

APPENDIX B

Heritage Research Report



**153 Balsam Drive
Oakville, ON**

December 2019

HERITAGE RESEARCH REPORT STATUS SHEET

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| Street Address: | 153 Balsam Drive |
| Short Legal Description: | LT 34, PL 1009; OAKVILLE |
| Heritage Type: | Residence |
| Heritage Status: | Listed Heritage Property |
| Zoning: | RL1-0 |
| Land Use: | Residential |
| Research Report Completion Date: | December 2019 |
| Heritage Committee Meeting Date: | December 17, 2019 |
| Designation Brief Completed by: | Carolyn Van Sligtenhorst Heritage Planner |
| Sources Consulted: | Ancestry website: www.ancestry.ca Halton Images website: www.images.halinet.on.ca <i>Oakville and the Sixteen</i> by Hazel C. Mathews <i>Oakville: A Small Town</i> by Frances R. Ahern Oakville Beaver Oakville Historical Society files Oakville Public Library Archives <i>Ontario Architecture</i> by John Blumenson Ontario Architecture website: www.ontarioarchitecture.com Ontario Land Registry Records Town of Oakville files |

STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST

The subject property has been researched and evaluated in order to determine its cultural heritage significance according to Ontario Regulation 9/06. This Regulation, defined in the *Ontario Heritage Act*, outlines several criteria for determining whether a property is of cultural heritage value or interest. In order for a property to be designated under section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* it must meet one or more of these criteria, which are outlined below. By using these criteria, staff can determine if the property's cultural heritage value or interest merits designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

1. The property has design value or physical value because it,
 - i. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method,
The subject house is a representative example of a c.1920s vernacular home built with Period Revival influences.
 - ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit
The property displays a modest degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit that is consistent with the materials of the era in which it was constructed.
 - iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement
There are no technical or scientific achievements associated with this property.
2. The property has historical value or associative value because it,
 - i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community,
The subject property is associated with William Tailby, an early fruit grower in Trafalgar Township.
 - ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture, or
The property contributes in a general way to the understanding of the early 20th century suburban development of Oakville.
 - iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community
The property is not associated with an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is known to the community.
3. The property has contextual value because it,
 - i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area,
The subject house supports the low-density residential character of Balsam Drive which is characterized by single-detached homes in a wide range of styles and dates of construction.
 - ii. is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings, or
The subject property is physically and historically linked its surroundings which have evolved from farmland to mid-20th century suburbs to the affluent residential community that it is today.
 - iii. is a landmark.
The property is not considered to be a landmark.

Design and Physical Value

Based on available records and stylistic characteristics, the residence at 153 Balsam Drive was likely constructed in the early to mid-1920s. The house is a simple 1-1/2-storey vernacular frame home built with influences from the Period Revival style. The structure has a cross gable roof with stucco-clad walls on a concrete block foundation. Original design features include faux half-timbering in the front gable combined with rough cast stucco cladding. The entrance is recessed under an open porch with a hipped roof.



West (front) elevation of house.



North elevation of house.

