



## REPORT

REPORT TO: Mayor R. Bonnette and Members of Council

REPORT FROM: William Roberts, Town Clerk

DATE: March 8, 2010

REPORT NO.: CS-2010-0037

RE: Designation of Cedarvale Park as an Associative Cultural Landscape, including Freeman-Bradley House, Cedarvale Community Centre and Cedarvale Cottage, under Section IV of the Ontario Heritage Act; 181 – 185 Main Street South, Georgetown, Halton Hills, legally described as Plan 1269 Part Block N, Town of Halton Hills, Regional Municipality of Halton (formerly Lot 17, Concession 9, Esquensing)

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT Report No. CS-2010-0037 dated March 8, 2010, regarding the report from Heritage Halton Hills recommending the designation of the Cedarvale Park as an Associative Cultural Landscape, including Freeman-Bradley House, Cedarvale Community Centre and Cedarvale Cottage, under Section IV of the Ontario Heritage Act; 181 – 185 Main Street South, Georgetown, Halton Hills, legally described as Plan 1269 Part Block N, Town of Halton Hills, Regional Municipality of Halton (formerly Lot 17, Concession 9, Esquensing) be received;

AND FURTHER THAT Council indicate its intention to designate Cedarvale Park as an Associative Cultural Landscape, including Freeman-Bradley House, Cedarvale Community Centre and Cedarvale Cottage, under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act;

AND FURTHER THAT staff proceed with the notification requirements as set out in the Ontario Heritage Act.

## **BACKGROUND:**

Heritage Halton Hills, reviewed the Cedarvale Heritage Designation Report at the January 20, 2010, committee meeting, and voted in favour of designation through Recommendation No. HERITAGE-2010-0002. Attached is a copy of their Heritage Designation Report (APPENDIX "A").

The Armenian National Committee of Toronto forwarded correspondence (APPENDIX "B") requesting designation be expedited to coincide with the 95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide on April 24, 2010.

## **COMMENTS:**

On February 23, 2010, the Cedarvale Heritage Designation Report from Heritage Halton Hills was circulated to members of the Senior Management Team for comment. Recreation and Parks Department staff provided the following comments:

The Recreation and Parks Department has no objection to the Heritage Halton Hills Cedarvale Heritage Designation Report that supports the preservation of the Cedarvale Cottage, Cedarvale Community Centre, Freeman-Bradley House and the Cultural Landscape. At this time there are no significant Recreation and Parks Department plans in place to recommend the physical alterations for the buildings nor the Associative Landscape.

The heritage designation will mean there may be more restrictive guidelines placed on the style of future repairs to the buildings as well as retaining the cultural landscape in the park. Future work and repairs should be done in keeping with the architectural features of the period when they were originally constructed.

For Council's information, an example of future work includes the replacement of the windows in the community centre which was identified in the 2011 Capital Forecast year. Should this project be approved during the 2011 Capital Budget deliberations, the windows would be designed to be similar in appearance to the original windows. The new windows would be upgraded to be energy efficient such as double or triple glazed but would be fabricated in a similar design to the existing ones in order to maintain the original architectural appearance of the building. Council should be aware that complying with the heritage designation may require additional capital cost. It is our understanding that Council may consider the cost implications and choose alternatives under its delegated authority found in the Heritage Act.

Other future identified capital repairs, as approved, would be undertaken in the same spirit which would be to preserve the original architectural features of the buildings and landscape.

**RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:**

This report relates to the Town's desire to preserve and enhance our Natural Environment and Cultural Heritage specifically, D.4 To use the conservation of built heritage and cultural heritage landscape resources to enhance the character and vitality of neighbourhoods and provide opportunities for economic development and tourism.

**FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

As noted in the comments received from Recreation and Parks Department staff:

For Council's information, an example of future work includes the replacement of the windows in the community centre which was identified in the 2011 Capital Forecast year. Should this project be approved during the 2011 Capital Budget deliberations, the windows would be designed to be similar in appearance to the original windows. The new windows would be upgraded to be energy efficient such as double or triple glazed but would be fabricated in a similar design to the existing ones in order to maintain the original architectural appearance of the building. Council should be aware that complying with the heritage designation may require additional capital cost. It is our understanding that Council may consider the cost implications and choose alternatives under its delegated authority found in the Heritage Act.

**COMMUNICATIONS IMPACT:**

If Council decides that designation under Part IV appears warranted, staff will provide Written Notice of Intention to Designate as required by Section 29 (3) of the Ontario Heritage Act in the manner and form and to the persons and agencies prescribed by the Ontario Heritage Act.

**ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:**

The Town of Halton Hills has a long-standing commitment to environmental protection and enhancement and recognizes the importance of maintaining, restoring and where possible, enhancing or improving natural and built heritage.

**CONSULTATION:**

Heritage Halton Hills Committee, the Senior Management Team and Recreation and Parks Department staff were consulted during the preparation of this report.

