

ACO Matters

Architectural Conservancy of Ontario – Port Hope Branch

Newsletter – June 2010

Rod Stewart on The File Factory! Focusing the Power of the Volunteer Sector See pages 4 & 5

From the President:

The primary objective of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario (ACO) is “to preserve buildings and structures of architectural merit and places of natural beauty or interest”.

The Port Hope Branch of ACO, now almost 40 years old, is one of the Province’s largest and most successful chapters. This is due to the dedication of volunteers working on our various activities. Port Hope is very lucky to have such a fine collection of heritage buildings, many lovingly restored, and others disguised behind later aluminum or vinyl siding awaiting an appreciative owner. ACO Port Hope has played a large role in the preservation and restoration of our heritage assets. Through our ambitious and successful fundraising, we are able to assist owners with not only good advice and moral support in their restoration efforts, but financial support in many cases. This has helped save many of our important and threatened buildings such as the EP Smith Block which was almost entirely lost in a fire in 1980, or the restoration of the Capitol Theatre, the Port Hope Library and more recently, the Walton Hotel. There are many other threatened heritage structures which ACO will continue to monitor. The Nicolson File Factory on Cavan Street, a designated structure, is one such building. Rod Stewart, in an article in this issue, makes a case for its reuse. Other buildings include the Opera House over the Royal Bank,

the Greenwood Tower Inn and the Centre Pier Buildings.

The financial support we are able to give can act as a catalyst for the restoration of these threatened structures. It is to these types of projects that many of the funds raised by our activities are assigned.

I would also like to report to members that a Governance Committee has been established as outlined in the motion at the Annual General Meeting. It consists of elected Board members and past Presidents and welcomes any suggestions that members and past board members may make. These may be directed to Patricia Doney at pdoney@sympatico.ca and will be much appreciated by the Committee as they undertake this important task.

I look forward to my role as President and will work hard to assure members the ACO Port Hope will continue its important role in the preservation of our heritage in Port Hope. I look forward to seeing everyone at the Summer Barbecue.

Phillip H. Carter

M. Arch., M.C.P., OAA, FRAIC, CAHP

ACO Cobourg and Port Hope Bus Tour, 2010 - Report

The 28th April bus tour, again completely booked, visited Brockville this year. We visited two very fine private homes, had lunch at the Mill restaurant, enjoyed a guided tour round the handsome town by a Brockville historian, and visited Fulford Place, the palatial mansion of George Fulford, manufacturer of “Pink Pills for Pale People”. At the Brockville Court House Mr. Justice Paul Cosgrove showed us both its brilliantly executed modern addition and the main courtroom. At the fine Presbyterian Church nearby the organist gave us a short recital and we had tea. Our traditional Happy Hour on the return home stretched into a Happy Two or Three Hours due to a major accident on the 401, but our participants were remarkably philosophical about the delay.

Patsy Beeson

DON'T MISS

The ACO Summer Barbecue

Thursday, August 12th, 5:30^{pm}

Due to the kindness of *Bobby and Dick LeSueur* the Annual Barbecue will be held at their lovely home near Canton, at 5351 6th line (north of 5th line, east off Grist Mill Rd.).

Reservations will close after Monday, August 9th and sorry, but this year no drop-ins will be accepted. Last year 35 more people arrived than had reserved and food ran out – unfair to those who have reserved.

So be sure and book by calling **Judith Copeland** at **905 800 0693** and letting her know how many will be in your party.

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ACO Board of Directors 2010

Executive Committee

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 Penny Harris Secretary
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Patsy Beeson
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 Patricia Doney
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 Charles Wickett
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Committee Chairs

Joan Tooke Auction
 Patsy Beeson Bus Tour & Newsletter
 Olga Cwiek Education
 Mary Shaw-Rimington Garden Tour
 Charles Wicketts Governance
 Susan Carmichael House Tour
 Trish Doney Membership
 Ed Pamerter Property & HPH Rep.
 Gerald Tooke Publications
 Mary Trevor Scholarship
 Judith Copeland Social

The ACO was incorporated in 1933 for the preservation of the best examples of architecture in the province and for the preservation of its places of natural beauty.

The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario Port Hope Branch Annual General Meeting for 2009, February 18, 2010 — Report

Will Ryan called the Meeting to order at 7:30 pm at the Capitol Theatre, welcomed all ACO members and thanked his Board, Committee Chairs and all Volunteers who have made this Branch what it is today.