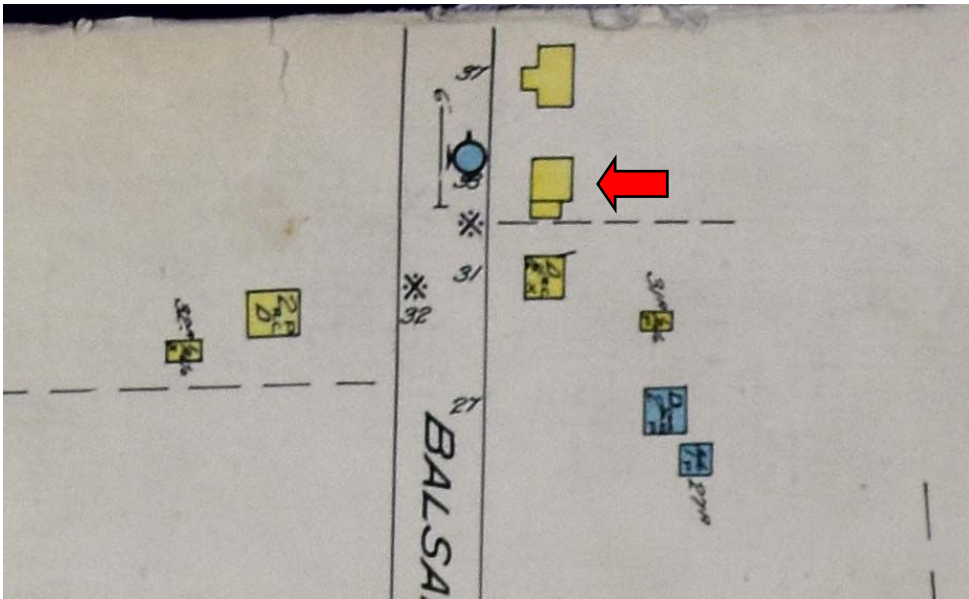


Rear elevation of house with contemporary 2-storey addition and contemporary 1-storey addition.



Front and south elevation of house.

In 1975, a two-storey addition was constructed at the rear of the house and in 2009, a one-storey addition was added at the rear on the northeast corner of the house. The 1949 fire insurance plan for the area shows a wing on the south side of the house which was later removed. The house would have originally had wood windows but they have been replaced with modern vinyl units. The original form of the house and porch, along with the stucco walls and fenestration of the windows and doors on the north, west and south elevations, remain relatively intact.



153 Balsam Drive is marked by the red arrow. [Fire Insurance Plan 1949]

The house is a modest vernacular home that was a fairly common design for its time. The small amount of detailing on the home is influenced from the Arts and Crafts movement, part of the larger Period Revival architecture trend that was common in Ontario from the 1900s to the 1950s (and can still be seen today). Inspired by historic English and French architecture, these styles featured elements from the Tudor period to the later Jacobean period. The movement was a reaction to the Industrial Age and the mechanization and modernization of the workforce and society in general. Architectural details such as decorative woodwork and stone detailing were handcrafted, beautiful and of high quality. The designs were meant to connect people to nature and remind them of the beauty and simplicity of life before the Industrial Revolution.

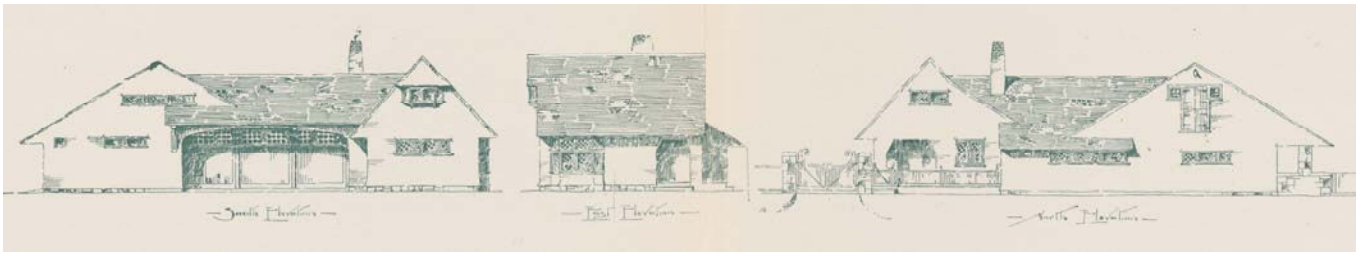
The Period Revival style was put to good use in many of the estate homes that began dotting the landscape of Oakville's rural edge and lakefront in the 1900s to 1930s. Tudor rooflines, diamond-shaped lead-pane windows, rustic stone columns and chimneys, half-timbering and decorative wood details were all common elements in these homes. Many of these significant estate homes in Oakville remain today as protected heritage properties.



