

Brampton Heritage Board  
Date: September 21, 2010

## *HERITAGE REPORT*

### *REASONS FOR HERITAGE DESIGNATION*



*Harrison-Hewgill Cemetery  
The Gore Road at Castle Oaks Crossing*

**August 2010**

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**PROFILE OF SUBJECT PROPERTY:**

<b>ROLL NUMBER</b>	
<b>PIN NUMBER</b>	14212 – 2538 LT
<b>MUNICIPAL ADDRESS</b>	The Gore Road / Lot 9 Concession 10
<b>WARD NUMBER</b>	10
<b>LEGAL DESCRIPTION</b>	Part of Lots 9 and 10, Concession 10, Northern Division, more particularly described as Block 375, Plan 43M-1799.
<b>SECONDARY PLAN</b>	
<b>PROPERTY NAME</b>	Harrison-Hewgill Cemetery
<b>CURRENT OWNER</b>	City of Brampton
<b>CRITERIA GRADE</b>	A
<b>CURRENT ZONING</b>	
<b>OWNER CONCURRENCE?</b>	<b>YES</b>
<b>CURRENT USES AND FUNCTIONS</b>	cemetery
<b>PREVIOUS OWNERS AND OCCUPANTS</b>	
<b>CONSTRUCTION OR CREATION DATE</b>	1869
<b>RESOURCES ON SUBJECT PROPERTY INCLUDED IN DESIGNATION</b> (circle)	

## **1.0 REASONS FOR HERITAGE DESIGNATION:**

The Harrison-Hewgill Cemetery on The Gore Road is worthy of designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act for its cultural heritage value or interest. The property meets the criteria for designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under the three categories of design or physical value, historical value and contextual value.

### **1.1 STATEMENT EXPLAINING THE CULTURAL HERITAGE VALUE OR INTEREST OF THE PROPERTY**

The subject property is the site of a small family burial plot, originally a feature within a well-tended rural farmstead established in the 1850s by Matthew Harrison and his wife Ann Hewgill-Harrison.

The plot was located in a small apple orchard, near the Harrison farmhouse, a brick masonry building in the Ontario Gothic style, dating to about 1855. The farmhouse was relocated to McVean Drive in 2006.

An archaeological assessment of the cemetery completed in 2005 confirmed that the family burial plot consists of a single grave with two interments – Ann Hewgill-Harrison and her unnamed infant baby. This share grave burial practices was not unusual under such circumstances. Mother and baby died on July 17, 1869. The burials are marked by two beautifully carved stone grave markers embedded, side by side in the soil.

The cultural heritage value of the property relates primarily to its historical or associative value. The property is directly associated with the Harrison and Hewgill families – both prominent in the Toronto-Gore area. The Matthew Harrison family worked this farm from 1854 to the 1950s.

Matthew Harrison (1822-January 5, 1887) was the son of William Harrison and Mary Hutchison. In 1832 William and Mary Harrison and family emigrated to Upper Canada from north Yorkshire, England. They established successful farms in the Wildfield area.

On May 20, 1849 Matthew Harrison married Ann Hewgill (August 9, 1829-July 17, 1869). Ann Hewgill was the daughter of William Hewgill and Alice Sleightholme, also from north Yorkshire, England. The Hewgill family emigrated to the new world in 1832. William Hewgill became one of the first school teachers in the Toronto-Gore and was the local Wesleyan Methodist minister, affiliated with the Hilltop-Gore Church. Hewgill was also a trustee of the Hilltop-Gore Cemetery.

Evidently Matthew Harrison's marriage to Ann Hewgill was met with some resistance from the Hewgill family since Harrison was a Roman Catholic. Animosity existed between many Catholics and Protestants in this period and so called, "mixed" marriages were not commonplace. Nevertheless the marriage went ahead.

The couple established a thriving farm on the subject property, starting in 1854, They built a fine brick masonry farmhouse and had five children together. Sadly, with the birth of their fifth child on July 17, 1869 both mother and infant died.

