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Fall 2020

IT'S ABOUT TIME...

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PORT HOPE ARCHIVES

OPEN BY APPOINTMENT

The Port Hope Archives is now open by appointment. We're excited to see you! See page 4 for more details about booking an appointment, and our Covid protocols.

And, don't forget to donate materials to our **Covid19 Community Memory Project**. See page 6 for more details, or visit <https://www.porthopearchives.com/covid-19-community-memory-project.html>

EDUCATION SINCE 1797

*"...most of those occupied as schoolhouses are **fitter to be used as sheds or stables** for the lower animals..."*

Education, along with so many other things, has gone through significant disruptions and changes this year, and parents have been put in a challenging position of trying to decide in which way their children will receive their education. In a way, we can connect with the challenges parents faced two centuries ago in educating their children, though the circumstances are much different than today's.

Did you know that in the first half of the 19th century there were only two main options for formal schooling in Upper Canada—paying for a private tutor, or paying for private schooling? Generations of Canadians have grown up with compulsory and publicly-funded education, but this was not always the case in our country and our town. In a time period when many children...

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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

The Archives is open by appointment. Please contact the Archives by phone or email to book an 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:

Rick Sullivan, Chair
Lois Richardson, Vice-Chair
Peter Hunt, Treasurer
Marie Jones, Secretary
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Evelyn Conn
Sue Sachs

ARCHIVIST:

Rachel Arnaud

*The Port Hope Archives is a
registered charity.
#83789 8675 RR0001*

were essential to running households, farms, and businesses, and literally putting food on the table, formal schooling would not have been a priority for many families. Even if parents had wanted their children to attend school, many families would not have been able to afford tuition in this time period. Survival was a priority, and the early schools of Upper Canada were mainly established to further the education of the upper class and wealthy families.

The earliest record of schooling in Port Hope took place in the Smith homestead, which was built in 1797 at the foot of King Street at the lake. Before the Smith's lived in the house, it was used as a private school and store, and was run by a Mr. Collins from Montreal. We don't know any more about this first school, such as which ages attended, how many students, or what they learned. The village of Smith's Creek was still very small in these early days, with a handful of families living near the river and out in the township. It should be mentioned that despite there not being many formal schools in these early days, it was common for families to group together to educate their children.

An act, passed in 1807, established one government-funded grammar school per each of the 8 districts of Upper Canada, however these schools were only attended by wealthier families who could afford the tuition, and whose children would benefit from their classical studies. Some of these children were even sent by their families to private schools in America.

The next historical record of schooling in Port Hope was a small one-room plank schoolhouse built in 1813 on Walton Street, approximately opposite John Street, a private school for elementary aged children. As Walton Street began to build up, and the space was needed for businesses, the school was dissembled and rebuilt in the area of King Street and William Street, near St. Mark's Church.

Over the next three decades private schools and tutoring were held in Port Hope's homes, stores, and other locations. Classes were held in Smith's Red Store on Mill Street, a private school was opened on Cavan Street, a school was established at Pine and South Streets, and another school was established in an unnamed location by a Reverend Coghlan. Apparently due to a lack of British textbooks in Upper Canada most students had to learn out of American textbooks, which commonly looked down on British subjects and spoke harshly about the British monarchy.

Aspects of our current education system can be traced back to the School Act of 1816, which allowed each district to form its own board of education, which was then responsible for textbooks, courses, and establishing school rules; also, any community within that district with over 20 students could establish a school that would have three trustees who would be responsible for hiring and firing teachers. In 1842, Port Hope received its first government grant to help fund schools, established three school sections in the town, and appointed the Reverend John Cassie as the school superintendent. Port Hope wouldn't elect its own official Board of Trustees for Schools until 1848.

Another major change to education was the Common School Act of 1850, which in part allowed taxes to be collected from all properties to help fund the schools, rather than just families with children. This would help to make school an option for those who had been unable to afford it before. An eye-opening report, created for the year 1850, is very revealing of the state of Port Hope's schools in that time. The report shows us that there were 4 common (public) schools by that time, with a total of 184 students attending. There were also 5 private schools noted, with 115 children attending those as well. At this time there were a total of 559 children in the town that were school age (5-16 years old), so only 51% of the local children living in the town were attending school. Only 50 of those 184 students in the common schools were female. The male teachers were earning an average of 61 pounds annually, while the female teacher was earning 29 pounds annually. None of these teachers had received a Normal School education to be a teacher. The schools themselves were noted as all

being suitably furnished but three were in bad repair, one school was smaller than 18' x 20', and they were all one-room schools. The Port Hope Board of Trustees had the following statement for the year 1850:

"with all our intelligent fellow-townsmen, we have hitherto considered it disgraceful to the town that it possesses not one school house, not one building for educational purposes; and that the most of those occupied as schoolhouses are fitter to be used as sheds or stables for the lower animals, than as seminaries for the cultivation of the taste, the manners, and the mind of intelligent and rational beings... We have passed a resolution that two good schoolhouses , each 33 feet by 40 feet , shall be erected , the one at the east and the other at the west end of the town , for primary schools ."

