

## Backgrounder

### McLean House History

- In 1928, James Stanley McLean, founder and president of Canada Packers, purchased fifty acres of countryside offering panoramic views of the Don River Valley.
- He commissioned renowned architect-historian Eric Arthur to design a country mansion for his young family.
- Completed in 1931, Bayview was a charming and dignified Georgian-style mansion, reminiscent of eighteenth century English estates with: fieldstone walls, a steep slate roof, harmoniously proportioned windows, and Corinthian columns flanking its entrance.
- Bayview's first floor featured; a classical Georgian arched window illuminating the elegant two-storey spiral staircase, a walnut panelled dining room, pine study and large formal living room with adjoining conservatory.
- On the second floor, all three McLean children enjoyed spacious bedrooms with abundant natural light and fantastic garden views.
- The grand master bedroom, with its conservatory extension, awarded Mr. and Mrs. McLean scenic vistas of their cherished estate. The walls of his spacious mansion abounded with James McLean's private collection of Canadian paintings, the largest in the world. He generously circulated paintings from this collection to his company's branch offices.
- Landscape architect, Gordon Culham, working in the grand English tradition, completed the "grand impression" with sweeping driveways, sprawling lawns, carefully planted trees and ornamental garden beds.
- James McLean died in 1954 and prior to Mrs. McLean's death in 1967, the lands surrounding Bayview were expropriated for the expansion of Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre.
- After 1967, the residence was used to house the Donwoods Institute and later as office space for the hospital.
- In 1983, the house was renovated through a joint venture of the Junior League of Toronto (JLT) and the Interior Designers of Ontario. It was the first Showhouse for the JLT.
- After this revitalization, Sunnybrook opened McLean House as a venue for social and corporate events with proceeds funding medical research at the hospital.
- The Junior League of Toronto is back for its second Showhouse at McLean Estate. With the assistance of the 2009 Design Team of over 50 of Toronto's finest designers and architects, this great Toronto home will be lovingly transformed to reflect the design elements and trends of the 21<sup>st</sup> century while maintaining its architectural integrity.

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For more information:

Mary Mahoney, 416-923-9448 [mahoney@specialassignment.com](mailto:mahoney@specialassignment.com)