

ACO MATTERS



Architectural Conservancy Ontario – Port Hope Branch

Newsletter – September 2022

Chair's Report

It was really great to return to some in-person events this summer. Our ACO BBQ in July was one of the best-attended ever, and a great opportunity for Port Hope ACO members and Executive members to renew acquaintances or make new ones. It was also an important opportunity to celebrate some of the work done by our many volunteers. The weather co-operated, and the setting of **Phil and Sheilagh's** beautiful garden provided a sylvan backdrop to the festivities.

Also earlier this summer, the **PHHF Garden Tour** (the first one since 2019) broke records in both attendance and funds raised (thanks to the generosity of the sponsors). While the upcoming **PHHF House Tour** will once again be a virtual tour, it has allowed for the inclusion of houses that might not have been opened for a physical tour, and will permit the inclusion of much more in-depth background on the houses themselves.

Keeping our fingers crossed that we will be able to return to our annual Christmas parties as well this year. More on that in the November newsletter.

The Advocacy Committee has been hard at work (as you can read about in more depth in their Report inside). In particular, we can celebrate some success on Ward Street (designation of the building) and Walton Street (maintenance of the unique heritage nature of our justly celebrated Main Street). With a municipal election coming up, we will be providing all candidates with a list of questions. It is an important time for our town — with the Waterfront and Riverwalk projects underway, and issues of livability (affordable housing, trees, greenspace etc) at the forefront. We need a Mayor and Council with a strong vision for the Town's future. Please make sure you vote!

– Ian MacKay, Chair, ACO Port Hope

Our important partner, the **Port Hope Heritage Foundation**, is at it again: the **57th Port Hope House Tour**. The Tour will be virtual once more and includes five homes built by one of Port Hope's earliest families, the Smiths, the most famous of which is the **Bluestone**. Others include the **Little Bluestone** (177 King South), **The Smith House** (92 King), **The Grange** (33 South St) and 5 other buildings. Some of these would never have been available for in-person Tours. We anticipate next year's Tour may include a mix of in-person and virtual as both are extremely popular.

This year's Tour will launch October 1st and may be viewed until October 31st. It is available for sale (\$35) at porthopehousetour.com. While you're visiting the site, you will see two extra features: 1) an in-depth tour of The Bluestone hosted by its owner, Ruth Redelmeier (\$20); and 2) five brand new pewter ornaments of **The Bluestone**, the **Little Bluestone**, the **Opera House**, **The Grange** and **Canton Church** (\$30 each).

The Foundation wishes to thank ACO Port Hope and all its members for supporting the Tours, thereby raising money for heritage preservation in this beautiful and significant treasure we call home. – **Bill Bickle**

STREETS & stories
Explore the intersection of Port Hope's history, life, and architecture

HOUSE TOUR WALKING TOURS

2022 features a special focus on King Street and the Smith family. Starting October 1st

The Bluestone, Little Bluestone, St Mark's Church, Clemes Duplex, 92 King, 46 King, 22 King, 8 King, The Grange, Schmidt Law, 45 Dorset St W

Tickets: phht.ca

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Walking Tours

The long lazy days of summer, cottage time and vacations are coming to an end but before your calendars are completely booked with September happenings why not consider booking one of the **Port Hope House Tour: Guided Walking Tours**.

Our tag line this year is “*Streets & Stories*” and in keeping with that we have divided the Downtown Heritage District into two tours: an east-west tour along Walton St. from Mill St. to Pine St. and a north-south tour from the bridge on Ontario St. south on John St. to Augusta St., east to Queen St. and north to Walton St. The Downtown Guided Walking Tours alternate on Saturdays at 10:00am Aug. 27 to Oct. 1. You will be sure to learn something new about Port Hope and its heritage buildings – or you can add your own stories.

Our ‘new’ tour this year is the King St. Walking Tour. It begins at St. Mark’s Church and includes architectural and historical details about the settling of Port Hope and its early families. You will hear stories of the Smith family who built Canada House, the Bluestone, the Little Bluestone, 92 King St. and gave the land for St. Mark’s Church. These, plus two other houses on King St., will be featured on the 2022 Port Hope Virtual House Tour. The King St. Guided Walking Tours are available Saturdays at 2:00pm Aug. 20 to Oct. 1.

