

Authority: Toronto East York Community Council Report No. 6, Clause No. 7,
as adopted by City of Toronto Council on July 24, 25 and 26, 2001
Enacted by Council: July 26, 2001

CITY OF TORONTO

BY-LAW No. 676-2001

To designate the property at 24 Chestnut Park (Robert Kemerer House) as being of architectural and historical value or interest.

WHEREAS authority was granted by Council to designate the property at 24 Chestnut Park (Robert Kemerer House) as being of architectural and historical value or interest; and

WHEREAS the *Ontario Heritage Act* authorizes the Council of a municipality to enact by-laws to designate real property, including all the buildings and structures thereon, to be of historical or architectural value or interest; and

WHEREAS the Council of the City of Toronto has caused to be served upon the owners of the land and premises known as 24 Chestnut Park and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation, Notice of Intention to designate the property and has caused the Notice of Intention to be published in a newspaper having a general circulation in the municipality as required by the *Ontario Heritage Act*; and

WHEREAS the reasons for designation are set out in Schedule "A" to this by-law; and

WHEREAS no notice of objection to the proposed designation was served upon the Clerk of the municipality.

The Council of the City of Toronto HEREBY ENACTS as follows:

1. The property at 24 Chestnut Park, more particularly described in Schedule "B" and shown on Schedule "C" attached to this by-law, is designated as being of architectural and historical value or interest.
2. The City Solicitor is authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be registered against the property described in Schedule "B" to this by-law in the proper Land Registry Office.
3. The City Clerk is authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be served upon the owners of the property at 24 Chestnut Park and upon the Ontario Heritage Foundation and to cause notice of this by-law to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the City of Toronto as required by the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

ENACTED AND PASSED this 26th day of July, A.D. 2001.

CASE OOTES,
Deputy Mayor

JEFFREY A. ABRAMS,
Acting City Clerk

(Corporate Seal)

SCHEDULE “A” HERITAGE PROPERTY REPORT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report is the “Long Statement of Reasons for Designation” for the designation of the property at 24 Chestnut Park (Robert Kemerer House) under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. It contains the Heritage Property Profile, as well as sections on the Historical Occupancy, Architectural Description and Significance of the property. The introduction, below, forms the “Short Statement of Reasons for Designation”, intended for publication.

The property at 24 Chestnut Park (Robert Kemerer House) is recommended for designation for architectural reasons. The house was completed in 1906 for broker Robert Kemerer according to the designs of Toronto architect S. H. Townsend.

The Robert Kemerer House is designed in the Period Revival style where the materials and detailing are inspired by English medieval architecture. Rising 2½ stories with a large T-shaped plan, the building has random-coursed stone walls with wood and stone detailing. A gable roof with flared eaves displays stone chimneys and dormers. The principal (south) façade is organized into three wide bays. The end bays contain two-storey bay windows where five-part window openings are set in wood surrounds with Classical detailing. In the centre, entablatures with brackets cover the main entrance and a pair of windows set in a wood surround. Four flat-headed window openings mark the second storey. On the side (east and west) walls, flat- and segmental-headed window openings are found in the base, first floor and attic levels. The window openings display stone sills, voussoirs and labels, and contain casement-style multi-paned windows with triangles and shield motifs.

The property at 24 Chestnut Park is located on the north side of the street, west of Cluny Drive. An excellent example of Period Revival design, the Robert Kemerer House is part of a planned residential enclave within the Rosedale neighbourhood.

1.1 HERITAGE PROPERTY PROFILE

ROBERT KEMERER HOUSE

ADDRESS:	24 Chestnut Park (north side, west of Cluny Drive)
WARD:	27 (Toronto Centre-Rosedale)
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY:	Rosedale
HISTORICAL NAME:	Robert Kemerer House
CONSTRUCTION DATE:	1906 (completed)
ORIGINAL OWNER:	Robert Kemerer
ORIGINAL USE:	Residential (detached house)
CURRENT USE: *	Residential (detached house) (* <i>this does not refer to permitted use(s) defined by the Zoning By-law</i>)
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/CRAFTSMAN:	S. H. Townsend, architect; Orr Brothers, contractors
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE:	Period Revival
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION:	Stone construction with stone detailing and leaded glass windows
ALTERATIONS:	Date unknown, south doors altered
HERITAGE CATEGORY:	Category B (Notable Heritage Property)
RECORDER:	Kathryn Anderson, Heritage Preservation Services:
REPORT DATE:	March 2001

