

## Chair's Report

The sights and scents of Autumn are here, and, by the time this goes to press, the municipal election will be done. While ACO, as a charity, does not make political endorsements, we did ask all of the candidates running for office to answer a number of questions on important current and future heritage issues. Their answers were published on our website at [acoporthope.ca](http://acoporthope.ca), and were promoted on social media including [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#). We hope that this helped ACO members (and others) in the effort to make informed decisions at the ballot box. Only with an engaged and informed electorate will our Town live up to its full potential.

Some aspects of this potential (and heritage) are highlighted in **Susan Layard and Bruce Bowden's** article in this issue on the Picturesque movement and the uniqueness of the features that make up our town — the river, the lake, the ravines, the railways, and the extraordinary heritage downtown district. We continue to remain actively involved in the Walton Street reconstruction and the Waterfront and Riverwalk project.

One of the key buildings and businesses in the Walton Street Conservation District is **Dreamers Cafe**, at the prominent corner of Walton and Queen. The very unusual windows there are about to undergo extensive restoration by the owner, **Roger Bernard**, with the assistance of a grant from ACO. We are very pleased to be working with local business owners in the Conservation District to help restore and preserve the streetscape that contributes so much to what sets Port Hope apart from other towns.

Fundraising is key to our ability to continue to do what we do. Our Auction Committee is currently holding the third online auction of the year, and over at PHHF, the second **Virtual House Tour** was released last month, and is a beauty to behold. It will be followed by the in depth **Bluestone Documentary**, and the new **pewter ornaments** of important heritage buildings.

After a very successful return to our annual BBQ in July, we are really excited to return to our **ACO Christmas Party**. This year's party will be hosted by **Dianne Graham-Stebalj and Frank Steblaj** at their beautiful home, **Dunain**. I look forward to seeing many of you there.

– Ian MacKay, Chair, ACO Port Hope

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## ACO Annual Christmas Party at Dunain

By Katherine McHarg

Join us in holiday festivities at **Dunain** as **Dianne and Frank Steblaj** welcome the ACO to their home. Dunain was built in 1857 as a two-storey, red brick structure in the Loyalist Georgian style, with a centrally placed front door and a glass roofed belvedere which brought light into the central hall below. The east elevation featured a single storey bay, but the second storey one sees today was another late addition. The house has been lovingly restored by Dianne and Frank with a focus on creating a beautiful, welcoming home while preserving heritage structures like the two spectacular skylights, the windows, and the conservatory.

Having access to some of Port Hope's finest properties is a wonderful advantage of ACO membership. Because these are private homes, it is necessary to limit attendance. We hope you can join us at Dunain for a wonderful event in the holiday season. We understand that in the context of the Covid world, plans may need to change. Please let us know as soon as possible if you need to cancel your reservation.

**Christmas Details, continued on page 2**





# Executive

## Executive Committee

### Chair

Ian MacKay

### Past-Chair

Bruce Bowden

### Secretary

Susan Carmichael

### Treasurer

Brenda Willows

### Directors

Susan Layard

Bill Bickle

Lydia Bell-Gradon

Katherine McHarg

Laura Antonik

James Grainger

Janet Eby

Phil Carter (Advisor)

## Committee Chairs

### Antiques

### & Artifacts

Peter Duck,

Sharon Hancock

### Advocacy

Bruce Bowden, Susan Layard

### Communications

### & Marketing

Bill Bickle

Katherine McHarg

### Fundraising

Anna Gray,

Moya McPhail

### Membership

Lydia Bell-Gradon

### Newsletter, Bus Tour,

### Discovery Series

Patsy Beeson

### Opera House Project

Julie Mavis

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## Christmas Details, continued from page 1

- **LOCATION:** Dunain, home of Dianne and Frank Steblaj, 345 Lakeshore Road, Port Hope
- **DATE & TIME:** Friday, December 2nd, 2022 from 5:30 - 7:30pm
- **PRICE:** \$45 per person, payable in advance. Members only.
- **ATTENDANCE:** 150 guests. There will be no admission without prior reservation and payment. The deadline for payment is Monday, November 21.
- **PARKING:** Parking will be along Lakeshore Road and Shortt Street. Car pooling or obtaining a ride is strongly recommended as this is in a residential area; parking is at a premium.

To reserve your ticket, please email **Susan Layard** at [tickets@acoporthope.ca](mailto:tickets@acoporthope.ca) to register on the guest list. Your reservation will be confirmed by email, and payment instructions will be given at that time. Only the first 150 guests will receive confirmation; beyond those numbers, we will form a waiting list in case of cancellation.

We are looking forward to a festive evening in this wonderful home to celebrate the season.

