



THE REPORTER



VOL.21 NO.3

CELEBRATING 200 YEARS OF PORT DALHOUSIE'S HISTORY - 1826-2026

FALL 2026

Summertime Bliss and Blues in Port

The Bliss.

Port Dalhousie has always attracted visitors. Even back in the early days, when there wasn't much time for leisure activities, when commerce was the main attraction, it drew workers, sailors, merchants and farmers to the village. These days, with more leisure time and entertainment options available, people from far and wide continue to flock to the town. It's exciting and energizing to see so many friends and families enjoying themselves on the beach and in the parks. The restaurants and other commercial establishments are busy. It was also a welcome surprise to see the Patio Andaluz restaurant reopen after severe flooding forced its closure. The popular Lokanta Mediterranean has reopened and the Thistle Book Shop is relocating to larger premises.

The celebration of the 200th anniversary of the founding of Port Dalhousie was a summer highlight, with thousands of people, young and old enjoying festivities taking place in the Lakeside and Rennie Parks. There was a comprehensive historical display and merchants' stalls under the roof of the Neil Peart Pavilion, food trucks and vendors lined the park and a steady stream of live music flowed from the Rotary Bandshell, all in commemoration of the town's bi-centennial. Kudos to the 200th organizing committee and team of volunteers who put the event together and also provided 500 (!) free cupcakes for the crowds.

Also adding to the enjoyment was The popular Port Dalhousie Supper Market on Tuesdays, as well as the Concert Series at the Old Lock One Commons sponsored by the BWC. And of course the precious 5-cents-a-ride merry-go-round whirled

Continued on page 2

Port Dalhousie: Stronger Together

Amid Catastrophic Floods Port Residents Showed Compassion and Generosity.



The devastating floods that impacted Port Dalhousie and St. Catharines this summer have left an immeasurable mark on our community. Many families experienced damage to their homes and businesses, resulting in serious financial struggles, the loss of cherished possessions, and the long-lasting emotional toll that comes with such a sudden and overwhelming event. To every resident affected, please know that our thoughts are with you and we remain committed to supporting the long recovery ahead.

While our immediate focus is on helping residents in crisis, we must also look forward. Our community deserves a transparent and independent review of what happened. Residents have questions about the factors that contributed

to this disaster, how our infrastructure performed, and what improvements can be made to better protect our neighbourhoods in the future. We recognize that extreme weather events are becoming more frequent, but that only reinforces the need to identify every practical measure that can reduce the risk and lessen the impact of future flooding.

As your city councillors, we will continue advocating for a thorough investigation, clear communication with residents, and an action plan that prioritizes meaningful investments in flood mitigation and resilience.

Amid the heartbreak, however, we also witnessed the very best of Port Dalhousie. Neighbours helped neighbours by opening their doors, sharing pumps and generators, delivering

Continued on page 2

Update on the 33 Lock Street Condo Proposal

The City Had a Lawyer in Attendance at the Hearing, but he Didn't Make a Single Comment.

On April 20-21 this year, on behalf of the Port Dalhousie Conservancy, I attended a virtual Ontario Land Tribunal hearing arising from the appeal of the St. Catharines Municipal Council decision in 2025 to deny the proposal by 1000066335 Ontario Inc. to demolish the existing multi-residential building at 33 Lock Street (corner of Lock and Main) and replace it with a five-storey residential and commercial mixed-use building that would have an expanded footprint to the lot line on Main Street. The Conservancy had observer status only.

The Tribunal's interim decision was released on June 5. Readers will remember that the original proposal asked the City to amend its existing zoning by-laws and Secondary Plan for the Port Dalhousie Designated Heritage Conservation District to allow a variance on building height, density and set-backs. The original proposal was for 29 residential units plus commercial space on Main Street, with minimal or no set-backs from the property line on Lock Street and on Main Street. It also requested permission to demolish the existing building, which contains an original core structure dating back to the 1860s.



A 5-storey Condo is Slated to be Built at 33 Lock Street

reached on January 14, 2026. The proposed building will now be set back further from the lot line on the Lock Street side, with landscaping to reduce the visual impact of the structure on that side. The number of proposed residential units was decreased to 23, each with one interior parking spot accessed from Main Street. The hearing at the OLT went ahead as a settlement hearing only, with the developer assembling a number of experts to argue its case - including architects, lawyers and heritage consultants. The City

Continued on page 2

Summertime Bliss and Blues

around a steady stream of delighted riders as it has done for over 120 years.

The Blues.

The summer of 2026 was also one we won't soon forget. In early August, catastrophic rainfall inundated our town, dumping over 150mm of rain in a matter of hours, causing flooded streets, basements, and yards, with the loss of household furnishings, and in many cases, irreplaceable and precious personal belongings. Even some orchards and vineyards were flooded and threatened the production of grapes and tender fruits. Serious erosion occurred along the lake and pond banks and some properties on Canal Street were at risk, including Dalhousie House.

The continuing deterioration of Main Street is another serious concern to many people. Is there any movement in remedying the situation? In this issue we present an update on the progress from Transportation Services of the Niagara Region.

On a wider scale, many Canadians are profoundly angry at the collapse of the so-called trade talks with the Trump gang of usurpers. This national crisis is less and less about trade and more about the sovereignty and independence of our nation. We need to be strong and stand together in the face of this unprecedented attack on our country's very existence and the way of life as we know it. Elbows up.

• • •

This issue is packed with interesting and entertaining articles, opinions, historical profiles, trips down memory lane, and our usual lineup, including the BWC Report, the From Where I Sit column, crossword and photos from talented photographers. A very special thank you to all the volunteers, readers and advertisers who continue to make the Port Reporter possible. Above all, stay safe and buy Canadian! ■

- Peter Wing



Fans Rush to Lakeside Park

This group of Rush Fans, some from as far away as Australia, Germany, Scotland and Alaska, are all smiles as they visit Lakeside Park, made famous to many by the Rush song of the same name. Chris Irwin co-ordinates and leads the tour, visiting places around Port Dalhousie that Neil frequented growing up here. *"Over the years, my research has resulted in the discoveries of the photo of Neil's earliest live performance, at a 1967 Lakeport Secondary School Talent Show, his earliest signed contract and his earliest known recording. None of these things are of any use to me, unless there are other passionate fans with which to share them!"*

If anyone is interested in a tour led by one of the world's most knowledgeable Rush fans, you can contact Chris through Facebook at Christopher David Irwin.

33 Lock Street *Continued*

had a lawyer in attendance; he did not make a single comment or intervention in the entire 6 hours of testimony. It was left to the OLT adjudicator to ask the tough questions and to my surprise - he did!

When the architect noted the inclusion of a new-build "replica house" to replace the demolished heritage building, proposed as the entrance to the condos and as a buffer to the homes beside it, the adjudicator's response was to ask for the "precedence on destroying cultural landmarks in order to preserve cultural heritage". But in the end, his hands were tied. The City and the developer had previously come to an agreement. ■

- Diane Simsovic

Stronger Together *Continued*

meals, checking in on seniors, and helping strangers salvage what they could. We'd like to thank everyone who demonstrated extraordinary compassion and generosity when it was needed most.

Those acts of kindness remind us what makes Port Dalhousie such a special place. While the recovery will take time, our community has shown that we can face challenges together. We are grateful to those who stepped forward to help, and we will work tirelessly to ensure our city is stronger and better prepared for the future. ■

- City Councillors

Bruce Williamson and Marty Mako



Tolga Baykala, owner of Lokanta Mediterranean donated dinners to the families of flood victims.



The view from our chair

A one chair dental office providing care to one person at a time

Dr David Bergen

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On August 15th Thousands of Revellers Enjoyed a Fabulous Day of Fun and Frolic at the Park.



With photos from John Marshall Goodyear

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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 published quarterly, usually in March, June, September and December. 8,500 copies are delivered to homes and businesses in Port Dalhousie ward. It can also be found at Avondale Stores, City Hall, public libraries and in various local business establishments.

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Port Dalhousie, St. Catharines, Ontario, is located on the traditional territories of the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Attiwasderonk, and Mississauga peoples. This territory is also covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and is within the land protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampanoag agreement.

The logo for 'stems etc.' is centered in a large, white, oval frame with a decorative border. The text 'stems etc.' is in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font. Below it, the address '101 lakeport road' and 'st. catharines' are written in a smaller, lowercase, sans-serif font. To the right of the logo, the text 'PORT DALHOUSIE'S FLOWER SHOP' is written in a bold, uppercase, sans-serif font. Below this, the text 'FLOWERS, GIFTS DÉCOR, AND MORE!' is written in a bold, uppercase, sans-serif font. Underneath that, 'CURBSIDE PICKUP' and 'DELIVERY' are written in a bold, uppercase, sans-serif font. At the bottom right, the phone number '289-438-2235' is written in a bold, uppercase, sans-serif font. At the very bottom right, there are two social media icons: a Facebook 'f' logo and an Instagram camera logo.

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Autumn Report



Our hearts go out to those affected by recent heavy flooding across our community and beyond. This has hit close to home - our BWC volunteers, our colleagues at the PD200 Committee, Henley Island Helpers, and other dear friends. I have seen many instances of neighbours helping neighbours; these heartwarming acts truly reflect caring and community spirit. Our best wishes to everyone for a speedy recovery.

Plants and Flowers

Mother Nature has thrown us some curve balls this year, but as always, our wonderful volunteers rose to the challenge. All our volunteers did a wonderful job adapting to the changing conditions, and we were pleased to add much needed volunteers to our team for watering and weeding. The rejuvenation of the pollinator garden in Howes Park is really taking shape. We recently reconnected with Deanna from MNR, one of the original champions of the project, who generously shared her expertise and helped us secure new plants through Land Care Niagara. A special thank you also to Pam and Jeanette, whose hard work has restored the garden's vibrancy.

