



THE REPORTER



VOL.12 NO.4

SERVING THE COMMUNITY OF PORT DALHOUSIE SINCE 2005

SUMMER 2017

Confederation and Port

The Rough and Tumble Adventures of Old Dave and Saxie

What was Port Dalhousie like 150 years ago?

Following years of turmoil and threats of war, 150 years ago Port Dalhousie was anticipating a more hopeful future.

The destructive Civil War in The United States was over and now the race was on to rebuild the towns and cities damaged or destroyed during the terrible years of 1861-1865. The last of the unsettling Fenian Raids had been resolved by the nearby Battle of Ridgeway, so an era of peace and stability was predicted.

Even better news: The government had promised to buy the Welland Canal, the bustling transportation route that stabilised hundreds of jobs in the local workforce. The Canal was universally feted as a shipping essential yet, from a financial viewpoint, its position was still uncertain.

By now 5,000 ships a year were passing through the harbour at Port Dalhousie. The main cargo was always imported grain from Russia to feed the thousands lured by the promise of free land on the prairies of the continent. The conversion of the barren unbroken prairies into endless miles of fields of rippling, golden, wheat could not have been achieved without the Welland Canal.

The bigger-sized steamers, or 'screws', were gradually increasing in numbers. These could transit the Canal unaided, while the sailing vessels needed towing for all of the 26 miles and through the 28 locks to reach the Upper Lakes. Still the sail-ships had three quarters of the traffic and, on what is now Lakeside Park, 150 tow-teams of horses and mules were stabled.

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~ Being a Colourful Recollection of Port Dalhousie Resident Jack Kellar, 1909-1989 ~



Port Dalhousie Harbour in the 1880s

Far from the sleepy village we now know, there was a time not so long ago that Port Dalhousie was a tough and tumultuous port of call on the old Welland Canal. Following is a selection from an interview Christine Robertson had with Mr. Kellar in 1977

“Old Dave Hunter and Saxie Brooks were like Wyatt Earp legends in Port back in the day. Both were captains that sailed for Muir’s. One sailed the schooner **Ayr** and the other the **Antelope**, both built at Muir’s Dry Docks in Port by the way. They were docked down in Kingston and had laid the ships up for the winter, which were icebound. Well, Saxie and old Dave got to arguing in a saloon, about who’d be the first one home for New Year’s. You see, at one time, they celebrated Hogmanay, which is a great Scots tradition celebrating the last day of the year. They all go wild and Port was wide open at that time. There

was a big celebration on Hogmanay. So this argument got very heated. Somebody started betting in the saloon and Saxie said, “I’ll show you who will be in Port Dalhousie first.” So he went down and rounded up his crew who had their baggage packed and they were ready to take the steam cars home. “Break out the sails boys!” he ordered. You see, all the sails were folded up and put away and the crew put them out. Then they had to saw a channel through the harbour ice.

When old Dave saw what they were doing he said, “Well those so-and-sos are not getting into Port before we do!” So he mustered his crew and they also cut a channel through

Continued on page 5

Citizens: A Call to Action!

Port Dalhousie has a unique and charming, historical village personality - and unfortunately, it also has the potential of being destroyed through inappropriate or insensitive development in its small commercial core. Every time we lose old architectural beauties to the wrecking ball, we all feel the pang of their loss for decades afterwards.

The Port Dalhousie Heritage District, designated by the Province in 2003, was being threatened by developers who wanted to build the tallest building in St. Catharines, right in the middle of the low-rise, 19th Century commercial core.

Volunteer organizations such as ACO St. Catharines shoulder the responsibility of preserving the unique architectural and historical heritage of our distinctive communities. It strongly supports development, restoration and investment in Port Dalhousie that is respectful of its historic past and maintains

the 'village feel' that promotes harmonious relationships amongst its citizens.

The Port Dalhousie Heritage Fund, an extension of ACO St. Catharines, was established in 2005, specifically for the purpose of defending and preserving what delegates to the 2004 World Canals Conference called; "One of the best preserved 19th Century Canal Villages in the world."

While new development is being planned, we support and advocate on behalf of the historic architectural integrity of the commercial core, as well as other designated homes and buildings in the town.

Please support our volunteers who work so hard to continue the good work. We, as well as your children and grandchildren will thank-you.

Donating is easy:

Go to:

www.CanadaHelps.org/dn/30078

and use MasterCard or Visa to make your donation now and indicate its for the Port Dalhousie Heritage Fund. If you would like to become a regular donor or Patron, or you would like to become more involved, please e-mail us at colinjohnston@bell.net.

Thank you for your support!

Colin Johnston

President,

Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, St. Catharines

** All the funds collected are used exclusively in and for Port Dalhousie heritage.*

** All donations receive a charitable tax receipt.*



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The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, St. Catharines Branch
congratulates the Port Dalhousie Conservancy
in their continued efforts to preserve Heritage in Port Dalhousie

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For information about our branch contact:
Colin Johnston, President
colinjohnston@bell.net



From a Bronze Rowing Shell to Attractive Planter Benches The Port Dalhousie Beautification Works Committee

is Rekindling the Charm of Port Dalhousie, One Project at a Time

I'd like to thank the Port Reporter for the opportunity to update everyone on the events at the Beautification Works Committee. It's SPRING in Port Dalhousie and I know that we are all anxiously anticipating the coming warm weather.

We have a lot to tell you, so hang onto your hat.....here we go.

First off, it's with great pleasure that we announce the arrival of the final piece of one of the BWC's first projects. Our very own bronzed rowing shell is at the entrance to the Royal Canadian Henley grandstand! We are told it's the only one in existence and we are sticking to that story vehemently. You may recall that this is actually the second rowing shell to adorn the front entrance. The first one met its unfortunate demise at the violence of a Coca Cola truck. The second one should be able to withstand a hurricane. Thanks to the Nitsapoulos family for donating the first shell and to George Dart for the second. We also would like to thank the Federal Government for the funding as

well as the Canadian Henley Rowing Corporation and St. Catharines Rowing Club for their support.

As you all might remember, we had a pretty exciting Fall/Winter with the "Save Lock One Campaign". As well, in concert with the Kiwanis and the National Heritage Trust we completed the "This Place Matters Campaign". We have all of the funding in place for the first phase of the Lock One project, but will require more funding to complete the horse statue sculpture portion of the campaign. As you may have noticed, in advance of the grading and stone work the overgrown brush has been cleared out of the Lock. It's only a matter of time now for us to see it start taking shape. The high water may cause a few delays, but we hope that Phase 1 will still be completed in advance of Port Dalhousie's Canada 150 celebrations.

Our thanks go to all of the volunteers, attendees and sponsors of our first "Dancing Through the Decades" fundraiser at the Port Dalhousie Lions club. It was a great event and well attended. We raised over \$7000

to help with beautification projects throughout our neighbourhood.