**CONCLUSION:**

Staff recommend proceeding with the Heritage Designation as per the recommendation of the Heritage Halton Hills committee as outlined in the attached Appendix "A".

Respectfully submitted,

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William Roberts  
Town Clerk

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Edward DeSousa, CGA  
Director of Corporate Services &  
Treasurer

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Dennis Y. Perlin  
Chief Administrative Officer



HERITAGE HALTON HILLS  
CEDARVALE  
HERITAGE DESIGNATION REPORT



CEDARVALE

HOME OF THE "GEORGETOWN BOYS"

Prepared by: John Mark Rowe

With the assistance of the  
Armenian National Committee of Toronto  
20 JANUARY 2010

## **Introduction**

The Cedarvale Community Centre is located 181-185 Main Street South, Georgetown, Ontario, in the Town of Halton Hills. The entire Cedarvale Park was once the farm of the Freeman family and then the Bradley family who sold their farm to the Armenian Relief Association of Canada. This group, with international connections, purchased the farm in 1923 in order to house orphan boys. From 1923-1927, a total of 109 Armenian orphaned boys were brought to the farm. On 12 January 1928, the Armenian Relief Association of Canada transferred the property of the Georgetown farm home to the United Church of Canada, who used it for the care and education of pre-adolescent girls. In January 1929, the farm home was renamed the Cedarvale School for Girls. It operated on this site until 31 August 1963. In 1966, the Corporation of the Town of Georgetown purchased the site as Georgetown's Centennial project and began the task of transforming it into a public recreation space. This is a task which continues to this day as the park serves an ever growing Georgetown population.

The built portion of the park consists of three distinct buildings, each with its own interesting history. The oldest building is actually two farming homes linked together by the summer kitchen. The oldest portion is a cut stone 1½ storey house dating from about 1840. It is connected to the red brick 1½ storey house, dating from about 1860, which faces the playing fields today.

The second building is the 2½ storey stucco building parts of which were built as the dormitory and school for the orphan Armenian boys in 1923.

The third building is the one storey cottage built probably by the United Church about 1928 as a residence for staff.

All three of these buildings have played their part in the story of a pair of significant pioneering families, "the Georgetown Boys", as the Armenian orphans came to refer to themselves and the Cedarvale girls. It is for this reason that Heritage Halton Hills has prepared this report for the consideration of the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Halton Hills. We recommend Cedarvale for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act and trust Council will agree after reading this report.

## **Historical Background**

Esquesing Township was opened to settlement in 1819. This property was Lot 17 in the 9<sup>th</sup> Concession and consisted of 200 acres. The Crown patent was granted to James McMillan on 3 March 1826. On 5 April 1828, the entire 200 acre parcel was sold to John Freeman (1806-1887). John and Catherine (Davis) Freeman came here from Freeman, Canada West, a village and toll-gate established by his father Joshua Freeman. The place is now at Brant Street and Plains Road in Burlington, Ontario. The young family would have lived in the log cabin which McMillan was required to build to get his patent to the land. About 1840 John Freeman built a 1½ storey stone house. The 1838 Esquesing assessment rolls did not list any stone houses, but the 1842 census listed 10 stone houses. About 1860 he built the 1½ storey red brick house and connected it to the stone house with the summer kitchen. It was probably new because the 1861 census has the family

living in this house with the 1½ storey stone house listed as vacant. The 1861 census also reveals a very prosperous farmer growing wheat, peas, oats, ground vegetables and hay. They kept steers, cows, horses sheep and pigs on the farm.

John Freeman's grandfather was the pioneer of Nova Scotia Methodism, William Black. He was certainly supportive of the Wesleyan Methodist Church here from his arrival. Charles Kennedy allowed the first chapel to be built on his land (Lindsay Court and Trafalgar Road) in 1821. John was a co-founder of the Union Sunday School in 1843. When the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society was established in Georgetown in 1845, the trustees included John Freeman. A record of donations to the Society shows donations by Mrs. Freeman and himself 14 times from 1848 to 1871.

John Freeman was also appointed a Magistrate for the County of Halton in 1855. They retired to Georgetown where they owned land. After Catherine's death in 1871, John left Georgetown and married Eliza Ernest. He died in 1887 in Ridgetown, Ontario.



1966 –ehs07956

John and Catherine Freeman sold the 200 acres (with the exception of the Toronto to Guelph Road opened in 1828) to James Bradley on 1 March 1869. James and Isabelle (Hainer) moved their growing family to this beautiful valley and named the farm Cedar Vale. James continued farming as well as being a millwright. Their youngest son William Freeman Bradley was born in 1886 at Cedar Vale farm. Only two years later, while excavating for a new farm building, the embankment collapsed injuring James Bradley fatally. The family of ten children continued to work the farm. In 1908 Mrs. Isabella Bradley sold the farm to her son

Thomas P. Bradley. He sold a half interest in 1914 to William F. Bradley. On 17 February 1923 William and Thomas Bradley sold 135 acres to the Armenian Relief Association of Canada. The land reserved by William Bradley would become the Dominion Seed House gardens after that business was started in 1928.

