

ACO MATTERS



Architectural Conservancy Ontario – Port Hope Branch

Newsletter – February 2024

Chair's Report

This year marks the 60th Anniversary of the Port Hope branch of the ACO. That is a remarkable achievement. Port Hope has always been one of the most strong and successful branches within ACO, and we are well placed to continue that tradition. A 60th Anniversary Committee has been struck (chaired by **Jenny Wadds** and **Bill Bickle**), and there will be much more to share in the coming months.

I hope you can join us for our Annual Meeting on Thursday, February 22nd. Our speaker this year is **Marc Hallé** (co-President of CCxA, formerly Claude Cormier and Associates). Marc will present and talk about the innovative, playful and joyous public spaces the firm has designed in Montreal, Toronto and Kingston. We will also be presenting this year's Bluestone and Marion Garland Awards.

I am very happy to share that we are re-starting ACO Port Hope Next Gen, with Marina Smirnova (Heritage Planner for the Town of Cobourg) leading the charge. It is gratifying to see that the importance of heritage is being embraced by younger generations in our community — people like Marina, and also talented artisans, like **Daniel Arellano** of Arcana restoration (see **Tom Cruickshank's** feature on the Walton Hotel in this issue).

Looking out the window (or stepping out the door) Spring may feel like a long way away. But there is much being planned - both an online and an in-person Auction in April, a Bus Tour in April, and Walking Tours in May.

This is my last message as Chair of ACO Port Hope. But I could not be leaving the organization in better hands than those of incoming Co-Chairs **Susan Layard** and **Katherine McHarg**. I look forward to supporting them (and the entire Executive) as I move to Past Chair.

– Ian MacKay, Chair, ACO Port Hope

*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.*

Annual Meeting

February 22

Sculthorpe Room, Capitol Theatre, 7pm

It's that special time of year when our members come together and discuss the matters concerning our vibrant organization. There will be light refreshments, and a chance to meet our new members, all 32 of them, whom we know you'll welcome.

We'll review our financial health, recall what happened in 2023, and consider what's ahead for us in '24 – which is special, as 2024 will be our 60th Anniversary. So find out what celebrations are planned.

Also, who's this year's winner of the Marion Garland Award for their contribution to local heritage, and will there be more than one award?

And don't on any account miss our speaker, Marc Hallé (see profile on p. 2) down from Montreal, with his talk, **Fun... Seriously?**

Marc's talk will highlight the phenomenon of fun in designing in the public realm, with a special emphasis on waterfront projects in Montreal, Toronto and Kingston (and how they may inspire Port Hope).

CCxA (formerly Claude Cormier et Associes) is the Canadian landscape firm responsible for visionary and joyful urban landscapes including Berczy Park, Sugar Beach, Love Park and the Well (in Toronto), and Dorchester Square, Place Youville, Clocktower Beach and The Ring (in Montreal).

His narrative will include how the firm has used history to inform the future, while not being a slave to it – as well as how understandings of heritage are constantly evolving.

Annual Meeting, continued on page 2

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Sharon Hancock

Advocacy

Bruce Bowden,

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Grants

Susan Carmichael

Education

Katherine McHarg,

Jenny Wadds

Membership

Lydia Bell-Gradon

Newsletter & Bus Tour

Patsy Beeson

Annual Meeting, continued from page 1



Marc Hallé is co-president of CCxA (formerly Claude Cormier et Associés), an award-winning landscape architecture and urban design firm based in Montreal. With a degree in Civil Engineering and a Master of Landscape Architecture, Marc's technical and creative backgrounds combine to direct projects from concept to built form. Working back and forth

between large-scales and minute detail, Marc maintains continuity and coherence between the elements of a project and their conceptual origins. Co-leading the studio into its next generation of practice, Marc carries the memory of the firm from two decades of working closely with its founder, as it evolves in the rapid current of social and environmental change redefining the scope and reach of landscape architecture.