During the Port Dalhousie Spring Market we held our plant sale in the newly cleaned up space of the former Port Mansion site. Travis Nolan of Fortress/Union Waterfront provided the funding for some very attractive planter benches built by the students of Holy Cross Secondary School, as well as flower and herb garden beds along the retaining wall. We'd like to thank John Bakker of Bakker's on third, Jerry Moes from Rice Road Greenhouses and Garden Centre and Stark Lumber. And let's not forget Mike Sirotnik of Holy Cross Secondary School. We are looking for volunteers to help water the plants. Please email portdalhousie@yahoo.com and let us know if you're available to help water and/or weed our many plantings around Port. We have planted and hung the planter boxes along Lock/Lakeport (in front of the restaurant formerly known as Acqua). Any help with the maintenance will be greatly appreciated.

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THE REPORTER



The Port Reporter is a not-for profit, all volunteer community information newspaper published by the Port Dalhousie Conservancy since 2005. The paper focuses on issues related to the St. Catharines waterfront, the conservation and celebration of Heritage in Port Dalhousie and across the City. It also encourages residents to work together to improve our community environment.

It is currently published quarterly, usually in March, June, September and December. Normally 2,500 copies are delivered to homes in Old Port and surrounding area in Port Dalhousie ward. It can also be found at Avondale, City Hall, public libraries and in various local business establishments.

Editorial Board

Hank Beekhuis / Deborah Kehler/ Peter Wing

Design/Layout

Peter Wing

Copy Editor

Bram Hoff

Help the Reporter thrive and grow by making a financial donation. Checks can be made out to the Port Dalhousie Conservancy, 600 Ontario Street, P.O. Box 28049, St. Catharines, ON L2N 7P8. With regret, tax receipts are not available at this time.

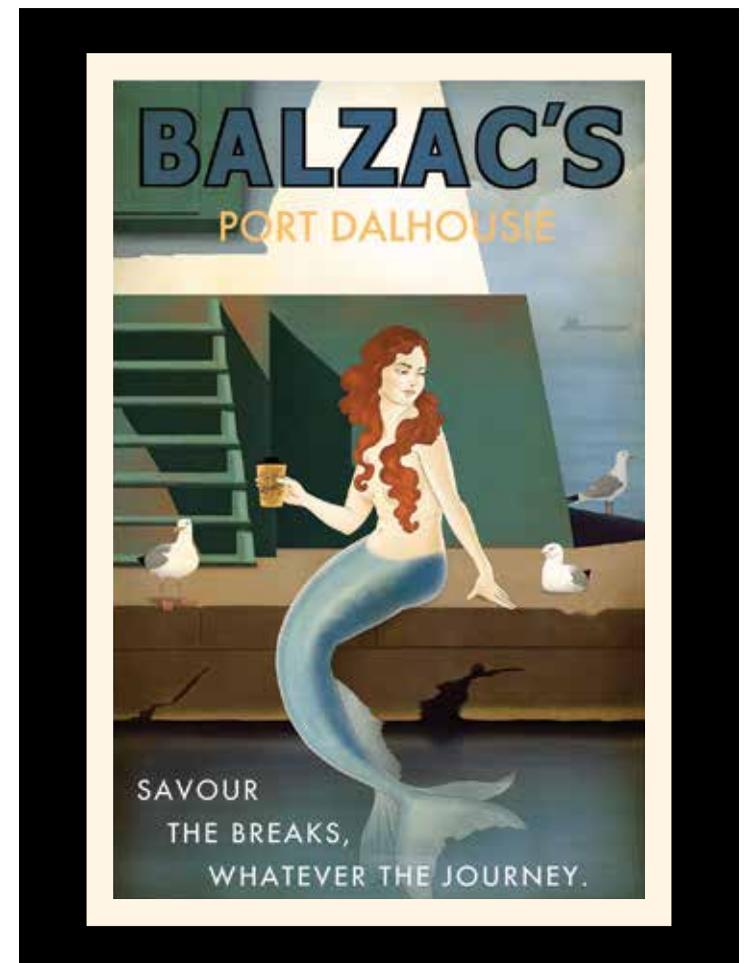
Please send contributions for future issues to editor.portreporter@gmail.com. All submissions are subject to a review including both editorial approval as well as copy editing for grammar etc...

Deadline for posting of community events, advertising and article submissions for September's issue is August 1, 2017.

Those interested in advertising should contact our advertising coordinator, Marty Mako at advertising.portreporter@gmail.com by August 1, 2017. Print ready ads are requested where possible.

The Port Reporter is a volunteer run publication. If you are interested in joining our team please contact Allison Beekhuis at editor.portreporter@gmail.com. Email contact is preferred, however if you wish to contact the Port Reporter by phone please call 289-213-3391 and leave a message. One of our volunteers will be happy to get back to you.

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The Rough and Tumble Adventures of Old Dave and Saxie

Continued from front page

the ice. They set out from Kingston all right, and they were both going to beat hell. The crew wanted to slack the sails but old Dave had a revolver. He stood by the wheel and said, "I'll shoot the first man who goes up the rigging." On the Antelope Saxie never carried a gun but he carried a belaying pin and he stood out there waving that belaying pin at the crew.

Someone who had taken an early New Year's morning walk in Port saw those two vessels coming into the harbour neck and neck. The halyards and the ropes that go through the blocks were all frozen and they couldn't take the sails down so they came racing into Port Dalhousie on New Year's Day, and never stopped until they hit the mud bank.

Both ships were put in Muir's dry dock for the rest of the winter. They were covered with ice and the sails had to be taken down with axes. The crew were half frozen and terrified because of the rough weather.

Another time they were tied up in Port, waiting to open on the first

day of navigation. Saxie was the first mate of the Ayr and old Dave was the Captain. Saxie was involved in a fight with six French Canadian sailors; so one of the crew ran down to get old Dave Hunter. "You better come quick. Cap'n, the mate is in a fight with six guys in front of the saloon!" Old Dave replied, "Only six?" He doesn't need any help."

But one of those French Canadians picked up something off the street, a rock, or club or something and he started after Saxie. Old Dave was standing on the cabin roof watching, but he wouldn't let the crew go and help. He said, "He doesn't need help." Then he saw the fellow lift the club to brain Saxie and he whipped out his revolver and shot him. The fellow lived for a year and a day, but they couldn't call it murder. At that time the law said that if you shot somebody and they lived for a year and a day, it wasn't murder. And believe it

or not old Dave got away with it.

Once they were in Buffalo harbour. Saxie came down on the run and quickly scrambled up the rigging, the police hot on his heels. They said to Dave Hunter the captain, "We want your mate."

"Go ahead and take him", he said obligingly. "There he is sitting up on the rigging." Saxie had his belaying pin in his hand and he just reached over and said, "I'll split the skull of any man that tries to come up here."

The ship was loading and it took about two days. All that time Saxie stayed up in the rigging. They ran a line up and hauled his meals up to him. And the police kept watch on the deck. By the way, it was a Port Dalhousie crew, so when old Dave had his cargo ready, and the hatches battened down, he said to the police, "You better get the hell off or you're going to Canada. Make up your minds."

*"The crew were
half frozen
and terrified
because
of the rough
weather."*

He yelled to the crew to release the forward lines. I don't know how they got it out into the mainstream. But the police got off and Saxie came home.

