

# ACO Matters

Architectural Conservancy of Ontario – Port Hope Branch

Newsletter – June 2011

## President's Report

The ACO Antiques Auction was held on April 10th and was a great success. Thanks to Joan & Gerry Tooke and their army of purple-shirted volunteers. We had a terrific turnout (too cold and rainy to be in the garden) and a wonderful collection of artefacts. Our new auctioneer did wonders and a great deal of money was raised to assist the many projects of Port Hope ACO. Our special thanks go to the donors of items to the auction. It is due to their contributions that the auction is a great success.

The Biennial Garden Tour will be held on Saturday, July 9th. This will be a spectacular tour and all the gardens are within walking distance of our downtown. I hope to see you there.

Our 46th annual House Tour makes it the longest continually running house tour in the Province. This year's line-up of houses is spectacular so we look forward to welcoming visitors to Port Hope to view our architectural treasures. Book your tickets early.

The Municipality has initiated a Centre Pier Task Force chaired by Paul Evans, to study the future of the Centre Pier and its buildings. We welcome this initiative and have been invited to participate in the process. To that end we have prepared a nine page Brief. As you are aware, ACO has had a long-standing interest in the Centre Pier and its buildings. To that end we helped form the "Pier Group", an independent organization focused on raising awareness of the important role the buildings have played in Port Hope's industrial heritage and the potential of reuse of these buildings and lands once the PHAI clean-up is complete.

The Municipality is concerned that the buildings, if kept, would become a financial liability to the Municipality. It is our belief that in fact, the buildings are an asset and with an aggressive economic development strategy, new uses could be found for the buildings which would bring economic development to the Town. We believe that demolishing the buildings, leaving a vacant site, is in fact a huge liability to the Municipality in terms of policing, maintenance and safety. We anxiously await the findings of the Task Force. If you wish to receive a full copy of our Brief, email me at [phecarch@bellnet.ca](mailto:phecarch@bellnet.ca).

We are saddened by the passing of Gerry Tooke. This remarkable man has left an indelible mark on Port Hope as well as the ACO. We will miss him immensely.

We look forward to a long hot summer and hope to see you all at the ACO Barbeque.

  
Phillip H. Carter  
M. Arch., M.C.P., OAA, FRAIC, CAHP

## Port Hope Branch Garden Tour

The ACO Port Hope Branch Garden Tour 2011 will be held **Saturday, July 9, 10am to 4pm**, and is designed to be a day for visiting 10 local private gardens whose enthusiastic owners will be present to meet visitors and show off these lovely properties.

This year, the gardens, all of which are in Port Hope itself, are clustered in groups of two or three which we hope will give a more relaxed day of more strolling and less driving. Three linked gardens, now separately owned, once formed one early large estate; two back onto one of the town's private ponds. This year, for the first time, Trinity College School ("The Lodge") will be included on the tour, with staff on hand, to explain the history of the garden as well as one of its longest serving gardeners whose time at the school exceeded six decades.

As in past years, local Master Gardeners will be on hand in most of the gardens to answer questions.

Lunch is available at Port Hope United Church, South St. (from 11:30am to 1:30pm).

Also on July 9, a separate, though related, event will take place. One of our 2011 gardens was designed by well-known Canadian gardening expert and author, Marjorie Harris, in 2010.

A wine and hors d'oeuvres reception will be held in the garden from 5 to 7pm. Marjorie will be on hand to discuss the project and give a short talk during the party. Only a very limited number of tickets will be available for this reception.

Tour tickets (\$20) are now available in local outlets or online at [www.acoporthope.ca/acogardentour.html](http://www.acoporthope.ca/acogardentour.html).

Tickets for the Marjorie Harris reception will also be available on line (at the same address) or by phone at (905) 885- 8250.

All the proceeds from these two events will go the support the work of the Port Hope Branch of the ACO.

*Mary Shaw-Rimington, Garden Tour Chair*

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## ANNUAL SUMMER BARBECUE



**August 11th at 5:30pm**  
**7415 McAllister Road, near Bewdley**

This year's barbecue will be hosted by ACO members **Tom Cruickshank and Darlene King**, who live on 75 hidden acres not far from Bewdley. Their hobby farm is home to a nicely preserved Victorian farmhouse, which might look familiar to some observant ACO-ers. In fact, their house is a clone of a better known farmhouse on Hwy 2, just west of Cobourg—the latter is well known for a spectacular annual display of Christmas lights. Both were built by the same family.

