

Authority: Toronto Community Council Report No. 5, Clause No. 69,
as adopted by City of Toronto Council on April 11, 12 and 13, 2000
Enacted by Council: June 8, 2000

CITY OF TORONTO

BY-LAW No. 323-2000

**To designate the property at 1107 Avenue Road (Eglinton Hunt Club) as being of
architectural and historical value or interest.**

WHEREAS authority was granted by Council to designate the property at No. 1107 Avenue Road as being of architectural and historical value or interest; and

WHEREAS the *Ontario Heritage Act* authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact by-laws to designate real property, including all the buildings and structures thereon, to be of historical or architectural value or interest; and

WHEREAS the Council of the City of Toronto has caused to be served upon the owners of the land and premises known as No. 1107 Avenue Road and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation, Notice of Intention to designate the property and has caused the Notice of Intention to be published in a newspaper having a general circulation in the municipality as required by the *Ontario Heritage Act*; and

WHEREAS the reasons for designation are set out in Schedule "A" to this by-law; and

WHEREAS no notice of objection to the proposed designation was served upon the Clerk of the municipality;

The Council of the City of Toronto HEREBY ENACTS as follows:

1. The property at No. 1107 Avenue Road, more particularly described in Schedule "B" to this by-law and shown on the map attached hereto as Schedule "C", is designated as being of architectural and historical value or interest.

2. The City Solicitor is authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be served upon the owners of the property at No. 1107 Avenue Road and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation and to cause notice of this by-law to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the City of Toronto as required by the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

ENACTED AND PASSED this 8th day of June, A.D. 2000.

CASE OOTES,
Deputy Mayor

NOVINA WONG,
City Clerk

(Corporate Seal)

SCHEDULE “A”Heritage Property Report

Eglinton Hunt Club
1107 Avenue Road

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HERITAGE TORONTO

Heritage Property ReportBasic Building Data:

Address: 1107 Avenue Road (southeast corner of Avenue Road and Roselawn Avenue)

Ward: 22 (North Toronto)

Current Name: not applicable

Historical Name: Eglinton Hunt Club

Construction Date: 1928-1929, Clubhouse

Architect: Vaux Chadwick and Bryan Chadwick

Contractor/Builder: not found

Additions/Alterations: 1928-1929, riding school wing added;
1940s and 1950s, military buildings added;
1986, stables (1919) demolished

Original Owner: George Beardmore

Original Use: Recreational

Current Use*: Not applicable

Heritage Category: Notable Heritage Property (Category B)

Recording Date: August 1998

Recorder: HPD:KA

* this does not refer to permitted use(s) as defined in the Zoning By-law

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

1. Eglinton Hunt Club:

The Toronto Hunt was founded in 1843, holding its first official meet at the Golden Lion Hotel at Yonge Street and Sheppard Avenue. The second oldest hunt club in Canada, it established its first permanent location in 1895 with facilities off Kingston Road in Scarborough. George Beardmore, the Toronto businessman who served as Master of the Hunt from 1893 until 1931, acquired the Gartmore House (Oriole Parkway at Burnaby Boulevard) in North Toronto as a temporary clubhouse. In 1919, Beardmore purchased property on Avenue Road, north of Eglinton Avenue, as the club's new headquarters. The Toronto Hunt was officially renamed the Eglinton Hunt Club in 1922; 11 years later, it became known as the Toronto and North York Hunt.

In 1919, stables accommodating 150 horses were erected on the Avenue Road site according to the designs of James Mitchell of the architectural firm of Mitchell and White. Demolished in 1986, its cupola and weathervane survive on the site.

In 1928, the club engaged Toronto architects Vaux and Bryan Chadwick to design a clubhouse and riding school. The older of the two brothers, William Craven Vaux Chadwick (1868-1941) trained as an architect in the office of R. C. Windeyer (c.1830-1900). During Chadwick's tenure in his firm, Windeyer prepared the plans for St. Alban's Cathedral at 110 Howland Avenue, a project later completed by his student. At the turn of the 20th century, Chadwick formed a partnership with Samuel G. Beckett, which lasted until 1917 when the latter died in World War I. Chadwick and Beckett are primarily recognized for their residential designs, including "Seven Oaks", Prime Minister Arthur Meighen's house at 57 Castle Frank Crescent (built 1910). During this period, the partners were the official architects for the development of the Lawrence Park neighbourhood. Bryan Chadwick joined the practice in 1910, managing the firm while his brother served in the military. Prior to receiving the commission for the Eglinton Hunt Club, Vaux and Bryan Chadwick completed alterations to the Osgoode Hall Law School and prepared designs for the Norman Seagram House at 2 Hawthorn Gardens. All of the above noted properties are recognized on the *City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties*.