Another time up in Midland, the whole crew got arrested. They were just drunk, you know. Old Dave and Saxie were ready to sail. Somebody told them that their crew was up in court right then and they went up and found that court was in process. The Judge was just sentencing them all to ten days or something when Saxie said, "Get back to the boat!" And the Judge said, "They've got ten days." Dave said, "We can't spend ten days here." And with that he picked up the nearest sailor and threw him out the window. Then he grabbed the others and threw them all out the window, booted them down to the boat and shipped out. They were a Port Dalhousie crowd you know. The things they did and got away with, you wouldn't believe possible." ■

Excerpt from "A History Outline of Port Dalhousie" by Christine Robertson



Jim Bradley, MPP
St. Catharines

*I am honoured to represent the
people of St. Catharines.*

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Port Dalhousie Beautification Works

Continued from page 3

There are also the pollinator gardens in need of our help so pitch in and give us a hand. The butterflies will love you for it.

In the coming weeks BWC volunteers will start building planter boxes to start a new urban garden. Anyone interested with building/woodworking or planting vegetables please email me at mackiejeff@gmail.com. This is a new initiative that I hope will grow (pun intended) in the future.

Don't fear, everyone. This isn't where we end, but where we begin. Please answer the volunteer call-outs for our projects within the community. We need your help to keep Port beautiful this summer.

If you are not on the mailing list please send us an email at portdalhousie@yahoo.com.

Yours in BWC, Jeff Mackie

The Port Reporter needs your help.

The Reporter is a non-profit volunteer-run quarterly publication.

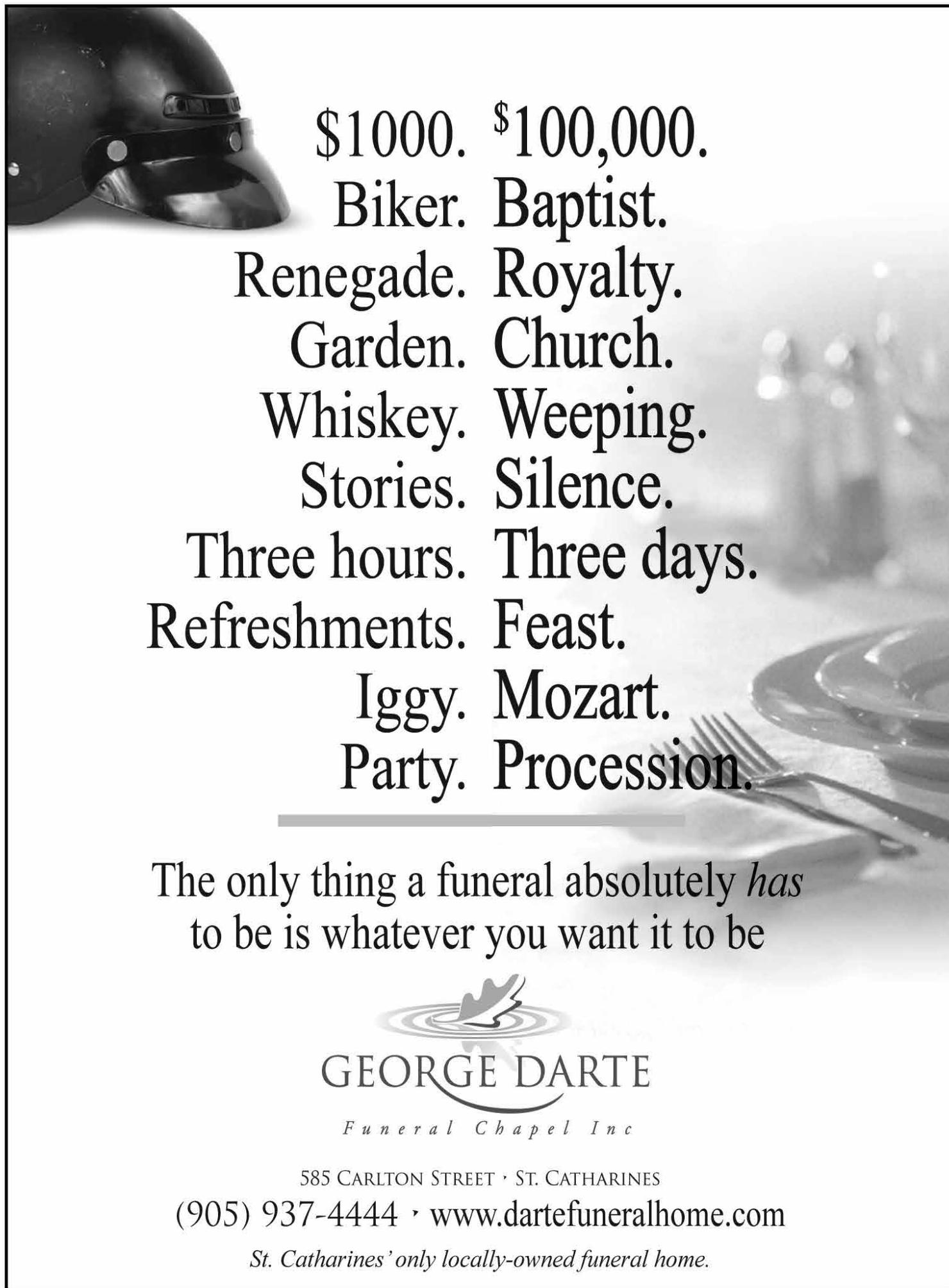
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Towing was tough and exhausting work for both the horses and the drivers and helpers, but it meant hundreds more jobs throughout the shipping season.

Waiting while their ships were repaired or serviced at the three dry docks, Port bustled with sailors through the shipping season. They were generally a free-spending lot who meant a thriving business for the hotels and stores and 17 grog shops crammed into Front and Lock Streets.

Lawrie's Flour Mill was a major enterprise on the Michigan side, where ships could lighten cargoes to be certain of untroubled passage in the segments where the draft was limited. The offloaded cargoes would be delivered to Port Colborne by rail or scow for pick-up.

In 1867 Nathan Pawling deeded a building site for St. John's Church in a prominent, central, position with a frontage of one chain and five links, and depth of two chains and forty nine links. We prefer 70 feet by 160. This was the first brick church in Port Dalhousie, just as the earlier wooden church had been the first church built for the community.

The current St. John's was completed in 1869, just three years ahead of The Star of the Sea church.

Port had a spread-out population of one thousand at this time. Many structures along our tree-lined streets have survived in attractive condition since that transforming year. The government-built Harbour Master's House, on the rise of Lock Street, was completed in 1845 and turned out, as it appears, unharmed by the passing years. Our Public Library enjoyed former locations, first at the Village Offices and then the Town Hall. In 1863, it was built by the Good Templars, an international fraternal society of temperance. As the sole, arid patch in a community of 17 grog shops, it seems unhappily outnumbered.

In 1860 Squire Pawling built The Union Hotel at the very foot of Front Street. The same year Bernard McGrath, a newcomer from Ireland, built the adjoining McGrath Hotel. Later the two hotels were joined to form the Port Hotel and subsequently the Port Mansion; sadly and needlessly taken away from us a few years ago.

