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**Mark Warrack**

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**From:** Leslie, CherieLyn [CLeslie@gravenhurst.ca]  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 26, 2010 1:09 PM  
**To:** Mark Warrack  
**Subject:** Notice of Intention to Designate - Wheelhouses  
**Attachments:** Notice of Public Hearing - Ontario Heritage Trust.pdf; Notice of Public Hearing - Newspaper Only\_.pdf; By-law - designating arch.pdf

Good Morning Mark,

I am the staff representative on the Heritage Committee for the Town of Gravenhurst. When preparing a By-law to designate two Wheelhouses in the town, I realized the Ontario Heritage Trust hadn't received a copy of the notice of intention to designate (attached). The notice has already been published in the paper for two consecutive weeks.

As this is my first time going through the designation process, please advice whether adequate information has been provided to the Ontario Heritage Trust? Or, would you prefer the notice shortened?

Email correspondence from yourself dated June 23, 2010, indicates that the Town never send a copy of the By-law to designate the Gravenhurst Arch. You mentioned that only the Notice of Intention to Designate was sent. I have attached a copy of the designation By-law for your records and I'm searching for the Notice of Designation that was published in the local newspaper. I will send it your way once I locate it!

Please advice if you require any further information.

Sincerely,

*Cherie Leslie*, B.E.S.  
Planner,  
Development Services  
Town of Gravenhurst

8/26/2010



**NOTICE OF INTENTION TO DESIGNATE  
UNDER THE ONTARIO HERITAGE ACT, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.18**

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TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Gravenhurst intends to designate the Wheelhouse of the Steamship – RMS Cherokee and the Wheelhouse of the Steamship – The Islander, located at 830 Bay Street, in the Town of Gravenhurst, District Municipality of Muskoka, as a structural artifact of historical interest under Part IV of *The Ontario Heritage Act* (R.S.O 1990, Ch. O. 18). A By-law to designate the property is to be considered by Gravenhurst Town Council at its regular meeting to be held at **3:00 p.m. on Thursday September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2010.**

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**REASON FOR DESIGNATION**

In 1991, Gravenhurst Council passed two By-laws that designated the Wheel Houses of the R.M.S. Islander and the R.M.S. Cherokee respectively under the Heritage Act. These By-laws were repealed in 2004 in order to remove and relocate the structures as a result of the Gravenhurst Wharf redevelopment. The Muskoka Steamship & Historic Society as since expressed an interest in re-designating the Wheel Houses of The R.M.S. Cherokee and The R.M.S. Islander.

Gravenhurst was once the busiest trans-shipping port in all of Ontario and the strategic location of the Town was one of the key reasons for the foundation of the Town of Gravenhurst. The steamers allowed Gravenhurst to serve as the gateway to the Muskoka Lakes, and it was thanks largely to them and the railways that the Muskoka resort industry developed. The Wheel Houses of the RMS Cherokee and the RMS Islander are historically unique. Along with the RMS Segwun, they are thought to be the only specimens of their type remaining in Eastern Canada.

**The RMS Cherokee**

Built in 1907, The RMS Cherokee was one of the few steel-hulled "Palace Steamers" and was used to provide better service to the Muskoka communities and resorts, at a time when the tourist industry was growing by leaps and bounds. The RMS Cherokee, along with the RMS Segwun, were the two Palace Steamers, being larger, more elaborate ships and sporting brass fittings. The RMS Cherokee's wheel house was built mostly of native Muskoka red pine, with white cedar cladding around the wainscoting and some red oak moldings. It was built in two sections, the rear Officer's Cabin being approximately 12.7 feet by 13.6 feet and the front viewing house being approximately 8 feet by 8.5 feet. The door-hinges are unusual, in that they are mounted on single-knuckle brass fittings instead of the usual interlocking knuckle hinges.

The Wheel House was designed and built with water drainage in mind. The "sheer" permits water to flow from the centre of the vessel to the stern and the bow, while the "camber" permits the flow to the port and starboard. Evidence of this is visible in the flooring and the walls of the structure. The Wheel House is painted marine white with green trimmings as found in the 1920's. The artifacts within are typical of those found during the running of the

ship. The sign is an exact copy of that originally used, with solid brass, stylized block lettering on pine board. The pipe railing that surround the deck and the ladder like steps are typical of the fleet.

### **The RMS Islander**

Built in 1900, The RMS Islander plied the Muskoka Lakes for over half a century until retiring in 1950. The RMS Islander never had a separate officers' cabin, although a small stateroom was provided for the captain in the back of the wheel house itself. Originally carried on the vessel's bridge, the pilothouse was lowered to the promenade deck over the winter of 1934-35 in an effort to lower the vessel's silhouette. The RMS Islander's rounded front wheel house was built mostly of red pine and cedar. Its fittings are made of steel rather than brass and the roof forms a prominent sun visor in front. The front windows are also interesting, in that they can be made to slide down into "pockets" inside the wainscoting for clearer visibility in rainy weather.

The Wheel House was designed and built with water drainage in mind. The "sheer" permits water to flow from the centre of the vessel to the stern and the bow, while the "camber" permits the flow to the port and starboard. Evidence of this is visible in the flooring and the walls of the structure. The Wheel House was built up from the deck of the ship. It was not attached after construction. The structure is painted marine white with green trimmings as found in 1920's. The artifacts within are typical of those found during the running of the ship. The sign is an exact copy of that originally used with the solid brass, stylized block lettering on pine board. The pipe railings that surround the deck and the ladder like steps are typical of the fleet.

As recommended by the Municipal Heritage Committee, the Wheelhouse of the Steamship – RMS Cherokee and the Wheelhouse of the Steamship – The RMS Islander should be designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. Both Wheelhouses continue to have important social, cultural and historic representation to the Town. This designation would ensure protection and recognition of both Wheelhouses into the future.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION** is available at the Town of Gravenhurst Website and Planning Department at the Municipal office during office hours (8:00 a.m. to 4:00 Monday to Thursday and 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Friday). For further information, please contact Cherie Leslie, Planner.

Any person may send by registered mail or deliver to the Clerk of the Town of Gravenhurst notice of their objection to the proposed designation together with a statement of the reasons for the objection and all relevant facts. If such a Notice of Objection is received, the Council of the Town of Gravenhurst will refer the matter to the Conservation Review Board for a hearing.

Dated at the Town of Gravenhurst  
this 4<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2010.

Candace Thwaites  
Clerk



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