

## Intention to Designate under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act – 33 Murray Avenue

Date: June 5, 2017

To: Toronto Preservation Board  
Scarborough Community Council

From: Chief Planner and Executive Director

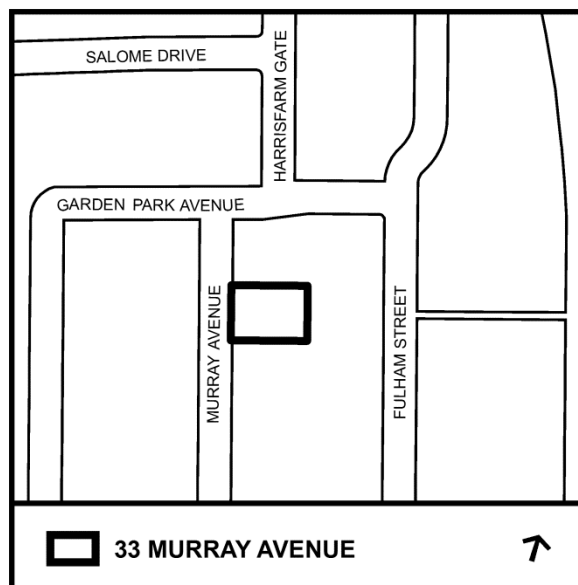
Wards: Ward 41 - Scarborough - Rouge River

### SUMMARY

This report recommends that Toronto City Council state its intention to designate the property at 33 Murray Avenue under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

The property located on the east side of Murray Avenue, south-west of Brimley Road and Sheppard Avenue East in the Agincourt neighbourhood contains a one-and-a-half storey, late 19th-century Ontario farm house, completed in 1888 and known as the Harris-White house. The property is included on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register

Following research and evaluation, it has been determined that the property at 33 Murray Avenue meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its design, associative and contextual value.



The designation of the property would ensure that all heritage values and attributes of the property are identified and conserved.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

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The Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division, recommends that:

1. City Council state its intention to designate the property at 33 Murray Avenue under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, in accordance with the Statement of Significance: 33 Murray Avenue (Reasons for Designation) attached as Attachment 3 to the report (June 5, 2017) from the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division.
2. If there are no objections to the designation in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act, City Council authorize the City Solicitor to introduce the necessary bill in Council.
3. If there are objections in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act, City Council direct the City Clerk to refer the proposed amendment to the Conservation Review Board.
4. If the designation is referred to the Conservation Review Board, City Council authorize the City Solicitor and appropriate staff to attend any hearing held by the Conservation Review Board in support of Council's decision to amend the designating by-law.

## FINANCIAL IMPACT

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There are no financial implications resulting from the adoption of this report.

## DECISION HISTORY

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The property at 33 Murray Avenue was included on the City of Toronto's Heritage Register on September 27, 2006 when City Council adopted the Planning and Transportation Committee Report 6 recommendation that pre-amalgamation properties listed by former municipalities be confirmed as listed under the provisions of the 2005 revisions of the Ontario Heritage Act.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2006/agendas/council/cc060925/cofa.pdf>

## COMMENTS

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The property is currently owned by the estate of Vivian White who owned the property with her husband Bill A. White, O.C. from 1951. Prior to her death in 2016, Mrs. White expressed her desire for the long-term recognition and protection of the property as illustrated by her activities in the 1990s to research the property and to have it listed on the Scarborough inventory of heritage buildings and her request that the property be designated. The trustees of Vivian White's estate are keen to have the property

designated prior to sale. City staff, with the local councillor's office, consulted with the trustees and the Scarborough Preservation Panel chair in preparing this report.

A location map (Attachment 1) and photographs (Attachment 2) are attached. Staff have completed the attached Research and Evaluation Report (Attachment 4) for the property at 33 Murray Avenue and determined that the property meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the criteria prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act under all three categories of design, associative and contextual values.

Completed in 1888, the Harris-White house has design value as an example of the mid-late 19th-century, one-and-a-half storey, Ontario farm house, which featured a verandah, T-shaped plan, steep gable roofs and decorative brick patterning. The property has value as it is associated with the 19th-century development of Scarborough Township as a series of farming communities and with the Kennedy family who built the house in 1888 as well as with John Harris who continued farming on the property from 1912 until 1943. It is also valued for its association with Bill White, O.C. and Vivian White who lived at the property from 1951 until their deaths in 1981 and 2016 (respectively) and contributed to humanitarian, social, political and environmental causes. Bill White was the first Black Canadian to run for public office as a federal candidate and was recognized with numerous awards for his humanitarian and civic service including being appointed an Officer to the Order of Canada. Vivian Keeler received a Queen's Golden Jubilee medal recognizing her contributions as a community volunteer and environmental activist. The White children have also been recognized for continuing their parents' legacy through politics, community care, social activism and music.

Situated on the east side of Murray Avenue, which was laid out as part of the suburban subdivision of the Harris farm lands, and surrounded by post-war bungalows and more recent larger-scaled houses, the Harris-White house in its setting, orientation and design retains the original 19th-century farming character of the Scarborough Township.

The Statement of Significance (Attachment 3) for 33 Murray Avenue comprises the Reasons for Designation, which is the Public Notice of Intention to Designate and will be advertised on the City of Toronto's web site in accordance with the City of Toronto Act provisions and served on the Ontario Heritage Trust to the provisions of the Ontario Heritage Act.

## CONTACT

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## SIGNATURE

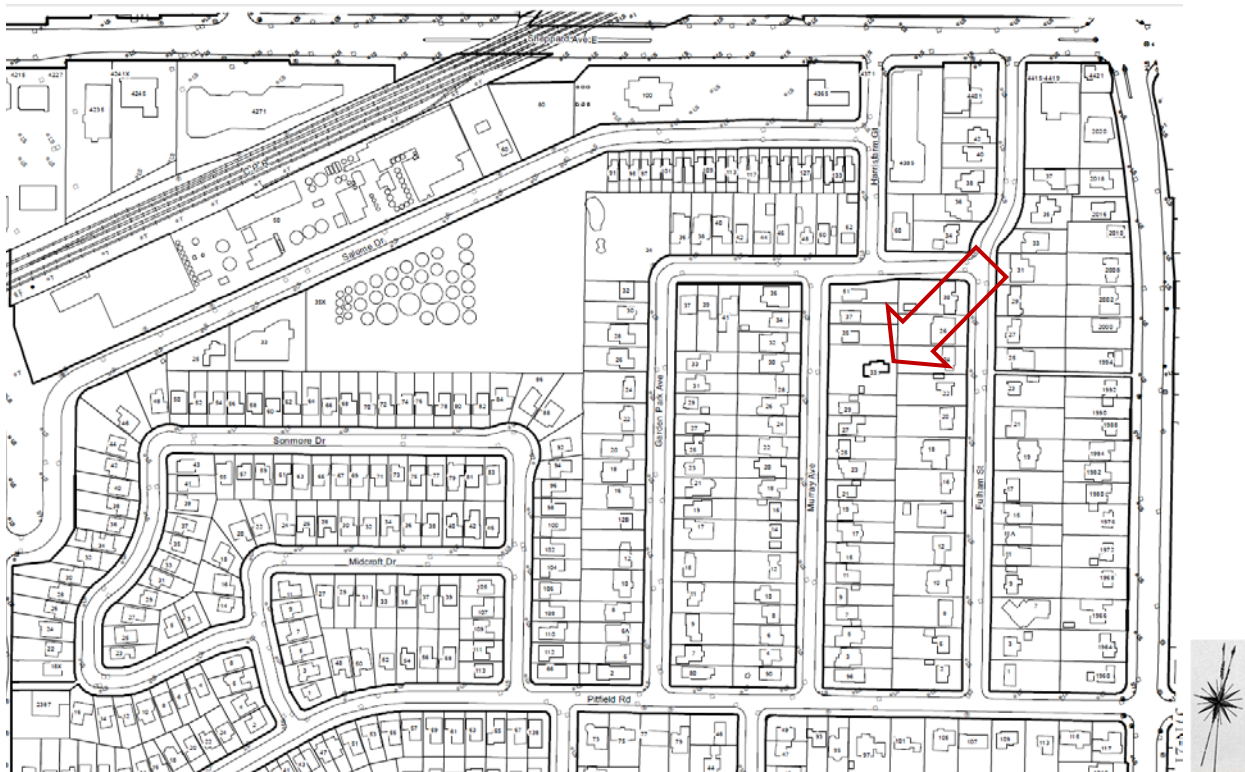
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Jennifer Keesmaat, MES, MCIP, RPP  
Chief Planner and Executive Director  
City Planning Division