The Walking Tours are visible ways for ACO members to join in and invite others to see what we have done and do to support heritage restoration in our town. For the tech savvy, Self-Guided Walking Tours are available for free on a downloadable app. The Virtual House Tour launch Oct. 1 will be followed by an extended video of the Bluestone, available for purchase or gifting at Christmastime as well as a new set of pewter ornaments: the Bluestone, the Little Bluestone, the Grange, the Opera Hall, and Canton United Church.

Please visit our website for more information or to purchase tickets: porthopehousetour.com.

– Marnie Bickle

The Festival of Lights and Trees

This is a Capitol Theatre/Port Hope holiday tradition. This year (the 25th) the auction committee is joining in the fun. In our “visions of sugarplums”, we imagine a tree dotted with teacups old and new (pretty, but not necessarily Christmas-y) each with a story attached. Do you have a favourite (saucers are optional) that once graced Great Aunt Maud’s table? Will you donate her cup and (briefly!) share her story?

Loved objects are part of a family’s history. If you can offer yours, contact **Heather Burnet** at (905) 800-1305 or haburnet@gmail.com. Please be in touch asap, and definitely not later than Thanksgiving (Monday, October 10th). There is nothing sweeter than a Christmas cup of tea.



ACO Auction by Sharon Hancock and Peter Duck

The auction committee has been fortunate to have received the generous donation of an important collection featuring a very exciting archive of early music, television and print from an individual involved with the CBC. The auction will feature very rare and collectible posters, photos, scripts, print ephemera and art work from some iconic names in print and broadcast history.

The auction will run online for one week **October 18 to October 26**. Check back to the ACO Port Hope Auction page for links to the auction and further information.

In the early years of the CBC, jazz great, Duke Ellington, played in a production of Jazz Unlimited. Working with Canadian music legend, Norman Symond, and produced by Paddy Sampson, Ellington's show featured dance and some pretty cool sounds created by him for the show. Includes a large poster signed by the artist who drew the poster, an original drawing of the Duke from the rear during production signed by the same artist and several original production photos from the show which was a significant part of CBC recording history in the field of jazz. All pieces are mounted to card.



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Advocacy by Susan Layard and Bruce Bowden

ACO Advocacy is continuing to promote the preservation of Port Hope's built and natural heritage, and we have updates on several fronts.

After Council voted against Southbridge's seven-storey long-term care facility at 65 Ward Street and the agreement between Southbridge and the Municipality expired, ACO Port Hope began again to advocate for the designation of the property. We are very pleased to report that Council voted to designate 65 Ward Street at the COW meeting on June 7th and formally designated the property on June 21, 2022.

ACO Advocacy has offered to assist with finding interested parties should the property become available for sale. The Case Management Conference for the Mason Homes Appeal took place on June 22, 2022. Participants Status for ACO Port Hope was confirmed, and the owners of Penryn Homestead and the group Phorests 4R Phuture were granted Party Status.

A second Case Management Conference, which was scheduled for July 27, 2022, was canceled because the lawyers representing the Parties were able to consolidate the issues through private consultation in preparation for the actual Hearing which will take place August 28, 2023 - September 15, 2023. In late June, ACO Advocacy sent a letter to Council regarding the Walton Street Reconstruction Plan, and Phil Goldsmith then expanded on the ideas in the letter in an excellent presentation given to Council on July 5th. In both the letter and the presentation, the

Municipality was encouraged to use the Stokes Report, which established the Heritage Conservation District Plan, as the basis for any further design changes to the Walton Street Heritage streetscape.

