



# Site 20

## The Charles Henry Sheppard House and Sheppard's Bush Conservation Area

Doors Open  
**Aurora**  
July 14, 2012

### SITE INFORMATION

**Hours:**

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Address:**

93 Industrial Parkway South

**Website:**

[www.windfallcentre.ca](http://www.windfallcentre.ca)  
[www.lsrca.on.ca](http://www.lsrca.on.ca)

**Architect:**

Alvin Sherlock Mathers, Mathers  
and Haldenby

**Year built:**

1921

### OVERVIEW

The Sheppard Estate House and associated buildings are set within a picturesque woodlot which for many years was an active sugar bush. Although a private estate, the Sheppard Family regularly invited Aurorans to enjoy their home and property throughout their tenure. Brownies, Scouts and school classes were regularly invited to observe sugaring operations. The property also included an active farm and an active fox-farm for a time. The current owner is the Ontario Heritage Trust.

### HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The Sheppard Estate is a unique and significant collection of cultural heritage resources, including an estate house, associated structures and man-made plantings set within a picturesque forest landscape.

Part of the estate is the Sheppard's Bush Conservation Area. The sugar bush is an outstanding and rare survivor of a once-active sugar bush in Aurora. It contributes to a highly distinctive setting incorporating mature trees influenced by human activity. While the estate was a residence, the working sugar bush was tapped several times.

The history of the property is divided into four distinct eras – pre-historic (prior to 1793), early-history (1793-1919), "Brooklands" the Estate of Charles Henry Sheppard (1919-1971) and the Conservation Area (1971-present). Currently, Sheppard's Bush is managed by the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority.

### HISTORY OF THE SITE

Charles Henry Sheppard (1875-1967) was born in Coldwater, Ontario. Charles followed his father into the timber trade, where he made his fortune in the Georgian Bay area. In 1922, he served as Mayor of Aurora.

In 1919, Sheppard acquired land holdings amounting to some 200 acres (about 81 hectares), partly in Whitchurch Township and partly in Aurora. The lands were obtained in three transactions totalling more than \$17,500.

Construction of the single-family dwelling on 58.2 acres, the Sheppard Estate, also known as "Brooklands," occurred in 1920-1921. The estate and associated estate-lands and buildings have one of the most rich, diverse and significant histories in The Town of Aurora and possibly York Region.

### ARCHITECTURAL HIGHLIGHTS

The estate and associated buildings are of outstanding English arts-and-crafts style promoted by William Morris and derived from Medieval English traditions.

The estate was built in 1920-1921 by Fred Browning and designed by architect Alvin Sherlock Mathers. Mathers, known for his architectural firm Mathers and Haldenby, had produced some of the most important buildings in Toronto, including: The Canada Permanent Building at 320 Bay Street (1920), The Bank of Nova Scotia Building at 44 King Street West (1951), a number of projects at the downtown University of Toronto campus such as the Botany Building and the Sir Daniel Residence and The National Library in Ottawa (1953).

### Special features include:

- A steeply-pitched roof
- Asymmetrical banks of windows
- Purpose-designed upper-level sun porches
- Extensive use of dark woodwork and trim



### Doors Open Aurora Contact:

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