

## Key Attributes for Designation

212 Caithness Street East, Caledonia – The Maples

### Description:

The Maples is a large, historic, family home in Caledonia, Ontario, located at 212 Caithness Street East, Caledonia. The property is legally described as Part Lot 17 North Caithness, Haldimand County.

The original parcel consisted of Lot numbers one through 15 and Lot numbers 30 through 33 in the Village of Caledonia and the area was surveyed by Emma I. Hamm in 1912.

Lot 17 North Caithness, was subsequently purchased by Archibald Tweedle, and again sold in 1921 to C.E. Donaghy for \$690.

The Deed of Land dated April 14, 1921 states: *The said Grantee on behalf of his heirs, Executors Administrators and assign covenants and agrees that no building except a house shall be built on the West half of the lands hereinbefore as described and that the west wall to the house erected on the lands hereinbefore described shall not be nearer than fifteen feet from the westerly limit of the lands hereinbefore described.*

The subject structure was built in 1921-1922 and incorporates a large house with porch, extensive back gardens, and garage/shop. The garage was likely constructed by Major G.M. Thomson, 2<sup>nd</sup> owner, in the late 1920's or the 1930's—who was the head of research at the Gypsum company—and he patented gypsum block construction, noting the garage does not conform to the 15 feet set back distance specified in the deed.

### Statement of Cultural Heritage Value:

212 Caithness Street East, Caledonia—The Maples—is worthy of designation under section 29 of Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act as it meets three of the prescribed criteria for determine cultural heritage value or interest, under O. Reg. 9/06. The cultural heritage attributes of this property include: design or physical value, historical or associative value, and contextual value.

#### Design or Physical Value:

The Maples has design value because of its impressive interior woodwork milled from local white and red oak, namely the paneling, wooden ceiling beams and cabinetry. The home encompasses many classic Edwardian features, one of the last built for this era. A transition to the Arts and Crafts period is evidenced by the imposing front porch with wood slat ceiling, carved railings and simple pillars. The home's 74 windows are almost all original, and nine windows and the front door are framed top and bottom with specialized stonework, added at great expense.

#### Historical or Associative Value:

Early Caledonia was an important location for the Grand River Navigation Company and later, the Grand Trunk Railway. It drew many settlers as a hub of industry and transportation in the town's early years.

The Maples has historical value having been built by Charles Edward Donaghy, a prominent local businessman and community leader. Mr. Donaghy was a local druggist for many years, he was involved in establishing Caledonia's baseball and cricket scene, and served as a member of the Board of Education and Town Council.

Donaghy built the home for Miss Maggie Bell Patterson, in his efforts to woo and wed her. Miss Patterson was a popular local school teacher and founder of the Caledonia Women's Institute. The receipted cost of his build was in excess of \$18,000, a princely sum in 1921.

Much of this cost was due to Miss Patterson's particular design needs which changed many times during the build process. Although they never married and never lived in the home, both had contributed to its establishment.

Major G.M. Thomson was a WW1 Canadian Army veteran (wounded at Ypres). He and his family moved into The Maples in 1927. His son, George (Geordie) R., was a Canadian Army (RHLI) Lieutenant and died in combat in 1945 – just before the end of WW2. Major Thomson was a founding member (February 1935) of the Caledonia Club (later the Caledonia Men's Club) established during the Great Depression to undertake charity work for needy people in Caledonia and the surrounding area. The Club is still operating today, after 90 years, 'Helping Quietly In Caledonia'. Apparently, Major Thomson's employment with the Gypsum Company was terminated in 1936 when they closed down his department – due to the Depression. Mrs. Thomson passed away in 1940 and the remaining Thomson's left The Maples in 1940.

#### Contextual Value:

The Maples has contextual value as it became a prominent and well-known landmark residence in Caledonia. The story of the romance between Donaghy and Patterson and the home they built, formed part of the lore of Caledonia in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the house standing as a bittersweet testament to their devotion to each other and their town.

Over the years the grand house became part of the fabric of Caledonia's past, forming part of a row of houses of affluent residents that saw the rise and fall of this town's ties to transportation on the Grand River, and witnessing a hundred years of the Caledonia Fair across the road.

#### Description of Heritage Attributes:

The following elements should be considered as the heritage attributes in the designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act:

- The north, south, east and west elevations and rooflines;
- Cooper eaves troughs on the main house;
- All stonework at the foundation and surrounding windows (lintels and/or sills) and the front door;
- Front porch with shed roof, hardwood slat ceiling, oak pillars, flooring and carved red oak balustrade;
- Five exterior oak doors, with glass window panels including the following:
  - Front door with nine bevelled, leaded glass panels;
  - Sunroom door, one bevelled, leaded glass panel;
  - Back (north) door, two plain glass panels;
  - Rear sunroom door, one bevelled, leaded glass panel; and
  - Deck door (second floor), one plain glass panel;
- Exterior windows (74), double hung construction, sash windows;
- Interior staircase with carved details;
- The breakfast room cabinetry and panelling (British Columbia fir);
- The main hall, living room, dining room interior panelling (white oak); ceiling beams (elm), and the leaded glass cabinetry (red oak, quarter cut);
- Exterior cast iron panel for the coal chute door, manufactured by the Galt Stove and Furnace Co. Ltd. in 1906;
- Garage ceiling and walls, made from locally sourced gypsum blocks; and
- Front door handle and lock.