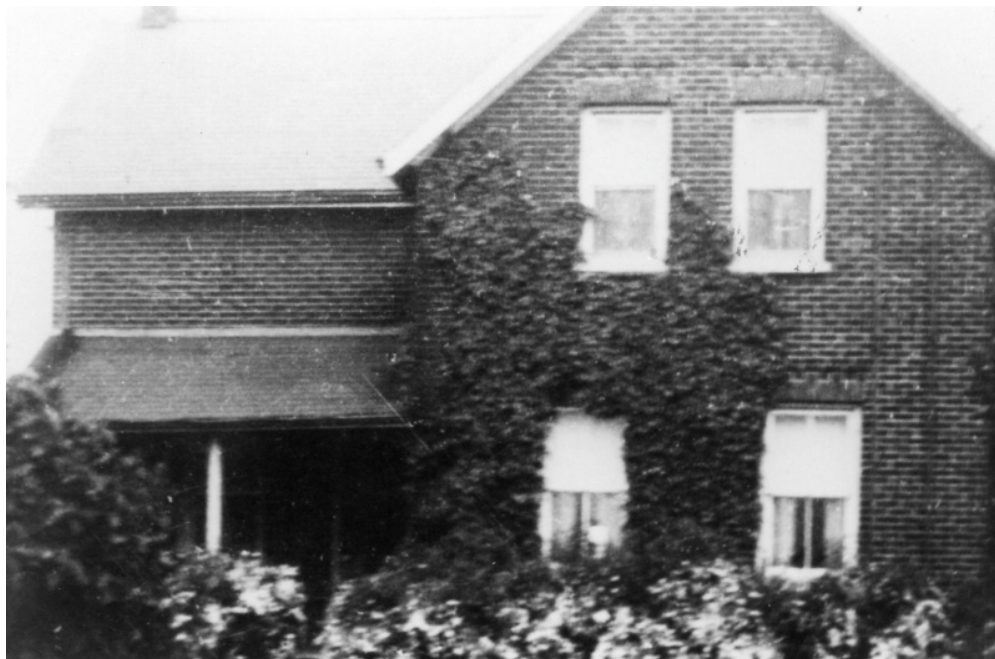
## ATTACHMENTS

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Attachment No. 1 – Location Map  
Attachment No. 2 – Photographs  
Attachment No. 3 – Statement of Significance (Reasons for Designation)  
Attachment No. 4 – Heritage Property Research and Evaluation Report



This location map is for information purposes only; the exact boundaries of the properties are not shown. The arrow marks the site of the property at 33 Murray Avenue, south-west of the intersection of Sheppard Avenue East and Brimley Road. The house has a bold outline indicating that it is already included on the Heritage Register.



Photograph of 33 Murray Avenue, showing the original, principal (north) elevation, taken prior to 1946. (Scarborough Archives)



Photograph of 33 Murray Avenue, with the original, principal (north) elevation, taken after 1946 and before 1969. Note the addition of the kitchen wing to the west, the painting of the brick and the removal of the porch roof. (Scarborough Archives)





Photograph of Bill White, O.C. and Vivian White (centre) with Vivian's brother, Bernie Keeler, on the left and Bill's brother, George White, on the right, and the west elevation of the house at 33 Murray Avenue in the background, 1953 (Sheila White)



Photograph of 33 Murray Avenue, original principal (north) elevation, showing the 1969 addition to the east (left) and the 1946 addition on the west side (right) as well as a new enclosed porch at the location of the previous verandah. (Heritage Preservation Services [HPS], 2017)





2001 Photograph of 33 Murray Avenue, south elevation, showing the 1946 addition to the west (left) and the 1969 addition on the east side (right) (Sheila White)



Photographs of 33 Murray Avenue, west elevation, showing the 1946 addition and the Scarborough Historic Site plaque under the octagonal window. (HPS, 2017)





Photograph of the setting of the property at 33 Murray Avenue, as seen from the street, with six of the eight coniferous trees, the U-shaped driveway and the (west) elevation, with the 1946 addition. (HPS, 2017)

The property at 33 Murray Avenue (Harris-White House) is worthy of designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value, and meets Ontario Regulation 9/06, the provincial criteria prescribed for municipal designation under all three categories of design, associative and contextual value.

#### Description

The Harris-White House, constructed in 1888 is a one-and-a-half storey single family dwelling with red brick cladding and a raised stone foundation. In 1946 a kitchen extension with an enclosed porch was added to the west and now faces the street and the brick cladding was painted white. In 1969 an extension to the living room was added to the east at the rear of the property. Originally oriented to be approached by a road from Sheppard Avenue East to the north, the house is now accessed from Murray Avenue to the west.

#### Statement of Cultural Heritage Value

The Harris-White house has design value as a representative example of the mid-late 19th-century, one-and-a-half storey Ontario farm house, with its T-shaped plan, steeply pitched gable roofs, verandah and brick patterning over the window heads created by brick headers.

The house has historical value as it contributes to an understanding of the 19th-century development of the Scarborough Township as a farming community with a collection of small villages such as Agincourt. It is associated with the James and Samuel Kennedy a family of farmers who constructed the house in 1888 and with John Harris, farmer, who purchased the Kennedy property in 1912 and lived in the house until 1943. The house is also valued for its association with William (Bill) A White, O.C. and Vivian White (nee Keeler) who lived at 33 Murray Avenue from 1951 until their deaths in 1981 and 2016 respectively. Bill White was the first Black Canadian to run for public office as a federal candidate and was recognized with numerous awards for his humanitarian service including being appointed an Officer to the Order of Canada. Vivian White received a Queen's Golden Jubilee medal recognizing her contributions as a community volunteer and environmental activist. The White children have continued their parents' legacy through politics, community care, social activism and music and have also received awards in recognition of their work.

Contextually, the Harris-White house is important in defining and maintaining the late 19th-century character of farmhouses set in 100-200 acre farm properties which typified the developing Scarborough Township and surrounded the 19th-century Agincourt village. Situated on the east side of Murray Avenue, which was laid out as part of the suburban subdivision of the Harris farm lands c. 1950 and surrounded by post-war bungalows and more recent larger-scaled houses, the Harris-White house in its setting, orientation and design supports the remaining 19th-century character of the township. It is physically, visually, and historically linked to its surroundings.

## Heritage Attributes

The heritage attributes of the Harris White house are:

- The setback, placement and orientation of the building on the east side of Murray Avenue
- The setting of the house which includes the U-shaped driveway, cedar hedge along Murray Avenue and line of coniferous trees on the west side of the house
- The scale, form and massing of the one-and-a-half storey house-form building, built on T-shaped plan with intersecting gable roofs and a verandah on its north side
- The materials including the raised stone foundation and the brick cladding
- The brick details including the projecting courses above the stone foundation and the decorative bands above the windows featuring a projecting string course with a line of projecting headers below
- The window details including the double hung sash windows with two-over-two glazing pattern including the storm windows, the projecting sills and the curved window brick window heads of the basement windows
- The arrangement of the windows on the north (originally principal) elevation with its symmetrically placed windows aligned with the centre line of the gable roof at the first and second stories and the adjacent single window at the first floor level
- The arrangement of the windows on the south elevation with the symmetrically placed pair of windows aligned with the centre line of the gable roof at the second floor with the asymmetrically allocated openings at the first floor level including the door, typical two-over-two double hung sash windows and the atypically narrow window. An additional window is the long window tucked under the eaves of the wing
- The arrangement of the pair of double-hung, two-over-two, sash windows aligned with the centre of the gable on the east elevation
- The double-hung, two-over-two, ground-floor sash window on the west elevation towards the north-west corner