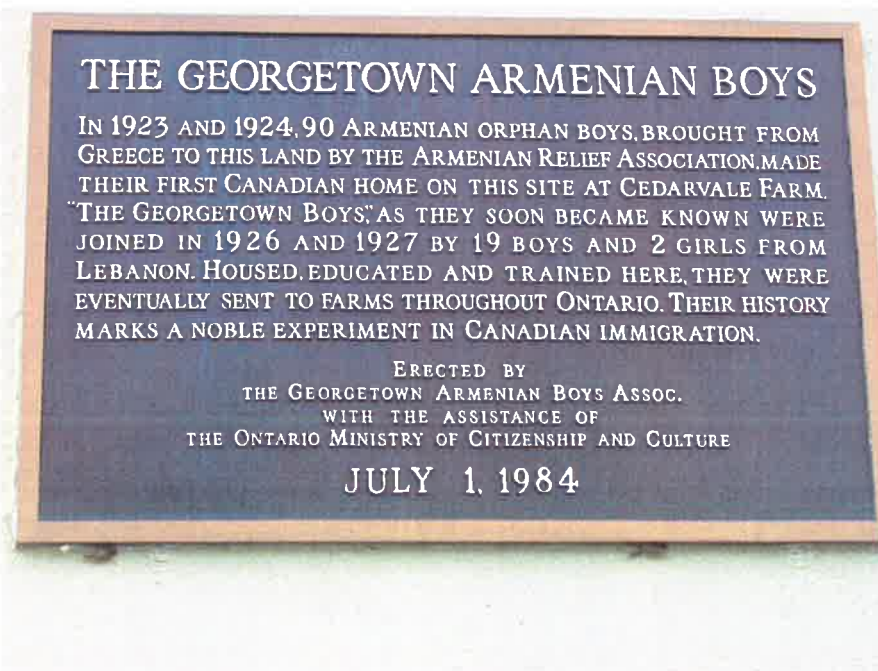
The next chapter in the history of this property begins in the Ottoman Empire. Growing Armenian nationalism prompted the Sultan of to begin a harassment campaign against the Christian Armenian population of his empire. This campaign culminated in 1915 in the first genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, leaving several thousands of children orphaned. [Official government recognition of this event as a genocide was acknowledged by the Province of Ontario in 2001 and by the Government of Canada in 2004.] Relief agencies such as the Lord Mayor's Fund of London and the Near East Relief Society of New York gathered as many of the homeless children as possible and put them in compounds and

orphanages to save them from death through starvation and disease. Canada, on a parallel but separate course, spearheaded a different program. The Armenian Relief Association of Canada was created under the patronage of the Governor General, Lord Byng and many other prominent Canadians, including Archbishop Neil McNeil, Ven. Archdeacon Cody, Col. Sir Henry Pellatt, John Kent, Donald A. Cameron, Henry L. Stark and Levon Babayan. Canadians contributed \$300,000 to feed, clothe and house the refugees.

In 1923, the Association took the courageous step of bringing a group of Armenian orphan boys to Canada and set up a farm home where they would be educated until the age of sixteen and trained in agriculture as potential farm workers. With this venture, the Association broke new ground as the first inter-faith and inter-ethnic organization in Canadian history to facilitate the relief of refugee children. It was referred to as Canada's "noble experiment".

Under conditions laid out by the Canadian government, the Association was permitted to bring in the first group of fifty orphans from the Lord Mayor's Fund Orphanage in Corfu, Greece, who arrived to Canada on July 1, 1923. The second group of orphans arrived on October 2, 1924, who were joined by sixteen Armenian orphan girls in December 1927.

From 1923 to 1927, 109 of these orphan boys were brought to Georgetown by the Armenian Relief Association of Canada. The children came from different orphanages and ranged in age from 8-12. The Armenian Relief Association was led by Canadian clergy and businessmen and enjoyed the patronage of prominent Canadians like the Governor General of Canada, Sir Julian Byng, commander at Vimy Ridge. Only two Armenians, Paul Courian and Levon Babayan, were on the executive board.





The boys were placed at the Cedarvale Farm Home set up for them in Georgetown, Ontario, which is currently the Cedarvale Community Centre. The farm came to be known as the Armenian Boy's Farm Home. The landing of the first group of Armenian orphans, who later came to be known as the Georgetown Boys, was a unique event in the history of Canadian immigration. By 1927, a total of 109 boys and 29 girls had been welcomed and given safehaven in Canada.

