

#19 Pierpoint Fly Fishing Nature Reserve

Address/Location:
255 Lamond Street, Fergus

Associated Historical Themes:
Physiography and Nature, Settlement,
Agriculture, Transportation, Industry, Community
Development

Spatial Pattern Type:
Nodes, Specific Properties

U.N.E.S.C.O. / O.H.T. Category:
Evolved and Associative

Description of Place

The Pierpoint Fly Fishing Nature Reserve is part of the northeast half of Lot 6, Concession 1, West Garafraxa, being Part 6, Reference Plan 61R-11285, Centre Wellington. The Pierpoint Fly Fishing Nature Reserve is located at 255 Lamond Street, Fergus, in the Township of Centre Wellington, Ontario.

The Pierpoint Fly Fishing Nature Reserve is a ten-acre, L-shaped park owned by the Township of Centre Wellington. It is located at the southwest corner of Anderson Street South and Lamond Street, on the north side of the Grand River. Among the most popular current uses of the site, for both local residents and tourists alike, are activities such as hiking, dog-walking, fly fishing, and photography. Moreover, students from the nearby John Black Public School use the park for educational and recreational activities.

The site generally consists of a variety of vegetation, such as grasses and shrubs, a mix of coniferous and deciduous trees, unpaved walking trails, and the Grand River. A number of apple trees are also found throughout the site, likely remnants of previous agricultural uses on the site. The Nature Reserve is accessed through a gravel parking lot, and a Parks Canada plaque recognizing Richard Pierpoint's life

as a National Historic Person is located near the entrance to the park trails. The trail into the park crosses over a small creek that extends from the Grand River and is crossed by a wooden pedestrian bridge.

The southern edge of the park follows the Grand River. The shoreline of the Grand River gently increases in elevation from east to west in the park. The eastern portion of the shoreline is sloped low and is lined with grass. The middle section of the shoreline is lined with bedrock in a stair-like configuration leading down from the trails to the water. The most western portion of the shoreline features the highest point in elevation and is lined with a steep dirt slope and coniferous trees.

The main trail through the park generally follows the alignment of the Grand River. The trail appears to have been developed and maintained by foot traffic, and a section of the trail is deeply indented into the dirt, suggesting heavy usage. The trail weaves through grassed areas until it reaches the western portion of the park where it becomes lined with tall coniferous trees. A sign marks the edge of the park's property along the trail. A secondary trails splits from the main trail and wanders through a dense forested area before connecting back to the main trail.



The low sloping shoreline of the Grand River in the eastern portion of the nature reserve, looking southeast (A.S.I., 2023).



The main entrance to the nature reserve from the parking lot. Note the plaque to the right of the entrance (Township of Centre Wellington, 2025).





The trail crossing a small creek, looking south (A.S.I., 2023).



The bedrock along the Grand River shoreline in a stair-like configuration, looking north from the river (A.S.I., 2023).



The trail nearing the edge of the nature reserve as it passes through a forested area (A.S.I., 2023).

Cultural Heritage Value

The cultural heritage value of 255 Lamond Street lies in its historical value and its contextual value.

The Pierpoint Fly Fishing Nature Reserve has direct associations with Richard Pierpoint who was designated a National Historic Person by Parks Canada in recognition of his life experience, hardships, and contributions as a Black Loyalist in Upper Canada. A former enslaved person, Richard Pierpoint was granted the east half of Lot 6, Concession 1, including the lands which now form the subject property, as a "Militia Grant" in 1822 for his military service as part of the War of 1812. Pierpoint fulfilled his settlement duties, a prerequisite for land ownership, with the assistance of friends and neighbours in 1825, and received the Crown Patent for the property in 1826. His property has been identified as a stopping point, a place of rest and refuge, for Black individuals and families on their own journey to set down roots in what was known as the Queen's Bush to the north, near present-day Owen Sound, along the Garafraxa Road. Richard Pierpoint and his property in what is now Fergus is part of the larger story of waves of Black settlement and displacement

in Upper Canada in the late eighteenth and early to mid-nineteenth century. The subject property has direct associations with historical themes determined to be important to the development of the Township of Centre Wellington. The Pierpoint Fly Fishing Nature Reserve is part of the long history of environmental conservation efforts in Centre Wellington and has developed into a site of commemoration, recreation, stewardship, and community development.

The Pierpoint Fly Fishing Nature Reserve is important in defining, maintaining, and supporting the character of the upper section of the Grand River in the Township of Centre Wellington as a popular fly-fishing destination, providing free access to fly fishers and others to appreciate the natural heritage of the Grand River, a Canadian Heritage River. It is physically, visually, and historically linked to the Grand River.

The property is historically linked to one of the travel routes used by early Black individuals and families in their journey north to the Queen's Bush in the 1820s and 1830s. It is considered a landmark for different reasons. For example, it is a well-known public access point for fly fishers along this stretch of the Grand River, a popular fly-fishing destination. The nature reserve, which is also locally referred to as Pierpoint

Park, is also highlighted as a stop on the "Wellington County: Black Heritage Reclaimed Driving Map" as a place of significance to the historical Black community in Wellington County and beyond.

Historical Integrity and Community Value

As part of Richard Pierpoint's land grant, this area is significant to the community as evidenced by the number of people who expressed interest and/or who participated in the public workshop held as part of the Pierpoint Settlement Research Project. The property is significant to the Black community of Centre Wellington, Wellington County, and beyond. Locally known as Pierpoint Park, the nature reserve is used to tell the story of Richard Pierpoint and early Black settlement in the area. It was named after Richard Pierpoint and has developed into a site of commemoration, recreation, stewardship, and community development. The nature reserve is valued as a passive park, open to all, accommodating fly fishing access, other passive recreational activities, and the appreciation of a natural space along the Grand River, a Canadian Heritage River.

Heritage Attributes

The Pierpoint Fly Fishing Nature Reserve was designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act on December 18, 2023 under by-law 2023-92. The attributes of the Pierpoint Fly Fishing Nature Reserve as described in the designation by-law are:

- Its location within the southeast quadrant of Richard Pierpoint's land grant which consisted of the east half of Lot 6, Concession 1, West Garafraxa, in proximity to historical Garafraxa Road.
- Place naming and acts of commemoration, expressing an understanding and celebration of its association with Richard Pierpoint.
- The naturalized and passive state of the park which supports a contemplative setting along the Grand River.
- Its potential to yield additional information, including potential undiscovered archaeological resources or features, that would contribute to a better understanding of this history.
- Its location along the upper section of the Grand River, a Canadian Heritage River, which is a popular fly-fishing destination.
- The naturalized state of the park, including the creek and the variety of vegetation including grasses and shrubs, and a mix of coniferous and deciduous trees of various ages, including apple trees.
- Its public access point at the northeast corner of the park.
- The walking trails which meander through the reserve and provide access to the Grand River.

