

IT'S ABOUT TIME...

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PORT HOPE ARCHIVES

TOWN HALL FIRE, 1893

In 1850, Port Hope was beginning to prosper, however the community was still without a town hall. Council, along with residents throughout Port Hope felt that a proper town hall was necessary in the booming town. By 1853, construction was complete, costing \$30,000 which was double the original estimated price. The glorious occasion of the laying of the cornerstone included a parade and attracted thousands of spectators. A clock and a bell were added to the building not long after. The newly built Town Hall soon became a source of pride for the townsfolk.

The building constructed in 1853 was on the same site as the current Town Hall. While the exterior of the building follows a similar design, the interior was much different. Municipal offices, a small jail and market stalls selling meat and produce made up the lower levels. A large hall for public events and an apartment were both situated on the second floor. For forty years, the original town hall building located on Queen Street served the town of Port Hope.

In 1893, John Gamble, the building caretaker and jailor was residing in the apartment within the building along with his family. On the night of February 3rd 1893, Mr. Gamble awoke to the smell of

smoke. Around 5:00 am, a fire broke out inside John Elliott's butcher shop, located in the north east side of the lower level of the building.



Fire at Town Hall, Queen Street, Port Hope February, 1893
PHA 2006-45-2-1635

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Town Hall Fire, 1893	1
Town Hall Fire Continued ...	2
ACO Walking Tour App.....	2
Archivist's Message	3
Notes from the Chair	3
From the Photo Database	4
"Book of Remembrance"	4

PORT HOPE ARCHIVES

17 Mill Street North
Port Hope, ON L1A 2T1
porthopearchives.com
archives@porthope.ca
905-885-1673

HOURS

Tue-Fri 1-5pm
1st Sat 9am-1pm (Oct-May)
Other times by appointment

MANDATE:

The Port Hope Archives exists to collect and preserve archival materials which illustrate the growth and development of the Municipality of Port Hope or which pertain in whole or in part to activities within the geographic boundaries of the Municipality of Port Hope.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Marielle Lambert, Chair
Marie Jones, Vice-Chair
Peter Hunt, Treasurer
Dave Doherty, Secretary
Barbara Coleman
Evelyn Conn
David Elliott
Stephanie Wright
Adam Ross

The Port Hope Archives is a registered charity.

#83789 8675 RR0001

TOWN HALL FIRE CONTINUED

Immediately, Mr. Gamble rushed to the jail and released the two prisoners who had been spending the night. Upon their release, John Gamble went to ring the fire bell. The smoke from the fire was extremely thick, causing him great difficulties. The rope for the fire bell was hidden within the thick smoke and without any luck John Gamble was forced to race through the snow to the nearby fire hall. Upon being informed, the fire companies soon responded. Hundreds of Port Hope residents watched the efforts of the fire companies. Unfortunately however, the fire made quick progress and was soon beyond control. Despite their efforts, there was nothing the fire companies could do: the building was gutted by the fire. The beloved town clock was destroyed and treasured bell rang no more.

Fortunately, the fire companies were able to save the town's important documents including items from the Mayor's Office as well as council chambers. The Gamble family furniture was also saved, however most of it had been badly damaged. Neither Mr. Gamble, nor the butcher had insurance for their possessions. The building itself had been insured for \$10,000, just enough money to restore it.

Restoration of Town Hall began immediately. While restorations were taking place, the rooms over Major McLean's Music Store located on Walton Street were used as a temporary office for the Mayor and a meeting space for Council. Just over a year later, on February 26th 1894, restorations were complete and council was able to return to the building and continue business as usual. Council has met in the same room ever since the restorations were completed in 1894.



