

# Research and Evaluation Report



9 Church Street (C. Patney 2020)

## **Former Georgetown Congregational Church**

9 Church Street, Georgetown ON, L7G 2A3

December 2020

### **Prepared by:**

Chirag Patney, Heritage Student and John Mark Rowe, Vice-Chair - Heritage Halton Hills Committee

with Laura Loney, Senior Heritage Planner - Town of Halton Hills

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## 1.0 Description

<b>9 Church Street: Former Georgetown Congregational Church</b>	
<b>Address</b>	9 Church Street, Georgetown, Ontario
<b>Municipality</b>	Town of Halton Hills
<b>County or Region</b>	Regional Municipality of Halton
<b>Legal Description</b>	Lot 41, 42, 43, and 44 on the Barber-Young Plan of Georgetown Formerly part of Lot 18, Concession 8, Twp. of Esquesing
<b>Construction Date</b>	1877
<b>Original Use</b>	Congregational Church
<b>Current Use</b>	Cultural Centre and Library
<b>Architect/Building/Designer</b>	Original Stone Church Builder (1877) – William H. Watson Architect for Addition (1981) – Keith H. Wagland Architect for Addition (2011) – Chamberlain Architect Services
<b>Architectural Style</b>	Neo-Gothic
<b>Additions/Alterations</b>	1951 – Entire ground floor of library renovated to change lighting and add more bookshelves 1981 – Addition added onto the existing library, taking over the north-west half of the lot 2012 – Addition added to the south side of library as the Town purchased adjacent property for an expansion
<b>Heritage Status</b>	Listed on the Town of Halton Hills Heritage Register and Designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the <i>Ontario Heritage Act</i> (1982), former Town of Halton Hills By-law 1979-0067
<b>Recorder(s)</b>	Chirag Patney and Mark Rowe; Laura Loney
<b>Report Date</b>	October 2020

## 2.0 Background

This Research and Evaluation Report describes the history, architecture, and contextual value of the property at 9 Church Street, which was designated under Part IV, Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* in 1979 by the Town of Halton Hills under By-law No. 79-67. The report includes an evaluation of the property's cultural heritage value as prescribed by the Province of Ontario in the 2005 amendments to the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

### 2.1 Historical Timeline

<b>Date</b>	<b>Historical Event</b>
1759-1801	Congregationalism gains popularity in Canada with the acceptance of an offer made by the British Government of land to New Englanders who relocate to Nova Scotia. In 1801, the British Congregationalists who had gathered in Nova Scotia sent a missionary to organize a church in Quebec which led to the formation of the Congregational Union of Ontario and Quebec.
Early 1840s	Reverend Stephen King assembles a small congregation in the growing town of Georgetown. Originally, the congregation gathered at a local schoolhouse and later in the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in Georgetown.
1851	The Congregationalists build a modest frame structure on land donated by William Barber.
1877	The original Congregational frame structure is deemed unsafe to handle the large

	crowds of a funeral service. Plans and designs for a new building at the corner of Church and Market Streets are drawn and William H. Watson is hired as the builder for the new church.
May 14, 1877	First stone laid for new Church building at the corner of Church and Market Streets.
Sept. 1, 1877	Church construction is complete and features a spire bell tower and dedicated stained glass window. Local limestone is used as construction material.
	Congregation member James Barber donates one third of the cost of the new building and offers a further \$500 on the day the Church opens.
1895	The introduction of the Provincial Libraries Act allows for the failing Georgetown Mechanics Institute to donate their library collection to the Village Council. The donation comes with certain stipulations (e.g. Library must be free to use for all residents of the village).
1899	Georgetown Public Library is established and operates out of local Town Hall.
Oct. 30, 1899	First salaried librarian, Miss Berta Glass, is hired for \$8.33/month.
Dec. 17, 1912	Indenture is signed to sell the Church property to the Village of Georgetown for \$1. Charles Kennedy P.L.S. (not the namesake of Georgetown) undertook plan and survey of the property.
Dec. 28, 1912	The property and building are officially deeded to the Village of Georgetown to house the library collection. Part of the agreement includes a requirement to ring the church bell every Sabbath at the usual time. Deed is signed by John Barber, Francis Ruddell, and Robert B. Barber over to the Village. Renovations begin to transform the interior of the building to be suitable for the library. This includes lowering the vaulted church ceiling and adding in a washroom. J.B. Mackenzie of Georgetown is hired to do the renovations.
1912	The Carnegie Foundation is asked for \$400 to aid in covering the cost of the renovations, however this request was rejected. Funds are then requested from locals, and the Women's Institute comes forward first and offers to finance a rest room in the library.
Mid-1913	Newly renovated library opens for the public.
Early 1914	A gym class is proposed in the library to keep boys out of mischief after some troubled behaviour by a group of young boys occurred.
Mid-1914 - 1916	The gym and rooms in the library are utilized by the military to train new recruits for WWI.
1924	The ringing of the bell on each Sabbath (Sunday) is stopped due to safety concerns that the bell housing is too loose in the spire tower.
1951-1955	Library membership grows fourfold and a new building is suggested. However, due to financial constraints, major renovations are undertaken within the interior of the library building instead. This included adding shelving units, new lighting, and reconfiguring the auditorium for alternative uses.
1955	Four feet of land is transferred to the neighbouring Knox Presbyterian Church to help facilitate an addition to the Presbyterian church.
1963	The Library board renovates the basement and moves the junior book collection to the new space.
1964	The bell is taken out of the tower and is relocated on a stone base in front of the library.
1974	The Town of Halton Hills incorporates and all public libraries in the area are

