

# IT'S ABOUT TIME...

## THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PORT HOPE ARCHIVES

### A 'SNAPSHOT' INTO EARLY PHOTOGRAPHY

While the first photographic image originates from the 19th century, the first camera; the camera obscura was first used during the Renaissance. Although this camera was able project images onto paper, it could not capture a fixed image. However, it was when Joseph Nicéphore Niépce performed the first photomechanical process during the 1820s, that lead to the development of photography that we know today.

When creating the first fixed image, Niépce reproduced an engraving by dissolving bitumen in lavender oil, which became insoluble when exposed to light. This allowed for the first semi-permanent photograph to be taken in 1827. Niépce called his technique heliography and later entered into a partnership with Louis Daguerre. Unfortunately, Niépce passed away before their photographic process, the daguerreotype was complete.

Daguerreotype photographs were first introduced in 1839 by Louis Daguerre (with help from Joseph Nicéphore Niépce) and remained popular until 1860. A daguerreotype image consists of a plate of metal containing silver nitrate which has been sensitized with iodine fumes. The plate was then exposed to light in a camera and developed with mercury fumes. In order to view a daguerreotype image, it has to be held at the correct angle to the light. All daguerreotypes are found inside cases because they are extremely fragile. Cases were traditionally made of leather with silk or velvet lining. When first introduced, exposure times ranged anywhere from 5 minutes to 30 minutes, making sitting for a portrait a long process. This is why many individuals are not smiling in daguerreotype photographs. New technologies decreased exposure times to less than one minute during the mid 1940's. Daguerreotypes can commonly be found inside rings, pins, bracelets, brooches, lockets, pendants, suspender clasps and belt buckles. The price for a daguerreotype was \$5.00 in 1860; more than a weeks' pay for many, causing a decline in the popularity of daguerreotypes during the 1860s.

### DAGUERREOTYPE



Left: Alfred C. Wilson,  
Credit:  
Macaulay  
Heritage  
Park /  
Museums of  
Prince Edward  
County

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### PORT HOPE ARCHIVES

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### 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

*The Port Hope Archives is a registered charity.*

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## A 'SNAPSHOT' INTO EARLY PHOTOGRAPHY CONT'D

Ambrotype photographs were popular between 1854-1860s and were invented by Fredrick Scott Archer. The process for creating an ambrotype included placing a negative image on a piece of glass, over a black background which was then bleached with collodion mixed with potassium iodide. This process allowed the negative image to appear positive. Ambrotypes are also found in cases, however instead of leather with silk interiors, the cases were made of paper or plastic with cardboard inside. Ambrotypes lost popularity with the introduction of tin type images in the 1850's.

Tin type photographs were common between 1856 and 1900 and were introduced by a professor of chemistry named Hamilton Smith. The process of creating a tin type was exactly the same to that of the ambrotype, however instead of glass, a piece of metal was used (not actually tin). Tin type cases tended to be made out of paper mache or cardboard. Tin types were much cheaper to produce (only about a penny) and were much more durable, making them a popular type of photograph for more than 40 years. One distinguishing feature of tin type images is that they are attracted to magnets. Unfortunately however, tin types are extremely dark and rust markings are common.

Carte-de-Visite (CDV) photographs were invented by Andre Adolphe-Eugene Disderi, and were popular between 1859-1890. Many individuals wished to collect photographs of their families, friends and celebrities; therefore there was a market for cheaper photographs that could be easily produced. CDV images were printed from wet collodion negative images. Unlike previous technologies, multiple copies could be produced. CDV photographs are approximately 3.5 x 2 inches, pasted on a mount approximately 4 x 2.5 inches. Some CVD mounts contain decorative elements, such as colours and borders. CDV photographs unfortunately usually develop yellow or brown spots.

Windsor and Bridge first introduced cabinet cards in 1866. While cabinet cards were originally introduced for landscape images, in the 1870's they were commonly used for portraits and family photos as well. Similar to CDV photographs, cabinet cards were also mounted onto pieces of cardboard, but were larger photographs, on larger mounts. Since they tended to be larger, greater detail was evident in these images

Prior to the 1900s, most families were unable to afford a camera. However, this changed in 1901 when Eastman Kodak released the Brownie camera, costing consumers just \$1.00. The low cost of the camera made it possible for many to afford. In fact, the first year it was introduced, more than 100,000 were sold. Kodak continued to produce a variety of different Brownie camera models which remained popular until the 1960s.

### TIN TYPE



Unidentified man, c 1880 (PHA # 2011-6-2-4176)

### CARTE-DE-VISTE



Queen Victoria, c1866 (PHA 999-12-1-2881)

### CABINET CARD



Unidentified Women, c1887 (PHA 999-3-1-500)

## ARCHIVIST'S MESSAGE

I would like to introduce myself as the temporary archivist while Erin is on maternity leave. I am pleased to have the opportunity to be your archivist over the next year and work on some very exciting projects!

I was born and raised in Cavan Ontario and I attended Trent University where I completed my Honours Arts degree in History. After graduating, I was still unsure what my career would be. I did some travelling and I visited countless museums, libraries, archives and historic sites. It was in visiting these places that made me realize that work in one of these areas was for me!

I was accepted into the Museum Management and Curatorship Program at Fleming College. The program included a four month internship which I completed at the Museums of Prince Edward County. My time there was rewarding and I gained experience in many different areas such as research, exhibits, collections management and conservation. My experience there affirmed I had followed the right career path.

Following my internship, I accepted a Guest Services position at the Waterloo Region Museum. My time there is what led me to the Port Hope Archives.