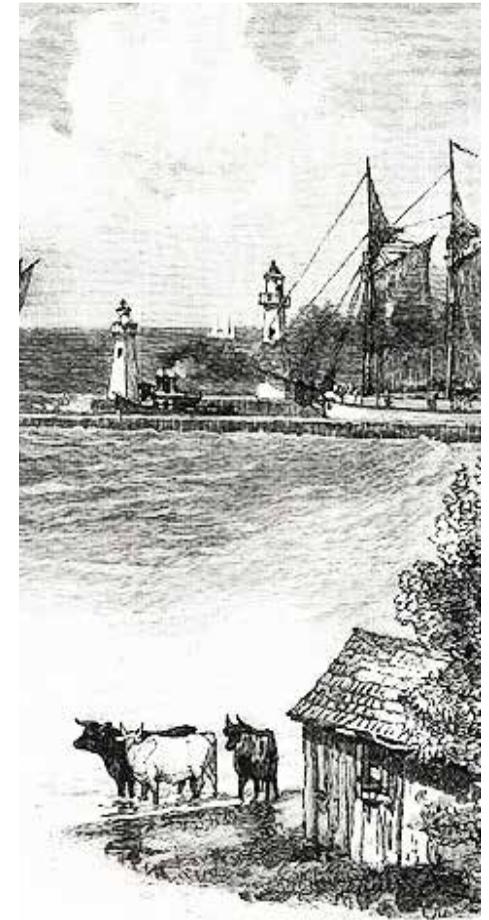
In the year of Confederation there was no legislation providing safety for workers. Seventeen years would pass before a move was made to prevent factories from employing children younger than 16 and to "limit" children from working more than 60 hours per week. In 1867 skilled workers were at the top for wages and they could expect to earn up to \$1.75 for working a ten-to-twelve hour day. The unskilled were the working poor, with rates between 80 cents and a dollar a day, while children working in factories were paid between 80 cents and a dollar per WEEK.

The book "Building of a Village Church" explores in more detail the social and working conditions of the era.

Roads were rutted and potholed making them hazardous in dry times and impassable in wet. Transportation relied on horse power supplied by real horses.

Did your grandparents ever tell you about those good old days? ■

Brian Leyden



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Port Dalhousie Residents,

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank the Port Dalhousie Reporter for continuing to provide an outlet, by which residents can be kept up to date with what is occurring in the community. I am very proud to represent St. Catharines in Ottawa, and community's like Port Dalhousie are a shining example of community spirit and local charm.

I was very pleased when the editors of the Port Reporter approached me to provide an update on what has been happening in Ottawa, in particular as it relates to the revitalization of our piers. It should be noted that I speak with both Councillors Williamson and Garcia on a regular basis and they very much emphasize the importance of the piers to our community. I agree with them. As well, Mayor Sendzik and I are in constant communication on matters that relate to the City of St. Catharines, including the piers. Our goal has always been, and continues to be, working together to ensure the piers are revitalized and re-opened for pedestrian access, as soon as is feasibly possible.

As residents may be aware, some repair work was started late last year, it was my pleasure to announce at the time, that Fisheries and Oceans Canada was investing an initial \$573,000 to repair the east pier wall, which includes the fuel dock at the Dalhousie Yacht Club. This work was critical to ensure boating operations could continue.

Furthermore, I can confirm that the Port Dalhousie Pier revitalization project is one of my top priorities as your Member of Parliament. I have spoken with the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans on several occasions. Minister LeBlanc and his office are very much aware of the need to re-open the piers to pedestrian access and are being briefed weekly on the status of the piers.

The Minister has assured me that he and his office are exploring every possible avenue to both revitalize the piers and proceed with the eventual transfer of the piers to the City of St. Catharines. I'm working diligently with the Minister and his cabinet colleagues to find the funds required to ensure our piers are repaired and re-opened to the public.

As matters progress, I will continue to update the public as I have since my election, via my social media accounts and through our local media outlets. I'm always pleased to discuss the piers or any other matters as they relate to the federal government with residents.



HOUSE OF COMMONS
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CANADA

CHRIS BITTLE

Member of Parliament
St. Catharines

With best wishes, I remain,

Sincerely Yours,

Chris Bittle

Member of Parliament



Chris Bittle

Member of Parliament — St. Catharines

I'm pleased extend my best wishes to all residents of Port Dalhousie as we celebrate Canada 150!

Community Office

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Why You Should Support the Preservation of Heritage Buildings!

Existing heritage has many practical advantages as well as historical and aesthetic ones.

There is currently a lot of debate around what to do with unused Heritage buildings. Many of us travel to destinations around the world and one of the things we do naturally is to visit the built heritage of other communities. Why do we do that? It's because heritage buildings connect us with the history of the place and they tell the story of those who came before. We marvel at the ingenuity and labour that went into making them and it gives us a sense of history. It also presents an opportunity to remind our children and grandchildren of the way things were in the past and how our ancestors lived and died.

Often we find it difficult to see the historical gems all around us and we tend, at the same time, to have greater appreciation for the value of Heritage elsewhere. Though the Courthouse is probably the single most iconic symbol of the city of St. Catharines, a city councilor suggested recently that the old courthouse should be put up for

sale. I could not help but think that there appears to be almost a disdain for heritage. We chase new shiny objects instead of maintaining and renewing what we have already built and paid for.

Port Dalhousie is one of those historical gems. It is one of the most well preserved 19th century canal villages in North America. It is a visual reminder of the three canals that played a major role in the opening-up of North America. Most everything that happened there in the last two hundred years is still visible and it is a marvelous opportunity for preservation and restoration.

However, let us not be naïve: Heritage structures don't save themselves and they need to be used in

a sustainable way so that we will have them pay for their own maintenance. What is required is ingenuity and vision to be able to adaptively reuse and restore them. It also requires a public policy that respects heritage and is willing to make financial investments as well as maintain reasonable and flexible building policies. While public safety is important, many of these buildings have, by their very survival, proved to be resilient and, therefore, only require creative updating and restoration to survive for many more years.

Existing heritage has many practical advantages as well as historical and aesthetic ones.

Did you know that:

"...the greenest buildings that we have

"Often we find it difficult to see the historical gems all around us and we tend, at the same time, to have greater appreciation for the value of Heritage elsewhere."

*are ones that already exist. Building renewal and reuse capitalizes on material and energy already invested in the asset. New construction by comparison contributes to greenhouse gas emissions, causing further climate change. New construction also contributes far more in construction and demolition waste, which strains our landfill sites."**

"Rehabilitation generates 21% more jobs, including highly skilled jobs in the construction trades, than the same investment in new construction. New construction costs consist of approximately 25% labour and 75% material, while rehabilitation costs consist of 75% labour and 25% material."

*"Rehabilitation of existing buildings enhances the unique character of streets and neighbourhoods, attracting business, creative enterprise and tourism."**

We know this to be true for Port Dalhousie because we have experienced it. In the late 1990's when revitalization was in full swing we experienced growth and buildings were occupied and alive. Small business was succeeding and was in the process of revitalizing the entire downtown core. It was only when outside interests began driving up prices and buying up and assembling properties that values were going up so high that local businesses could no longer compete. It was largely forgotten that growth does not have to be massive to be real. Density increases of 100% are just as important as density increases of 1000%. Let's make the effort to do the right thing in Port Dalhousie and make the effort to preserve what we have for future generations. ■

* Source: Architectural Conservancy of Ontario



Hank Beekhuis

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Gold Star Recyclers

Residents can play the Recycle and Win online game at www.recycleandwin.ca.

