

**BY-LAW NUMBER 16-32**

**OF**

**THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CLEARVIEW**

**A By-law to designate the Bethel Union Pioneer Cemetery as a property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest**

**WHEREAS** Section 29 (1) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. 018, as amended, authorizes the Council of the municipality to enact by-laws to designate a property within the municipality to be of cultural heritage value or interest;

**AND WHEREAS** the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Clearview has caused to be served upon The Ontario Heritage Foundation, notice of intention to designate the aforesaid real property and has caused such notice of intention to be published in a newspaper having general circulation in the Municipality;

**AND WHEREAS** the Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest and the Description of Heritage Attributes are set out in Schedule "B" attached to this by-law;

**AND WHEREAS** no Notice of Objection to the proposed designation has been served on the Clerk of the Municipality;

**NOW THEREFORE** the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Clearview HEREBY ENACTS as follows:

1. That the Bethel Union Pioneer Cemetery located on the property legally described as Concession 6 N Pt Lt 17 WSR, Township of Clearview, County of Simcoe and municipally known as 2249 Creemore Avenue, is hereby designated as being of cultural heritage value or interest pursuant to s. 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
2. The Clerk is hereby authorized to cause a copy of this by-law to be registered against the property described in Schedule "A" hereto in the proper land registry office.
3. The Clerk is hereby authorized to cause a copy of the by-law to be served upon the owner of the aforesaid property 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 Township of Clearview.
4. This By-Law shall come into force and effect on the date of final passing.

**By-Law Number 16-32 read a first, second and third time and finally passed this 25<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2016.**

