

IT'S ABOUT TIME...

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PORT HOPE ARCHIVES

PORT HOPE'S TOWN HALL

As part of the return of the "Town of Port Hope" papers from the Archives of Ontario, the Port Hope Archives received a very important historical document: the original Indenture outlining the purchase of land to build the Town Hall and Market, dated December 23, 1851.

The Deed outlines the selling of land from the Smith family to the Town of Port Hope on April 14th, 1851. Here is an important excerpt: "Whereas by a Bye Law of the said Town Council of Port Hope, passed on the fourteenth day of April in the Year of Our Lord, One Thousand, Eight Hundred and Fifty One, entitled a "Bye-Law to provide for the purchase of a public square, the establishment of a market, and the erection of a Town Hall and Market Buildings in Port Hope", it was enacted amongst other things "that it shall and may be lawful for the Mayor of the Town, to purchase for and on behalf, and from the proprietor or proprietors thereof, the piece or parcel or square of land, therein mentioned and described being part of Town Plot numbers of forty eight, forty nine, and fifty in the Original Town Plot of Port Hope..."



Above: a portion of the Indenture, showing the wax seal and signatures of all involved parties.

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PORT HOPE ARCHIVES

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archives@porthope.ca
905-885-1673

HOURS

Monday 1-5PM
Tuesday to Thursday 9:30-5
Friday 1-5pm
We're flexible!

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:

Marie Jones, Chair
Evelyn Conn, Vice-Chair
Peter Hunt, Treasurer
Rick Sullivan, Secretary
Cathy Moore, Membership
Suzanne Camm, Outreach
David Brooks, Member at Large

ARCHIVIST:

Rachel Arnaud

The Port Hope Archives is a registered charity.

#83789 8675 RR0001

**COMMUNITY HISTORY
HAPPENS HERE!**

TOWN HALL (CONTINUED)...

The Town Hall is one of the most impressive structures located in Port Hope. Located at 56 Queen St. the construction of this neo-classical building began in 1851, with final completion in 1853. Mervin Austin of Rochester, New York was the architect commissioned to carry out the design. The clock and bell tower is octagonal in shape with louvered panels, small graceful columns and topped by a metal tiled dome with decorative iron work. It is believed that the original working mechanisms of the clock are still present.

The price came in at \$20,000, which was almost double the estimated cost, a significant expense for a small town at that time. The completed Town Hall was received with much celebration.

The Town Hall was not just a building for municipal affairs, but also served as a site for public and social functions. Market stalls for the sale of produce and meat were located on the ground floor and in the summer and fall months the square outside was a busy farmer's market on Saturdays. Community groups used the second floor council hall for their events and meetings. The hall and the surrounding park land area became the centre of activity within the town.

In February of 1893 a fire broke out in the lower level that resulted in severe damage to most of the structure. The insurance of \$10,000 was adequate to cover the costs of the restoration and one year later was re-opened for business.

The Town Hall continues to retain much of its original character and charm.

NEW TO THE COLLECTION



A recent donation to the Archives was the Austin Chestnut Collection.

Highlights of this collection include scrapbooks compiled by Chestnut with photographs, newspaper clippings, written histories, and more on local history, places, and people. It includes photographs of local sports teams; a written history of Welcome-Guideboard, and Canton Mill; photographs of fires and firemen of Port Hope; photographs of SS#4 Welcome School class in the early 1900s; "My Memoirs" by Phyllis M. Smith, descendent of Port Hope's principal founder Elias Smith; photographs and articles about local mills, and much more.

Mr. Chestnut was interested in the history of the area and was involved with the East Durham Historical Society. He worked at the Canton Mill for many years as manager, and later the Pratt's Mill. To view this interesting collection, please visit the Archives.

REPORT FROM THE BOARD

Happy New Year! (Perhaps a little later than usual). The Port Hope Archives Board looks forward to an active year of events and outreach, as we celebrate Canada's sesquicentennial. 2016 was a very exciting and successful year at the PHA. We received more grants this past year than at any other time in our history, which has allowed us to complete several outstanding initiatives. With the installation of compact storage we have been able to re-arrange our collection in a way that makes it easier to access material. We have room for continued growth of the collection well into the future.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank David and Mary Jane Broughton for their generous donation to the Port Hope Archives in memory of Sanford Haskill. Sanford's ancestors arrived in 1793 from Vermont as UEL's and settled in Smith's Creek, present day Port Hope. By 1796 they had acquired property on Lakeshore Road. The property has continued to be in family ownership since that time. He was an important member of our community, and was always willing to share his incredible knowledge of the history of Port Hope.

Thank you for your continued support of the Port Hope Archives through your memberships, donations and volunteer hours. We hope to make Canada's 150th Birthday an exciting year of events at the archives and in collaboration with other organizations!

ARCHIVIST'S MESSAGE



Hello everyone. My name is Rachel Arnaud and I am the new Archivist of the Port Hope Archives as of the new year. I come to the Port Hope Archives with an educational background and over 8 years of experience in community museums and archives. I have always loved history, and am passionate about finding and preserving the hidden details and stories from the past. I am very fortunate to be spending my career doing what I love! I'm very happy to be here at the Archives continuing the great work of our past archivists, and am looking forward to meeting all of our members. This area has such an incredibly rich heritage, and I'm looking forward to being a part of it!



Port Hope's Town Hall, c1860s

PHA# 2006-45-2-1631

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

www.flickr.com/photos/porthopearchives

UPCOMING EVENTS

- March-May: Travelling Exhibit- "Family Ties: Ontario Turns 150" (on display at the Archives)
- April 3-9: Archives Awareness Week
- The ACO holds its 12th Annual Bus Tour this year on Wed. April 26th, 2017. Departing from Port Hope at 8:00, the tour heads west to the lovely historic town of Guelph. Tickets are \$90.00 for ACO members. Please call or email Patsy Beeson to reserve your ticket for this exciting trip! 905-885-4416 or (preferably) pbeeson@eagle.ca

FIND US ONLINE!

Website: www.porthopearchives.com

Flickr: www.flickr.com/porthopearchives

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