Early 20th century photo of a Tudor style home at 46 Cameo Street in Oakville [Oakville Historical Society]



1926 photo of the estate house at Gairloch Estate [Oakville Historical Society]

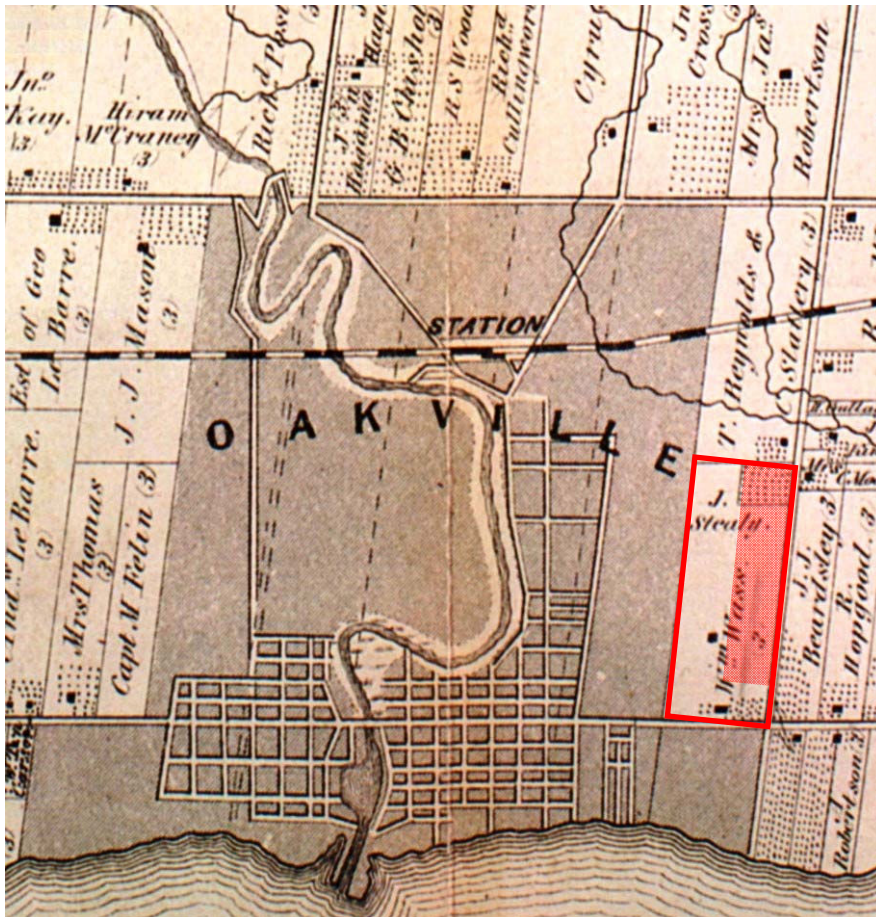


Architectural drawings for the Coach House at Erchless Estate [Canadian Architect and Builder Magazine]

While the house at 153 Balsam Drive may not be an example of one of these grand estate homes, it does have some heritage value as a representative example of a vernacular home that employed some of the architectural techniques of the Period Revival era in a more modest manner.

Historical and Associative Value

The property currently known as 153 Balsam Drive was originally part of Lot 11, Concession 3, SDS (South of Dundas Street) in Trafalgar Township. This land was formerly part of a large 200-acre parcel purchased by William Wasse in 1860. In 1878, William Wasse sold off 90 acres on the east side of what is now Balsam Drive (formerly Centre Avenue), likely to finance the construction of 'Balsam Lawn', the 1878 Italianate frame house located today at 114 Balsam Drive.