Ed Pamerter then explained the origin and qualifications for the Marion Garland Awards and presented one to Lee Caswell and Blaise Gaetz for 13 Church St., and another to Dan Koomen (*in absentia*) for The Pines Condominium.

Eileen Ford, Treasurer, reported that memberships and donations were up and outlined the finances involved with ACO projects.

Penny Harris read summaries for the following committees: Antiques & Artifacts, Bus Tour, Garden Tour, House Tour, Projects, Scholarship, Pier Group, Education, Membership, Property, Social and Governance.

Will Ryan thanked retiring Board Members Ken Burgin, Kathryn McHolm, Jackie Tinson and Chris Wallace and said that on their behalf, a book on Florence would be presented to the Port Hope Library.

New Board Action Plan

Will introduced Blake Holton and Bill Wilkerson. Blake reported that at the 2008 AGM an organizational review was suggested by Sue Stickley. Will asked Blake and Bill to conduct the review and they interviewed all Past Presidents and present Board Members. Bill outlined their findings and summarized the New Board Action Plan as follows: 1) Governance Review, 2) Qualitative Reforms, 3) Succession Planning, 4) Term Limits, 5) Role of President, 6) Conflict of Interest Policy, 7) Role of Past Presidents, and 8) Mission Statement.

Nancy Redner moved the following motion; seconded by Lee Caswell: Be it resolved that the procedures developed in 2009 for the governance of the Port Hope Branch of the ACO be



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reviewed and revised by a new *ad hoc* Governance Committee comprised of Past Presidents and current Board members. Six Committee members shall be nominated by the Branch Nominating Committee and be empowered to select a Committee Chair and invite input from other ACO members as required.

The results of the Governance review will be reported for adoption by the ACO Branch membership at the 2011 AGM, once adopted by the 2010 Board of Directors.

Patricia Doney thanked Nola McDonald and Blake Holton for the knowledge and experience each brought to the Nominating Committee and then presented the 2010 Slate of Officers (see left-hand column).

Patricia read biographies of the new Board members, Patsy Beeson, Olga Cwiek and Charles Wickett, as well as that of the incoming President, Phil Carter.

Phil took the Chair and thanked Will for his term as president, presenting him with a book on Cemeteries to be donated to the Port Hope Library on Will's behalf. He outlined the outstanding successes of the past year, and stressed how proactive the Board has been and will continue to be.

He then adjourned the AGM for refreshments, followed by the Guest speaker, John Joynt, who gave a slide talk entitled "Love at First Site" outlining the "destruction and reconstruction" of his home in Upper Cold Springs.

Antiques & Artifacts Auction, April 11, 2010 — Report — Joan Tooke

Antiques & Artifacts 2010 attracted a good crowd of new and repeat bidders from many venues, with slightly over half from either Port Hope or Cobourg. Our committee members and volunteers were resplendent in new purple "Antiques & Artifacts" t-shirts. Auctioneer Les Brittan was in good form and many of our attendees came early and stayed late enjoying Marleen Campbell's wonderful refreshments.

We received a record number of donations from 65 households, and the auction/tag sale set up was a challenging one. New features included the "Chairs R Us" and "Hall" sales areas. Both auction and tag sale rooms reflected the respective artistic eyes of Peter Duck and Judith Copeland. Appraisals were done by Lee Caswell and Clay Benson. The 2010 Silent Auction component raised \$1,400.

Many thanks to all who assisted, donated and attended. \$16,000 was transferred to the ACO Port Hope Branch. Antiques & Artifacts has raised \$98,000 over six years to support the work of Port Hope ACO.

The Town Park Recreation Centre is booked for April 10, 2011 and items have already been received for 2011. The Committee has great new ideas for the event. Please help by donating some great stuff.



Friends of Wesleyville Village News

The "Friends" would like to thank the Port Hope ACO for making possible the removal of the hazardous bat guano and the ceiling replacement in the 150-year-old Wesleyville Church. While our fund-raising events have been very successful, without the ACO's \$20,000 contribution the work might have had to be postponed. Masonry, woodwork, roof and plaster repairs are now complete and the Church ready for several public and private events. (See p. 8 under Major Events.)