They had their own school established for them in the Armenian Boys' Farm Home. The classes and curriculum were patterned after the Ontario School system of this time. The Farm Superintendent looked after the senior classes while Assistant Superintendent, A.L. Alexanian was the only Armenian-speaking adult on the premises. He was later assisted by Miss J.G. Adams and Miss Ethel Kenny. The farm was inspected from time to time by the Public School Inspector, J.M. Denyes.

Rev. J. W. Edwards (superintendent 1923-1925) and Alexanian were not trained as teachers and also had the responsibility of running the farm. Nevertheless, a rudimentary education was imparted. Alexanian, following other educational examples, allowed his students to publish their own monthly magazine. It was printed on paper supplied by the Georgetown Coated Paper Mills and entitled, "Ararat".

Hugh Kidd, as the Farm foreman saw that they boys were well-trained in agricultural skills. Almost every kind of animal and field husbandry was practiced at the Armenian Boys farm to prepare them for every rural eventuality.

Mrs. M. Smythe cooked for the residents while Miss Jennie farmer was the nurse. If serious illness threatened Dr. Marcellus and Dr. Ross of Georgetown would give their services free of charge. Dr. Watson, the dentist, similarly obliged. After Rev. Edwards left in February 1925, he was succeeded by Prof. A. Maclaren, Rev. Andrew Lane, Rev. Thomas P. Shaver and William Boland.

However, the boys were not kept in isolation. On Sundays, they paraded up to one of Georgetown's four principal churches and attended the services. They soon joined into the hymns. At Christmas they put on an 'entertainment' at the Town Hall on Guelph Street. Finally, they enjoyed the summer holidays at the YMCA Camp at the top of the Norval hill. With these social contacts, an education and husbandry training the boys were prepared for Canadian life.



Antranig Kevorkian #38. Transferred to Georgetown in 1923.

These boys had lost their parents, their homes and their country. They were brought to a country that was alien to them in language, culture and tradition. Jack Aprahamian, a Georgetown Boy, wrote of the boys' experience later on in life, he said:

*“Here was a group of Armenian lads, many of them with a Mediterranean appearance and accent, with no fluency in the language of the land, no skilled trades, no knowledge or experience of the city, striving against great odds to achieve a tenuous hold on the bottom rung of economic ladder. To many of the boys who had come this far in their young lives—shunted from orphanage to orphanage, and then surviving wars, persecutions, deportations, exiles, pestilences, prejudices and semi-starvation—the Great Depression was another demoralizing obstacle in the series of traumas they had encountered.”*

How did the Georgetown Boys use their freedom? They toiled and struggled and prospered in their new country. Most enjoyed a comfortable living, got married and had families. Finally, they were able to enjoy peace and opportunity and with this, a chance to forget or put aside the hard blows fate had dealt them during their young and tortured years.



Barefoot Cowboys: Hagop Aprahamian (#48); Hovsep Akeleian (#19); Sarkis Jilezian (#49).

On December 31, 1927 the Armenian Relief Association transferred Cedarvale farm to the United Church of Canada. They immediately removed the remaining boys elsewhere and opened the Farm as a home for girls. The girls either did not have any homes of their own or they could not stay at home for various reasons.

The Home officially opened on Friday May 18, 1928 at 2 in the afternoon. Mr. F.W. Duggan was chairman and the Rev. J.W.

Pierce, formerly secretary to the Relief Association, explained how the transfer was completed in exchange for the oversight and care of the Armenian Boys. The first superintendent of the school was Miss Jessie Oliver who opened the school with eight girls.

In 1944, Miss Oliver retired to Toronto (died 1963), turning the school over to Mrs. O. Houston. The Children's Aid Society continued to turn girls over to the school, necessitating expansion and modernization.

The girls continued to be encouraged to participate in ‘normal’ pursuits. The 8 to 12 year old girls often joined CGIT, Explorers, the YMCA, Guides and Brownies and went skating. The Superintendents also encouraged outside groups to use their facilities, like the YMCA, Rotary Club and the Georgetown Barber Shop Quartette.



Mrs. Houston was replaced in 1960 by Mrs. Phylis Stobie, the last Superintendent. Because of the great expansion of foster home care, the number of girls at CedarVale dropped to 14. After a long and careful consideration, the Board of CedarVale School announced in 1963, “At the end of August, after 35 years of operation, the CedarVale School will close its doors.”

Many proposals were advanced including one by the County of Halton to use the place as a half-way house for prisoners. Finally in

Lounge and Classroom in 1966  
-ehs07949 & 07953

1966, it was announced that the Town of Georgetown would purchase the property as a centennial project. They planned to convert it into a community cultural and recreation centre and to lease out space to various community organizations.

One group which took space was the YMCA. They opened the Maple Nursery School on the premises. The Y programme for pre-schoolers was taken over by parent volunteers in 1967. They continue to run the school privately as a co-operative effort.



