the heritage of J.H. Fairbank and today they are the oldest, continuously operating family-owned oil wells in the world. The life and legacy of J.H. Fairbank is a local, national and international part of our Canadian history, worthy of recognition in the designation of "Sunnyside". The current house constructed in 1891 is on a large site partially above the top of the bank, and partially in the valley lands of Bear Creek. In its prime the upper table lands were developed to the highest standard of Victorian gardens with surrounding brick walling masonry gate posts, masonry and wood trellis encompassing a beautiful garden in the English style.

Architectural Reasons:

Style: Romanesque Revival Victorian

The plans for "Sunnyside" were prepared by Jones & McBride, Architects of London, Ontario in 1889 for John Henry Fairbank and the house completed in 1891. Its site is the northwest quadrant of the intersection of Petrolia Street and the course of Bear Creek. This very tall, two and a half storey mansion is a visual landmark, commanding an eastward view of Bear Creek Valley and marking the eastern entrance of Petrolia's central business district. It visually anchors the downtown, linking it with the Petrolia Discovery site and the recreational facilities of Bear Creek Valley. It was designed in a late Victorian style known as Romanesque revival. Petrolia has only three structures built in this style and Sunnyside is its only residential example. (St Pauls Church and the old Post Office being the other two) Romanesque revival was made prominent by the work of H.H. Richardson of the United States, but it is best known to Canadians who see its defining characteristics illustrated by the Legislative Building of Ontario in Toronto known as Queens Park. Sunnyside reflects the typical features with wide round arch openings, heavy masonry and a circular tower. It was meant to be solid and durable, like the centuries old structures of Europe that inspired it.

The exterior is red brick and stone, with a decorative shingled gable facing south, featuring a palladian window. The three storey tower is capped with bell-shaped dome and decorative finial. The main roof features a swept dormer facing south. Windows make extensive use of massive stone masonry, with sills, quoins and either arched stones or solid stone horizontal lintels. An impressive front entry is sheltered by a (south) verandah with massive foundation stone to support paired cast iron columns of classical design. The verandah roof features a decorative metal railing. The metal eavestroughs are concealed within decorative wood trim, shaped to create a moulded fascia and dentilled frieze below.

The interior features a large wooden staircase with urn-shaped lamps atop carved newel posts. A large decorative window featuring coloured glass illuminates the main landing and other significant coloured glass windows face the verandah and illuminate the den. Native sycamore wood wainscoting lines the central hall and fine quality baseboards and woodwork are found throughout Sunnyside much of it credited to the prominent wood finisher and carver, Thomas Bicknell who is also associated with the interior details of two other designated Petrolia buildings, Nemo Hall and the Englehart Study-Library at Glenview (C.E.E. Hospital). Good quality stone and fine quality wood mantels adorn fireplaces found in all (eleven) major rooms, and a classical polished plaster panel of cherubs, is prominently incorporated above one in a bedroom. The interior details of Sunnyside reflect the best of interior finishes and the finest craftsmanship available in the late nineteenth century in Petrolia and Lambton County.

Any persons may before the 23rd, May, 2003 send by registered mail or deliver to the Administrator Clerk of the Town of Petrolia, notice of his or her objection to the proposed designation, together with a statement of the reasons for the objection and all relevant facts. When a Notice of Objection has been received, the Council of the Town of Petrolia will refer the matter to the Conservation Review Board for a hearing and report.

DATED AT THE TOWN OF PETROLIA THIS 17TH DAY OF APRIL, 2003.

R. Brad Loosley,
Administrator Clerk