In my free time, I enjoy reading and I am currently learning how to play the guitar. I also enjoy photography and spending time with my friends and family.

My time so far at the Port Hope Archives has been very rewarding and educational. Everyone here has been extremely welcoming and has made me feel at home. I have the opportunity to be surrounded by history each and every day which is exactly what I was hoping for in a career!

I am looking forward to the many projects I will be working on over the course of the year. I encourage you all to drop in and introduce yourself.

**LEAH-ANN LOGEL**

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*"Without archives many stories of real people would be lost, and along with those stories, vital clues that allow us to reflect and interpret our lives today." - Sara Sheridan*

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## NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

Here we are in March 2014 & as I am writing this the snow is flying & the fear that spring will never come is in all of our minds!

With the start of 2014 came many changes for the Port Hope Archives, not only do we have changes in the board, but we also have temporary archivist Leah-Ann Logel, for ten months while Erin is on maternity leave since having her baby boy.

This letter being my first as chair is bitter sweet. As we welcome new board members & volunteers, we have had to say goodbye to past board members, but, the most difficult is to announce the passing of a very dedicated board member, John Bennett who died at the end of January.

John was not only the treasurer for more than eight years at the Port Hope Archives, but he was also my dad. John brought me on to the board about four years ago & during that time my Dad & I developed a whole new relationship as we worked together for the Archives. It was interesting to say the least, to be in a working relationship rather than a familial one and I am sad that my Dad is not around to see me take on the chair's role for the Archives.

I would like to thank everyone who donated to the "John Bennett Memorial Acquisition Fund". My family is overwhelmed by the contributions, which allows the Port Hope Archives to purchase historical items significant to Port Hope, a town that my Dad felt proud to be a part of.

With all of the changes happening lately we at the Archives are looking to the future, with partnerships with the Canadian Fire Fighters Museum, the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario - Port Hope Branch, Heritage Port Hope as well as the Municipality of Port Hope. We will be working on some new and very interesting projects as well as continuing with existing projects like "Our Memories: Downtown Port Hope" Oral History.

As I start this new role as chair of the Port Hope Archives I hope that I can count on your continued support and I ask that you never hesitate to contact me if you have questions or concerns.

**MARIELLE LAMBERT—CHAIR**



## WAR OF 1812: AMERICAN WARSHIPS AT SMITH'S CREEK

Captain Hamilton Merritt was glad to see relief troops finally arrive at British headquarters on the Niagara frontier in the summer of 1813. This was his opportunity to travel to the commissariat in Kingston to pick up the uniforms and saddles long promised for his troop of Canadian-born Dragoons. Captain Merritt, the 20 year old son of a Loyalist, left St David's on horseback at the end of July, 1813, switched to a ship and continued on to Kingston and then Montreal.

On his way back, he returned to Kingston in a brigade of 85 ships guarded by five gunboats. Lake Ontario was a dangerous place during the War of 1812 as British naval forces battled American warships in open water and along shore-lines. The uniforms for his men awaited him and it was time for Captain Merritt to return to Niagara.

After a great deal of trouble, I obtained a boat at Kingston,  
and left there on the 1<sup>st</sup> September in company with two  
other boats...In passing Presqu'île I heard a cannonading  
[from the east] between the two fleets. It was a running fight  
between Quebec and Kingston.

Captain Merritt and the three boats sailed into the harbour at Smith's Creek (now Port Hope) at the end of August, 1813. By September 10<sup>th</sup>, after spending more than a week at Smith's Creek arranging to retrieve the horse he had left in the care of Joseph Keeler's Inn at Colborne, the small convoy was preparing to sail out when two enemy warships were seen off shore.

On the 10<sup>th</sup>, early in the morning I left Smith's Creek with  
a fair wind – discovered two sails ahead. Fearing they might  
be the enemy, I very prudently put back to the Creek. I took  
a boat and reconnoitred, and found them to be enemies, so  
returned and landed everything from the boats. We drew up our  
forces at the mouth of the Creek (consisting of 20 men and 12  
muskets only). I sent expresses in all directions for the [local]  
militia. (Wood, William. 1928. Select British Documents of the  
Canadian War of 1812. Champlain Society, vol.3, p 593)

The stand-off at Smith's Creek lasted while the American ships seemed to consider landing. The previous September, a gunboat had indeed landed enemy soldiers in the small town of Ganonoque and burned buildings in a day-long raid, so Captain Merritt and his men were apprehensive. However "the vessels came opposite, and laid off for some time, but did not think proper to land."

Captain Merritt stayed in Smith's Creek for another week until it was clear to sail. They arrived safely at Twelve Mile Creek (St. Catharines) on September 20<sup>th</sup>. The boats had been carrying considerable money (coins) for the commissariat, 20 soldiers, and an English gentleman named Mr. Broomhead who had asked to be transported to see Niagara Falls.

**BY CATHARINE TOZER**

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### Heritage Fair

The Port Hope and District Historical Society Heritage Fair takes place on Sunday 4 May 2014. Visit the Lions Centre on St. Thomas Street from 10-4 for displays on the Great War.

#### National Volunteer Week

National Volunteer Week (April 6-12 2014). We would like to thank our volunteers who have donated their time to the Port Hope Archives! Your contributions are greatly appreciated!

#### Archives Awareness

Ontario Archives Awareness Week (April 7-13 2014). To celebrate, we invite you to take a peak at some unique items from the Port Hope Archives collection. April 9 and 11 from 10-1.

## PORT HOPE ARCHIVES

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