

Town seeks heritage designation for 70-year-old 'royal' oak tree

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Staff Writer

Royalty has been living in Halton Hills for the past 70 years and now the Town of Halton Hills plans to honour that.

Halton Hills council voted to proceed with a heritage designation under Section IV of the Heritage Act for an oak tree growing beside the former Speyside School on Regional Rd. 25.

"I can't see any reason not to designate the tree," said Ward 2 Councillor Joan Robson, the representative for the area. "It's taken root and is a part of community, and I think we need to continue to care for that tree. It's has some significance in our history."

According to history compiled by local historian and Heritage Halton Hills chair, Mark Rowe, acorns from the Royal Park at Windsor were sent to schools within the Commonwealth in 1937 to celebrate the coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth—and the former Dublin School, just south of Acton, received one.

The students there planted the acorn, and when that school closed and Speyside School was opened in 1960, the tree was transplanted to its current location with a commemorative plaque attached to the school.

When Speyside School closed in the 1980s, the tree stayed behind, but the spirit of the Royal Oak carried on with an acorn planted in each of the new school yards for the Speyside students: Brookville, Limehouse, Pineview and Stewarttown. Rowe had not yet investigated whether any of these trees have survived.

"It's such a touching story and one we should really celebrate," said Ward 3 Councillor Moya Johnson. "Someone should take it upon them-



Heritage Halton Hills chair and local historian Mark Rowe stands in front of the oak tree which sprang from an acorn in 1937 to commemorate the coronation of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth. Town council is hoping to get the tree, located beside the former Speyside School on Regional Rd. 25, a heritage designation. *Photo by Ted Brown*

selves to collect those acorns every year ... I think it would be great to have even more trees just in case something happens to this tree."

According to Rowe, the Royal Oak meets heritage designation criteria:

See 'ROYAL', pg. 4

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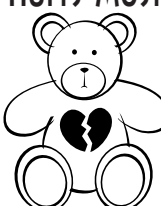
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