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ONTARIO

# ACORN

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# REMNANTS OF THE PAST

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Spring Issue  
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Cheltenham Brickworks, 2017  
Richard Seck Photography

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**F. Leslie Thompson**

ACO President and Chair

Photo Matthew Plexman

# FROM THE PRESIDENT

My home's baseboards are scarred! These indentations are likely the marks made by the workmen who lived here in the nineteenth century as they kicked the mud off their work boots at the end of the day. Many layers of lead-based paint cover these eleven inch first-growth pine boards, but the front hall dents remain as evidence of "Muddy York" and remnants of the lives lived here. Looking at these scars I can imagine the prior inhabitants kicking the baseboards and the sound of heavy boots hitting my walls. The historic context of these dents and imagined memory allows me to forgive the destructive act of their making because these remnants have meaning for me as a viewer and homeowner. Warning; if you visit, do not test my baseboards or my interpretation.

Remnants, ruins and architectural fragments are the subject of this issue of *ACORN*. Our stories include a range of interpretations of the theme. For example, Dan Schneider "ruminates on ruins" in a manner evoking the sentiments of nineteenth century romantics and of one of their

champions — John Ruskin. For Ruskin, not only was "truth" one of the moral categories of architecture<sup>i</sup> but he also argued that "ancient buildings should be preserved, but no attempt should be made to erase the accumulated history encoded in their decay."<sup>ii</sup> Our colleague celebrates ruins in his article and gives special attention to the stabilized walls of the Ruin of St. Raphael's Roman Catholic Church National Historic Site among others.

From another perspective, Hannah Hadfield, Tanya McCullough and Leora Bebko consider the repurposing of architectural fragments outside their original context. Although Ruskin might have been horrified at the thought, he did live in a Victorian London widely embellished with the architectural codes of other centuries in the form of ornament. I wonder however, do the original codes of the salvaged fragments create a new meaning in their new context? In the article we learn that the new context is the garden of a salvaged nineteenth century home now surrounded by skyscrapers. Will the ambiguity of the site or the references of the remnants open an opportunity for public

amusement and pleasure; perhaps a purpose never imagined by the architects of either the ornaments or the house?

In their article on relocating remnants, Noah McGillivray and Alison Creba ask us to consider the process of moving the William Whitehead house as a signifier. Given the historical and sociological context of its original location, what is the meaning of its move on hydraulic dollies? How would its significance change if it remained and became the façade or an element of a glass tower? Would it be a pastiche? Read on and find out.

You may notice I ask a lot of questions. For me the joy of reading *ACORN* is that it provokes questions and nudges me to try to understand architecture and cultural landscapes from different perspectives and theoretical vantage points. My hope is that you too will enjoy this issue and continue to probe the possible meanings of the remnants and the ruins you see every day.

— F. Leslie Thompson

<sup>i</sup> Ruskin, John, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, (John Wiley, New York), 1849

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid.

# RUMINATING ON RUINS

By Dan Schneider

What is a ruin? Think of it as a built heritage remnant *in situ* in the landscape. The remnant has lost, irretrievably, its ability to shelter, provide a crossing or be otherwise useful.

The landscape the ruin inhabits includes our countryside, riverscapes, even streetscapes — although, as structures go, ruins tend to be anti-social and off by themselves.

On this side of the Atlantic, and compared to intact historic structures, ruins are little appreciated. Their worth and significance to our communities is ignored, and their sites are purposely degraded or destroyed.

The poetic and picturesque associations of ruins, stereotypically of the “old world” kind, springs from their appeal to the senses and the imagination. While Ontario is lacking in ruinous castles, monasteries and temples, we do have more than a few ruins worthy of this romantic tradition.

On the Grand River, just north of Paris, is one of the more spectacular ruins in the province — the piers and abutments of an old railway viaduct. The bridge, built circa 1854, carried the main line of the Great Western Railway running from Niagara Falls to Windsor. According to interpretive signage, this portion of the line was abandoned in the 1930s.

Near Sebringville, west of Stratford, is a humbler relict. A rusted steel truss bridge, deckless but with stringers and floor beams intact, crosses a tributary of the Thames. Half-swallowed in the encroaching verdure, the bridge calls to mind a line from Al Purdy’s poem “The Country North of Belleville”

about the vestiges of old farms: “the undulating green waves of time are laid on them.”

The most common type of ruin in our rural landscape is old farm buildings. As preservationists well know, without active use an old building can go downhill fast and the usual outcome is demolition and replacement, skipping the ruin stage entirely.

But now and then, a building reaches the point of no return, and is just allowed to keep going — through a long falling-down into ruination and, but for some kind of intervention, ultimate dissolution and disappearance.

Decrepit, unused barns start to lose their siding; then more and more pieces fall away. The timber structure with its massive beams can survive for decades before complete collapse. Eventually what remains are foundation walls, or just a silo.

Farmhouses are sometimes left to rot away too. And what’s left of old stone walls and rail fences, meandering through the undergrowth.

Instead of a protracted mouldering away, ruin can come suddenly, the result of a fire or other disaster. Old mills especially were notoriously subject to fires. If rebuilding was not feasible, and if no other use for the site presented itself, the ruins remained.

Fire was the culprit in the creation of perhaps Ontario’s most dramatic ruin — the hulking shell of St. Raphael’s church northeast of Cornwall.

Unlike many ruins, the “open air museum” that is St. Raphael’s today



▲ Railway viaduct near Paris. Photo Dan Schneider, 2018



▲ Barn silo near Shakespeare. Photo Dan Schneider, 2017

is the result of major intervention. After the church, built in 1821, burned 150 years later, the Ontario Heritage Foundation (now Ontario Heritage Trust) stabilized and restored the stone walls and landscaped the site. The magnificent National Historic Site is protected by one of the first OHF heritage easements.

St. Raphael’s shows how that the historical significance of ruins is owing to two, sometimes three, events and the circumstances surrounding them.

The first, of course, has to do with the building of the (now ruined) structure

for human occupation or use. The second event is the abandoning of the site, which puts it on the road to ruin. Why was an apparently “healthy” and functional building deserted by its owner, left to fall down and moulder? Why was a structure damaged or destroyed by calamity not repaired or rebuilt or its site re-used?

In either case the abandonment would almost always have been the result of the owner’s decision that the upkeep and continued use of the structure, or the re-use of the land, was not economically practical. Behind such a determination would be one or more potentially far-reaching historical factors: changes in industry conditions, such as depletion of natural resources; technological obsolescence; loss of markets; decline in population; and changes in land use patterns and transportation routes.

The association with these larger social and economic themes are a key part of every ruin’s story. The ruin stands as a reminder of the fateful and

often poignant change in historical circumstances that resulted in the second event effectively reversing the first.

For some (lucky?) ruins there is a third event. This is intervention, the decision to do something to conserve the ruin and its values. Intervention runs the gamut all the way from a plaque or other interpretation, to the isolation of the ruin for safety purposes (through the erection of barriers to access, for example), to the stabilization of the structure (by capping and repointing masonry walls, for example), to selective demolition or re-construction of the structure.

In the extreme, very rare case — the old William Lyon Mackenzie printery in Queenston is one — the ruined structure is completely restored.

Intervention, where it occurs, itself forms an important part of the story of the ruin. But — and herein lies the paradox of “saving” ruins — just

as a ruin is a destroyed structure, so intervention inevitably destroys the ruin to a greater or lesser extent. Something is lost.

Of course, without active intervention, a ruin will ultimately disappear, or disappear more quickly. So, the question about what to do, or not to do, must first look at all the values of the ruin site — aesthetic, physical, historical, contextual, intangible — some of which, like it or not, will be competing.

To put it starkly, would you rather have hoary remains or an all-cleaned-up archaeological site? A relict slowly melting under the “green waves of time” or one preserved indefinitely? A site redolent with spirit of the place or an “open air museum”?

In practice, some middle ground can usually be found. But, with ruins, active preservation will mean a challenging compromise.

For now, just find — and gently hug — a ruin near you.



◀ St. Raphael's church northeast of Cornwall, a National Historic Site. Photo Catherine Nasmith, 2017

### About the author

Dan Schneider is a St Marys-based heritage consultant. He posts twice monthly on his award-winning heritage policy blog *OHA+M* at <https://uwaterloo.ca/heritage-resources-centre/blog>.

# RIVER REMNANTS:

A BEER BOTTLE AND A STREET RAILWAY. A BROKEN DAM. A CONDO AND A FINE HOME

By Susan Ratcliffe

## THE BEER BOTTLE AND THE STREET RAILWAY

Leave your car near Edinburgh Road in Guelph and walk west along the River Speed. As you listen to the flow of the water over the concrete weirs, you will come to a little bridge over a sludgy, turgid stream that runs between broken limestone walls and disappears under Waterloo Avenue. What is it? Where does it go?

You are looking at Guelph's Silver Creek, a sad reminder of its former glory as the source of the best beer-making water in Ontario in 1851. When John H. Sleeman arrived from Cornwall, England in 1836, he brought his family tradition of brewing beer and established his business near St. Catharines. But he was not happy.

Dissatisfied with the quality of the water in that area, he collected samples from various places in Ontario and sent them for testing in Cornwall. He moved the brewery to Guelph when its water tested the closest to the water he had used brewing beer back home. After three years of leasing space, he built the first Silvercreek Brewery in 1851 near the creek at its confluence with the Speed River — and a “notorious” legend was born.

John's son George, who took over the brewery in 1867, proved to be not only a phenomenal brewer, but also sportsman (his Guelph Maple Leaf team won the baseball World Series in 1874), businessman and mayor of Guelph. His brewery on

the banks of Silver Creek needed to increase production to meet demand, so he decided to add a second shift of workers. Electricity had recently arrived in Guelph, so he could light his factory for night work.

How could he get his workers out to the west end of town? In 1894, George obtained a charter and built a street railway to bring workers to the brewery. He built the car barns and powerhouse near the edge of the creek so that he would have a ready supply of cooling water for the condensing engine necessary to power the trains. The powerhouse still remains on the banks of Silver Creek, now beautifully restored as the Graystone Apartments.

The Sleeman story is a remarkable one of pirates and gangsters, of prohibition and hidden family history. A handwritten notebook with a recipe for Cream Ale on page 64 began a new chapter to the story which can be told another time.

## THE BROKEN DAM, THE CONDO AND THE FINE HOUSE

Following the path of Silver Creek north past the old car barns, you will see it disappear under the parking lot into a wooded area. The muddy trickle brings us to the broken remnants of a small dam whose scattered chunks of limestone no longer hold back the creek. Beyond the broken dam, the shape of the land clearly outlines a former mill pond, now choked with weeds.

The story goes back to Guelph's



▲ Phoenix Mill on the banks of Silver Creek, Guelph. Photo Susan Ratcliffe, 2006



▲ Past the old car barns of the Sleeman street railway, Silver Creek disappears into a wooded area, trickling through the broken dam of a mill pond. Photo Susan Ratcliffe, 2006.

### Sources:

<sup>1</sup>John W. Keleher, “The Mill Lands of Guelph and Associated Industry” *Historic Guelph: The Royal City*. Guelph Historical Society, Vol XXXIII, 1994, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup>David Allan, *About Guelph: its Early Days and Later*. Guelph Historical Society, 2012, p. 37 (based on David Allan's original text from 1939).



