



Society Newsletter

Local resident, Nelson Gardiner, recalls tragic crash of Anson Bomber just north of Garden Hill village

On the farm of Dr. Wright in Garden Hill, an Anson training bomber crashed November 2, 1943 at 2:15 a.m., according to the Canadian Military Archives.

The event was also noted years later in the *Northumberland Today's* "Today in History" column, November 2, 2007, stating "...area residents heard the roar of the low-flying plane and ran outside. They watched as flares were dropped in a desperate attempt to find a place to land. The crash killed all four airmen. When the rescuers arrived, the plane blew up, knock-



<http://airforcemuseum.ca/en/anson-restoration>

ing them off their feet."

The bomber was also heard over what is now 3120-7th line Port Hope [then Hope Township] travelling northeasterly at a low altitude., where local resident, 10 year-old Gordon Mercer, saw the plane banking from a N.E direction to westerly. An engine was on fire when he



former Mercer home

first saw it and the moon was bright. Flying directly toward his bedroom window at a very low altitude [the plane's lights were on] the aircraft tipped to miss two large spruce trees and their house [shown here]. Not knowing where it went, Gordon ran to the other side of the house in time to see the fiery crash. A wing tip had caught a fence. Gordon and his father, Arthur, ran over immediately. A

second explosion knocked Mr. Mercer down, but he was not injured and was able to carry water in a rubber boot to pour over the burning bodies. Another aircraft followed closely and searched at a low level. The pilot of the reconnaissance aircraft visited the crash site the following day. The flyers were subsequently reported to be from Poland, New Zealand, Finland and Canada. Arthur Mercer and Leonard Nelson returned the pilot's [Freeman, perhaps] wristwatch to his widow. Only one body was intact. The following year a fuel cap was found 'half a mile' away. Local lads picked up airplane parts such as pieces of the wooden instrument panel. One lad had the bulls-eye off the tail but his mother made him return it. Useful parachute material was retrieved by locals as well.

— Continued on page 3

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Preserving the past for future generations

In this Issue

- Anson Bomber — page 1
- Interim Pres's Report — p.2
- Bomber cont'd on — p.3
- Interim Pres's cont'd — p.3
- Local History Quiz — P.4
- Port Hope Fair 2017 — 4
- Events Calendar — p. 4

We're on the Internet

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Interim President's report



PHDHS [former EDHS] is pleased to have the support of the following business members

Another season has come and gone and here we are with our report. The Heritage Fair was held at the Port Hope Lion's Centre on May 1, 2016. The attendance was low but the Exhibitor's displays were great and everyone enjoyed the day with great interest. Many thanks to all who helped and volunteered their time.

We held our AGM on Wednesday, May 18th., but it was very disappointing attendance with no one showing up except the Executive. So the Board representatives decided to carry on for the next year with hopes for a better showing in 2017.

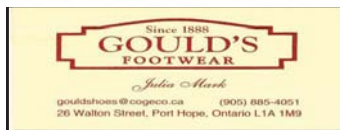
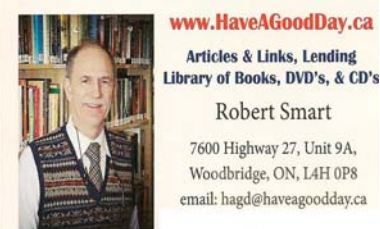
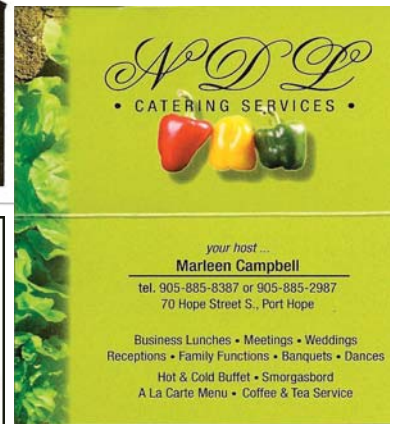
We had another successful Fundraiser at DHM in June and much of the success was due to the Volunteers who helped out and those who donated items. Thanks to all of you.

A special thank you to Blair and Catherine Johnston from Peterborough who donated and delivered in August a beautiful Dollhouse to the Museum. "This beautiful dollhouse was constructed by Alan Gracie of Peterborough and the decorating and furnishings were lovingly created by his wife, Lenore, as they travelled around the globe. The dining room furniture was all provided by Queen's Crown Antiques in Peterborough. The rugs and tapestry were painstakingly petit pointed by Lenore. A lot of loving pride went into the building and decorating of this dollhouse." We hope you enjoy viewing this amazingly crafted artifact, as much as they did in creating it.