Fun...Seriously? will highlight the phenomenon of fun in designing the public realm, with a special emphasis on waterfront projects from Toronto to Montreal - hoping this will inspire an attitude for Port Hope. And fun 'à la Cormier' will be the narrative, a notion of using history to inform the future, not to be a slave to it...ending with the Kent Monkman to reveal the larger scale of history that is leading the current conversation.

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 as soon as possible. If you would like to join one of our committees or our list of volunteers, please call 905-885-7929 any time.

New Executive Member

Brian Buttery

I was born in this area and have never really left. My ancestors came here generations ago and it has a hold on me too.

I attended the old **Dr. Hawkins Senior Elementary** on Pine Street and then **Port Hope High School**, before graduating from Trent University with an Honors B.A. in English and History. I got a teaching degree from The University of Windsor and ended up teaching right back at Dr. Hawkins.

My wife Pamela and I bought our first home on Walton Street, a beautiful red brick heritage house. Later we moved around the county and lived in two other historic houses where we experienced the joy (and challenges) of conserving old homes. I have been a collector and sometime antique dealer for the past 30 years and continue to grow an appreciation for our cultural and material heritage.

We currently live at 240 Ridout Street, another house we have enjoyed restoring which was featured on the 2021 virtual tour of historic homes. My wife and I have always enjoyed attending Port Hope's garden and house tours and appreciated the important work that the local ACO does, and I look forward to contributing to the best of my abilities.



Advocacy Update

By Susan Layard and Katherine McHarg

Advocacy and Education came together at the inspiring lectures in the Capitol Theatre celebrating the Ganaraska River. This was a partnership project involving the ACO Port Hope Education Committee and the Port Hope Public Library - Friends of the Library group. **Robin Long** presented a detailed personal history of the Ganaraska River, illustrated with family photographs and archival images. This provided a powerful narrative of the impact the river has had on the Port Hope community over the generations.

Phil Goldsmith followed with *Re Imagining the File Factory*, a creative and realistic look at preserving and re-purposing this key Port Hope heritage site. Using examples from North America and beyond, Phil looked at possible options for this vital location in our town, suggesting ways to integrate the site into the Municipality's Waterfront/Riverwalk plans. New excitement generated by Phil's presentation on the File Factory, prompted the Advocacy Committee to discuss how ACO Port Hope might advocate for an adaptive re-use of this important heritage property. Meetings and conversations continue to take place in order to forge a creative solution for one of the last heritage industrial sites in our community.


In other news, it was a sad morning when many Port Hope residents woke up to the sound of chainsaws and large removal equipment in the Penryn Woodlot. All of the trees have been removed from the site, despite the fact that the promised Heritage Impact Assessment has not yet been submitted by Mason Homes to the Municipality.

Finally, with regard to 65 Ward Street, the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) met on November 23, 2023 to hear evidence on Southbridge's motion claiming that the Heritage Demolition Permit that was issued to Southbridge by the Municipality in February, 2022 is still valid. The OLT has not made their decision public at time of publication.



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The Walton... Revealed!

By Tom Cruickshank



No doubt you saw it on social media back in November: one of several posts taking notice of the big reveal at the old Walton Hotel. Shrouded under scaffolding for weeks, the transformation was nothing short of dramatic as layer after layer of paint was removed from the exterior brick to once again expose the true mottled-red masonry as it was meant to be seen. Judging by the comments left behind on Facebook, the makeover is a huge hit, even among those with only a passing interest in heritage architecture. It's also a sign that this very worthy project, financed in part by a generous grant from the ACO, is back on track after a lengthy bureaucratic delay.

Like the Walton, there are a number of local brick buildings that have been painted—sometimes for cosmetic reasons but more likely to disguise blemishes or to avoid or delay more costly maintenance—but as a preservation strategy, this is at best a Band-aid solution. “In the long run, it’s best that the paint be removed,” says **Daniel Arellano**, whose Toronto-based Arcana Restoration Ltd. was chosen to do the dirty work at the Walton.