These two new schools were built as octagonal-shaped structures- one was built in the area of Little Hope and Sullivan Street, and the other in the area of Elgin and McCaul Street. Port Hope's William Barrett, who built the Octagon House still existing today on Martha Street, was in favour of this unique design. Octagonal buildings were popularized by American Phrenologist Orson Squire Fowler in the 1850s as being more spacious, easier to light, heat and cool, and promoting a better quality of life due to their shape.

By 1856 the Trustees also decided to open a United Grammar and Common School at the corner of Walton and Cavan Street, with 5 schools rooms located on the upper floor of the building, at the top of a narrow stairway. At this time, children paid over 3 shillings per quarter to attend the primary schools in town, 5 shillings to attend elementary school, and up to 25 shillings for higher studies. It was established that all students would attend class from 9am-12pm and 1pm-4pm each weekday.

The original plank schoolhouse (built c1812) unfortunately burned down sometime after 1856, while under the management of its teacher, Mr. Erskine. This teacher was then moved to the east octagon school, and it also promptly burned down. Mr. Erskine was fired by the Board of Trustees, and the east octagon was never rebuilt. To replace the plank school, another school was opened at Ward and Elgin Street and used until the East Primary School was built in 1868 and the west Octagon school was used until the West Primary School was built in 1873. *To be continued...*

The history of our local education doesn't end here...this article will continue in our next newsletter. Stay tuned!



Students from the East Primary School, Port Hope, c1919.

Acc.#995.43.1.193

Do you have old photographs of Port Hope or Hope Twp. schools and classes? We would love to have a copy for the collection. Please contact us!

CHAIR'S REPORT

Good news! The Port Hope Archives is now open by appointment only for all of your research, donations and information gathering. To make your appointment today, call our archivist, Rachel, at 905-885-1673, who will gladly book a time that is convenient for you. Even through the closure, the archives has been very busy indeed. We recently received a grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage, through the Museum Assistance Program, and approval from the federal government to hire a student for an eight week period under the Canada Summer Jobs Program. This student will assist with the further digitizing of our sizable collection. We have also been contacted by Fleming College, to place a student intern for a period of fifteen weeks. This too will help in the day to day processes at the archives. Your Board has been able to meet through "Zoom" to keep on top of the operations, acquisitions, and expenditures of our archives. We are also preparing for our Annual General Meeting that will take place near the end of January 2021, so watch your in-box for further information regarding this event. It also will be held under a video call platform. As the holidays approach, our wish is that you remain safe and healthy to enjoy this season to its fullest. I look forward to seeing you all at the AGM in January.

Rick

ARCHIVIST'S MESSAGE

Despite being closed to walk-in visitors, it's still been a busy Fall. We've had lots of research inquiries, and myself and volunteers have been working away on projects like cataloguing, research, organizing, and other fun things. As you saw on our main page, we are now open to visitors by appointment. I'm really looking forward to seeing visitors in our building again! See below for more details on what we will be doing to ensure visitor and staff safety. If you're not comfortable visiting in person, but would like to do research, we can still assist you virtually over the phone or email and do research on your behalf. We are again accepting donations of items for the collection, so please contact the Archives to arrange a time to drop them off. And, don't forget to donate items to our Covid 19 Community Memory Project— although we all want this pandemic to be over and forgotten about, it's important to record it's impact on our community for future generations to learn about.

Rachel

The Port Hope Archives has reopened for in-person research visits. Here's what we're doing to ensure your visit is as safe as possible:

- All visitors must book an appointment time to visit for any purpose, at least 2 business days in advance
- Staff will conduct a collection search for you in advance of your appointment and bring out all the materials they find on your topic
- Every visitor will fill out a mandatory Covid screening questionnaire on arrival
- Only 1 visitor allowed per appointment
- All materials handled by researchers will be quarantined for a safe amount of time before they are returned to circulation
- Thorough cleaning of our reading room surfaces before/after each researcher/visitor
- All visits are limited to 90 minutes to allow time for cleaning between researchers
- Face masks are mandatory and to be worn properly at all times, without exception.
- NEW: payment by debit or credit card to be accepted starting December

If you're not able to visit us in-person, we are happy to do research on your behalf.