	concentrated within one library board. This puts strain on the Georgetown Library's services as increased usage required more books and space which was not possible within the existing structure.
May 30, 1980	Property is transferred from the Village of Georgetown to the Town of Halton Hills for \$2.
1981	An addition is added on to the west side of the stone library building. The addition is designed by Keith Wagland and allows for the creation of the Cultural Centre and the John Elliot Theatre.
2006	Property adjacent to the Library (Lot 41 and 42 on the north Part of Plan of Georgetown) is purchased by the Town to allow for building expansion (26,000 ft <sup>2</sup> ). Following a feasibility study, the project planning committee puts the project on hold until funding for the expansion and renovation can be confirmed.
2008	The Library and Cultural Centre receives funding for major renovation. Expected start date for construction is Spring 2010 and the temporary site to house the Library's collection is secured at Holy Cross Church (224 Maple Avenue).
2009	Delay in the construction of the Holy Cross Church's new building results in a delay of the Library renovation and expansion until Winter 2011.
April 2011 – December 2012	Melloul Blamey Construction Inc., Chamberlain Architect Services, MMM Group, Bronte Engineering, MTE Consultants, Millennium Engineering, and Enermodal Engineering perform the expansion and renovation of the Halton Hills Library and Cultural Centre.
January 26, 2013	Newly renovated and expanded Halton Hills Library and Cultural Centre opens with 34,400 ft <sup>2</sup> of spaces.
2014	Library is awarded LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver certification.

## 2.2 Land Use History

The heritage property located at 9 Church Street is located within Lot 18, Concession 8, and Eighth Line. The property is located within downtown Georgetown in the Town of Halton Hills, Ontario, on the southeast corner of Church and Market Streets. A land use history of the property is provided as follows.

On March 10, 1819, Christian Barnes was granted the west half of Lot 8, Concession 8 in Esquesing Township. Barnes is also indicated as the owner on the 1822 Patent Plan (Figure 1). Barnes was a Loyalist descendant that came to Esquesing Township from Grantham Township in 1819. On July 19, 1844, Barnes was granted the full 200 acres of Lot 18 after completing his settler duties. In Lucy E. Emslie's book 'A History of St. John's Anglican Church, Stewarttown, Ontario,' the 200-acre property is noted as an Indigenous cemetery prior to colonial settlement. Emslie goes on to mention that the Indigenous artifacts were found on and around the property in later years.

In the early 1850s George Kennedy led the way for town lots and streets to be laid by severing his own land. It is likely that neighbouring properties followed suit. The 1858 Tremaine's map shows Lot 18, Concession 8 being split multiple ways in ownership (Figure 2). 100½ acres were sold to Peter Barnes, Christian's son, 50 acres of the north-west of the property were sold to George Goodwillie, and the remaining 49 and 1/2 acres on the east portion of the lot were sold to the partnership of James Young and William Barber to allow for streets to be laid for the Village of Georgetown (Figure 2).





Figure 1 -The study area overlaid on the 1822 Patent Plan for Esqueving Township (Archives of Ontario 1822)

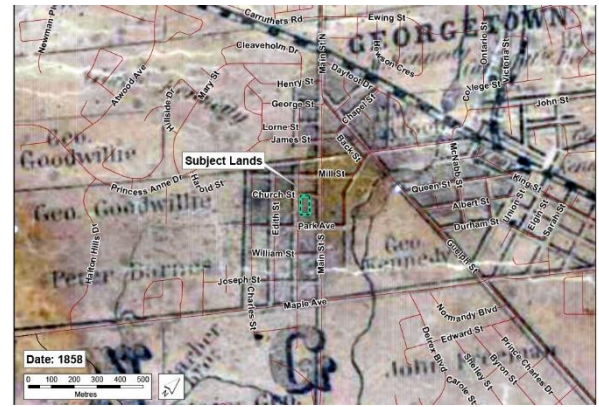


Figure 2 - The study area overlaid on the 1858 Tremaine's Map for Esqueving Township (Tremaine 1858)

In 1877, the first owners of the property were the Congregational Church who was gifted the land by William Barber, a supporter of the Church and catalyst in the development of the Village of Georgetown. The Illustrated Historical Atlas of Halton (1877) shows Lots 41-44 within which the existing building is located (Figure 3). However, during the initial sale of lots, the Congregational Church membership only purchased Lots 44 and 43. In 2006, the Town of Halton Hills purchased Lots 41 and 42 which coincidentally were listed at a time when the Town was considering major renovations to expand the Library and Cultural Centre.