Where once it was considered common practice to paint a brick wall, it has fallen from favour in recent years. “Paint—even latex paint—doesn’t necessarily allow the brick to ‘breathe,’” Daniel says, noting that traditional clay brick allows the free

passage of airborne vapour. “Paint seals the moisture in, and eventually the paint cracks and peels. Worse, it contributes to spalling, leaks and other water-related masonry failure.” Like many heritage enthusiasts, Walton-owner **Will Ryan** was well aware of this, but also knew that conventional means of paint removal aren’t exactly benign. For one, sandblasting—the method of choice in the ’70s and ’80s—removes grit and grime but is, in fact, badly abrasive, damaging the masonry irreparably. Meanwhile, an acid wash—which produces vastly superior

Walton, continued on page 5



Walton, continued from page 4

results to sandblasting—poses potential health risks to anyone who uses it, not to mention environmental problems.

So imagine Will's relief when Daniel suggested something called "non-abrasive steam cleaning" as the effective way to remove the paint from the brick on the Walton. Daniel favours a non-toxic, non-caustic product called Smart Strip Pro paint remover, which avoids the disadvantages of an acid wash and unlike sandblasting, leaves the brick intact as it cleans the surface of paint, soot and grime. "It employs a two-step process," explains Daniel.

- First, the paint-stripper is applied to the wall as a thick gel and covered with laminated paper. This is left in place for several days.
- Next, the paper is peeled off and with it comes the gel. The residue is rinsed off with hot water—lots of it—leaving behind an unblemished surface as clean as the day the brick was laid new. The residue is collected in a filter for proper disposal.

On the Walton, Daniel used two crews, starting high on the third floor and working their way down to the sidewalk. One worked ahead, applying the gel stripper; a second followed with the rinse. "This was our biggest brick-cleaning project ever," Daniel recalls. "It took the better part of eight weeks to complete."

The results were astonishing, but the job wasn't done yet. "Once the paint is removed, you never know what surprises are waiting," Daniel says, referring to problems that the paint had tried to conceal. Here, it was time to call in the brick masons, who repointed countless mortar joints and replaced flawed or damaged bricks. Only then could the scaffolding be dismantled and all could admire the completed project.

Unlike many in the trade, Daniel—whose background is history—comes to masonry indirectly, never intending to take it up as a permanent vocation. He fell into bricklaying while working to make ends meet as a construction labourer on subdivision houses in suburban Toronto, but quickly grew to admire the artistry of historic brick. He—with business partners—now has a staff of 10 and when hiring masons and cleaners, looks for candidates who, like him, see bricks as something more than just an ordinary building material. "I'm fascinated by the creative side of bricks and bricklaying," Daniel says, referring to the decorative effects shown in arches and cornices and to the occasional flaw—a fingerprint or a kitten's paw—in old handmade bricks. While working at the Walton, he observed that the brick had been laid mindfully: "The best, most consistent brick was reserved for the main floor, which after all, would be seen by passersby. Up on the third floor, not so much."

No doubt you've been following the progress on the Walton for several years now. At the corner of Walton and John streets, it began about 1870 as the Queen's Hotel, a relative latecomer in the evolution of downtown Port Hope. Significantly, archival photos show that the brick had been painted as early as the 1940s. Will Ryan remembers it was still the best spot for Sunday dinner when he was a kid, but like all small-town hotels, the automobile age dealt the Queen's a hard blow and it eventually slid into decline as a beer parlour and strip joint. It didn't help when, in 1978, it was the scene of a notorious biker murder that



made national headlines. A subsequent name change to the "Walton Hotel" did little to turn the tide.

When Will and his partner bought the hotel, it had been closed and vacant for years. The third floor had been declared unsafe and there were doubts about the rest of the building. Perhaps recalling his childhood connections to it, Will saw potential and devised an innovative scheme to rehabilitate the building along authentic lines. Sprawling down John Street, it's much larger than its Walton Street façade would suggest, with plenty of opportunities for new retail units at ground level with condominiums above. A fourth-floor glass penthouse, recessed from view and not visible from the street, is also planned.

