HERITAGE MATTERS

November 2026

CHAIR'S REPORT

Welcome! That is the most important thing that I want to say here. Welcome to the **Port Hope Heritage Foundation**. We are so glad you are here where you will find 400 or so other like-minded citizens who care about the town and its heritage. You may notice some slight changes to this newsletter including the title and the name of the organization, but I hope that you'll recognize this as a positive step towards the future of protecting our heritage in Port Hope. It has been a long and winding road to get here, especially in the past 6 months since ACO Inc. informed us that they would be ending the branch system on October 31st.

There is definitely some sadness in this as ACO has been active in Port Hope for over 60 years and has played a huge role in many of our conservation successes. We expect that the provincial organization will continue to advocate on behalf of heritage protection but it became necessary for us to create our own own not for profit corporation to ensure that the important work of conservation and restoration continued in our special town, and that we had a suitable place for our members to carry on the activities and events that we have always offered.

At this point you may be asking yourself, "Well, where is this beautiful place and how did I get here?" And that is understandable. It has been a long strange journey these past months which have led up to you becoming a member of the Foundation. A transition steering committee consisting of **Bruce Bowden**, **David Pamenter**, **Dennis Hogarth**, **Susan Layard** and myself, was created during the summer and was charged with the task of making sure that everything was in place for a new organization by November 1. This was not without its challenges. I can't thank these people (and the many other volunteers) enough for the dozens of meetings and thousands of emails that resulted. It became clear that the organization that we needed already existed.

The Port Hope Heritage Foundation was created in 2014 with similar goals and objectives to ACO Port Hope. It has run the house tour and garden tour for many years now and has donated a great deal of money to preserve Port Hope's heritage. PHHF was an already established, successful heritage not for profit whose only members were on the board, and it seemed like a natural fit for us. Work has also begun on establishing a separate charity, **Port Hope Heritage Charitable Fund**, which should be in place by next summer and will allow us to give charitable receipts for auction donations. accept gifts or bequests, pursue fundraising. etc.

It has been difficult to communicate what was happening with the new organization, in part because we weren't quite sure ourselves but also because we were under certain restrictions from ACO Inc. about communicating with our members and so l apologize for leaving many of you in the dark. We will make a concerted effort to communicate clearly and promptly now that we are purely a Port Hope entity. A nominating committee has chosen an interim board in place consisting of myself as President, **Susan Carmichael as Treasurer**, **Michelle Haney-Kileeg as Secretary**, **Lydia Bell-Gradon on Membership**. **Susan Layard on Advocacy** and **Julie Mavis on Communication and Marketing**. We will invite nominations to the board in the spring newsletter and present the board at our planned May general meeting. PHHF has an existing website at **phhf.ca** which we will be updating and using at least for the short-term and we will try to keep you informed there. There are also PHHF social media accounts for Instagram and Facebook and we will continue to issue e-blasts to our members for important and/or short notice issues or events.

I am excited about this organization and l hope you are too. It is our chance to be a part of something that is making a difference in our town and also, that is fun and social. I look forward to welcoming all of you to PHHF personally and I fully expect this organization to grow. Please tell your friends and neighbours about us. It's the best deal in town – **free membership!** – at least until May. We have done great things together in the past and I expect the future to be even brighter.

I want to leave you with one last thought: *what matters?* Your answer to this is likely be some combination of family, friends, health… But I want you to look back to the top of this newsletter and consider adding heritage to that list. We are very fortunate in this town to have inherited a legacy of over 200 years of fascinating history in our streets and buildings and landscape, and a river runs through it! Some of you have grown up here and may, at times, (like me) take it for granted a bit but some of you are newcomers and can see it with fresh eyes. Take a walk, get out, look around, look up. It's a wonderful place, isn't it.

– Brian Buttery, PHHF President

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Christmas in the Mediterranean?

I'm sure many of our members would love this, and while we can't quite offer that, we are able to announce that our first ever **PHHF Christmas Party** will be held in a historic Mediterranean Villa overlooking Lake Ontario.