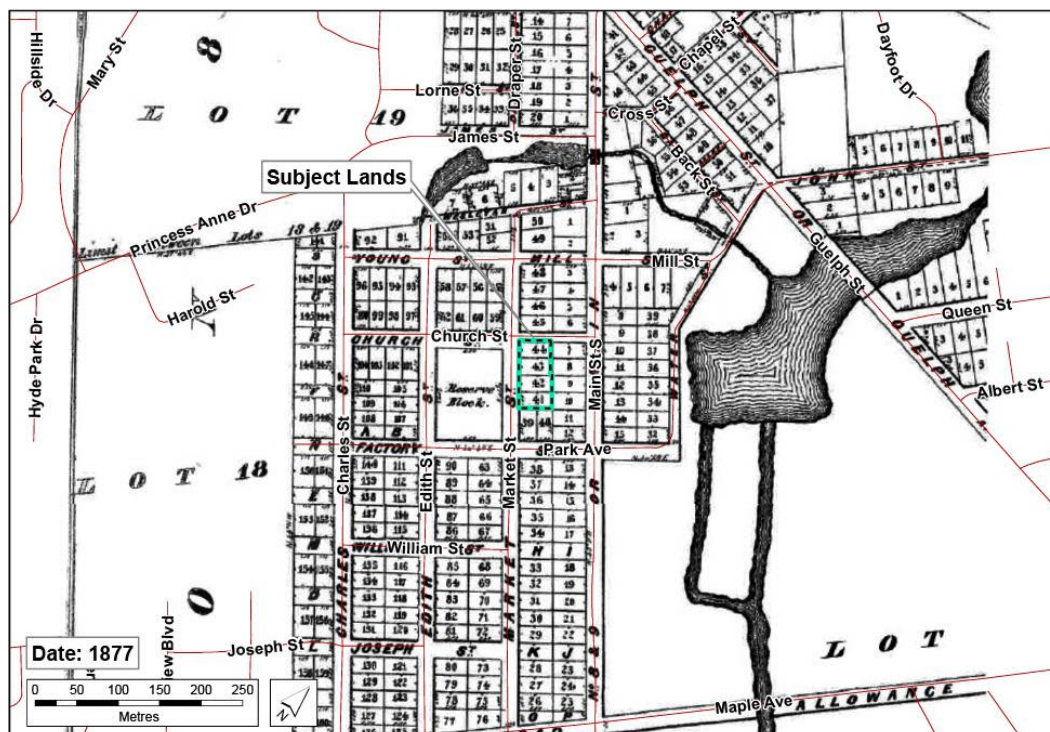


Figure 3 - The study area overlaid on the 1877 Halton County Atlas.

It should be noted that not all historic features of this property, including the location of trees, and topography, were systematically mapped throughout the 1900s. The 1909 topographic map depicts a

stone or brick building on the property used for institutional or commercial purposes. The property itself is unchanged from 1909 to 1942. The building on-site was transferred from the Congregational Church to the local government for use as a library in 1912 and received renovations in the months ensuing until opening day in mid-1913. Most of these renovations were on the interior.

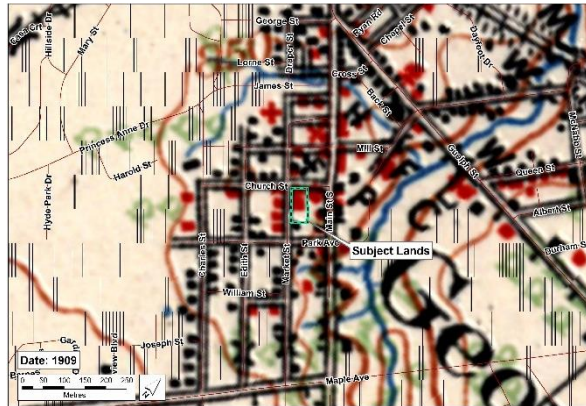


Figure 4 - The study area overlaid on the 1909 National Topographic Map  
(Department of Militia and Defence 1909)

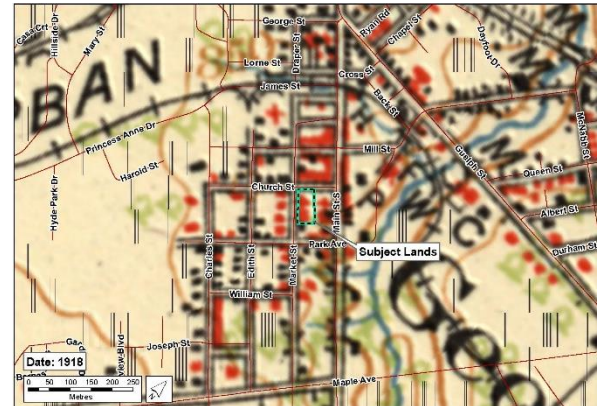


Figure 5 - The study area overlaid on the 1918 National Topographic Map  
(Department of Militia and Defence 1918)



Figure 6 - The study area overlaid on the 1929 National Topographic Map  
(Department of Militia and Defence 1929)

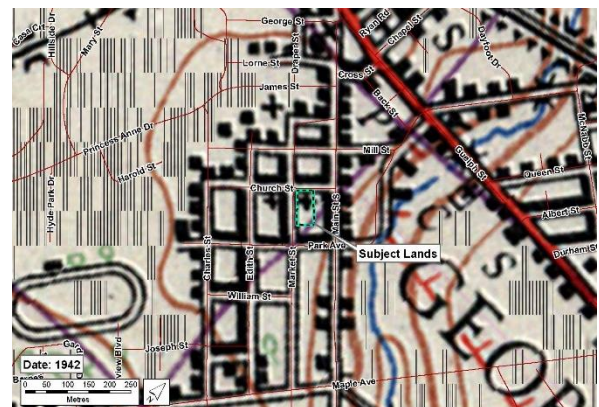


Figure 7 - The study area overlaid on the 1942 National Topographic Map  
(Department of Militia and Defence 1942)

The 1954 Town of Georgetown survey features the town streets and prominent locations throughout the town and identifies the library in its legend (Figure 8). The 1974 topographic map highlights the continued growth of Georgetown with the addition of a hospital to the west of the property (Figure 9). This was the same year that the Town of Halton Hills was incorporated, and the transition had begun to a new form of local government that encompasses a larger area. The property was transferred to the Town of Halton Hills in 1980.



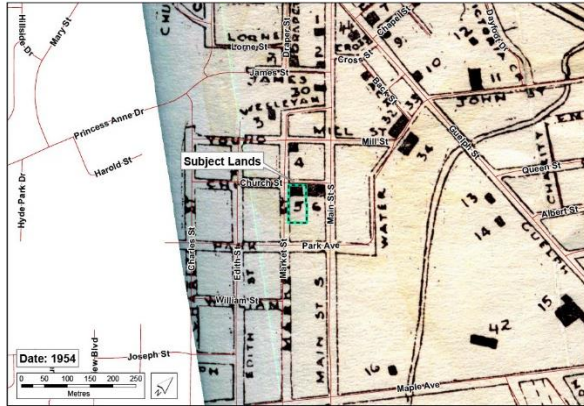


Figure 8 - The study area overlaid on the 1954 survey of Georgetown.