Are you looking for gift ideas for the history or genealogy buff in your life? Here are some great ideas for gifts you can find at the Archives:

- 1) Annual Membership to the Archives: \$25, benefits include a quarterly newsletter and no user fee charges for each research visit to the Archives
- 2) 1885 Historic Map of Port Hope : \$15, printed copy
- 3) Book: 'Military Contributions of a Small Town : \$10, describes Port Hope participants in wars and conflicts, all the way from the American Revolution to Afghanistan
- 4) Book: 'Book of Remembrance' : \$20, A record of the men of Port Hope who participated in the Great War, 1914-1918
- 5) Historic Photographs: \$5 per photograph, for a high quality digital copy - would make great framed or printed gift. See a large selection of our historic photographs at <http://www.flickr.com/porthopearchives>

Please contact us to arrange your purchase. Can't make it in to the Archives, or live far away?

Contact us to arrange mail delivery, we're happy to help.

PORT HOPE ARCHIVES'

COVID-19 COMMUNITY MEMORY PROJECT

<http://www.porthopearchives.com/covid-19-community-memory-project.html>

We will be creating a special collection to collect and preserve the Covid-19 experiences of those in the Port Hope area. Our aim is to collect records of your experiences of how the pandemic has impacted you, your family, friends, business, and your community.

Types Of Submissions Can Include (but are not limited to):

- Photographs
- Artwork
- Diaries, journals, scrapbooks
- Correspondence
- Business Materials
- Oral histories
- Unpublished works of fiction and non-fiction, i.e. poetry, essays, short stories
- Audio or video recordings
- Journal entries

If you are interested in submitting materials to the Port Hope Archives' **Covid-19 Community Memory Project**, please send a detailed email to archives@porthope.ca and include as much information as you can. You will be asked to complete an agreement to transfer ownership and assign copyright of the item(s) to the Archives so that we can use them for a variety of important purposes, including research, education, exhibitions, and more.

Thank you for helping us to collect and preserve our local history!



NEW TO THE COLLECTION



Bluestone House c1890

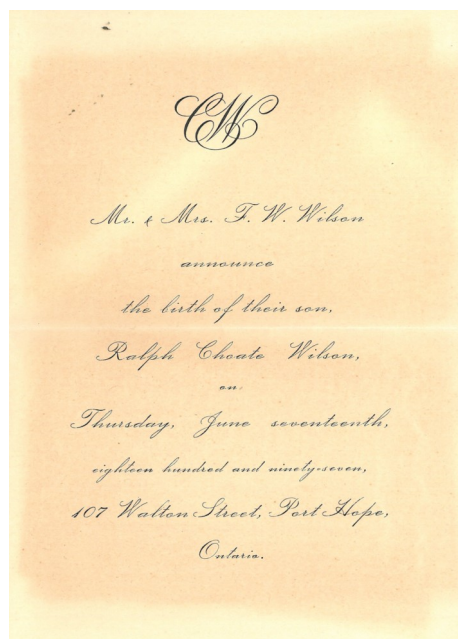
2019.24.18.7118



"Kaffir, Kangaroo, Klondike- Tales of the Gold Fields, Diamond Mines, and Pearl Fisheries", 1899

This interesting book features short stories interspersed with 1899 advertisements from local Port Hope businesses. 2020.19.3

NEW TO THE COLLECTION



Left: Birth Announcement for Ralph Choate Wilson, 1897, sent to Mr. and Mrs. Asa Choate of 'Belmont'

2020.9.2



Right: Photograph of Winfield Curtis Kellaway taken by Hamill & Ball Photographers in Peterborough. The information on the back of the card indicates 46th Battalion, Port Hope.

2019.25.1

Upcoming Events

Port Hope Archives Annual General Meeting— January 2021 on Zoom (*members will be notified of the date and sent the AGM package prior to the event*)

The Archives is now open by appointment. Please contact us at least 2 business days in advance to book your appointment.

Website: www.porthopearchives.com

Flickr: www.flickr.com/porthopearchives

Facebook: www.facebook.com/PHArchives

Archeion: www.archeion.ca/port-hope-archives

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/PHArchives>

Instagram: www.instagram.com/porthopearchives/

PORT HOPE ARCHIVES

17 MILL STREET NORTH 1 PORT HOPE, ONTARIO L1A 2T1
905.885.1673 1 archives@porthope.ca 1 porthopearchives.com

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