### Directions:

1. Follow **Hwy 28** north toward Bewdley, about 15 km.
2. Turn right at the lights at **County Rd. 9**. Go about 3 km on County Rd. 9, past Benson Rd.
3. Turn right on **McAllister Rd.** (If you pass Cavan Rd. you've gone too far.) McAllister Rd. is a dead-end dirt road with only three houses on it. Darlene and Tom live at **#7415**.

**RSVP to Judith Copeland at (905) 800-0693 before August 9th.** Please leave a message.

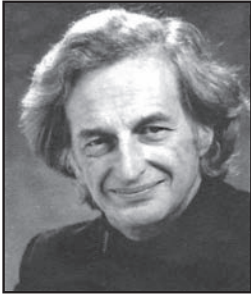
## Projects Committee

Every month or so, the Projects Committee sits down over a pot of coffee to discuss strategies and issues relating to local buildings that are currently on the heritage radar. Over the last few weeks, we've been keeping a close watch on the fate of landmarks as diverse as Fudge's Mill at Campbellcroft, which is currently for sale, and Central School, the best-preserved school in town and recently sold into private hands. We hope that new owners can put both buildings to new and productive use.

The Projects Committee is also the body that advises the ACO board on grants to private homeowners. Currently, two requests are under consideration for restoration work on two local houses. We hope to work with both owners as these projects progress.

Meanwhile, we continue to voice our support for the Centre Pier and the Nicholson File Factory while keeping an eye on any number of Walton Street commercial buildings.

*Tom Cruickshank, Projects & Auction Chair*



## Gerald Tooke

June 27, 1930 –  
April 29th, 2011

Gerry Tooke was a huge help for ACO Port Hope. He wrote and produced the newsletter. Together with Joan, he edited and produced the two 1982 inventories, "Symbols of our

Past" and "From Georgian to Vernacular".

Gerry was on the founding committee for the Auction; he researched donations to the Auction, photographed them, and generally kept us all on path.

Chairing the Municipality's Cultural Advisory Committee combined many of his talents and interests.

Gerry was very pleased to have been given the Marion Garland Award in recognition of his contributions to Port Hope and the ACO.

We will miss him!

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## Partners in the Village

The Friends of Wesleyville Village (FOWV) partnership with the ACO Port Hope Branch will be highlighted at the ACO/CHO conference in Cobourg on **June 3**. Kathryn McHolm and Blake Holton will speak about the set-up of the FOWV and the groundbreaking 20 year lease with the United Church of Canada. From noon to 4 p.m. on Sunday June 5th the Wesleyville Church will be open for inspection and tours of the village. All are welcome.

On March 23rd, the FOWV held its first Annual General Meeting and members workshop. The AGM heard that not only have we achieved almost all our goals for the first five years of Church restoration but our treasury is in the black. (Again we thank the ACO Port Hope for the generous donation in 2010). The workshop confirmed the FOWV vision and objectives and produced many new ideas for fund-raising and events.

What a success the Martyn Joseph concert at the Church April 1st was! Great music, warm vibrations and lots of new members. Thanks to Lee Batchelor, Ontario Power Generation, Unitrak Corporation and many volunteers, about \$1,600 was raised. Please call Roz Farber at 905 885-1575 to become a village friend.

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*The ACO believes in listening to the ideas that give rise to a project and giving it a fair hearing.*

## Riverside Parks

**T**he Ganaraska River East Side Parks project comprises three parks having common connection to Mill Street and the river.

Developing goals, program and designs for the parks involved the landscape architect working with a steering committee. The committee represented many interest areas, but several, including the ACO were not included. The process also lacked public awareness and consultation.

The design of any project requires more than just dealing with the narrow problems of how big, how many and so on. It must be guided by appreciation of opportunities and constraints of a place's physical setting and its culture, heritage and history.