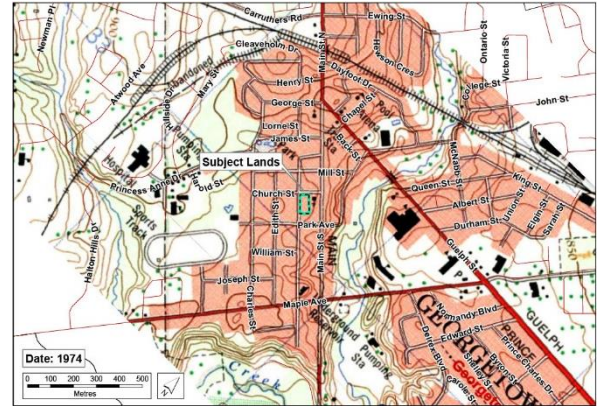


Figure 9 - The study area overlaid on the 1974 National Topographic Map  
(Department of Energy and Mines, and Resources, 1974)

The 2018 aerial photograph shows the library and cultural centre with the addition on the south and east sides and major renovations completed in 2013. There is no on-site parking given that nearly the entirety of the property is taken up by the building (Figure 10).

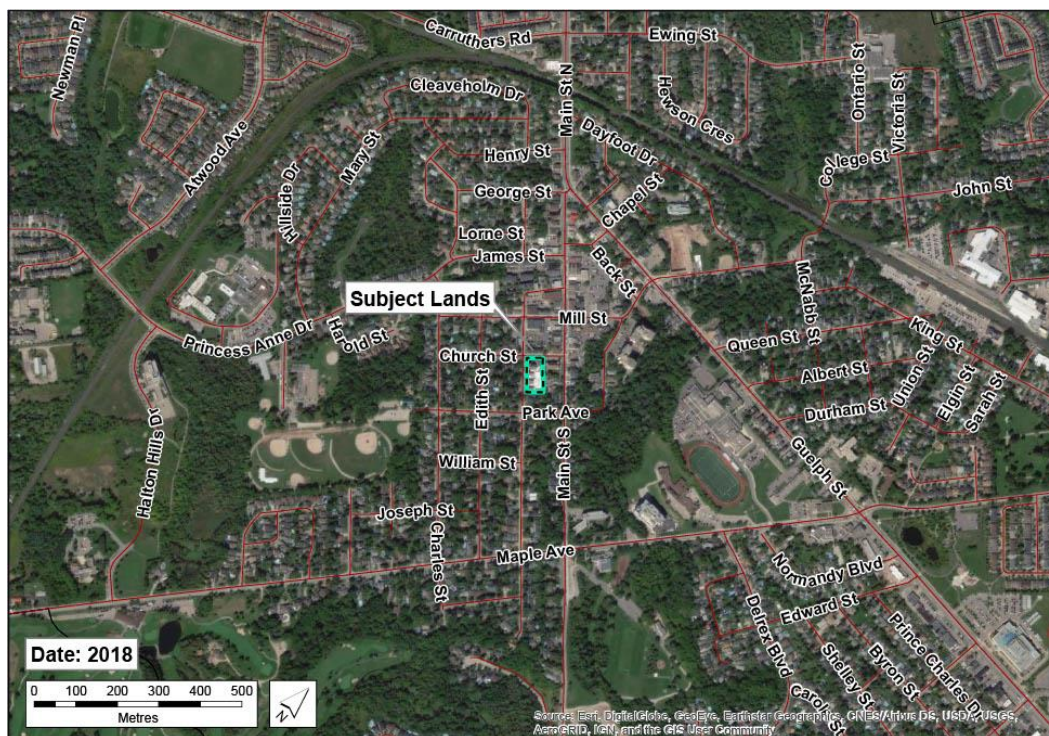


Figure 10 - The study area overlaid on the 2018 Google Satellite Image



## **2.3 Historical Background**

### **Downtown Georgetown**

The neighbourhood at Church and Main Streets is the one of the oldest neighbourhoods in Georgetown. The village was established after United Empire Loyalist George Kennedy settled in the area in 1823 due to the abundance of water for milling purposes. His mill was the beginning of an early settlement known as George Kennedy's Mill. However, by 1837, there were still only three families living around the mill. In that same year, the Barber brothers, an entrepreneurial duo, bought a woollen mill and foundry from Kennedy and renamed the settlement Georgetown in his honour.

The Barber brothers' business attracted more industrialists to the area, including the Dayfoot family in 1844 that operated a thriving leather and shoe trade in Ontario. The area soon became a centre of commerce and industry, attracting an increasing number of industrialists partly due to the Toronto to Guelph Road (1828) passing through the area providing access to Kennedy's Mills, the Grand Trunk Railway (1856), and the Hamilton and North West Railroad (1877) connecting Georgetown to Milton, and to the CPR at Allendale (Barrie).

In 1864, the population of Georgetown was 1250 and the area was incorporated as a Village on December 16<sup>th</sup>. Following population growth during the 1870s and 1880s, wooden frame homes and public buildings built in the 1840s and 50s were often replaced by brick and stone edifices. Gothic Revival architecture was becoming popularized by the writings of Augustus Pugin, as was evident with the construction of the Gothic Revival Chapel Street School (1869), Baptist Chapel (1869), and Town Hall (1878).

In the late 1870s, the original frame structure of the Congregational Church was deemed unsafe. A new building was constructed at the corner of Church and Market Streets in 1877 (Figure 12). The mid-late 1800s was the beginning of architectural prowess in Georgetown as it saw the construction of many prominent buildings that followed similar architectural styles.