The following are not included as heritage attributes:

- The 1946 kitchen and enclosed porch addition
- The 1969 extension on the east side of the house
- The garage



HERITAGE PROPERTY RESEARCH AND EVALUATION REPORT



HARRIS-WHITE HOUSE  
33 MURRAY AVENUE

Prepared by:

Heritage Preservation Services  
City Planning Division  
City of Toronto

June 2017

## 1. DESCRIPTION



Above: 33 Murray Avenue, with its principal (north) elevation with the 1946 extension on the west side (right) and the 1969 extension visible on the east side (left) (Heritage Preservation Services [HPS], 2017)  
Cover: 1953 photograph of Bill White, O.C. and Vivian White (centre), owners of 33 Murray Avenue, with Bernie Keeler, Vivian's brother on the left and George White, Bill's brother on the right, with the west elevation of the house at 33 Murray Avenue in the background (Sheila White)

33 Murray Avenue - Harris-White House	
ADDRESS	33 Murray Avenue
WARD	41 Scarborough-Rouge River
LEGAL DESCRIPTION	PLAN 3932 PT LOT 14
NEIGHBOURHOOD/COMMUNITY	Agincourt, Scarborough
HISTORICAL NAME	Harris-White House
CONSTRUCTION DATE	1888
ORIGINAL OWNER	Samuel Kennedy
ORIGINAL USE	Single Family Dwelling
CURRENT USE*	Single Family Dwelling
ARCHITECT/BUILDER/DESIGNER	Unknown
DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION/MATERIALS	Brick cladding
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	One-and-a-half storey Ontario farmhouse
ADDITIONS/ALTERATIONS	Alterations 1946 and 1969
CRITERIA	Design, Associative and Contextual
HERITAGE STATUS	Included on the Heritage Register
RECORDER	Heritage Preservation Services: Marybeth McTeague
REPORT DATE	June 2017

## 2. BACKGROUND

This research and evaluation report describes the history, architecture and context of the property at 33 Murray Avenue, and applies the evaluation criteria which determine that it merits designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act.

### i. HISTORICAL TIMELINE

Key Date	Historical Event
1796	The Scarborough Township is surveyed establishing concession roads and subdividing the land into lots typically 200 acres in area
1885	Archibald P. Thomson owns the north 100 acres of Lot 25 Concession (Con) 2
1886	Scarborough assessment rolls indicate that Archibald P. Thomson owns 10 acres of Lot 25, Concession 2 including a stone building; James Kennedy owns 90 acres of Lot 25, Con. 2 which has no buildings; James (owner) and his son, Samuel, Kennedy (tenant) live at Lot 29, Con. 3.
1888	The assessment rolls indicate that Lot 25, Con. 2 owned by James Kennedy is built upon, indicating that the house was completed by March 1888 although no one was living at this property. The total value of the property is \$5,300.
1889	Samuel Kennedy is the owner of 90 acres of Lot 25, Con. 2 and continues to live at Lot 29, Con. 3
1894	Archibald J. Patterson farmer and tenant living at Lot 25, Con. 2, owned by Samuel Kennedy. The value of the property is \$5300.
1907	William Spencer, farmer and tenant at Lot 25, Con. 2
1908	John Harris, farmer and tenant at Lot 29, Con. 3, owned by Samuel Kennedy
1912	John Harris, farmer has purchased two separate parcels of Lot 25, Con. 2 measuring 56 acres and 22 acres - the latter is occupied by the Harris family and includes the Kennedy house
1943	John Harris is recorded as living at and owning the 56 and 22 acre parcels at Lot 25, Con. 2
1944-45	Lenora and William Blum are recorded as owners of the 56 and 22 acre parcels of Lot 25, Con. 2
1946	Morris Shiff has purchased the two parcels of 56 and 22 acres of Lot 25, Con. 2 The addition of the new kitchen and porch are added on the west side of the house and the brick is painted white
1951	Morris and Rae Shiff own Lot 14, Plan 3932 (33 Murray Avenue)
1951	Bill White and Vivian White purchased Lot 14, Plan 3932
1969	The family room addition is built on the east side of the house
1970	William (Bill) A. White is appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada
1981	Bill White dies



1994	Vivian White begins her research and correspondence with the Scarborough Archives regarding the history of the house and its property to secure its long-term recognition and protection
1996	As part of the Scarborough Urban Design Awards, the house at 33 Murray Avenue is selected to be one of 100 Buildings to be given an award for Scarborough's Bi-centenary for making a significant contribution to the development of Scarborough. A commemorative plaque is presented which is still on the west elevation of the property. The property is listed on Scarborough's inventory of heritage properties
2002	Vivian White receives the Queen's Golden Jubilee medal
2006	The property is added to the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties (now known as the Heritage Register)
2012	Scarborough Community Preservation Panel submits a nomination form requesting designation of the property
2016	Vivian White dies
2017	The local ward councillor and the estate trustees renew the request for designation of the property

## ii. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

### Agincourt Neighbourhood, Scarborough

The property at 33 Murray Avenue is located in the Toronto neighbourhood known as Agincourt located in the Scarborough Township. (*Image 1*) The name 'Scarborough' was given to the new township by Elizabeth Posthuma Simcoe, the wife of the first Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada, as the dramatic cliffs reminded her of the chalky cliff coast of England's Scarborough.<sup>1</sup> Scarborough was surveyed and subdivided in 1796 with a series of concession roads, approximately two kilometres apart that ran east-west and side roads, perpendicular to the concession roads that were approximately 1,200 metres apart. The land between the concession roads was subdivided into long, narrow 200-acre lots. (*Image 2*)

Initially, poor transportation resulted in slow settlement of Scarborough, but by the 1820s-1840s this improved and with increased European immigration, particularly from Ireland and Scotland, the population grew. Up until World War II, the township was a prosperous farming community. Following the war, the proximity to Toronto resulted in the replacement of farms with suburban residential developments.

Located on Lot 25 of the Second Concession, the property including 33 Murray Avenue was part of the village of Agincourt, one of the villages which sprang up at the intersections of concession roads and side roads throughout the 19th century. Located on Sheppard Avenue (which marked the boundary between the Second and Third Concessions) between Kennedy and Brimley Roads, Agincourt emerged as Scarborough's second largest village in the 19th century when it first acquired a post office in John Hill's general store. It has been suggested that the name, Agincourt, was

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<sup>1</sup> Brown, p. 115.

given to the village by a friend of Hill's, commemorating King Henry V's victory over France at the French battlefield of Agincourt in 1415.<sup>2</sup>

The two hundred acres identified as Lot 25, Concession II, south of Sheppard Avenue East, was originally granted to Archibald Thomson, brother of David Thomson, the first settler of Scarborough. By 1886, his grandson, Archibald Parshall Thomson, owned the northern 100 acres. (*Image 3*) In this year Thomson, retained ownership of the northern-most ten acres, which included his residence, a stone house, and sold the southern 90 acres to a farmer, James Kennedy, age 69. The assessment rolls for 1886 indicate that Samuel P. Kennedy, farmer, age 42, was the tenant of the 90 acres. Both James and Samuel lived on a farm at Lot 29, Concession 3, north of Sheppard Avenue to the west of Lot 25.

By 1888, the assessment rolls stated that the property at Lot 25 had been "built upon." However no one was living on the property and both James and Samuel are recorded as living at Lot 29. In 1889, Samuel J. Kennedy was listed as the owner of both Lot 25 and 29. As James Kennedy was no longer listed in the Assessment Rolls, it seems likely that he had passed away by the date of April 12, 1889 when the assessment of the properties was completed. There is no record of anyone living at the 90 acre property at Lot 25, Concession 2, until 1894, when Archibald J. Patterson, farmer, was identified as the tenant and resident.