Carlos Garcia Park

We have worked hard coordinating with the City on insurance and third-party access to begin work on the physical site. Layout and site locations have taken place and hopefully by this time the pergola and benches will be in place. The City has approved lighting for the site. Significantly, the City has agreed to support the project through its Parks Legacy Fund.

Martindale Pond Fountain

We hope that by now you have seen the fountain in operation in Martindale Pond. The fountain is not only lovely to look at and nice to listen to, but provides aeration of the water to help maintain and improve the water quality for the plants and animals who call the pond home. We would like to thank Henley Island Helpers for their donation and the City of St Catharines for their support.

Rock on the Lock Concert Series

The season wrapped up with some spectacular concerts – great bands that performed this year were: Stonewall, Chippawa Dirty, Usual Suspects, Revolution, InfraRed, Brant Parker Band, Juliet Dunn Trio, Ceol Cara, Grass Mud Horse and many more. Memorable performances included The De Menezes Reilly Irish Dancers and the Smudge Fundaes (Children's show)! Some great soloists included Stevie James, Jay Nicholls, Stephanie De Shane, Danny Phelan, Ocean, and Daryl Gray. We appreciate our volunteers and the City of St. Catharines for their support. A special thank you to our local sponsors:

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Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars for the BWC Annual Christmas Stroll on Saturday, December 5th, 2026. While Christmas may feel far away, we're already preparing an unforgettable celebration. St. John's Anglican Church opens at 5 p.m., with the stroll kicking off at 6 p.m. Wander Dalhousie Avenue and soak in the holiday spirit with live music and community cheer. The annual BWC Halloween Walk will be on Halloween this year, Saturday, October 31st. We're working on the details with our community partners and appreciate their support over the years. Stay tuned for more updates.

Chairman Ernie Jodoin – Reflection

My two-year term as your Chair has concluded and I am pleased to work with the new leadership team to be announced in November. I am proud of what the BWC has achieved! Thanks to our team leads, volunteers, the City of St. Catharines and all our partner organizations, Port Dalhousie has and will continue to be served well! Selected highlights the past 2 years include: the continuing Rock on the Lock concert series; Carlos Garcia Park; Martindale Pond Fountain; Lock Keepers Shanty (agreement with City); PD200 celebration and much more. The flowers and plants have always made a great impression as you enter Port – it is a delightful welcoming to all who enjoy our parks, shops, restaurants, and cultural events. Early in my tenure it was critical to work cooperatively with the City of St. Catharines – there is now an official agreement with the City formally recognizing the BWC. A first for the BWC was our online community survey to identify issues and priorities. Our Candlelight Stroll and Halloween walk continue as premier community events well supported by donors, businesses and the City. One item of unfinished business – Dalhousie House – the BWC has advocated for continued dialogue with the City and community to establish DH as a community resource. I am hopeful the BWC can work with all levels of government and heritage groups to see this come to fruition. All the best - please support your BWC! We are always looking for volunteers to help keep Port beautiful. In lieu of volunteering, donations are always welcomed! ■

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A Port Boy's Story - Part Two

Neil Peart's Memories of Growing up in Port Dalhousie.

“Sometimes we would ride to the railway crossing at Third Street, and just sit in the culvert all day, listening for trains and running out to watch them go by. Perhaps that sounds as exciting as watching grass grow, but for those apocalyptic few seconds when we stood by the track and felt that power speeding by so close, so loud, and so mighty that the earth shook and the wind roared, it raised more adrenalin than any Nintendo game.

We could explore along the wilder parts of the lakeshore, maybe sneak into old man Coles' orchard to pilfer some fruit (risking his fabled pepper gun), or just spend our days “messaging around” down by the old canal, or over by the lighthouse on the “Michigan side.”

We would often see old mad Helen walking fast across the bridges, a blade of a nose, protruding teeth, and a thatch of grey hair racing ahead of her old overcoat and blocky shoes. Helen was always muttering to herself as she stalked along, and adolescent boys, hiding under the bridges to listen, could imagine as much profanity in her gibberish as we did in the lyrics to Louie Louie. But in reality, only our minds were dirty.

And no wonder - we lived in a dirty world. Like all that generation of Port kids, I learned to swim in Lake Ontario, at Mrs. Stuart's classes on the pier, and not only was that water cold on dark days, but what a cesspool we were swimming in - algae and dead fish washing along the shore in reeking piles, dotted with “Port Dalhousie whitefish” (used condoms). Aside from the cold water and the stench, we sometimes endured eye, ear, and throat infections, and indeed, this was only a year or two before the scary signs began to go up: “No Swimming - Polluted Water.”

Perhaps people are more used to such things now, but to a 10-year-old boy in 1962, this was an inscrutable mystery. How could this happen? How could people let this happen? Everyone said it was because of the factories in Hamilton, and the pulp mills in Thorold, but of course the worst problem was fecal coliform - human sewage - just as it is today.

In any case, it wasn't the water in Port Dalhousie that nearly killed me - it was other kids. One time, at about the same age, I was swimming 'way out over my head, trying to reach a raft which was anchored a couple of hundred yards offshore. The bigger guys used to swim out there, and I'd done it once before, but I was not a strong swimmer, and shivering added to the exertion. Choppy waves broke in my face, and I choked a couple of times. When I finally made it to the raft, I was gasping for breath and my arms were heavy.

A bunch of the neighborhood bullies were playing there, wrestling and throwing each other into the water, and they thought it would be a good joke not to let me on. Exhausted and desperate, I paddled from side to side of the raft, but they would only taunt me, laugh, and push me away. I started to swim back to shore, while they lost interest and turned away again, back to their rough play.

I couldn't do it. About halfway I ran out of strength, and in a panic realized that



Neil with his first set of red-sparkle drums.

- and I've never forgotten what they did.

Nor have I forgotten the simple joys of childhood: riding in the back seat of Dad's red '55 Buick hardtop, squirming against Danny and Judy, all of us excited to be on the way to a drive-in movie (always pretending to be asleep when we got home, so Dad would carry us to our beds).

Or the rarest luxury - going out for dinner at the Niagara Frontier House, a diner on Ontario Street which was modest enough, but seemed like the Ritz to me. Red-upholstered booths, lights glinting on wood, Formica, and stainless steel, the Hamilton Beach milkshake machine, the tray of pies on the counter, and the chrome juke-box beside each booth, with those metal pages you could flip through to read the songs. Although the highest luxury of all was being allowed to choose from a menu, I always ordered the same thing: a hot hamburger sandwich and a chocolate milkshake.

Simple joys, and simple sorrows, yet felt as deeply as they will ever be. And sometimes they are both evoked just by remembering an old car. One time we drove out Lakeshore Road and up the lane to Mr. Houtby's farm, and Dad got out to talk to him. Next morning, I started my first summer job. In retrospect, I have to wonder if Mr. Houtby had some grudge against my Dad's farm equipment business, for I found myself sent out to weed a potato field - by hand - and after three days of crawling through the dirt on my hands and knees under the baking sun, I received the princely sum of ... three dollars. My faith in the work ethic was shaken, I can tell you, but it was later restored - first by a Globe & Mail newspaper route, then by a little set of red-sparkle drums. . .” ■

- Neil Peart

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Heritage Designation

It's Not the Bugaboo You Think it is.

Heritage designation is not a bad thing, or in any way restricting your rights as the homeowner. People seem to have pre-conceived ideas about what a designation is, and most of the time it's an uphill battle to explain it. One of the main things about designation is that it's intended to preserve the appearance of the front facade, and any sides of the building that can be viewed from the street - in other words, any modification of the window and door openings is restricted. The house can be enlarged, as long as the new build is "subordinate" to the heritage portion of the residence.

What designation does NOT do is to "freeze" the house in time. It does not dictate what paint colours you can use, and it doesn't turn your house into a "museum." Basically, you can do what you like to the interior of the building provided that interior features that have been designated are preserved. We would hope that if there are original interior heritage features, such as staircases, or fireplaces, the owners will be sympathetic and preserve them. An additional bonus of designation is it allows the homeowner to apply for a "matching" heritage property grant of up to \$5,000 per year to help the owner with exterior repairs (or interior work, if the interior features that are being repaired have been designated). It's your property so enjoy it.

And to all of those who sit back and complain... why not become a member of the city's Heritage Advisory Committee? We meet once a month to approve heritage grant applications, structural modifications (e.g. replacement windows, or rear additions etc.) and we also research buildings for inclusion on the city's register of historically and structurally significant buildings. Since this is a municipal election year, there will be a new round of appointments to the Heritage Committee to start in early 2027. Why not join and make your voices heard in a constructive way. ■

- Brian Narhi

Recipient of the Lieutenant-Governor's Heritage Award for Lifetime Achievement and Chair of the St. Catharines Heritage Advisory Committee

*For More Information on the St. Catharines Advisory Heritage Committee
Please Visit rb.gy/gmq1bh*

Voices of the Past



Albert Harold "Huck" Berry's family goes back a long way as inhabitants and owners of the land between Lock Street and Lakeside Park, a property of summer cottages once known colloquially as 'Berryville'. It's here, on the corner of Lock and Main, on a hill overlooking the park and the town, where Huck and Daphne, his wife, resided. Having raised three children, they became grandparents five times over.

Albert (Huck) Berry - 1936-2015

"My mum and dad lived in a cottage on Gary Road down by the park. They were married in 1935. My mother was a nurse at the Cottage Hospital in NOTL, and when it came time for me to arrive, my father took Mother there. After a week or so, I came to Gary Road and have been there ever since. My grandparents live in the house I now live in at 28 Lock Street. My father and all his brothers and sisters were born in that house. My grandfather bought that place in 1887. The deed says he paid \$160 for it. I think he was born up where the library is now. He died the year before I was born. My grandmother lived to be 96. My dad and my grandfather both worked on the boats, pulling them through the canal by donkey and horse.