### **Congregational Church and the Barber Family**

Congregationalism originated in Canada through the acceptance of free land by British immigrants to Nova Scotia. In 1759, several hundred immigrants arrived in Nova Scotia, creating new towns, and bringing with them their religious beliefs. Congregationalism saw two initial churches constructed in Nova Scotia, one in Chester and another in Liverpool. Following this success, British Congregationalists sent a missionary to organize a church in Quebec in 1801, leading to the formation of the Congregational Union of Ontario and Quebec (the "Union"). Congregationalists tended to be wealthier and entrepreneurial and were quick to affirm these claims of intellect and foster educational institutions and academies.

As Congregationalism grew in popularity throughout Quebec and Ontario, Reverend Stephen King assembled a small congregation in the growing village of Georgetown in the early 1840s. Early members gathered in the local schoolhouse and eventually moved into the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel for a short period of time.

Brothers Joseph Jr., Robert, William, and James Barber were founding members of the Georgetown Congregational Church. The Barber family immigrated to Canada in 1822 where Joseph Barber Sr. used

his experience and skills to work as a stonemason under James Crooks, the namesake of Crooks Hollow. Joseph Jr., Robert, William, and James Barber soon gained experience working in the nearby paper mills. In 1837, six years after their father passed away, the Barber brothers moved from Crooks Hollow to George Kennedy's Mill. The brothers purchased a portion of George Kennedy's land and built a woollen mill and metal foundry just south of the Kennedy Mill, and renamed the village in honour of George Kennedy.

By 1843, Georgetown was a growing community attracting other businesses such as the 'J. B. Dayfoot & Co.' boot and shoe factory. Some of this growth has been attributed to the initial success of the Barber brothers who attracted in further business to the Georgetown area. The Barber woollen mill soon became very profitable, and the brothers opened a second mill in Streetsville (Mississauga). The Barber brothers would eventually consolidate the woollen mills in 1851 in Streetsville.

William Barber donated the tract of land on corner of Park and Church Street to the Congregational Church for the eventual location of their first building which opened in 1851, a modest frame structure but still had a 50ft spire. In just over 20 years, in the mid-1870s, the Congregational frame church had fallen into a state of despair. In 1877, the frame church building was deemed unsafe as it could not structurally handle a funeral service with a large crowd. Designs and plans were drawn up for a new stone building with Neo-Gothic Architecture, a prominent form of church architecture throughout Canada at the time (Figures 11 & 12). The new building would be located on the corner of Church and Market Streets, neighbouring the Knox Presbyterian Church. The new Congregational Church dominated the skyline as the neighbouring Presbyterian Church was a one-storey brick building at the time.

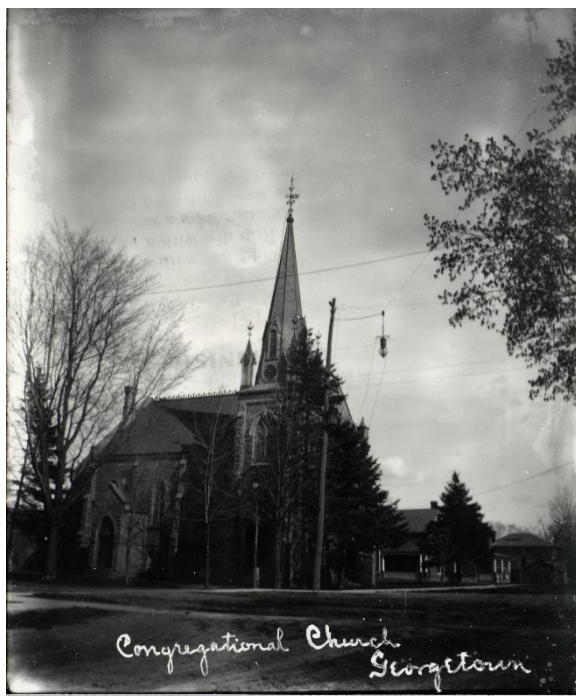


Figure 121 - Archival Photograph, Market Street looking south to Church Street, 1908: showing the property while it was still a church. (Esquesing Historical Society Archives, EHS 12245)



Figure 11 - - Archival Photograph, Inside of Congregational Church, 1908: showing the interior of the Congregational Church decorated for a harvest home service. Photo depicts vaulted ceilings, pews, and the stained glass window in the background (Esquesing Historical Society Archives, EHS 05159)

Joseph Barber donated one third of the cost of the building on the condition that the remaining debt be cleared by other members of the Church by the following night. Joseph Barber also served as the Deacon for the Church for 34 years. The new building cost \$6500 and included a spire and bell tower with a bronze church bell manufactured in 1878 in Troy, New York by the Meneely and Kimberly Foundry. The south end of the building was dominated by a large stained-glass window dedicated in honour of James Barber's wife, Maria Barber, who died in 1876.

The 1880s saw an active growth of membership for the Congregational Church and are considered some of the most prosperous years in the Georgetown Church's history. However, in 1892, the congregation began to see a stark decline in membership, falling from 102 members to 80. The congregation continued to dwindle in membership as the Church closed for the summer in 1909. Soon after, the congregation at Georgetown ceased to exist. The remaining congregants decided that the property should be donated to the Village to house the growing library. The official indenture indicates that the deed was signed over to the Village of Georgetown in 1912 (Figure 13). Following the donation of the Church building and property, Congregationalists joined other denominations in the area including the Presbyterians, Methodists, and Anglicans.

CANADA Province of Ontario County of Halton	}	I John J. Allen of the Village of Georgetown in the County of Halton Commercial Traveller	make oath and say:
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To Wit:

1. That I was personally present and did see the within instrument and a duplicate duly signed, sealed and executed by John Roaf Barber, Francis Ruddell And Robert B. Barber ~~and~~ of -----
2. That the said Instrument and duplicate were executed by the said parties thereto at the Village of Georgetown in the County of Halton and in the City of Toronto in the County of York respectively.
3. That I know the said parties.
4. That I am a subscribing witness to the said Instrument and duplicate.

