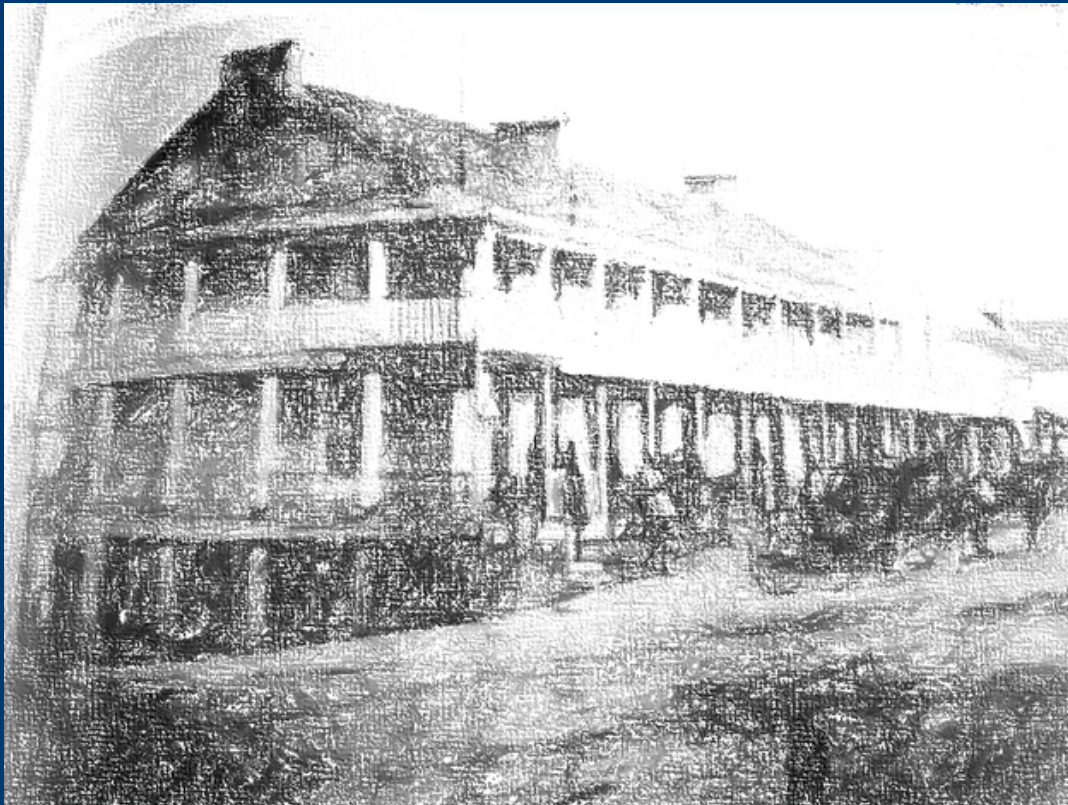


SELF-GUIDED HISTORICAL WALKING TOUR DURHAM

2022



THIS BOOKLET...

... was compiled by staff at the West Grey Public Library for the 150th Anniversary of the Town of Durham and 2022 Homecoming. It is intended to help you explore Durham on foot, and learn about some of the people who settled and changed the area. Please use it as you like - there's a map on the last page to help you plan a route, or you can just look up those sites you happen to come across.

Wear comfortable shoes and bring some water - if you find you like it, consider joining Roaming Readers, an adult summer program offered by the library, for walkers and book-lovers.

If you're interested in local history - and there's a lot that couldn't be included! - drop by one of our branches. Durham Branch (453 Garafraxa St S) even has a local history room.

And Grey Roots Museum and Archives near Owen Sound is a valuable source of local and regional history.

Source materials for this booklet include:

A History of the Town of Durham 1842-1994, compiled by the Durham Historical Committee and printed by Stan Brown Printers Limited, Owen Sound.

How Firm a Foundation: Historic Houses of Grey County by Ruth Cathcart, with photography by Willy Waterton and drawings by Bert de Graaf, copyright 1996 Ruth Cathcart; published by The Red House Press, Warton, ON. Typeset & printed by Stan Brown Printers Ltd., Owen Sound.