Port Hope is celebrated for its heritage architecture, not just in its downtown but throughout many parts of the community, and is a shining example of the value of conserving, restoring and repurposing its heritage buildings.

At the time they were built, Port Hope's heritage buildings reflected the values and style of their present, but they were the beginning of the future. We now cherish these as part of our heritage. That same kind of process will continue as new works are built that reflect our time, but with respect for conserving our heritage.

The Ganaraska valley and its wonderful river was Port Hope's birthplace because it enabled the first industries that supported the growth of the town. The deep valley also required the railroads to build the huge viaducts that fly over it. These structures are not only symbols of industry that created the town boom in the past, they offer great open portals for free flow between downtown and the lake.

The Municipality's goal was to try and make these three parks part of what was termed a "Green Ribbon" to strengthen the link between downtown and Lake Ontario. But the three parks are only a part of a larger townscape in the valley. Lands between downtown and the lake that include underutilized properties, vacant buildings and barren parking

lots have potentials for better uses to complement downtown and help energize linkages to the lake. Also, ambitions to protect and repurpose the Pier could be well served by enlivening these linking lands. Port Hope's determination to stay vital demands long term visions and strategies for this area.

The parks, small parts of the "Ribbon", are separated by other uses. Efforts to make them seem continuous, to tie the ribbon together, are important.

Each of the parks has riverside walkways and linking paths and plantings but they also provide places to sit, to gather and to make gateways. These places did not need to be enclosed but defined as spaces. Open, walk-through structures were envisioned for this purpose.

While the idea of continuity is supported by a common palette of plantings and walkway materials throughout, the structures are more identifiable as one travels the streets or strolls through the parks.

## Structures' Design and Materials

Port Hope's architectural and industrial heritage are aspects to be celebrated and they influenced the design of the parks structures.

### Pillars

Vertical elements like pillars, when grouped, can define a space and yet allow views and free passage through them. They could be made of wood, steel or other metal, concrete, stone or brick. But brick, like no other, is Port Hope's material, and was chosen for the pillars as a symbol of her architectural heritage.

### Beams

The treed corner at Farini Gardens is the location for the first of the structures and it provided guidance for their design.

A roof could have helped to define the space but would not work well with the existing trees and would have further blocked views. In place of a roof the purpose of defining a space and adding structural stability can be served by a horizontal members, or beams, atop the pillars. Beams could be made of wood, metal pipe, open web metal joists, reinforced concrete, solid steel, but not brick.

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Steel, in the form of an I-beam, like the viaducts, is a strong symbol of Port Hope’s industrial heritage. Its black colour was chosen as it recedes and blends well with leaves. It also matches the horizontal black band and trim of the Waddell Hotel across the street. Benches, (still to be installed) are also black metal. Since structures in the other parks were also intended to be located with groups of trees and with the goal of continuity in mind, the Kin Park/Farini corner structure became the pattern for all the parks.

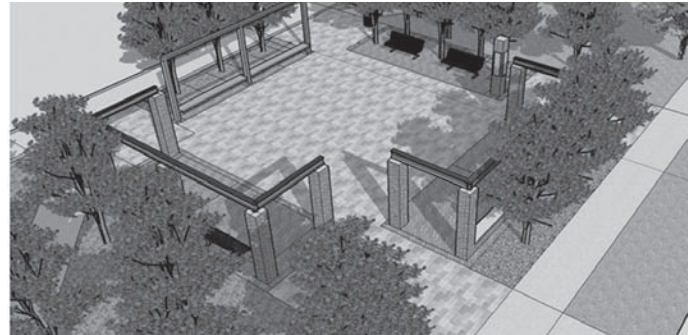
**There are key locations for structures:**

At the Kinsmen / Farini Gardens corner, the structure defines a seating area and marks an important entry to downtown. The original plan calls for an additional small seating area further north along the river.