Niagara Region is on the search for Niagara's Gold Star recyclers. In an effort to reward proper Blue and Grey Box recycling, the Region is recognizing those Niagara residents who have outstanding weekly recycling habits as "Gold Star Recyclers".

Starting in 2012, the program consists of a series of visual waste audits of the material set out for weekly curbside collection in randomly selected neighbourhoods from across Niagara. Households that receive high marks on material preparation receive a Gold Star recycling box to recognize their efforts.

Proper sorting and preparation of recyclables reduces processing challenges and downtime at the Region's recycling facility, in addition to ensuring quality recyclables are sold on the open market. Increasing the quality and the value of the recyclables helps offset the cost of all Regional waste management programs, thereby reducing the burden on the taxpayer. If residents want to learn more about

the "how-to's" of recycling or test their recycling knowledge, residents can play the Recycle and Win online game at www.recycleandwin.ca. The online game will be available until June 30, 2017. This interactive game is designed to educate residents on the proper containers in which to place waste and recyclables. Residents who complete the quiz can then enter a draw to win one of five \$100 VISA gift cards.

Some easy recycling tips to follow are below:

- Only clean containers and rigid plastic packaging are accepted in the Blue Box. Items such as plastic toys, children's pools, lawn edging, clothes hangers, water filters and VHS tapes are not accepted in Niagara's recycling program.
- Milk, juice cartons and drink boxes are to be placed in the Blue Box. These cartons and boxes contain plastic and are to be recycled with your bottles, cans and rigid plastic packaging in your Blue Box. Placing these items in the

Grey Box contaminates the paper and cardboard stream.

• Grocery bags and stretchy plastic outer-wrap (i.e. dry cleaner bags, outer-wrap from pop cases, toilet tissue packaging and paper towel packaging) must be stuffed in one plastic bag; must have the handles tied; and then be placed in the Grey Box. Although these items are plastic, bags and stretchy plastic outer-wrap can be recovered from the Grey Box sorting line much easier than from the Blue Box sorting line at Niagara Region's Recycling Centre. If placed in the Blue Box, it can become highly contaminated with food residue, and will not be recycled.

- Secure all loose items by placing them inside the Blue or Grey Box. Stacking your Blue/Grey Boxes on top of one another and placing heavier items on top of lighter ones helps to prevent wind-blown litter.

For more information call the Waste Info-line at 905-356-4141 or 1-800-594-5542 or visit niagararegion.ca/waste. ■

Lucy McGovern



Marty Mako is one of Port's Gold Star Recyclers

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Bruce Williamson
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City of St. Catharines

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Report from Councillor Bruce Williamson Port Dalhousie Ward

What theme other than water could be more appropriate for the spring 2017 column of the Port Reporter? The rains came and they kept on coming. After last summer's drought, I guess we should have expected the other shoe to drop. Mother Nature, the great equalizer, got busy delivering her regular reminder to us of who is boss. Some have postulated the glut of moisture is related to climate change, since this torrent of precipitation maybe one of the expected extreme weather events associated with global warming. Others claim it is simply part of the normal cycle of things and that the lake has experienced similarly high water levels at various times. Regardless, this volume of water with only limited snow pack melt contributing to it sure gives one pause to contemplate and it does generate important issues that require serious discussion.

The higher lake level and consequent flooding starkly remind us of the enormous power of wave action that erodes the beaches and sandy bluffs comprising much of the lakefront of Port Dalhousie. We must hope the current negative effects such as the undercutting of the Martindale Road Bridge and the loss of beach frontage reawaken us to the great need to

invest in better identification and greater preventative maintenance of vulnerable infrastructure components and protection of our shoreline. Future storm surges on Lake Ontario with their enormously destructive force will then find us better prepared. Resuming the installation of the armour stone work east of the piers – work that was discontinued in the 1990's – is another matter that will need to be thoroughly examined. It is a

potentially controversial issue because it involves great public expenditures as well as change. It is also complicated because of the mix of private and public ownership of the lands abutting the lake, some with existing erosion control projects in place, some with insufficient protective works and some stretches with no barriers in place at all. Nevertheless, without a solid bulwark

the thousands of litres of untreated raw sewage which have bypassed our combined sanitary/storm waste water management system. While many improvements have been made, it is clear more needs to be done. Making meaningful improvement in this area also involves costly public works.

Changing the theme to some happier aspects of water, the late Brock University professor, John Jackson in his wonderful book – *The Welland Canals and Their Communities* - described Port Dalhousie when it was being settled by the refugee Loyalists as follows, "Known locally as "the peninsula within the peninsulas." Port Dalhousie developed at the eastern end of a narrow peninsula of land that rose steeply to its crest above the bluffs of Lake Ontario. This promontory, described as a cape and forested with pine trees, was bounded on the north by Lake Ontario and to the south by the impounded waters of Twelve Mile Creek." The map from the Historical Maps of Niagara Collection, Brock University, depicts the situation of the topography and waters during the era of the first canal of which he writes.

While much has changed, the essential features of Port Dalhousie remain the same as being visible in the water bodies that surround us. Water seems to do much more than define and shape our local dwelling place on this earth. Mother Nature how about some moderation?

Wishing everyone a healthy, sunny summer!




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A Port Dalhousie Diary: The Good, The Bad and The Ugly



Record high water

Photo D. Cahill



New concession stan

Photo C. Garcia



Opening of Lock Street Brewery



Lift off on Martindale Pond

Photo D. Robinson



New concrete walkway

Photo C. Garcia



New Pavilion

Photo C. Garcia



Martindale Bridge construction

Photo R. Hodges



Flyover in Port

Photo D. Robinson



Volleyball anyone?

Photo P. Wing



Clean up Day in Port (pre-flood)

Photo C. Garcia



Crowd at the Schoolboy Regatta

Photo R. Hodges



More flooding...

Photo C. Garcia



Fun at the Port Dalhousie Market

Photo J. Mackie



Sandbaggers

Photo D. Cahill



Flood victim

Photo P. Wing



Racing in the Schoolboy

Photo R. Hodges

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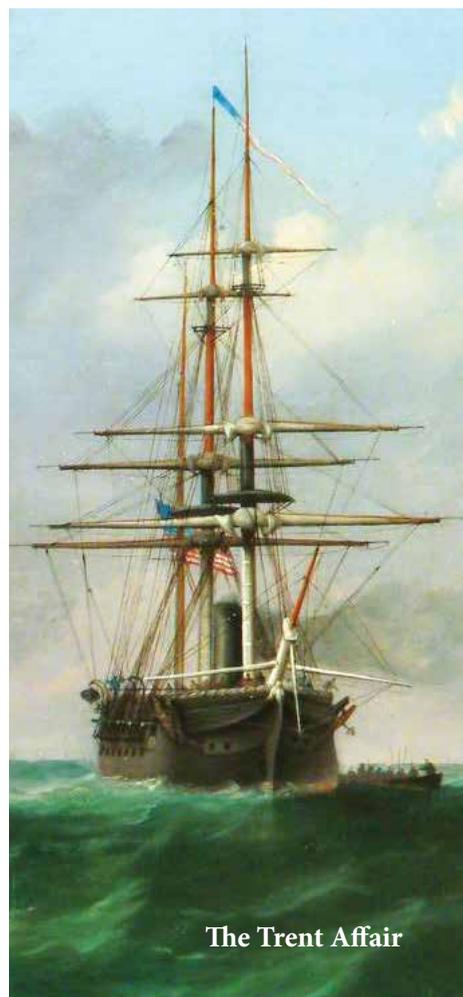
Port Dalhousie in the 1860s: The Threat of Invasion

“The village of Port Dalhousie was hardly a dozen years in existence before it figured in an invasion plan.”