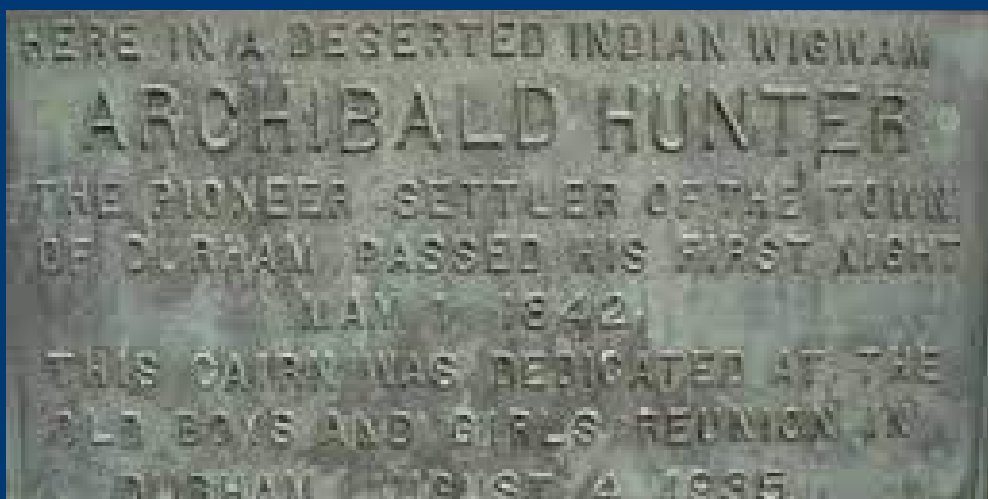
With incidental material from Durham resident Darlene Hastie (Hastie Tobacco Store and Billiards), included with thanks;

https://www.geocaching.com/geocache/GC2AEJ1_mcgowan-falls?guid=a0974b01-3561-49da-bb16-ea277fec93e7 (McGowan Falls) excerpted from <https://www.durhamfurniture.com/about-us/our-history/> (Durham Furniture)

Several Indigenous populations have traditional territory in what is now Grey County: Six Nations of the Grand River, Metis Nation of Ontario, Historic Saugeen Metis and Saugeen Ojibway Nation, but settlers began to arrive once Charles Rankin, Public Land Surveyor, was commissioned in 1837 to survey and blaze a road from Garafraxa Township north of Fergus to Sydenham (Owen Sound) through dense forest. Work ceased during the 'Farmers' Revolt' (Upper Canada Rebellion). Public Land Surveyor John MacDonald finished the project in 1840, laying out lots on each side of the road. Settlers received 50 acres free when they had completed the settlement agreement.

COMING TO DURHAM: THE SETTLERS

The first settler in what is now the town of Durham was **Archibald Hunter**, who located there from Scotland on May 1st, 1842, travelling with his son and companions on foot from Guelph (see 4, "British Hotel"). He first built a log house. In 1852, when townships were organized, the east side of Garafraxa Street was part of Glenelg and the west side was part of Bentinck, with two different governments and enforcement, until Durham became a town in 1872.



*Plaque on cairn
near Trinity
Anglican
Church
193 Chester St
E (not on
route)*

1 VICKERS PARK AND PAVILION

178 Lambton St West

Durham resident Grace Vickers had a home on this spot, and bequeathed the land to the Town specifically to be used as parkland in 1998 "...in memory of her parents, George and Amberzine Reay and her husband Clarence Vickers".

The gazebo was erected on the site and, as the home was white, it was painted the same colour in tribute to her generous donation.



2 HASTIE'S BILLIARD HALL & TOBACCO SHOP

146 Garafraxa Street North

The first pool and billiard room in Durham opened in 1911 over the opposition of many Durham citizens. With the era's public houses closing down over disapproval of their selling liquor, the pool halls were similarly viewed with suspicion, even though they didn't sell liquor. The concern was that players would neglect their chores and get involved in betting.

The Town Council tried to



solve the problem by setting a yearly licensing fee for each table that was more than they thought anyone would pay.

Instead, the new owners paid \$400 in advance and within a year were requesting longer hours and more table licences.

The Hasties, father and son, owned the establishment from 1941 to 2008.

The front of the shop sold tobacco and sundries; the back was the billiard hall. It was one of an amazing array of small businesses in Durham over the years -- general, jewellery, furniture and clothing stores, car dealerships, blacksmiths, carriage shops, harness makers and blacksmiths, among others.

The Durham Public Library's roots are in the Mechanics Institute, dating from c1860. The Institute provided members with lectures, adult education classes, reading rooms and a lending library. It was supported by subscription, \$1/yr for subscribers and 25c/yr for shareholders, payable in advance.