When I was growing up, my father had the cottages along the edge of the park. He must have had close to a couple dozen cottages. Then he bought Mrs. Carr's house at 30 Lock Street. She used to own the Lion Hotel but it was called the Edinburgh then. That house had thirty rooms in it. In the wintertime, it was just Mother, Father and myself in the house.

People learned about the cottages by word of mouth. Every year when people came over most of them would book a week or two. They'd come by car, boat or train from Toronto, the States, all over. Mother did most of the book work and the cleaning. My father would take his car and a small trailer and we would go up to the railway express office downtown and pick up luggage, small chests and trunks people would ship ahead for when they would be staying at one of the cottages. Their name would be on it and my father would look in his book and match them up with their cottages. They sent clothes, sheets, pillowcases, dishes, pots, cutlery and luggage there as well, then take them all down and put them in the cottages. All their stuff would be waiting for them when they arrived. All they had to do was unpack it.

Excerpt from *Port Dalhousie: An Intimate History*

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More Residents and Less Greenspace For Linhaven Long-Term Care

Linhaven Long Term Care Home on Ontario Street redevelopment is nearing completion. There will be an increase in both the number of beds and amenities. This long overdue project is projected to be finally completed this fall and all the residents will be moved out of the existing facility and into the new multi-story complex. As we all know, the need is great and the waiting lists are long, so the community is fortunate to have this new and updated facility. Interestingly, this entire property was originally donated to the city for the sole purpose of looking after seniors and the less fortunate. It is now the intention of the Region to declare a good portion of the existing land as surplus and sell it to the private sector for development with the hope that it will be used for affordable housing.

Reporter staff recently met with Cindy Mclean and Tammy Loch who are heading up a petition to ensure that the access to outdoor space for the residents will not be only a manicured patio area, but include nature and trees as has always been the hallmark of Linhaven. The current older facility had many natural greenspaces surrounding the sprawling one-story facility. There were

two secure greenspaces as well as many natural open spaces and walkways, including the waterfront on Martindale pond, all available to residents, staff, and visitors. Greenspace provides a quiet and restful place for resident

their breaks in natural, green spaces.

It is troubling to observe that even though the number of beds have increased, the amount of greenspace has been significantly reduced, and the residents' access to nature and shade

The concern is that with the current design, residents will not have adequate access to the waterfront trail, nor will there be a dedicated natural retreat for residents. Given that the entire site was donated for the purposes of looking after our seniors, it seems that it would not be too much to ask that some portion of what is now being designated as "surplus lands" be set aside as a natural preserve for the residents, and that some direct access to the waterfront park along the pond be maintained. It is understood that the Region wishes to recoup some of the financial costs of the new building but these concerns are important, and can only be dealt with at the beginning; once the greenspace is gone, it is gone forever.

If you are interested in supporting this effort please email: Cindy MacLean learningc17@yahoo.ca or Tammy Loch tammylochsweets@gmail.com (Please put "Linhaven Greenspace" in the subject line).

The link for signing the petition:

<https://rb.gy/23hl7e>



families to take their loved ones to enjoy the outdoors, and to hold events like barbecues and musical entertainment, or enjoy the animals that were brought for visits. Staff would also enjoy taking

trees will also be reduced. We can all understand that direct contact with nature is very beneficial for residents, especially those with dementia and Alzheimer's.



Lakeside Park, 1940: L-R: Restaurant, Dance Pavilion, Bathhouse, Carousel Building

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Ottoman Lamb Stew Recipe



Photos by Lauren Garbi

Ottoman lamb stew (*mutancana*) has a long history, dating back to the 15th century or earlier. The dish embodies the rich heritage of Türkiye, borrowing techniques and ingredients from Turkic nomadic tribes, royal court kitchens, and vast ancient trade routes. It was also reportedly a favourite meal of Mehmed "The Conqueror", the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire who captured Constantinople in 1453.

This sweet-and-sour stew features lamb, dried apricots, figs, prunes, honey, and balsamic vinegar, all braised low and slow until the sauce turns glossy and the lamb falls apart.

Tolga Baykala of Lokanta Mediterranean Café in Port Dalhousie grew up with food like this – dishes that carry history in every bite, recipes passed down by generations of cooks who understood great cooking is never just about the ingredients. It's about what the dish remembers.

Tolga's version of *mutancana* draws on both his Circassian heritage and the Ottoman culinary tradition. The result is a balanced dish that is both ancient and just as alive today as ever.

Ingredients

- 2 lbs lamb shoulder or leg cut into 2-inch chunks
- 2 tbsp butter or sheep's tail fat
- 1 cup light lamb or chicken broth
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- ½ cup dried apricots, halved
- ¼ cup dried figs, quartered
- ¼ cup dried prunes, halved
- ¼ cup slivered almonds
- 2 tbsp honey
- 2 tbsp pomegranate balsamic vinegar
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp sumac
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- Fresh flat-leaf parsley, chopped

Method

1. Brown the lamb

Melt butter or fat in a heavy-bottomed pot over medium heat. Season the lamb generously with salt and pepper. Working in batches, brown the lamb lightly on two sides — do not rush or crowd the pan. The goal is a gentle colour, not a deep sear.

2. Build the braise

Return all the lamb to the pot. Pour over the broth. Bring to a gentle simmer, then reduce the heat to low. Cover and cook until the lamb is nearly tender (approx. 75-90 minutes).

3. Add the fruit

Add the apricots, figs, and prunes to the pot. Stir gently to nestle them among the lamb. Cover and continue cooking on low heat for 15 minutes or until the fruit has softened and begun to meld with the braising liquid.

4. Make the glaze

Remove the lid. Stir in the honey, balsamic vinegar, cinnamon, sumac, black pepper, and a final pinch of salt. Taste and adjust — the balance of sweet and sour should feel harmonious rather than dominated by either. Simmer uncovered for 10-15 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the sauce reduces into a glossy, coating glaze.

5. Finish and serve

Stir through the slivered almonds. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed. Serve warm, topped with fresh parsley and toasted almonds, and warm pita bread or rice to catch the sauce.

Wine Pairings

The best wine matches for our Ottoman Lamb Stew recipe are structured Cabernet Francs and elegant Merlot-dominant red blends that can cut through the richness of the slow-cooked lamb without overpowering the delicate spices and sweetness of this dish.

- **Cabernet Merlot** Vineland Estates 2024 Vineland VQA
- **Merlot Reserve** Reif Estates 2020 Niagara River VQA
- **Red Blend** Stratus "Red" 2021 Niagara-on-the-Lake VQA
- **Red Blend** Lautus "Savvy Red" South Africa 0.5% ABV (Dealcoholized)



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SPECIAL ADVERTISING FEATURE

YESTERDAY AND TODAY: *A Short History of Port Dalhousie's Only Bank.*

This modest little bank building stands at the corner of Lock and Canal streets in Port Dalhousie. The bank was the first and only bank ever to serve the residents of Port.

The building opened on September 21, 1907 and was designed by John Lyle, a prolific Toronto architect active in the first half of the 20th century, designer of all manner of buildings, commercial/industrial, residential, ecclesiastical – including some 32 banks in Toronto and 21 elsewhere in the country, including a few as far afield as Halifax, Montreal and Calgary.

It seems that banks come and banks go, so for over 85 years this bank served Port Dalhousie. It was owned first by the Sterling Bank of Canada and when that institution failed in 1925 the Standard Bank of Canada took over, followed only three years later by the Canadian Bank of Commerce. After the CBC merged with the Imperial Bank of Canada in 1961 to form the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC), the building bore the CIBC name until it was closed in June 1992.

Our old photo must have been taken sometime between 1928 and 1961 since here the building bears the markings of the Canadian Bank of Commerce.

Arguably, the most notable day in this bank's long time serving Port was November 19, 1941. Just before noon that day four young men – who probably should have been off fighting in Second World War – arrived at the bank to

“withdraw some funds.”

Putting a pistol up against the ribs of the branch manager, three of the boys herded him and three other employees into the bank vault, grabbed as much money as they could (about \$1,300), and headed out the door, where a fourth robber was waiting in a stolen car, ready to spirit them away.

At that point the bank's staff sprang into action – the bank's teller emerged from the vault and fired a couple of shots in the direction of the fleeing bandits, and one of the female bank employees in a bystander's car chased the robbers as they sped away.

Happily, by the time the sun set that day two of the robbers had been captured – in Burlington Beach after an 80 mp/h car race with the OPP along the new QEW highway.

Since the CIBC closed that branch in 1992 the building has been home to a series of other businesses – an apparel shop, a Subway sub shop, and a hair stylist for short periods of time, and two longer lasting successors – Cooke's Cycle bicycle shop (for seven years) and Dalhousie Princess Cruises for another five years.

Since July 2015 the old bank building has housed Balzac's Coffee Roasters café, a popular destination for coffee drinkers. ■

- Dennis Gannon

is a member of the St. Catharines Historical Society

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The Port Dalhousie Municipal Councillor's Report

A Recap of Key Municipal Issues by Councillor Marty Mako.

Here is an update on various municipal issues Bruce and I have been involved with and worked on through early August 2026.

St. Catharines Celebrates Community Volunteers

The City honoured more than 70 volunteers at the 38th annual Volunteer Recognition Awards during a special celebration on April 21 at Market Square. Mayor Siscoe presented the 2026 Volunteer of the Year Award to Bruce Krushelnicki and the Lifetime Volunteer Service Award to Marie France-Marcie. In Port Dalhousie we are fortunate to have so many volunteers supporting organizations like the Conservancy, BWC, Lions Club, Legion Branch 350, Grantham Optimists, Royal Canadian Henley Regatta, Friends of the Carousel and more who give their time, talent and treasure to make our community a better place each and every day.

