

9228 First Line_ Sam May House



Legal Description

CONCESSION 1 EAST, PART LOT 7, NASSAGAWEYA,

Description of Property

Samuel May built this one-and-a-half-story log house around 1861. Alexander Young Jackson, a well-known Canadian painter and a founding member of the Group of Seven, painted in the studio of this house. Canadian journalist Isobel LeBourdais, daughter of Frank and Isobel Brown, wrote the book "The Trial of Stephen Truscott" while living in this log house. This house is one of the few remaining early settlement houses in Nassageweya and continues to remind us of the settlement history of this historic Township.

Statement of Cultural Value and Interest

Historical Value

In 1835, Jeremiah Hirst, who served with the 4th Battalion of the Royal Artillery from Yorkshire, England, and his wife Mary nee Hudson, took out the Crown grants for the 100 acres in the east half of Lot 7 Con 1. Jeremiah's son, James, bought the property in 1854 and sold it the next year to Francis Campbell, who in turn sold it to Samuel May in 1861.

Samuel and his wife built their house on this lot around 1861. They had two sons, Thomas and Robert. Thomas inherited the farm in 1881. His son George Franklin (Frank) worked on the farm with him and eventually took ownership in 1935.

Frank May married Annie James, and they had ten children. Frank was a genius at making and repairing farm equipment and machinery. He invented a gas-drive drag-saw which he mounted on

a horse- drawn wagon and took around the neighbourhood to cut wood. He also designed an elaborate gate of entwined roots and constructed it at the entrance to this property. This artistic gate was moved to the Halton Regional Musuem.

In 1935, Frank May sold the log house and about 3 acres to Frank Erischen Brown. Frank Brown and his wife Isabel used it as a summer cottage until 1963. During that time, Alexander Young Jackson, Mr. Brown's cousin, a well-known Canadian painter and a founding member of the Group of Seven, painted in the studio that Mr. Brown had built beside the house. Canadian journalist Isabel LeBourdais, daughter of Frank and Isabel Brown, wrote the book "The Trial of Stephen Truscott" while living in this log house.

Isabel inherited and sold the property to Ralph and Moira Berquist in 1965. Subsequently, the property was sold to John and June Gardiner (1966), Jacobite Edgewater Kennels Ltd. (1967), Robert and Suzanne Appleford (1967). During the Appleford's ownership, the entire upper storey, flooring and some beams were damaged by an electrical fire. John and Margaret Pirrie bought the property in 1968 and made extensive repairs and restorations to the house. The current owners are Wayne and Judith Howard.

Physical or Design Value

Physically, this simple vernacular one-and-a-half-storey log house has a simple rectangular plan and a medium gable roof. Single-flue stone and brick chimneys are located on the east and west sides of the house. The simple cottage is adorned with six over six windows on the upper floor and pairs of eight-lite windows with four-lite transom and wooden shutters on the ground floor. A one-storey random stone studio was added to the original house in the 1940s. It has a medium slope gable roof and nine lite windows.

Contextual Value

Contextually, this house is one of the few remaining early settlement houses in Nassageweya and continues to remind us of the settlement history of this historic Township.

Character Defining Elements/Heritage Attributes

Key attributes that reflect the cultural heritage value of the property include:

- Original massing of the one-and-a-half-story log house with rectangular plan and medium gable roof
- Original massing of the attached one-storey stone studio with medium gable roof.
- Original hand-sewn wood rafter in the interior
- Original wood flooring in the interior
- Single flue stone and brick chimneys located at the East and West elevation
- Six over six windows on the upper floor
- Pairs of eight lite windows with a four lite transom and wooden shutters on the ground floor
- Nine light windows in the Studio
- Studio of Alexander Young Jackson, Canadian artist and a founding member of the Group of Seven
- Studio of Isabel LeBourdais, author of the book "The Trial of Stephen Truscott"
- The last remaining log house in the settlement history of Nassageweya, which was home to the early pioneer Samuel May.