Town Hall, Port Hope, 1907
PHA 2008-18-2-3071

BUILDING STORIES: ACO PORT HOPE WALKING TOUR APP



The Port Hope Branch of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario has been working on a walking tour app, showcasing designated heritage properties within Port Hope. The ACO has already completed tours for Augusta Street, Baldwin Street, Dorset Street and King Street. The next tour is for downtown Port Hope, including Walton, Queen and John Streets. Sarah Coates, a volunteer at the Port Hope Archives is assisting the ACO with this new tour. Sarah has been entering information about the buildings, uploading current photographs and adding historic photographs from the Port Hope Archives photograph collection.

The walking tour app developed through Building Stories is a free app which can be downloaded at www.buildingstories.co. Communities throughout Canada are contributing an inventory of buildings of historical significance to the Building Stories website.

ARCHIVIST'S MESSAGE

Autumn, my favourite season of the year has arrived. As the leaves change into beautiful shades of red, orange, and yellow, fall marks a busy season at the Port Hope Archives. Our annual yard sale was held on September 6th, the Port Hope Fall Fair was in town from September 12th -14th and Culture Days occurred on September 26th.

With a theme of *Farming, Food and Fun* this year at the Port Hope Fall Fair, we decided to include all three elements in our booth at Agricultural Park. A history of farming in Hope Township was exhibited with both text and photographs. Cookbooks from the archives collection were also displayed in our showcase. Our booth included fun, interactive elements as well, such as a stop for the scavenger hunt organized by the Agricultural Society and the opportunity to participate in our mural art project. This project encouraged visitors of all ages to draw something they could find on a farm. If you have not had the opportunity to see this, it will remain at the Port Hope Archives until November 8th, 2014.

For Culture Days this year, the Port Hope Archives organized an event titled *Collective Collections*, an opportunity for collectors to bring in a portion of their personal collection to be displayed for the day. 17 different collections were on display ranging from ink pots to rocks to tea cups to hats. A special thank you to everyone who brought in their collections and all that assisted in making this event such a success.

LEAH-ANN

"The farther backward you can look, the farther forward you are likely to see."

-Winston Churchill

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

It's hard to believe but yes, we did it again! We broke our record at the Port Hope Archives Yard Sale. In spite of changing the date to avoid the rain which came anyway, we still were able to raise over \$1700.00, our best year ever!

We had items donated from the Port Hope ACO, as well as from many people in the community which resulted in more items to sell than we have ever had and the quality of the donations has greatly improved as well.

Thanks to volunteers like Evelyn Conn, Marie Jones & Barb Coleman who started pricing about a month in advance of the sale. As well as Peggy Bennett and Mary Jane Broughton who helped with set up and take down. We could not have not have done what we did without everyone's help.

Over all the event, in spite of the rain, was a wonderful success and with this under our belts we look to 2015 and our 10th annual yard sale.

MARIELLE

FROM THE PHOTO DATABASE...



Costume Party, Port Hope 1920

PHA# 994-1-5-1410

This photo and others can be found in our Flickr photostream:

www.flickr.com/photos/porthopearchives

Description: B&W photograph depicting a group of unidentified individuals in fairy tale and storybook costumes. *If you can identify anyone in this photograph, please contact us!*

BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

With Remembrance Day just around the corner and 2014 marking the 100th anniversary of the start of the Great War, we would like to remind you that the “Book of Remembrance” is still available for purchase at the Port Hope Archives for just \$5.00.

Originally published in 1919, the “Book of Remembrance” illustrates Port Hope’s involvement in the Great War of 1914-1918. The original book was compiled as a tribute to the sixty-five men of Port Hope and vicinity who died during the First World War. The “Book of Remembrance” was then as it is now, the town’s attempt to remember the fallen men as personalities, not just names in the cenotaph.

In 2007, a reprint of the original book was produced by the Port Hope Archives. The reprint includes the names of Port Hope’s soldiers along with their photographs. It is also a record of how the citizens of a small town joined together to support “their boys” overseas. The special edition also includes letters from the front and other photographs.

PORT HOPE ARCHIVES

17 MILL STREET NORTH | PORT HOPE, ONTARIO L1A 2T1

905.885.1673 | archives@porthope.ca | porthopearchives.com

