

Research and Evaluation Report



(Town of Halton Hills 2023)

McKinlay Dentistry Building
50-52 Main Street South, Town of Halton Hills

December 2023

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1.0 Property Description

50-52 Main Street South	
Municipality	Town of Halton Hills
County or Region	Region of Halton
Legal Description	PT LT 1, PL 51, AS IN 184361 (SECONDLY); HALTON HILLS
Construction Date	c.1891
Original Use	Commercial/Residential
Current Use	Commercial/Residential
Architect/Building/Designer	Charles McKinlay
Architectural Style	Unknown at this time
Additions/Alterations	Interior; First storey front elevation
Heritage Status	Listed on the Town’s Heritage Register
Recorder(s)	Laura Loney
Report Date	December 2023

2.0 Background



Figure 1: Location Map – 50-52 Main Street South



Figure 2: Aerial Photograph – 50-52 Main Street South

This research and evaluation report describes the history, context, and physical characteristics of the property at 50-52 Main Street South in Halton Hills, Ontario (Figure 1 and Figure 2). The report includes an evaluation of the property’s cultural heritage value as prescribed by the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

2.1 Historical Background

Indigenous History Background

The enduring history of First Nation Peoples in Halton Hills can be traced back through time immemorial before contact with Europeans in the 1600s. Prior to the arrival of European settlers, the Credit River was central to Indigenous ways of life, supporting settlements, fisheries, horticulture, transportation, and trade. Iroquoian-speaking peoples, ancestors of the Wendat, occupied the Credit River Valley for hundreds of years until approximately the mid-1600s, establishing semi-permanent villages. There are numerous archaeological sites in Halton Hills dating from this period, ranging from village sites to burial grounds, which reveal a rich cultural heritage.

The Wendat were displaced by the Haudenosaunee around 1649-50 amid the conflicts that arose between European colonial powers and their First Nation allies. The Mississaugas (part of the Anishinaabe Nation) arrived in southern Ontario in the 1690s, settling in two groups along the north shore of Lake Ontario and Lake Erie. The western group, occupying the area between Toronto and Lake Erie, became known as the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Until the early 19th century, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation followed a seasonal cycle of movement and resource harvesting along the Credit River (Missinnihe, meaning “trusting creek”), and other rivers. In the winter months, extended family groups hunted in the Halton Hills area, travelling south towards the mouth of the river in the spring for the salmon run. The Mississaugas’ fisheries and traditional economies were diminished as a result of increased Euro-colonial settlement, leading to a state of impoverishment and dramatic population decline.

In 1818, the British Crown negotiated the purchase of 648,000 acres of land from the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, including present-day Halton Hills, under the Ajetance Treaty (No. 19), named after Chief Ajetance. This left the Mississaugas with three small reserves on the Lake Ontario shoreline. The legitimacy of early land “surrenders” to the Crown is questionable when considering the Mississaugas’ traditional understanding of property ownership. Unlike the British, the Mississaugas understood land in spiritual terms, and did not share the idea that access to land and resources could be given up permanently¹.

Archie and Charles McKinlay

Archibald (Archie) McKinlay (1855-1889) was a dentist, demonstrator, and teacher at the Royal College of Dental Surgeons. Dr. McKinlay established his dental practice in a house on Main Street (16 Main Street South) in Georgetown, in which he also lived. In 1884, the *Acton Free Press* advertised that McKinlay was now using the latest technology of “Vitalized Air”, or nitrous oxide gas (“laughing gas”), for anesthesia in his practice. McKinlay was also one of the first School Board trustees for the Georgetown High School Board which opened in January 1887.

¹ This brief overview of Pre-Treaty Indigenous Territory within the land now known as Halton Hills is taken from the Town of Halton Hills’ 2023 *Cultural Heritage Strategy*. This document includes additional recommendations relating to Truth and Reconciliation in Heritage Planning as part of the Town's commitment to advancing Truth and Reconciliation.

Charles McKinlay, L.D.S. (1846-1916) studied dentistry with his brother Archie, following several years of teaching in the Township of Erin. In 1886, C. McKinlay became licensed and soon began his practice. Archie McKinlay died following an illness contracted upon return from a trip to Europe. Following Archie's McKinlay's death, Charles took over the dental practice in Georgetown, and continued his brother's twice-monthly visits to Acton.

In 1890, Charles McKinlay purchased the subject property, and in 1891, McKinlay built what is known now as the "McKinlay Building". The *Toronto Daily Mail* reported in 1893 that the building was "... red brick, two storeys high, with basement and thirty by fifty feet in dimensions", while the ground floor was used commercially and the upper floors for McKinlay's offices and residential use.

In 1909, McKinlay sold the property to realtor Jonathan Harvey Lane (1856-1922). Following Lane's death, the executors of Lane's estate transferred the property to Lane's son, John Thomas Elmore Lane (1912-1990).

