

THE CORPORATION
OF THE
TOWN OF NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE

BY-LAW NO. 3318-99

(157 Queen Street)
(Roll No. 26-27-010-004-044)

A BY-LAW to designate the property known municipally as the Rogers-Blake-Harrison House, 157 Queen Street, in the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, in the Province of Ontario, as being of architectural and historical value and interest.

WHEREAS Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter O.18, authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact by-laws to designate real property, including all buildings and structures thereon, to be of architectural or historic value or interest; and

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake has caused to be served on the owner of the lands and premises known as the Rogers-Blake-Harrison House at 157 Queen Street, in the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake in the Province of Ontario and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation, notice of intention to so designate the aforesaid real property and has caused such notice of intention to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the municipality; and

WHEREAS the reasons for designation are set out in Schedule 'B' hereto; and

WHEREAS no notice of objection to the proposed designation has been served on the clerk of the municipality;

THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake enacts as follows:

1. There is designated as being of architectural and historical value and interest the real property known as the Rogers-Blake-Harrison House at 157 Queen Street in the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake in the Province of Ontario, more particularly described in Schedule 'A' hereto.
2. The municipal solicitor is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this By-law to be registered against the property described in Schedule 'A' hereto in the proper land registry office.
3. The Clerk is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this By-law to be served on the owners of the aforesaid property and on the Ontario Heritage Foundation and to cause notice of the passing of this By-law to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the municipality.

READ A FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD TIME AND PASSED ON THIS 8TH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1999.


LORD MAYOR ART T. VIOLA


TOWN CLERK R. G. HOWSE

SCHEDULE 'A'

DESCRIPTION:

Rogers-Blake-Harrison House
157 Queen Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake

Part of Lot 52, as shown on the Niven Plan registered in the Registry Office for the Registry Division of the County of Lincoln as Plan No. 86, formerly Town of Niagara, County of Lincoln, now Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, Regional Municipality of Niagara, more particularly described as follows:

COMMENCING at the intersection of the westerly boundary of Gate Street with the northerly boundary of Queen Street;

THENCE North 34 degrees and 44 minutes East in the westerly boundary of Gate Street, 75.6 feet;

THENCE North 55 degrees and 28 minutes West, 105.6 feet to a point in the line between Lots 52 and 51;

THENCE South 34 degrees and 44 minutes West in the said last mentioned boundary, 75.6 feet to a point in the northerly boundary of Queen Street;

THENCE South 55 degrees and 28 minutes East in the said last mentioned boundary, 105.6 feet more or less to the place of beginning.

TOGETHER WITH the right and privilege of the owner or owners for the time being of the herein land to enter upon, from time to time, the following part of Lot 51 according to said Plan No. 86, namely:

COMMENCING at a point in the northerly limit of Queen Street where the boundary between Lots 51 and 52 meets the said limit of Queen Street and being the most southerly angle of said Lot 51;

THENCE North 34 degrees and 44 minutes East in the boundary between Lots 51 and 52, 55 feet;

THENCE North 55 degrees and 28 minutes West, 8 feet;

THENCE South 34 degrees and 44 minutes West 55 feet to the northerly limit of Queen Street aforesaid;

THENCE South 55 degrees and 28 minutes East in the last mentioned limit 8 feet to the point of commencement for the purposes of repairing, maintaining and improving the existing dwelling house erected on the herein lands until the said dwelling house is removed or destroyed by fire or otherwise.

Being the land previously described in Instrument No. 693380 (1995).

SCHEDULE 'B'

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION:

Rogers-Blake-Harrison House

157 Queen Street, Niagara-on-the-Lake

The Rogers-Blake-Harrison House at the north-west corner of Queen and Gate Streets is recommended for designation for architectural and historical reasons. Erected in 1817 by James Rogers to replace an early house burned in 1813, this neo-Classical style building is one of Niagara's finer post-War of 1812 residences. Until 1995 it was the home of the Rogers family and their descendants the Blakes and the Harrisons, prominent members of the community.

According to family history this land was settled and a house was built c.1790 by the A. C. Smith family from Scotland. James and Mary Rogers arrived in Upper Canada from Ireland in 1806 and purchased the ½ acre lot and nearby property. As the early residence was being burned by the retreating Americans in December 1813, Mary is said to have saved the parlour/living room mantelpiece which was then built into the new structure. James Rogers completed his large house in 1817, at times operating a hotel and the Niagara Coffee House in it, as well as a shaving and hairdressing business in the bar room. Their son Alexander's widow Agnes continued to operate the hotel and undertook renovations c.1823 after receiving compensation for war losses. At different periods during the 1820s the coffee house was run by Charles Koune, L. Carroll and Robert Gray.

The Rogers family received the Crown patent for Lot 52 in 1830 and five years later John Rogers obtained title to the property. The oldest son of Agnes and Alexander, John was a prosperous merchant who served as Town Clerk (1856-1880), a member of the Niagara Fire Company and the St. Andrews Church treasurer for 46 years. In 1833 Rogers and his brother-in-law John Blake built a three storey building on the east side of the lot, adjacent to the Rogers family home, to accommodate their large forwarding business. This building, which apparently replaced a store built in 1819, was the largest of its kind in Niagara for several decades and was eventually torn down c.1905.