Residents of our peaceful Port Dalhousie today likely give little if any thought to the possibility of an American invasion, but that was not always so in the past. For a good part of the 19th century, and especially in the 1860s, the threat of a hostile invasion of the Niagara area by Americans was not so unlikely. In times of tension and conflict between the United States and Great Britain, Port Dalhousie, with its strategic position as the northern entrance to the Welland Canal, was in a position of particular vulnerability.

In the decades following the War of 1812, the traumatic experience of the war was never forgotten by local residents; the Niagara area had been the location of its major battles, and people here had suffered great turmoil, fear, destruction of property, and loss of life. Security concerns were an important reason for the choice of the route of the Welland Canal in 1825. It was believed necessary to build it some distance away from the border, and throughout the canal’s early decades there were recurring discussions about the need for some defensive fortifications along its length.

The village of Port Dalhousie was hardly a dozen years in existence

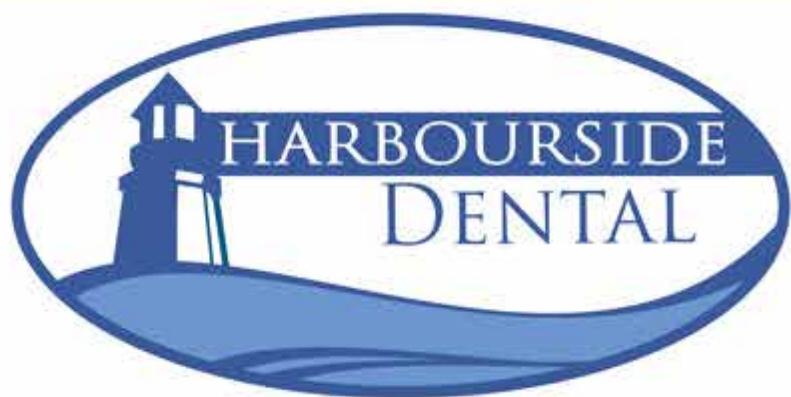


before it figured in an invasion plan proposed by an American group. This was during the period of the Rebellions of 1837-38, when some radical reformers staged an uprising in Toronto in an attempt to bring about more representative government.

In September 1838 a leader of American sympathizers proposed a detailed plan for the invasion of Canada which included the occupation of Port Dalhousie as a staging point for attacking Toronto.

It was in the 1860s, however, that Niagara residents had the greatest reason to fear an American aggression. In 1861 a diplomatic crisis between Great Britain and the United States known as the “Trent Affair” made war seem inevitable, and an American invasion of the Niagara area seem imminent. On November 8 1861 (during the first year of the Civil War) a British steamer carrying two Confederate diplomatic envoys to Britain was stopped by an American warship in international waters. The envoys were forcibly removed and interned back in Boston. This violation of international law provoked outrage in Britain, and the British government demanded the

Continued on page 14



Harbourside Dental is the new name of a dental practice that many people in Port Dalhousie and the greater St. Catharines area have always known as “Dr. Korody & Associates”. In September 2016 Dr. Frank Korody sold his practice to Dr. Mark Poustie. Dr. Frank, however, continues to work in the office most days with a slight reduction in his hours of availability. There have been no changes with the “Office Team”, in the way we care and provide dentistry, and fees remain the same.

Dr. Mark is a warm, gentle, compassionate and caring person. He was raised in the Niagara region and has lived in Port Dalhousie with his family since 2008.

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Port Dalhousie in the 1860s: The Threat of Invasion

Continued from page 13

envoys' release. It seemed that Britain would recognize the Confederacy and declare war on the Union.

In the Niagara area it was generally believed that if war were declared, the first goal of an invading American army would be the destruction of the Welland Canal. Because of this, the Welland Canal Field Battery, a militia artillery unit, was established to patrol and defend the canal.

After several weeks the United States conceded and released the two envoys, but the episode with its threat of war had deeply affected the Canadians. In 1862 the government issued a "Report on the Defense of Canada" which proposed to establish "permanent works" (forts) at Port Dalhousie and Port Colborne for the protection of the canal and vessels.

At Port Dalhousie the report recommended a fort "mounting fifteen guns and capable of garrisoning 300 men be built on the high ground to the east of the canal entrance" along with "a floating shield to protect the gates of the first lock from artillery fire from the lake." These recommendations were

not implemented, however, and Port Dalhousie never got its fort. Continuing tensions between the British and Americans during the Civil War years, however, especially because of the perceived British sympathy for the South, kept the fear of invasion in the minds of local residents.

In 1866, the Niagara region was invaded by American soldiers, but not from the U.S. Army. These invaders were members of the Fenian Brotherhood, an Irish-American organization dedicated to the liberation of Ireland from British rule. Many of the Fenians were Civil War veterans induced to form a new army in the fall of 1865, believing that they could capture Canada in order to bargain with Britain for Ireland's freedom.

On June 1 1866, a contingent of 1500 Fenians crossed the Niagara River to occupy Fort Erie, and then began to advance northward. Meanwhile the alarm had been sounded throughout Niagara, and militia units quickly assembled. The Queen's Own Rifles sailed from Toronto to Port Dalhousie where they boarded the train (the Welland Railway station was situated where the Dalhousie Yacht Club is now) and headed south to join other militia units and meet the enemy. The Welland Canal Field Battery assembled to guard the canal route, and the Royal Navy gunboat Heron "a trim little craft carrying two 112-pound Armstrong guns" was stationed at Port Dalhousie. The Fenians, however, only got as far as Ridgeway before heading back across the border.

"At Port Dalhousie the report recommended a fort "mounting fifteen guns and capable of garrisoning 300 men be built on the high ground to the east of the canal entrance"."

Tension resulting from uncertainty over American intentions and aggressions, and the continuing fear of American invasion helped promote the belief in the British North American colonies that they needed union and a united defence. This idea of union for better defence against American invasion was a significant factor in the achievement of Canada's Confederation in 1867.

By the 1870s and 1880s, the growing political maturity of both the United States and the recently-confederated Canada, together with ever-improving relations between the U.S. and Great Britain, meant that the threat of an American invasion diminished and faded away. With its proximity to the border the Niagara region greatly appreciated these developments, and the canal village of Port Dalhousie was happy to welcome the thousands of American boats that continued to make their way up and down the Welland Canal. ■

Nancy Cameron



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Is a Registered Massage Therapist at Lakeshore Chiropractic Group. She graduated with a B.Sc. Kinesiology from Brock University and the Massage Therapy Program at Ontario College of Health and Technology.