Sue Stickley



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THE FILE FACTORY – WE COULD DO THIS! Focusing the Power of the Volunteer Sector – *Rod Stewart*

When I was asked to write this piece, the thought was that it would be a sort of background on ACO activities – victories and losses – in the good old days. An article like that might be fun. It would begin with the formation of the Port Hope Branch just before I moved to Port Hope. There would be lessons learned: the loss of our magnificent Post Office, and of the Old Fire Hall: severely damaged in the great flood of 1980 – finished off in the rush to channelize the Ganaraska the following year. With better days ahead, there would be recognition of the fundamental and successful contribution by the ACO and its stalwarts to preserve what remained of the Smith Block after the devastating 1982 Walton Street fire. We'd recall saving the train station, its little freight shed and of course the more recent cottage at Union Cemetery. Wesleyville Church and village would be sited along with the important scholarship fund and various publication projects. We'd touch on the band shell, not mention the fountain, and enlarge on the ACO's significant contribution to the restoration aspects of the Capitol Theatre. The continued survival and health of the "jewel in her crown", Port Hope's Walton Street, has been an abiding focus. The article might end with the current efforts of The Pier Group to breathe some life into the stagnant municipal thinking surrounding the great industrial buildings on the Port Hope Centre Pier, and for good manners it would apologize for errors and omissions that there certainly would be in such an overview.

The Port Hope ACO has indeed been a positive force in this community; but I guess you all know that. Certainly I learned everything I know about the joys of volunteer work from my association with its leadership.

But that's not what I want to do here. Instead, I'd like to make a recommendation about an innovative way

to revive one of the ACO's oldest, most challenging and potentially most rewarding projects.

To see the former Nicholson File Factory on Cavan Street – redeveloped into a useful and productive complex – has long been a dream of the Port Hope Branch of the ACO.

As the industrial heart of Port Hope, employment at the File pumped life into Port Hope like no other industry. Never faltering, it was always reliable, starting in the mid 1850's and carrying on generation after generation. When the company moved to new digs and eventually out of Canada altogether, Port Hope lost an important part of its old self.

What is so important about the building that remains – the old pile on Cavan Street?

It still has, for different reasons, what made it succeed in the first place – a great location on the river – and, it is the real McCoy: a big airy spacious collection of unpretentious industrial buildings with robust architectural character that could never be created in today's economy. Authenticity is one thing that we have here in spades, and the File is simply one manifestation of it. It is inherently precious for that reason.

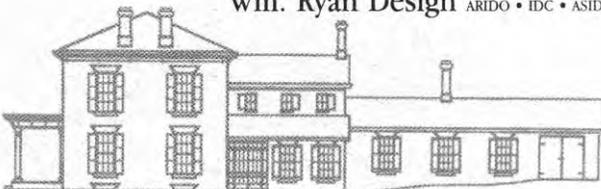
Years ago the ACO supported renewal of the File Factory as the future home of the Canadian Canoe Museum which eventually decided to locate in Peterborough. Since that idea went north, there has been no serious look at what might be possible.

In the early 1990's, the provincial ACO Preservation Works program commissioned an architectural review of the complex by present ACO PH chair Phil Carter. The local branch actively supported passage of a Brownfield Remediation Bylaw specifically designed to address the File Factory, and it did the ground work for the Part IV designation under the Ontario Heritage Act.

But the ingredients of a private enterprise project never coalesced – the building remains like a beached whale lying on one of the most desirable plots of land in Port Hope.

What could be done? In my view, what is needed for the File Factory is for the not-for-profit sector of the local

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economy to kick in, purchase the site and use the unique attributes of a non-profit corporation to make the site “developer-ready” as a high end loft condominium housing project overlooking the river.

The key will be to establish a not-for-profit corporation with a volunteer board of directors that takes advantage of the multitude of programs that exist for job creation, skills training, community economic development, and the formation of other partnerships essential to the pursuit of the goals of the project – to make the site attractive to a commercial developer of high quality residential condominiums.

The principal objective of this hypothetical board would be risk reduction for a future private sector investor. The tasks among others would involve:

- a) determination of what the final footprint of the buildings complex might be,
- b) assessment of the structure and condition of the portions of the complex that might be rehabilitated and expanded,
- c) commissioning of the site survey work related to the brownfield remediation requirements,
- d) development of a program of recycling of materials and the associated skills training that would ensue,
- e) negotiations with local authorities for zoning and site plan approvals,
- f) more....

Why, you might ask, would anybody volunteer to sign on for such a task: to do as an unpaid volunteer work that other people do for a living, and which would inevitably

carry great requirements of time and energy? Why do good people volunteer to do anything? For the answer to that, I suggest we think of the rewards such a project offers.

