

Chair's Report: *We Did It!*

And by We, I mean all of us together, not just executive members or Opera House Committee members, or those who are stepping forward with a new vision for the property. The effort to retain the unique corner building at **85 Walton St.**, the **Opera House** as it once was called with an exuberant dash of “cheek,” was a prime example of community action.

When we walk up Walton St., we find no plaques or pavers saying that windows, brickwork, trim, building structures themselves stand because ACO Port Hope assisted financially. Many Owners and our members have believed that the gently curving, rising street has an almost magically unified presence that requires their sustained attention. That has been the case from the formation of our chapter in 1967 after several heritage losses and the Council's indifference, and especially after the 1980 flood's damage, up to the present. There are heroes and heroines, who include a host of our Marion Garland Award recipients. However, I choose not to recognize those who have been immersed for the past five years in the Opera House file, for the credit belongs to the entire membership of ACO Port Hope. The preservation of the Walton Streetscape made this intervention both possible, and necessary. The effort to save the Opera House stands on many shoulders. All these and more made the loss of 85 Walton St., unthinkable.

ACOntario is 88 years old, a provincial charity that is working hard to support the National Trust and lamenting the very imperfect nature of the recent Ontario Place decisions and provincial disregard for its own rules in Leslieville and “The County”. It is based upon community chapters working through public education, not by means of endowments that would permit ownership to preserve key structures. Every chapter can point to successful interventions; every chapter laments serious cultural heritage losses. We are an organization of perpetual optimists, and battered participants. Yet, twice, ACOntario has intervened about heritage preservation in our community by accepting ownership of a building — the **Little Station** and 85 Walton St.

Because the downtown Heritage District existed, RBC could not just plan to rebuild a new branch at 85 Walton by tearing down the building it had owned since 1912. Because, ACO Port Hope had been enquiring for years about restoring this building, we became a partner to seek out when the town could not see its way to accept ownership of the building. This Mayor chose to try to create a community partnership and introduced us to the RBC representative; another might not have done so. RBC was prepared to consider a long-standing provincial charity for a property transfer. ACOntario could accept ownership because we said: we must; our chapter can carry the building for five years while we seek out a new owner; we can manage this process.

The first step, already completed, was to commission a study by NetGains. Remember that meeting at St. Mark's church hall? The study had found no vision for this building among Port Hope residents, nor any deep pockets, but the authors did find interest when speaking with respondents in Toronto. It was a cautiously optimistic report that concluded that this signature building in combination with other heritage settings in our town could create an exciting new opening for Port Hope. At this meeting, we reached for that dream. When we met at the Capitol Theatre we unanimously agreed to seek ownership. When we secured a new prospective owner, those responding to last fall's unveil did so with enthusiasm.

The membership's undertaking has been fulfilled. We have spent \$50,000 on the NetGains report, perhaps \$60,000 maintaining the building in the first year, withstood Covid's slashing of annual revenues from members' contributions by two-thirds; initiated three new events that supported these specific costs and committed \$50,000 toward a study by an architect about the building's fabric. We will now try to assist the new Not-for-Profit owners to initiate their rehabilitation work in the coming year. That is community commitment!

The new owners will surely face many challenges but the integrative community potential that they see for this structure may truly become transformative for this town. Stay tuned.

— **Bruce Bowden, Chair, ACO Port Hope**

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The ACO was incorporated in 1933 for the preservation of the best examples of architecture in the province and for the preservation of its places of natural beauty.



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Opera House Project

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ACO Antiques and Artifacts Online Auctions are a Big Success!

By Katherine McHarg

Covid has required us all to make huge changes in our lives and routines. The **ACO Antiques and Artifacts Auction Committee** has done an incredible job of adapting an annual live auction into a very successful online auction using the MaxSold service to sell treasures donated by our community.