SWORN before me at the Village of Georgetown in the County of Halton this 28<sup>th</sup> day of December A.D. 191<sup>2</sup>,

*John J. Allen*

*H. W. Kennedy J. P. for Halton Co*

A Commissioner for taking Affidavits in H. C. J., Co.

*John J. Allen*

Figure 13 - The Indenture to deed the property and building that was the Congregational Church to the Village of Georgetown. The Indenture is signed by John Barber, Francis Ruddell, and Robert Barber as representatives of the Church, and is received by John Allen from the Village (Esqueving Historical Society Archives, MG8 A20).



## **Halton Hills Library**

Prior to the absorption of Georgetown into the Town of Halton Hills in 1974, the Halton Hills Public Library was known as the Georgetown Public Library. In existence since 1895, the Library initially came to fruition from the tradition of Mechanics Institutes popular across much of southern Ontario. Mechanics Institutes were associations for those who had finished school to continue their education through attending evening classes and special lectures. The Institutes also offered a library stocked with books, newspapers, and magazines.

The Georgetown Mechanics Institute was re-formed in the spring of 1880 after local dollars raised were matched by the Department of Education. The enthusiasm for the Georgetown Mechanics Institute (the "Institute") saw its library collection grow rapidly for the first three years of operation. However, the following twelve years of the Institute's operation saw much slower growth of the library, a dip in active membership, and repeated failure to qualify for and obtain provincial funding for the Institute. The Georgetown Village Council occasionally offered grants of \$25 or \$40, along with free rent to aid the Institute. However, as membership continually dwindled, new provincial legislation in 1895 encouraged directors of the Institute to turn over the collection of nearly 1,300 volumes to the Village on the condition that access to it be free for all residents of the Village. This was the birth of the Georgetown Free Library in 1895 and the Acton Free Library in 1898. From inception, the Georgetown Library Collection was housed in the local Town Hall and managed by Miss Alberta Glass, one of the first public librarians hired for the library in 1899 earning \$100 a year.

After a few years in operation, the Georgetown Council requested funds from the Carnegie Estate for a new building, following its generosity to other public libraries across North America. However, their requests were turned down in 1903 and again in 1910. In 1912, members of the local Congregational Church, anticipating a union of the Congregational Church with the Methodist and Presbyterian churches, decided to move next door to Knox Presbyterian. Founding president of the Georgetown Mechanics Institute and leading local industrialist John R. Barber, with the other trustees of the Congregational Church, deeded the land and building to the Village to be used as a library. The conditions of sale included the provisions that no gambling of any kind be permitted on the premises, that the Memorial window remain, and that the Church bell be rung each Sabbath for Church Services. Following the land transfer to the Village, the Carnegie Foundation was again asked for \$4,000 to cover the cost of renovating the building; however, this request was once again refused.

Despite the refusal for funding by the Carnegie Foundation, renovations proceeded with Council's funding. J.B. McKenzie of Acton was given the contract for renovations including rest rooms and a new metal ceiling, and the newly-renovated library officially opened on October 10, 1913 (Figures 14-18). The newly renovated space included an auditorium equipped with gymnastic equipment which was used during WWI for training recruits. After WWII, Georgetown's population significantly increased, growing fivefold between 1951 and 1971. Many of the new residents were young families that required new schools and growing library facilities. As a result, a junior collection of books was expanded and moved into the basement of the Georgetown Library.



Figure 14 - Archival Photograph, Market Street south of Church Street, 1913: looking north on Market Street towards Church Street. The building is now housing the Georgetown Library (Esquesing Historical Society Archives, EHS 12082)



Figure 15 - Archival Photograph, Front of Library, 1973: showing Library prior to any additions being added on. The arched doorway within the spire tower has been repurposed as the main entrance to the library (Esquesing Historical Society Archives, EHS 01442)



Figure 17 - Archival Photograph, 1973: showing the Congregational Church bell on a cairn in front of public library (Esquesing Historical Society Archives, EHS 01444)

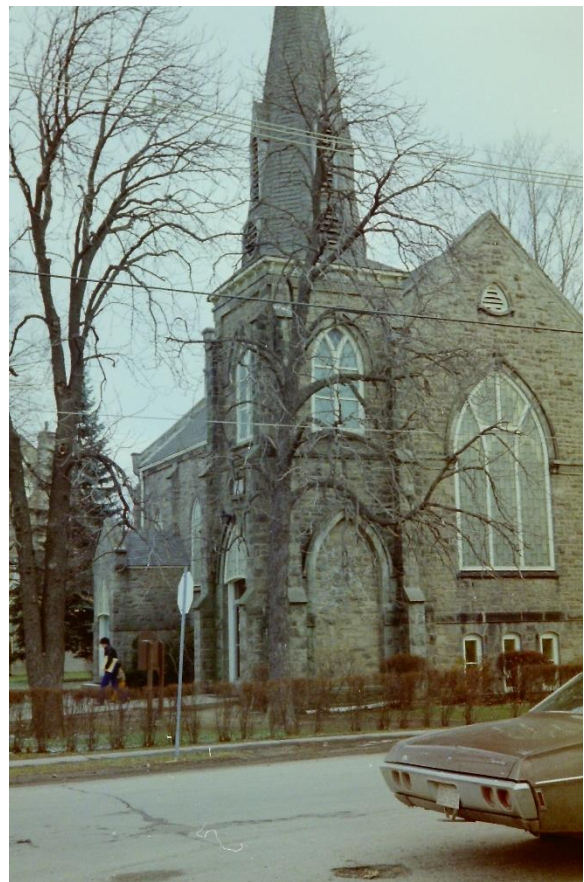


Figure 16 - Archival Photograph, 1973: showing the northwest corner of the library building prior to any additions (Esquesing Historical Society Archives, EHS 01445)