One would have the satisfaction of having participated in a project that made a great difference to the community one cares about.

Port Hope needs the present eyesore on Cavan Street dealt with. There doesn't seem to be any kind of private sector investor who is going to come here and solve the problem. Port Hope needs the economic development activity. It needs jobs and the tax base that would result from the project. It also needs to attract the kind of people who would like to purchase this type of housing and move to this community to live.

The end result of the effort would be the sale of the site “development ready” with the proceeds from the sale remaining in the hands of the not-for-profit corporation. Presumably, that entity would have a name along the lines of The Port Hope Heritage Development Trust, and presumably it would take a moment or two to catch its breath and move onto another worthy project. A very similar not for profit board accomplished just such a task with the Capitol Theatre. I think with a little re-jigging of the formula, it could work again for the Nicholson File Factory.

Rod Stewart has a long-standing interest in Port Hope and its potential. He works in building conservation with his partner Masumi Suzuki. He can be contacted by e-mail: Rod@HistoricPlaster.com



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On Being House Tour Chair – Susan Carmichael

I was honoured to be asked to be Chair in 2007 (a 3-year term ending this year) and was happy to be able to contribute to a very worthy cause. We had chosen to make our home near here precisely because of the architectural quality of Port Hope, the direct concern of the ACO. The ACO Port Hope House Tour is now in its 45th year, the oldest of its kind in Ontario, and our ACO's largest fund raiser, regularly taking place on the Saturday before Thanksgiving, a date unchanged for 20 years.

The first tour, back in 1964 was organized by A.K. Sculthorpe and showcased some of Port Hope Township's finest homes: in town - Hill & Dale, Dunain, Bluestone and Hillcrest, and in the country - Batterwood, Canton Mill and Durham House. Tickets sold for \$2.00. Our custom now is to try to feature eight architecturally interesting homes and one or two of Port Hope's institutional buildings. Visitors come from all over Ontario, many having been coming for years, so we try to have "fresh" homes each year, a daunting task in a town of this size. After a house is "toured", it won't re-appear for eight years unless significant changes are made to it.

Once I realized the many facets of getting a House Tour ready for October, I formed a committee of six community-minded, hard-working and committed individuals. Committee activities start in January and end in October. Most importantly, we find homeowners willing to open their doors for a worthy cause; then, as our ticket is also a booklet, its preparation requires house pictures, architectural features write-ups, sponsors to help defer printing costs, churches to participate with lunches, and a map with all locations noted.

At the same time we develop our advertising strategy and marketing materials. Everyone on the committee participates in this activity, which includes mailing to visitors that attended a previous House Tour.

Other activities include co-ordination with the town, tourism, community Police Services and local media.

Outside the committee, others support in the areas of photography, media relations, graphic design, home write-ups, and flower arrangements, just to mention a few.

Tickets usually go on sale by July 1st so the first half of the year is quite busy. Then a few months before House Tour Day, over a hundred volunteers are solicited and assigned a shift at one of our featured homes - no small feat for our Volunteer Co-ordinator.

On House Tour Day it's all hands on deck! Husbands and partners are press ganged into jobs like parking control, signage drop-off and pick-up, balloons, doing a shift at one of the houses, or all of the above. It's a certainty there'll be a crisis somewhere needing attention. Lost tickets, last minutes who are trying to buy tickets, individuals wanting refunds, you name it!

But then when you see a lot of smiling faces from homeowners and visitors, you know all is well. The team has achieved success and this has been the case for the last 2 years. Only the weather is beyond our control...

The following day, as our way of expressing gratitude to the heroic homeowners, they receive a private tour of the houses ending with a most deserved thank-you dinner at the Chair's home, an event which is much appreciated.

This committee is especially proud of the diversity of the houses we have brought on the tour, the changes made to the advertising materials, the introduction of online ticket purchasing, the new sponsors each year and writing a cheque to the ACO for \$28,000 last year.

And now for the 2010 House Tour! It will again be very exciting with five properties in town including one very modern one and three in the country. Five have never been shown. St. Mark's Church and Trinity College School's Guild Room and Chapel will be our featured institutions. So get your tickets early (volunteers see it free).

I would like to acknowledge these very hard working committee members: Fionna Barrington, Jacquie Currelly, Janet Harvey, Diana Joynt, Joan Moss and Daphne Svenningson.



