

329 Royal York Road: Christ Church Mimico CemeteryDescription

The property at 329 Royal York Road is worthy of designation under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* for its cultural heritage value or interest, and meets the criteria prescribed for municipal designation by the Province of Ontario under the three categories of design or physical value, historical or associative value, and contextual value. Located on the west side of Royal York Road, south of the Gardiner Expressway, Christ Church Mimico Cemetery was opened in 1832. According to historical sources compiled by Etobicoke historian, Randall Reid, the property encompasses approximately 500 burials and over 100 grave markers.

Statement of Cultural Heritage Value**Design or Physical Value:**

With the demolition in 2006 of the third Christ Church Mimico (dating to 1956), the gravestones in the cemetery are the remaining physical reminders of the use of the property for over 175 years. In 1989, the Toronto Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society documented 124 markers. The first recorded gravestone identified the resting places of John McKay, a native of Scotland, and his wife, Barbara Murray McKay, who both died in 1832.

Historical or Associative Value:

Historically, Christ Church Mimico Cemetery reflects the earliest period of settlement at the south end of Etobicoke. The cemetery is an important historical reflection of the parish of Christ Church Mimico, which was founded in 1827 as the third in the Anglican Diocese of Toronto and the eighth oldest in the province. John William Gamble, a prominent miller and one of the first settlers in the district, used his political connections with Upper Canada's ruling elite to secure land for a church and adjoining cemetery in the former King's Mills Reserve along the west bank of the Humber River. Farmers, mill labourers and former soldiers comprised the founding members of the congregation, which expanded in 1852 when the arrival of the Toronto and Hamilton Railway attracted new residents and parishioners. In 1857, Sir James Lukin Robinson, son of the Chief Justice of Upper Canada, donated additional land to enlarge the churchyard. As the community of Mimico grew around the intersection of the railway line and present-day Royal York Road, Christ Church Mimico and its graveyard remained a well-established local landmark.

Christ Church Mimico Cemetery contains the graves of many prominent Etobicoke residents associated with the founding and development of the congregation. John William Gamble was buried in the cemetery in 1873. A later burial in 1910, Daniel

Fisher Horner was a noted Etobicoke realtor, inventor, businessman and politician who resided in a house named “Ashfield” at 183 Beta Avenue, a property that is recognized on the City’s heritage inventory. Among the notable local families whose members were buried at Christ Church Mimico Cemetery are the names Appleby, Duck, Hicks, Tremayne and Van Every.

Contextual Value:

Placed in a parklike setting with grave markers adjoining an alley of mature trees, Christ Church Mimico Cemetery is a landmark in south Etobicoke.

Heritage Attributes:

The heritage attributes of Christ Church Mimico Cemetery consist of the collection of granite, marble and limestone monuments that identify many of the plots and represent tablet, block and obelisk styles of grave markers.