Figure 18 - Archival Photograph, 1973: showing the north elevation of the building from Church Street. Of note are the two arched entrances (Esquesing Historical Society Archives, EHS 01443)

In 1980, the Georgetown Library was recommended for expansion to 25,000 ft<sup>2</sup> from its current size of 6,000 ft<sup>2</sup>. The Church Street location was originally deemed inadequate to renovate, resulting in plans drawn up for a new library on Main St. and Cedarvale Park. However, this site was rejected by residents and the plans reverted back to an expansion and renovation of the existing structure. The expansion doubled the existing floor space to 13,000 ft<sup>2</sup> and was completed in October 1981 (Figures 19 & 20). This renovation allowed for more shelving for books with empty shelves for new purchases, reference desks, a children's activity area, a space for the Esquesing Historical Society Archives, and the John Elliott theatre for community groups.



Figure 18 - Archival Photograph, 1988: Looking south on Market Street showing the addition added to the south elevation of the library (Esquesing Historical Society Archives, EHS 12248)



Figure 19 - Archival Photograph, 1994: Looking east on Church Street showing the addition on the south elevation of library. The spire tower is the tallest structure within view (Esquesing Historical Society Archives, EHS 10980)

The library continued to grow and build partnerships with community organizations for years to follow. In doing so, the library once again started to reach capacity in the early 2000s and required upgrades. In 2006, the lot adjacent to the library on the South became available. After undertaking a feasibility study, the Town of Halton Hills purchased the property to allow for another expansion and major renovation of



the library facilities. In order to complete these renovations, it required the demolition and reconstruction of parts of the 1981 structure. In a multi-firm partnership, Melloul Blamey Construction Inc., Chamberlain Architect Services, MMM Group, Bronte Engineering, MTE Consultants, Millennium Engineering, and Enermodal Engineering undertook the expansion and renovation of the Halton Hills Library and Cultural Centre. The library was expanded to a total of 34,400 ft<sup>2</sup> of space that included more space for library materials, study rooms, a local history room, lounge areas, meeting rooms, a larger lobby space, a bar for the theatre area, new entry vestibule for the gallery, and an update to the interior of the theatre.

The construction of the library was delayed by one year with the consultant groups breaking ground on the new expansion in April of 2011 and completing it in December of 2012. The expansion cost \$11,000,000 and the overall square footage of the building is 51,000. The Library and Cultural Centre had its grand reopening in January of 2013.

### 2.3 Architectural Description

Nineteenth-century Gothic Revival architecture was elaborate, dichromatic, and used often for church and government buildings. In contrast, Neo-Gothic is grander, monochromatic, provides eclectic and often ornate style with elaborate stonework, vaulted ceilings, and steep pitched roofs.

The original Congregational Church building at 9 Church Street is a Neo-Gothic structure with a steeply pitched roof over the main entrance, brick on the façade that extends through the first storey on the new additions and the height of the building on the original church construction. This is complimented by large three point-arched windows and doors with drip moulds and decorative tracery on the exterior (Figures 21 & 22). Of particular note are the drip moulds atop some of the larger arched windows that feature decorative stone trim and are a different texture than the limestone cladding. Additionally, the structure features light-yellow brick and stonework with decorative tracery that flanks interior walls in the original stone church portion of the building, both characteristic of western Ontario Neo-Gothic architecture. Segmentally-arched window openings are located on the north and west elevations at the basement level.



Figure 20 - North Elevation – Window Detail (Chirag Patney, 2020)



Figure 21 - North Elevation –Entry Detail (Chirag Patney, 2020)

The original Congregational Church structure is clad with limestone, embellished detailing, and two three-pointed arched doorways on the eastern elevation of the building (Figure 22). However, the two doorways have been infilled with brick and are only a façade, currently being used as storage for

maintenance equipment. Other features include a 16-foot stained glass window on the west facing wall that dominates the elevation of the structure and is dedicated to Maria Barber, in addition to the church bell that was once housed in the 50ft spire bell tower (Figures 23-25). The bell is now on a concrete pad prominently placed in the plaza near the main entrance to the Library off Church Street (Figure 18).



Figure 22 - Current Photograph, 2020: West Elevation – Maria Barber Stained Glass Window Detail (Chirag Patney, 2020)



Figure 23 - Current Photograph, 2020: North Elevation (Chirag Patney, 2020)



Figure 24 - Archival Photograph, 2014: showing a view of the western stained-glass window “Sacred to the memory of Maria Barber” in the Helson Gallery after the window has been treated for UV protection. The brass plaque below the window reads, “This property was donated by the members and Adherents of the Congregational Church to the Village of Georgetown for a Free Public Library” (Esquesing Historical Society Archives, EHS 04584)

Other notable features include seven nine-foot stained glass windows on the north and west elevations of the original church building and vaulted ceilings on the interior of the original church structure that are reminiscent of eleventh-century Romanesque architecture.

## 2.4 Context

The property at 9 Church Street is a landmark within the Downtown Georgetown community and surrounding neighbourhoods. It anchors the northwest corner of Church and Market Streets and is bounded by the Knox Presbyterian Church to the east and residential properties to the north, south, and west. To the east, Knox Presbyterian Church complements the adjoining property in style and architectural detail as a Gothic Revival church with stone construction, arched doors and windows, and a symmetrical façade. The building has been a landmark at the corner of Church Street and Market Street since 1877 and has been an integral part of life in Georgetown as it has evolved over time. The building is further reflective of the religious expression that was prominent in the early history of the village.



