



# East York-Riverdale Mirror

---

July 21, 2006

An era has ended with the venerable and historical homestead at 28 Playter Cres. listed for sale Tuesday.

Listed at \$1.5 million, with an annual property tax approaching \$14,000, the home is just north of Danforth Avenue, near Broadview Avenue.

Declared a historical property in 1981, the home has been in the hands of the same Toronto family since it was first built in the 1870s by John Lea Playter.

The Player name goes even farther back in the annals of Toronto history – right to the beginning of settlement by the English – with the Playter family holding the original land grants on both sides of the Don River near Bloor Street.

Part of their land on the east side of the Don River was sold to become Riverdale. But when John Lea Playter built his homestead just north of the Danforth in the 1870s, it was still surrounded by farmland. Amazingly, through portions of three centuries it had always remained in family hands – until now.

The home, which has been vacant for a number of years and requires “a good historical restoration,” is being sold by two elderly sisters who did not wish to speak with the press, confirmed Lee Taylor, a real estate agent with Bosley Real Estate, who listed the property.

“This is a very difficult transition for them, selling off the remaining farmhouse, which has been in the family for so long. It’s quite a big deal. They’re very private people. ... Already this is a little too much to bear,” she said.

The historical property, which is prominently listed on the Danforth BIA website in its history section, has been used in the past for movie and television shoots.

The land around the house continued to be used for farming until just prior to the First World War, noted the profile on the Danforth BIA website. “By 1912 the property was subdivided, streets were opened up and substantial houses were built on what is still known as the Playter Estates.”

“This kind of historical house is important, it’s one of the original houses in that area,” said Ward 29 Councillor Case Ootes (Toronto-Danforth), in whose ward the house lies. “And given that we’re now an urban area of almost five million people, these things start to become very important in terms of preserving our heritage and what this community was about originally.” There’s no chance the city will purchase it, he said.

“We couldn’t begin to purchase all the properties that are designated (as historical),” he said. “I don’t know how many there are, but it would become cost prohibitive.”

Its historical integrity will be maintained, though, Ootes explained. “It’s designated as historical, so a sale won’t change that.”