Homewood, the former home of  
Admiral Charles Edmund Kingsmill.  
Photo Susan Ratcliffe, 2011.



founder, John Galt, an agent for the Canada Company and responsible for attracting settlers to the prospective town. The Company prospectus boasted, "The River Speed is a considerable stream with falls in the vicinity of the Town sufficient to afford sites for fifteen or twenty mills. Limestone, easily quarried, and which makes excellent lime, is found in the immediate vicinity of those falls.... The water power is considerable, and during the greater part of the year scarce can be exhausted."<sup>1</sup>

Horace Perry was summoned from Port Hope in 1829 to construct the Canada Company Mill on the lands near the founding site of the new city. When that mill was completed, he decided to invest in Guelph by building his own small saw mill in 1831 on a property on Silver Creek. It was constructed of "wood, painted red, and fed by two streams which supplied sufficient head to drive an overshot water wheel with which to run the mill."<sup>2</sup> Known as the Red Mill, it was not only profitable, but its large size made it a popular spot to hold dances and large gatherings. Until 1887, it provided a good income to a variety of owners including Guelph's first land developer, Sheriff George J. Grange.

The water power was so strong in Silver Creek that M. J. Patterson and

A. J. Butt decided that they too would build a mill along its banks closer to Waterloo Avenue to be nearer potential markets. They called theirs the Phoenix Mill, an appropriate name since it found new life in 1912 when it was reborn as the Sterling Rubber Factory. Converted in 1991 into condominium apartments, it remains today on its original site on the creek. It is hard to believe now that the little trickling Silver Creek could have spawned such industrial success.

When the creek was dammed to form a pond, its banks provided a beautiful setting where a little-known piece of Canadian history unfolded. Around 1850, J. J. Kingsmill bought seven acres from pioneer John "Quaker" Howitt and built the elegant house he called Homewood. Constructed of local limestone in the Italianate or Tuscan Villa style, it was surrounded by a wide verandah, boasted 15 rooms with six fireplaces, arched windows, stained glass, tin ceilings and a mahogany-panelled library.

J. J. Kingsmill's son, Charles Edmund, grew up in the house until he left to join the Royal Navy at age 14. After a successful career, he was invited by Prime Minister Laurier in 1910 to establish the Canadian Navy. For his exceptional contributions during the First World War, Kingsmill was awarded the title of Admiral and knighted for

his service. The Howitts repurchased the property in 1894 and lived there until 1941. After many years as an apartment building, the house was discovered in 1984 by Frank Valeriote, later MP for Guelph, who felt called to care for it. A psychic later told him that "a person of command" was still living in the house. Frank has spent the last 35 years restoring and renovating the house into an elegant home, a fine tribute to its past glory.

The beer bottle, the car barns, the broken dam, the condo and the home by the pond are remnants that tell great stories about Guelph's heritage as an industrial centre, a leader in public transportation and the home of a famous Canadian. As you walk the banks of its diminished water course, pay attention to Silver Creek to hear the echoes of its storied past.

#### About the author

Susan Ratcliffe is a long-time historical walking tour guide, co-ordinator of Doors Open Guelph, former President of ACO. She is President of the Guelph and Wellington Branch and a passionate lover and defender of her city's heritage.

# FRAGMENTS OF INDUSTRY

By Brendan Lacy and Robyn Lacy

In the summer of 2012, Brendan Lacy, a descendant of John Harris, travelled to Rockwood Conservation Area and saw the ruins of the Harris & Co. Woolen Mill for the first time. Interested in learning more about the family history, he did not expect to experience the space where many individuals had once worked and lived, now reduced to a grandiose ruin in the woods.

John Harris, one of the first European settlers of the town of Rockwood, was Brendan's great- great-great-great grandfather. Through a surviving transcription of his diary held at the Wellington County Museum and Archives, Harris, originally from Ireland, detailed his life as a sea captain during the Napoleonic wars. It

was during this period of conflict that he was captured at sea by a French privateer, a *Corsair* on February 6th, 1813. He wrote of his ordeal, marching across France as a prisoner: "Oft have I when overpowered with fatigue and sleep, fancied myself at home in company of my friends: but alas! how great the change when I awoke and how distant that day appeared."

Harris was eventually released and made his way back to the British Isles, where he rejoined the shipping company where he had previously worked. In 1820, he boarded a ship to Canada to seek further opportunities.

Having bought a plot of land and raised a shanty for himself, John Harris became one of the first settlers of



View of the tower's date stone. Photo Gordon Lacy, 2012 ▲

what would eventually become the Town of Rockwood, Ontario. In 1867, John's three eldest sons along with their brother-in-law founded the Harris & Co. Woolen Mill which was built from locally quarried limestone. The mill supplied the town and the surrounding area with textiles until around 1925 when it closed due to competition from mills in Toronto and Cambridge. Today, after several fires and years of bustling activity, the mill has been stabilized as a stoic ruin within the Rockwood Conservation Area.

To approach the mill ruins today, one must drive a winding park road through thin trees and pull around to the parking lot as the land falls away to meet the Eramosa River. There, sprawling across the landscape, with half a tower poking out of the depths of the stone walls lies the limestone ruin of the Harris & Co. Woolen Mill. On a sunny day, the stone shines austere and white against the calm of the forest, a stark industrial feature cutting through its natural backdrop. Inside, empty windows evenly spaced around each wall look out at slowly waving cedar trees. The east wall had an arched doorway complete with limestone voussoirs as did the



The Rockwood Woolen Mill ruins. Photo Gordon Lacy, 2012 ▲

windows. The carefully carved quoins at every corner demonstrate the level of care and detail the builders put into this industrial structure.

Standing in a historic structure, knowing its rich history within the community and on the landscape, it is easy to imagine just how many people stood in that exact spot over the years. During Brendan's visit to the site, he found himself overwhelmed by the history and significance of the structure, walking through doorways and down into the room below the tower. A trough that carried the water from the reservoir to the huge machinery snaked across the floor and ran down under the wall by the tower. Today, the preserved trough is filled with smooth white river stones, and a small footbridge crosses to the other side of the room. Entering a site like this, with so many years of history, visitors can almost hear for a moment the crash of machinery and the voices of workers calling to one another.

Lacy wrote of his experience at the site:

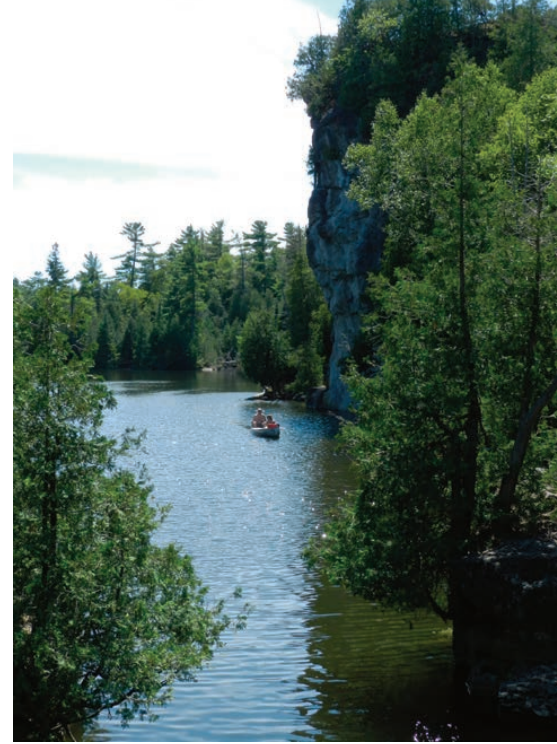
*Something shifted in the ruin in my mind and the silence I was wrapped in slipped away. Through the window openings I could hear the soft burbling of the nearby river in the mill race. A few children ran by me laughing, and a couple walked onto the footbridge to take engagement photos. I think my dad and I felt the same thing, a kind of unexplainable connection to a distant past. We smiled at each other, no longer alone with the weight of history. My parents and I walked out beyond the ruins to where the river was full and ran over slick limestone in a narrow waterfall. The cedar trees*

*extended up gently sloping hills on either side of the river so that it was impossible to tell we were surrounded by the town, and yet the chimney on the mill would have been visible from anywhere in Rockwood.*

As cultural values change over time, so does our relationship to the landscapes we inhabit. Preserving pieces of our heritage and transitioning these new landscapes into roles that are valuable to the communities they serve is vital for the continuation of any culture.

The ruins represent a personal and cultural, tangible connection to the past, not only for the Lacy family but for everyone who lives or has lived in the vicinity of Rockwood. The ruins themselves represent the industrial history of the region, preserved within the Rockwood Conservation Area as a structure with significant physical, historical, and contextual value. Limestone structures like the mill aren't built anymore, and the decision of the township and the Grand River Conservation Authority to stabilize and preserve the structure for future generations to reflect on the history of the area, was a great one.

Today, the mill sits as a landmark and romantic ruin within the conservation area, representing another point of development within an ever-changing landscape. It is a popular destination with tourists and locals alike for nature walks, photoshoots, weddings, and learning about the community's heritage. Through restoration, the structure has been conserved as an important aspect of the community to inspire future generations.



▲ Canoeists paddle on the Eramosa River which once powered the woolen mill. Photo Gordon Lacy, 2012

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#### About the authors

Robyn Lacy is a Cultural Heritage Specialist with Golder Associates Ltd, working with historic properties on a daily basis. She holds an MA in Archaeology from Memorial University of Newfoundland. Brendan Lacy is a descendant of John Harris. Brendan is studying architecture at the University of Waterloo. He works in Toronto and has a passion for landscape and history from his time at ERA Architects.

# REMEMBERING THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH AIR TRAINING PLAN

By Lindi Pierce

A war memorial stands on a limestone escarpment above Picton, Ontario, approximately 160 kilometres east of Toronto. This is not a monument to fallen combatants or the statue of a famous commander. This Second World War remembrance is a 700-acre former air training base, looking much as it did when the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, the program for which the base was created, ended in 1944.

During the desperate days of 1940, when England needed to train air crews out of range of the Luftwaffe, the British government created the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (BCATP). Picton's No. 31 Bombing and Gunnery School was one of more than a hundred flight training facilities built in Canada, staffed by Canadians, to train pilots, navigators, gunners and bomb crews from Canada, Britain, the United States and Commonwealth countries at the start of the war.

Things changed quickly for quiet Picton. In April 1941, almost six hundred Royal Air Force personnel arrived in Picton, after a transatlantic crossing, and the train journey from Halifax. During the war, the BCATP facility had a significant social and economic impact. The influx of federal dollars, and uniformed men of marriageable age, changed the county forever.

The bombing and gunnery school closed on November 17, 1944, five months after the allied invasion of Europe. In subsequent years the facility served the Canadian military in other capacities, under various names.

In 1969, the Department of National Defense left for good. The old BCATP buildings and airfield were purchased by H. J. McFarland, construction company giant and Picton's legendary mayor.

Thirty years later, the buildings, neglected and vandalized, were given a final lease on life with the Scott family's purchase of the complex. Mr. Scott had trained with the BCATP at a similar installation in Manitoba, and when he discovered this site on visits to Prince Edward County, he invested.

Mayor McFarland's initial vision for the site, to preserve and utilize the buildings, has been realized by the Loch Sloy Holding company. Jacqui Burley has worked as manager for 17 years. She confesses that as a local girl, she didn't know the historic significance of the facility. Listening to veterans and their families has made it come to life.

Even today, each of the thousands of visitors enters the 688-acre property via the former guardhouse. Substantial hospital and drill hall buildings, smaller barracks and workshops, six hangars, three air strips and two parachute towers recall the work done here during the Second World War. A menacing, barbed-wire fence defines the perimeter.

The buildings of Loch Sloy could be a movie set, with street upon street of weathered, shingle-clad buildings. The sense of history is palpable. The old Commonwealth Air Training facility has, in fact, made it into the movies. Several films have been shot





▲ Many improvements have taken place at Loch Sloy since these photos were taken in 2014. Photo Lindi Pierce, 2014

there, the historic structures providing the perfect backdrop for wartime dramas.