City Council authorized a License Agreement with the Port Dalhousie Conservancy

to facilitate the beautification of Carlos Garcia Park. The next phase of the project will allow private contractors, volunteers and City staff to complete work on the site to bring the design to

fruition. We are still hopeful a grand opening will take place later this fall.

Recreation Master Plan Update

Back in May, City Council received an update on the city's 10-year recreation facilities and programming plan, which recommended the city build a new indoor aquatics centre and recreation facility, costing between \$70-100 million dollars. Councillor Williamson and I put forward a motion requesting a delegation approach Atria (current owners of the former YMCA building) and explore the possibility of the city reacquiring this property. We believe a fiscally responsible approach should be taken when the city is looking to spend such a large amount of taxpayer dollars on a building that already exists. The real estate market has also changed considerably since previous negotiations with Atria took place. It should be noted that significant damage has been done to the interior of the vacant building. We must thank Tom Rankin who recently completed an initial structural analysis of the building free of charge and advised it doesn't have to be demolished. In order to give the city a full cost estimate regarding electrical, plumbing and mechanical repairs related to the pool piping, the flooded basement must be pumped out which is the next step.

Additional funds for 2026 road resurfacing

City Council transferred unused funding from past road resurfacing projects that came in under budget to the City's 2026 program. Council also requested an annual update on the prioritization of streets for resurfacing. We often get questions from residents about when their street will be done so regular updates will be helpful. Old Mill Road will be going out for tender this year, which is one street in Port Dalhousie that badly needs it.

City Council supports 2026 Community Improvement Plan

During our June 8th meeting, Council approved the 2026 Community Improvement Plan (CIP). A CIP allows municipalities to offer financial incentives to stimulate investment in projects that support local community renewal. The CIP Review has been a priority for Council under the City's 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, with new incentive programs that will focus on brownfield remediation, affordable rental housing units, increases in façade improvement and heritage grants, as well as greater support for the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Program. ADU's have proven to be very popular and the grant value for

construction of an exterior ADU will increase to 70% of eligible project costs, to a maximum of \$40,000. The CIP program has been controversial in the past when proposals supported the development of luxury condos. Hopefully this revised criteria and scoring matrix will ensure a greater focus on the priorities of community members and the City.

Council enhances security at Lakeside Park

Residents have likely noticed more security patrolling Lakeside Park this summer to curb increasingly problematic behaviour that's been on the rise since the start of beach season. City Council allocated \$40,000 from the Tax Rate Stabilization Reserve to support dedicated security foot patrols in the park for the summer months. Security guards equipped with body cameras, will be on duty during late afternoons and evenings and will be in addition to increased police presence. Security cameras were also installed outside the washrooms/ice cream stand. City staff will continue to monitor safety and security at Lakeside Park and report back should further enhancements be required in the future.

Shoreline Maintenance Pilot Program

City Council approved a shoreline maintenance pilot program that Councillor Williamson and I brought

Continued on page 12

Reverse Mortgages: The Pros, The Pitfalls, and The Possibilities



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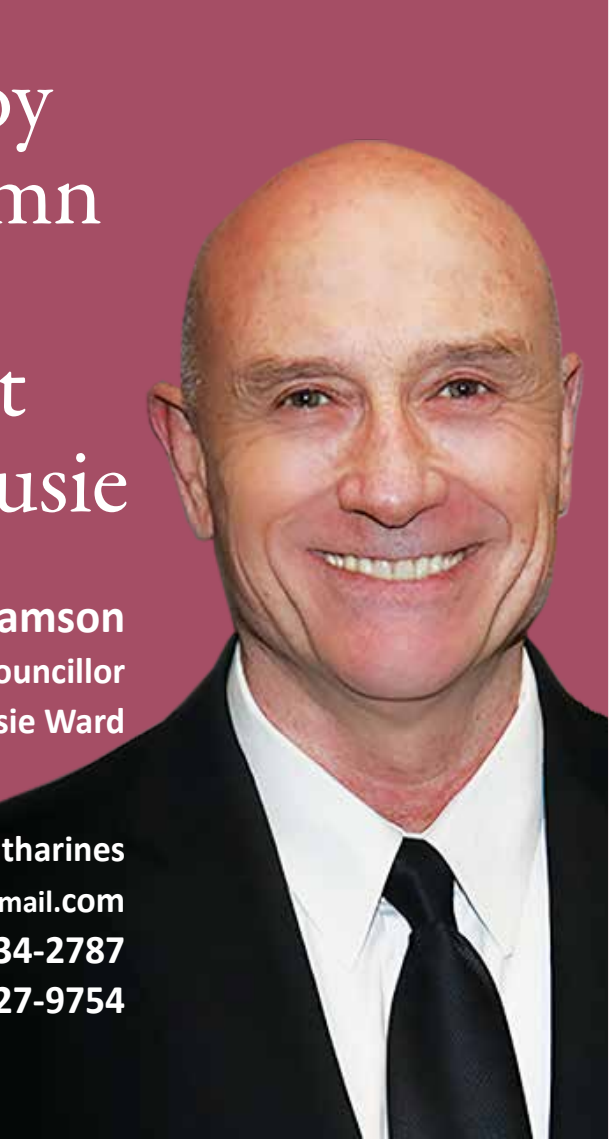
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Voices of the Past



Mary tells the story of her father, Peter Birdgeneau, and the canoe livery (offering rentals) he built and operated from 1926 until the day he died in 1954. The livery was north of the grandstand below Canal Street. Mary and her brother Peter helped their father operate the canoe livery.

Mary Patrick

"A boardwalk stretched from one end of the dock to the other, with benches installed for customers to sit on while waiting for canoes to return. At the top of the stairs (leading down to the dock) there was a sign. One side said, Pete Birdgeneau Canoe Livery, and on the other side it said, 'Thank you, call again'.

We were quite busy in those days. When the regatta was on, it was wild. The rowers would sometimes come and change shells on the dock. They were short of shells back then. After the race they'd get out of their shells. The other rowers would come over by motorboat, get in and the first set of rowers would be taken back.

There was a dancing platform that was always full of young people and fiddle music on weekends. His brothers were musical and they performed for the eager crowds. It was all very gay and festive. I'm very sorry that I missed all of that!

One time we were down at the boathouse and one of the ships started up their propellers and we went floating. All that was holding us was the electrical wires. I had to run up to the house and have my mother call the shipyard and they turned the boat off and pushed us back with a tug.

Every spring there was work to do. The canoes had to be sanded by hand and varnished. My dad was forever re-enforcing the bottom of each canoe putting an extra rib between the existing ones. Strips of carpet were placed on the bottom to protect each one for the ladies high heels. Those sharp heels could go right through the bottom when they stepped in! They were each provided with four pillows and a wooden backrest; a pillow to sit on, a pillow for their backs and one for each of their arms. Occasionally when the man preferred to half kneel, he'd want one for under his knee. Also they were given a parasol to keep the sun off their heads, and in the evenings a blanket was provided to ward off the cool winds that came off the water."

Excerpt from *Port Dalhousie: An Intimate History*

Councillor's Report *Continued*

forward to better manage invasive vegetation at select waterfront viewing sites in Port Dalhousie. Vegetation was cut back at four designated locations based on community feedback: corner of Ann St. and Bayview Dr, Westcliffe Park and trail behind Westgate Park Drive (overseeing the marina), end of Geneva St. (Waterfront Trail), and Martindale Pond area behind 88 Lakeport Road. Council directed City staff to report back with results from the pilot, including any requirements for ongoing annual maintenance, costs and funding options, in time to implement the program again during spring 2027.

'Old Lock One Commons' celebrated with permanent sign unveiling

The City celebrated the official naming of this outdoor public space with a ribbon cutting and the unveiling of a permanent 'Old Lock One Commons' sign. The naming recognizes both the area's rich history and its ongoing role as a gathering place for residents and visitors. The outdoor event space once served as Lock 1 for the second Welland Canal, which operated from 1835 to 1945. The lock's stone walls are still visible today and a focal point of the stage and seating area constructed

in 2018. The Port Dalhousie BWC's "Rock on the Lock" summer concert series was an excellent example of how this venue can be used to bring the community together.

Long-term maintenance program approved for the Port Dalhousie Piers

During our July meeting, City Council approved a program to maintain and fund the maintenance of the piers which were turned over to the City after reconstruction in 2022. The strategy includes formal structural assessments (including underwater dive inspections), escalation procedures and lifecycle planning practices. The piers are an important piece of our public infrastructure that are beloved by the community, and we are pleased to see a long-term, proactive maintenance approach being taken.



Port Dalhousie's Bi-Centennial
1826-2026

Municipal Elections 2026

This is an election year, and it is the one time every four years that residents can vote to elect those they wish to represent them at city hall. Elections are an honour and a privilege in a free and democratic society and we urge everyone to take the time to participate.

In Port Dalhousie we are entitled to two ward councillors and, as of this writing, we have three candidates. There are two incumbents: Bruce Williamson, our longest serving councillor, and Marty Mako who was recently elected in a highly contested by-election. The incumbents are



being challenged by Constantina O'Reilly. The contact information for the candidates: Marty Mako Ph: 905 401 3740 Email: martymako76@gmail.com ; Constantina O'Reilly Ph: 905 937 2682 Email: avroarrow4@gmail.com; Bruce Williamson Ph: 905 934 2787 Email: cbrucewilliamson@gmail.com

We thank all candidates for their willingness to participate in public service. Please note that Advanced Voting will take place between Oct. 6 and October 24—watch for details and locations. Voting will be held on Oct. 26 and polls are open from 10 am to 8 pm. Voting results will be available on Oct. 27 and will be posted on the city website.





From Where I Sit ...

Parking and Traffic Suck in Port Dalhousie.