  
MAYOR

  
DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATIVE SERVICES/CLERK

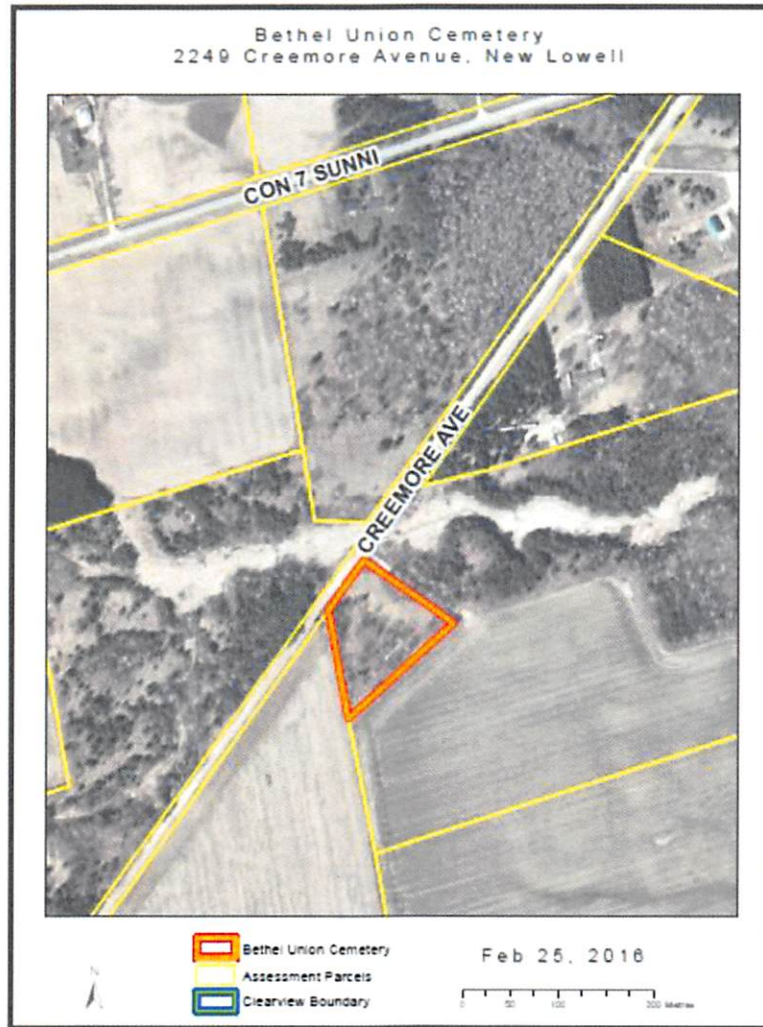
**SCHEDULE "A"**

BETHEL UNION PIONEER CEMETERY

2249 CREEMORE AVENUE, NEW LOWELL, ONTARIO

CON 6 N PT LOT 17 WSR  
TOWNSHIP OF CLEARVIEW

---



## **SCHEDULE "B"**

### **Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest**

The Bethel Union Pioneer Cemetery is an inactive cemetery within the Township of Clearview, and is situated on a remote 2.72 acre plot of land that was once part of a 200 acre parcel of Crown Land. It is an extension of the Silvershoe Burial Ground located to the north of the present day site and is the last vestige of the culturally unique and once vibrant community known as the Silver Shoe Settlement. It is perhaps the only totally inter-racial, multicultural, non-denominational cemetery established during the period of history when only individuals of Anglo-European heritage were permitted burial within the boundaries of Caucasian sanctified cemeteries in the Province of Ontario.

The original cemetery "The Sunnidale Union Cemetery" was established by resolution of Sunnidale Township Council on August 6, 1885. The land was purchased from James Mather for the sum of \$68 and duly registered on January 18, 1886 under the legal name of Sunnidale Union Public Cemetery. The earliest recorded burials in this section of the cemetery were: Susan Johnson (1880), Bella Lawrence (1881) and Keneda Lawrence (1881).

The name Bethel Union Pioneer Cemetery was applied to the site by the SilverShoe Historical Society at the time of the 1997 Restoration Initiative to avoid public confusion with the nearby Sunnidale Pioneer Cemetery (aka Old Zion Presbyterian Cemetery) on Highway 26.

It is estimated that approximately 500 – 1000 burials have taken place at Bethel Union Pioneer Cemetery with an equal unsubstantiated number interred north of the present day site, in the pre-rebellion Silver Shoe Burial Ground.

The Bethel Union Pioneer Cemetery is the largest of all the inactive cemeteries within the jurisdiction of Clearview Township and now stands as a shining example of dedicated community involvement and as a template for all inactive cemeteries throughout the Province of Ontario.

## **Description of Heritage Attributes**

The Reasons for Designation include the following heritage attributes:

The Bethel Union Pioneer Cemetery is an indispensable educational teaching tool providing the last visual and tangible evidence of the evolution of the incomparable cross-cultural area of Clearview Township, once known as the Silver Shoe Settlement. It is not simply "an old inactive cemetery", it is a cemetery permeated with a wealth of historical contextual and environmental features.

1. **Cathedral of Trees** (grove of birch trees surrounding Silver Shoe Monument)
2. **The SilverShoe Monument** (erected in 1997) in memory of the 25 original African families that settle in Old Sunnidale Township
3. **Epidemic Ridge** (mass burial site of the numerous victims of the many epidemics that plagued the area in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries)
4. **The Emancipation North Star** (installed by the SilverShoe Historical Society in memory of the first 25 African Canadian resident families of Old Sunnidale Township. The Star is an optical illusion that appears to rise as evening visitors leave the cemetery)
5. **Numerous Slave Graves** (interred in inconspicuous area, marking family graves with a large field stone or young saplings over the graves as deterrents against "illegal exhumation")
6. **Late 19<sup>th</sup> and Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century Grave Markers** (markers are found in a number of different styles and are made of a variety of materials including wood, limestone, marble, granite and soapstone)
7. **Replicated 19<sup>th</sup> Century Cedar Pole Fence** (replacement of the deteriorated fence; and is in keeping with the historical background of the site)
8. **Memorial Mound** (contains the remnants of the little wooden markers that once dotted the shallow graves throughout the entire south-east section of the cemetery)
9. **Natural Vegetation, Wildflowers and Shrubs** ( large concentration of thimble berry shrubs form a natural protective hedge surrounding perimeter of cemetery), wild apple trees, variety of mushrooms, wild grapes, lambs quarters, cedars, pine trees, among other indigenous vegetation that provided natural food and medicinal resources for early residents).
10. **Indigenous Wildlife** (can be seen in the serene park-like setting of the cemetery and the adjacent wetlands of Silver Creek Marsh).