The difference between an imperiled historic building and a useful one is a good roof. Buildings constructed in haste as temporary structures in the 1940s have been rescued and repurposed. Loch Sloy staff have reroofed many of the structures in bright red steel; of the 44 original buildings at the base, only three have been lost. These have been dismantled, and the windows, cedar shakes and structural timbers have been salvaged for repairs to other buildings. Old elements, such as 1940s lighting, are being retrofitted; the green ethic is emphasized.

This is adaptive reuse on a grand scale. Fifty-seven businesses and storage clients – painters, photographers and design studios, a yoga studio, auto and construction services, small manufacturers and other entrepreneurs – call the renovated buildings home and pay the bills. In 2017, the county's iconic Taste the County event was hosted at Loch Sloy – the former hangars welcomed over 3000 visitors. This place which once buzzed with wartime activity is vibrant again.

A long-term vision is to renovate a space for a museum – when funds and time permit. In reality the entire complex is a living history museum. Historic vignettes pop into view everywhere: a parachute tower behind barbed-wire fencing, a decommissioned military vehicle beside a shingled H-hut. In summer, the shiny yellow gliders of air cadets in training rest at ease after classes, outside a weather-worn hangar.

The former BCATP installation is the largest and most intact of the 111 stations built in Canada during the war. This place is something special; it holds open the door to our past, and links us directly to the experiences of young men who risked, and sometimes lost, their lives.

Jacqui Burley tells the story of an elderly gentleman who drove up to the gatehouse, and slumped over the steering wheel of his car. She approached, concerned for his health, to find him sobbing. His explanation took her back to war-ravaged Holland, a terrified seven-year-old boy and his family directly in the path of advancing German troops. He recounted the arrival of Canadian paratroopers who evacuated the family. Had it not been for the Canadians and the training at bases such as this, he explained, his family would have perished. These personal stories, the appreciation expressed by individuals who experienced the war, highlight the importance of this place.

The former BCATP base is a neglected national treasure. Canada has been called the “aerodrome of democracy” for its vital role in training allied air crews; others have dubbed the BCATP operation the country's greatest contribution to the Second World War. Those who know it hope that the facility's national historic significance will soon be recognized by heritage organizations and by government.

As of January 2017, the complex is again for sale. The commercial potential of the site is being emphasized, its runways and hangars likened to small airports like Buttonville. After 17 years, Loch Sloy holdings is passing the torch. Hopes are high that the values of adaptive reuse and historical preservation can both be honoured, so that this unparalleled link with history will not be lost.



▲ Picton's No. 31 Bombing and Gunnery School of the BCATP. Photo Lindi Pierce, 2014



▲ Several of the 1940s structures, including hangars, were erected in haste during the war. Photo Lindi Pierce, 2014



▲ Several films have been shot here, the historic structures providing the perfect backdrop for wartime dramas. Photo Lindi Pierce, 2014

### About the author

Lindi Pierce is a Belleville-based heritage writer and regular contributor to County and Quinte Living, Country Roads, and Outlook, the newsletter of the Hastings County Historical Society. She shares her passion for heritage architecture on her blog Ancestral Roofs. Lindi is a member of ACO Quinte.

# THE CREDIT VALLEY DYNAMO

By Patricia Farley

Presently owned by the Credit Valley Conservation Authority, the limestone ruins of the 1888 Credit Valley Dynamo, known locally as the Barber Dynamo, are located in Georgetown, Ontario and can only be accessed by using the Credit Valley Footpath. The footpath is a side trail of the Bruce Trail that follows the gorge created by the Credit River. This tough, just over three-kilometre hike through the woods beside the river, begins at the remains of the Barber Paper Mill on River Road in Georgetown and takes you under the massive 1856 Grand Trunk Railway trestle before finally reaching the scenic ruins of the dynamo building. Before starting your hike, take a few minutes to check out the Provincial Plaque at 99 River Road, which gives an excellent outline of the dynamo's history.

In the late nineteenth century, after finding the existing dam and water wheel system supplied insufficient power to meet the increasing demands of the Barber Paper Mill, mill manager, John Rolf Barber travelled to England and the United States in search of a solution. He eventually located a manufacturer in Ohio — C. F. Brush — who built and supplied a 100 hp generator, which could be powered by water-driven turbines. After Barber built a higher dam downstream from the mill, the newly installed dynamo began supplying the mill with electricity via transmission lines through the woods.

In 2015, after including the Barber Mill on Canada's Top 10 Endangered Places list, Heritage Canada described the dynamo as "a remarkable innovation dating to 1888 and reported to have been the first long-distance transmission of hydro-electric power to supply an industrial plant in North America."

The dynamo ruins seen today are the remains of a small, three-storey limestone block building, erected to house, not only the turbines and dynamo machinery but, the family of James Alexander who received his orders from the mill via telephone and was charged with operating and maintaining the machinery. The dynamo's usefulness was short-lived and it became redundant in 1913 when public electricity became widely available in Georgetown; however, the Alexander family continued to reside in the building until 1935.

Today, much like the Barber Paper Mill it once powered, the crumbling dynamo building is slowly being overtaken by nature, with trees growing within its walls, while the sounds of the nearby Credit River are accompanied by bird song and chirping crickets. As of this writing, the greatest threat to the dynamo is a resident colony of beavers that regularly fells nearby trees, further damaging the structure. Happily, given its isolated location and the difficult hike, the dynamo is seldom the target of vandals.

All is not lost! As part of the development of the 113-kilometre Credit Valley Heritage Trail, which will follow the course of the Credit River from its headwaters near Orangeville to its mouth at Port Credit, the Credit Valley Conservation Authority hopes to stabilize the dynamo ruins, preventing further deterioration and making it safe for visiting hikers.

It should be noted that the remnants of the dynamo buildings are unprotected by designation or listing on the Halton Hills Heritage Register.



▲ The crumbling dynamo building. Photo Steve Cook, Hiking in the GTA blog, <https://hikingthegta.com>, 2015.



▲ John R. Barber and the Credit River Dynamo Plaque, 99 River Road, Georgetown. Photo Patricia Farley, 2017

## About the author

Patricia Farley is the Founding President of ACO Halton Hills Branch which was established in 2014. Her article on the project involving Lucy Maud Montgomery's Norval home appeared in the Spring 2017 issue of *ACORN*.

# THE FORGOTTEN PAST CHISELED IN ROCK

By Jack Hutton

Tuesday, November 21, 2017, started off as an ordinary morning for Jean-Marie Gagné, the site supervisor for a new hydro plant being built at the Bala Falls in Muskoka. Gagné is employed by WSP Canada, which designed the North Bala Small Hydro Project for Swift River Energy Ltd., the developer. Gagné's task for the day was to inspect an area where an SREL excavation crew using heavy equipment had just dug down to expose the Precambrian bedrock for the next stage of construction. The weekend digging had unearthed a large ridge of granite that looked down the Moon River at an angle. It was 25 feet wide, 20 feet deep and 8 feet high, covered by a thick crust of mud and soil.

The more he looked, the more Gagné thought that he could see unusual outlines in the mud surface that faced down river. Was he missing something?

Gagné used a broom to poke at the mud and got the surprise of his life. Someone had carved the year "1888" into the granite. Gagné rushed to a nearby cofferdam with a pail and began throwing water at the mud. By lunch time, he had washed all mud and dirt off two side-by-side rock inscriptions. The left-hand inscription had "1888" at the top. Below the year were two signatures: HIRAM DEPUY (the Y was very faint) and G. V.

WILLSON, followed by PITTSBURG US. A second inscription, added decades later at the right, read: W. A. T. AND G. G. BIRRELL, AUG 1919 LONDON ONT.

Word spread quickly that the most exciting archeological find in Bala's history had been discovered. Gunta Towsley, president of the Muskoka branch of Architectural Conservancy Ontario, phoned a vice-president of SREL, Nhung Nguyen, to tell her that the find was located within Bala's new Heritage Conservation District, albeit on provincial lands so not subject to the municipality's HCD Plan. Towsley was told that the find had already been reported to Ontario's Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport and that all work had been halted near the historic rock. The two agreed that the rock inscriptions should be preserved for posterity if at all possible.

Swift River contacted consultants to determine how to remove a section of the rock face with the two inscriptions as a permanent historical display. The challenge was a crack extending through the inscriptions that could easily fracture.

Meanwhile, the Muskoka ACO branch was attempting to learn who the individuals were whose signatures were chiseled into the two rock



▶ The Pittsburgh Rod and Gun Club at Bala Falls, 1888 from Bob Petry's *Bala: An Early Settlement in Muskoka*. Robert Petry, 1998. p.187.



inscriptions. W. A. T. Birrell's signature was already known to local historians because he had chiseled his name into a granite ridge on the north side of Bala's North Falls on August 1, 1919. Unfortunately, he didn't add where he was from and this remained a mystery for many years.

The newly discovered rock inscription revealed that he was from London, Ontario. Based on that, Jeff Stewart, a Toronto genealogy researcher, told Bala's Museum that the mystery man was Walker Arthur Thomas Birrell, 19, who had just returned from his overseas service during the First World War at the end of May, 1919, and had visited Bala in August. G. G. Birrell was his brother.

We now know that both Birrell brothers were electricians working for Hydro in the City of London, thanks to Liz Lundell, the founding president of ACO Muskoka and author of seven books on Ontario heritage, and a second researcher, Pam Wong, a retired occupational therapist and an expert in genealogical research. Two members of London Region's ACO branch, Maggie Whalley and Dan Brock, added extra details.

Meanwhile, who were George V. Willson and Hiram DePuy whose



▲ Jean-Marie Gagné discovered the chiseled rock at the worksite in Bala. Photo Jack Hutton, 2018.

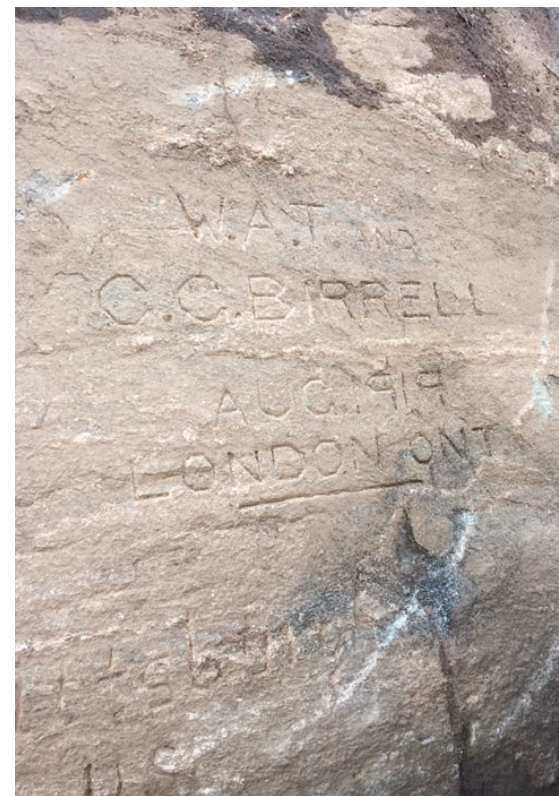
chiseled names appear in the 1888 rock inscription? On December 1, Pam Wong discovered online that George V. Willson was a well-known Pittsburgh businessman who frequently attended meetings at the Astoria Hotel in New York. On that same day, Liz Lundell found a photo in a Bala history book of the Pittsburgh Rod and Gun Club tenting at the Bala Falls in 1888. Her research confirmed that Willson and DePuy were members of that club.