In their designs for the clubhouse at the Eglinton Hunt Club, the Chadwick brothers conceived a two-part complex. In one wing, bowling alleys were located in the basement beneath the main-floor dining room and kitchen and the second-floor dance hall and apartment. The other wing housed a basement swimming pool with locker rooms on the first floor and a gymnasium above. An indoor riding school wing was attached to the rear (north) end of the structure (the riding school wing is not included in the Reasons for Designation). The complex was completed with the inclusion of an outdoor riding ring.

With the northward expansion of the City of Toronto, streets containing residential buildings quickly surrounded the Eglinton Hunt Club. By the late 1930s, the club was facing bankruptcy and available for sale. After the Government of Canada purchased the property in 1939, the club used the proceeds of the sale to move to a temporary location at Hoggs' Hollow and later to the Eaton family's North York farm. In 1963, the organization amalgamated with the Caledon.

Riding and Hunt Club to form the Eglinton and Caledon Hunt Club with facilities in the Caledon Hills.

1. World War II and Aftermath:

In 1938, Sir Frederick Banting, the co-discoverer of insulin as a treatment for diabetes, headed the Banting and Best Department of Medical Research at the University of Toronto. Banting developed an interest in aviation medicine that resulted in his participation with the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) in research concerning the physiological problems encountered by pilots operating high-altitude combat aircraft. The “unofficial” status of the research required a secret location. With the acquisition of the Hunt Club property, Banting headed the Number 1 Clinical Investigation Unit (CIU) of the RCAF. An aircrew intake evaluation unit was established on the site to disguise its true purpose.

Working on the Hunt Club property, Banting and his researchers investigated the problem of pilots temporarily losing consciousness during high speed and high altitude maneuvers from the effects of “G” forces - up to seven times the normal pull of gravity. Banting recruited Dr. Wilbur Franks, a cancer researcher, to his team. The first man-made centrifuge unit in North America was secretly constructed on the Hunt Club property where Dr. Franks developed and produced the first “G”-suit, a water-filled rubber flying suit. Ironically, Banting was killed in an airplane crash while en route to England to conduct operational tests on the Franks flying suit. Following the successful deployment of the flying suit during combat in 1942, it was used by the Royal Navy’s Fleet Air Arm. It is considered a forerunner to later “G”-suits that used compressed air rather than water as the enveloping material.

Other research activities on the Hunt Club property included an “acceleration laboratory”: the decompression chamber designed to test human capabilities under extremes of cold and high altitude led to the development of oxygen and survival equipment for the RCAF. The CIU was renamed the RCAF Institute of Aviation Medicine (IAM) in 1945. Following the war, additional buildings were erected to provide administrative, training and living facilities for the IAM and RCAF Auxiliary Squadrons. In 1959, the site became the RCAF Staff School, with the clubhouse used as an officers’ mess. Following the unification of the armed forces in 1966, it was known as the Canadian Forces Staff School (CFSS). By the 1980s, the property also housed the Air Cadets League of Canada, the Armed Forces Benevolent Fund, the Canada Defence Construction (1951) Limited, and a militia unit. During this period, the centrifuge unit was removed. The property remained a military site until its closure in June, 1994.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

The Clubhouse at the Eglinton Hunt Club is the integral component of a campus of buildings that developed on the property following World War I. The building is designed in the English Period Revival style, with medieval and Classical features inspired by country-house architecture. The Clubhouse features elaborate massing with a 2½-storey entrance block flanked by long 1½-storey wings. The building is covered by a combination of steeply-pitched gable, hip and gambrel (double-sloped) roofs with dormers that are described below. The red brick walls have brick and stone detailing. Most of the window openings and dormers contain casement-style windows, many arranged in pairs with transoms. The openings are decorated with brick voussoirs and stone sills.

On the principal (south) facade, the central entrance block rises 2½ stories beneath a steeply-pitched hip

roof with a segmental-headed dormer. In the lower floor, the main entrance is placed in an inset porch. A moulded wood doorcase with a segmental head contains a panelled wood door with glass inserts and a multi-paned glass transom. On either side, single flat-headed window openings have inset windows. A flat-roofed portico supported by fluted stone columns and brick piers with stone bases and capitals protects the entrance. Overhead, a pair of French doors is set between single flat-headed window openings.

The east wing is organized into four bays of varied proportions beneath a gable roof with three segmental-headed dormers. In the centre of the east wing, the wall rises 1½-storeys beneath a cross-gable roof with a large chimney. The chimney is decorated by piers with stone coping and a stone plaque with a carved fox's head. In the lower storey, the chimneys is flanked by bow windows with tent roofs, while two flat-headed window openings are placed at the second-floor level. At the left end of the east wing, a single-flat-headed window opening is located in the first floor.