## Site Analysis

*Cedarvale Park*, part of Lot 17, Concession 9, Esquesing covers 16.32ha (40.33 acres). It is bounded on the north by Maple Avenue; on the west by Main Street (8<sup>th</sup> Line); on the east by residential housing off Delrex Blvd., Pauline Street, Margaret Street and Cedarvale Court and on the south by the property line which follows a varied course through the trees and scrub.



Aerial view of Cedarvale School and grounds in 1966. EHS07945

This park constitutes a cultural landscape under the Ontario Heritage Act by virtue of being associated with the Armenian Farm School and the Cedarvale Girls' School. It is also defined as an evolved landscape being transformed from a family farm to a farm school into playing fields and recreational area with sections left to return to their natural state.

The focal point of this landscape is the Silver Creek which meanders through the western portion of the park and continues south to become the West Branch of the Credit and Credit River itself. This water course created the steep embankment on the west, along which the 8<sup>th</sup> line travels and the floodplain to the east of the creek, on which the playing fields are laid out, rising steadily to the top of the valley.

The buildings within Cedarvale Park have the municipal address of 181-185 Main Street South and consist of three buildings. A description of these buildings follows.

### *185 Main Street –Freeman-Bradley House*

This house appears to be two houses of different vintages joined together by what may have been the summer kitchen”. The main house is constructed of red hand-made bricks laid in a Flemish bond pattern. It is a single detached 1½ storey house built in the gothic revival style known as “Ontario Gothic” with a rectangular long façade. A single storey wing on the east side connects it to an older 1½ storey cut stone house. It appears to have a full partially above grade poured concrete basement added in later years. The house is topped with a medium gabled roof of asphalt shingles finished by a projecting verge with returned eaves boxed in by a plain vinyl soffit. A single brick chimney stack sits at the centre right of the house.



Ground floor windows have a plain opening with a header of bricks standing on end arranged in a flat angled pattern. The opening has no side decoration and sits on a plain lug sill. The windows themselves are double hung vinyl replacement windows.

The second floor gable end windows are small single hung windows in a plain opening with a lug sill and a header of butt end bricks in a double row.

The centre gable is decorated with gingerbread bargeboard and a wooden finial with a semi-circular window opening topped with a pattern of white bricks on their ends alternating with two butt end bricks. A double hung vinyl replacement window sits on the plain lug sill. The main entrance door is hidden by a closed porch. Early photographs show a single door framed by side lights.

The single storey wing, probably the original summer kitchen was originally wood siding, now covered with white vinyl siding. The wing is topped by a shed roof of asphalt shingles finished by a projecting verge with boxed in by a plain vinyl soffit. It has a single window opening with a square window of four panes. It appears to be close to where an exterior door is shown in historic photographs.



The 1½ storey cut stone house has a sawn finish laid in a broken course pattern. It appears to sit on a below-grade foundation of the same material. The house is topped by a high gabled roof of asphalt shingles finished by a projecting verge with returned eaves boxed in by a plain vinyl soffit on the front and a flush verge on the back. The windows and doors are plain openings with large plain stone lintels and plain lug sills on the windows. The windows are single hung wood frame windows with four panes, covered by aluminum storm windows.