The working group is led by **Peter Duck** and **Sharon Hancock**, supported by their fantastic team of **Heather Burnett**, **Felicity Corelli**, **Iris Vermeulen**, **Bernard Morin** and **Colin James**. They have created a fun, creative way for us all to bid on wonderful items and support our local ACO chapter without leaving our homes! And as Sharon Hancock points out, "There is a huge environmental benefit as things are given a new life with the new owners."

Joan Tooke served for 15 years as the chair of the very popular live Antiques and Artifacts Auction, and then retired. Then, as Peter Duck tells it, "We stepped up as co-chairs and took the approach of what can the buyer do with the furniture to update and personalize it? We even wanted to have expert presenters come to the live auctions to show people techniques to preserve, re-think and update antiques. It was meant to provide learning opportunities and a strong message of sustainability."

"We reach a huge audience using the online platform, with buyers of all ages and locations ranging across Ontario."

The first auction presented by Peter and Sharon's team went online in November 2019, followed by three in 2020 in April, September, and November, then one in June 2021. Covid restrictions around pick-up times necessitated the gap between the last two auctions.

"We try to keep it between 60 and 80 items per auction," Peter explained. "We are very selective about what is accepted as a donation. Sharon has a very good eye for staging and photographing the auction items. The photography is a key step in marketing the items online."

But the auctions are not only fun for the public who enjoy bidding on the treasures presented by the team. "It's a huge

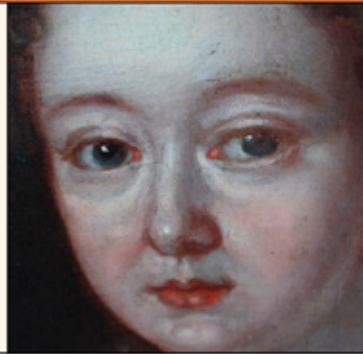
undertaking to organize, photograph, catalogue and promote these online auction events," said Sharon. "But we laugh a lot at meetings and have a lot of fun."

And the best news of all: the next auction is just around the corner! Look for the next ACO Antiques and Artifacts Online Auction starting **Tuesday, September 7th** and running till **Wednesday, September 15th**. The pick-up date takes place at the chapel Saturday, September 18th.

ANTIQUES & ARTIFACTS ONLINE AUCTION

Fundraising for the ACO (Architectural
Conservancy of Ontario)

September 7, 2021 -
September 15, 2021
on MAXSOLD.COM



17th C. Oil on Canvas
Portrait, Ann(e) of Abingdon

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Advocacy Port Hope Update

by Susan Layard

On May 18th, the Port Hope Municipality reached an agreement with AON/Mason Homes to allow the development of a portion of the Phase 5 lands, except for a block of land that includes the woodlot and some additional land surrounding the Penryn heritage properties. The decision for the development of the excluded block will be made at a later date. The Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) accepted this agreement at the Case Management Conference on May 28th. All requests for either Party or Participant Status, including ours, were granted, and ACO Port Hope will be notified of any future developments. Mason Homes still needs to submit an updated Environmental Impact Assessment that responds to criticisms outlined by the peer review of their original environmental submissions and a Heritage Impact Assessment which is consistent with the terms of reference provided by Letourneau Heritage Consulting and addresses the information in the Letourneau Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report.

We are now waiting for Mason Homes to fulfil these obligations. They must report on their progress within 6 months.

The Walton Street Reconstruction Working Group met several times in May, and a letter was sent to the Municipality. The Working Group believes that the Walton Street Reconstruction project provides Port Hope with an opportunity to truly enrich our community by preserving and enhancing the extraordinary heritage streetscape that is unique to Port Hope and sets us apart from so many other southern Ontario towns. Indeed, the two by-laws creating the Walton Street Heritage Conservation district, based largely on an extensive report prepared by the noted heritage architect Peter Stokes in 1995, stated that "Walton Street, and its accompanying side streets in the downtown core, remain the finest example of a formal Main Street in Southern Ontario." The Stokes report provides a detailed analysis of the differing zones of Walton St. and outlined an approach "fostering minimum interference concomitant with maximum conservation." The full text of the letter sent by the Working Group to the Municipality will be posted on the ACO Port Hope website soon.