## Any New Nominees for ACO Executive Members?

**A** Nominating Committee has been established to prepare a slate of Director nominees for presentation and election at the Annual Meeting in late February. Anyone interested in serving on the ACO Executive Committee should contact **Ian MacKay** at [ian\\_mackay@rogers.com](mailto:ian_mackay@rogers.com) before the end of November, 2022. If you would like to join one of our Committees or our list of Volunteers, please call 905-885-7929 anytime.

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# Bringing Architecture and Nature Together

by Susan Layard & Bruce Bowden

*“Port Hope is a remarkably picturesque community located along the shores of Lake Ontario.”*

This statement provides the introduction to [Port Hope’s Facebook page](#). Characterized by a natural landscape of deep ravines, tall trees, a winding river, and Lake Ontario views coupled with a built environment of fine 19th century commercial buildings, residences, churches, and country houses, designed to enhance that natural landscape, Port Hope is indeed “remarkably picturesque.”

**Peter Stokes** stated that Walton Street “set Port Hope apart from so many other towns” because it was the “finest formal 19th century streetscape of southern Ontario.” As new research into picturesque landscapes is indicating, the fact that this focal avenue along with Port Hope’s other heritage streetscapes, neighbourhoods and rural areas exist within our picturesque natural landscape makes Port Hope into a unified whole that is unlike any other. Retaining this and building upon it, as new development necessarily occurs, becomes our challenge, and our ACO Advocacy members have become convinced that the planning for such initiatives as the Walton St. Reconstruction and the Waterfront/Riverwalk enhancements needs to be integrated within an overarching vision for the town.

The ideas behind the Picturesque movement emerged in England during the 18th century. A landscape was considered picturesque if it was irregular, varied, and intricate, perhaps with an uneven configuration of tall trees causing ever-changing effects of light and shadow, ravines

and rocky slopes, or a stream rippling over rocks. When architectural elements were added, they needed to be designed and situated in such a way as to be appropriate to that setting. Port Hope’s plethora of parapet walls, church steeples, towers, belvederes, and pinnacles, silhouetted against the sky along streets and roads that curve, rise and fall would have been deemed particularly well suited to be termed a picturesque setting.

The proponents of Picturesque ideas would not have believed that such interspersed elements on their own were sufficient. The idea was always to ask the question: Do these elements reflect an appreciation for the integration of architecture and landscape, a concern for how a structure rests upon its site, and a belief in creating a setting in which both the built and natural landscapes are improved by these elements? This means that contemporary elements and new purposes may be appropriate within an evolving picturesque landscape and that the ideas behind Picturesque Aesthetics may continue to resonate today.

**Susan Herrington**, an Associate Professor in the School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture at the University

**[Picturesque, continued on page 4](#)**



**Picturesque, continued from page 3**

of British Columbia, notes in her article, *Framed Again: The Picturesque Aesthetics of Contemporary Landscapes*, that because certain aspects of picturesque works may awaken associations that evoke “sensations, ideas, and memories,” Picturesque ideals can provide “a useful concept for understanding the growing appreciation for parks that recycle former industrial sites.”

Old ruins were often left to decay and become overgrown within picturesque landscapes because advocates believed they would not only enhance the appeal of the setting but also induce in the viewer feelings such as nostalgia and wonder. Today, the ruins of industrial structures that have fallen into disuse may also be “enjoyed as picturesque.” Herrington cites, among others, the example of Duisburg North, the former site of the Thyssen factory in Germany, now cleaned up and transformed as a park, stating that it demonstrates “that the structures of the industrial age were now distant enough in time and memory to serve as ruins whereby a chain of associations could be released.” The park was designed by Peter Latz, “with the intention that it work to heal and understand the industrial past rather than reject it,” and, according to Herrington, the abandoned railway scaffolding, blast furnaces, and foundry walls now summon “musings upon the loss of the Ruhr Valley’s industrial might to overproduction, pollution, and foreign competition.”

This is not to say that more light-hearted pursuits should not also be included in such a landscape. As Herrington notes, the activity programs at Landscape Park Duisburg Nord “surprise both the eye and the intellect.” In addition to hiking trails and cycle paths, there is a large indoor diving centre housed in the gasometer, a series of challenging climbing walls on the ore bunker site and a group of popular event spaces in the steam blast house, the foundry and the power station.

It seems then, that Picturesque aesthetics require us to give serious thought to whether or not any changes we are about to make in Port Hope will improve our picturesque landscape. They also require us to consider seriously what has been left behind from the past. For example, retaining some of our industrial relics such as the Nicholson File Factory, if it cannot be fully restored, as a structure like the Brickworks in Toronto’s Don Valley, or the railway bridge remnants from two railways as overgrown “follies,” could provide echoes of Port Hope’s past alongside a newly added pedestrian bridge across the river.