Further research identified George V. Willson as general manager of a Pittsburgh steel plant and Dr. Hiram DePuy as a well-known Pittsburgh dental surgeon. The historic photo in the history book shows 17 or 18 men in front of their tents, with seven women off to the side. Somewhere in the photo are DePuy, aged 28, and Willson, aged 35.

Swift River's Nhung Nguyen had more good news on December 20. A metre-thick slice of the historic Bala rock had just been severed in a delicate operation known as line drilling, leaving both rock inscriptions intact for a future display. The main problem was a slight fracture line across the letters that required many hours of advance planning. In addition to perimeter line drilling, 10 holes were drilled to install long steel rock bolts with bolt-on steel plates through the 10-plus ton massive block to prevent it from fracturing. Miraculously, it all worked.

The historic discovery and rescue of the two rock inscriptions is a dramatic example of what can happen when a developer co-operates with local ACO branches to recognize the importance of local history and heritage.

It's worth remembering that none of this would have happened if Jean-Marie Gagné had not decided to take a second look at the mud-covered granite ridge that had been buried for more than half a century. As the saying goes, the rest is history.



▲ The inscribed rock face has been removed and will become part of a permanent display. Photo Glenn Zavitz, 2017

### About the author

Jack Hutton is a member of ACO Muskoka. He is a retired reporter and communications director. A regular contributor to Muskoka publications, he is also a ragtime piano maestro.

# RESURRECTING A VICTORIAN STOREFRONT

By ACO London Region branch

On January 11th, 2018, ACO London's project to resurrect a Victorian retail façade had its unveiling at London Public Library. Over the past two years, ACO London, Museum London, and London Public Library worked towards moving this vestige of a mid-nineteenth century streetscape to a space where the public could enjoy it once again.

The building at 67 Dundas Street was probably constructed after the extensive downtown fire of 1844. Research done by London Public Library's Ivey Family London Room staff revealed that the building had previously housed an organ manufacturer. It then became the workshop of stained glass artisan Robert Lewis — also mayor at the time — who may have created the beautiful "67" transom window.

The building's longest occupant was Marshall Bros. Tea Co., founded in 1873 by Robert and George Marshall. They moved into 67 Dundas in the mid-1880s and soon afterwards George's son Ernest joined the family business, remaining a devoted "purveyor of fine teas" until 1973. In a delightful London Free Press article from 1968, Jeanne Graham reveals Ernest's devotion to his trade and to his customers. The photograph from this article has become part of the installation.

Unfortunately, by the mid-1980s, the stretch of Dundas between Ridout and Talbot streets was demolished as part of a proposal for residential towers and a large mall that ultimately never got built. Julia Beck, then president of ACO London, and noted London historian Mike Baker asked the developer to save the façade. The pieces were initially stored in a public utilities substation before being moved to Museum London, where they were displayed at one time. The façade remnants then went into the museum's storage where they remained for decades.

Just over two years ago, Kevin Zacher, Regional History Registrar at Museum London, discovered untagged pieces in the collection. Again, fortunately, Mike Baker, now curator at Elgin County Museum, recognized the façade he had helped rescue. Museum London asked ACO to help find a permanent home for the Marshall Bros. Tea façade. London Public Library was very responsive.

To the credit of the original joiners and the integrity of the Museum London vault, the remaining pieces of the façade are in relatively good condition. ACO London advisor Janet Hunten theorizes that the storefront would originally have had its architectural detail highlighted in a contrasting paint colour and



▲ Unveiling of the Marshall Bros. Tea Company display on January 11, 2018. Photo Dorothy Palmer



▲ The transom window from 67 Dundas Street, London, now on display at London Public Library. Photo Dorothy Palmer, 2018

photographic evidence suggests that this is correct.

At the unveiling, Londoners shared their own memories of Marshall Bros. Tea. Kathy Dokton recalled that visiting the shop was like "stepping back in time ... I remember an old Victrola, a typewriter, with the keys going sideways." Ernest Marshall evidently used to wear a long duster coat when preparing custom

tea blends. William Clarke related that he became a regular visitor to Marshall Bros. Tea in the early 1970s, chatting with Ernest Marshall. Clarke remembers the store still having a very Victorian atmosphere, with Dickensian standing clerk desks and old gas fixtures still in place, even though electricity had been installed.

Mike Baker notes that the Marshall

Bros. Tea shop was probably one of the best-preserved in London, serving as an exemplar of mid-19th century retail architecture. These artifacts also reflect the drive and commitment of Julia Beck, and her generation of leading heritage conservationists. ACO London Board member Sharon Lunau added that if buildings can't be saved, we can be a guardian of the remnants and not just throw them out.

### About the branch

The London Region branch of ACO was founded in 1966 in response to the threat of destruction of the city's original financial district on Ridout Street. In addition to that preservation campaign, the branch has celebrated many conservation successes during its more than fifty-year history.

# GHOST OF THE GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY

By Bob Malone

The ghost of the Grand Trunk Railway lingers! Its footprint remains on the stretch of its original right-of-way between Newcastle and Port Hope, Ontario. That footprint must be visible in other segments along its route as well.

The Grand Trunk Railway was incorporated in late 1852 with the object of building and operating a line between Montreal and Toronto. A year later, the ambitious company expanded its charter to include a line running from the east coast of the United States in Portland, Maine through Quebec and southern Ontario to Sarnia, Ontario. From there, Chicago-bound traffic was barged across the St. Clair River to Port Huron, Michigan, travelling on to Chicago via an operating subsidiary, the Grand Trunk Western Railroad. A tunnel was also built under the St. Clair River in the 1890s.

Some 25 to 30 years following its incorporation, the Grand Trunk, by total length, was considered one of the largest railways in the world; however, there is an unfortunate side note. The later plan to enlarge the Grand Trunk presence in the New England/New York area was abandoned with the death of the company president. He was a passenger on the *Titanic*.

The Grand Trunk was one of the very few railways of the 1850s to survive and enjoy slim to moderate prosperity until it was absorbed into what would become one of two coast-to-coast Canadian railways: the Canadian National Railway Company created by an Act of Parliament in 1923.

In the mid-1850s, the Grand Trunk established operations between Montreal and Toronto. There were other GTR lines in Ontario, either built by the GTR or added by purchase of other financially troubled lines. When



▲ Newtonville Station, midway between Newcastle and Port Hope. Photo Samuel Jones, 1860, Courtesy Newcastle Village and District Historical Society

the line reached Newcastle, Ontario in 1856, a handsome station was constructed on what is now Toronto Street. Many photos of the station exist at the Newcastle Village and District Historical Society.

Starting at the lakeside community of Bond Head in Newcastle, the original right-of-way is identified by a three-



▲ Construction south of Newcastle. Photo W. H. Chaplin, 1906, Courtesy Newcastle Village and District Historical Society

wire pole line running east from the bend in Lakeshore Road at the top of the hill, just one hundred meters from the now famous wooden bridge over the present CN main line right-of-way. Travelling east along Lakeshore Road — a historic indigenous peoples' trail — the road name changes to Glovers Road for a short distance. Once crossing at grade the active rights-of-way of both railways, the old pole line becomes visible again several hundred metres ahead. From the roadway, and looking east and west, the old right-of-way lies immediately north of the pole line. In fact, the pole line likely lies within the railway right-of-way, owned by the GTR, with the original poles and wire serving as the railway telegraph.

Finally, several kilometres further east along Lakeshore Road, one comes upon the Clarington /Port Hope Town

Line. Travelling north along Town Line Road to a point about two hundred metres south of the active CN/CP main line grade crossing, the old pole line is again visible. Looking east and west along the pole line, the old Grand Trunk right-of-way is visible.

Why, you might ask, would the Grand Trunk have abandoned its original right-of-way in favour of the present, active CN right-of-way? The answer likely lies in the fact there were numerous wash-outs and reportedly the loss of some rolling stock where the old right-of-way bordered Lake Ontario west of Port Hope, so a move to the north seemed to be the prudent thing to do!

As one walks, where practical, on the old right-of-way and a piece of track which may be original, one feels a real connection to the original steam train

operations which began some 160 years ago.

For a modern-day view of this remnant of original right-of-way, view Google Earth from Newcastle to Port Hope. In many places, the imprint on the earth left by early road bed construction and train operations is clearly visible.

The old Grand Trunk Railway lives on!

#### About the author

Bob Malone is the President of the Newcastle Village and District Historical Society.

# MILL RACE PARK, CAMBRIDGE

By Marilyn Scott

On Sunday, July 31, 1977, dignitaries and the public were invited to the “Official Opening of the Mill Race Park” along the banks of the Grand River in downtown Galt.

That name – Mill Race Park – is a giveaway as to the site’s history. So are the still standing sections of stone walls and their window frames, the skeletal remains of the long-gone woollen mill that once stood there. What clinches it was the discovery by workmen who were digging on the site in 1976 in preparation for its conversion to public parkland. They unearthed the mechanics of a wooden waterwheel used in the process of powering the mills along the river.

Galt’s thriving industrial area was concentrated along this particular section of the Grand, and in the 1850s, several mills were built here to take advantage of the readily available water power.

Scottish immigrants Robert Turnbull and John Deans founded their knitting business in 1859 in a nearby house. The two Scotsmen knitted fabrics on hand frames, which their wives then sewed into garments. The business thrived, and relocated to the Water Street site. In 1879, son Charles Turnbull inherited the business, which in 1890, purchased the even older neighbouring Wardlaw Mill. After it was destroyed by fire in 1897, the present stone structure was built in its place. The business grew to become one of the leading knitting establishments in the Dominion of Canada. The mill’s still-visible stonework, expertly built at the time by Scottish stonemasons, is all that remains of the C. Turnbull Co. Ltd.

Mills feature prominently in local history. Preston, originally known as Cambridge Mills, along with Galt and Hespeler — now amalgamated into Cambridge — have each prospered and grown because of the variety of

industries driven by waterpower.

On September 26, 1994, the park was the site of a special celebration of national importance. The public gathered to attend a dedication ceremony marking the Grand River and its tributaries as Canadian Heritage Rivers. One of five plaques, all located in communities along the watershed, was unveiled to commemorate the designation.

Today Mill Race Park is a popular destination. Situated next to the river, it has been configured as an amphitheatre, with the picturesque stone walls and windows as a backdrop to the annual Mill Race Folk Festival and summer concerts. Special moments are captured here, especially as countless wedding parties troop in and out for photos of their big day, or even the marriage ceremony itself. Toddlers, freed from their strollers, lurch around exploring, while others take a scenic shortcut to the nearby eatery. And some pause long enough to view the cogs of the original gear mechanism, still just visible through some overgrown groundcover.

◀ The Mill Race Park in 2008. Photo Saforrest. [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mill\\_Race\\_ruins\\_in\\_Galt,\\_Ontario.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mill_Race_ruins_in_Galt,_Ontario.jpg)



## About the author

Marilyn Scott is a member of ACO Cambridge & North Dumfries (formerly Heritage Cambridge), a former board member, and an active volunteer with numerous cultural organizations in Cambridge and Waterloo Region.

# RELOCATING REMNANTS: REFRAMING THE WHITEHEAD HOUSE

By Noah McGillivray and Alison Creba

*Definition of Remnant from Merriam-Webster, 2018*

- a usually small part, member, or trace remaining
- a small surviving group — often used in plural
- an unsold or unused end of piece goods

On a cold Saturday morning in November 2016, a two-and-a-half storey Victorian brick house at 76 Howard Street in Toronto, known as the William Whitehead house, was moved more than 300 metres west to the lot at 28 Howard Street. It spent much of the day on hydraulic dollies, inching down the middle of the roadway to the surprise and delight of a crowd that had gathered to watch this engineering stunt.