In this report, Peter Stokes, perhaps the leading heritage architect and historian in Ontario of his generation, thoroughly analyzed Walton Street which he thought "set Port Hope apart from so many other towns", having the "finest formal 19th century streetscape of southern Ontario." The street's presence comes from its matching blocks that are not softened by what he termed other "embellishments." It is composed of adjoining blocks without separations of three, occasionally four-storey Georgian brick buildings, with matching large six-over-six pane windows. He argued that the maintenance of this street's presence required that any alterations should build upon that unity. We can see this in historical pictures of Walton Street - sidewalks of uniform width; no trees; the brick faces of the upper stories with their repeating windows that unify each block with its neighbour; shade coming solely from the buildings' height coupled with sidewalk awnings over the first-floor storefronts; only side streets lined with mature trees. Take a moment to appreciate his insight:



Victoria Jubilee Celebrations, 1897



Walton Street, 1912



Queen St. during the 1909 flood, long before the trees were lost as the street was widened to become the designated route of Hwy 2. In this image, Queen Street, then lined with mature trees on both sides, could have been from such famous European towns as Aix-en-Provence. It strongly suggests the beauty that could be attained were Queen St. to become a park-like entrance into Walton Street, an approach that would also provide the "green" connection to the waterfront and Pier.

As Phil pointed out, using this Plan as the basis for deciding upon design changes would insure that any such changes were Port Hope inspired, and guided by the plan for the Heritage Conservation District (HCD) to include built-in flexibility and appropriate aesthetics to support the unique character of Walton Street. In the presentation, Phil further suggested that a Heritage Impact Assessment could be required for any design work that is being contemplated on the designated portion of Walton Street. An HIA would highlight the history and attributes of the streetscape and consider design approaches that would reduce impacts and be appropriate within the HCD. Phil also noted that the HCD Plan itself provides insights when considering restoration, alteration or additions to both the buildings and the treatment of heritage streetscape elements, and both public and private open space. As Phil concluded, the Walton Street Reconstruction is an opportunity to design a Port Hope centred

streetscape that will not only see us far into the future but also reference the HCD Plan's objectives, draw inspiration from our own

history, be attractive, accommodating, and maintainable, and include maximum flexibility for both a multiplicity of current uses and possible future shifting priorities. Such a streetscape will require careful design with few "embellishments," historic appropriateness, continuity, and the use of good materials.

Advocacy, continued on page 5 →



Advocacy, continued from page 4

Phil's presentation seemed well received and generated considerable discussion. He emphasized the importance of making heritage a leading priority in Port Hope, and demonstrated that Walton Street needed to be revised not by itself but in the context of its entering streets and laneways. We hope that our advocacy came at a critical moment to influence debate. In the end, the report was received for information, and a motion against including design-changing bump-outs in the current Walton Street Reconstruction Plan was passed.

During the summer, ACO Advocacy established a Working Group to develop our recommendations regarding the Municipality's Waterfront/Riverwalk Plan. We have also been working on a set of heritage-related questions for Municipal candidates to answer in written responses that will be posted to our website for public consideration.

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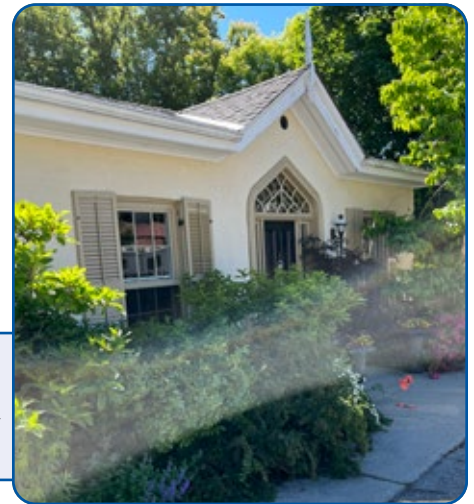
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Repurposing a Church by Jackie Tinson

In the early days of settlement Presbyterians had to gather in private houses or school houses to worship and were ministered to by “wandering missionaries” or ministers from neighbouring communities. But in 1828 funds were raised to begin work on a small frame church to be built by Messrs. Brogdin & Lee. The church was finished and ready for occupation by 1831, but interestingly it stood in a “pathless wood” and, worse, was separated from the main road by a deep gully (Craick, pp.66-67). This meant that after toiling up the steep dirt track that was the Walton Street hill, parishioners had to make a significant detour to the west to get around the gully and into the church.



Later a bridge was built across the gully and eventually the Town filled in the gully to create the appropriately named Church Street. As a result of these necessary road works, a two-storey house on the east side of the new street lost its ground floor and today resembles an Ontario Cottage.