Hank Beekhuis

It was a hot day in Port Dalhousie, around 35 degrees. I had to relieve someone for my shift at the downtown trolley booth. I live 1 km away as the crow flies. I left home 10 minutes before my shift was to start, and arrived 10 minutes late. It took a full 20 minutes to drive 1 km. This is not unusual in Port, especially on hot summer days, but it caused me to reflect on what is going on in Port and why we continue to have these issues, and why nobody appears to be doing anything about them.

The city has for decades been aware of these issues. Multiple studies have been done and yet next to nothing has improved. (Please, no more studies.) All the city has done is monetize parking which benefits the city, but does nothing to solve the actual problem and in some ways has made the functioning of Port worse. It allows the city to spend money employing folks, to police and install parking hardware (four different types) to collect fees, and then further subsidize developers by giving breaks on parking that takes away spaces which are never replaced.

Does this mean nothing can be done in the short term? Of course not! Our main street remains unpaved, there is no parking or traffic plan and no transportation plan. Everyone appears to be sitting around waiting for developers to do something. In the meantime traffic backs up, parking is extremely short (especially in the summer season) and development hasn't even started yet.

It is time to do something now to make Port work better for the sake of residents and businesses that have to suffer through every summer while they wait for something to happen. I have read all the parking studies ever done on this area and there are answers, but it means that we have to spend a bit of money doing the little stuff now, even if we have to wait for the big stuff. A number of options for improvement have been presented to the city but no discussion is happening. We don't even experiment with options. If development ever does start, we are going to have a major crisis that will make the current frustrations seem to be petty.

Here are few suggestions:

Repair and improve the Rennie Park lot and formalize spaces that currently have folks parking in the mud. One side of Dalhousie house is fixed up, let's do the other side. Spaces can be added here but the

"All the city has done is monetize parking which benefits the city, but does nothing to solve the problem. In some ways it has made the functioning of Port worse."



layout is poor and the pavement even poorer. Perhaps we could also ask the businesses to take down their visitor unfriendly signage in exchange for the new extra spaces.

Improve bus transportation, especially at peak times (Weekend afternoons, Tuesday evenings). Perhaps move the bus stop to Lakeside park where most folks are going anyway and add a few new parking spots along Lock St at the old bus stop. Maybe we need bus pullouts so that cars can pass while the bus is picking up and dropping off passengers.

Paint lines so that Lock St. traffic is better separated between those slipping around going to the city and those turning left, create a stacking lane. This has long been promised

since the 4 spaces in front of the Twisted Pig were removed years ago. Traffic should be kept moving.

Remove the 4 spaces along Main St. north of Lock and make for a two lane park exit so that folks going up Main St. are separated from those turning left onto Lock. This removal has been suggested by expert reports, but requires new lines (a cheap solution) We should be able to replace them with new spots elsewhere.

If we are expecting folks to park in the neighbourhood, then those spaces should be clearly marked and curbed with permeable spaces, instead of parking on peoples' front lawns and blocking driveways. If we do our measurements correctly, we could even add a few spaces and keep the lanes open a bit wider so that traffic can pass each other. This is done in Toronto with reduced setbacks from hydrants and corners.

A lot can be done simply with painting arrows and lines and other visual aids which help visitors who don't know their way around find their way. Let's try some things and see if it helps instead of waiting. Perhaps temporary portable street lights. Let's play with adjustable timing. Electronic indicators in real time at

Lock & Lakeport which indicate when the Lakeside lot is full, so people can make an early decision instead of going into a dead end where nothing is available for them anyway. The current sign at the bridge is a waste as it offers no decision options and is not in real time.

Maybe a cross channel ferry that only operates during warm weekends and special events. Let's formalize the pot-holed parking on the east side by the power station. It is a far shorter walk than Jaycee park or other eastside parking options.

More than anything we need surge capacity. Port is not always busy. It is mostly on hot summer afternoons and evenings and during events. Currently the gravel lot by the Legion, parking in Hogan's Alley and illegally parking on Rankin property, all act as overflows. If we finally get development, these 75 spaces will disappear. Make deals with private owners for use of their spaces and protect them from liability.

We recognize that things are never going to be perfect, but ignoring the current situation only leads to more problems down the road. We have to keep traffic moving and we have to make sure that our businesses don't go broke because their customers can't find a place to park, or folks simply don't come to Port anymore. Maybe that's the plan! Now is the time to make those changes which will help us in the long term too. ■



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The Thorold & Port Dalhousie Railway

In 1853, Some Felt That St. Catharines, as a Mere Station, Would "Play Second Fiddle" to Thorold and Port Dalhousie.

In late June 1853, a special meeting was held in the St. Catharines town hall (in the old courthouse) "to consider the propriety of the town's taking stock in the Thorold and Port Dalhousie Railway." This meeting, called for the general shareholders of the company, would carry the Act of Incorporation into effect and directors would be elected. A notice, published in the St. Catharines Journal, named it as the "Port Dalhousie and Thorold Railway Company." Perhaps the names published in the newspapers reflected the perspective of the individual, depending on whether they lived in Thorold or in Port? (Journal, June 30, 1853).

The editor of the St. Catharines News opined that the town "being rather left out of the line of the Great Western, is justly fearful of being isolated amid the railway improvements going on and hence manifests a laudable anxiety to keep pace with the times---and...prepared to 'go it' at all hazards." Some felt at the time that St. Catharines, as a mere station, would end up "playing second fiddle" to Thorold and Port Dalhousie (Evening News, July 6, 1853).

Land was purchased along the route of the new railway and construction commenced in 1854. In April 1855, a "Memorandum of Expenditure" was prepared by George Rykert, president of the P.D. & T. RR. Co., showing that £15,489.9½ had been spent up to that date, and the company had an additional £9,510.10.2½ "cash on hand." The Town of St. Catharines passed a by-law which authorized the mayor and council to "subscribe for additional stock" in the railway "to the extent of £25,000. This was in addition to the amount that the town had already subscribed toward the work. Samuel D. Woodruff noted that the railway company was "relieved of a considerable expenditure" by certain projects undertaken by the Canal authorities, and permission given to them to locate the railway terminus on or near the pier at Port Dalhousie on the Michigan side (St. Catharines Constitutional, Apr. 11, 1855).

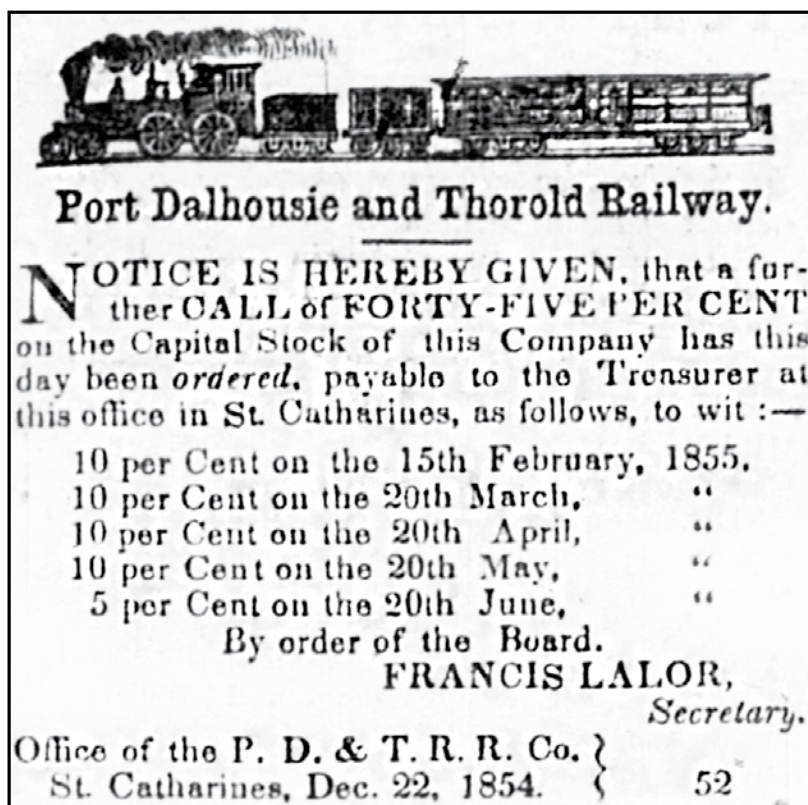
No firm decision was made by the Town of St. Catharines regarding the purchase of the additional stock, and so a special meeting was called on December 10, 1855, to vote on the issue. This injection of badly needed cash would determine whether the work on the railway would be completed on time. The editor of the Semi-Weekly Post wrote: "Many will, no doubt, cavil and snarl, and call the gentlemen who first started and have thus far successfully carried through this undertaking, all sorts of nasty and ungentlemanly names,

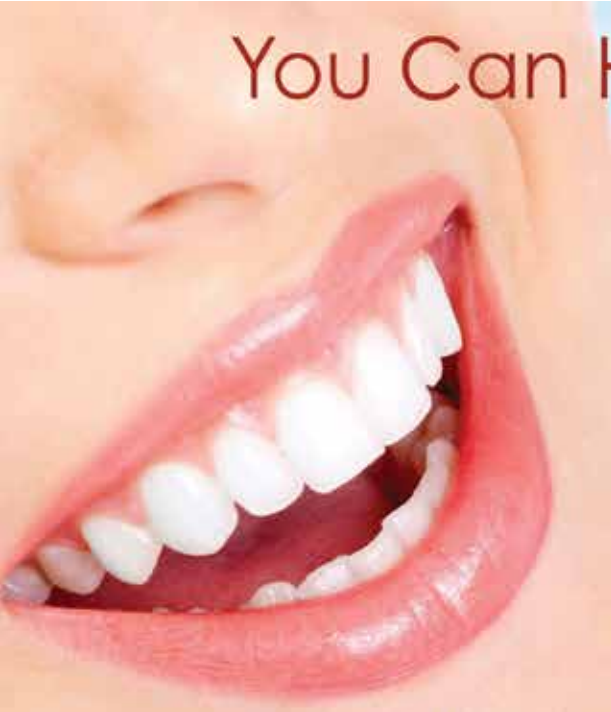
and will insist that the Directors have not the interests of the town at heart when they ask an additional grant of £25,000." It was pointed out that the completion of the line would provide a connecting rail link to the Great Western, with more convenient access to the markets at Buffalo, Hamilton, and Toronto, as well as a regular ferry connection across the lake to Toronto. This would eliminate the (then) inconvenient method of travel to Toronto, via a steamer from the docks at the Town of Niagara. "A pretty thing it would be to go abroad that the people of St. Catharines were such a cowardly chicken-hearted set of individuals, as to commence a great undertaking...and abandon it when half-finished and leave their money to rot in railway iron and ties, when by a little exertion and firmness they could have built their road" (Semi-Weekly Post, Nov. 20, 1855).