Its first home is not known, but it was moved into council chamber in the new Town Hall Building in 1875. In 1888, Mayor David Jackson, Jr., earmarked land he owned for a library and he deeded the building and land to the town.

For a few months in 1903, the library moved to a store downtown, but the expected surge in library membership didn't occur and it moved back.

In 1911, the Carnegie Foundation contributed \$8,000 for the construction of a new library building, which was built in front of the old library. This was one of 125 public Carnegie libraries built in Canada between 1903 and 1922.

The building was completed in 1912 and the first library was used as an overflow storage and service depot until 1970, when it was

3 CARNEGIE LIBRARY

240 Garafraxa Street North

demolished.

The Library's basement has been used as a voting station, kindergarten, courtroom, lecture hall and meeting space. The Durham Art Gallery used it from 1978 to 1991. Groups like the Durham Literary Association, formed in 1867, met monthly. Many organizations in town supported the Institute or Library through concerts and productions, debates, skits and other entertainments.

The Library moved to its new space at 453 Garafraxa St S in October, 2016.



4 BRITISH HOTEL

421 Garafraxa St N

Archibald Hunter, Durham's founder, built a log house just north of Durham Road as soon as he took up his farm property in 1842. Once he returned with his family the following year, they were constantly asked for food and overnight accommodation, as settlers came into the Queen's Bush looking for land (there was no tavern between Mount Forest and Sydenham/Owen Sound.

The Hunters often ran out of room and travellers would sleep in the barn or stable (after Mrs. Hunter collected their pipes, tobacco and matches). They built a log tavern about 24' wide and 60' long, with horse stabling on the west side of Garafraxa St.

The hotel was expanded in 1854 to a 2-1/2-storey stone hotel with a basement, then it was extended twice more to include store space and living quarters for employees. Mr. Hunter sold the business to H.J. Middaugh in 1864.

The British Hotel still survives as the British Apartments, in Upper Town or Uppertown.



The British Hotel, c 1858
(built 1854)

5 JAMES HUNTER

HOUSE "THE HEDGES"

388 Durham Rd E



The Hedges was built c 1867 by the youngest son of Archibald Hunter for his bride Kate McDonald, the only granddaughter of Simon Fraser, the explorer.

James Hunter was born in Scotland and came to Canada as a child. After attending Goderich Grammar School and Upper Canada College, he returned to Durham and operated a prosperous mercantile business. He was a councillor and reeve of Glenelg Township, and was elected as a Liberal to the Ontario Legislature three times, the last in 1890. He died in 1891.

6 HENRY PARKER HOUSE

“IDYLWILDE”

385 Durham Rd E



Across the street is the house of Henry Parker.

He was born in 1836, an immigrant from Bentham, Yorkshire, England. He came with his wife Elizabeth to Upper Canada in 1857 and acquired a farm in Bentinck Township and land in Durham. He helped establish a brickyard (the Samuel Wright Brickyard) for 'yellow' or buff brick, likely used for his own house. He also apprenticed in the drug business and established a branch of the Parker & Cattle Durgstore on Garafraxa Street, Upper Town in 1860.

Mr. Parker was a councillor for the north ward in the first Town Council, helped to found the Durham and District Horticultural Society in 1896, and played a role in bringing the Wellington Georgian Bay Railway to Durham in 1880.

7 THE GUN HOUSE

283 Durham Rd E



James Gun's family immigrated to Durham in 1862 from Caithness, Scotland. James was born in 1834, and in the 1860s he bought this lot from the Edge Estate and lived there with his wife Mary. He was a physician and so was his son Arthur.

Dr. James Gun was a leading citizen and beloved in the region. He played a major role in the development of Durham, serving on the School Board, setting up a "Model School" for teacher training (1877), reorganizing the Mechanic's Institute into the town library (renamed the Durham Public Library in 1895) and serving in the Presbyterian Church and as the District Health Officer.

He warned the town council about the dangers of polluting the Saugeen River and in 1896 he helped found the Durham and District Horticultural Society.

8 MCGOWAN FALLS

562 George St E

McGowan Falls ultimately was named in tribute to one of the historical pioneer families of Durham, but it had other names first.

Samuel and James Edge came into possession of land along the Saugeen River in 1847, which included "Edge's Mill".

When Robert McGowan bought the Edge property in 1888, the McGowan family started operating "The People's Mill" at the falls, along with other water powered mills on the Saugeen, producing flour, oatmeal and other by-products associated with the milling of grain.

Beginning in 1890, local electric power would be generated, thanks to the Saugeen River.