The Walton Street Reconstruction project came before Council at the beginning of July.

Municipal staff recommended that the project be split at Pine Street so that work may begin in 2022 west of Pine Street but be delayed east of Pine Street to enable business owners to recover from the pandemic and to give everyone more time to review the streetscape design in relation to its adjoining areas. A remaining issue is that the replacement engineering work proceeds west and uphill only to Church St, whereas this heritage corridor is an intact historical whole all the way to Toronto Rd. The appearance of those six blocks needs to be planned as an integrated unit. The Working Group hopes to

Advocacy, continued on page 7 →

Providing Expertise for Restoration of The Opera House

by Phil Goldsmith & Julie Mavis

Prior to the property closing, ACO Port Hope took on two vital undertakings to prepare for the transfer of the building. As the custodian of the Opera House for the past twenty months, ACO sought to document, key attributes and artifacts within the property. This documentation will provide future access to our local heritage and serves as a continuing memory of Port Hope's history. Every room, every piece of newspaper, poster, graffiti, and messages on the walls have been photographed by Phil Goldsmith. This work is still ongoing – and when complete this documentation will be archived at Port Hope Archives.



Additionally, ACO Port Hope retained, at its expense, consultants to prepare for the exterior restoration of the Opera House. Robyn Huether Architect, from Toronto, was commissioned to prepare Drawings and Specifications for the exterior restoration. Robyn Huether Architect is a Toronto-based architecture firm which offers full and specialized services in heritage conservation.

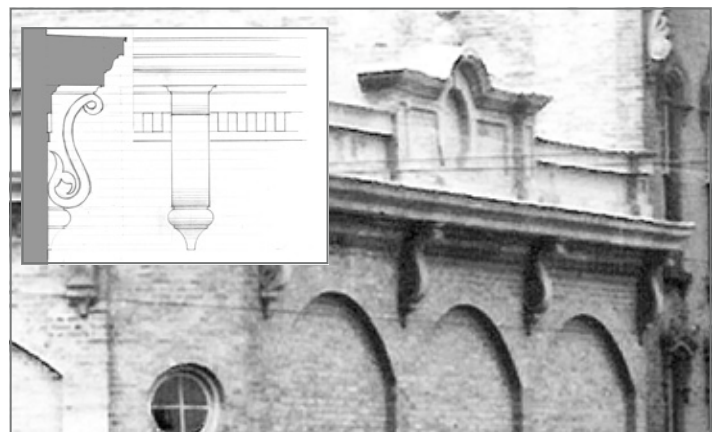
The Opera House was constructed in 1870 by the O'Neil brothers to the designs of Smith and Gemmel Architects as a mixed-use main street building with commercial units at street level, and above, a two storey music hall. The mid-1880s saw a renovation to a higher standard of performance theatre with a proscenium stage added at one end, a horseshoe balcony installed with boxes near the stage and a decorative plaster ceiling. A significant fire burned through in 1897 and destroyed the interior of the building. After the fire a more basic reconstruction took place to create a vaudeville-movie theatre. In the 1950s, the Bank renovated the building and clad a large part of the exterior with stucco. They also replaced a sizeable original cornice with a simplified building cornice and simplifying other exterior details. The exterior of the building reflects all these stages of the building's renovations.

Robyn Huether, along with Phil Goldsmith and Rod Stewart, explored the site. Henderson construction opened some exploratory holes in the cladding for review. It appeared that some of the early details had survived, and some were replaced.

The most significant missing element of the building is the prominent upper cornice with monuments on both John and Walton Streets as well as a secondary cornice between, and

part of shop fronts on the ground floor. The panels under the windows have been reconstructed during the mid-century period, and finally, the original windows have been replaced, and new replica windows are needed. In addition, it was determined the most deteriorated areas requiring work were the masonry on the side and rear walls and the condition of the building stone rubble foundations.