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Witnesses to Canada's Confederation Still in Port Dalhousie!

They were here in 1867. And they're still here with us today. A number of notable historic homes and buildings that charm our village today were part of village life in the year our country marked its Confederation. Imagine that, as you take your morning walk and chat with the neighbours, you walk by the very buildings where people also stopped to chat on July 1, 1867. If walls could talk...The next time you're out and about in our historic canal village, remember to take notice of these witnesses to our past:



54 Main Street, (1838)



Alexander Muir House, 43 Dalhousie Ave. (1841)



The Port Dalhousie jail (1845)



The Customs House 36 Lock Street (1845)



27 Canal Street (1840s)



Lock One, Second Welland Canal (1848)



6 Ann Street (1850)



145 Dalhousie Avenue (1850s)



136 Dalhousie Avenue (1856)



33 Lock Street (1860)



75 Dalhousie Avenue, (1860)



58 Main Street (1860)



82 Dalhousie Avenue (1860s)



Port Dalhousie Library (Good Templars Hall, (1863)



43 Ann Street (1865)



Muir Shipyard Building (1865)



88 Dalhousie Avenue (1865)



St. John's Church, 80 Main Street, 1867

Reference:
Port Dalhousie
Heritage Inventory
1998
by
Nancy Cameron



Your Guide to The Rowing Groups

Many residents of Port have belonged to a rowing organization as a competitor, a coach, an executive, or simply as a volunteer.

Since 1903, when the Royal Canadian Henley Regatta was first held on Martindale Pond and the St. Catharines Rowing Club was founded, Port Dalhousie has become synonymous with rowing. Over the ensuing years, we have seen many course and facility improvements and the move of the rowing shell house from Lakeport Road to Henley Island. Many residents of Port have belonged to a rowing organization as a competitor, a coach, an executive, or simply as a volunteer. Here is a brief summary of the various rowing groups.

St. Catharines Rowing Club (SCRC)

Founded in 1903 as the St. Catharines Rowing and Canoe Club, the club has an extensive history of rowing excellence and community service. Club activities are centred at the shell house on Henley Island. The club offers competitive, recreational, youth and para-programs. The club hosts the annual Early Bird and Mother's Day High School regattas in May and the St. Catharines Invitational Regatta each July. Current president is Michelle Kerr, a Port resident. For more information visit the web site <<http://stcatharinesrowingclub.org>>

Ridley Graduate Boat Club (RGBC)

The Ridley Graduate Boat Club was established in 1972. The RGBC shell house is located on Henley Island. The club provides a base for the Ridley College rowing program, as well as programs for competitive rowers of all ages. For more information visit the web site <www.ridleyrowing.com>

Brock University

The Brock University O.U.A. rowing program and the Brock University Rowing Club shell house are located on Henley Island. Brock hosts an annual university regatta in October. Web site is: <www.gobadgers.ca/sports/rowing/index>

Canadian Henley Rowing Corporation (CHRC)

This group was formerly known as the Henley Aquatic Association. CHRC owns and maintains the bridge onto Henley Island and all the facilities on Henley Island, except for the Alumni clubhouse. They also own and maintain the Craig Swayze grandstand and all the rowing course facilities (i.e. timing tower, etc.). Current mailing address is P.O. Box 27017, 600 Ontario Street, St. Catharines, L2N 7P8.



Photo: Renate Hodges

St. Catharines Rowing Alumni Association (SCRAA)

Established formally in 1957 as the Old Boy's Rowing Association, the first president was Port resident Bill Smith. As soon as there was vehicular access to Henley Island, this group built the current clubhouse. The Association continues ever to contribute to the betterment of rowing and acts as the social hub for the rowing community. The current president is Brian Campbell. The Association normally meets on the second Friday of each month.

Henley Island Helpers (HIH)

The Henley Island Helpers was established in 1963 for the purpose of supporting rowing. Their main activity is operating the snack bars on Henley Island and at the grandstand during regattas. The funds raised have provided equipment for the athletes and monies for facility upgrades.

Royal Canadian Henley Regatta Commission

This group is a partnership between Rowing Canada Aviron and the Canadian Henley Rowing Corporation, for the purpose of organizing and running the annual Royal Canadian Henley Regatta. It takes hundreds of volunteers to run the regatta and many Port residents can be found among them. Web site is: <www.henleyregatta.ca>

Canadian Secondary Schools Rowing Association (CSSRA)

While not based in Port Dalhousie, their main annual event, the Canadian Secondary Schools Championship Regatta, is held on the Henley Course, usually in the first weekend of June. The first one was held in 1945. Many Port residents are active in running and holding this regatta. Web site is: <www.cssrrowing.ca>

Upcoming Regattas
June 2 - 4 - Canadian Secondary Schools Championships
July 22 - St. Catharines Invitational
August- 8 - 13 - Royal Canadian Henley

Bill Stevens



Hello Port Dalhousie and residents,

Canada's 150th year is off to a great start with special events across the city to commemorate our heritage, our progress and our future potential as a community and as a country. The annual Canada Day celebration in Rennie Park will be an extra-special event and I hope to see you at the park on July 1st.

Across the city, several parks projects are being completed for Canada's 150th birthday, including Lakeside. Community groups have also joined in. The restoration of old lock one at Lock St. by the Kiwanis Club is a great example of community pride and participation in Canada's 150th year. And as always, thanks to the Beautification and Works Committee for their continued efforts to highlight the heritage and charm of Old Port.

City Council has been busy working on housing issues, an integrated transit plan and development reports this spring. City staff are working closely with the development community on several proposals for Port Dalhousie. The Port Dalhousie secondary plan will be presented this summer with recommendations for heritage conservation, built form, public space and parking. Together, the secondary plan and these new developments will be a major step forward in the revitalization of Port Dalhousie as a vibrant mixed-use waterfront community.

The heavy rains and wet weather have created challenges for construction crews and events at Lakeside Park. High water levels have forced us to install temporary fencing along the piers where some sections have been completely submerged. The high water levels have also posed challenges for the Port Dalhousie Yacht Club. We're all hoping for a bright and sunny summer season, but in the meantime, I ask you to please remember that the fencing is up to protect public safety. The piers will remain closed this summer while we wait for a repair plan and funding from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. This is our top priority. We are working closely with St. Catharines MP Chris Bittle to take action as soon as possible.

The high water levels remind us that the impacts of climate change are very real, and as a Great Lakes city we have a responsibility to preserve and protect our waterfront. We must also be prepared for the impacts of climate change. That's why it is important that the City is a member of the Compact of Mayor's (now called the Global Covenant of Mayors) – to help us prepared for the impacts of climate change and to do our part to reduce emissions.