Howard Street is the last remaining strip of the Victorian neighbourhood that was razed through the 1960s to construct St. James Town, a sprawling mid-century “tower in the park” development that stretches south from the former site of the William Whitehead mansion. While the narrow block north of Howard Street at its eastern terminus was spared by the developers of St. James Town in the 1960s, the current frenzied development climate in Toronto has seen Lanterra Developments carefully organizing the properties on the irregular block, only to sell the assembled land to Tridel Developments in support of a two tower and podium scheme they have planned for the site.<sup>1</sup>

While most of the buildings on the block had previously been demolished, the Whitehead house survived and remained problematically situated in the centre of the development parcel. Built in 1887, this ornamented Bay and Gable was listed on the Toronto Inventory

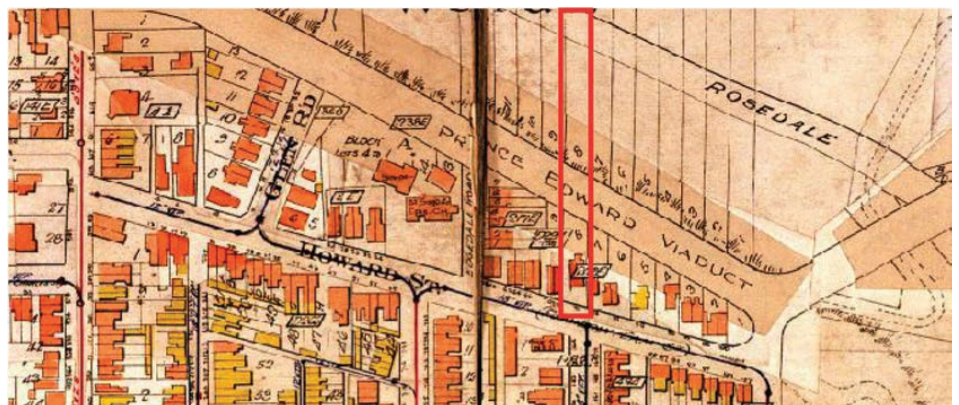
of Heritage Properties, and simply demolishing it was not a viable option. Lanterra’s consultation with ERA Architects led to an assessment of the feasibility and rationale for relocating the house to a more favourable lot.

As the last remaining structure in what had previously been a similarly-populated block, the lone house may be considered a remnant of early vernacular architecture in Toronto. However, it is not simply a vestige of the past. This structure can also be seen as an adept survivor as well as a reflection of evolving approaches to heritage conservation and broader patterns in the local cultural landscape.

Historically, buildings have most often been moved for pragmatic reasons: it was simply cheaper and/or easier to move a completed building than to construct a new one. As such, the movement of buildings frequently registers a historical movement of populations, and the associated traumas of migration.<sup>2</sup> With the rise of industrial era infrastructural development and urbanization, historic and well-rooted buildings began to be increasingly relocated for new reasons; not the pull factors of new frontiers within a migratory existence, but the push factors of

unfamiliar transportation and land speculation logics that threatened and destabilized well-rooted and permanent communities.<sup>3</sup> In parallel, these same threats precipitated the rise of contemporary historic preservation as a distinct field through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Both of these developments come to bear on the William Whitehead house, which, under the auspice of conservation practice, was lifted from the ground as much by the sheer force of capital as the hydraulic pressure of pistons.

Responding to similar threats and conditions, the practice of heritage conservation has maintained a varied relationship to the practice of moving buildings. This shifting doctrine can perhaps best be traced through the charters of the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS). While the initial Venice Charter of 1964, in Article 7, puts an outright ban on the relocation of historic buildings because they are “inseparable from the setting in which they occur”<sup>4</sup>, subsequent revisions have evolved from this position, reflecting wider changes in heritage theory and ideology. The New Zealand Charter of 1992, reinforced by the Nara Document of 1994, acknowledges relocation can be a legitimate part of the conservation process when



▲ Goads Map Fire Insurance Plan 1923, detail featuring 76 Howard St., Toronto. Annotated by ERA Architects. Courtesy City of Toronto Archives. Retrieved from: [www.toronto.ca](http://www.toronto.ca)

relocation “provides continuity or cultural heritage value.”<sup>5</sup>

Aristotle said, “Place is what is motionless.”<sup>6</sup> Much of the confusion and controversy surrounding the relocation of buildings stems from their situation in the world of place, the world of static backdrop. The concern over this change in context can be tempered by an understanding that the setting of a building left *in situ* is also subject to change — sometimes radically.

Adjacent demolitions, new constructions, infrastructural development and decay all interfere with this notion of a stable setting, and complicate notions of authenticity or wholeness in a landscape.<sup>7</sup> Had the Whitehead house retained *in situ*, one possible outcome may have seen it enveloped by the glass curtain walls of the impending condominium, undermining its proportion and definition, but maintaining its universal coordinates. Instead, the house was relocated to a lot surrounded by the last remaining cluster of Victorian buildings on the street, placing it within a familiar and arguably appropriate context, if not an authentic one.

Here, like the traditional practice of disassembling and reassembling Shinto temples in Japan, the practice of moving structures may also be conceptualized as not only a procedure with its own heritage, but as a transmission of unique skills and the evolution of a broader heritage discourse. In Toronto, where the real estate market has reached a fever pitch, the scale and scope of heritage interventions may be viewed in relation to the developments which transform them. Indeed, as increasingly ambitious proposals are made, similarly drastic measures are being taken to retain heritage fabric. Encompassing challenging conceptual and technical feats, these

maneuvers require a distinct set of skills and tools. These processes in turn contribute to an expanding discourse which reflects a distinct cultural moment within the city where heritage is seen as both a burden and an asset.

Recognizing not only the object but the process as embodying heritage, the relocation of the Whitehead house also speaks to larger patterns of movement within the St. James Town neighbourhood. Regarded as the densest neighbourhood in Canada<sup>8</sup>, St. James Town is also characterized by its large immigrant population. United by experiences of displacement, the relocation of this fragment again reflects the prominent and ongoing patterns within the city. Now nestled amongst its comrades, the sliver of Howard Street contains a cluster of remaining Victorian houses and a large vacant lot awaiting development. In this state, we may view these structures not only as remnants of an earlier built landscape, but a reflection of ongoing themes of movement, conservation and adaptation within the city. In this way, the movement of Whitehead mansion of Howard Street represents both a fragment of the past and current

cultural landscape. As such a symbol, the story of this relocated remnant challenges us to further consider the what other materials and processes are generated through contemporary conservation strategies. What of the lesser-valued remnants, fragments, residues? What are the stories not told about the materials and processes left in their wake?

<sup>1</sup> Landau

<sup>2</sup> Lennon, 7

<sup>3</sup> Gregory, 114

<sup>4</sup> Gregory, 113

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Huggett, 58

<sup>7</sup> Gregory, 128

<sup>8</sup> *The Canadian*

*Encyclopedia*, 2018

### About the authors

Alison Creba and Noah McGillivray were both born in Toronto. Noah currently works with built heritage at ERA Architecture after completing a Masters of Architecture degree at the University of Toronto. He has been a member of ACO since 2015. Alison will complete her Masters in Heritage Conservation at Carleton University in September, 2018. Her thesis is on the demolition and deconstruction of Honest Ed's and Mirvish Village.



▲ The William Whitehead house relocation in November 2016. Photo Noah McGillivray, 2016

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# GHOST GRAPHICS OF YESTERYEAR

By Bob Hamblly

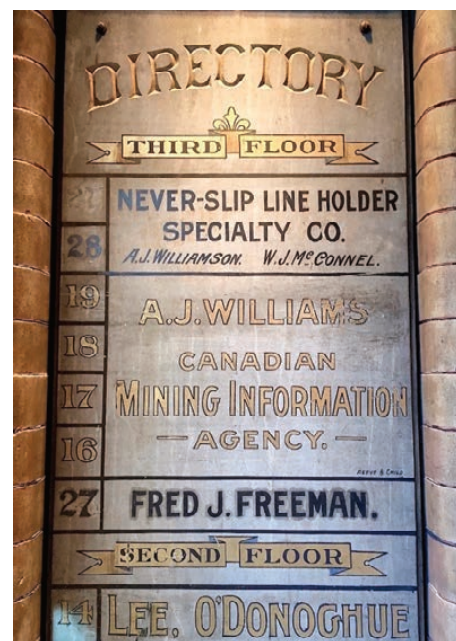
For as long as I can remember I've been drawn to the photography of Walker Evans. His masterfully composed images remind us of the beauty inherent in the architectural vernacular of our surroundings. His work features timeworn façades of once proud churches, main street storefronts displaying nothing other than their age and weathered billboards with their waning pronouncements – all vestiges of a former era, connections to the past. "Evans," as the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University's website says, "had the extraordinary ability to see the present as if it were already the past, and to translate that knowledge and historically infected vision into an enduring art."

Buildings, as Walker Evans' photographs confirm, provide ideal surfaces and exposure for various forms of graphic proclamations – signs, wall paintings, posters and mosaics. These temporary adornments may be distant cousins to architecture's carefully considered, permanent surface embellishments such as friezes, frescoes and stained glass, nonetheless, they can play a role in understanding a structure's history. They may not define a structure's

legacy, but they certainly add to its character.

Throughout Ontario, in both urban and rural settings, one can see examples of fading graphics on warehouses, mills and retail stores. These once bold messages are now ghosts of their former selves – slowly and reluctantly losing their voices. Having said that, when you happen upon an example, they immediately signal another time, forcing us to look closely at the building and imagine a bygone era. A remnant has a funny way of engaging the imagination.

Above a restaurant at the corner of Logan Ave. and Gerrard St. in Toronto a patchwork of fragmented typography broadcasts a cryptic message to passersby. The rounded corners of the art deco LOGAN GRILL font hover above the classic script face of the Coca-Cola logo. Both are enclosed within a heavy white border suggesting they appeared at the same time. A Lumberking sign, with its mid-century Helvetica letterforms, once covered the aforementioned ads in a blanket of yellow. Today the three ads battle for supremacy as they dissolve into one another. This street corner wall has become an unwitting graphic



▲ The preserved directory of former tenants of Toronto's Dineen Building on Temperance Street. Photo Bob Hamblly, 2017

time capsule.

In the foyer of Toronto's Dineen Building on Temperance Street you will find the preserved directory board of former tenants. Thanks to a recent restoration this graphic gem resurfaced, complete with its stone carved title and hand painted, gold-leafed lettering. A quirky mix of serif



and sans serif fonts are presented here, rendered in solid and outlined characters. This wayfinding relic could have been easily dismantled during the renovation. Now it offers visitors a window into the building's past.

Am I advocating that we preserve all building graphics? No. Like ACO's many conservation efforts over the years, each must be assessed on its individual merit and historical relevance. Some surface embellishments are more significant than others. When a building is demolished it is lost forever and with it we lose a part of our history. And when we eliminate or paint over or poorly restore old advertising and signage we destroy elements that may help a building tell its story. Most of these stories can never be fully told, yet these very remnants start the discovery process.

Walker Evans, I'm sure, would agree.

### About the author

Bob Hambly is a partner in the Toronto-based graphic design firm Hambly & Woolley. He is a member of ACO Port Hope and ACO Cobourg.