Ann Hewgill Harrison converted to Catholicism in June 1849. Family members believe that following her death just one month later husband Matthew wished her to be buried in the St Patrick's Catholic cemetery. Ann's father insisted she be buried in his Methodist Hilltop-Gore Cemetery. It seems that the decision to bury Ann and her baby on the Harrison farm may have been a compromise used to settle the impasse.

The cemetery also has the potential to yield information about the many hardships of the early settlers in Peel County who had to endure isolation, a harsh environment and many struggles. From a social historical perspective the site is also a reminder of just how prevalent infant mortality was in the European settlement period.

The two white marble grave markers exhibit design value. They are representative of the stone carvers art. The markers display the highly evocative weeping willow motif, a popular Victorian symbol of loss and grief. Both stones have undergone conservation treatments.

The cultural heritage value of the property is also connected to its contextual value. It helps define and identify the location of the former Harrison farm. This burial site is the only remaining tangible vestige of the former farmstead.

It is physically and historically linked to the farmstead as well as the former cross-roads hamlet of Castlemore (located just north of the subject property at the intersection of The Gore Road and Castlemore Road).

The Cemetery also retains a simple, pastoral, rural character. The setting, trees, shrubs and other new landscaping elements introduced in 2010 form an interesting rural green space within an newly urbanized setting. Originally an old apple tree helped define the site but it suffered from years of decay and had to be removed in 2009.

The statement explaining the cultural heritage value or interest of the subject property, including a description of the heritage attributes of the property along with all other components of the Heritage Report: Statement of Reasons for Heritage Designation, constitute the "reason for heritage designation" required under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

## **1.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE HERITAGE ATTRIBUTES OF THE PROPERTY:**

Unless otherwise indicated, the reason for designation apply generally to all burials, the grounds generally including all landscaping elements, hedgerows, groupings of trees, and shrubs, vistas, fences and all other natural and structural elements found on the subject property. Specific heritage attributes of significance include:

### **Design / Physical Value:**

- Representative example of a rural Euro-Canadian family burial plot;
- two marble grave markers.

Historical / Associative Value:

- has the potential to yield information about the many hardships of the early settlers in Peel County who had to endure isolation, a harsh environment and many struggles.
- from a social historical perspective the site is also a reminder of just how prevalent infant mortality was in the European settlement period.
- associative value reflecting the history of the former 'cross-roads' hamlet of Castlemore;

Contextual Value:

- all trees bushes, grasses, all groundcovers such as daylilies and all hedgerows;
- pastoral, rural character of site;
- physically, functionally, visually and historically linked to its surroundings and to the nearby former hamlet of Castlemore;
- only remaining physical element of the original Harrison farmstead.

**2.0 GENERAL PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:**

The cemetery is situated on block 375. It is essentially square in shape with the lot line demarked with a decorative wood fence and stone piers. The entrance to the cemetery is from the south side of Castle Oaks Crossing off The Gore Road. The subject property is generally flat in nature. Just to the south of the parcel is a storm water management pond.

**3.0 HERITAGE EVALUATION / CRITERIA NOTE:**

The property meets the criteria for designation prescribed by the Province of Ontario under Ontario Heritage Act Regulation 9/06.

The property was listed in the Municipal Register of Cultural Heritage Resources in the 2005 as a "Category A" heritage resource.

**4.0 ALTERATION HISTORY AND HERITAGE INTEGRITY NOTE:**

The original contextual value of the property has been essentially lost with the redevelopment of the surrounding lands as a residential subdivision, which is now underway.

As part of heritage due diligence an overall heritage conservation management plan was developed in 2005 for the standing heritage features on these lands. Since the very beginning of the process, the development company (Criterion Developments) has been exceptionally cooperative and supportive of the heritage conservation program for these lands.

The Harrison farmstead was subject to a heritage impact assessment in 2005.

In 2006 a proposal was put forward to relocate the red brick masonry house to an estate lot facing McVean Drive, just south of Mayfield Road. After the completion of additional due diligence (which included a structural assessment and the preparation of measured “as is” architectural drawings), the plan was endorsed by the Brampton Heritage Board and approved by Council. Relocation was endorsed primarily because of the advanced state of decay exhibited by the house due to several years of being vacant.