2.0 HISTORICAL OCCUPANCY AND SIGNIFICANCE:

2.1 ROSEDALE

Following the establishment of the Town of York in 1793, Lieutenant-Governor John Graves Simcoe authorized the division of the lands north of present-day Bloor Street into a series of farm lots that were awarded to government and military officials. In 1796, Captain George Playter received the 200-acre lot at the northeast corner of Yonge and Bloor Streets. Playter sold the west half of the property to John Small in 1821. Three years later, Small transferred this land, with an adjoining 20 acres, to William Botsford Jarvis. While serving as the “High Sheriff for the Home District” (the Province of Upper Canada was divided into a number of districts for administrative functions), Jarvis developed a country estate named “Rosedale” on the tract.

In the early 1850s, Jarvis began subdividing his acreage for a residential subdivision named “Rose Park”. In 1855, David Macpherson, owner of the lands north of Rosedale where he had a country house named “Chestnut Park”, acquired the northwest section of Rose Park. Macpherson was a railway promoter who formed a partnership with engineer Casimir Gzowski to build the Grand Trunk Railway in 1855. Leaving business to enter politics, Macpherson was one of the first appointees to the Canadian Senate in 1867 and became the Speaker in 1880. He received a knighthood during his service as the Minister of the Interior in the 1883-1885 government of John A. Macdonald. Macpherson retired from public life after receiving criticism for his handling of the Northwest Rebellion of 1885.

Following Macpherson's death in 1896, his trustees engaged architect Alfred Boulton and his brother, Toronto barrister Horatio Boulton, to supervise the development of the Chestnut Park subdivision. The Boultons, in consultation with architect S. H. Townsend, laid out Chestnut Park Road ("Road" was removed from the street name in 1909) in the area between Yonge Street and present-day Mount Pleasant Road. The meandering street ran parallel to and north of Roxborough Street to which it was connected in five places. With the first houses completed in 1904, a select residential enclave developed. Its inspiration was purportedly drawn from the Bedford Park subdivision in late-19th century London, one of the earliest garden suburbs (McHugh, 247). Boulton, Townsend and other prominent architects of the day planned houses in the Period Revival and Colonial Revival styles. Boulton and Townsend designed brick sidewalks and distinct lamp standards, and placed gas and telephone service to the rear of the lots to avoid the installation of utility poles along the street. The sidewalks, standards and nine houses on the street are recognized on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties.

2.2 ROBERT KEMERER HOUSE

In June 1905, James Foy received a building permit for the construction of a residence on Chestnut Park. This application followed Foy's appointment as Commissioner of Crown Lands and as Ontario's Attorney General. First elected to the Ontario Legislature in 1898, Foy was a partner in the law firm of Foy, Knox and Monahan. The house was unfinished in 1906 following Robert C. Kemerer's acquisition of the property. Kemerer, who headed the Amalgamated Cobalt Mines Limited and Nipissing Reduction Company, resided on the property until 1912 when Edward Broome, a teacher at the Toronto Conservatory of Music, bought the site. The Robert Kemerer House was listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties in 1975.

3.0 ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND SIGNIFICANCE:

3.1 ARCHITECTURAL STYLE

The Robert Kemerer House is designed in the Period Revival style that gained popularity in North America at the turn of the 20th century. The style was based on late-medieval English architecture, with the influence of the Arts and Crafts movement that favoured authentic materials and craftsmanship. The movement's main proponent, William Morris, influenced a generation of English architects, including C. F. A. Voysey (1857-1941) who specialized in English country house design. Voysey's comparatively small houses incorporated light-coloured materials, roughcast finishes, mullioned windows and large roofs with wide eaves.

3.2 ARCHITECT/BUILDER/CRAFTSMAN

Architect Samuel Hamilton Townsend (1856-1940) designed the Robert Kemerer House. After apprenticing with W. G. Storm from 1874 to 1876, Townsend entered a partnership with Herbert Hancock that lasted for three years. After a period of time spent travelling through Europe in the 1880s, Townsend practiced alone until his retirement in 1916. He specialized in residential designs, where he drew inspiration from the work of C. F. A. Voysey and his contemporaries. A founding member of the Architectural Guild in 1887, Townsend served as the president of the Ontario Association of Architects in 1898.

The Robert Kemerer House was built by the Orr Brothers, contractors, who also constructed residences at 39 (1906) and 49 (1905) Chestnut Park according to Townsend's designs.

