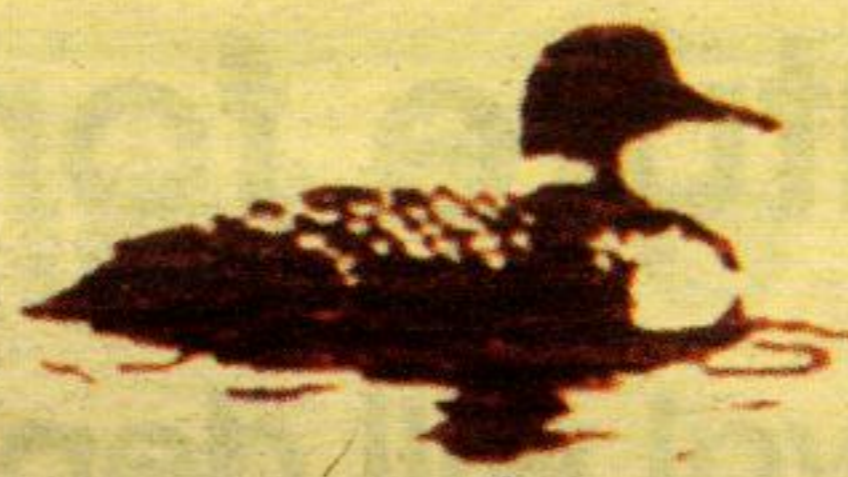


the antiquarian



LOON-WOODS LTD.

Antique Restoration & Furniture Finishing

Cindy Lunau
email: cindy@in.on.ca

25 Sideroad, Nassagaweya (Milton)
Tel: (519) 853-3772 • Fax: (519) 853-1846

Keeping the best of the past Heritage Milton strives to preserve old buildings

By JENNIFER ENRIGHT

As development proceeds at a rapid pace in Milton, Mirella Marshall feels a sense of urgency about preserving the town's historic heritage. The co-chair of Heritage Milton, who is past president of the Milton Historical Society, is concerned, however, that many people don't see what is at stake until it's too late. "I don't think people realize until something is gone or taken down what they have lost."

But for Mrs. Marshall the picture involves more than just a lack of awareness in general; at the same time, she believes there are no adequate mechanisms available to prevent the demolition of a property. What's more, she's not convinced that changes proposed to the province's Ontario Heritage Act will provide the requisite teeth to protect Milton's architectural heritage.

The Milton Historical Society (MHS) and Heritage Milton both have programs to designate historic buildings in the area. But neither group is provided with sufficient tools to protect buildings, according to Mrs. Marshall.

"I DON'T THINK PEOPLE REALIZE UNTIL SOMETHING IS GONE OR TAKEN DOWN WHAT THEY HAVE LOST".

Heritage Milton, which is an advisory committee appointed by the Town, can assist in designating buildings under the Ontario Heritage Act. And the Act itself does offer some protection to buildings that receive historic designations. But Mrs. Marshall says many more buildings are without any such protection.

According to the Milton planning and development department there are currently 25 designated structures within the Town of Milton, each of which is recognized by a bronze plaque. These structures are legally recognized under Part IV and V of the Ontario Heritage Act. Under the province's Heritage Act, any application for demolition or alterations to designated buildings requires the approval of Heritage Milton

and Town Council. However, there are approximately 1,100 properties listed in the inventory without any designation under the Act.

Under the current legislation, the Town has 180

"THEY THINK THAT HISTORIC DESIGNATION IS LIMITING AND THAT THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO... SELL... THEIR PROPERTY".

days to negotiate an alternative to demolition with the property owner of a designated building. Chris Lupis, a planner with the Town of Milton says at the end of this period "the property owner is entitled to do with that building what he or she wishes." The McGuinty government has proposed changes to the current Act that would provide municipalities as well as the province with the ability to prevent demolition of heritage sites. But Mrs. Marshall believes that, for the most part, these changes benefit buildings that are designated already under the Act.

In her opinion, however, more than legislation is required to protect buildings of historic significance; she believes there's a whole mindset that needs to be altered as well if historic preservation is to actually work. She says many people are misinformed about what's required of them when a building is designated under the Act, and this can discourage people from seeking a historic designation for their property. "They think that historic designation is limiting and that they won't be able to renovate, sell or improve their property." Heritage

Milton can advise people about the steps they can take to renovate their property or what might be appropriate trim to match the time period of their home. "We are showing them how to enhance their property as opposed to placing restrictions on their home."

Ultimately, Mrs. Marshall is concerned that there isn't more creative thinking when people consider the process of preserving a building. She says Heritage Milton can request that a developer protect a historic property and incorporate that property in a development. But in many cases this doesn't happen. She wonders why some level of government doesn't take responsibility for this task. People selling their heritage homes should also have a say, she believes. "Why aren't owners requesting that the developers do certain things as part of the arrangement to sell a property?"



PHOTO BY LOUISE COOK

Milton Historical Society is trying to preserve many of Milton's historic buildings. The Town Hall (pictured here) is an interesting example of one of the many architectural styles found in the region.

**SPECIAL 1 HOUR
IN HOME COLOUR
CONSULTATION**

ONLY \$60

(OFFER VALID UNTIL SEPT. 30/04)

colour consultation •

space planning •

window treatments •

furniture design •

re-upholstery •

Assistance with your contracting & renovating needs •

**INTERIOR.DESIGN
Solutions**

FOR ALL YOUR COUNTRY & CITY DECORATING NEEDS

mobile: 289-259-5372