Blake's widow, Mary Ann Rogers, moved back into her family home in 1835. Her son John A. Blake owned several local businesses including the Niagara Oak Leather Tannery in the Dock area and in the 1860s he travelled extensively in the American west with the United States Indian affairs department. At the turn of the century a court order left Herbert R. Blake in possession of the lot which later passed to his sisters Annie M., Gertrude L. and Mary Ada Blake Davidson who, in 1904, disposed of the parcel now known as 177 Gate Street. Annie organized the St. Andrews Church youth group and was married to William H. Harrison, founder of a local hardware and building supply company, who served on Town Council for twenty years, including eight years as Lord Mayor.

In the 1950s the property was divided among their sons William D., Allan B. and John O. Harrison. Later the 185 Gate Street parcel was severed and William D. and Zaida Harrison became the sole owners of the existing 157 Queen Street property. It passed to their son Roger who in 1995 sold it to the current owners, Marilyn and Peter Marchesseau.

This two storey dwelling sits on the west side of the lot and, at the front, encroaches on Town property. While exhibiting a considerable complement of early detail, it has evolved from the original and demonstrates earlier and later changes of varying impact. In 1995 the house was extensively renovated and a rear, one storey addition was constructed.

The present house has an unusual front of six bays, the even number of openings resulting in an off-centre entrance. The original house was likely the two storey main block 45' long by 24' deep, with a lean-to kitchen wing off the east end removed c.1835 and replaced with the two storey rear addition.

The main section has a medium gable roof (replaced in 1995) with a shed roof over the c.1835 addition, two side brick chimneys with single stacks (reconstructed in 1998) and wide sloped eaves and plain boxed verges which likely replaced the original eaves returns and built-in-cornice gutter detail. The exterior finish is now smooth stucco (1995). Vestiges of $\frac{3}{4}$ bead corner boards also survive and a wood starter board is still in place. The ten front windows have all been resashed, the originals had a 12/12 pattern of 8" x 10" glass; the 12/12 sash with very fine muntins and quite narrow meeting rails survive in the three first floor windows at the rear of the building. The entrance doorcase appears to be intact but window architraves are relatively simple with beaded interior edges to some, plain in others. Notable exterior detail includes the main entrance including the shaped transom with multiple lights, sidelights and six panel entrance door. The structure is basically a heavy timber frame of the barn type, long timbers hewn, the rest straight sawn, with heavy intermediate studding. Floors have primary supporting members dividing the structure into joist panels. The roof is a plain rafter system. Wall framing is braced from main posts as viewed at the rear, presumably this also occurs at corners.

The interior detail is representative of the finer houses of the Town, the Rogers having been one of the earliest families to live there, including a fine staircase, trim of delicate profile and four elaborate mantelpieces, including one of almost Baroque Germanic convolution and one fireplace with alcoves arched at the top beside it. The main floor fireplace mantels include one with symmetrical pilaster trim and the other with arched alcoves and delicate cove and bead backmould to the trim. The original window and door trim is finished with ovolo/bead/fillet and $\frac{3}{4}$ corner bead trim in the downstairs rooms and fillet/cove/ovolo/bead/fillet trim in the upper rooms. Baseboard on the main floor features an fillet/bead/cove/fillet/ovolo design.

The first floor arrangement includes four main rooms on first floor, the dining room, parlour/living room, kitchen and family room, along with the front hall/stairs/bathroom and rear hall/laundry room/pantry. The entrance hall is almost intact except for revisions to the trim of the parlour/living room doorway and a new partition and rehang of the old back doors at the end of the hall to accommodate the new washroom. The dining room is perhaps the most original with its beautifully trimmed alcove to accommodate a sideboard, but an entrance was cut to the kitchen through the west cupboard opening.

In 1995 the second floor was altered to create four bedrooms, all with bathrooms, and one lounge, along with the hall/stairs. The south-west/Rogers bedroom has a fireplace and an early if not original closet alongside the chimney breast. The north-east/Harrison suite has an old closet with peg rails and closely spaced turned wooden clothes pegs within, possibly part of the c.1835 alterations.

Significant interior detail includes the following:

first floor - dining room, parlour/living room, family room, kitchen, front hall/stairs, rear hall/pantry/laundry, including features such as horsehair plaster ceilings and walls, pine floors, pine baseboards, doors and windows including trim, carpenter iron box locks, ironwork and door hardware; parlour/living room fireplace, door with trim; dining room fireplace, alcove with trim, door with trim, pine floor; six panel bathroom door; six panel kitchen/hall door; three 12/12 windows at the north wall; family room/back hall door with hardware/thumb latch

second floor - Blake bedroom mantel, door with trim and hardware (box lock); Rogers bedroom mantel/fireplace; Harrison suite floors, doors.

This designation applies to the lands and more particularly the entire exterior facade and structure of the house and the significant interior detail as noted above. All bathrooms and the 1995 addition and alterations to the main section of the house such as the new stucco, roof, windows, openings and partitions are excluded from the designation.