3.3 ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER: DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

Rising 2½ stories, the house is designed in a T-shape with an extended façade along Chestnut Park and narrow side walls. The building has random-coursed stone walls with wood and stone detailing. A gable roof with flared eaves displays stone chimneys on the north slope and a pair of segmental-arched dormers on the south slope. Beside the dormers, a monumental stone chimney is combined with a multi-sided dormer that copies the design of the bay windows below. The principal (south) façade is organized into three wide bays. The end bays contain two-storey bay windows where five-part window openings are set in wood surrounds with wood cornices and continuous stone sills. In the centre, the main entrance is offset in the first floor beside a two-part window that lights the interior entrance hall. A pair of doors (now altered) is set in a moulded wood surround beneath an oversized entablature with curved brackets. The adjoining window opening features similar wood detailing and contains stained glass windows. Four flat-headed window openings mark the second storey. On the side (east and west) walls, flat- and segmental-headed window openings are placed in the base, first floor and attic levels. The window openings display stone sills, voussoirs and labels, and contain casement-style multi-paned windows incorporating triangles and shield motifs.

3.4 ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Robert Kemerer House is an excellent example of the Period Revival style, where the stone cladding, bay and dormer windows, monumental south chimney, and casement-style and stained glass windows are special design features.

4.0 CONTEXT

4.1 CONTEXT AND SETTING

The property at 24 Chestnut Park is located on the north side of the street in the block west of Cluny Drive. On the west side of the Robert Kemerer House, the John Falconbridge House (1903-1904) at 22 Chestnut Park and the Robert Greig House (1906-1907) at 20 Chestnut Park are listed on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties.

4.2 CONTEXTUAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Robert Kemerer House, while displaying stone rather than brick cladding, shares the setback from the boulevard with the other houses along the north side of Chestnut Park. The property is an integral component of the series of substantial, well-designed houses that identify the Chestnut Park residential enclave.

5.0 SUMMARY

The Robert Kemerer House is architecturally significant as an excellent example of Period Revival design and an integral component of the Chestnut Park residential enclave in the Rosedale neighbourhood.

6.0 SOURCES

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Assessment Rolls, City of Toronto, Ward 2, Division 2s and 4, 1900 ff.

Blumenson, John. Ontario Architecture. Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1990.

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The Canadian Who's Who. Toronto: The Musson Book Company, 1910.

City of Toronto Directories, 1900 ff.

Dixon, Robert, and Stefan Muthesius. Victorian Architecture. London: Thames and Hudson, 1978.

Goad's Atlas, 1910 and 1923.

Lumsden, Liz. The Estates of Old Toronto. Erin, Ont.: Boston Mills Press, 1997.

McHugh, Patricia. Toronto Architecture. A City Guide. 2nd ed. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1989.

Parker, C. W. Who's Who and Why. Vol. 5. Vancouver: International Press, 1914.

“Two storey plus attic stone house to cost \$10,000”. Contract Record (21 June 1905) 7.

Subject: By-law: Designation of premises 24 Chestnut Park (Robert Kemerer House)
under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act
(Ward 27 –Toronto Centre-Rosedale)
File: C8-H1

SCHEDULE “B”

In the City of Toronto and Province of Ontario, being composed of Lot 23 on the north side of Chestnut Park on Plan 271-E and Lot 1 on the south side of Rowanwood Avenue on Plan 334-E, both said Plans being registered in the Land Registry Office for the Metropolitan Toronto Registry Division (No. 64).

The said lands being most recently described in Instrument CA707960 (FIRSTLY and SECONDLY).

The hereinbefore described land being delineated by heavy outline on Sketch No. PS-2001-043 dated July 10, 2001, as set out in Schedule “C”.

SCHEDULE "C"



Toronto

WORKS & EMERGENCY SERVICES
TECHNICAL SERVICES DIVISION
SURVEY & MAPPING

NOTE:
THIS SKETCH IS NOT
A PLAN OF SURVEY
AND HAS BEEN COMPILED
FROM SURVEY NOTES AND
OFFICE RECORDS. IT SHALL
NOT BE USED EXCEPT FOR
THE PURPOSE INDICATED
IN THE TITLE BLOCK

PROPERTY INFORMATION SHEET
No. 24 CHESTNUT PARK
(ROBERT KEMERER HOUSE),
LAND DESIGNATED AS BEING OF
ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL
VALUE AND INTEREST
(NOT TO SCALE)

WARD 27 TORONTO CENTRE-ROSEDALE
DATE: JULY 10, 2001

SKETCH No. PS-2001-043