



Geoffrey Harris Sayers, seen here last summer in front of his family's historic home Benares, has died at the age of 90.

Sayers was vital link to the past

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Mississauga has lot one of its links to the past.

Geoffrey Harris Sayers, one of the descendants of Captain James Harris, the original owner of the Benares Historic House in Clarkson, died of cancer last week. He was 90.

Known for his feistiness and high energy, Sayers along with surviving sisters Barbara Sayers Larson and Dora Sayers Caro, were instrumental in getting Benares converted into a public museum in 1995 after years of lobbying with the Ontario Heritage Foundation (OHF) and City of Mississauga.

The three donated the house, located at 1507 Clarkson Rd. N. and the six acres it sits on, to the OHF in 1968 after the death of their aunt Naomi Harris who last resided in the home.

As well, he lobbied the public to support the Foundation set up to garner donations to help keep it open.

Benares has been made famous world-wide because it was used as the basis for *Jalna* series of novels written by Mazo de la Roche.

Sayers Larson said her brother was a model of statesmanship.

"He was a wonderful man. Although he was 13 years my senior, I always admired him very much. I said I wanted to marry someone like him."

Sayers' efforts were recognized by the City of Mississauga when it held a special 90th birthday celebration for him at the house recently.

Ted Giddings, a member of the Benares Foundation Advisory Board, said our community is richer because of the generosity of Sayers and his family.

"The house along with the many local street names inspired by Mazo del la Roche's novels provide a rich history to all of us fortunate enough to live in the Whiteoaks-Lorne Park area."

Sayers was pre-deceased by his wife Kay.