

# STATEMENT OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE

## DESCRIPTION

Municipal Address: 65 Royalpark Way

Legal Description: Lot 7 Plan 65M3157, Vaughan S/T ROW & EASE IN FAVOUR OF LOT 8, PL 65M3157 OVER PT 3, 65 R19573 AS IN LT1222026

Brief description: 2-Storey Georgian Stone House

## OVERVIEW

The cultural heritage value of the property known as 65 Royalpark Way meets the criteria set out by the *Ontario Heritage Act* under Province of Ontario Regulation 9/06 for the categories of design/physical, historical/associative and contextual value.

Name: Andrew McClure House

Date Built: 1859

Location: West side of Royalpark Way and East of Highway 27 and south of Rutherford Rd. in Woodbridge

Condition: good

## DESIGN OR PHYSICAL VALUE

Affectionately known as “the Stone Pile”<sup>1</sup>, this 2-storey vernacular Georgian Stone house was built in 1859 by Andrew McClure. It is designed in a “T” shape and has a side-gabled roof and symmetrical arrangement of chimneys, windows and doors on the front façade. The front door has a fan light, which is done in Classical style. Two basement windows appear on both sides of the gabled roof (north and south). A sunroom was added to the east side of the house by Col. William Laurie in the early 1950s. The house is a stunning example of the simple, solid and symmetrical style of Georgian architecture, which was most prominent in Ontario during the 1780s – 1860s<sup>2</sup>.

The stone used to build the house came from an area  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile east of the 9<sup>th</sup> Concession, in a valley on the south side of Elder’s Sideroad<sup>3</sup> in Elder’s Mills (Woodbridge). Photographs from the McClure Family Fonds at the City of Vaughan Archives give us great insight to how the area looked pre-1950s.

Today (2024), the house is part of a sub-division with the east side of the house facing the street entrance and operates as a business.

## HISTORICAL / ASSOCIATIVE VALUE

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL

The general area surrounding the subject property does not have any documented potential for archaeological findings, although potential does surround the outskirts of the property.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Box 5, Interviews, McClure Family Fonds, City of Vaughan Archives

<sup>2</sup> Ontario Architectural Style Guide, University of Waterloo, 2009

<sup>3</sup> Box 5, McClure Family Fonds, City of Vaughan Archives

<sup>4</sup> Arc-GIS, City of Vaughan

## **McClure Family (1844-1921)**

The Crown patent land for Lot 14 Concession 8 had been awarded to Augustus Jones and transferred through several hands, until Sam Snider purchased and began to sever portions of the property, selling and registering to Andrew McClure in 1842<sup>5</sup>.

McClure had emigrated from County Down, Ireland in 1833 where he joined his uncle John Waugh in Etobicoke. Soon after he purchased and settled on Lot 14 and 15 Concession 8, Woodbridge, becoming one of the first settlers in the area. He became a prominent settler, being a carpenter by trade, he assisted with the building of many grist and sawmills along the Humber River. He married Mary Ann Hamilton in 1836 and had 9 children. Shortly after his marriage, he built the subject property in 1859<sup>6</sup>. McClure's granddaughter, Janey, recalls, "I remember my Grandpa McClure as a rather stern man, but with a soft heart."<sup>7</sup>

The 1851<sup>8</sup> census of Canada West records represent Andrew McClure as a successful farmer, farming both Lots 14 and 15 in Concession 8. With a total acreage of 107, he had 58 ½ acres under cultivation and 44 ½ acres under crop. The garden and orchard were 1 acre, wheat crop under 20 acres, peas under 5 acres, oats under 6 ½ acres, potatoes under 1 acre, and turnips under ½ an acre. He produced hay, tallow, fulled cloth, and flannel. He also had several animals, such as bulls, oxen, steers, milk cows, horses, sheep, and pigs. From the animals he produced butter, cheese, beef and pork. This lifestyle helped to feed his family and have enough to sell at market. The 1861<sup>9</sup> census shows McClure and his family living in a stone house, thus confirming the 1859 build date.

McClure died in 1878 at the age of 65, and his son William inherited the property<sup>10</sup>. William McClure<sup>11</sup> was the eldest child of Andrew and Mary Ann. In 1876 he married Ellen Nesbitt, and the two of them continued the farm. The McClure's loved to entertain and often held Garden Parties, as seen in attachment 2<sup>12</sup>.