### 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 is not applicable for this property.

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

The property at 9 Church Street contains a representative example of Neo-Gothic church architecture. Neo-Gothic architecture is a prominent form of church architecture throughout Canada, likely due to its free forms and craftsmanship with refined decorative elements such as carvings, steep pitched roofs, and windows with foils or leaf patterns. The original stone foundation is two stories in height with a 50ft spire tower flanking the north-west corner of the building (Figure 24). The two later additions have been clad with a limestone façade that scales the first storey to match the stonework of the Church portion. The light-yellow stone of the original church building is characteristic of western Ontario Neo-Gothic architecture and is often found in mid-to-late nineteenth century stone church construction in Ontario. The north and west elevations are flanked with twelve wall buttresses, eight on the north elevation and four on the west (Figure 20 & 24).

Other design elements on the building include three-point arched doorways and windows on the portion of the building that is the original Congregational Church, drip moulds atop some of the larger arched windows that are a smoother texture than the surrounding stone and follow the curvature of the windows and doors (Figures 21 & 22), and the intricate designs of the stained glass windows to highlight the craftsmanship of Neo-Gothic style (Figure 25). The large stained-glass windows on the north, east, and west elevations show a high degree of technical achievement. The intricate designs on the 16ft stained glass window on the west elevation illuminate the interior of the building with colours and have an opacity that provides privacy when indoors. Segmentally-arched window openings are located on the north and west elevations at the basement level.

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

The historic and associative value of the property at 9 Church Street is related to its origins as the home of the Congregational Church at Georgetown and its evolution into a library and theatre. Since its beginning as a Congregational church, the property has acted as a hub for knowledge mobilization, arts and culture, and community interaction. Prior to the addition completed in 1981, the building also housed training sessions held by the Canadian Military during World War I, allowed the local YMCA to

use the spaces for gym classes and other activities post WWI, and was used by multiple community groups including the Georgetown Women's Institute who donated funds during the initial renovations in 1912 for a rest room to be added.

The John Elliott Theatre is named after local businessman, politician, and community supporter, John Alwyn Elliott. Collectively the John Elliott Theatre and Art Gallery are known as the Cultural Centre and are located within the addition constructed in 1981 on the east side of the Congregation Church portion.

The Congregational Church also has connections to the prominent Barber Family in Georgetown. The Barbers owned and operated a paper mill in Georgetown that saw early success and was renowned locally and regionally. The Barber family donated extensively to the Church helping finance the original stone church building. Furthermore, the Barber family is memorialized twice within the Library, including a 16ft stained glass window dedicated to Maria Barber who died prior to the construction of the Church and a marble tablet that records Mr. Joseph Barber serving as the Deacon for the congregation for 34 years.

William H. Watson was a prominent builder in Georgetown. Along with building the Congregational Church, he also built the Georgetown Academy (now demolished), a school building in Stewarttown, many homes in the Georgetown area, the Wesleyan Church (1876), and did considerable work for prominent Georgetown families including the Barbers, Dayfoots, Besseys, and Hardings.

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

Contextually, the property at 9 Church Street is valued for its historical and visual links to the surrounding neighbourhood of Downtown Georgetown. One of the first few public buildings built in the Hungry Hollow area, the Neo-Gothic structure complements the neighbouring architecture of churches and homes. The property has been an integral part of the community since 1895. The former church building is a landmark in the community since its construction, and its 50ft spire has dominated the skyline of Georgetown for many years matched only by the Baptist spire on the hill built in 1869.

The former Georgetown Congregational Church building stands as an important physical reminder of late nineteenth-century architecture that saw Gothic-Revival Style churches, homes, and government buildings become a dominate form factor in Canadian Architecture

## 4.0 Summary

Following research and evaluation according to Ontario Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the property at 9 Church Street in Georgetown has physical and design, historical and associative, and contextual cultural heritage values. The existing Halton Hills Public Library and Cultural Centre on site has sympathetic design with elements indicative of Neo-Gothic Architecture that was prominent during the mid-late nineteenth century. Surrounding buildings are visually linked to the historic building's architecture reflecting Gothic-Revival elements such as steep roofs and three-point arched windows. The property is also valued for its connection with prominent Georgetown families that were important in bringing business to area prior to incorporation as a Village. Having been in operation since 1895 and been at its current location since 1913, the library has grown with the surrounding community and been host to trainings for WWI soldiers, YMCA events, and arts and culture initiatives since the construction of the John Elliott Theatre in 1981.

The heritage attributes of the former Georgetown Congregational Church at 9 Church Street are as follows:

- The setback, placement, and orientation of the late nineteenth-century building on the southeast corner of Church and Market Streets in the downtown Georgetown area;
- The scale and form of the 50ft spire and bell tower that flanks the north-west corner of the building with a steeply pitched roof;
- The solid limestone construction materials of the original church building.
- On the east and west elevations, two large stained-glass windows. The window on the west elevation is dedicated to Maria Barber the wife of James Barber;
- On the north elevation, two pointed-arched doorways (currently bricked-in) and three stained glass pointed-arched windows, approximately 9 feet tall;
- On the west elevation, an arched doorway that has been bricked in and clad with limestone to resemble the rest of the building;
- On the interior, the vaulted ceiling arch ending in a decorative entablature with a corbel featuring a classical acanthus leaf with flowers below the cornice;
- On the north elevation, a limestone datestone above the bricked-in doorway on the north-west corner that signifies where the original entrance to the Church and Library used to be;
- On the north and west elevations, wall buttresses that extend the elevation of the building. There are twelve wall buttresses in total, eight on the north elevation and four on the west;
- On the north and west elevations, segmentally-arched window openings at the basement level; and,
- Drip-moulds atop each arched window and door around the building that feature decorative stonework.



## 5.0 Sources

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