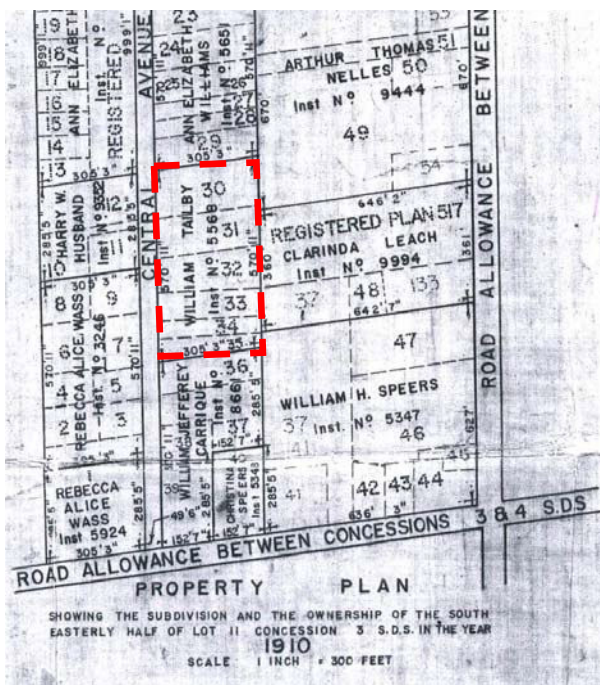


The subject property is located on a 90-acre portion (shown in red) of the Wasse farm that was sold off in 1878. [Halton County Atlas 1877]

In 1890, William Tailby purchased a small four-acre portion of this 90-acre parcel for \$600 (see 1910 survey below). Census records indicate that William was a farmer already living in a house on this property with his wife Sarah and their nine children, perhaps as early as 1871. Business directories from 1871, 1881, 1891 and 1901 list William Tailby alternatively as a labourer, gardener, fruit grower and farmer. William and his family lived in a frame house that is now known as 159 Balsam Drive, located directly to the north of the subject property. This house, known over the years as the 'Patrick House', was built in the 1850s by William Wass at the northwest corner of Lakeshore Road and Balsam Drive and moved to its current location before he built 'Balsam Lawn'.

William Tailby died in 1916 and his wife Sarah followed in 1922. In 1925, both the subject property and the adjacent one at 149 Balsam Drive were left to their daughter Laura Rebecca Tailby and son Charles Amos Tailby who had lived with their parents until their deaths. Both houses were identical in size and design and very likely built at the same time.

There have been anecdotal stories that William built the two houses at 149 and 153 Balsam Drive for his two daughters who did not get along very well. This has never been verified and land registry records show that Laura owned both properties for many years. We do know through voter records that Laura lived in the house at 149 Balsam Drive until her death in 1960. Having had an illegitimate child in 1908, she never married but instead lived with her child and brother Charles Amos who died in 1957. So it is possible that one of their sisters lived in the house at 153 Balsam Drive, but no such records have been found.



William Tailby owned four acres on the east side of Balsam Drive comprised of Lots 30-35 of this 1910 Survey. The subject property is located on Lot 34. [1910 Survey]

In 1941, Laura and Charles sold the subject property to Wilbert Ballagh, an accountant, and his wife Frances. They lived in the house with their daughter Rosemary until Wilbert's death in 1953. Frances Ballagh sold the house to Reginald, an editor, and his wife Winnifred Englebert who owned it until 1962. David Jackson, a salesman, and his wife Mabel purchased the property and sold it in 1970 to Leo and Trudy Senesi. The current owner purchased the property in 1972.

Below is a summary of the owners of the property from 1890 to the present. The rows shaded in grey indicate ownership after the estimated construction of the current house.

| Name of Owner(s) | Years of Ownership |
|--|--------------------|
| Crown | 1806-1828 |
| King's College | 1828-1838 |
| Thomas Leech | 1838-1859 |
| S. Greeniaus | 1859-1860 |
| Joseph Leach | 1860 |
| William Wass | 1860-1873 |
| Mary Wass | 1873-1878 |
| George Andrew and William Henry Speers | 1878-1890 |
| William Tailby | 1890-1925 |
| Laura Rebecca Tailby and Charles Amos Tailby | 1925-1941 |
| Frances A. Ballagh and Wilbert W. Ballagh | 1941-1953 |
| Reginald Englebert and (Margaret) Winnifred L. Englebert | 1953-1962 |
| David M. Jackson and Mabel M. Jackson | 1962-1970 |
| Leo Peter Senesi and Trudy Norene Senesi | 1970-1972 |
| Current owner | 1972-present |

The property is considered to have some historical value for its association with the Tailby family, in particular William Tailby who was by all accounts a fairly successful fruit grower and farmer in Oakville around the turn of the 20th century. Little information could be found on subsequent owners who appear to have been average middle-class residents of Oakville.