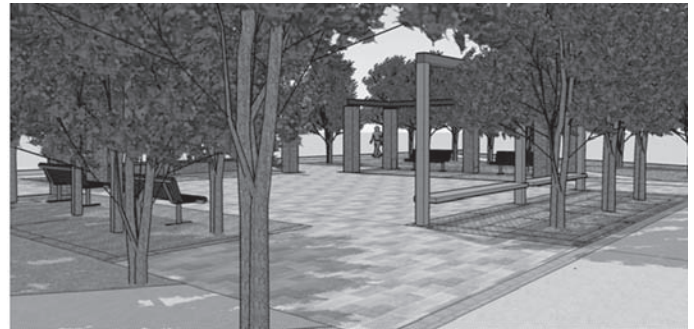
Farini Corner Structure

At Rotary Park the structure is located at the intersection of north / south pedestrian traffic along the river, east and west movements crossing the iron bridge and diagonal movements to and from Mill Street. The space can act as an arrival place from the bridge as well as an entry to it. It can become a casual meeting place or a site for a small event. It was referred to in the initial concepts as an Event Space.



Rotary – bird's eye looking NW

There is one structure at Rotary Park’s event space that is outside of the pattern. Galvanized steel posts and painted beam, with trees, defines the west side of the space. Its double facing seat allows people to sit facing into the space perhaps for a performance, or facing the river and Town Hall . Its different look and colour, sharing the space with brick pillars, was intended to suggest that respect for heritage can also support new works.



Rotary – view to SE from Riverside walk

East west links between the downtown areas in the floor of the valley to neighbourhoods at the top of valley slopes are important. Dorset Street east is a pedestrian route leading up to King Street. It could be improved. The event space can provide an arrival and “jumping off” point for that pedestrian connection.

A secondary seating area is located near the fish jumping area of the river. . . . continued next page



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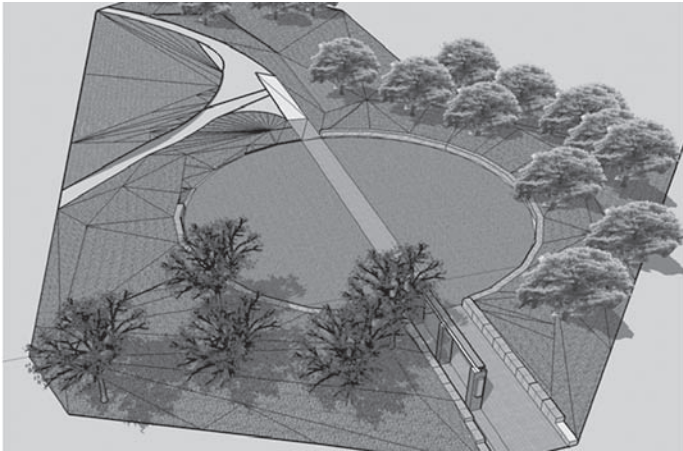
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(Continued from Riverside Parks, pg. 5).

At Riverside Park the corner at Mill and Peter is in the forefront of views into the southwest part of the valley, particularly as viewed from west bound Peter Street, an arrival point in the downtown precinct.

The purpose of the structure here is to identify a visual and physical entry point that is strong enough to lead the eye into the park setting. The park is a foreground for views to the strong sculptural viaducts converging into the west.



Riverside Park bird's eye looking W

Work to be completed in the current contract for all the parks includes benches, planting, seeding and sodding. The overall concept also included additional seating areas and furnishings, trees and other plantings, possibly to be done in a future phase.

Several areas visually or physically linked to the parks are important contextually. Future works on these, by private or public owners, have the potential to support goals of strengthening the townscape and linkages to the lake.

*Brad Johnson*

*BFA in Landscape Architecture, U. Illinois '58  
Master in Landscape Architecture, Harvard U. '63  
Member (Emeritus), Ont. Assoc. of Landscape Architects  
Fellow / Past-president, Cdn Soc. of Landscape Architects  
Academician Royal Canadian Academy of Art*

## ACO Auction & Tag Sale Report – A Great Success!

The seventh ACO Auction and Tag Sale was the best to date. We received hundreds of antiques and architectural items from supportive donors, many of them ACO members. The windows from the town hall were a highlight and brought many interested buyers. These donations helped us raise over \$20k which brought the total raised to over \$120k over the seven years of the Auction's existence.

Volunteers are the backbone of our success. They help throughout the year and the days leading up to the auction are always long and hectic. On Sunday, energy levels reached a high pitch and purple T-shirts were everywhere.