The People's Mill perished after a deadly combination of flood and fire.

Ultimately, the flume and waterwheel deteriorated and disappeared, but the dam, after extensive repairs, was restored to serve as a recreational and conservation flood control project.

9 KNECHTEL MILL

258 George St E



Area mills were critical to the early prosperity of the area. Mills for grain (grist and flouring), lumber and woollens were established within four decades. This Mill was built in 1909, owned and operated by William Arthur, son of Robert McGowan. It started as the McGowan Milling Co, and produced rolled Rob Roy and Chieftain brand oats and oatmeal which were used by Canadian soldiers in France in WW I.

Several fires caused terrible damage but the mill was rebuilt as a chopping mill, feed storage and blending plant. Knechtel Mills purchased the mill in 1938, and in the mid-80s, it was sold to local farmer and cultural force Michael Schmidt, who imported millstones from Germany for stone-ground flour. At Christmas time he used the space to present a traditional European Christmas Play.

In 1989, the mill was sold to artists who also used it as a residence. It housed the Durham Art Gallery briefly. In 1993, the mill was divided into separate living spaces and renamed United Media Arts, also the name of a a non-profit arts-focused organization.

10 DURHAM ART GALLERY

251 George St E

In 1978, the first discussion of ways to establish an art gallery began. By 1980, through grants, and public and private funding, enough funds had been raised to refurbish the lower floor of the Library building to accommodate a Gallery. By 1980, the Gallery began, with a focus on the visual arts and a mandate to provide an accessible cultural resource. Its reputation for quality programming and its opening by then-Lieutenant Governor Pauline McGibbon gave it a glowing reputation, and its Ontario Arts Council funding led it to becoming the smallest art institution to hold public library status.

By January 1993, the Gallery moved into a purpose-built building, its current location.

The Gallery has been instrumental in many local ventures, including a performing arts group, film society, the annual Herb Fair, a cultural exchange with Durham, England, the Saugeen Music Society and the Wood Show.



11A THE ARCHIBALD MACKENZIE HOUSE

312 Lambton Street West

The first settler to own this property was George Jackson, a celebrated Grey County resident who immigrated from Hutton, Yorkshire, England in 1844 and was appointed Crown Lands Agent in 1848. Mr. Jackson was the first Reeve of Bentinck and served as



Warden of Grey County, member from Grey County in the Legislative Assembly of the United Canadas and in the House of Commons. He died in 1885. In 1868 he sold his property on Lambton Street to Archibald and Sarah MacKenzie. Part of the house served as the Post Office and MacKenzie was postmaster from 1869 until his death in 1899.

11B COCHRANE-JAMIESON HOUSE 'BON ACCORD'

294 Lambton St E



Named in recognition of the confederation of Canada in 1867, 'Bon Accord' was owned by Adam Cochrane, an immigrant from Eagleshome, Renfrewshire, Scotland. Adam and his brother Alexander were co-founders of the Inkerman Foundry and Ironworks, and Alexander became the first mayor in 1872.

The house was sold in 1885 to Dr. David Jamieson, who arrived in 1878. Dr. Jamieson was the Reeve of Durham and one of the founders of the Durham Furniture Company. He served in the Legislative Assembly and planted 200,000 trees at nearby Wilder's Lake.

12 DURHAM FURNITURE

450 Lambton Street West

Durham Furniture got its start in the late 1890s to provide local employment for the Town's young people. A group raised more than \$10,000 from local citizens and secured additional support from the Town council. The Town purchased a six-acre site on Lambton Street for \$500, where it is today.



The first shipment on Feb. 5, 1900 – a consignment of unfinished furniture- was sent to a Mr. Brentall of Manchester England. The first 32 employees earned seven cents an hour for a 10-hour day.

In 1905 a fire destroyed the factory. The town rallied and rebuilt, then expanded in 1910, helped by listings in The T. Eaton Company's popular catalogue. In 1948 Eaton's commissioned a wedding gift for Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh from the company: Solid maple paneling and specially designed furniture in the "Canadian Room" in Clarence House, the couple's home in London, England, some of which moved with them. Prince Phillip used his maple desk all his life.

Starting in the 1950s, Durham Furniture was purchased and merged several times, ending in receivership in 1992. A group of townspeople raised funds locally to purchase the company and Durham Furniture Inc. was re-launched in 1992.

DURHAM HISTORICAL SELF-GUIDED TOUR ROUTE

*NOT to scale