▲ Layers of typography at the corner of Logan Avenue and Gerrard Street in Toronto. Photo Bob Hambly, 2018

# NEWMARKET'S GHOST CANAL

By Gordon Prentice

The monumental remains of Newmarket's "Ghost Canal" serve as an ever-present reminder of one of the great follies of the closing years of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's Liberal Government (1896-1911).

Laurier was persuaded by York North's MP, Sir William Mulock, to build a canal north from Newmarket to Lake Simcoe – a distance of 13 miles – to



▲ The Newmarket Canal under construction, 1908.  
Photo Courtesy Newmarket Historical Society.

allow the town's manufacturers, merchants and farmers access to the Trent Canal System and to markets across the Great Lakes. However, one blindingly obvious point was initially overlooked. Would there be enough water to fill the canal?

In 1904, the Grand Trunk Railway had just jacked up its freight rates by 35 to 50 per cent, infuriating the town's mercantile elite. Mulock responded by championing an alternative – a canal. It was an election year after all and Mulock was again the Liberal standard bearer. He had a riding to rally and a cause to promote.

In Newmarket there was huge support for the idea and, on February 21, 1905, a mighty 65-strong delegation

of town worthies made their way to Ottawa, led by the persuasive Mulock. The federal cabinet gave the go ahead for work to begin even though all of the engineering studies had not been completed.

The Prime Minister assured the delegation they had a friend in court in Sir William, "whose persistence in a good cause was notable."

The Chief of Trent Surveys, the engineer E. J. Walsh, was asked to draw up plans which he worked on in early 1905. Walsh, who was subsequently pilloried as the man responsible for runaway costs, blamed the top civil servant at the Department of Railways and Canals, a certain Mr. M. J. Butler who, in 1906, gave the job to someone else.

*Had that work (the Newmarket Canal) been left in my charge the Government would have avoided much unpleasant criticism, and the country spared an absurd extra outlay of several hundred thousand dollars.*

Walsh later described Butler as discourteous and unprofessional, saying, "One could not expect much better from a parvenu whose previous authority was exercised chiefly over navvies and shanty-men." Ouch!

Construction began in 1906 and costs quickly spiralled out of control as specifications changed and the engineers hit new, unforeseen problems. The early estimates of \$360,000 proved to be wildly optimistic and by the time the project

was cancelled by Robert Borden's incoming Conservative Government in 1911 the costs were projected to hit \$1 million – a colossal sum of money in those days.

The four canal locks would be massive structures, each with concrete walls 12 feet thick at the base and narrowing to 5 feet at the top. The lock chambers would be 33 feet wide. They would be up to 27 feet deep. These were megastructures.

The plans called for the Holland River to be dredged but it was soon discovered that a few feet below the riverbed was "hardpan" — earth as impenetrable as concrete.

By the time Mulock left Parliament in 1905 to become Chief Justice of the Exchequer Court of Ontario it was clear that the project was posing demanding challenges – above all, securing an adequate water supply.

In his paper on the Ghost Canal, the much-admired Newmarket historian, the late George Luesby, wrote of the paradox: "The remarkable engineering work completed on the canal stands in stark contrast to the implausibility of the whole project – there was no water"

And, in another paradox, the project gave a shot in the arm to the canal promoters' arch rival – the Grand Trunk Railway, which found itself with contracts to deliver mountains of construction materials to the lock sites.

By 1908 an army of 400 men and 300

teams of horses were working on the locks. The Conservative MP for North Simcoe, J.A. Currie, mocked:

*Throughout the summer people go there in pilgrimages to see this great public work of Ontario: it is something like the Colossus of Rhodes or like the Suez canal, and people go to see it out of curiosity, and they get an object lesson that opens their eyes to the way this Government is wasting public money.*

The surviving structures that can be seen today, from Newmarket north to Holland Landing, were needed to address the 43-foot difference in elevation between the two places. But without a plentiful supply of water it was later estimated it would take two and a half weeks to fill the lock basins in the summer, just when the canal would be most heavily used.

The future of the Newmarket canal was a frequent topic of debate in Parliament with the then Conservative Opposition excoriating the Laurier Liberals for their profligacy.

On July 28, 1911, the day before the Commons was dissolved for the election, the Conservative MP for Centre York, T. G. Wallace, expressed outrage. The cost of the canal, he fumed, had risen inexorably from \$297,000 to a projected \$967,000:

*There has been no estimate made that this canal would be of any commercial value whatever, and what is more, no plan has been devised for furnishing water to*

*this canal, and we all know that nothing is more necessary for a canal than water... therefore I condemn this expenditure as extravagant and a wanton waste of public money.*

The MP Samuel Sharpe described the canal as “a farce” and a “monstrosity”:

*It would be a splendid diversion if they (the Prime Minister and other Ministers) would organise a picnic up there and take the whole House of Commons up to the Newmarket canal in order to exhibit this great public work. I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that the Members would not require long rubber boots nor life preservers nor even bathing suits because there is not sufficient water in that canal with which they may even moisten their lips.*

And so it finished as it began. No water, no canal.

By the time all work was abandoned and the sites cleared in 1913, an impressive 83 per cent of the canal had been completed. The huge lock gates were never installed but the receiving hinges are there to see.

The massive concrete locks remain, their solid enduring presence a silent witness to “Mullock’s Madness.”

*The Parliamentary debates can be viewed at “Canadian Parliamentary Historical Resources”, Library of Parliament, [parl.canadiana.ca](http://parl.canadiana.ca)*

*George Luesby. Newmarket’s Ghost Canal. Newmarket Historical Society, 1989. 2nd edition prepared by Terry Carter.*



▲ The Lock at Holland Landing. Photo Gordon Prentice, 2018



▲ Remnants of the Newmarket Lock. Costing almost \$1 million, there was never enough water for navigation on the canal. Photo Gordon Prentice, 2018

### About the author

Gordon Prentice is President of the Newmarket Branch of ACO.

# CHELTENHAM BRICKWORKS

By Peter Stewart

Located on the south slope of the Niagara Escarpment, just west of the village of Cheltenham in the Town of Caledon, remnants of the Cheltenham Brickworks are clearly visible from Mississauga Road west of the Credit River. The site provides important lessons in the understanding of the value of industrial activities to the economies of rural communities in the early twentieth century.

The brickworks sit atop a significant Queenston shale deposit, which was well-suited to the manufacture of bricks. The Hamilton & Northwestern Railway (then owned by Canadian National Railways) ran along the east boundary of the property between the river and the brickworks, providing a key transportation link to external markets.

“Established in 1912, the industrial complex of the Cheltenham brickyard was constructed over two years with full production beginning in 1914. Its early development is attributed to

Fredrick Bruce McFarren, who became a prominent figure in Canada’s clay brick industry.”<sup>i</sup> In 1915, the operation was licensed as the Interprovincial Brick Company.

The clay was extracted from a pit just west of the brickworks complex and taken to the two production buildings. There it was processed and formed into brick and from there the bricks were loaded into the six downdraft kilns. The kilns were fired from a series of ovens spaced equally down each long side of the kiln. They were exhausted through the floors of the kiln into an underground exhaust system. The six 50-plus foot tall brick chimneys extracted the heat from under the kilns, thereby creating the downdraft effect within the kilns. By 1922, a railway tunnel kiln had been added to the site’s downdraft kilns. This tunnel kiln represented the latest in brickmaking technology and was the first of its kind in Canada. It allowed continuous firing of the bricks, unlike the downdraft kilns

which required a cycle of loading, heating, cooling and unloading.

At the peak of production 90,000 bricks a day<sup>ii</sup> were processed at this facility. Brick was shipped by rail to locations as far north as Sault Ste. Marie and as far east as Halifax. The Toronto market was served by truck. After 50 years of production, in 1964, then under the ownership of Domtar Corporation, the brickworks were closed.

Today, the remnant structures include two brick production buildings where the shale was processed and shaped into bricks, the original poured concrete coal bunker at the east end of the site, and five of the original six brick chimneys that exhausted the downdraft kilns. The shafts that connected the kilns to the chimneys and the kiln foundations also remain below grade.

In 1977 the remnant buildings, by then part of a Heritage Resource Area designated in the proposed Niagara Escarpment Master Plan, were threatened by a demolition application to the Niagara Escarpment Commission. Demolition was not allowed, based on the determination by the then Ministry



▲ Watercolour of brickworks in full production, circa 1923. Artist: Marten, Courtesy of Robert Long, P.Eng.

## About the author

Peter Stewart is an architect and partner in the firm of George Robb Architect. He is a past member of the provincial executive of ACO and also a past member of the board of CAHP.

of Culture and Recreation that these remaining structures contribute to our understanding of “the post-1900, larger scale development in brickmaking” and had a significant impact on the growth and stability of the surrounding community.

Brampton Brick Limited reopened the site in 1990 for the purpose of extracting clay for its brick manufacturing facility in Brampton. While the original pit had a limited life, having been exhausted by 2011, the larger property offered an anticipated minimum 30-year productive life from several other identified pit sites. As a condition of their license under the Aggregate Resources Act, Brampton Brick Limited mothballed the buildings that remain based on drawings prepared by OCA Architects in 1992. This work included blocking up existing windows openings with concrete block, renewing the security of grade-level doors, minor masonry repairs, minor structural steel repairs, and removal of earthen ramps that provided exterior access to the second floors of the fabrication buildings.

In 2013, the Town of Caledon designated the Heritage Resource Area lands, identified in the 1977 NEC ruling, under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and entered into an Heritage Easement Agreement with Brampton Brick Limited in regard to the on-going maintenance of the parcel and its heritage resources. To guide this process, George Robb Architect, along with Ojdrovic Engineering Inc. and MHBC Planning, was retained by Brampton Brick



▲ At the peak of production 90,000 bricks a day were processed at this facility. Photo Richard Seck Photography, 2017

Limited to provide a current condition assessment and conservation plan for the Cheltenham Brickworks.

Since then, Brampton Brick Limited has undertaken conservation work based on the conservation plan. The site has been grubbed and any unsafe subsurface conditions, caused largely by collapsed underground shafts related to the former kiln exhaust system, have been stabilized or filled in. Concrete repairs have been undertaken to the coal bunker. Corrosion damage to steel framing and reinforcing has been stabilized. Masonry repairs have been undertaken to stabilize the chimneys. Doors to the buildings accessible at grade have been replaced with sheet steel doors, resembling bank vaults, to minimize vandalism, which until recently has been a major concern for the owner. All of the conservation work has been coordinated by Lauren Mulkerns, Environmental Manager at Brampton Brick Limited and Sally Drummond, Heritage Resource Officer of the Town of Caledon.

Today, as Brampton Brick Limited is actively processing clay from the site on a daily basis, the site remains a restricted industrial operation and is not accessible to the public.

Views of the remaining buildings and structures are available from Mississauga Road and the former railway right-of-way, which is now the public Caledon Trailway system.

There have been informal discussions in regard to future uses on the site, especially those that provide a new use for the original buildings. The site could be fenced-off from the on-going industrial activity to the west and access provided from the Caledon Trailway. Appropriate new uses might include a rest station and washroom facility for those hiking the trailway or biking in the Caledon Hills, or a museum dedicated to the history of brickmaking in Peel Region. The Evergreen Brickworks in Toronto has set a pretty high standard for this kind of adaptive reuse by creating viable and vibrant community event space. Is it possible to do the same at the Cheltenham Brickworks?



▲ The Cheltenham Brickworks ceased production in 1964. Photo Richard Seck Photography, 2017

<sup>i</sup> “Cheltenham Brickyard, Statement of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest,” Town of Caledon, 2013.

<sup>ii</sup> “The Cheltenham Brickworks, A report for the Niagara Escarpment Commission,” Historic Planning and Research Branch, Ministry of Culture and Recreation, 1977.