Contextual Value

The subject property is located on the east side of Balsam Drive and is directly associated with two other properties owned by the Tailby family. The first is the 'Patrick House' at 159 Balsam Drive which is listed on the Heritage Register and is considered to be of significant cultural heritage value. This was the home of William and Sarah Tailby where the Tailby children were raised. The second is the house at 149 Balsam Drive which was removed from the Heritage Register in 2015. The house at 149 Balsam Drive was built at the same time as the subject house and the two structures were originally identical. Alterations to both houses over the years have made this connection less evident.



The properties at 153 and 149 Balsam Drive, two identical houses built by the Tailby family in the 1920s. Later alterations to the two houses have made this connection less apparent. [Staff photo]



The house at 159 Balsam Drive in the late 19th century (on the left) and in the 1980s (on the right). [Oakville Historical Society]

This area remained primarily rural until well after World War II. Subsequent land divisions created new lots all along Balsam Drive. In 1955, the area was registered as a subdivision, as seen in the plan of subdivision below. One-storey bungalows were built on the new empty lots throughout the 1950s and 1960s. A large lot fronting on Balsam Drive was assembled from three different landowners to provide a site for the New Central Public School which replaced the old school on Navy Street.



1949 Fire Insurance Plan on the left and 1955 Plan of subdivision on the right (with the subject property outlined in black). The new lots created in 1955 accommodated the New Central Public School in Lot 37 and new detached homes in the new empty lots. [Plan of Subdivision, Plan 1009, Registered 1955]

In more recent years, this affluent residential neighbourhood has seen the replacement of the mid-century bungalows with larger custom homes on its generously-sized lots. Many of the 19th century and early 20th century homes remain and are protected through individual designation or listed status under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. These include the c.1865 'Clearview' at 109 Balsam Drive (designated), the 1878 'Balsam Lawn' at 114 Balsam Drive (designated), the c.1850s 'Patrick House' at 159 Balsam Drive (listed) and the c.1860s Italianate home at 184 Balsam Drive (listed).

Through the town's Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy, the streetscape of Balsam Drive from Lakeshore Road to Macdonald Road was recognized as a potential cultural heritage landscape with medium priority status. The streetscape is considered to be an Organically Evolved Landscape, which is described as a landscape that "results

from an initial social, economic, administrative, and/or religious imperative and has developed in its present form in response to its natural environment”. More particularly, the streetscape is considered to be a Continuing Landscape which “retains an active social role in contemporary society closely associated with the traditional way of life, and which the evolutionary process is still in progress”.

The streetscape of Balsam Drive is characterized by a generally flat topography, the absence of curbs, soft and/or grassed shoulders and mature tree plantings. Of particular note are the large spruce trees along the west side of the street which are a remnant of the original ‘Balsam Lawn’ property. The cultural heritage landscape assessment recommends that the streetscape be recognized through the protection of the right-of-way only, rather than all of the private properties along the street. This could be done through a variety of planning tools, including the designation of the streetscape under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.



View of Balsam Drive looking north. [Town files]

While the property at 153 Balsam Drive is considered to contribute to the character of the streetscape of Balsam Drive, it is not considered to be a significant defining feature. It does help to support the low-density residential character of the area and is historically linked to its surroundings, but it is not considered to be a significant landmark. The cultural heritage value of the Balsam Drive streetscape could therefore be maintained, even without the retention of this particular house.

Conclusion

The property at 153 Balsam Drive is considered to have some cultural heritage value for its modest early 20th century vernacular home and for its historical associations with the Tailby family. It is also considered to have contextual value as part of the Balsam Drive streetscape which has been recognized as a potential cultural heritage landscape.

However, the property is not considered to meet the criteria in Ontario Regulation 9/06 in any significant way and therefore is not considered have sufficient cultural heritage value to merit designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

As identified in the Cultural Heritage Landscape Strategy, the streetscape of Balsam Drive potentially has significant cultural heritage value, as do the other listed heritage properties along the street. These include the c.1850s 'Patrick House' at 159 Balsam Drive and the c.1860s Italianate style house at 184 Balsam Drive. These have been identified by staff as strong candidates for designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.