In a letter to the editor, penned by "H.H.," it was noted that the citizens of St. Catharines had been the "victims of a gross piece of folly, thrust upon them by misrepresentation

and deceit," and have been "sneered at by the promoters of this scheme." He opined that if the work, which far exceeded the initial estimates, was to be stopped, and the iron rails and ties were to be sold, that the amount of money raised "would have gone a great way towards making a good Macadamized [packed gravel] Road to Port Dalhousie" (St. Catharines Constitutional, Nov. 28, 1855).

Continued on next page





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Misfortune struck the railway company when, at 7:30 on the morning of Aug. 15, 1856, it was discovered that the steamer Welland had caught fire while moored at Port Dalhousie. This vessel, which was owned by the Town of St. Catharines, provided ferry service to Toronto. Under the command of Captain William Donaldson, her engines had been built by Thomas Towers of St. Catharines. She was described as "magnificent" and "elegantly fitted up." On the previous evening the Welland was "crowded for a pleasure party" on a "moonlight excursion" from Port Dalhousie to Queenston, which broke up around 2:30 am. Had the fire erupted while on the lake "the consequences would have been truly horrible." The Welland was a total loss and although partly insured the town sustained a loss of £10,000 or £12,000. Immediately after the fire, Capt. Donaldson journeyed to Montreal to examine a ship named the Blue Bonnet. It was hoped she would replace the Welland and allow for the cross-lake service to resume. By August 1859, other steamers such as the Peerless were also offering moonlight cruises which departed from Port Dalhousie (Constitutional, Aug. 20, 1856).

On the morning of Sept. 2, 1859, the Welland Railway train, which departed from Port Dalhousie, was forced to apply its brakes less than a mile outside the village to avoid a large "stick" or tree limb that had been deliberately placed across the tracks and was resting on both rails. The limb was cut into pieces when the train ran over it. Although the train was not derailed, the limb was sufficiently large that it could have damaged the engine. Authorities apprehended three males who were nearby: Thomas Nihan (age 16), Henry Alcox (18), and a black man only named in the papers as Fairfax. Nihan was bailed out but the other two men spent the night in gaol, and all appeared at the mayor's court on the following morning. Despite being investigated, it could not be determined that the men charged had actually obstructed the tracks. The mayor released them after "administering quite a fatherly and benign admonition to Nihan, Alcox, and Fairfax" (Journal, Sept. 3, 1859). ■

- Brian Narhi



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More Random Reminiscences

Snapshots of Growing up in Port Dalhousie as an Unfettered Adolescent.

In 1960 a plebiscite was held to determine if Port Dalhousie should amalgamate with St. Catharines. Even though over 90% of Port residents voted to reject amalgamation, it was defeated by the Ontario PC government which overrode local opposition to force the expansion. Sound familiar? So much for democracy in action. The resulting centralization of services, explosion of suburban malls, the end of the cross-lake ferries and streetcar lines, and the shuttering of the Lakeside Amusement Park, added to the slow decline of the town.

During those years of dwindling economic vigour, I rode my bike and hung out on the streets until the streetlights came on, worked at the amusement park, picked fruit during the summer months, laid in the sun on the beaches, learned to swim from Martha Stuart, fished from the piers and Martindale Pond. Most enterprises in the business district along Front Street and Lock Street had closed, although the Lion's Tavern, the Port Hotel and a few other stores hung on. The piers and lighthouses had fallen into disrepair, and the lake and Twelve Mile Creek were so polluted a piquant odour wafted over the town on some hot summer afternoons. But even in its forlorn and faded beauty, it was still loved by many of its citizens.

I grew up on Queen Street, (now Dalhousie Ave.), just around the corner from McArthur Public school, in a neighbourhood of towering maple trees and humble homes. As a kid, I was blissfully unaware of older adults, who were, ironically, much younger at the time than I am now. In the dusty vault of my memories, I have filed anecdotes about the village and its characters, although some events, no doubt, weren't so funny at the time. Be advised some names have been changed to protect the guilty.

The Emancipation Day Picnic was a celebration of the anniversary of the freedom of enslaved people on August 1st, 1834, and the "Big Picnic" took place at Lakeside Park every year on August 1st. The huge event attracted up to 6,000 people and offered a veritable kaleidoscope of sights, sounds, and sensory experiences that to us Port kids were wildly exotic and irresistible. It was a day like no other day at the park. A friend of mine told me about watching the gambling that took place, mostly shooting craps on blankets spread on

got a gun!" Constable Jamieson, who was policing the Emancipation Day Picnic, pushed through the crowd and confronted a guy who brandished a .38 revolver at his girlfriend with whom he had been arguing. Jamieson fearlessly walked up to him, stuck out his hand and ordered him to surrender the gun or else he would be arrested. The guy hesitated then handed it over and was quickly hustled out of the park. After word of the episode got around, Constable Jamieson gained a lot more respect from us Port kids.

going. Everyone knew when and where he set up the speed traps and a couple of the older guys would prank him by speeding down the street in their car until just before they hit the trap, then jam the brakes on and slow down, waving at him as they legally passed by. A great example of homegrown prankster ingenuity, Port style.

Dougie Dutton was another memorable character who for a time showed up at the park during the summers and hung around. Dougie, believe it or not, rode his bike from Florida. Seriously, from Florida. He came to visit relatives in town. He was a rough-hewn older guy with strong, meaty hands. He would hold them up in a boxer's stance and punch the air with his left fist and shout out "Hotel Dieu!" then throw a right hook with his other fist and shout "General!" (the names of the two area hospitals at the time), and if he got his hands on you in his iron grip, you weren't getting away. As was the case with the gang of guys that hung out in the amusement park, they played a trick on Dougie. One night he fell asleep at a picnic table under one of the pavilions and some of the boys quietly piled picnic tables around him, and when he awoke, he was trapped in the table cage.

He cursed at them until the tables were taken apart, freeing him to threaten them by pummelling the air with his "hospital" punches as they ran away laughing.

One other time, a dark, mysterious stranger from Port Arthur showed up at the park and someone found out he was a self-proclaimed hypnotist. Well, always up for something new, the gang assembled at the bottom of the stairs going down into the park and he performed his mesmerisation for us. After hypnotising a few of the guys into believing they were riding a go cart, bumping around on the ground on their butts, doing The Twist to inaudible music, and making their cigarettes taste like burnt rubber, he disappeared as mysteriously as he arrived.

There are many stories of the strange occurrences that took place in Port back in those days. There's the one about a stolen police car buried in a backyard, and the bookies who ran businesses in Port for the Buffalo and Toronto mobs, or the glowing UFO that appeared hovering above the Gracefield schoolyard one night. These are just some of the stories/myths of Port Dalhousie's past. Undoubtedly there are hundreds, if not thousands more, lost in the mists of time. ■

- Peter Wing



The Lakeside Park Midway during the early 1960's, facing East. The original Merry-Go-Round building on the left.

the ground. One stylish gentleman from Detroit they called Fritzzy, who was all decked out in a zoot suit, enlisted him to assist him while shooting craps. It seems he was a big man and had difficulty picking up the dice, so he paid my buddy a nickel to retrieve them. He also paid some of the other boys from town to keep an eye out for the cops, as gambling in public was not allowed.

In any large gathering of people the possibility is always present of unexpected violence or disruption. Anyway, a ruckus broke out in the crowd, and someone yelled "He's

Both Jamieson and Eddy the cop walked the beat in Port Dalhousie back then, their headquarters were at the old Town Hall, which is today's library. On occasion Jamieson would set up speed traps in town. One time he installed a trap on Queen Street between Ann and Elgin then hid behind a large maple tree and monitored the speed meter. It was slow going in the sleepy town, just a few cars drove over the rubber tubes he had laid across the road, and they never came close to breaking the speed limit. Out of boredom he invited the neighbourhood kids to ride over the tubes with their bicycles and tell us how fast we were



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Do you have some colourful Port memories to share? If so, send them along to editorportreporter@gmail.com. We might print them in the next issue.

Progress on The Carlos Garcia Memorial Park



Motorists who enter and exit Port Dalhousie via the Main Street and 3rd Street Louth intersection, be aware of the change. Stay safe out there.

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There are Tattoos, and Then There are TATTOOS!

At One Time Marching Band Competitions in Lakeside Park Were Very Popular.

In the late 1950s and early 60s, military and marching band competitions called Tattoos were very popular here in Port Dalhousie. The Tattoos in Lakeside Park were “musical tattoos”, open-air marching competitions and exhibitions that drew thousands of enthusiastic spectators. The town had its very own marching band, The Port Dalhousie Guardsmen who won competitions in Peterborough, Fort Erie and in Pennsylvania. They sponsored a tattoo for some years throughout the late 50s and early 60s at Lakeside Park which attracted Senior and Junior drum corps from southern Ontario and western New York, who participated in precision “marching and maneuvering” drills in the park. The Tattoos included

not only marching bands, but also majorette competitions, street parades, water skiing exhibitions, *donkey baseball(!), fireworks, giant bingo games and raffles and proved to be extremely popular, filling the grandstand in the park and the midway with throngs of visitors. The Port Dalhousie Guardsmen Corps eventually folded in 1990, mainly due to lack of funding.