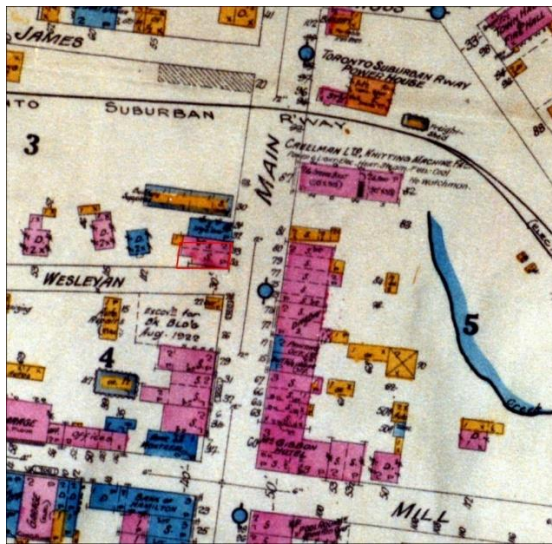


Figure 3: Subject property identified on the 1922 Fire Insurance Plan



Figure 4: Main Street South c.1925. Subject property identified on the right (EHS 00094)



Figure 5: Subject property identified on the 1934 Fire Insurance Plan

In 1946, Lane sold the property to M. (Marion) Sybil Bennett (1904-1956) and Leroy Dale (1889-1956). Law partners Leroy Dale and Marion Sybil Bennett were significant figures in Halton in the first half of the twentieth century. Bennett graduated from the University of Toronto (1926) and Osgoode Hall (1930) and was called to the Bar in 1930; she was the fourth woman to be named King's Council in the British Commonwealth. Bennett served as a solicitor for 6 years for the Agricultural Development Board at Queen's Park and later practiced law with partner Dale in Georgetown. Bennett was also President of the National Women's PC Association, life member of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (IODE), honorary president of Esquesing Agricultural Society, and a member of the United Church, Georgetown Business & Professional Women's Club, Soroptimist Club, Law Society of Upper Canada, and the Women's Law Association of Canada. Bennett was a federal politician and was elected to Parliament as a Conservative in 1953.

Leroy Dale was the first mayor of Georgetown following village status in 1922. A fellow graduate of Osgoode Hall, Dale came to Georgetown in 1914 and opened his law practice on Main Street. Dale was elected to Council in 1919, elected Reeve in 1920, and elected Mayor in 1922. Like Bennett, Dale was a prominent politician however for the Conservative party, running provincially but unsuccessfully. Dale was named King's Council in 1934. In 1936, Dale and Bennett became legal partners and formed the law firm of Dale & Bennett.



Figure 6: Main Street South in Georgetown c.1949. Subject property identified on the left (EHS 00634)



Figure 7: Main Street South in Georgetown c.1950. Subject property identified at the end of the commercial row (EHS 26094)



Figure 8: Subject property identified on the 1960 Fire Insurance Plan

In 1965, the property was owned by Richard (Dick) Licata. Dick Licata and his wife Tina owned a fruit business on Main Street in Georgetown, previously owned by his brother-in-law Tony Restivo. Licata was an important citizen of the community, as President of the Lion's Club, and fundraiser for the Salvation Army amongst other roles.

The subject property was home to various commercial uses throughout the years. In 1977, The Gift Ark was located at 52 Main Street South; in the 1990s, the building was home to Telehop Communications. In 2001, the property was transferred from the estate of Richard Licata to Thomas and Heather Best who owned the property until August 20, 2004.



Figure 9: Subject property identified along Main Street, date unknown (Ray Eckert via The Georgetown Vault)



Figure 10: 50-52 Main Street South identified on a 1994 photograph (EHS 10938)



Figure 11: Main Street in Georgetown, c.2007. Subject property identified on the right (Courtesy the Georgetown Vault)



Figure 12: Then and Now Feature of 50-52 Main St S (*Independent & Free Press*, August 6, 2020, p.7)

The property was purchased in 2004 by Judith Louis Grant-Horner. Grant-Horner opened Accountants on Main at the subject property in 2006. The property was registered in Grant-Horner's name until it was transferred to 1837383 Ontario Inc in 2012.

2.2 Property & Architectural Description

The property at 50-52 Main Street South is a rectangular-shaped parcel located along the southwest side of Main Street South in Georgetown in the Town of Halton Hills. The existing two-storey commercial building occupies almost all of the existing property with a small reveal at the rear corner and carport with above balcony and addition to the rear with a paved asphalt driveway.



Figure 13: Looking towards the subject property at 50-52 Main Street South (Town of Halton Hills 2023)



Figure 14: Looking up Main Street South towards the subject property (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

The existing building features a flat roof with a slight slope towards the rear; above the stone string course beneath the parapet at the rear, slightly lighter brick is evident at the rear, suggesting repair or intervention to the existing roofline.