This is one of the most ambitious and admirable projects in the continuing preservation of Walton Street. Congratulations to Will and his partner and hats off to Arcana Restorations. We can't wait to see the next phase in the rebirth of the Walton. Meanwhile, which of the other painted heritage buildings in town will be next to reveal its true colours?



Think of Spring!

2024 ACO Coach Tour heads to Belleville and Deseronto on Wednesday, April 24, 2024

Our tour starts in Deseronto, a town that was once a “hive of industry” thriving waterfront sawmill and cannery town. We take a coffee break on-route before heading to Chapel Royal beside the Bay of Quinte.

We will see historical points of interest along the Bay of Quinte before having lunch in the center of Belleville at historic Dinkel’s Restaurant where we will be greeted by Mayor Ellis.

In the afternoon, Belleville’s splendid Glanmore House, National Historic Site, will welcome us with a guided tour and a surprise special guest from Port Hope. We hope to add a few more gems to complete our tour.

Price: ACO Members \$100, Non-members: \$115
Please make cheques out to ACO Cobourg & East Northumberland and mail or deliver cheque to: c/o 314 College Street, Cobourg ON, K9A 3V4

Information Required: You must include: Your email, phone number and address; ACO Membership Branch if a member; Name and daytime phone number of an emergency contact; Where you will be joining the bus (Cobourg or Port Hope); Special dietary needs for lunch.

If you are unable to attend, please let us know immediately.

If you have any questions, please email **Denise** at johnson.4d@gmail.com or call (905) 372-0996.

We will be keeping in touch between now and the day of the tour.

Port Hope Pick-up is at the parking lot (east end) of MacDonald’s just south of the 401. The bus leaves at 8:00am sharp.

Cobourg Pick-up is at the parking lot to the left (west) just north of the 401 on Hwy 45. The bus leaves at 8:30 am sharp.

Drop off will be at the same places between 5-6pm.

We will have more precise details nearer the time.

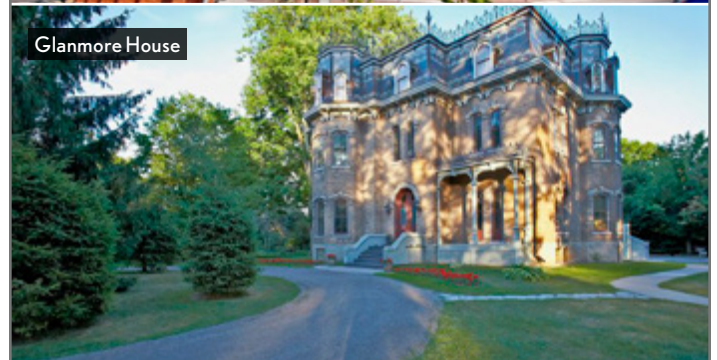
Note: Please wear comfortable shoes for walking. This coach trip is not for anyone with mobility issues.



Downtown Deseronto Architecture



Belleville City Hall



Glanmore House

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Why not place an advertisement in the pages of *ACO Matters*? Our readership is interested in buildings and their preservation, furnishing, gardens, and everything else connected with them.

Contact Patsy Beeson at pbeeson@eagle.ca.

SAVE THE DATE COBOURG HOUSE TOUR

June 1st, 2024 • 10:00am - 4:00pm

For information: Esther Robson, erobson44@gmail.com or call: 289-252-0991



Live & Virtual!

April is Auction Month for Port Hope ACO!

By Susan Layard & Katherine McHarg

Our Virtual Auction committee has been working hard on yet another fabulous virtual offering on the MaxSold platform. Keep watching for the auction link, which goes live on the opening date of the auction, which is April 9th. The virtual auction will run from April 9th to the 16th.

Please contact **Sharon Hancock** at sharonhancock@hotmail.com or **Peter Duck** at duckkpeter@gmail.com if you have items to donate to this auction. They are almost set for donations for this auction, but would be happy to see items of interesting artwork in particular.