In the winter of 2005 the Harrison-Hewgill Cemetery suffered damage. Crews working on a Region of Peel road widening along The Gore Road inadvertently dumped fill on a portion of the cemetery site. The City intervened. Work was halted and the fill was removed.

Heritage staff called for: a) the preparation of conservation plan; b) an archaeological survey; and c) protective fencing and signage around the perimeter of the cemetery site.

The archaeological assessment was completed later in 2005. The City then approved a conservation plan.

The City applied certain conditions to the approval of the plan of subdivision, including heritage designation of the cemetery and that appropriate street naming opportunities to commemorate the Harrison family be applied.

A nearby street has been named “Matthew Harrison Street” in commemoration of the Harrison farmstead.

Originally the cemetery included a very old apple tree – presumably original to the Harrison family occupation of the property. In 2009 the tree was evaluated by a professional arborist. It was determined to be in an un-healthy state after years; the result of years of neglect and decay. It was subsequently removed and replaced with a new tree.

In December 2009 legal title to the cemetery parcel was conveyed to the City of Brampton.

In August 2010 a new landscape plan was implemented for the cemetery. The objective of the plan was to introduce landscaping that is compatible with the historical context of the parcel as a farmstead burial plot. The treatment is intended to be as simple in form as possible, using native perennials, shrubs and tree species, many of which would be typical of a 19<sup>th</sup> century pioneer cemetery.

Since the historic site is now a City-owned cemetery surrounded by a modern residential subdivision certain new features had to be introduced to ensure public access, on-going maintenance and protection of the site. These features include decorative fencing, signage and vegetation buffers. A storm water management pond was located adjacent to the cemetery to help improve the pastoral and natural character of the cemetery.

In August 2010, the two existing marble tombstones were conserved by a professional tombstone restoration company (Sanderson Monuments in Orillia). The stones will be returned to the site and embedded in concrete bases.

**5.0 NOTE ON ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL:**

The subject property has archaeological significance as a Euro-Canadian cemetery containing two internments in a single grave.

**6.0 EXCLUSIONS:**

There are no exclusions within the proposed scope of heritage designation.

**7.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:**

Poulton, D.R., Heritage The 2005 Stage 3 Archaeological Test Excavations of the Harrison-Hewgill Cemetery, 9749 The Gore Road (November 2005).

Tavendar, George S., From This Year Hence (1984).