The west wing off Avenue Road is organized in three parts. The centre section rises 2½ stories beneath a hip roof with segmental-headed dormers. At its base is placed a bow window identical to those on the east wing, while the second floor contains two flat-headed window openings. On the right, next to the entrance block, a gambrel (or double-sloped) roof rises 2½-stories. Its upper slope contains a pair of segmental-headed dormers with round multi-paned windows. Below, the second floor is marked by two similarly-shaped wall dormers containing a pair of windows. The first floor has a large segmental-headed window. At the left end of the west wing, the steeply-pitched gable roof has three hip-roofed dormers in the half-storey. Below, the first floor has three segmental headed window openings that are smaller versions of the one found elsewhere on this wing.

The west end of the building facing Avenue Road has a gabled firebreak wall with a variety of window openings copied from the principal façade. An entrance is placed in the second storey, while the half-storey has an oval window opening. The east wall has a gabled firebreak wall. The rear (north) wall and roof contain window openings similar to those found on the south wall.

On the interior, the entrance hall, two-storey staircase, and main lounge are important heritage elements. Inside the principal entry, the ceiling of the wide entrance hall is shaped like a Tudor arch. In the centre of the hall, a single flight of stairs extends to a second-floor landing where it divides in two and continues to the upper floor. The stairs have wood banisters, iron spindles and, in the second storey, extended wood supports. At the landing, a moulded wood doorcase with Classical detailing contains four entrances. The centre doors are superseded by a monumental fanlight with a multi-paned iron transom. On the upper floor, the doorways are identified as significant heritage features. East of the entrance hall in the first storey, the main lounge fills the east wing. Important details are the beamed ceiling, wood-panelled walls, and a rubblestone fireplace with a stone mantel and carved hounds' heads.

CONTEXT:

The Eglinton Hunt Club is located on the southeast corner of Avenue Road and Roselawn Avenue, four streets north of Eglinton Avenue West. The site is bounded by Elwood Boulevard on the south and Oriole Parkway on the east. All of the surrounding streets contain residential buildings. On Eglinton Avenue west of Avenue Road, the Eglinton Theatre at 400 Eglinton Avenue West is included on the *City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties*.

SUMMARY:

The Eglinton Hunt Club housed the social facilities of an equestrian club for Toronto society during the post-World War I era. The site gained historical significance during the Second World War when essential experiments in aviation medicine were conducted by Dr. Wilbur Franks under the direction of medical researcher Sir Frederick Banting. An excellent example of English Period Revival architecture, the clubhouse is a local landmark in the North Toronto neighbourhood.

Sources Consulted:

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"If you fly, put him high on your hero list (Wilbur Franks)". Toronto Star (18 September 1984).

McHugh, Patricia. Toronto Architecture. A City Guide. 2nd ed. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1989.

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Kathryn Anderson
August 1998

ATTACHMENT I

Short Statement of Reasons for Designation

Eglinton Hunt Club
1107 Avenue Road

The property at 1107 Avenue Road is recommended for designation for architectural and historical reasons. The Eglinton Hunt Club opened in 1919 as an equestrian club patronized by Toronto society. The social activities of the club were centered in the clubhouse, completed in 1929 according to the designs of Toronto architects Vaux Chadwick and Bryan Chadwick. The property is historically important as the location during World War II of Dr. Wilbur Franks' research in aviation medicine under the direction of Sir Frederick Banting.

Architecturally, the clubhouse is an excellent example of the English Period Revival style. Constructed of brick with brick and stone detailing, a 2½-storey entrance block is flanked by wings rising 1½ and 2½ stories. The main (south) entrance is protected by a portico. The segmental-headed and flat-headed window openings, bow windows and French doors are important elements. The building is covered by a combination of gable, hip and gambrel roofs with firebreak end walls, dormers and tall chimneys. The entrance hall, two-storey staircase and main lounge are important interior elements.

Located at the southeast corner of Avenue Road and Roselawn Avenue, the clubhouse is the surviving component of the Eglinton Hunt Club and a local landmark in the North Toronto neighbourhood.

SCHEDULE "B"

In the City of Toronto and Province of Ontario, being composed of;

FIRSTLY: (Land Titles Office)

Part of Parcel A-1 in the Register for Section M-425.

Being part of Block A on Plan M-425 designated as PART 15 on Plan 66R-18433, both said Plans being in the Land Registry Office for the Land Titles Division of Metropolitan Toronto (No. 66).

SECONDLY: (Land Registry Office)

Lots 30, 31 and part of Lot 29 in Range 1 on Plan 734-York designated as PART 1 on Plan 64R-16367, both said Plans being in the Land Registry Office for the Metropolitan Toronto Registry Division (No. 64).

The hereinbefore FIRSTLY and SECONDLY described lands being delineated by heavy outline on plan SYE2941 dated May 4, 2000, as set out in Schedule C.

Schedule 'C'