The team's objective was to see if the building could return to a condition reflective of the early twentieth century, a period for which we believed we had the photographic and physical evidence to get it right. In addition to a review of the building on-site, ACO supplied Robyn and her team with historical photographs as reference material for missing details. With his many years of historical photo interpretation, Phil Goldsmith assisted with the analysis of the photos.



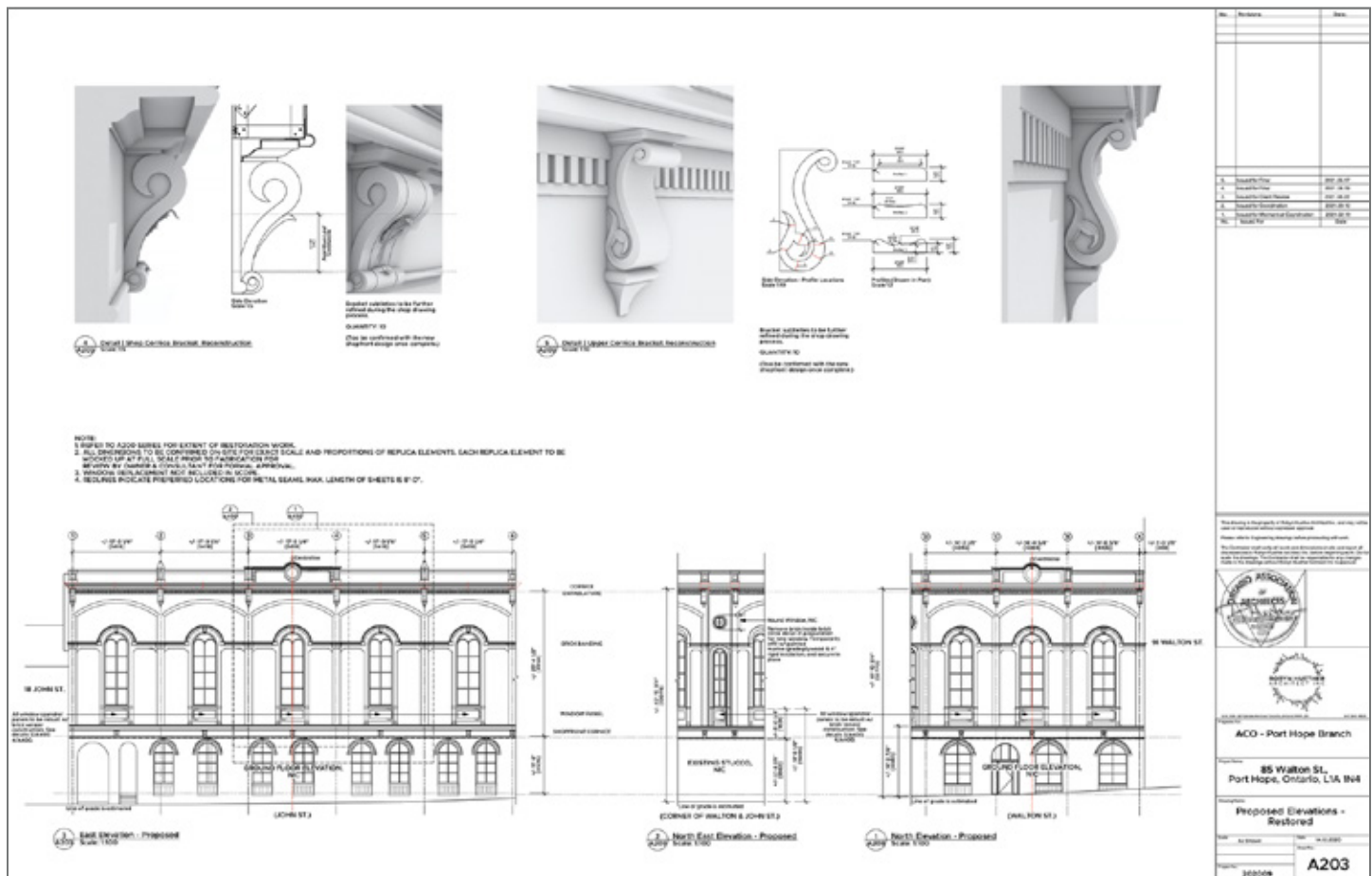
In addition to historical photographs, Phil retrieved from his library drawings in pattern books and construction manuals for how traditional cornices were shaped and constructed. Historically many projecting cornices and bracket details consisted of sheet metal components decoratively painted or sometimes painted to resemble stone supported by steel or wood framing off a solid masonry base wall. Over time, these materials would rust out, which is why so many cornices have been removed from period buildings.