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The Centre Pier Buildings

This is a letter sent by Phil Carter on February 11, 2010 to Mayor Linda Thompson and Members of Council, Corporation of the Municipality of Port Hope.

I am writing on behalf of the Port Hope Chapter of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario (ACO) to voice our concern over recent announcements that Cameco has been instructed to include the Pier Buildings in its Vision 2010 Program and to demolish the buildings.

I attended Vision 2010 meetings over a two year period, donating a great deal of time to the public input process initiated by Cameco, a process that took seriously the role of the public in helping Cameco to determine its 2010 Vision of improvement and renovation of its facilities. Throughout that public consultation process, it was always made clear that the future of the Centre Pier was not part of Vision 2010. I find it unacceptable that the Centre Pier buildings and their demolition can now be part of Vision 2010 without the public consultation process that Cameco invested into so heavily.

We can take some consolation from the fact that the buildings cannot legally be demolished until the final CNSC license is granted in some two years time. However, we are disturbed that proper process has not been followed with respect to the Centre Pier buildings.

ACO Port Hope has had a continued interest in the future of the Centre Pier and its buildings. We initiated the idea of a study that we could fund, but our request to the Municipality was refused in 2006. We continued our efforts and the Pier Group was established. ACO funded two studies commissioned by the Pier Group. The first, entitled, "Heritage Assessment of Port Hope's Centre Pier" by Dr. Chris Andreae, demonstrated clearly that the Centre Pier and its buildings are a considerable Cultural Heritage Resource, celebrating our industrial and waterfront heritage. To suggest that the buildings have no heritage value is to ignore this evidence of a highly

qualified and objective heritage expert.

2) The Mayor has asserted that the buildings are in poor condition and will continue to deteriorate. The refusal to allow ACO to undertake a proper evaluation by refusing access and having no other extensive engineering or architectural condition studies undertaken suggests that more study is required before making such an assertion.

There is a further assertion that there is no guarantee that an investor can be found to preserve and adapt these buildings. A second study commissioned by the Pier Group and funded by the ACO suggested there is an economic future for the buildings. It would seem to us that the Municipality could instruct its Economic Development Department to explore this option. They might contact universities and colleges, industries and other businesses to determine the economic viability of the buildings' reuse.

We of the ACO have funded two studies that we believe demonstrate that the Centre Pier and its buildings have heritage value and that there could be an economic future in their rehabilitation and reuse. ACO has expended hard-earned financial resources to back our belief. We believe it is now time for the Municipality to undertake more intensive studies prior to making any decision on the demolition of these heritage assets. We accept that one option for the Pier is that the buildings will be demolished, but this decision should only be taken once all options for saving some or all of the buildings have been exhausted.

We hope Council might reconsider its directive to demolish the buildings. We of the ACO are anxious to work with the Municipality to help determine whether the buildings can be preserved.

*Respectfully submitted,
Phillip H. Carter*

*M.Arch., M.C.P., OAA, FRAIC, CAHP
cc Cameco Corporation*

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Port Hope ACO Major Events

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at Wesleyville Church
Saturday, June 12th, 10^{am} - 3^{pm}

&

F.O.W.V. SPRING/SUMMER PICNIC and LAKESHORE RAMBLE,

Sunday, June 13th, at church.

ACO SUMMER BARBECUE

Thursday, August 12th, 2010

ACO 36th ANNUAL HOUSE TOUR

Saturday, October 2nd, 2010

F.O.W.V. BARN DANCE AT BATTERWOOD

Fall. Date tba.

Architectural Conservancy of Ontario Port Hope Branch MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name(s): _____

Full Address: _____

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Annual memberships in the ACO, Port Hope Branch are due each January 1st. Membership cut-off is July each year. The Port Hope Branch of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario is financed through membership fees and voluntary contributions which are tax deductible. Additional funds are raised through the annual House Tour, Biennial Garden Tour, Antiques & Artifacts Auction and other fund raising initiatives. Educational programs, including bus/walking tours of Port Hope and other learning forums are part of our yearly program. Each member is invited to participate in branch and provincial activities. Membership also includes a subscription to *Acorn*, the provincial ACO publication, and *ACO Matters*, our Port Hope Chapter publication.

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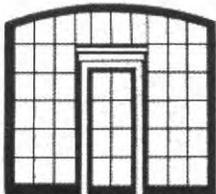
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