The date of the house has been suggested to be 1894 which coincides with the date of first recorded residents on the 90-acre property, however, according to the assessment rolls, which identified the property as being 'built on' for the first time in 1888, it seems likely that the house was built in this earlier year. Furthermore as the assessed value of the property remained constant at \$5,300 between 1888 and 1894, this would also confirm that the house had been completed by 1888.<sup>3</sup> It may be that when James Kennedy bought the 90 acres from Thomson in 1886, it was intended that his son Samuel would live there. It is likely that the house was started during 1887 but it was not recorded as completed until the assessment dated March 20, 1888. As James had died by April of 1889, it could be that Samuel had decided to remain in the family home on Lot 29, Concession 3 rather than move to the new house. In 1894, Archibald Patterson was the first recorded resident tenant of the house.

In 1907, the assessment rolls recorded William Spencer as the tenant farmer living at the Kennedy property on Lot 25, Concession 2. In 1908, John Harris first appeared in the Scarborough assessment rolls and was recorded as a tenant and resident at the former Kennedy family home and farm at Lot 29, Concession 3. Harris remained a tenant on Lot 29 until 1912, when following Samuel Kennedy's death; he purchased two parcels of land at Lot 25, Concession 2 of 56 acres and 22 acres. The smaller parcel included the 1888 house and became the Harris family home.

John Harris and his family remained on the farm for over 30 years.<sup>4</sup> By 1944, both parcels of Harris property had been purchased by Lenora and William Blum. In 1946

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<sup>2</sup> Bonis, p. 167.

<sup>3</sup> At this time the assessment rolls do not provide separate amounts for buildings and land.

<sup>4</sup> The assessment rolls for 1943 record Harris as the owner of the two parcels of property.

Morris Shiff was recorded as the new owner of the parcels of 22 and 56 acres in Lot 25, Concession 2.

Morris and Rae Shiff family photographs from the late 1940s and early 1950s give an idea of life in Scarborough when it still retained the character of its 19th-century farming roots as images of the barn, and children with flocks of chicken illustrate. (*Images 4-6*)

Morris Shiff is listed as a builder in the assessment rolls and it was under his ownership that the two parcels of 56 and 22 acres were subdivided as Plan 3932. This was part of the post-war transformation of Scarborough from a series of small towns surrounded by farms to a suburban community. Finally in 1951, Bill and Vivian White purchased the original Harris farmhouse, situated on an atypically large lot which measured 123 x 165' and remains intact to the present.<sup>5</sup>

Bill (William) Andrew White III (1915-1981) and Vivian Ruth Keeler (1925-2016) met in Nova Scotia in the mid-1940s. Bill was the son of Rev. Capt. Dr. Wm. Andrew White II (1874-1936) who was born in King and Queen County Virginia and whose parents, Andrew White and Isabella Waller White, were two former slaves who had negotiated their freedom and became founders of the Zion Baptist Church.<sup>6</sup> (*Image 7*) William White II moved to Nova Scotia in 1900, and intending to become a preacher, applied to Acadia University to study Theology. He was the second Africadian (African Nova Scotian)<sup>7</sup> student to attend Acadia University where he became renowned as an exceptional athlete. He was ordained a minister in 1903, preaching the equality of all and working to break down racial barriers in employment, at theatres, buses and schools. During World War I, he was the first and only officer of African descent in the Canadian Expeditionary Force.<sup>8</sup> Rev. Capt. White, also served as the only Black chaplain in the entire British army with the Second Construction Battalion of Nova Scotia, a regiment initiated by Black Canadians who were excluded from white regiments.<sup>9</sup> After the war, Rev. White became the pastor at the Cornwallis Street Baptist Church in Halifax, serving there for 17 years. He was also a monthly contributor to radio broadcasts heard across Canada and the northern United States. Shortly before his death in 1936, he was presented with a honorary Doctorate of Divinity from Acadia University and was "the first Black in Canada to receive such an honour."<sup>10</sup>

Bill White's mother, Izie Dora White,<sup>11</sup> a descendant of Nova Scotia Black Loyalists, and Rev. White had 13 children. Bill White's siblings include Portia White, the internationally renowned contralto and first Black Canadian concert singer to be declared a "person of national significance" by the Government of Canada in 1995,<sup>12</sup> and Jack White, a respected Ontario labour leader, who ran as a MPP for the Provincial Legislature.

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5 The lot measured 123 x 165' while those adjacent properties typically measured 50 x 165' and were sometimes as narrow as 32' or 45'.

6 Email from Sheila White 8 June, 2017, see also *White Family History*.

7 George Elliott Clarke, the great grandson of Reverend White.

8 Karolyn Smardz-Frost, email 8 June 2017

9 A documentary film, *Honour Before Glory*, based on Reverend White's diary about the Second Construction Battalion's World War I experience was produced in 2004 by his great-nephew, actor and filmmaker, Anthony Sherwood.

10 Levitt.

11 Izie Dora and Bill both had the family name White.

12 Portia White, 1911-1968, Canadian Encyclopedia.



Bill White attended Dalhousie University, Halifax, acquiring a degree in sociology and philosophy. He was also a composer, musician and singer, at one time leading the Halifax YMCA dance band. *(Image 8)* Bill White moved to Toronto in 1946, and worked for the Home Service Association, operated by Toronto's Black community. While still in Halifax he had met, fallen in love with and proposed marriage to Vivian Ruth Keeler, a white woman. In spite of wide-spread opposition to a "mixed-race union" documented in a collection of letters addressed to Vivian, the couple were married on June 23, 1947.<sup>13</sup> *(Images 9-10)*

In 1949, Bill White became the first Black Canadian to run for public office as the candidate for the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) party in the 1949 federal election.<sup>14</sup> Although he did not win the election, he gained twice as many votes as the CCF had previously won in the contested Spadina riding.<sup>15</sup> In 1949, Mr. White was appointed the Personnel Manager for the John Inglis Company, where he was very active as the recreation manager for the Employees' Credit Union and was elected the President of Scarborough's Golden Mile Kiwanis Club. In both cases, this was the first time a Black man had held either position.<sup>16</sup> He also served on the Social Planning Council, the advisory committee for the Neighbourhood Workers' Association and the Toronto Board of Trade as well as being elected President of the Construction Safety Association. In 1976, he was appointed Executive Director of Public Affairs (Safety and Education) for the Workman's Compensation Board. His philanthropic and social service commitment was evident in his 1956 election as a Member of the Executive of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews, his membership on the Board of Directors for the YMCA.

In 1956, Mr. White received the Golden Mile Kiwanis Award for Outstanding Club Leadership. In 1966, he received the Human Relations Award from the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews followed by the 1967 Confederation of Canada Centennial Medal for "Valuable Service to the Nation." In 1970, he was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada, and given the Order of St. John in 1975. *(Image 11)* In 1976, The Scarborough Civic Award of Merit presented to him recognized his work as a humanitarian as well as his talents as a musician, prior to his death in 1981.

Vivian White was also recognized for being a committed philanthropist, community volunteer, activist, environmentalist and "trailblazer."<sup>17</sup> *(Image 12)* In 2002, she was awarded the Queen's Golden Jubilee medal for her volunteer work and environmental and community activism. Vivian and Bill raised five children at 33 Murray Avenue. The White children continue their parents' diverse work representing their gifts and talents of and their dedication to community service. These include Chris White, guitarist, singer, song-writer and producer, who won the Helen Verger Award in 2012 for "significant sustained contributions to Canadian folk music,"<sup>18</sup> Laurie White, a doctor, Romney

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13 These letters were as the White's daughter, Sheila White writes "meticulously saved" by Vivian and after her death were made public by Sheila White, and were the subject of a CBC news report, February 14, 2017.

14 Ibid.

15 Don Allan, p. 1.

16 Ibid.

17 Obituary, Globe and Mail, September 10, 2016....

18 Sheila White, citing the terms of the award given to her brother, 6 June 2017.

White, a computer systems consultant for IBM, Sheila White who has been a journalist, political advisor, a candidate for public office at the municipal, provincial and federal levels (representing the NDP in the latter two), is a panelist on the CBC's 'Here and Now' as well as a composer, musician, choir leader and mentor of songwriters. In 2014 Ms. White was awarded the African Canadian Achievement Award for Excellence in Politics. Her brother, Tim White, is a bass player with the Headstones band whose first album, *Picture of Health*, released in 1993, was certified Platinum by Music Canada. Their most recent album, *Little Army*, was released in June 2017. Other members of the White family include, retired Senator Donald Oliver, a grandson, George Elliott Clarke, poet and playwright, a great grandson, who is currently Ottawa's Parliamentary Poet Laureate and Anthony Sherwood, the award-winning actor, producer, director and writer, who is a great nephew.