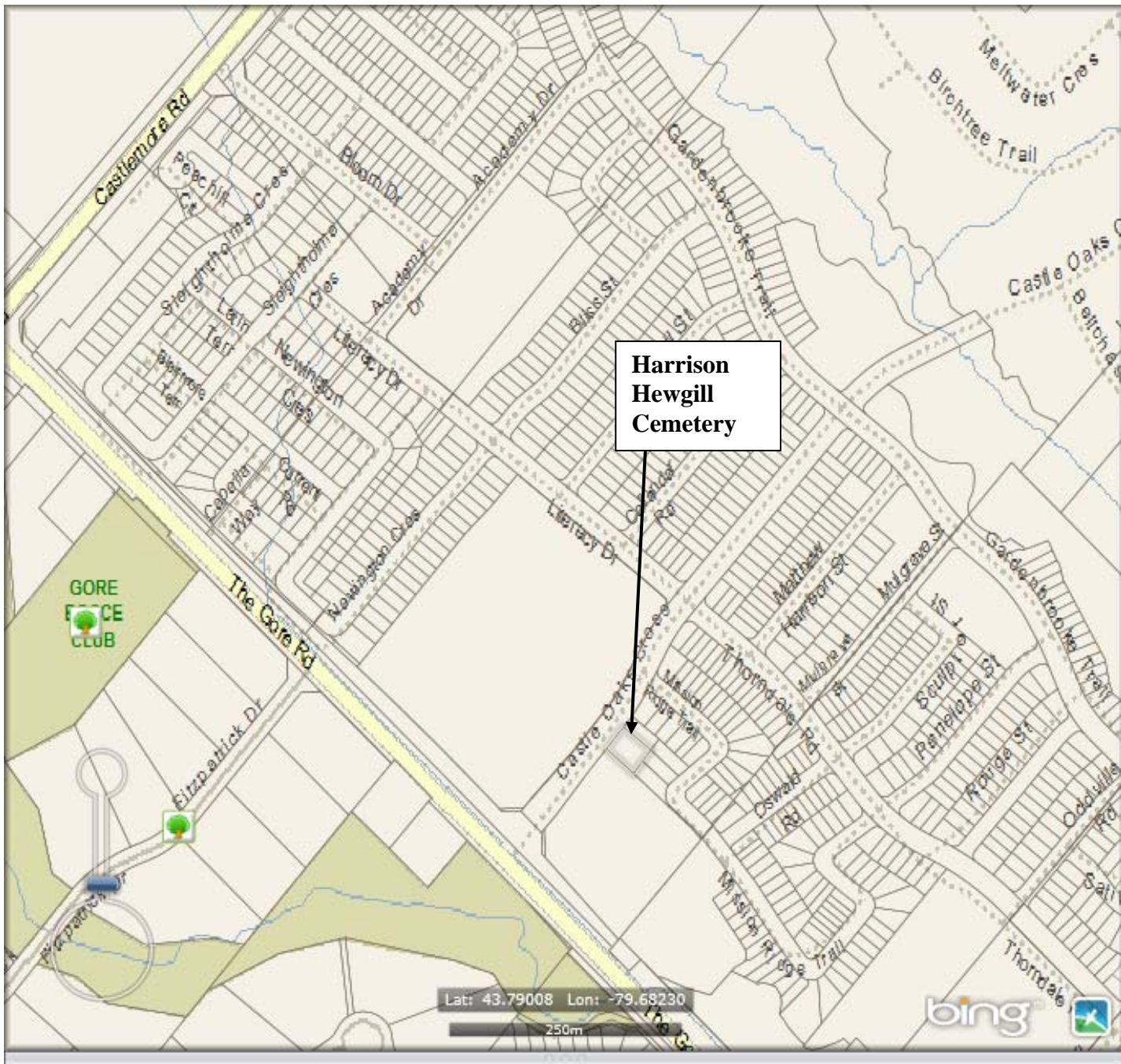
Harrison, Michael, Harrison Family History and Hewgill Family History (*harrisonfamilyhistory.blogspot.com*).

Lynn Barkey, Criterion Development Corporation.