Thanks also to Catherine [Cockburn] Johnston from Peterborough who donated a Singer sewing machine [Circa early 1900s] belonging to her grandmother, Irene [Curtis] Arnold of Port Hope [1881-1961]. "Irene was born and raised in Port Hope, then married Harry Arnold and moved to Pickering, Ontario to live in a beautiful stone home called Arnhills. Today it is designated an Historical Home. Here she raised five daughters, all who made homemade dresses with the help of this machine. As her granddaughter, Catherine was fortunate to receive several doll outfits, lovingly sewn by her grandmother on this machine." Thank you Blair & Catherine for donating these beautiful artifacts.

Dorothy's House Museum was also honoured by Ted Farrell of Dale Road who donated a Port Hope Stewardess sink — made in Canada 1948.

On Saturday, August 27, 2016 the 7th Annual Monarch Butterfly Tag & Release was held at Dorothy's House Museum and it was a great day for the event. Thanks to Don Davis who volunteered his time to make it a very educational day enjoyed by young and old. Many thanks to all the



Continued from Page 1

Anson Bomber Crash in Garden Hill 1943

On the site of the crash the bodies ended up against the wall of an old barn in an orchard owned by neighbour, Egbert Wilson, who usually went to bed late. At 2:15 a.m. he was taking off his boots when he saw a huge flash from his barn. He thought it was on fire. When he looked again the flash was gone. It was a reflection of the bomber crash. Two groups of military guards watched over the site and billeted at Mr. Wilson's home.



At the crash site, which is just a few 100 yards north of the former Garden Hill United Church, a new house now stands. During the subdivision development people recalled digging up pieces of aluminum and other air-plane parts when excavating for the foundation of a particular house.

Few people remember or know of this tragic accident that killed four trainees preparing for WW2. A plaque on municipal property identifying this historical event would be a fitting reminder of the sacrifices of the military in World War II. — Submitted by **Nelson Gardiner**

President's Report continued below....

volunteers who helped out during the day.

The 185th Port Hope Fall Fair was September 16-18, 2016 and despite the cold and rainy weather — which did clear up — was very successful. The PHDHS as usual had a display for the whole three-day event. Again, thanks to all who volunteered their time to help.

The season is winding down and everyone is raking leaves, etc. and winter is fast approaching. The PHDHS board of directors after serious thought decided to publish only two newsletters in 2017 — Spring and Fall — due mainly to extensive repair costs on Dorothy's House Museum, including such items as shingling the roof and replacing the eaves trough.

Thank you all who have helped and contributed to the Port Hope and District Historical Society over the past few years.

See you in the Spring,

Joan Ashby Parrott, Interim President and Secretary



Donated by Catherine Johnston



Blair & Catherine Johnston



Local History Quiz — By Tim Austin



- 1) Where was Trinity College located prior to moving to Port Hope?
- 2) Where is the old Welcome School House located?
- 3) Where was Martin's School House located?
- 4) What school year did the Canton and Bunker Hill Schools close (1964/65, 1965/66, or 1966/67)?
- 5) Where was Bunker Hill School located?

Answers to Quiz

- 1) Trinity College was established in Weston Ontario in 1865 and later moved to it's present location on Ward Street in Port Hope in the year 1868.
- 2) Welcome School was located at the corner of Hwy 106 (now County Rd 74) and Choate Road.
- 3) Martin's School House was located at the bottom of Dean's Hill in Garden Hill.
- 4) In 1966/67 the schools joined and all public school children were bused to George Hamilton Public School in Welcome.
- 5) Bunker Hill School was located on the 4th line of Hope between Mast Wood Road and Morrish Church Road.

Events Calendar 2017

AGM [Annual General Meeting]
 Wednesday, May 17, 2017 at 7 p.m.,
 GRCA, Hwy #28, Port Hope, Ont.

Three-Day Fundraiser Yard Sale at Dorothy's House Museum
 Fri., Sat, &Sun., June 23-25, 2017

Dorothy's House Museum
 opens for summer months, July & August weekends from 10a.m. to 2 p.m.

8th Annual Monarch Tag&Release
 at DHM 3632 Ganaraska Road,
 Garden Hill from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.,
 Saturday, August 26, 2017.

Port Hope Fall Fair 2017
 Sept. 15-16-17, 2017. PHDHS plans on having a display

Contact Information

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Note: If no response please leave message at 905-797-2291

Membership Rates

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 5) Single | \$15.00 |
| 4) Couple | \$25.00 |
| 3) Business | \$40.00 |
| 2) Lifetime | \$75.00 |

PHDHS is a charitable organization and can issue Tax Receipts for donations of \$10.00 or larger.

If you have a story or story ideas, please contact Cal Morgan at cmorgan@eagle.ca