Since the Rev. Capt. Dr. Wm. Andrew White II's arrival in Nova Scotia in 1900, the White family have been recognized and awarded for their significant contributions to Canadian society, politics, the arts and the environment over the last century.

### iii. ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

#### Harris-White House, 33 Murray Avenue

The Harris-White house is a typical representative of the Ontario farmhouse as it evolved in the second half of the 19th century. (*Images 13-16*) This represented a move away from the symmetrical Georgian model with its simple, rectangular volume and low-pitched gable roof that predominated in the first half of the 19th century to the more complex T-shaped plan with their steeply pitched intersecting gable roofs frequently featuring dormers. The T-shaped plan accommodate porches within one of its L's, and provided narrow volumes with windows on several sides of the interior rooms maximizing daylight. (*Image 17*) The buff-brick trim that originated as stone Georgian quoins and lintels and evolved into decorative patterns was replaced with the late 19th-century Arts & Crafts and Richardsonian Romanesque inspired delight in surface patterns created through texture, and here achieved by the decorative bands of alternating projecting and receding headers above the windows.

The principal elevation of the Harris-White house was originally on the north side facing the farm lane, now known as Harris Farm Gate<sup>19</sup> which led from the Third Concession Road, now known as Sheppard Avenue East, to the farm. A secondary entrance led from the south garden to the stairs which provided access to the basement and convenient delivery of produce to the cellar for winter storage.

The interior of the house retains the original plan as outlined by Vivian White. (*Image 17, as above*) Many original interior features survive including the window and door frames which feature two different styles: one with a mitred corner and elaborately moulded sills in the living room and a second used in the kitchen and bedrooms which

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19 When this road was going to be named Petworth Gate, Vivian White protested, suggesting that as John Harris had planted all the mature trees in the neighbourhood, the street should keep his name and so it was called Harris Farm Gate. (Letter, March 8, 1994)

featured a square block at the corners with a bulls-eye moulding and plainer sills. Other features include the original door handles, stair balustrade and wainscoting in the dining room which was originally the kitchen. (*Images 18-26*)

In 1946, the Shiff family had extended the kitchen and enclosed porch to the west, so that the house had an entrance which would face the new street, Murray Avenue, which had been laid out with the subdivision. (*Image 27*) At this time the brick portion of the house was painted white, matching the siding.<sup>20</sup> The east end of the house is occupied by the single-storey, 1969 extension of the living room. Both of the extensions are clad in white aluminum siding. The kitchen porch features a small octagonal window typical of mid-20th century architecture.

#### Setting:

The Harris-White house, originally constructed in 1888, was situated on a 90 acre parcel of land, set back from the south side of the third concession road now known as Sheppard Avenue East. Harris Farm Gate is the original road which had been constructed as a lane leading from the avenue south to the Kennedy house. (*Images 28-29*) This is why the house was constructed with its principal elevation facing north. Following the subdivision of the property by Morris Shiff, the Harris house was left on a lot measuring 123 x 165' nearly 2-3 times bigger than those adjacent lots of subdivision Plan 3932. Murray Avenue was created as part of the subdivision, providing new access to the Harris house from the west instead of from the north so that the first elevation which is viewed from the street is that of the 1946 single storey addition which included an enclosed porch and kitchen. (*Image 30*)

A U-shaped driveway leads from Murray Avenue surrounding the lawn which is enclosed on the western edge of the property by a tall cedar hedge, adjacent to the street and parallel to a majestic row of mature coniferous trees believed to have been planted to provide a wind break, as well as shading the house from the low western sun. A garage stands on the south border of the property facing the enclosed porch entrance. (*Images 31-34*)

#### iv. CONTEXT

The Murray White House is located in a suburban neighbourhood constructed in the 1950s and characterized by single-storey bungalows typical of post-war housing. Many of the properties have since been rebuilt with substantially larger double-storey houses. (*Images 35-36*) All of the houses are set well-back from the street with an alternating pattern of lawns and long driveways punctuated by mature coniferous and deciduous trees and occasional low clusters of shrubs and flowers. The site of the Harris-White house is distinguished by its cedar hedge planted along the street edge, the U-shaped driveway and the row of tall conifer trees parallel to the street. The property is a surviving example of the 19th-century settlement of Scarborough Township which was characterized by farms and small villages including Agincourt.

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20 Allan Shiff relayed this information regarding the painting of the brick to Sheila White.

### 3. EVALUATION CHECKLIST

The following evaluation applies Ontario Regulation 9/06 made under the Ontario Heritage Act: Criteria for Determining Cultural Heritage Value or Interest. While the criteria are prescribed for municipal designation under Part IV, Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act, the City of Toronto uses it when assessing properties for inclusion on the City of Toronto Inventory of Heritage Properties. The evaluation table is marked "N/A" if the criterion is "not applicable" to the property or X if it is applicable, with explanatory text below.

Design or Physical Value	
i. rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method	X
ii. displays high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit	n/a
iii. demonstrates high degree of scientific or technical achievement	n/a

The Harris-White house has design value as a representative example of the mid-late 19th-century, one-and-a-half storey Ontario farm house, with its T-shaped plan, steeply pitched gable roofs, verandah and brick patterning over the window heads created by brick headers.

Historical or Associative Value	
i. direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community	X
ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture	X
iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	n/a

The house has historical value as it contributes to an understanding of the 19th-century development of the Scarborough Township as a farming community with a collection of small villages such as Agincourt. It is associated with the James and Samuel Kennedy a family of farmers who constructed the house in 1888 and with John Harris, farmer, who purchased the Kennedy property in 1912 and lived in the house until 1943. The house is also valued for its association with William (Bill) A White, O.C. and Vivian White (nee Keeler) who lived at 33 Murray Avenue from 1951 until their deaths in 1981 and 2016 respectively. Bill White was the first Black Canadian to run for public office as a federal candidate and was recognized with numerous awards for his humanitarian service including being appointed an Officer to the Order of Canada. Vivian White received a Queen's Golden Jubilee medal recognizing her contributions as a community volunteer and environmental activist. The White children have continued their parents' legacy through politics, community care, social activism and music and have also received awards in recognition of their work.



Contextual Value	
i. important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area	X
ii. physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings	X
iii. landmark	n/a

Contextually, the Harris-White house is important in defining and maintaining the late 19th-century character of farmhouses set in 100-200 acre farm properties which typified the developing Scarborough Township and surrounded the 19th-century Agincourt village. Situated on the east side of Murray Avenue, which was laid out as part of the suburban subdivision of the Harris farm lands c 1950 and surrounded by post-war bungalows and more recent larger-scaled houses, the Harris-White house in its setting, orientation and design supports the remaining 19th-century character of the township. It is physically, visually, and historically linked to its surroundings.

#### 4. SUMMARY

Following research and evaluation according to Regulation 9/06, it has been determined that the property at 33 Murray Avenue, containing the Harris-White house has design, associative and contextual values.

Completed in 1888, the Harris-White house has design value as an example of the 19th-century, one-and-a-half storey, Ontario farm house, which featured a verandah, T-shaped plan and steep gable roofs and decorative brick patterning. The property has value as it is associated with the 19th-century development of Scarborough Township as a series of farming communities and with the Kennedy family who built the house in 1888 as well as with John Harris who continued farming on the property from 1912 until 1943. It is also valued for its association with Bill White, O.C. and Vivian White who challenged racial barriers and prejudice throughout their lives while contributing to humanitarian, social, political and environmental causes.

Situated on the east side of Murray Avenue, which was laid out as part of the suburban subdivision of the Harris farm lands and surrounded by post-war bungalows and more recent larger-scaled houses, the Harris-White house in its setting, orientation and design retains the original 19th-century farming character of the Scarborough Township.