Other local drum Corps:

Grantham Police Boys Jr Corps
Welland Crowland Lancers
Niagara Regionaires
Merriton Grenadiers
Thorold Black Knights
Niagara Sea Cadets



* What's Donkey Baseball? Visit: rb.gy/bhfot0

Lakeside Park - Port Dalhousie, Ontario



SITE OF PORT DALHOUSIE GUARDSMEN TATTOO 1956-7-8

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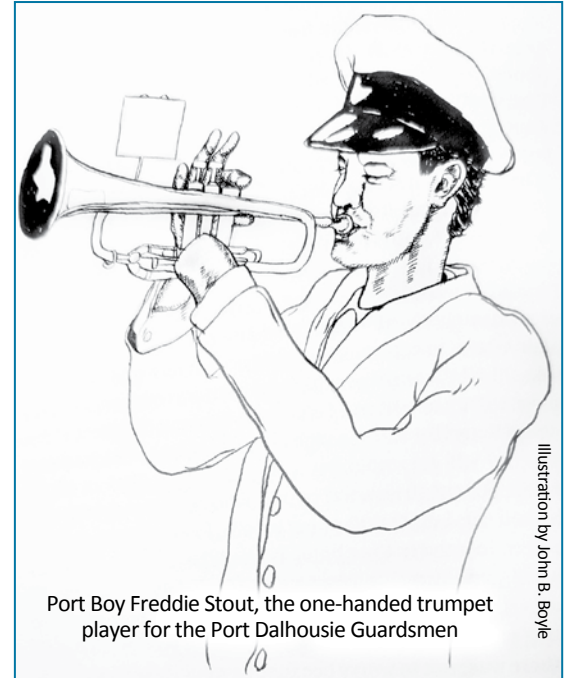


Illustration by John B. Boyle

Port Boy Freddie Stout, the one-handed trumpet
player for the Port Dalhousie Guardsmen

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So About Main Street ...

Wondering about the progress of its reconstruction?

Our Municipal Councillor Bruce Williamson has been enquiring about any progress in the design, and reconstruction of RR87, as well as the ongoing negotiations between the City and Region. Below we reprint an email he received from the Region.

Good Afternoon Councillor Williamson,

I have reviewed your email below and have the following to provide:

City and Region staff are in the process of negotiating the transfer to the City, in doing so we have jointly retained a consultant to provide a full listing of all assets that will be transferred to the City and to provide a non-bias cost estimate to go along with those assets. This process along with the negotiations is going well and both City and Region staff are working toward a mutually acceptable recommendation.

Given where we are with the election upcoming it is reasonable to expect that a recommendation to Region Council will be in Q1 of 2027 followed by inclusion of a business case in the 2028 Capital Budget to facilitate the transfer of funds (pending approval). In future meetings with the City I will be recommending that City staff proceed with their design once the Council report is approved in Q1 of 2027 and be prepared for construction in 2028. In order to assist with this, we will turning over our designs to the City to allow for an expedited design process.

In the interim Region Operations staff will be maintaining the road section to our Minimum Maintenance Standards, I would not suggest any further investment by either the Region or City given that the Road will be fully reconstructed.

Lastly, I will reiterate that Region and City staff have been working very well together and there is a strong collaboration underway to get this completed as soon as practical.

I trust the above is acceptable, should you have any further questions please reach out at your convenience.

Best Regards,

Frank Tassone, C.E.T.
Director of Transportation Services
Niagara Region

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Voices of the Past



Mr. Croft is a very modest man who prefers to talk more about the many other great athletes than about his own accomplishments. He was born in St. Catharines and moved to Main St. when he was four. Ultimately, he would embark on an illustrious career in sports playing lacrosse.

KEN CROFT

"I was born in St. Catharines and in 1930 we moved to my grandfather's cottage at 148 Main Street when I was four. It was handy for me because when I went to high school there were two streetcars at 8:30 in the morning. I was always pretty tardy and when the first streetcar stopped at Christie, I would wait until it went by the house and then run out the back door to Johnston and get the second one. The streetcar tracks were in the middle of the street and the ties and rails were raised and the only way you could get across with a car was at the street corners where they had boards.

As kids growing up in Port we didn't have much. There was my mum, my brother, my sister and myself. Not too long after we moved there, my father, who was Willie Muir's (Muir Dry Docks) chauffeur, abandoned us. That was really tough on everyone but we didn't realize it at the time. There wasn't a lot of work around. My brother was older than us and he went to work on the lake boats. He would buy us things that we needed in the house—like a broom and a dustpan. Insignificant. But not then, that was a big deal.

I often think about my sister and me doing our homework by coal oil lantern because they had shut the power off. That wasn't bad, but when they shut the water off because the bill wasn't paid that was really bad. Our next-door neighbour, Mrs. Garland, was good to us - me in particular. She used to baby-sit me when my mother went to work and I liked going over there because her son Melvin had lots of toys. Her other son played the bagpipes and that was pretty exciting.

If you were a decent person and you had a problem, people would bend over backwards to help you. I remember one year the volunteer firemen had a Christmas tree by the Cenotaph and they had a gift for every kid in Port Dalhousie. It was that type of a community."

Excerpt from *Port Dalhousie: An Intimate History*

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Port Dalhousie's Last Town Council - 1960

Amalgamation With St. Catharines Made the Town's Governance Obsolete.



Top row, L-R: Stan Thompson, Sid Brookson, Bill Caton, Jim McGrath, Mike Hourigan.
Bottom row: Norman Johnston, Trevor Morgan, Bob Johnston, Bill Mackie, Lorne Graham (Town Clerk)

With amalgamation into St. Catharines on January 1, 1961 Port Dalhousie ceased to have its own Town Council. The last town election for the 1960 term of office was held Monday, December 7, 1959. The positions of Mayor, Reeve and Deputy Reeve were acclaimed and six councillors were elected.

Stanley Mathew (Stan) THOMPSON - Stan was born on May 24, 1911 and grew up in rural Saskatchewan before moving to Ontario sometime after 1931. His parents, Peter and Mary (Kadlec) Thompson, were of Croatian ethnicity and were born in Europe. They immigrated to Waukegan, Illinois before moving in 1911 to a farm in Saskatchewan. He married his wife Audrey Clara Kenty in Welland, Ontario and they had two children: Marilyn and Jay. They lived at 141 Main Street. He was a charter and life member of the Port Dalhousie Lions Club. Stan died on November 9, 2008 in his 98th year.

Sidney Harold (Sid) BROOKSON - Served 3 years on council. Sid was born in 1907 in London, England and immigrated to Canada in 1921 with his parents Arthur and Ellen. He and his wife Margaret Ann had four children: Verna, Shirley, Gordon and Robert. He was an Anglican in faith and a member of St. Andrew Masonic

Lodge. He lived at and owned and managed Lakeside Amusement Park. Sidney died on February 25, 1992 and cremation followed. On April 27, 1993 the family planted a green ash tree near the carousel in his memory.

William Morrison (Bill) CATON - Bill was born on March 8, 1924 in Ontario. He and his first wife, Joan who died July 30, 1970 had 2 children: Patricia and Catherine. He remarried Lydia and became step-father to Frank and John. He lived at 58 Main Street. He served in the Royal Canadian Navy during World War II. He was a member of Port Dalhousie Branch 350 Legion for 62 years. He was the president of Lubrizol of Canada in Niagara Falls. William died on March 2, 2012 and is buried in St. John's Cemetery.

James Edward (Jim) McGRATH - Born on August 6, 1910 in Port Dalhousie. He and his wife Gwendoline had three children: Carlene, Richard and James. They lived at 194 Main Street. He was a superintendent at Port Weller Dry Docks and had worked there since 1945. He was a member of St. John's Anglican Church and of Seymour Masonic Lodge A.F and A.M. James died in a car accident on May 23, 1963. He is buried in St. John's Cemetery.

Claude Michael (Mike) HOURIGAN - elected for the first time. He had been the Town's Planning Board Secretary. He was born March 12, 1905 in Dundas, Ontario. He and his wife Drucilla lived at 167 Main Street before moving to 198 Dalhousie Avenue. They had two children: Patricia and Michael.

His wife Drucilla died July 2 1982. He died on November 15, 1977 at Hotel Dieu Hospital and is buried in the St. Augustine Catholic Church Cemetery, located at 54 East Street South (Dundas), Hamilton.

Norman Scott (Norm) JOHNSTON - Served 5 years on council. Norm was born in Port Dalhousie on June 26, 1903 and lived in Port all his life, mostly at 22 Ann Street. He married Helen Blair in 1928 and they had four children: Norman, Kenneth, Betty and Marilyn. He began his sailing career at age 15 and was appointed captain of his first ship at age 24. He was a Lake Captain for 18 years, retiring on June 1, 1946. He was very involved in the Boy Scouts, Henley Aquatic Association, St. John's Church and other groups. He died on November 14, 1972 and is buried in St. John's Cemetery.

Continued on page 23

The beach grows quieter, but the waterfront never loses its charm.