## **Nattress Family (1921-1940)**

It is possible that William McClure had been sick for a while, because he sold the property to William Reid Nattress, who was the husband to his niece<sup>13</sup>, Jane, in 1921 shortly before he died in the same year. Jane was the daughter to Samuel, William's brother, who was also a prominent figure in the development of Woodbridge. William and Jane were married in the parlour room of the McClure home (stone house) on January 31, 1906.<sup>14</sup>

The Nattress family all worked hard and did their part to continue to run the farm. William's daughter, Agnes, recalled in an interview that there was a "small field south of the railway

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<sup>5</sup> Ontario Land Titles, Historic Books; [www.onland.ca](http://www.onland.ca)

<sup>6</sup> Reaman, G. E. (1971). *A History of Vaughan Township: Two centuries of life in the township. Vaughan Township Historical Society*. Pgs. 208, 278

<sup>7</sup> Memories, Box 5, McClure Family Fonds, City of Vaughan Archives

<sup>8</sup> 1851 Census of Canada

<sup>9</sup> 1861 Census of Canada (stone house is listed)

<sup>10</sup> McClure Family Fonds, City of Vaughan Archives

<sup>11</sup> 1878 Tremaine Map of York

<sup>12</sup> 1886 Garden Party, Lot 14 Con 8, Map Cabinet, McClure Family Fonds, City of Vaughan Archives

<sup>13</sup> Vital Statistics, Ancestry- Library Edition; [www.ancestry.ca](http://www.ancestry.ca) (Vaughan Public Libraries)

<sup>14</sup> Memories, Box 5, McClure Family Fonds, City of Vaughan Archives

tracks; it was triangular in shape with the long side lying on the north fence line.... Some years later a train wreck upset a car of acid onto the field. For many years nothing grew where the acid had soaked in the soil.”<sup>15</sup>

William and Jane’s daughter, Jennie “Janey”, recalled in an interview in 1991 how “the Stone Pile, or our stone house, was built by the McClure side of the family and was quite large and very cold in the winter. Water would freeze in our bedrooms; there wasn’t a furnace until later...There was no electricity, no water on tap, no bathrooms inside and no hospital bed”<sup>16</sup>.

### **The Lauries**

Colonel William Little Laurie and his wife Charlotte Francis (Valentine) Laurie purchased the property in 1946 off Audrey A Williams (who had only owned the property for two years). William was a decorated man of service, having served in both World Wars, and he was made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire.<sup>17</sup>

Sometime around the late 1940s to early 1950s, Laurie had a sunroom installed to the east portion of the house. Several photographs<sup>18</sup> of the stone house were in the McClure Family Fonds, providing many angles of the house and what it looked like in the early 1950s (attachment 4).

### **CONTEXTUAL VALUE**

The property located at Con 8 Lot 14, Woodbridge, is one of the earliest, stone residential structures in Vaughan in its original location. It is a stark reminder of what once existed surrounding the sub-division it has now had built around it.

From where the house is situated, it likely had a pleasant view looking out in every direction. For over a century the property was used as a farm and contextually relates to the agricultural history and colonial settlement of Vaughan. Knowing the history of who lived in the house helps to generate an understanding of the life this property lived and continues to live. From its humble beginnings of a pioneering settler family, clearing land and starting to grow crops and raise animals, to providing shelter, life and memories to several families, many of whom were prominent individuals in the settlement of Elder’s Mills and Woodbridge itself.

The house and property gave space for birth, death and marriage. It held joyous family gatherings and garden parties. It had great success in farming and then destruction and hardship, but the people of the property prevailed and kept it going, and now the stone house is still standing today, a reminder of what once was.

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<sup>15</sup> Agnes Agar, Memories, Box 5, McClure Family Fonds, City of Vaughan Archives

<sup>16</sup> Memories, Box 5, McClure Family Fonds, City of Vaughan Archives

<sup>17</sup> Learn more about Colonel Laurie and his military achievements [Laurie, William Little - RCSigs.ca](http://RCSigs.ca)

<sup>18</sup> Laurie Stone House Photos, McClure Family Fonds, City of Vaughan Archives

## **SUMMARY OF CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE**

### **Physical/Design Value**

- Pre-Confederation construction; built in 1859.
- A rare, surviving stone-clad vernacular Georgian House
- Side gabled roof
- Symmetrical arrangement
- Small paned windows, 6 over 6
- Centred, plain, single door with a transom and decorative, single paned windows outlining it, as well as an unusual fanlight in the Classical style.
- Intricate brickwork above doorframe

### **Historical/Associative/Contextual Value**

- connection to specific historic settler families such as the McClures
- Over a century of the property staying within the same family
- the subject property reflects some of the earliest settler architecture and siting, giving insight into settler practices.
- the subject property is contextually linked to Vaughan's agricultural history from initial settlement and land clearing, early 19<sup>th</sup> farming practices.