## 5. SOURCES

### Archival Sources

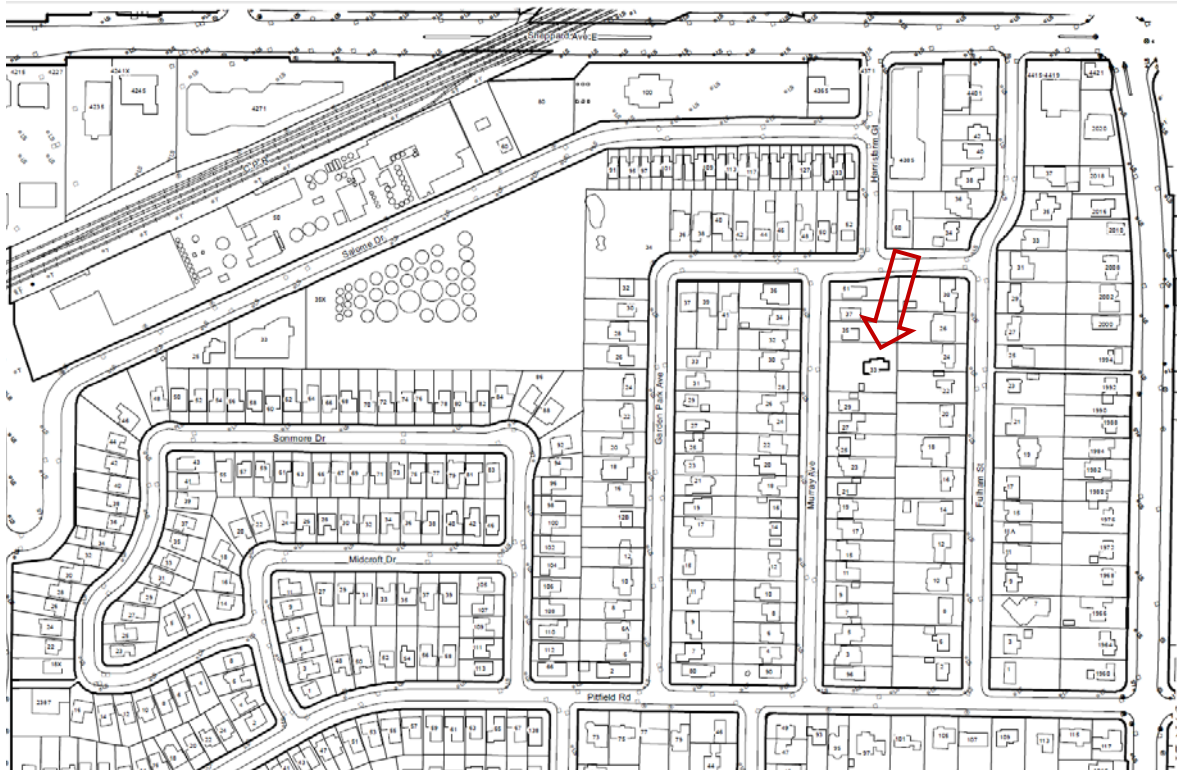
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Visiting Professor, Department of History and Classics, Acadia University  
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*White Family History*. <https://whitefamilyreunion.wordpress.com/white-family-history-2/>  
White, Sheila, daughter of Bill and Vivian White. Ms. White generously provided numerous photographs, copies of documents, and information regarding the history of her family as well as providing information and photographs from the Shiff family.  
White, Vivian. Letters written to Rick Schofield of the Scarborough Archives dated March 8, 1994 and June 19, 1994.

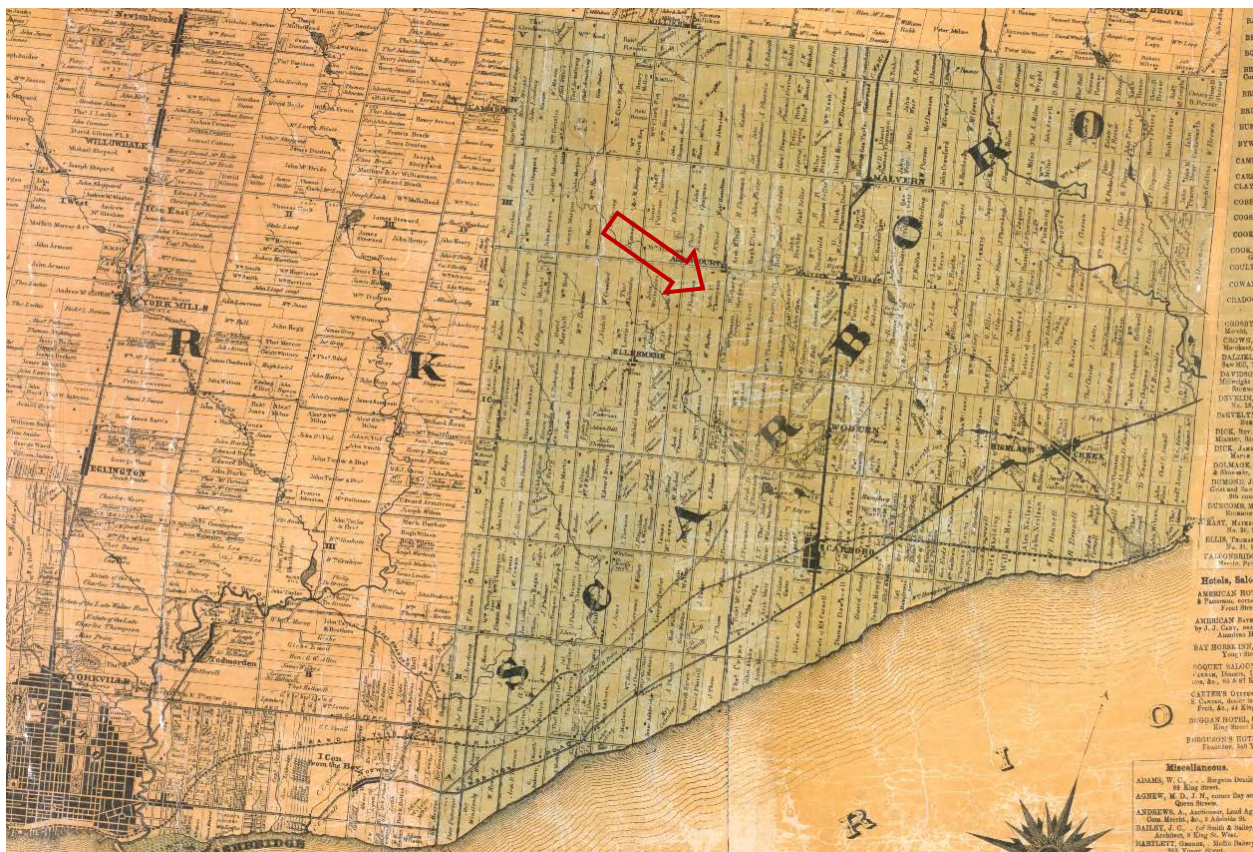
## 6. IMAGES:

The arrows mark the location of the property at 33 Murray Avenue.  
*Please note:* all maps are oriented with north at the top, unless otherwise indicated



1. City of Toronto Property Data Map: the subject property at 33 Murray Avenue is marked on the east side of Murray Avenue, south west of Sheppard Avenue East and Brimley Road. The house has a bold outline indicating that it is already included on the Heritage Register.