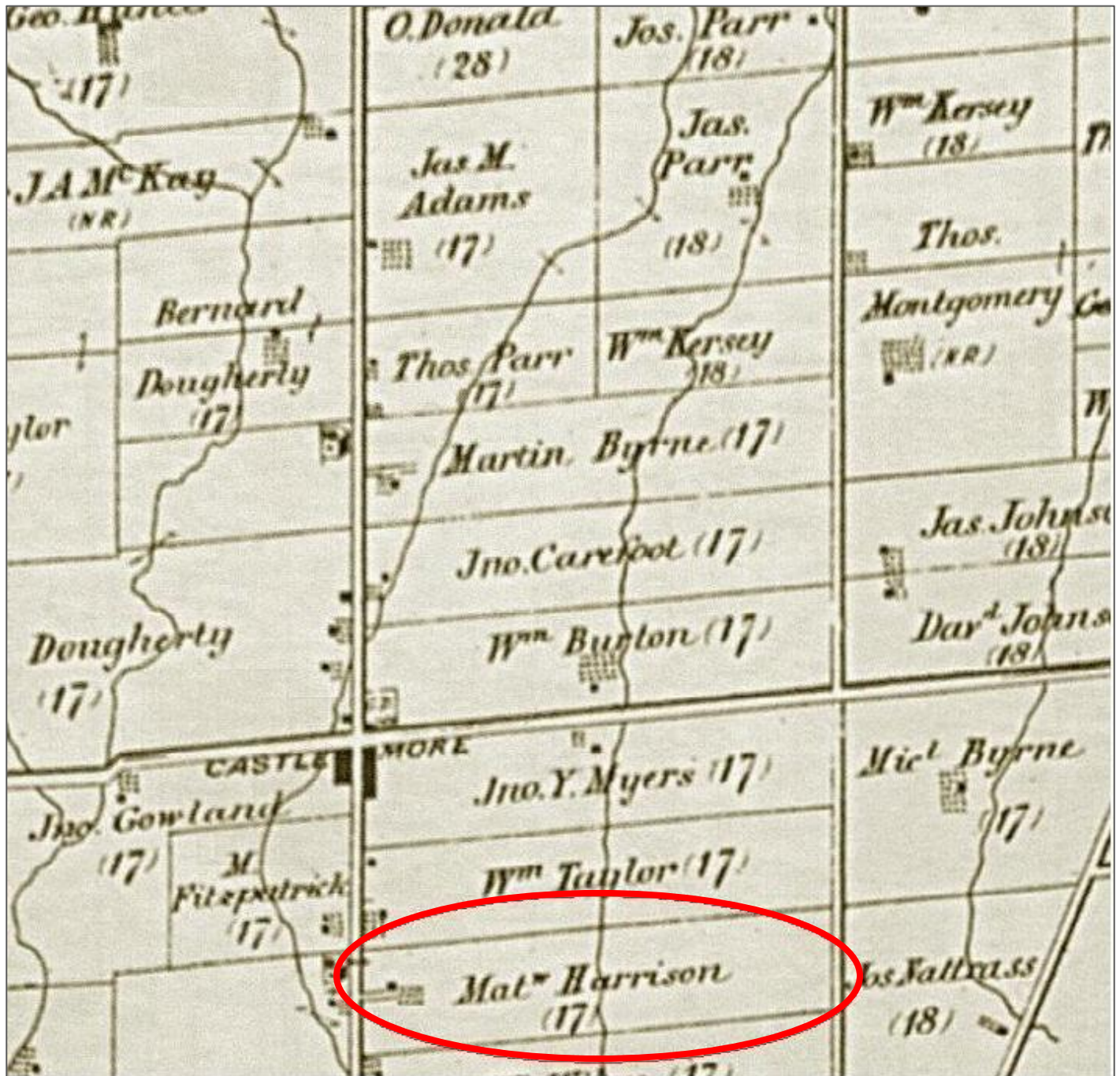


**LOCATION MAPS:**









1877 Peel County Atlas showing the Matthew Harrison farm property on the east side of The Gore Road south of Castlemore. The farmhouse, laneway and apple orchard are depicted.



**IMAGES:**

**Figures 1 and 2:** The Harrison-Hewgill Cemetery (2004) in a neglected condition. The grave stones were marked with crude plastic garden border fences, just visible in the tall grass (see figure 2 below). The rear service wing of the Harrison farmhouse is partially visible in both photos. A drive shed can be seen in figure 2. The farmhouse was located just to the north-west of the graves, across an unpaved laneway. The old apple tree is clearly visible in both photos.



**Figure 2**





**Figures 3 and 4:** Photographs showing the front façade of the Harrison farmhouse (ca. 1855) which was located near the cemetery plot. The house faced The Gore Road. It was dismantled in segments, relocated to an estate lot on McVean Drive near Mayfield Road, reconstructed and restored.



**Figure 4:** The cemetery is circled to show its location in context with the farmhouse.





**Figures 5 and 6:** These comparison photos show the Harrison farmhouse on its original site and setting (figure 5) and the relocated, restored house on McVean Drive (figure 6). Measured architectural drawings made of the house in situ were used to reconstruct and restore the house following relocation.



**Figure 6**





**Figure 7:** Detail shot of the infant marble grave marker in situ as of 2004.



**Figure 8:** Ann Hewgill Harrison grave marker, as of 2005. It reads: *ANN / Wife of Matthew Harrison / Who died / July 17, 1869 / Aged / 40 years.*





**Figure 9:** Detail of the grave marker for infant child in the 1980s or 1990s. (Michael Harrison)



**Figure 10:** Photos showing the infant grave marker in situ during the archaeological assessment called for by the City in the summer of 2005. The single grave shaft was located but the burials themselves were not disturbed.