Huge thanks to the entire virtual auction group, who continue to work diligently to provide both fundraising and fun experiences for our members and beyond.

For the first time since the pandemic, our branch is also offering a Live Auction which will occur on April 20, 2024 at the **Port Hope Recreation Centre Gymnasium**. This new group is chaired by **Blaise Gaetz** and **Brian Buttery**.

If you have items to donate to the Live Auction, please contact **Blaise Gaetz** at blaisegaetz@gmail.com and send photos along with a description of them.

All proceeds of both the Virtual and the Live auctions go directly to the Port Hope ACO to support heritage in our community.

Examples of items sought for donation to the Live Auction:

- Quality late Georgian/Early Victorian/MCM furniture
- Vintage and antique garden accessories and furniture, artwork and carpets
- Vintage and quality porcelain, sterling silver, and crystal glassware
- Fine architectural elements (doors, columns, windows)

Items that are selected are appraised, after which tax receipts are sent.

60th Anniversary Committee Report

The year 2024 marks the sixtieth anniversary of the Port Hope branch of the ACO and sixty years of dedication from our members to protect, restore, and celebrate our historic community. The 60th anniversary committee plans to mark this momentous occasion with events throughout the year to celebrate our past accomplishments and look forward to the future. Stay tuned for more details on events to engage even the youngest members of our beautiful town! **Committee members: Bill Bickle, Jenny Wadds, Lydia Bell-Gradon, Brian Buttery, Michael Penney, Katherine McHarg, Susan Layard**

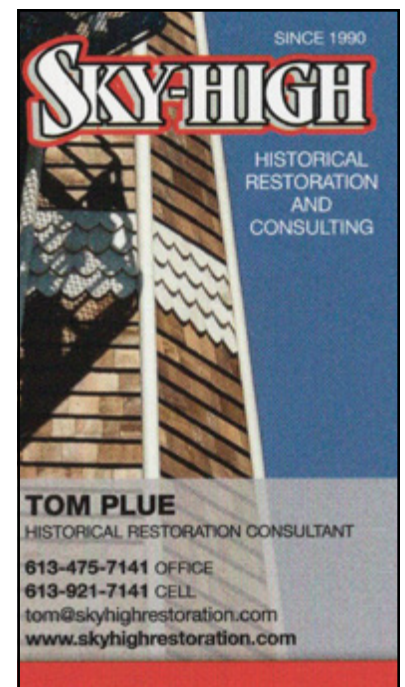
Walking Tours: Tentative Schedule for 2024

Saturdays in May, August, September, and October (9 Tours)

NOTE: Timing change – now 11:00 - 12:30.

Tickets available on Eventbrite, \$20 each

Date	Tour	Guide
May 4	King Street – From the water to Ward Street	Jane Watanabe
May 11	Trains, Taverns, and Theatres – Queen and John Streets	Lois Brown
May 25	Parade of Stately Homes – Augusta and Dorset Streets	Brian Buttery
Aug 24	King Street – From the water to Ward Street	Jane Watanabe
Aug 31	Secrets of Pine Street	Bruce Bowden
Sep 7	Parade of Stately Homes – Augusta and Dorset Streets	Brian Buttery
Sep 14	Trains, Taverns, and Theatres – Queen and John Streets	Lois Brown
Sep 21	King Street – From the water to Ward Street	Jane Watanabe
Oct 5	Parade of Stately Homes – Augusta and Dorset Streets	Brian Buttery





Major Upcoming Events

Annual Meeting February 22,
The Sculthorpe Room at the Capitol Theatre, 7pm (p. 1)

Virtual Auction April 9-16, (p. 7)

Live Auction April 20,
Port Hope Recreation Centre (p. 7)

Bus Tour April 24 to Belleville (p. 6)

Walking Tours Saturdays, May–Oct. 11-12:30 (p. 7)

Cobourg House Tour June 1, 10-4 (p. 6)

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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

1. 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.

2. 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**

3. 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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