Join us for a fully catered party on **Thursday, December 10 from 5:30 –8 p.m.** at historic **Villa Idalia** (85 Victoria Street South).

Hors d'oeuvres and canapés will be served. Sparkling and white wine, along with beer, and non-alcoholic choices will also be offered for a cash donation.

Additional information including ticket sales will be made available shortly.

Reminder: This is a members only event and tickets will be limited. Get on the list – it doesn't really matter whether you've been naughty or nice!

We look forward to seeing you there!

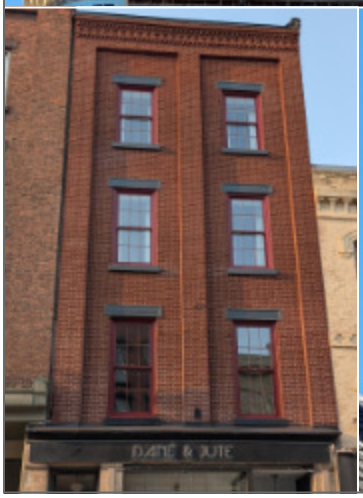
RESTORATION GRANTS

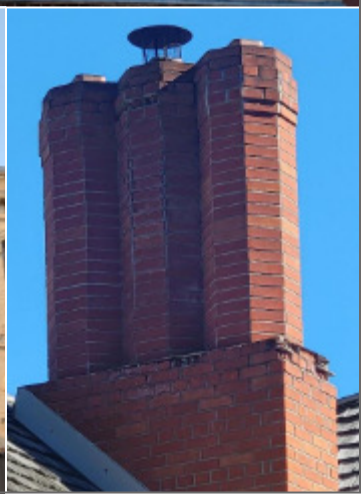
For over 60 years, ACO Port Hope has helped property owners with restoration projects for the vast array of historic buildings in Port Hope.

Port Hope has a wonderful collection of 19th and 20th century buildings, and the downtown has maintained its unique streetscape of preserved heritage buildings.

Costs to preserve and maintain these buildings have risen and with the help of grants, owners can update, replace, restore key exterior elements. These include masonry, cornices, chimneys, windows, doors, and porches.

Just in the last 5 years, $355,000 in grants have been paid out for many buildings on Walton St., John St. and in Ward 2. Below are just a few of the restoration projects.





We have commitments for grants totaling $145,000 for several projects not yet complete that include windows, woodwork, and chimneys on Walton, Ridout, Pine and North streets.

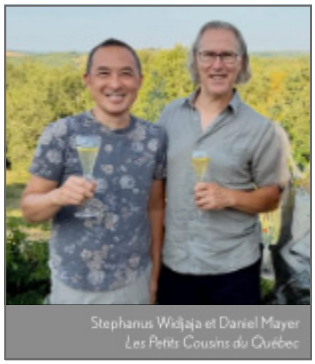
All these funds come from fundraising activities. This is only achieved through the hard work of the Board, Event committees and volunteers that support each successful fundraising event.

As ACO Port Hope ends on October 31, 2026, **Port Hope Heritage Foundation** will continue the tradition of providing support for heritage preservation through grants. Following are a few of the projects underway.

I would like to acknowledge the hard work of the Grants Committee – **Phil Carter**, **Susan Layard**, **Ian MacKay**, **Katherine McHarg**, **Jim Sculthorpe** and **Brenda Willows**.

– Susan Carmichael

LES PETITS COUSINS DU QUÉBEC


Stephanus Widjaja et Daniel Mayer
Les Petits Cousins du Québec

Many of you have heard the short version of how we ended up in Domme, France. I won't go into it now, but I'll share the full story at our presentation on November 28th, 2026, at the **Beamish House** in Port Hope at 3pm.

Stephanus and I (Dan) will be visiting Port Hope to present our project and the all-inclusive visits we offer.