**Figure 11:** Archaeological assessment in progress during the summer of 2005. A single, undisturbed grave shaft was identified during the survey. Post holes and drainage trenches were also identified (see figure 15).



**Figure 12:** Detail of Ann Hewgill grave marker during archaeological assessment in summer of 2005.

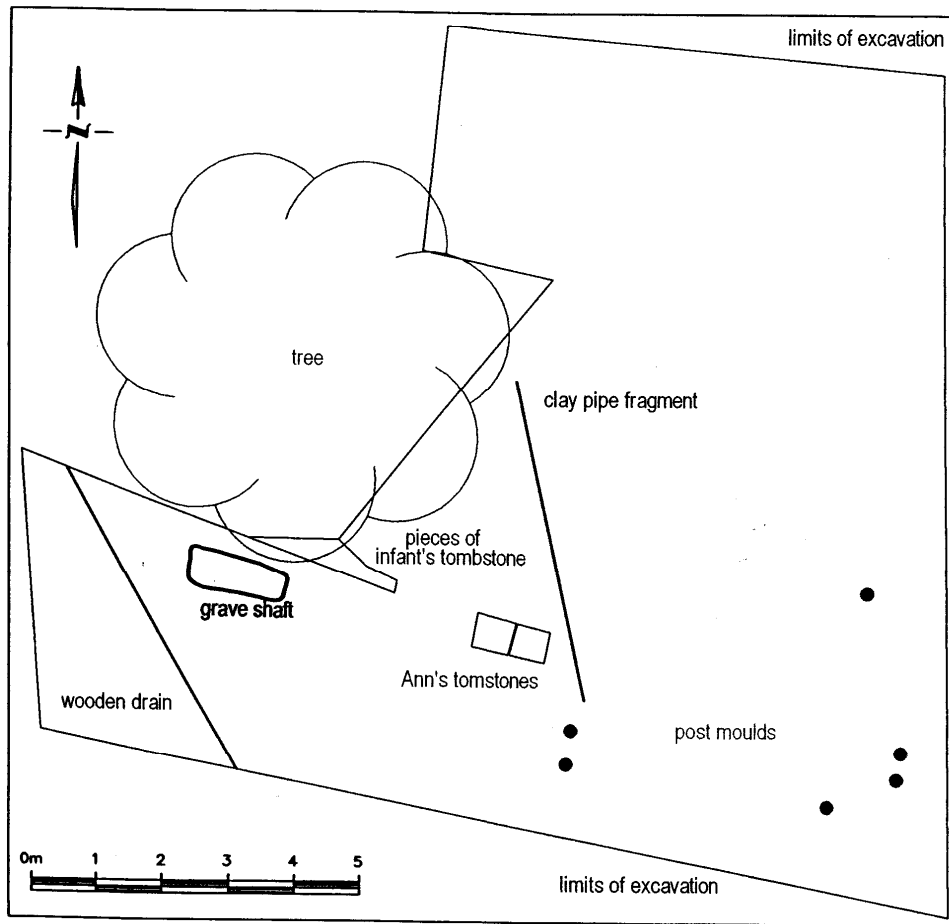




**Figures 13 and 14:** Images of the Harrison Hewgill Cemetery in 2005 following the introduction of site protection measures and the completion of the archaeological assessment.



**Figure 14**



**Figure 2** Plan of the Stage 3 Archaeological Test Excavation

*D. R. Poulton & Associates Inc.*

**Figure 15:** Sheet extracted from 2005 archaeological assessment of Harrison Hewgill Cemetery undertaken by D.R. Poulton, showing a plan of the cemetery with grave shaft, markers and other features shown in context.





**Figures 16 to 21:** Assorted images taken of the cemetery within the new residential subdivision plan. Landscaping of the site is underway.



**Figure 17**





**Figure 18**



**Figure 19**





**Figure 20**



**Figure 21:** Looking north-west toward Castle Oaks Crossing Road. The grave site is circled. The Harrison House was originally located in the centre of the frame, in approximately the middle of the new road.





**Figures 22 and 23:** Photos documenting the recent restoration of the two original grave markers and their re-installation at the Harrison Hewgill Cemetery.