Thus, care must be taken in what we choose to do with Port Hope’s exceptional landscape. In her article, Herrington states that asking residents which environments they like and then offering a wish list of items from which they may choose was the 20th century approach to public landscape design. She notes, however, that this approach could be very limiting and suggests that a more relevant and searching question might be: “How are people moved by landscapes and how might landscapes activate a rich range of human experiences?” Port Hope’s picturesque landscape is moving and rich because it binds architecture and nature; urban and rural; past and present. Let us care for its entirety as we contemplate future innovations.

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## A Bus Tour Again, at Long Last!

The last highly popular Annual April bus tour was in 2019, to Lakefield and Warsaw. Three and a half years ago! We think you'll agree it's high time to start up again.

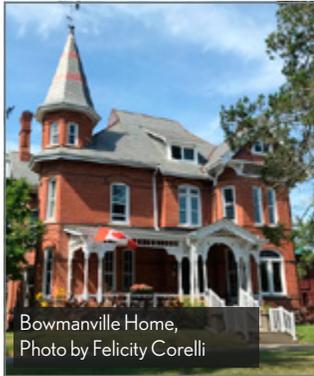
So we're working on a bus tour to **Newcastle, Bond Head and Bowmanville** on April 24, 2023. Yes, we pass these towns all the time on our way to and from Toronto, and perhaps we think we know them. But do we? No doubt you'll be as staggered as we've been on discovering the plethora of splendid heritage homes they both contain. In addition we will visit the former POW

camp in **Clarington**, which housed important high-ranking German officers in the last war.

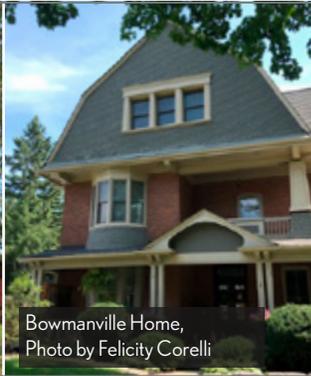
So come for the discovery and fun typical of our ACO Bus Tours. Spend a day learning something entirely new about the history and architecture of two relatively nearby communities in the company of your fellow ACO members. If interested let us know promptly and we'll put you on our list, though only payment guarantees a seat.

Stay tuned for more information in the February newsletter.

- **Patsy Beeson & Felicity Corelli**



Bowmanville Home,  
Photo by Felicity Corelli



Bowmanville Home,  
Photo by Felicity Corelli



Newcastle Community Hall,  
Photo by Mlyno Van Dyke

## Call for Bus Tour Volunteer.

There are three bus committee members. Each has their specific duties though we all join in the fun of finding and researching new destinations.

But we've lost one member, so someone is needed to be in charge of meals and their menus during the journey. We've had meals in restaurants, churches, museums, town halls, millhouses – you name it – wherever imagination and ingenuity found us a place! – in towns and villages all around Ontario. So, useful assets: Imagination and persuasion.

The job also involves a few more mundane jobs, like typing name tags and bus lists. So, useful asset: Basic typing skills.

## Pewter Ornaments By Bill & Marnie Bickle

Our partner the Port Hope Heritage Foundation, through the House Tour Committee, is working with **Suzanne Camm** to resurrect the Pewter Ornament project this fall. There

are five brand new ornaments available individually or in a set: **The Bluestone; The Little Bluestone; The Grange; The Music Hall; and Canton Church.**



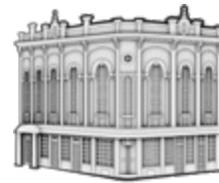
The Bluestone  
1834



The Little Bluestone  
1834



The Grange  
1832



The Music Hall  
1831



Canton Church  
1876

The first three houses were built by the Smith Family in the early 1830s and are featured in the **2022 Virtual House Tour**. The Music Hall, formerly the Royal Bank building at Walton & John Streets in Port Hope, has been near and dear to the Port Hope chapter of ACO: taking it over from RBC and finding the new owners, Hope Towns Community Ventures, who have begun restoring it to its original glory. People may be surprised at the features rendered in this ornament because it goes back to the original. Finally, Canton Church is the "Hope Township

ornament" in this set.

The 2022 Ornaments will be launched at the 2021-2022 Homeowners Appreciation Event November 12 after which they will be available at **Penney & Company** on Walton Street for \$25.00, cash only. Ornaments can also be ordered online at [porthopehousetour.com](http://porthopehousetour.com) for \$25.00 plus \$5.00 shipping. Please consider ornaments as you carry out your Christmas shopping, and help fund heritage restoration in our unique and vibrant town!



# Hamilton Township's Architectural Legacy Now Online

Text and Photos by Tom Cruickshank



You may know the heritage architecture of Port Hope, but chances are you don't know Hamilton Township nearly as well. Pity, because the rural environs immediately to our east boast a treasure trove for anyone interested in architectural heritage. Its development as an agricultural community spanned the final years of the 18th century, the entire 19th century and into the 20th, leaving behind a surprising legacy of vintage buildings along its roads and concessions. There are even a few approaching their 200th birthday. From Georgian manors to stone farmhouses to Victorian fantasies, the built heritage of Hamilton Township offers plenty of fodder for architecture buffs.