To give you a quick highlight, Stephanus and I would like to invite you to explore our home in Domme, France. The region is rich in history, from prehistoric to medieval times. There are castles, caves, prehistoric sites, rivers, outdoor activities for all ages and more.

On the 28th at 3pm, we would like to invite you to our presentation, where we'll go into the details of who we are and what we do. We will talk about Domme and give you an overall example of what a week with us could look like.

You might have visited us already, so why not come and see us, and bring your friends and family to the Beamish House in Port Hope. Depending on how many people sign up, we might do two presentations on the same day, at 3pm and 6pm. We'll provide refreshments and a few door prizes. Please email us at stephanus.dan@gmail.com to reserve your spots.

– Daniel Mayer et Stephanus Widjaja
Les Petits Cousins du Québec
B&B/Chambres D'hôtes à Domme, France
16 Grand'rue 24250, Domme France
lespetitscousinsduquebec.com

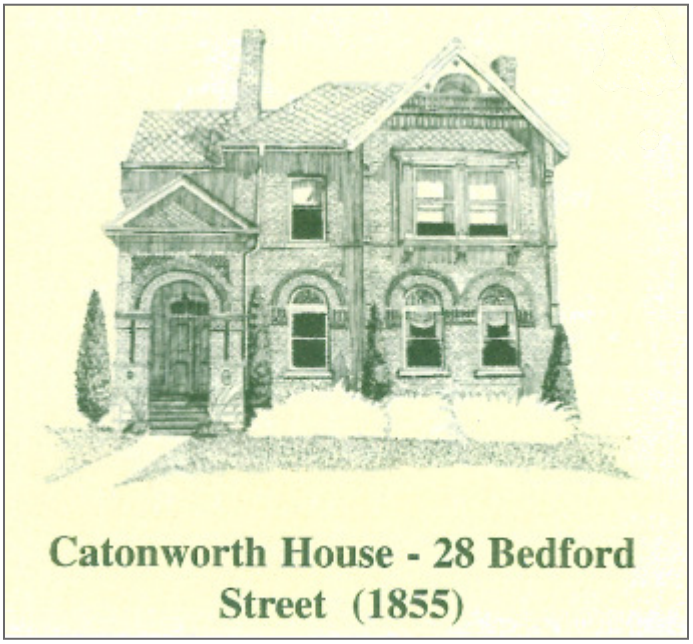
SO'S YOU KNOW

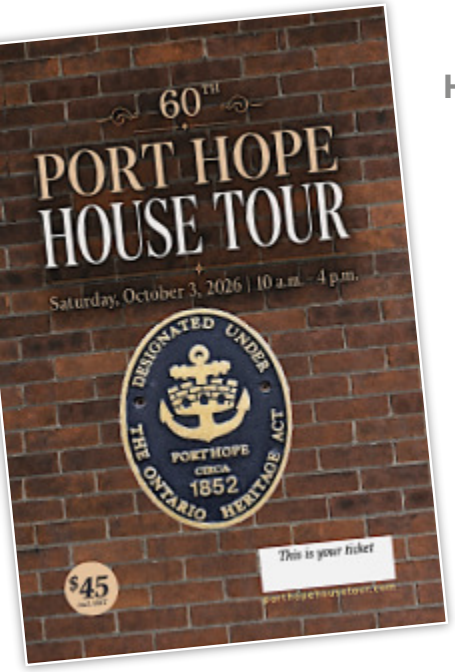
If you've never heard of the architectural style **Richardsonian Romanesque Revival**, you are in plentiful company. It's a style seen more frequently in the United States than in Canada, suggestive of success and solidarity, and lasted over the last three decades of the 19th century.

Henry Hobson Richardson (1838-86), who introduced it, is regarded by many as one of the most influential masters of early modern American architecture, along with Frank Lloyd Wright and Louis Sullivan. The style was a rugged version of Romanesque Revival, characterized by massive rough-hewn stone walls, deep-set rounded arches, heavy red sandstone or granite, and quiet, monumental power.