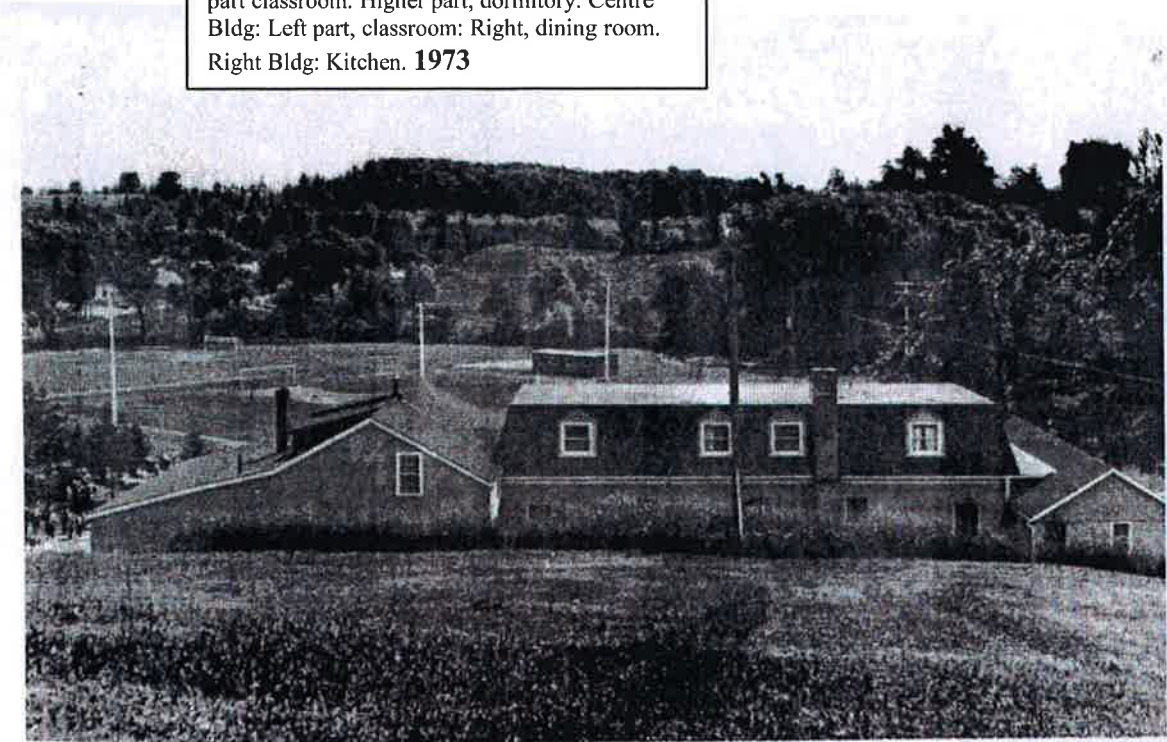


*181 Main Street South - Cedarvale Community Centre*

The original 2½ storey School building is a rectangular frame structure with a stucco covering. It has a two storey addition at right angles to the front west end of the building and a large two storey addition on the east end. Both wings have a matching exterior covering of stucco. The original building has a four sided flat mansard roof with four dormers at the rear and five dormers on the front, all with flush eaves. Both wings have flat roofs. The five styles of windows on the various floors and in the different wings are all replacement windows.



Cedarvale Community Centre. Left Bldg: Lower part classroom. Higher part, dormitory. Centre Bldg: Left part, classroom: Right, dining room. Right Bldg: Kitchen. **1973**



*183 Main Street South - Cedarvale Cottage*

The cottage is a one storey T plan detached frame building covered in stucco. It appears to have been built in two stages judging by the foundations. The main building with the enclosed and winterized porch has a stone-faced cinder block basement, while the top of the T has a poured concrete basement. The building has an asphalt shingle hip roof. All the windows have been replaced with vinyl except one wooden single hung painted wooden window on the north end of the cottage.



Cedarvale Cottage – 1966 (ehs07955) and 2009 photo showing south of the building.

## Reasons for Designation / Cultural Heritage Value

### *Cultural Landscape*

Cedarvale Park is a cultural Landscape because it has been altered by people and it has a special significance for this community because it conveys cultural messages about past and continuing practices. It falls under two of the three categories as defined by the World Heritage Committee and adopted by the Government of Ontario.

**Associative Landscape** – This Park and the buildings therein are associated firstly with the Freeman family who were significant farmers in the pioneer community of Georgetown. It was associated secondly with the Bradley family who were also significant farmers and businessmen of the Village of Georgetown and who named the place Cedar Vale farm. It was also particularly associated with the youngest son William Freeman Bradley who kept a portion of the original farm and started the Dominion Seed House in 1928, which eventually became the largest mail-order seed business in Canada.



The Park is associated thirdly with the Armenian Farm School which took over the Bradley farm and worked the land as a training ground for orphan boys who would call themselves ‘The Georgetown Boys’. Cedarvale Park is fourthly associated with the Cedarvale Girls’ School who were instrumental in adapting the farm to recreational pursuits.

**Evolved Landscape** – Cedarvale Park is a landscape transformed by the people who lived here over a long period of time. The Freeman

and then the Bradley family cleared the original forest and developed a very prosperous family farm. The farm evolved into a farm school with buildings and barns to serve a higher purpose of educating new Canadian citizens. Then the farm school evolved under the auspices of the United Church Girls’ School into playing fields and facilities which they shared with some Town organizations. This landscape continued to evolve under the Town of Georgetown and the Town of Halton Hills to better serve the community as a recreational facility.

### *Design Value*

#### **Freeman-Bradley House**

- i) The 1½ storey cut stone house has a sawn finish laid in a broken course pattern. The windows and doors are plain openings with large plain stone lintels and plain lug sills on the windows. The windows are single hung wood frame windows with four panes.
- ii) The 1½ storey house built in the gothic revival style known as “Ontario Gothic” is constructed of red hand-made bricks laid in a Flemish bond pattern. The house



has a projecting verge with returned eaves boxed in by a plain vinyl soffit. A single brick chimney stack sits at the centre right of the house.

Ground floor windows have a plain opening with a header of bricks standing on end arranged in a flat angled pattern and a plain lug sill. The second floor gable end window openings have a lug sill and a header of butt end bricks in a double row.

The centre gable is decorated with gingerbread bargeboard and a wooden finial with a semi-circular window opening topped with a pattern of white bricks on their ends alternating with two butt end bricks. The main entrance door is framed by side lights.

