

Cedarvale: now a heritage site

Nearly 700 people, many of them from the Armenian community, were at Cedarvale Park Saturday afternoon for the unveiling of a plaque recognizing the property as the site of Canada's first international humanitarian resettlement effort, rescuing orphans of the Armenian genocide.

In 1923 the Armenian Relief Association of Canada brought a group of Armenian boys—orphans of the 1915 Armenian genocide—to Cedar Vale Farm. The landing of the first group of Armenian orphans, who later became known as the "Georgetown Boys" was a unique event in the history of Canadian immigration.

From 1923 to 1927, 109 of these orphan boys plus 29 girls were brought to Georgetown. They had their own school established for them in the Armenian Boys' Farm Home and were also well trained in work skills.

The Armenian National Committee has been working for the past two years to have the Georgetown Armenian Boys Farmhouse, presently the Cedarvale Community Centre, designated as a protected historical and cultural site.

"The Georgetown farm serves as a constant reminder of the Armenian Genocide, and remind us of the lessons we need to learn from history in the hopes of preventing future cases of genocide," said Raffi Sarkissian, Organizing Committee Chairperson.



Several hundred visitors remained dry under canopy as the Town designated the Cedarvale Community Centre building as a cultural heritage site. Above, His Holiness Aram I, Catholicos watched the festivities.

Photos by Jon Borgstrom



Mayor Rick Bonnette and J. Mark Rowe, Chair of Heritage Halton Hills unveiled the designation plaque.



Raffi Sarkissian, Armenian National Committee, presented Mayor Rick Bonnette with a carved stone.

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