# TORONTO'S SLEEPING GIANT

By Julian Mirabelli



▲ Toronto's Richard L. Hearn Generating Station opened in 1951. Photo Richard Longley, 2017

Beyond the huddled skyscrapers of downtown Toronto, along the shores of Lake Ontario, the Richard L. Hearn Generating Station quietly rests amongst overgrown weeds, its commanding presence still tangible despite the broken windows and water-stained bricks that define the site today. The neglected behemoth, once a symbol of prosperity and growth, supplied electricity to millions of Ontarians, but now lies in a state of decay and near-abandonment deep within Toronto's Port Lands.

Opened in 1951 as a coal-fired generating station, the Hearn employed over 600 workers at its peak, with twelve giant turbines churning out 1,200 MW of energy, burning roughly 400 tonnes of coal per hour. The current chimney was constructed in 1971 and, standing 215 metres high, was the tallest structure in the city until the CN Tower opened in 1976. The station was converted entirely to natural gas in 1971 and remained in operation until it was decommissioned in 1983, due largely to concerns around air pollution and an over-abundance of energy supply in Ontario. It continued to be used in some capacity until 1995, when it was shut down completely; its short-lived life span contrasting with the permanence of its scale. It was listed on the Toronto Heritage Register in 2003.



▲ Hearn's Turbine Hall during the 2016 Luminato Festival. Photo Julian Mirabelli, 2016

The size of the Hearn cannot be understated. Measuring in at over 650,000 cubic metres in volume, it is three times the size of the Tate Modern in London and was the largest enclosed space in Canada at the time of its completion. The towering central spaces of the Hearn can fit the Statue of Liberty upright unimpeded, amongst a tangle of steel beams and

columns that seem to continue for eternity.

Since 2002, the Hearn has been leased to a film company, who had started but then abandoned plans to turn the building into permanent film studios. Most of the industrial equipment, including the twelve massive turbines, was unceremoniously discarded from the building. Now, all that remains of the Hearn's industrial past is the machinery in the control room and a few pieces of equipment scattered throughout the building's massive interior spaces.

Since closing its doors, the Hearn had been largely forgotten by the public, serving mainly as a playground for urban explorers. In recent years, however, the Hearn has moved back into the spotlight, and rumblings of a future awakening are beginning to make waves.

It began in 2010, when German architects Behnisch Architekten came forward with a proposal to install a sports complex within the Hearn that included three ice rinks, an idea that was quickly dismissed by the City for not utilizing the building's full potential.

Then, in 2016, Toronto's multi-arts Luminato Festival chose the building as the main hub and venue for their annual event. The initiative was wildly successful. The festival broke attendance and donations records, with many people coming simply to wander the vast spaces of the Hearn. Installations included a 2,000-seat music stage, a 1,200-seat theatre, a restaurant within the control room, and Michel de Brouin's *One Thousand Speculations* — the world's largest mirror ball, suspended in the 300-metre long viewing gallery above the Turbine Hall which, during the short time Luminato was operating, was reportedly the longest columnless gallery space in the world.

It was no easy feat retrofitting the building for public use. There were no services or electricity, staircases and an elevator needed to be installed, deteriorated building materials had to

be stabilized, a concrete topping was necessary to make the floor even, and over 9,100 square metres of acoustical material had to be hung from the ceiling. Evidently, the investment was worth the experience.

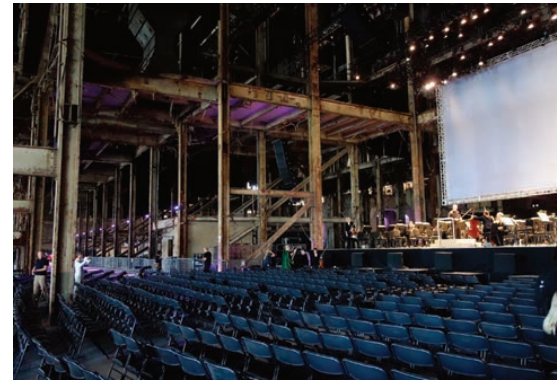
Once the festival ran its 17-day course, all installations were removed, and the Hearn returned to its previous dormant state, awaiting the next injection of energy to bring it back to life.

Fortunately, that injection of life may not be far off. In 2017, the City of Toronto unveiled its detailed Port Lands planning framework, envisioning a new mixed-use residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational neighbourhood in the 356-hectare brownfield district.

Within the Port Lands plan, the Hearn Generating Station is earmarked as a future "community hub" and is described as a catalyst that would fuel development in the area, attracting visitors from both near and far. Reinforcing its elevated status, a southward extension of Broadview Avenue is planned to terminate next to the Hearn, complete with an extended streetcar line that would provide public transit directly to the site.

In the eyes of the municipal government, the Hearn is a prime location for the revitalization of a heritage industrial site, similar to Toronto's popular Distillery District, Evergreen Brick Works, or Wychwood Barns. Each of these projects transformed a neglected industrial site into a vibrant urban destination, each acting as a community hub with a mix of uses that cater to both private and public functions while still respecting and celebrating the site's industrial past.

All of this, of course, is still hypothetical and many years away from fruition. But the message is clear: the Hearn is a unique opportunity to create something extraordinary. What that extraordinary thing might be is still unknown.



▲ The music stage during Luminato. Photo Julian Mirabelli, 2016

There is solace in knowing that amongst city planners, design professionals, and politicians, there is more or less a consensus that this site deserves something more than ice rinks, or more than just another condo or office development. Luminato provided a glimpse, a split-second flash of true potential for the Hearn, but it also left us with some burning questions. What about the Hearn is so captivating to its audiences, and what about it is worth keeping? How do we occupy the space without diminishing the qualities that we aim to keep?

After the success of the festival, the challenge now is to harness that creative energy and use it to transform this massive relic into something that can redefine the identity of the city.

For decades, the Hearn provided the energy to power our everyday lives; it is about time we returned the favour.

### About the author

Julian Mirabelli is an Intern Architect at EVOQ Architecture and a freelance writer at UrbanToronto.ca. His studies and work experience have focused on the design of public spaces, adaptive reuse, and heritage conservation. He is a lover of all things urban, with a passion for cities and a firm belief in the role of architecture as a driver of urban and social change.

# SPRINGING TO ACTION

By Devorah Miller

Architectural Conservancy Ontario is long in history, small in stature, and powerful in impact. An early brochure explains that ACO was formed by “public spirited citizens who for several years had seen the fine buildings of colonial days perish with neglect....” I am struck by how well that description still fits today. Public spirited citizens indeed! It is truly impressive what can be accomplished by people who are determined to protect something that they cherish.

Eighty-five years on, the work continues, and it’s not for the faint of heart. Some pieces of our history crumble slowly from neglect or come crashing down all at once, while others are hollowed out, pieces kept for show like a stage set. Keeping spirits up is challenging, but we do, because we know that heritage matters. The buildings and cultural heritage landscapes that we save are sweet victories that live on as a testament to our efforts.

For Ontarians who care about historic preservation, elections provide us with an opportunity to talk about the importance of our architecture, history and cultural landscapes with a broad spectrum of politicians. This is an election year

at both the provincial and municipal levels, and the politicians we elect will be making important decisions that will affect our towns and cities for years to come.

As we approach the elections this spring on June 9 and then again on October 22, let’s make sure that the people we elect to serve our communities hear our voices. For information about key election issues and tools you can use to engage politicians in your community, you can read our monthly e-newsletter Nutshell, or check out the resources on our website at [www.arconserv.ca](http://www.arconserv.ca). Together, let’s do our best to make this election year count for heritage.

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*If you're not receiving our monthly e-newsletter "Nutshell" and you would like to, you can subscribe at [tinyurl.com/ACOsingup](http://tinyurl.com/ACOsingup). We'll keep you up to date about current heritage issues and events, and share the latest stories, research and resources.*



# THE BARCLAY POST OFFICE

By Elaine Splett

The first post office in Innisfil was built in 1841, and the first postmaster was Benjamin Ross.

Francis Barclay emigrated from Dumfries, Scotland, and settled in Innisfil in 1849 on a 200-acre lot. He built a log house for his wife, Agnes, and their nine children. Barclay prospered as a farmer and he replaced the frame dwelling in 1870 with a sturdy fieldstone building. The building was moved to its current site, now 7335 Yonge Street in Barclay, around 1906.

George Barclay, one of Francis's four sons, became a magistrate and the Postmaster. He carried the mail between Innisfil and Stroud, two miles north of Barclay, for thirty years. One corner of the Barclays' back kitchen was partitioned off to become the Community Post Office.

The Barclays sold the Post Office and the building became a home to many other types of businesses. There was a bank-barn on the property. It was rebuilt in 1954, after the original barn burned down. It housed a turnip-waxing operation.



▲ Barclay Post Office in the early 1900s. Photo Innisfil Heritage Committee

In 1974, Mr. and Mrs. Chambers received permission from the Municipality of Innisfil to use the one-and-a-half-storey fieldstone house as a Tea Room and Craft Shop. Other rooms contained locally made pottery, weaving, quilts, baskets, wooden toys and antiques.

Mr. Chambers used his carpentry skills to shore up the sloping floors, restore some of the six-over-six window sashes, and repair the simple transom and sidelights framing the four-paneled front door. Local tradespeople were hired to bring the wiring up to code, install a proper furnace, replace a septic tank and fit in another washroom to serve the public.

The quality of the original mason's workmanship is evident in the cut stone façade. The wide baseboards, floor-boards, the period door panels and mouldings would be very difficult to replace today.

The building was sold to the new owners in 1982. The house is now called the Chimienti Homestead. The building was severely damaged in December 2014 in a fire.

The building was added to the Town of Innisfil Registry in 2009. The notice of intent to designate was issued in 2017. The application was sent to the Conservation Review Board in 2017. In May of 2017, the town learned that a demolition permit was being sought to destroy the building.

As of January 2018, the Town of Innisfil has agreed to expropriate the



▲ The south façade in 2018. Photo Elaine Splett

property at 7335 Yonge Street. The Post Office building may be used as a part of the new Health Hub Project in Innisfil.

Post offices have been preserved across Ontario. Two fine examples are the Waterloo Post Office, built circa 1912, and the Newmarket Post Office constructed circa 1915. The Barclay Post Office is not as grand as these examples and doesn't have a clock tower, but it is an integral part of our rural history in Innisfil — founded by people who worked the land — and it is part of our heritage.

## About the author

While working as an Interior Designer and an Architectural Technician, Elaine Splett developed an interest in heritage buildings. She joined the ACO Toronto Branch in 2016 and has contributed a number of articles to *ACORN*.

# LOST AND FOUND: REPURPOSING FRAGMENTS TO ANIMATE PUBLIC SPACE

By Hannah Hadfield, Tanya McCullough and Leora Bebko

In the 1950s, as the city continued to grow, many older buildings in Toronto's downtown core were demolished to make way for modern office towers. Rosa and Spencer Clark, passionate supporters of the Arts and Crafts movement and eager to preserve examples of handcrafted masonry, rescued architectural fragments from some of these historic buildings and relocated them to their Scarborough home, now known as the Guild Park and Garden. Although many of these fragments are now on display on the grounds of Guild Park (see ACORN Spring 2016), other stone pieces have languished in storage.

For the first time in 60 years, the public will be able to see some of these previously hidden pieces in an exhibition entitled "Lost and Found: Rediscovering Fragments of Old Toronto." Beginning in May 2018 for a year, the exhibition will be installed in the garden of Campbell House Museum.



