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Summer 2013

IT'S ABOUT TIME...

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PORT HOPE ARCHIVES

RING, RING, HELLO? THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE TELEPHONE IN PORT HOPE

Telephones are a part of our daily lives that we often take for granted. While it seems as though telephones have always been a staple in our homes, purses and pockets, the process was not officially invented until 137 years ago; a short span in the "grand scheme of things."

Alexander Graham Bell first patented the telephone (which was developed in Brantford, ON) in 1876. The following year Graham Bell transferred 3/4 of the Canadian patent rights to his father, Prof. Alexander Melville Bell.

The first telephone in Port Hope was installed in Ambrose & Winslow Brewing Company (1879). Thos. H. Ambrose leased the telephone from Prof. Melville Bell himself.

The 1880s proved to be a busy time for Port Hope's telecommunication industry. The Montreal Telegraph Co. put a telephone in their office downtown and at the Midland Railway Junction (1880); a long distance pole line was installed between Port Hope and Cobourg (1881); and a line was installed from Port Hope to Toronto (1882).

Port Hope's telephone connection to Toronto allowed for the first telephone exchange in town, which was opened in 1882. Thomas Long was appointed as the first Port Hope agent for Bell Telephone Company, and a Gilliland switchboard was installed in the back of his insurance office.

By 1892, the office had moved to a building on Walton Street, and later to Queen Street (1895).

At the Queen Street office, Bell Telephone became a 24 hour service (1898), lead by William Quinn (1899) and eventually by W.J. Costello (1900).

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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 available 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

Pam Robinson, Chair
Marielle Lambert, Vice-Chair
John Bennett, Treasurer
Dave Doherty, Secretary
Barbara Coleman
Evelyn Conn
David Elliott
Peter Hunt
Marie Jones

The Port Hope Archives is a registered charity.

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EARLY TELEPHONE HISTORY CONT'D...

In Garden Hill, Dr. Alexander Carruthers Beatty brought the telephone out to Hope Township by 1895. He initially installed four telephones within a 16km radius and operated them by a switchboard in his home.

Farmers were provided with the necessary equipment for a telephone if they installed the poles and so the "Garden Hill Exchange of the Beatty Telephone System" was born.

From these modest beginnings, by 1900 the "Official Telephone Directory - District of Eastern Ontario" for Port Hope listed 93 exchanges, and grew from there!

Sources:

Port Hope Evening Guide, Aug 1978

"The Party Line: A Telephone Tale," O. Gardiner, 1999



Cover of the Telephone Directory of Eastern Ontario, Bell Telephone Co., 1900

ORAL HISTORY UPDATE

Our first interview in the *Our Memories: Downtown Port Hope* oral history project was officially conducted in April of this year. Evelyn Conn, board member and volunteer, served as our first interviewee. She discussed her memories of the various businesses that were located in downtown Port Hope while she was growing up, and reflected upon the changes the area has seen **since that time. Evelyn's video was also the first to be edited and posted to our website and YouTube!**

To-date we have interviewed a total of 16 participants, from all walks of life. Some are current or former business owners, employees, long-time residents, former government staff members; we have even interviewed a municipal councillor!

Even with these varied backgrounds, all of our interviewees have at least one thing in common: a love for Port Hope, and a desire to document its history for future generations.

If you're interested in contributing your memories to the project please contact us; and keep watching our YouTube channel for more memories: <http://www.youtube.com/user/PHArchives>



Above: 1980 Flood (courtesy of Owen Lent)

Below: Uneda Taxi, Queen Street Office (courtesy of Norm Deremo)



ARCHIVIST'S MESSAGE

As we head into summer, it is time to reflect on the VERY busy spring with had here at the Port Hope Archives!

In March we started the “Our Memories: Downtown Port Hope” oral history project. A project that has been in the making for a year now. If you are interested in participating please contact me at the archives.

In April one of our own was honoured with a Port Hope Civic Award for volunteerism! Evelyn Conn works tirelessly to improve the quality of life for citizens of Port Hope; a mission that includes volunteering for the PHA on a weekly basis and being an enthusiastic member of our board of directors. Myself and Pam (our board chair) were pleased to support Evelyn and cheer her on as she received this great honour!

In May we welcomed two new board members: Peter Hunt and Marie Jones. Their experience and commitment will prove to be a great addition to our board! Welcome Peter & Marie!

During the month of May we also added a new social media site into the fold. As part of our oral history project, we now have a video channel on YouTube. The site is going to be a great visual component for the project, as well as another method for keeping in touch with you!

Finally, June has been a very exciting month so far! While gearing up for the summer months, we updated our letterhead and logo. More details on that to come!

Start saving those yard sale donations and have a great summer!