The front elevation is symmetrical in its appearance, representative of a vernacular late nineteenth-century commercial property as it has retained its scale, form, and massing over time. At the first storey,

the elevation has been overclad with what appear to be EIFS or stuccoed panels and applied architectural detailing to reflect a more traditional appearance. At the second storey, the elevation is divided into two bays with brick pilasters, and two single window openings are symmetrically placed within each bay, with a continuous stone course delineating the first and second storeys. At the parapet, brick dentils and detailing define the roofline, with metal flashing above. Rounded brick detailing defines the northeast corner of the building.



Figure 15: Front elevation of the existing building at 50-52 Main Street South (Town of Halton Hills)



Figure 16: Detail of the front elevation of the existing building at 50-52 Main Street South (Town of Halton Hills)

The side (southeast) elevation along Wesleyan Street is almost completely covered with a painted mural, however the architectural detailing remains defined on this elevation. The rubble stone foundation, partially parged, extends above the paved sidewalk. The side entrance, flat-headed with transom window and stone lintel, is accessed via a flight of concrete steps. Small rectangular window openings are extant towards the south end of this elevation. As with the front elevation, the first and second storeys are delineated with a stone course, with three flat-headed window openings between these courses. The slope of the roof is evident at the parapet above the upper stone course.



Figure 17: Side (southeast) elevation of 50-52 Main Street South (Town of Halton Hills 2023)

A reveal at the southeast corner features unpainted brick and a small, covered porch above a single flat-headed entrance. Above, a flat-headed window opening with stone sill and lintel is extant at the second storey. A small rectangular window opening is extant within the return. A modified window opening with stone lintel is visible adjacent to the rear addition, and a brick chimney extends above the roofline above the second storey. The rear (southwest wall) is partially obscured with a rear carport and upper storey addition. An additional entrance is accessed beneath the carport.



Figure 18: Rear corner of the existing building on the subject property (Google Streetview 2023)

3.0 Description of Heritage Attributes and Evaluation Checklist

The following evaluation checklist applies to Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the *Ontario Heritage Act*: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. The criteria are prescribed for municipal designation of Heritage Properties under Part IV, Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The evaluation tables utilize an 'X' to signify applicable criteria and 'N/A' to signify criteria that are not applicable for this property.

Design or Physical Value	
Is rare, unique, representative, or early example of a style, type, expression, material, or construction method	X
Displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	N/A
Demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement	N/A

The property at 50-52 Main Street South in Georgetown has physical and design value due to the c.1891 commercial building known as the McKinlay Building extant within the property. The two-storey building height with red brick exterior, brick and stone detailing, extant window openings at the second storey, and detailing parapet reflect characteristics typical of many of the late-19th century commercial buildings within the downtown Georgetown core. While the front elevation at the first storey has been altered, the alterations have been sympathetic to the heritage character of the building and the downtown.

Historical or Associative Value	
Has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization, or institution that is significant to a community.	X
Yields, or has potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	N/A
Demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer, or theorist who is significant to a community	N/A

The subject property and McKinlay Building have significant historical and associative value due to its associations with one of Georgetown's earliest dentists, Charles McKinlay, who constructed the building for his practice and for residential use. The subject property has also been owned by significant residents of Georgetown, including Leroy Dale and Sybil Bennett, as well as Richard (Dick Licata). Additionally, owner Judith Louis Grant-Horner has been recognized as an important member of the business community in downtown Georgetown.

Contextual Value	
Is important in defining, maintaining, or supporting the character of an area	X
Is physically, functionally, visually, or historically linked to its surroundings	X
Is a landmark	N/A

The McKinlay Building has contextual value as it is important in defining the built heritage character of the downtown. The existing two-storey building remains in its original location, physically and functionally linked to its surroundings as a commercial property on the Georgetown main street.

4.0 Summary

Following research and evaluation according to Ontario Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the property at 50-52 Main Street South has physical and design, historical and associative, and contextual value and therefore meets Ontario Regulation 9/06 criteria for determining cultural heritage value or interest.

The heritage attributes of the property at 50-52 Main Street South are identified as follows:

- The setback, placement, and orientation of the two-storey, late-19th century commercial building within a commercial row in historic downtown Georgetown;
- The scale, form, and massing of the two-storey building;
- The materials, including red brick exterior and architectural detailing, stone detailing, and rubble stone foundation;
- The front elevation at the second storey, divided into two bays;
- The stone course above the first and second storeys;
- The extant flat-headed window openings at the second storey on the front and side elevations between the stone courses; and,
- The single entrance door at the first storey on the side elevation with stone lintel.

The rear elevation and interiors have not been identified as heritage attributes as part of this report.

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