And there's a bonus, in fact two: because it borders Rice Lake, one of the first leisure destinations in Ontario, Hamilton Township also has a long history as cottage country and the contrast between the resort and farm communities just adds to the heritage mix. Likewise because of its proximity to Cobourg, Hamilton Township saw some of the architectural spillover from the town's golden era as a playground for the American nouveau-riche. Add it all up and there's a lot of history to be found within the bounds of Hamilton Township.

In an effort to make its history better known, the Hamilton Township Heritage Committee has embarked on an inventory of its older buildings. It sent committee member and long-time architecture enthusiast Tom Cruickshank out in to the field, camera in hand, to photograph as many farmhouses, barns, bridges, churches and schoolhouses as he could find. As he toured the back roads, he knocked on doors to gather anecdotes and family histories. And then he turned himself loose on research, diving through land titles, collecting newspaper stories and checking out local family genealogy. To date he has gathered info on 600 buildings.

At first, it was thought the new Township of Hamilton Architectural Inventory would form the basis of a book, but it was quickly evident that no book could be thick enough. Instead, the inventory has found a place on-line, namely the Township's "story map," the new state-of-the-art mapping system that documents all township services. The first fifty buildings have been uploaded and are ready for public view.

Follow this link: <https://arcg.is/1eW8KOO> or google the Township of Hamilton and look for the "Recreation & Leisure" tab. It will direct you to "History & Heritage." There, look for the "Digital Heritage Story Map" link.

We hope it's a rabbit hole from which you won't emerge for several hours.





## The Bluestone Documentary By Bill & Marnie Bickle

If you saw The Bluestone during the 2022 Virtual House Tour, you will have been captivated by how Ruth Redelmeier has “made it bloom” over the past decade. It was apparent during the filming of The Bluestone with Ruth that we had a very important record to preserve in the Bluestone video, and so we are creating and offering a documentary about the house’s history. It will cover the original owners, the Smith Family, 18th century contemporaries of the Harris, Hawkins and Haskell families, the house’s unique and remarkable structure, the historic beauty of the home, and some behind-the-scenes discussion about bringing the house into its current glory. Tribute is paid to Don and Joan Rumgay who preceded Ruth as owners and restorers, and you’ll hear from Jim Sculthorpe about the restoration project, and Bruce Bowden, an authority on the home inside and out. The restored gardens and terrace also feature in the documentary. This will be a first-hand glimpse into one of the premier homes in Canada, one of the first buildings in Ontario to be designated. Tickets will be available online December 1st at [porthopehousetour.com](http://porthopehousetour.com) for \$20.00 and you will be able to bundle it with the 2022 Virtual House Tour for \$50.00. Again, a magical Christmas gift-idea!



Can you help out at one  
of our Christmas  
markets?

### CHRISTMAS AT ST MARK'S

7:00 – 9:30 pm Friday, November 25th  
or 9:00 – 2:30 Saturday, November 26th

### FARMER'S MARKET

11:00 – 2:00 Saturday, December 3

Shifts available, call or email Marnie Bickle at  
(905) 885-6571 or [marniebickle@me.com](mailto:marniebickle@me.com)

## PLACE AN AD IN ACO MATTERS!

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at [pbeeson@eagle.ca](mailto:pbeeson@eagle.ca).



# Major Upcoming Events

## Christmas Party

Friday, December 2 (p. 1-2)

## Annual Meeting

Late February, date TBA

## Bus Tour

Wednesday, April 24, 2023 (p. 5)

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# Membership Renewal Form

Please enrol me as a member of the **Port Hope Branch of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario**. I have indicated below my/our applicable membership category.

**Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

New or  Renewal

Individual Membership: \$40

Household Membership: \$50

Full-time Student Membership: \$20

Tax Creditable Donation: \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Enclosed:** \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Free Membership for individual donors who have donated at least \$1000 in the year.

I am interested in volunteering for ACO Events.

I give permission for ACO to contact me electronically .

### Payment Options

- E-transfers:** From your bank's Interac service, the address is **etransfer@acoporthope.ca**. please provide your email and mailing address in the message box and indicate that the payment is for membership fee and/or donation.
- Cheque:** Please complete this form and mail it with your cheque payable to **ACO Port Hope at P O Box 563, Port Hope, Ontario L1A 3Z4**
- Credit Card:** to pay by VISA or MasterCard, contact Architectural Conservancy Ontario (**acontario.ca**) online or by telephone at **416-367-8075 ext. 404**. Please indicate that you wish to join the Port Hope branch.

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