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St. Catharines 150 1876-2026

AUTUMN CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1. Uncle with a top hat
 - 4. Traps by stealth
 - 10. Forest unit
 - 14. Apr. consultant
 - 15. Hide out indefinitely
 - 16. "On Golden Pond" bird
 - 17. One way to be left
 - 19. Comfy cozy
 - 20. Historic racehorse
 - 21. Computer programmer, e.g.
 - 22. ___ upswing (rising)
 - 23. Truman's state
 - 27. Flamed meat venue, briefly
 - 31. Past potentates
 - 34. Back on the boat
 - 35. Where Moses floated
 - 36. "Men in Black" quarry
 - 37. Suffix with cynic
 - 40. As well
 - 42. Bovine chew?
 - 43. Univ. mil. group
 - 45. Help and comfort
 - 47. Mugs of suds
 - 49. 1990 Hackman thriller
 - 53. Not one of the gang
 - 54. You must read this?
 - 58. Midshipman's counterpart
 - 60. Transports for 36-Across
 - 62. Way off base?
 - 63. Circular
 - 66. Ditto
 - 67. Books in hotel drawers
 - 68. "To Kill a Mockingbird" character
 - 69. Observer
 - 70. Second in the credits, often
 - 71. Unusual gift of sight
- Down
- 1. Dunderhead
 - 2. For the bees
 - 3. ___ cum laude
 - 4. Artie or George
 - 5. Generic

- 6. Astronaut with Armstrong and Collins
- 7. Color of Mao's little book
- 8. Continental abbr.
- 9. Place bugs or wires
- 10. Nonwinner
- 11. Presidential advisor, affectionately
- 12. Bounder
- 13. Tech. dept. in a university
- 18. Provide with a medal
- 21. 2003 play-off 10-Down
- 24. Treadmill site, perhaps
- 25. Refine, as flour
- 26. Preminger of film
- 28. Letters on a Michelin
- 29. Hazy appearance
- 30. Proof letters
- 31. Bird over the waves
- 32. Long Greek promenade
- 33. First roofed ballpark
- 38. Wise words
- 39. Actress Rogers
- 41. Kimono tie
- 44. More like Simon Legree
- 46. Parent, back and forth
- 48. Methuselah's father
- 50. Giant legend Mel
- 51. Treat the ice again
- 52. Egg quality
- 55. Pioneer bathyspherist William
- 56. Popular cookies
- 57. Legally block
- 58. Check out, as a joint
- 59. Not here
- 61. Gorbys former domain
- 63. Brit. broadcaster
- 64. Spanish river
- 65. They make hosp. deliveries

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*ANSWERS ON PAGE 23



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Voices of the Past



Shirley had the good fortune to be born into Lakeside Park where her father, Sid Brookson was first the manager and then the owner. She recounts her experiences as a young girl who spent her summers living in a cottage in the park. A vibrant and personable individual, she was part of the first-ever women's rowing team and competed in an exhibition event at the CNE in 1948 and 1949.

Shirley (Brookson) Dick

"My dad was the resident manager of Lakeside Park and we had a cottage down there. There were the four of us children. My two brothers were five and seven years younger so we had separate lives at Lakeside Park. But it was great growing up there. Well, because of course you were the boss' daughter.

I think I was ten years old when I was allowed to go into the bathhouse and hand out hangers once in awhile. I don't even think I got paid for it. I don't really remember. The bathhouse was a huge building about halfway down the midway. When you walked out of the bathhouse/changeroom you were right on the beach. There were two sides, a ladies side and men's side. There was a place there where you could rent a bathing suit or a hanger to hang your clothes on. The men's bathing suits were all wool—one piece with long shorts and a belt at the waist. Of course, the ladies' were covered even more. I remember feeling them and thinking how can anyone wear one of these. Some of the people came by boat for the day to look around and didn't realize there was so much available. Sometimes when the water got too high, it got flooded. I can remember putting sandbags around the merry-go-round at least.

When I was 12, I began working in the hotdog stand. We had a big oven that toasted the buns and a two-sided steamer that boiled the hot dogs on one side. When they were cooked we kept them warm on the other side. We sold hot dogs and orange Jello for 25 cents each. The man that ran the stand, Mr. Kelly, mixed up the orange (honeydew) in the back in a great big vat. It was a concentrate and he added water and ice to it to keep it really cold. The people lined up three deep around the hotdog stand. There were two of us working at a time and we'd each start at one corner and go around. It was amazing how we kept up with it. We worked from 10 a.m. until 11 p.m. when the rides closed. Sometimes he'd make us stay open until 1 a.m. when the dance was over in case someone was hungry. We were kiddie-corner from where the merry-go-round used to be—across from the ball pitch and the fishpond."

Excerpt from *Port Dalhousie: An Intimate History*

The Beaton Medal

The Beaton medal was awarded annually to one student of the Port Dalhousie Public School. It was awarded by William Bruce Beaton who had served on the Port Dalhousie Town Council and Public School Board and on the Lincoln and Welland District High School Board. Each year teachers in grades 5 through 8 nominated students who showed the highest degree in such characteristics as marked progress in studies, observing the Golden Rule, being truthful and other general good characteristics. The students in these grades then voted for the eventual winner.



Willard Bruce Beaton was born on July 20, 1883 in Eden, Bayham Township, Elgin County. Willard was living in St. Catharines when he married Ethel Gertrude Colvin of Port Dalhousie on April 29, 1914 in Port Dalhousie. Her parents were Captain and Mrs. Harvey Colvin who lived on Queen Street (now Dalhousie Avenue). Ethel died on November 28, 1921 and is buried in the family plot in St. John's Cemetery. After the passing of his first wife, he married Hazel Agnes Comfort on March 29, 1924 in St. Catharines. The Marriage Licence was sworn at the Port Dalhousie Village town hall and lists Willard as a widower aged 39. Anglican, residence on Queen Street. The last Port Dalhousie directory entry for Willard was in 1951 when he was living at 125 Main Street.

Willard died on February 1, 1965 at the St Catharines General Hospital and is buried in the Comfort family plot in section 'F' Victoria Lawn cemetery. Willard was living at 201 Ontario Street at the time. Hazel died on April 13, 1984 and is buried in the same family plot.

Although the medal may have been awarded beginning in 1925, the first year that I was able to find a recipient was in 1928 when Maxine Johnson won the coveted medal. The following are the other Beaton medal winners:

1929 Franklin Ness, 1930 Orro Tallman, 1931 Irma Talman, 1932 Wallace Reid, 1933 Lloyd Lemon, 1934 Ida Heckadon, 1935 George Campbell, 1936 unknown, 1937 unknown, 1938 Wilma Mitchell, 1939 Allan Haynes, 1940 Terry Belford, 1941 Donald Ferguson, 1942 Murail Truesdale, 1943 Dorrie Belfors, 1944 unknown, 1945 unknown, 1946 Jack Forbes, 1947 Bill Daniels, 1948 Catherine Phillips, 1949 Bob Giles, 1950 Jim Anderson, 1951 James Eckhardt, 1952 Dave Rennie, 1953 Robbia Davies, 1954 Bob Mackie, 1955 Ralph Gibbs, 1956 Margaret Hutchison, 1957 Peter Barron, 1958 Bill Thorne, 1959 Dennis Brown, 1960 Angus Hutchinson, 1961 Bill Stevens, 1962 unknown, 1963 Bernie Knelson, 1964 Terry Dawdy, 1965 Barb Croft.

No further recipients were found after 1965. McArthur Public School closed in 1979 and I presume this ended the award, if not in 1966. ■

- Bill Stevens



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Last Town Council ... Continued

J. Trevor MORGAN QC - Trevor became a town councillor in 1954 and was acclaimed as Reeve in the 1960 election, having served as Reeve since 1956. He served as an Alderman for Port Dalhousie Ward on the St. Catharines City Council between 1960 and 1968. He was a Niagara Regional Councillor from 1969 to 1972. He served in the House of Commons of Canada from October 30, 1972 to May 9, 1974 as a member of the Progressive Conservative Party. Having only 3 per cent of normal vision he had a guide dog, and was the first blind MP for Canada. He was born on December 27, 1923 in Regina, Saskatchewan and died on October 19, 1989.. He was a barrister lawyer. Trevor and his wife Linda had one son Graham and lived at 40 Ann Street.

Robert Mercer (Bob) JOHNSTON (Mayor) - acclaimed as mayor in 1960 election. At age 22 he was first elected to town council and served for 18 years: Reeve 1941 - 1947, Warden of Lincoln County 1946, Mayor 1950 - 1960, Alderman on City Council 1961-1964, Mayor of St. Catharines 1965 -1967.. He was elected in 1967 to the Provincial Legislature as a Conservative M.P. in 1967 and re-elected 2 more times. He was born on September 15, 1916 in the family home at 10 Canal Street, and he lived his entire life in town. He owned and operated Johnston Ice and Coal Limited and was a charter member of the Port Dalhousie Lions Club and was President in 1953. Robert died on October 16, 1985 and is buried in New Section A of Victoria Lawn Cemetery. Johnston Street is named after him.

William Inglis (Bill) MACKIE - acclaimed as Deputy-Reeve in 1960 election. He lived at 8 Gertrude Street before moving to 8 Mary Street. Bill was born on July 2, 1919 in Port Dalhousie and lived his entire life here. He and his wife Jeanine had four children: William, Brian, David and Dianne. He was part of the St. Catharines Athletics Mann Cup championship teams of 1941 and 1944. and a member of Port Dalhousie Branch 350 Legion, a member of Seymour Masonic Lodge A.F and A.M., a member of the St. Catharines Rowing Club and the Alumni Association, he was a president of the Thompson Products Old Guard Association. Bill died suddenly at the age of 55 years on August 24, 1974. He is buried in Victoria Lawn Cemetery. Mackie Street is named after him.

William Lorne GRAHAM (Town Clerk) - served 25 years as clerk-treasurer, retiring in 1966. He was born in Port Dalhousie in January of 1896 and lived here all his life. He and his wife Fanny had two children: George and Eleanor. Between 1912 and 1937 he operated a coal and ice business. Between 1932 and 1940 he operated his own general insurance business. By 1941 he was appointed town clerk. He and wife Fanny lived at 38 Main Street. Willam died on September 1, 1972 and is buried in Victoria Lawn Cemetery. ■

- Bill Stevens



Photo Brian Raimondo

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Chris Bittle

Member of Parliament - St. Catharines



Have a Healthy and Happy Fall season!

Have any federal issues, reach out to my office, we would be happy to help!

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