Richardson was born in Louisiana, attended Harvard College, and was only the second American to study architecture at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris.

One of his most important works is the twin-towered Buffalo State Asylum for the Insane, an immense building constructed in red brick and Medina sandstone, its peaceful, therapeutic grounds designed by the distinguished landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmsted, a close friend and frequent colleague of Richardson's. In fact the two collaborated on around 20 major projects together.An example of Richardson's style here in Port Hope is **Catenworth House**, at **28 Bedford Street**, which started off as an Ontario Cottage in 1855, housing workers from the distillery in the ravine behind it. But in 1888, its new owners, **Elias and Rebecca Crawley**, had altogether grander ideas for it. The cottage was greatly enlarged and the style chosen was Richardsonian Romanesque, reflected in its sturdy proportions and the emphatic rounded arches over the door and ground floor windows.





HOUSE TOUR NO. 60: A RECORD SUCCESS

It would be hard to imagine a more perfect fall day than Saturday, October 3rd this year. The day dawned bright and clear, the sun began to warm the porches, and the lineups formed well before the 10:00 a.m. start.

While we cannot take credit for the weather, months of careful planning helped make the **60th Port Hope House Tour** a tremendous success. The House Tour Committee began preparations soon after the previous year's event, working together to secure homes, prepare the ticket booklet, coordinate sponsors, manage ticket sales, organize volunteers, and promote the tour throughout the community and beyond.

This year's committee included **Corey Goldman**, Chair; **Heather Read**, who coordinated the support from the business community; **Lee Yaroschak**, who managed online ticket sales and mailed out tickets to people from Minnesota to Quebec; **Judith Hewlett Gladstone**, who worked with ticket retailers and served as Treasurer; **Kate Kostandoff**, assisted by **Trish Doney**, who recruited and organized more than 140 volunteers; and **Brian Buttery**, who offered advertising and communications support through online and physical posters and signs. The committee's work, along with the generosity of homeowners, volunteers, sponsors, and local retailers, made the day possible.

House Tour, **continued on page 2**

***House Tour,* continued from page 1**

All of the team's hard work paid off when tickets sold out quickly and the first guests showed up bright and early, excited to get a peek inside houses they were curious about. The mood was overwhelmingly positive, with many guests talking about how many times they had been on the tour, their favorite houses, and thanking the volunteers and homeowners for the opportunity.

For the second year in a row, the tour was designed to be walkable. It was great to see the crowds out enjoying the day and filling downtown. Both churches sold out of lunches. By 4:00 in the afternoon, there were tired, happy people everywhere, already talking about next year.

The smiles and thanks received on October 3rd were gratifying, but it must also be noted that this year's tour raised a record amount, $57,000, in support of Port Hope heritage. The House Tour Committee is deeply grateful to everyone who contributed: the homeowners who opened their doors, the volunteers who welcomed guests, the businesses that sponsored the ticket booklet, the retailers who sold tickets, and the many visitors and supporters who made the event such a success. We're already looking forward to **October 2nd, 2027**.

Corey Goldman, Port Hope House Tour Chair

Could Your Home Be on the 2027 House Tour?

The Port Hope House Tour is possible because homeowners generously open their doors and share the homes they love. Hundreds of homes have been featured over the past 60 tours, and each has helped sustain one of our community's most valued heritage traditions.

The Tour Committee is now planning the next House Tour on Saturday, October 2nd, 2027. If you own a home in Port Hope and might consider participating, we would be delighted to speak with you. There is no obligation to inquire, and we can connect you with past homeowners so you can hear directly about their experience. The committee provides guidance and volunteer support throughout the process, helping hosts prepare for a welcoming and well-organized day.

Please contact the House Tour Committee (info@porthopehousetour.com) to start a conversation about sharing your home in 2027.

Major Upcoming Events

Christmas Party December 10, 5:30–8:30 p.m.

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