The team agreed that this restoration would extend from the cornice above the shopfront level to the top of the parapets and include restored cornices, monuments and windows and paint removal and brick repairs.

Extracting the detail from the photos was a challenging prospect made possible through computer imaging, enlargement, and enhancement to reveal, in the end, what the original details were. Robyn and her team incorporated these findings into her drawings for the restoration, which, in the future, we believe will return the building to an appropriate turn-of-the-century appearance.

Today the drawings and specifications for the restoration are complete and with the new owners of the building.

ACO played an essential role in funding this vital upfront work. HopeTowns Community Ventures now takes the challenge of bringing this project to fruition. We thank them for their commitment to heritage restoration and the Opera House.



Land Acknowledgements

by Bruce Bowden

We acknowledge that we who reside along the Lake Ontario shore are hosted on lands that the **Mississauga of the Anishinaabe** and the **Haudenosaunee Confederacy** had agreed to share in peace before the Loyalist settlers arrived. The Crown's treaties within Canada (when even made) that have been signed after 1763 have been imperfect and incomplete, and much harm has resulted to aboriginal peoples, including the Metis and Inuit from actions of our

country and its citizens. Through the leadership of the **Alderville Nation**, a settlement negotiated between our national and provincial governments in 1995 with the four nations of this region who had had no choice but to sign the Williams Treaty of 1923 addressed past wrongs and invited fresh partnerships for these lands. The formal apology given at that time invites all of us to join in a fresh beginning. We, in ACO Port Hope welcome this.



70th Anniversary of the Memorial Chapel at Trinity College School, Consecrated on 21 October, 1951 — Trafalgar Day.

by Maj. The Revd Canon Don McLean Aitchison,
Chaplain, Trinity College School

The Memorial Chapel was built to replace the one that was destroyed by fire, along with the rest of the Senior School, in 1928. Although the shell of the old chapel was the only part of the school that didn't need to be demolished prior to rebuilding, it was decided that the space was no longer suitable given the growth in enrolment that had been seen during the twenties. The old chapel space would become the new dining hall and the former dining hall, which was one floor down, would be a temporary chapel until such time as the School was in a position to build a chapel that would live up to Headmaster, the Rev'd Dr. Graham Orchard's vision "of the most beautiful Chapel in Canada," with accommodation for 500.

Dr. Orchard would not live to see the new chapel. He resigned the Headmastership in 1933 and died in England in 1943. He was succeeded by Philip Ketchum '16, a graduate of the School, and the first non-priest to be appointed to the position. Ketchum was no less dedicated to the task of building a new chapel, but first he had to deal with the challenges of the Great Depression and the Second World War.

In 1943, the TCS Record published a campus map which showed potential future sites for the new chapel where Ketchum House and the Science Wing now stand. The War Memorial Fund was formally established in January 1944 "for the purpose of erecting a Chapel at the School as a Memorial to the Old Boys who have given their lives and for those who may still give their lives in the service of their country, and also as a thank offering for the safe return of others from such service."

At Speech Day 1946, the School shared proposed drawings for a new chapel by A.S. Mathers of the Toronto architectural firm Mathers and Haldenby. In January 1947, a cross-country fund-raising appeal was made to the Old Boys' community. Although \$110,000 had been raised by the end of the school year in June, post war building costs made it unwise to begin construction just yet. A year later they had achieved their goal of \$250,000, but inflation required them to scale down their ambitions.