ERIN

*"Of all national assets, archives are the most precious... they are the gift of one generation to another."
- Arthur Doughty, Dominion Archivist, 1904-1935*

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

This summer our very own Capitol Theatre will be hosting some impressive guests: the cast and crew of the critically acclaimed ***Kim's Convenience***, brought to our small town stage by the superb Toronto theatre company, Soulpepper. ***Kim's Convenience*** makes its first stop here on a cross country tour to Ottawa, Vancouver, Calgary, and later to the stages of New York. Soulpepper is the creative child of Canadian actor and native Port Hoper, Albert Schultz, whose family are remembered as newspaper publishers and involvement in the restoration of numerous buildings in the downtown core, including the St. Lawrence Hotel.

I note this play because it explores themes that are familiar to all communities, no matter their size or location. At some time we are all newcomers: finding our way, integrating ourselves into the flow, establishing roots, holding on to old traditions and making new history. This spring, as we at the Archives have begun recording the memories of many members of the community for our oral history project, we are reminded of the deep and intersecting roots of Port Hope. From long-time residents, to newly arrived **townspeople, to those who have left and returned ... young and old ... we are hearing some fabulous and marvelous stories of the business life of Port Hope.** It is a rich and varied life that ebbs and flows, and always survives.

If you or a family member would like to contribute to the project, there's still time – give us a call. And take in a performance of *Kim's Convenience* – for a look at a family business that might just stir some memories!

This spring the PHA welcomed two new Board members: Peter Hunt, a life long Port Hope resident with deep family roots in the community, and Marie Jones, a newcomer to Port Hope with a wealth of experience from running the community of Markham, Ontario's museum. We are thrilled to add their energy and enthusiasm to our group.

Enjoy the summer!

PAM

FROM THE PHOTO DATABASE...



Walton Street, c1940s

PHA#2008-6-4-3142

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

www.flickr.com/photos/porthopearchives

Description: B&W photograph looking east from the corner of Ontario & Walton streets. Included: Hyne's Drugstore, Embassy Cafe, Margle's Clothier, Billiard Parlour, Turck's Coffee Shop

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sep 13-15th: Port Hope Fair (check out our booth!)

Sep 21st: Port Hope Archives' Annual Fundraising Yard Sale, 8am-1pm (donations accepted after Labour Day weekend)

Sep 27-28th: Art in the Archives Exhibit, Culture Days

***Watch our website for more details as fall events get closer!**

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Small changes can make a big impact....

As you are reading the latest newsletter from the Port Hope Archives, you may notice some small changes in the appearance.

We have been working on a “rebranding” of the Archives. It started with the design of a new banner which will be taken to events. The colours & design were so fresh the board decided to take things a little further and we now have new letterhead as well.

It's nice to change things a little every now & again and the fresh new look really is a great way to show everyone that the Port Hope Archives is not dull & boring!

WELCOME NEW BOARD MEMBERS!

MARIE JONES:

Hello, my name is Marie Jones, and I am a new joining member of the Archives Board. I moved in Nov. from Markham with my husband, David, and three children. I have always admired the heritage structures in Port Hope and its beautiful main street.

I have been volunteering in the Archives since Jan. of this year. Working with Erin on various projects has allowed me to have a better understanding of the collection and to learn more about the history of Port Hope.

I have served on the Markham and Ajax Heritage Committees for over 15 years. I worked with the Town of Markham as their historical researcher with the Heritage Planning Dept. and later as the collections co-ordinator with the museum, where I oversaw the curatorial and the archive/research areas.

I am excited about being on the board and look forward to contributing to the on-going initiatives of the Port Hope Archives.

PETER HUNT:

Hi, I'm Peter Hunt, a recent addition to the Port Hope Archives Board.

I was born in Port Hope and lived here until my late teens. I then moved to Toronto to attend Ryerson Polytechnical Institute for a couple of years and then got the itch to go west. I spent 10 enjoyable years in Alberta attending school, working, skiing and travelling around the western provinces and western USA. Alberta's is a beautiful province but in my heart I longed to be back in the rolling hills of Northumberland. So, in the early 90's I moved back to Port Hope.

I have just recently retired from working at Veridian Connections and with my new found freedom I am keen to explore the history of this area. In particular, my partner Therese and I want to explore how the area near our home came to be known as "Monkey Mountain".

I am very excited to be a part of the Archives Board. Some members I have known for many years and others I am meeting for the first time.



“OUR MEMORIES: DOWNTOWN PORT HOPE” ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Have you ever owned a business in Port Hope? Help us document YOUR stories of downtown Port Hope and share them with the world online - and in the archives - for future generations!

If you would like to participate in the project and have your memories recorded please contact us:

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