#### **Cedarvale Community Centre**

- i) The original 2½ storey School building is a rectangular frame structure with a stucco covering. The original building has a four sided flat mansard roof with four dormers at the rear and five dormers on the front, all with flush eaves.

#### **Cedarvale Cottage**

- i) The cottage is a one storey T plan detached frame building covered in stucco.

### *Historical or Associative Value*

Cedarvale was firstly the pioneer farm of John and Catherine Freeman, descendants of the founder of the Halton village of Freeman. They were important members of the Wesleyan Methodist Church at Kennedy's Meeting House and Georgetown. John Freeman was also a local Justice of the Peace.

Cedar Vale farm was so named by James Bradley, who was an important local millwright. It was secondly associated with the William Bradley family who made significant contributions to the business community by opening The Dominion Seed House which eventually became the largest mail-order seed business in Canada.

Cedarvale was thirdly associated with the Armenian orphans. The aim of the Armenian Relief Association of Canada was twofold: to help build the Canadian nation, while developing these boys into contributing citizens of Canada. Upon their arrival, the boys of Georgetown became patriotic and industrious. About twenty-five Armenians joined the armed forces, some volunteering in the very early stages of World War II. Three gave their lives for their new country of Canada. They proudly fought for Canada and defended her honour on the battlefields. Like the many minority groups that helped weave our social and political fabric, these boys constituted an important part of Canadian history.

As genocide survivors, these boys brought their own story; their own version of the injustice that befell the Armenian population. This "noble experiment" marks Canada's first involvement in international humanitarian aid by providing assistance to non-British or non-Commonwealth refugees.

The lessons learned from the Georgetown Boys experience are both Canadian and international in nature. Since the Farm School building was specifically built for them, it

symbolizes Canada's role in international humanitarianism, aid, and peace. Preserving this site will preserve the collective memory of this humanitarian effort, and the memory of the Armenian Genocide. It will help facilitate lessons in humanity, genocide, Canadian history, and international affairs.

Cedarvale School for Girls was associated with the hope for a better life for the many girls that passed through its doors. It also represents the method used by Canadian society to house orphans and unwanted girls before the advent of the foster home system used today.

Finally as Cedarvale Park since 1966, the property has provided innumerable preschool, organizational and sports-related experiences to three generations of residents to date.

### *Contextual Value*

Cedarvale Farm School was the first of its' kind in Canada, and was a "noble experiment" that proved to be a success. Canadians found this humanitarian effort to their liking. This school inspired the French-speaking Notre Dame de Beauregard (1935-1947-1977) and the Canadian Jewish Farm School (1927-1931), which both operated further south on this same 8<sup>th</sup> Line. Today there is no indication that these facilities once existed.



CedarVale Farm marked the southern boundary of the Village of Georgetown, but William Bradley's sale eventually resulted in the preservation of an idyllic rural retreat in the centre of an expanded municipality.

Cedarvale Park is the crown jewel in the Georgetown system of parks under the direction of the Town of Halton Hills. Every resident,

relatively new or long-term knows and appreciates this landmark park and its distinctive buildings.

## **Statement of Future Potential Focus**

Teachers of history will have access to a valuable resource, rich with the history of Canadian and Armenian experiences. Students will have the opportunity to explore the community of Georgetown, and mark its place in Canadian and world history. Also, through a series of insightful workshops, the Cedarvale Community Centre will attract students from across Ontario, and take them on an important and significant historical journey. This is especially relevant since the Toronto District School Board has implemented a Grade 11 course entitled Genocide and Crimes Against Humanity which has been adopted by over 20 schools in Toronto and in Kitchener-Waterloo region. The curriculum includes a section on the Georgetown Boys and teachers are always interested to take class trips to places that represent Canada's positive contribution to humanity.



Grade 4 students of A.R.S. Armenian Private School visit the Georgetown Farm every year. Students and teaching staff pause for a group photo in Spring 2009.

## **Conclusion**

Cedarvale Park is an outstanding place that embodies so much of Canada and its values. Its preserved landscape has evolved from our own Canadian pioneer experience. These hard-working self-sufficient values were passed on to new Canadians here in our first international humanitarian efforts on Canadian soil. Once again the values were passed on in our efforts as a society to deal with Canadian girls who needed a guiding hand to reach adulthood. These same values are still being instilled on this site today by parents, teachers, coaches and mentors who bring children to play and learn in its buildings, on its playing fields, on its woodland trails and in the babbling waters of Silver Creek.

## Sources

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## Current Owner

The Cedarvale Community Centre is currently owned by the Town of Halton Hills.

## Recommendation

Heritage Halton Hills recommends to the Council of the Town of Halton Hills to proceed with the designation of the Cedarvale Community Centre under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act for reasons explained in this report and summarized in Appendix I.