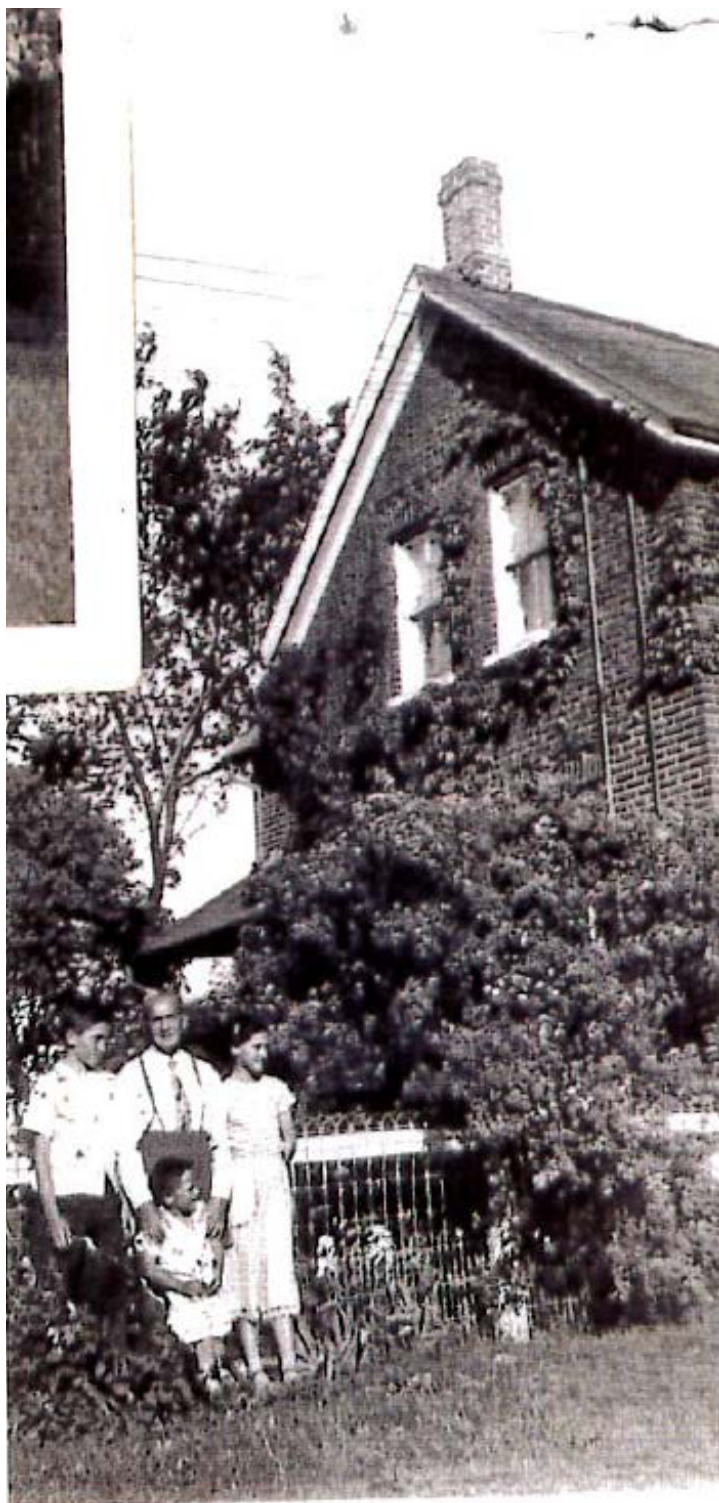


2. Tremaine, George R. *Tremaine's Map of the County of York, Canada West*. 1860 showing the relative location of Agincourt and the property owned by Archibald P. Thomson (Ng)



3. Tremaine, George R. *Tremaine's Map of the County of York, Canada West*. 1860. Detail showing the location of the northern 100 acres of Lot 25, Concession 2, owned by Archibald P. Thomson. Note the square block indicating the stone house on the northern 10 acres which Thomson retained after he sold the southern 90 acres to James Kennedy in 1886. (Ng)





4. Photograph taken during the Shiff family ownership, 1946-1951, of the house at 33 Murray Avenue showing the house prior to the brick being painted white and the property subdivided. Note the chimney in the gable indicating that there was originally a fireplace or stove in this location in the original kitchen space, now the dining room (Allan Shiff, son of Morris and Rae Shiff)



5. Shiff family photograph showing the barn and other farm outbuildings, 1946-1951. (Allan Shiff)



6. Shiff family photograph of young girl feeding chickens, 1946-1951. (Allan Shiff)



7. Rev. Capt. Dr. Wm. Andrew White II, 1874-1936 (Sheila White)



8. The Halifax YMCA dance band with Bill White on the drums, 1942. (Sheila White)





9. Bill and Vivian White with Vivian's brother, Bernie Keeler (left) and Bill's brother George White (right) in 1953 with the house at 33 Murray Avenue behind. (Sheila White)



10. Bill and Vivian in the living room at 33 Murray Avenue in 1968 with their daughter Laurie and Vivian's brother Bernard Keeler. (Sheila White)





11. Bill White at his investiture as an Officer of the Order of Canada, 1971.  
(Sheila White)



12. Vivian White (Sheila White)



13. North elevation prior to the brick being painted white prior to 1946. (Scarborough Archives)



14. Photograph of 33 Murray Avenue, original, principal (north) elevation, taken after 1946 and before 1969. Note the addition of the kitchen wing to the west and the painting of the brick c. 1946, and the removal of the verandah roof. (Scarborough Archives)



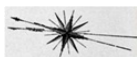
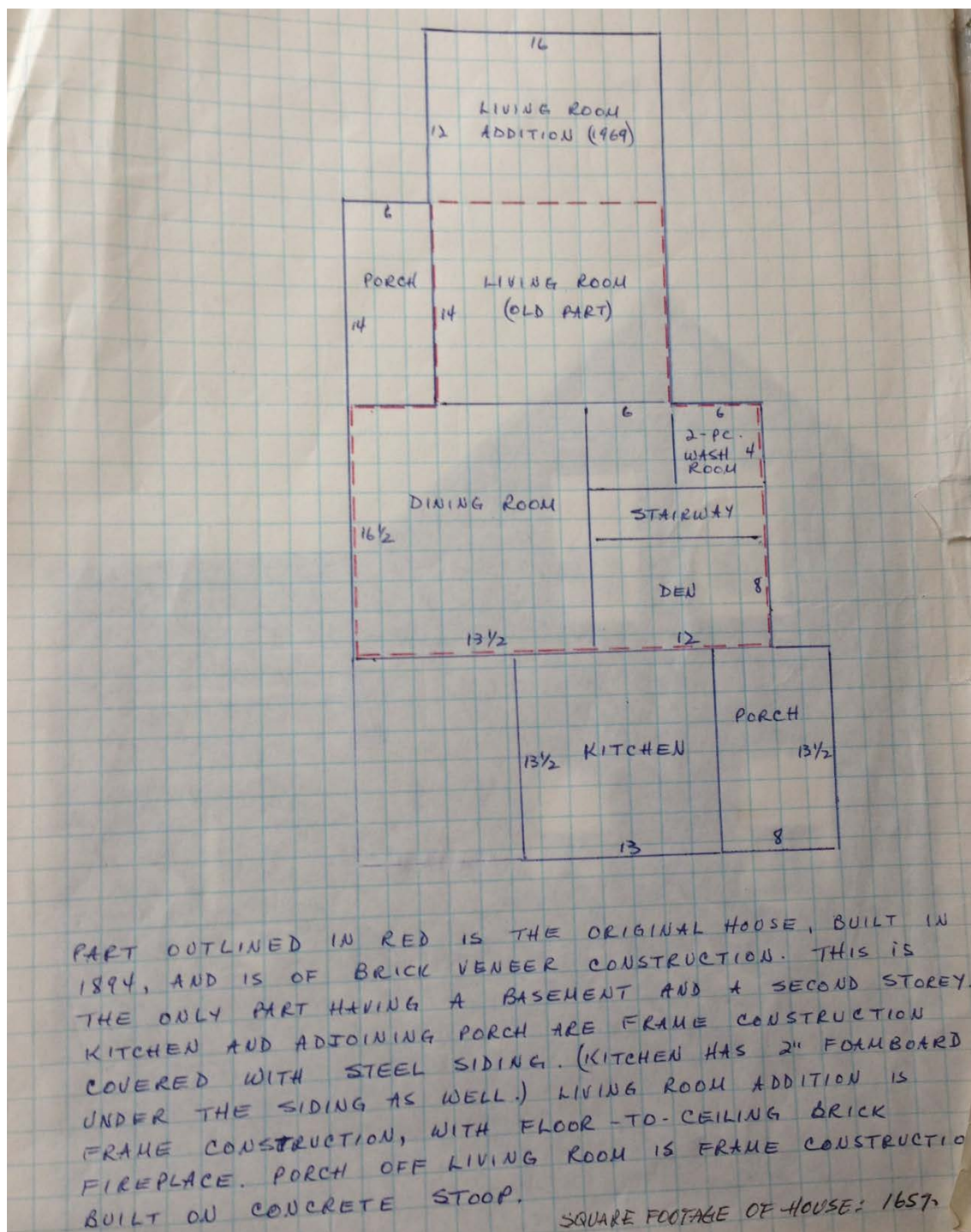