▲ Column capital from the old Toronto Bank building. Photo Leora Bebko, 2018

Curated by three graduate students from the University of Toronto's Museum Studies program, the exhibition will feature groupings of carved stones from such iconic heritage structures as the Toronto Star Building, the old headquarters of The Toronto Bank and The Bank of Montreal, and the Imperial Oil Building – all chosen to highlight the craftsmanship and history of Toronto's lost buildings. Working in collaboration with the Campbell House Museum and the City of Toronto, Museums and Heritage Services, with support from J. D. Strachan Construction Ltd., Historic Restoration Inc., Blackwell Structural Engineers, and ERA Architects Inc., "Lost and Found" will create opportunities for reflection and discussion about how to conserve the city's surviving architectural heritage and how the Guild Park's salvaged pieces can animate today's urban landscape.

Campbell House – itself a salvaged building – is a fitting location for the "Lost and Found" exhibition. Built in 1822 for Chief Justice William

Campbell and his wife Hannah, the house was saved from demolition in 1972 and moved from its original location east of Jarvis Street to the intersection of Queen Street and University Avenue. From the vantage point of the Georgian house and garden with its modern backdrop of office and condo towers, one is acutely aware of the juxtaposition of the old and new. The property is a perfect setting to welcome fragments of Toronto's past back to their home in the city's downtown.

Recognizing the need to increase opportunities for the public to interact with, and learn from, objects in the City's collections, "Lost and Found" will demonstrate that these architectural fragments can still make an impact. Conceived in the same vein as recent efforts to repurpose other salvaged Toronto pieces, like the Sam the Record Man and Honest Ed signs, the curators hope that this exhibition will encourage further projects of this type and act as a pilot for future use and display of the Guild Park stone pieces.



▲ The original Toronto Bank at 78 Church Street. Courtesy of Bibliothèque et Archives Nationale du Québec, P547, S1, SS1, SSS8, D1, P908R/Collection Magella Bureau/Toronto/Bank of Toronto/Published by The Federated Press, Limited, 1915.

## About the authors

Hannah Hadfield, Tanya McCullough and Leora Bebko are all second-year graduate students in the Museum Studies program at the University of Toronto. While their respective backgrounds range from studies in history, archaeology and English literature, collectively they share a strong interest in the history of Toronto and its heritage.

## Heritage Professionals needed for important work across Ontario

The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario is frequently asked to recommend heritage professionals with a variety of specialties. We are currently updating our resource list for our members, and we are planning to introduce a Heritage Professionals Directory in ACORN magazine. If you would like to be included in this list, if you would like to recommend that a person or company be included, or if you would like to be a part of the ACORN directory, please let us know!

For more information or to submit a recommendation, please contact [development@arconserv.ca](mailto:development@arconserv.ca)

## Heritage Allies, Please Step Forward

Back in 1933, a group of heritage advocates led by Toronto architect Eric Arthur saved Barnum House, one of Ontario's finest examples of neo-classical architecture, and created the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario. Since that time, ACO has played a part in saving hundreds of buildings across the province.

ACO still works on behalf of all Ontarians, and your support is vital.

If you want to help fund ACO's work, please consider becoming a "Heritage Ally." Donors who give \$100+ annually to the provincial office, either through a one-time gift or through small monthly donations, will be included in this group of grassroots supporters.

What does your support accomplish? It helps ensure that:

- communities trying to save beloved buildings from demolition receive information and support
- young professionals who want to work in heritage-related fields have access to mentoring, learning opportunities and support
- politicians are kept informed of the environmental, social and financial benefits of heritage conservation
- exceptional professionals and students in the heritage field are acknowledged and recognized for their work

Best of all, you'll have the satisfaction of knowing that you're supporting Ontario's heritage for future generations.

To support ACO, simply go to [canadahelps.org](http://canadahelps.org) and select "Donate Now" or "Donate Monthly." The full link is [www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/architectural-conservancy-of-ontario-inc/](http://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/architectural-conservancy-of-ontario-inc/)

You can also contact us directly at [development@arconserv.ca](mailto:development@arconserv.ca)

Thank you, Heritage Allies. We have a lot more work to do!



*The door knocker at Barnum House, Ontario Heritage Trust*

# TWO SAULT STE. MARIE REMNANTS

By Chris Tossell

From June 7- 9, 2018 the Community Heritage Ontario Annual Conference will be held in Sault Ste. Marie.

Since time immemorial, the Sault rapids were a traditional indigenous gathering place, then a fur trading post operated by the North West Company and eventually by the Hudson's Bay Company. This was followed by paper-making, iron and then steelmaking industries founded by Francis Clergue.

Here are two examples of our "remnants of the past." Curiously both are on the same property at 75 Huron Street but portray two totally differing aspects of the Sault's development.

## The North West Company Canoe Lock of 1797

The 1797 Canoe Lock was the first canal and lock constructed to link Lake Superior and Lake Huron via the St. Mary's River. The lock itself was 38 feet by 9 feet, linked to a waterway cleared of rocks and a boarded towpath of 2580 feet in length for oxen to pull the 36-foot freighter canoes.

The first recorded mention was a survey by Theodore de Pincier dated 1797 conducted by order of the North West Company. In 1802, following a dispute between the North West Company and the XY

Company, a Captain Bruyeres of the Royal Engineers prepared a report (September 10, 1802) detailing the construction and operation of the lock. At that time, the lock was still in use.

If the lock was still being used in 1814, it is assumed that it was largely destroyed in the American raid of that year. In 1886, a Judge Steere and a Mr. Wheeler of Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, with the assistance of Joseph Cozens, a provincial land surveyor of Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, located and excavated the lock remains. The floor and foundations of the lock were revealed to be in perfect condition. Their findings were recorded by Douglas Brymner, the Dominion Archivist in the "Report on Canadian Archives, 1889." The report also contained record drawings of the lock prepared by Mr. Brymner.

Almost a hundred years later, in 1895, the existence of the lock was brought to the attention of industrialist Francis H. Clergue. Clergue re-excavated the site, retained the original floor timbers and foundations but rebuilt the walls in stone instead of timbers. What can be seen today is the lock as recreated by Francis H. Clergue.

In 2015, members of the Sault Ste. Marie Municipal Heritage Committee drained the lock and confirmed that the 1797 timber floor was still in place and was, where tested, sound.

As can be seen from the accompanying photo, the stone walls of the Clergue restoration are unstable and have been temporarily braced. Plans have been developed for restoration to the wooden original



▲ The North West Company Canoe Lock in Sault Ste. Marie. Photo Chris Tossell, 2016.

design as recorded by Douglas Brymner but retaining a portion of the stone retaining walls by Clergue. Fundraising has commenced.

### **The Algoma Conservatory of Music Building, 1901**

This fine example of Richardson Romanesque turn of the century architecture was originally the General Office Building of the Consolidated Lake Superior Company founded by Francis H. Clergue. Readers attending the 2018 CHO Conference will likely hear a considerable amount about the entrepreneur Mr. Clergue who has also been designated as a “Person of National Historic Significance” in Canada. The “Consolidated” portion

of the business name refers to the assembly of companies formed by Clergue in the period between 1895 and 1903. These include power generation, pulp and paper production, shipping, railways and mining interests.

The building itself was built using red sandstone excavated during the construction of the Sault Ste. Marie Canal and Lock which opened in 1895. It is thought, but not confirmed, that the building’s architect was Edward Francis Head who worked for Francis Clergue between 1898 and 1902. Head was in all probability the designer of the other fine Richardson Romanesque building on the adjacent site known as the Machine Shop. Both buildings have been designated

under the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

We may expect the buildings of entrepreneurs (and Francis Clergue might be viewed as the ultimate entrepreneur) to be quickly erected in the most cost-effective manner possible. Clergue’s buildings were different. He invested in talented designers and used quality materials in structures designed to last. The Algoma Conservatory of Music, the current owners of the building, have inherited a building which is in almost the same condition as the year in which it was built.

Remnants of the past, yes, but constant reminders of the growth of Sault Ste. Marie from the original indigenous meeting place and fur trading post. This — and much more — you will be able to see during the June Conference. Coincidentally, 2018 will mark thirty years since the last Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee Conference held in Sault Ste. Marie at which the seeds of Community Heritage Ontario were established. We look forward to seeing you here.



▲ The Algoma Conservatory of Music built of Sault Ste. Marie red sandstone. Photo Chris Tossell, 2016

### **About the author**

Chris Tossell, MRAIC, CAHP (Building Specialist) is a member of the City of Sault Ste. Marie Municipal Heritage Committee. For details about the Sault Ste. Marie 2018 Ontario Heritage Conference, please visit the conference website: [www.ontarioheritageconference.ca](http://www.ontarioheritageconference.ca).



# Ontario Heritage Conference Sault Ste. Marie *June 7-9, 2018*

Come join us in beautiful Sault Ste. Marie for our 30th anniversary conference!

Conference attendees can expect a varied itinerary featuring inspiring guest speakers, visits to local heritage landmarks and opportunities to experience all that Sault Ste. Marie has to offer.

For more information about the conference program, booking information at the Delta Hotel (the main conference venue), and tours, go to [www.ontarioheritageconference.ca](http://www.ontarioheritageconference.ca)



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## Interested in hosting a future Ontario Heritage Conference?

We are presently looking for communities who would be interested in hosting our Annual Ontario Heritage for future years starting with the 2020 opening. Hosting a conference is a great way to showcase your community and all the great work you do in heritage conservation.

For more information and deadline please view the RFP posted on  
[www.communityheritageontario.ca](http://www.communityheritageontario.ca)





## Bricks and Mortar: The craft of heritage conservation

Meaningful heritage conservation relies on craft carried out by people with superior skills and extensive expertise in their trade or field. These abilities are gained through experience and sensitivity to the historic fabric. Without skilled practitioners, heritage fabric may become damaged or even lost.

The Fall 2018 issue will feature examples of superior craft in glass, plaster restoration, stone, masonry, fittings and metalwork, brick, terra cotta, and woodwork.

Articles should be a maximum of either 450 or 900 words in length and “encourage the conservation and reuse of structures, districts and landscapes of architectural, historic and cultural significance to inspire and benefit Ontarians.”

Before commencing work on an article, please send your proposal to [liz.lundell@rogers.com](mailto:liz.lundell@rogers.com) to avoid duplication and ensure editorial and photo guidelines are received. Deadline for submissions is July 16, 2018. Submitters are encouraged to look at past issues available on the ACO website.

# ACORN Fall 2018 Call for Submissions

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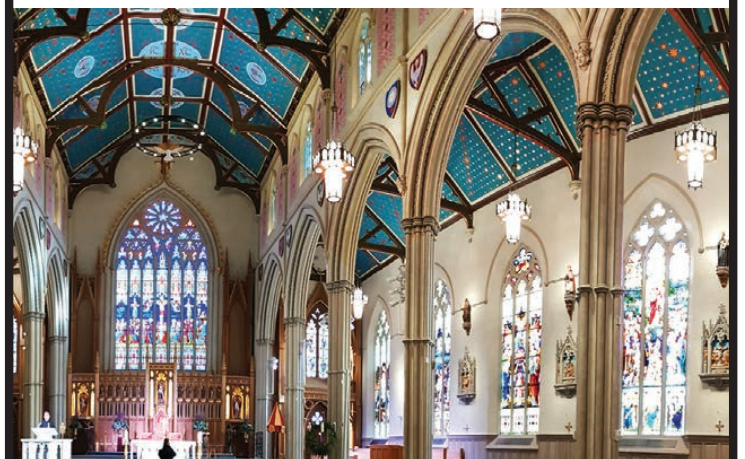
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