Dora Sutherland of the Red Cross and Councillor Bill Smith with four others, including the minister of the United Church, inspect the Town of Georgetown purchase in 1966.  
Ehs08036

## APPENDIX I

### *Statement of Significance*

|   |  |
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| <p><b>Description of Historic Place:</b><br/>i.e. Description of Property</p>           | <p>Cedarvale Park is located at 181-185 Main Street South at Maple Avenue being Plan 1269, Part Block N (Georgetown) in the Town of Halton Hills. Besides the playing fields, Silver Creek and wooded areas, it consists of the Freeman-Bradley House (built c.1840 / 1860); Cedarvale Community Centre (built 1923) and Cedarvale Cottage (built c. 1928).</p>  |
| <p><b>Heritage Value:</b><br/>i.e. Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest</p> | <p><i>Cultural Landscape Value</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Cedarvale Park is an associative cultural landscape because of its association primarily with the Armenian Farm School.</li> <li>ii) Cedarvale Park is an evolved cultural landscape because of its evolution from family farm to farm school to community recreation facility.</li> </ul> <p><i>Design Value:</i></p> <p><b>Freeman-Bradley House</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>iii) The 1½ storey cut stone house has a sawn finish laid in a broken course pattern. The windows and doors are plain openings with large plain stone lintels and plain lug sills on the windows. The windows are single hung wood frame windows with four panes.</li> <li>iv) The 1½ storey house built in the gothic revival style known as “Ontario Gothic” is constructed of red hand-made bricks laid in a Flemish bond pattern. The house has a projecting verge with returned eaves. A single brick chimney stack sits at the centre right of the house.<br/>Ground floor windows have a plain opening with a header of bricks standing on end arranged in a flat angled pattern and a plain lug sill. The second floor gable end window openings have a lug sill and a header of butt end bricks in a double row.<br/>The centre gable is decorated with gingerbread bargeboard and a wooden finial with a semi-circular window opening topped with a pattern of white bricks on their ends alternating with two butt end bricks. The main entrance door is framed by side lights.</li> </ul> <p><b>Cedarvale Community Centre</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii) The original 2½ storey School building is a rectangular frame structure with a stucco covering. The original building has a four sided flat mansard roof with four dormers at the rear and five dormers on the front, all with flush eaves.</li> </ul> <p><b>Cedarvale Cottage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii) The cottage is a one storey T plan detached frame building covered in stucco.</li> </ul> <p><i>Historical and/or Associative Value:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Cedarvale was firstly the pioneer farm of John and Catherine Freeman, descendants of the founder of the Halton village of Freeman. They were important members of the Wesleyan Methodist Church at Kennedy’s Meeting House and Georgetown. John Freeman was also a local Justice of the Peace.</li> <li>ii) Cedar Vale farm was so named by James Bradley, who was an important local millwright. It was secondly associated with the William Bradley family who made significant contributions to the business community by opening The Dominion Seed House which eventually became the largest mail-order seed business in Canada.</li> <li>iii) These buildings symbolize Canada’s role in international humanitarianism, aid, and peace. This site preserves the collective memory of this humanitarian effort, and the memory of the Armenian</li> </ul> |

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|  | <p>Genocide. It will help facilitate lessons in humanity, genocide, Canadian history, and international affairs.</p> <p>iv) This site represents the hope for a better life that the United Church Girls' School could offer. It also marks the method used by Canadian society to house orphans, unwanted girls before the advent of the foster home system used today.</p> <p><i>Contextual Value:</i></p> <p>i) Cedarvale Farm School was the first of its' kind in Canada, and on this same road inspired the French-speaking Notre Dame de Beaugard (1935-1947-1977) and the Canadian Jewish Farm School (1927-1931).</p> <p>ii) CedarVale Farm marked the southern boundary of Georgetown, but William Bradley's sale eventually resulted in the preservation of an idyllic rural retreat in the centre of an expanded municipality.</p> <p>iii) Cedarvale Park is the crown jewel in the Georgetown system of parks under the direction of the Town of Halton Hills. Every resident, new or long-term knows and appreciates this landmark park and its distinctive buildings.</p> |
| <p><b>Character-Defining Elements:</b><br/>i.e. Description of Heritage Attributes</p> | <p><i>Landscape, Historical, Associative and Contextual elements that contribute to the value of Cedarvale Park include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Silver Creek</li> <li>- the combination of recreational facilities and natural regeneration areas</li> <li>- the stone house with stone lintels and sills</li> <li>- the red brick Gothic-style house with a Flemish-bond pattern</li> <li>- the varied window lintels on the Freeman-Bradley House</li> <li>- the gingerbread bargeboard and wooden finial on the Freeman-Bradley House</li> <li>- the semi-circular window opening and main door sidelights on the house</li> <li>- the four sided flat mansard roof with four dormers at the rear and five dormers on the front on the Community Centre</li> <li>- the cottage</li> </ul>   |

Armenian boys working at Cedarvale Farm. This photograph comes from the United Church Archives. Ehs01058