We opened at 10am and lineups began by 9:30, and the Tag Sale was converged upon as soon as the doors opened. As always, there were great buys and satisfied buyers.

“Chairs R’ Us” was started last year, a great success. This year we added “Windows” and “Doors R’ Us” allowing us to have fewer and better items in the auction and to keep the auction itself moving at a better pace.

The success of last year’s inaugural “Silent Auction” was repeated. Thanks to some very generous donors we doubled the final receipts.

After 6 years as our fabled auctioneer, Les Brittan stepped down. He introduced us to Rob Rusland from Peterborough who brought the same energy and sense of fun that Les gave us. Rob has a “following” which meant new people and new friends for the ACO Auction.

A lot of the work is done behind the scenes over the year and we want to pay tribute to a very special person, Gerry Tooke. Gerry gave unstintingly of his time and creative talent to help make the auction grow so successfully. He will be missed and his memory lives on.

Once again, thank you to our donors, volunteers and supporters for making this event such a success.

*Olga Cwiek  
for Joan Tooke*



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## The 6th Annual Port Hope & Cobourg ACO Bus Tour

On 27th April we rolled to Prince Edward County, once again with a full bus ( incidentally the numbers of guys are growing steadily, so come on, you guys - it's not all dolls!). The cost was \$70, the same as last year, and this includes everything. No paying for lunch on your own—an incredible bargain.

Forecast to the contrary, the sun shone and it only rained (deluged!) while we were on the bus going home, stopping obligingly before we disembarked.

The owner of Van Alstine's Mill, Professor John Paul Harney, led us on a most interesting tour around his wonderful old mill, and at the second stop, Alan Gratias, at his very handsome house on the lakeshore, served us all wine from his vineyard. The third house visited in the morning, Hayes Inn, a little Greek Revival gem restored to a B & B by two young lawyers, Sean and Andrea Campbell, was also greatly admired.

Following lunch at Waring House, we were given a tour in Picton by Peter Lockyer, former TV & radio journalist and founder of History Lives Here. Peter guided us round the totally contrasting structures of the Gaol and gallows (dark, heavy and enclosed) of Picton's Court-house, and the Crystal Palace (all light and sunshine), and afterwards we were given a vast and splendid tea by the ladies of St. Mary Magdalene Church.

On the return home we as usual offered our traditional Happy Hour, and in spite of a very busy day, managed to stay almost exactly on schedule.

*Patsy Beeson,  
Gail Rayment  
& Honor Shepley*

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*Frank Lloyd Wright*

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## House Tour

The 47th Port Hope ACO House Tour will be held on **Saturday, October 1, 2011** from 10am to 4pm. We have our complete slate of homes and to our delight, 75% of them have never been on tour before! This is quite a feat for a 46-year-old tour in a small town. All the houses are in town with many of them on the West side. A walkable tour was on our minds this year, most if not all can be tackled this way. We will have specific instructions in the ticket regarding parking, to keep any bottlenecks at bay.

Tickets are usually for sale on or about July 1, so keep an eye out. We encourage ticket purchases online with the ACO Website, using Paypal a secure payment method, or our many ticket outlets in the downtown core or out of town outlets as mentioned on the website. Ticket prices remain the same as the past few years at \$25. Some churches offer lunches and teas, the ticket or website will describe these options. The website will be updated as our ticket becomes available.

Our hard working House Tour Committee consists of Lee Caswell and Blaise Gaetz as co-chairs, Joan Moss as secretary/treasurer, Charles Wickett as ticket layout/advertising, Helene Savard-McQuigge mail order tickets, Penny Purcell as ticket outlet captain, Peggy Bennett as volunteer captain, and Daphne Svenningson as advisor. Please check the website for updates. Buy your tickets early as ticket numbers are limited. [www.acoporthope.ca](http://www.acoporthope.ca)

Any new volunteers for House Tour day please contact Peggy Bennett, e-mail [margaretrbennett@gmail.com](mailto:margaretrbennett@gmail.com), and she will put you on the list and contact you nearer tour day. Volunteers work half a day then get a free ticket to tour homes the other half day.

*Lee Caswell  
House Tour Chair*



### Lee Caswell

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