In positive news, the wall repairs on the east pier in front of the yacht club are expected to be completed on time for the boating season. The construction at Lakeside Park is also taking shape and we expect the new pavilion, band shell and accessibility enhancements to be ready for the unofficial start of summer – May 24 weekend. City staff and stakeholders are making plans for a grand re-opening of the new and improved Lakeside Park later this June. Stay tuned for details to be announced at www.stcatharines.ca

I look forward to connecting with you in the parks, at the supper market, and around #OurHomeSTC this summer. Please stay in touch.

Walter Sendzik, Mayor
mayor@stcatharines.ca
 905-688-5601 ext. 1540




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July 1st, 1867, A Look Back..

On the Celebration of Canada's Sesquicentennial this July 1st, one cannot help but wonder what reaction greeted the creation of the new country back in 1867...

July 1st, 2017 marks the sesquicentennial of the enactment of the "British North America Act."

Under that legislation, four provinces (Canada West, or Ontario, Canada East or Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick) entered into Confederation thereby creating the "Dominion of Canada." Although "Canada 150" is an event of great national pride for us today, one cannot help but wonder what reaction greeted the creation of the new country back in 1867.

The news which proclaimed our nationhood was received much more enthusiastically in cities and towns where large celebrations were held, such as Hamilton where horse races were held. Much more modest celebrations were seen in Grimsby, Thorold and Fort Erie.

In Port Dalhousie July 1st appears to have been a typical day in many respects. The newspapers reported the passage through the canal of several ships carrying cargoes of wood, timber, staves, salt, wheat, railroad iron and "sundries." A boat excursion was organized and, on board the steamer "America", 200 passengers



sailed to Toronto for the day.

The newspapers reported that in St. Catharines the birth of the new nation was announced at midnight

with a "thundering" 21-gun salute by Captain Wilson's artillery battery. This was followed by a second salute at 7 am. This was no doubt a most

unwelcome way to greet the "glorious first of July" for any townsfolk wishing to sleep late. The day dawned warm and sunny which "forecast a bright and happy destiny for Canada."

The town fathers in St. Catharines were unprepared for July 1st, which was proclaimed as a holiday but no formal program of events had been organized. "It is to be regretted that some concerted action was not had...that would have ensured a more marked and popular approval of so auspicious an occasion." Citizens were free to enjoy themselves in various ways, and many celebrated "quietly but decorously." Some homes were decorated with flags and bunting, while other houses were "beautifully illuminated" that night.

A company of militia volunteers marched into town from St. Ann's, and paraded down St. Paul Street. They marched to the "old drill shed" in the grounds at the rear of the grammar school (Robertson School) where the artillery company and the Grantham cavalry under Capt. Gregory had assembled. A "feu de joie" rifle salute was given, followed by "three

The Great Flood of 2017



Photo by Piroska Bacso



Photo by Ralph de Groot

For more photos go to www.facebook.com/PortDalhousieViews

Community Events

Doors Open St. Catharines

Saturday June 24

St Johns Anglican's historic church

Children's Service and Summer Party

Sunday June 25

St Johns Anglican Church

Port Dalhousie Supper Market

Lakeside Park

Tuesday evenings starting July 4th

The Moonlight Flicks Film Series

Tuesday nights starting July 11 through Aug 29

Lakeside Park

Royal Canadian Henley Regatta

The Masters August 6th

Opening Ceremonies

w/ Rowing Canada Hall of Fame presentation

Monday August 7th 7pm – 930pm

Race week 8-13th

St Catharines Chicken Wing Festival

August 12 & 13th

Lakeside Park



July 1st, 1867, A Look Back.. ... Continued

cheers for the new dominion." The volunteers then performed military maneuvers, but nearby fences were damaged due to the "ardor of the combatants, who were pushing and driving an invisible enemy."

The "hose company" (fire department) headed off to Jordan for the day where they enjoyed "dancing, swinging, quoit throwing, boating and other games." The shoemakers organized a picnic which was held at "Wiley's Grove" in the east end of the town.

A social was held in the "Montebello Gardens" that day, where the ladies from the Presbyterian Church sold strawberries and ice cream. One reporter wrote that the town band "discouraged excellent music," while another thought that the picnic "was an immense success in every respect---the band, not."

The day did not unfold entirely smoothly. At some point, it was discovered that an oil lamp had been overturned, setting fire to the floor of the bowling alley in the Stephenson House Hotel. The fire was quickly extinguished with minimal damage, which was fortunate considering that the fire department was out of town. A black woman named Marie Currie, an "ebony damsel of great volubility," was arrested for "maliciously throwing stones" at the house of a black man named John Henry Preston. Preston alleged that Currie was "a nuisance in the neighbourhood," but the case was dismissed. Later that day, two young men in Jordan tried to board a train bound for St. Catharines. They refused to pay their fare, and were immediately ejected by the conductor.

In the evening, Montebello Park was illuminated with coloured lanterns and "rockets and other fireworks were exploded in various parts of town."

Other documents suggest that July 1st was just another working day on the farm

for many people: despite the euphoria of nationhood, chores still needed to be done.

Ransom Goring (1841-1921), a farmer from Niagara Township, wrote in his day book or journal: "Mon. 1st day of July the Canadas comes into the new dominion today. Calling Upper Canada the Province of Ontario." The political importance of the day seems to have made little impact upon Ransom, who continued: "We were drawing out dung with two wagons. We took out 16 loads...I purposed going down to Virgil at night but was too tired. Celebration and fire-works in some places." (Is "drawing out dung" on the "Participation" list?)

One St. Catharines newspaper reported that no festivities were held in the Town of Niagara. The reporter archly observed that "the only celebration Niagara had on New Dominion Day was looking at the rockets going up in Toronto, distant 36 miles."

One year later, Goring noted in his journal that July 1st 1868 was "very sultry weather." He and his family planned to travel to St. Catharines to enjoy the festivities marking the 1st anniversary of Confederation. Their departure was delayed because "just as we were ready to start the bees swarmed." Their party eventually arrived in St. Catharines but "we did not have a good time at all. The day was so hot and dusty. It only cost us 15 cents for strawberries & cakes." His father, Abraham Hamilton Goring, left the celebrations in the early afternoon and set out for home. "We came home at 8 P.M. they had fireworks at night."

On July 1st, remember to show your patriotism and celebrate "Canada 150" in your own unique style! ■

Brian Narhi

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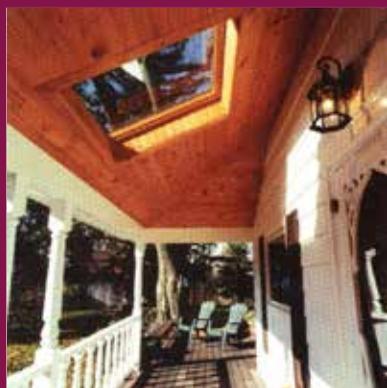
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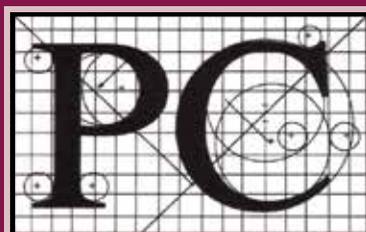


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Port Dalhousie Sunset

Photo by Dave Robinson

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Monday to Thursday 8:30 to 8 - Friday 8:30 to 7 - Saturday 10 to 12
Sundays and Holidays Closed