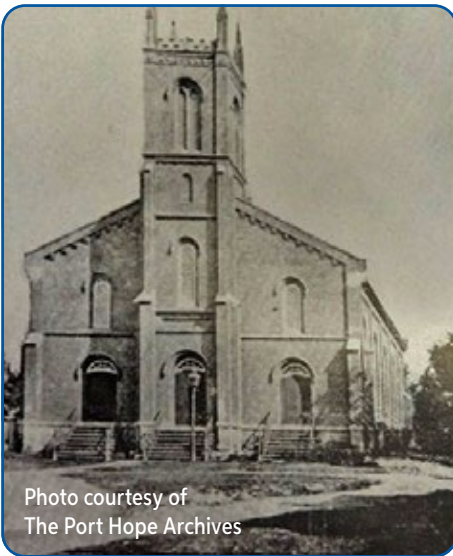


Photo courtesy of The Port Hope Archives

In 1854 a substantial brick building replaced the early frame church. Ian Montagnes (p. 129) describes the new church as “chaste in design,” with three front doors opening onto what now is Baldwin Street.

But the congregation finally outgrew the new church and in 1906 the Presbyterians moved further down Walton Street to the current St. Paul’s. Some of the old church was demolished but a substantial portion was imaginatively repurposed as two semi-detached private houses, numbers 22 and 24 Baldwin Street



At a glance the conversion from church to house is not readily apparent but closer inspection reveals the building’s ecclesiastical bones. Most obvious are the buttresses necessary in church construction to take the thrust of the weight of the roof and strengthen the walls to allow piercing for light.

But the main doors as well as the buttresses are also still there, the doors now tastefully repurposed as windows.



Church, continued on page 7 →



Church, continued from page 6



And behind numbers 22 and 24, fronting on Bruton Street, the church cemetery remains, as does the old crematorium

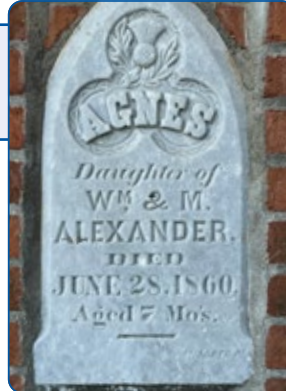
This early cemetery has been carefully preserved, with head stones collected and displayed. They make interesting reading.



The headstones of children are always the most poignant and the early death of children could not have been uncommon



In 1842 John and Jean Orr lost both their daughters within weeks of each other. Mary died on September 23rd aged 5 years 3 months, and Jean died on October 9th aged 7 years 2 months To this writer, the desire to record the precise length of these short lives is heart-rending. These deaths, so close together, were almost certainly caused by an infection circulating in the community at the time.



Other inscriptions indicate a nostalgia for (or pride in) the homeland, such as that of Joseph Cornett whose place of birth (County Armagh, Ireland) is prominently displayed.



Many other inscriptions have stories to tell, like that of Hannah Barrie [Fig. 13.] Hannah Catharine Clark married Alexander Barrie in March of 1861 but died just 6 months later.

The headstone reads:
In remembrance of Hannah Catharine Beloved kin of Alexander Barrie Who died / Oct. 11th 1861 / Aged 28 yrs Asleep in Jesus! Oh for me May such a blissful refuge be Serenely shall my ashes lie Waiting the summons from on high

The above inscription was researched and transcribed by taphologist James Campbell. Dr. Campbell speculates that given Hannah's late marriage, death was probably caused by a miscarriage or other complications arising from pregnancy. Many pioneer women, of course, died in childbirth.



Major Upcoming Events

Walking Tours | Streets & Stories

2 Downtown Tours: Alternate Saturdays at 10:00am, August 27 to October 1 (p. 1)

King Street: Saturdays at 2:00pm, Aug. 20 to Oct. 1. (p. 2)

Virtual House Tour

October 1-31 (p. 1)

Auction (online)

Runs online for one week Oct. 18 – Oct. 26 (p. 3)

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Address: _____

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New or Renewal

Individual Membership: \$40

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

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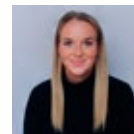
2. Cheque: Please complete this form and mail it with your cheque payable to **ACO Port Hope at P O Box 563, Port Hope, Ontario L1A 3Z4**

3. Credit Card: to pay by VISA or MasterCard, contact Architectural Conservancy Ontario (**acountario.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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