In 1949 a scale model with working lights was delivered and the final site was chosen. Construction began in the summer of 1950 by the firm Joseph Pigott & Sons who, among other projects, built the Royal Ontario Museum. The cornerstone was laid in a special ceremony on Sunday, 22 October 1950 and followed by Evensong in the temporary chapel. Bishop Robert Renison '92, Bishop of Moosonee, preached a sermon entitled "The White Stone" in which he referred to the tomb of the Unknown Warrior in England and suggested that the Memorial Chapel "will always be the Westminster Abbey of this School."

One year later, the chapel was consecrated by the Rt Rev'd Ray Beverley, the Bishop of Toronto, in the presence of His Excellency the Governor General of Canada, Viscount



Alexander of Tunis and Lady Alexander. A choir of sixty, eleven priests and three bishops led the procession from the temporary chapel into the new building. A leather-bound and hand-illuminated Book of Remembrance, containing the names of the 185 Old Boys lost in three wars, was placed on the altar as the service began. The book was lettered by Elizabeth Greenhill of London, England.



The style of the chapel has been referred to as Modern Gothic. The seating is antiphonal and reflects the idea that the students are participants in the services and not merely spectators. Large, clear windows allow plenty of natural light, and the limed oak panelling and white marble pavement lend the whole an atmosphere of brightness.

A large altar dominates the chancel space. The frontals and reredos curtains were made by Watts and Co. of London, as were the altar cross and candlesticks, which were designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott whose other works include the iconic red English telephone booth; the Battersea Power Station and Liverpool Cathedral. Sir Giles also oversaw the making of the lancet windows by the firm of James Powell and Sons who also made some of the windows for his Liverpool Cathedral. The windows depict eight stories from the scriptures.



The Chapel bell was cast in England by the Whitechapel Bell Foundry, makers of the Liberty Bell and Big Ben.

The baptismal font is made from Purbeck marble and was carved by Betty Muntz, of Dorchester, England. A gift of the Ketchum family, it is adorned with country animals and Canadian leaves and wild flowers.

The stained glass windows in the gallery and the stairwell leading to the gallery were made by Yvonne Williams RCA in 1956.

1962-63, Sydney Watson RCA, OSA, Principal of Ontario College of Art, was commissioned to paint the 12 Apostles on the walls of the chapel above the panelling.

The two manual pipe organ was a gift for the centennial of the School in 1965. It is by Hill, Norman and Beard.

As the Memorial Chapel approaches its 70th anniversary this October, the School looks forward to receiving three new stained glass windows in memory of an Old Boy who landed on Juno Beach in 1944 with the Queen's Own Rifles of Canada and died in 1912.

Beati Mundo Corde — Blest Are The Pure In Heart.



Advocacy, continued from page 3 →

participate in a meaningful dialogue with the Municipality concerning the project.

The revisions made by the Ford Government to the Ontario Heritage Act came into force on July 1st, 2021. In general, the timelines around Municipal decisions regarding heritage are much more strict and precise. Heritage property owners may appeal these decisions to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT), which has replaced LPAT and comprises both the former LPAT members and the former Conservation Review Board (CRB) members. CRB decisions were only recommendations, and they were not binding upon the municipalities. OLT decisions are binding and final.

At 65 Ward Street, Southbridge is now planning to build a seven-storey long-term care facility and intends to demolish not only the Old Hospital buildings but Hope Street Terrace as well. A public meeting will be held at a future date.

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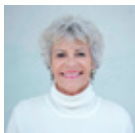
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Membership Renewal Form

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- ☐ Individual: \$40
- ☐ Household: \$50
- ☐ Emerging professional: \$20
- ☐ Student: \$20
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- ☐ For-profit corporation: \$100
- ☐ Individual donor who has donated at least \$1000 in the year: **No fee!**

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