



SUMMER'S PINNACLE

August 26, 2025 in Blair

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If you have ever lived in Waterloo Region and driven from Doon to Blair, then you have seen Pinnacle Hill. It is located within the Pinnacle Hill Natural Area of Kitchener, visible from Conestoga College and from Fountain Street in Cambridge, Preston.

The nature area, which features hiking trails, is situated at the east edge of Topper Woods.

Canadian artist Carl Schaefer (1903-1995) painted "Pinnacle Hill Woods, Waterloo County" (right) in 1968. This watercolour on paper is housed in a private collection.



Carl Schaefer's Pinnacle Hill Woods, Waterloo County (1968).



Dorothy Russell's c.1950 oil painting of Pinnacle Hill Drive (above) looking west in old Waterloo Township. The three pines are distinctive, as are the split rail fences. The area is now developed and unrecognizable now.

At left, this C. Gordon Eby photo in the 1910s also depicts Pinnacle Hill. Taken from a WHS story by rynch mills.



Gordon C. Eby fonds. Mennonite Archives of Ontario

Schaefer's painting offers a beautiful view of the rural Ontario landscape.. Painted in his mature period, this work captures a cluster of spruce and pine trees. The rolling plane and sky evoke a sense of natural movement.

Schaefer was a key figure in 20th-century Canadian art, known for his sensitive depictions of the countryside, particularly in Ontario's Mennonite farming regions. He studied alongside members of the Group of Seven and taught for decades at the Ontario College of Art.

Rather than romanticize nature, Schaefer aimed to capture what he saw and felt

in the moment, always with deep respect for the land.. Historically a hub for farming and rural life, Waterloo Region is home to charming towns and villages, like Doon, home of landscapoe painter Homer Watson. The area reflects both German and pioneer influences. By the mid-20th century, Waterloo County had become a favourite subject for Canadian landscape painters, who were drawn to its pastoral beauty and changing seasons.

"This area has always intrigued me," said Harold Russell, whose mother Dorothy painted it.