15. North (original principal) elevation with more recent porch (HPS, 2017)



16. South elevation with the 1946 enclosed porch and kitchen addition at the west (left) side and the 1969 living room extension at the east (right) side, 2001 (Sheila White)





17. Plan drawn by Vivian White of the house, showing the original T-shaped plan outlined in a dashed red line with the 1946 kitchen and porch addition on the west end and the 1969 living room addition on the east end. The porch in the 'L' between the living room and dining room is a more recent addition but repeats the location of an earlier porch (Sheila White)





18. Mitred frames for living room window and doors (left) (HPS, 2017)

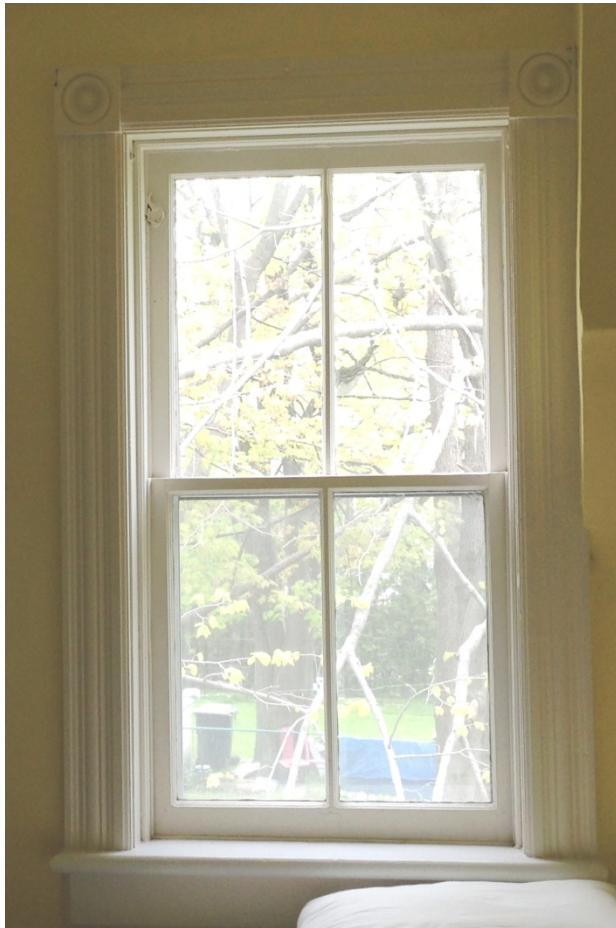
19. Frames with corner block for doors and windows in kitchen and upstairs rooms (HPS, 2017)



20. Living room window sill (HPS, 2017)



21. Living room window sill showing profile of mouldings (HPS, 2017)



22. Bedroom window frame with corner blocks and plain sill (HPS, 2017)



23. Typical door handle seen on exterior and interior doors and fielded panel moulding of door (HPS, 2017)



24. Stair balustrade at the second floor (HPS, 2017)





25. Kitchen-dining room wainscoting. (HPS, 2017)

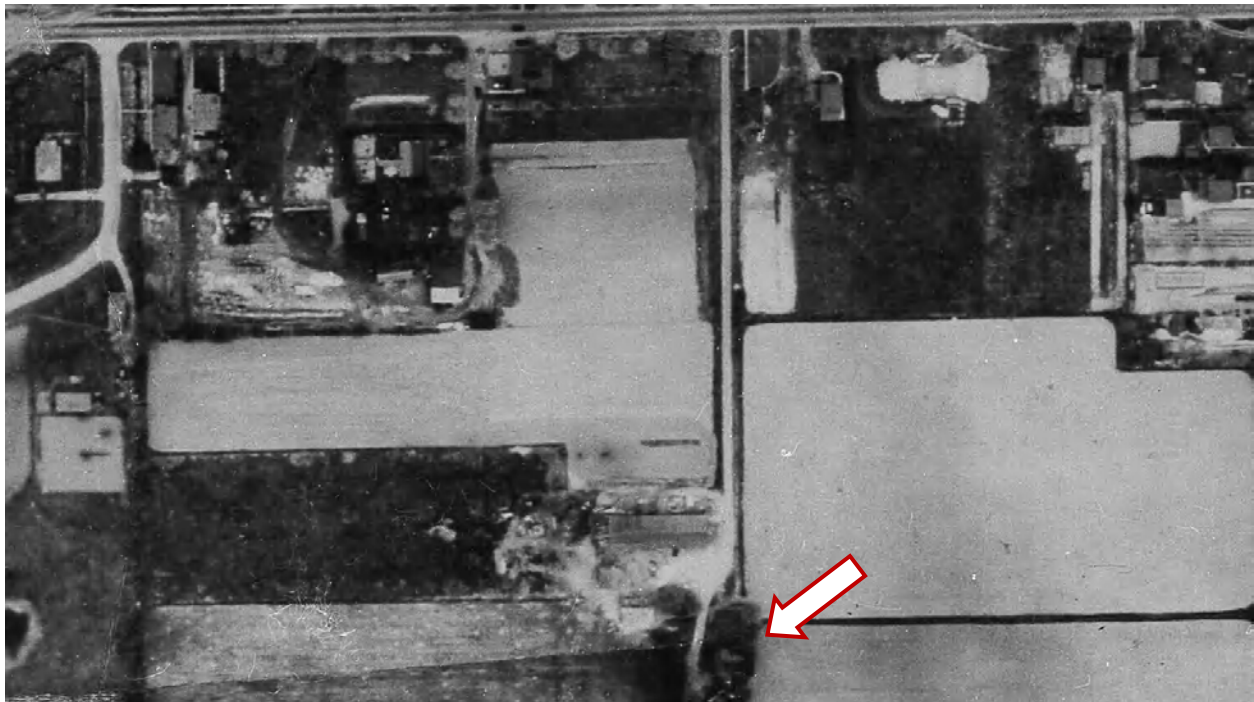


26. 1959 photograph of the dining room (originally the kitchen) showing the door which originally opened to the exterior north verandah. (Sheila White)





27. 1953 photograph of the house showing the 1946 extension with the new kitchen and enclosed porch (Sheila White)



28. 1947 Aerial Photograph of the land just north of the Harris White House prior to subdivision. Note the north-south road (today known as Harris Farm Gate) on axis with the house, the barn to the left of the road and the large turning area between the house, barn and the chicken coop.  
(Series 12 Aerial Photographs of Metropolitan Toronto Area, 1947)



29. 1950 Aerial photograph of the Harris White farm showing the barn demolished but the house and chicken coop still standing. Note the beginning of the construction of the suburban houses on today's Fulham Street one block east of Murray Avenue (Series 12 Aerial Photographs of Metropolitan Toronto Area, 1950)



30. 1953 Aerial photograph showing the house at 33 Murray Avenue and the dark line of coniferous trees stretching across the U-shaped driveway to the chicken coop. Note that the farm lane has now been widened as Harris Farm Gate (Series 12 Aerial Photographs of Metropolitan Toronto Area, 1953)





31. 33 Murray Avenue, showing the chicken coop still standing on the adjacent lots, 1954 (Sheila White)



32. 1954 photograph of the property at 33 Murray Avenue as seen from the west side of the street showing the setting and the cedar hedge (Sheila White)





33. 2017 photograph of 33 Murray Avenue showing the setting and the cedar hedge (HPS, 2017)



34. View of the current setting with the U-shaped driveway, the lawn, and the line of coniferous trees with the cedar hedge at the right (HPS, 2017)





35. Post-war bungalows lining the east side of Murray Avenue (HPS, 2017)



36. Murray Avenue showing the combination of recent large-scale houses and the original post-war bungalows. (HPS, 2017)