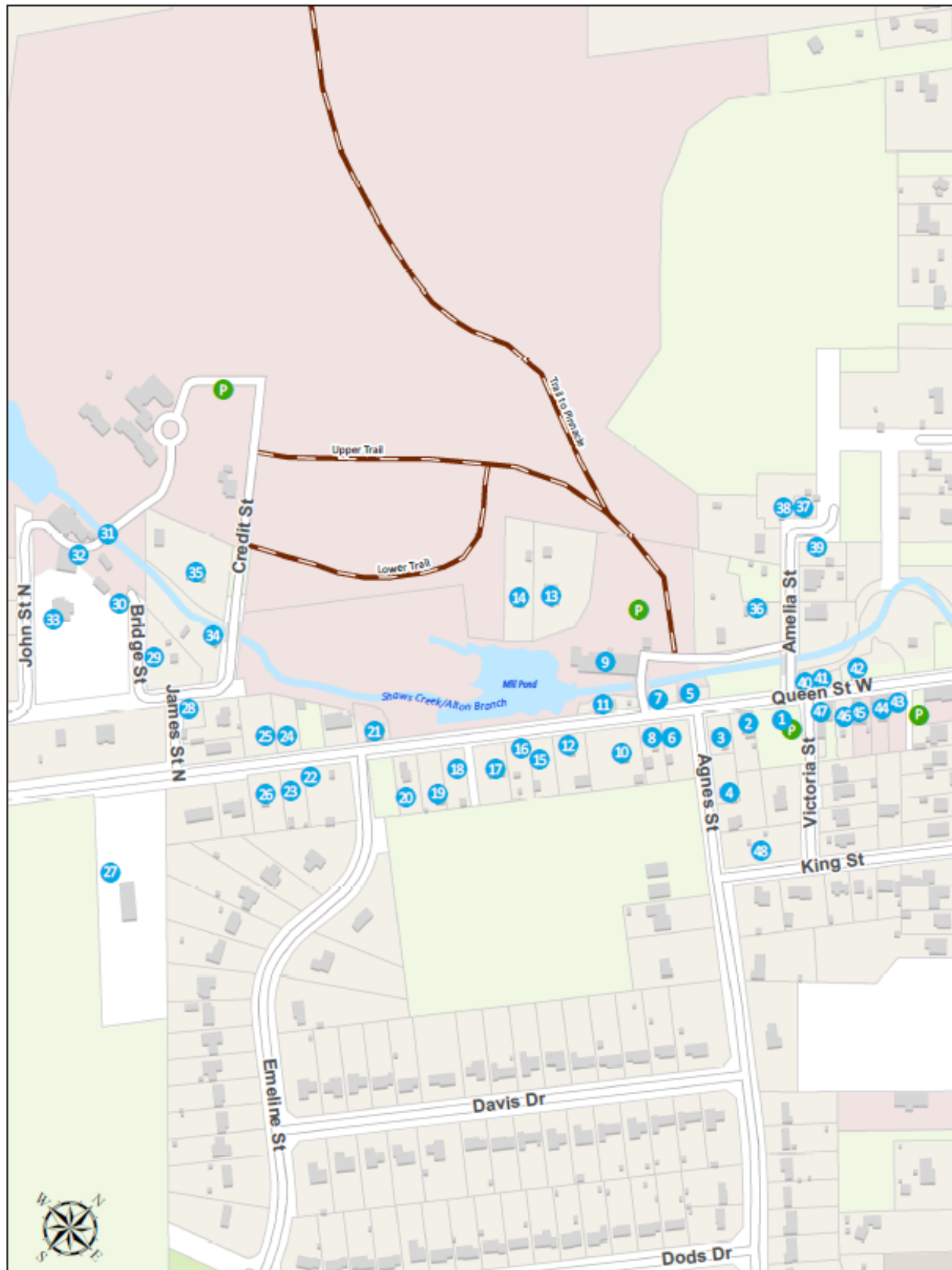


# *Heritage Caledon Walking Tour Series*

## **Alton Village: Queen Street West to Millcroft Inn**



***Please respect private property.***

*Last Updated: February 3, 2026*

***\* Designated under the Ontario Heritage Act***

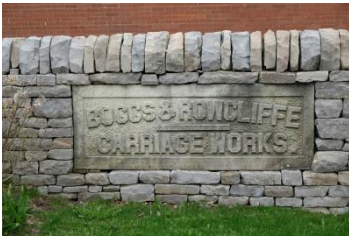
1  
A



***Queen Street West at Victoria Street - Alton Village Square***

This park is on the site of the former stone carriage works building. It is anchored by a series of dry stone walls which incorporate elements from the original building. The stone circle was created by Neal Rippengate from Scotland; Daniel Sinclair created the bronze bonsai tree; Norman Haddon, stone mason at Balmoral Castle, craftsmen from Vermont and local stone mason Eric Landman built the various walls with the help of local residents.

B



***Carriage Works Name Stone and Date Stones***

Built into the wall on the west side of the park are the original Boggs & Rowcliffe Carriage Works name stone, the 1894 date stone for the Barber & Bro Carriage Works as well as a stone horseshoe with the date 1894. On the east side of the bonsai tree wall is a commemorative stone recognizing Martin Middaugh Jr. and his wife Elizabeth Middaugh Gaynor as Alton's Founding Family.

2



***1437 Queen Street West***      Commercial/Residential Block      1870s

Originally a single-storey frame store and residence, by 1898 this building had acquired an upper level and a red brick veneer. Sometime after 1903, it was further enlarged with a full second storey, hip roof and front dormer in the Edwardian Classical style. The west half of the building remained residential; the ceiling above its entry is clad with stamped tin. The east half housed a succession of businesses starting with the McQuarrie Bakery followed by the Lake Bakery, Weeks Bakery, Oddfellow's Hall, and Broyden Bakery before being converted to its current residential use.

3



***1429 Queen Street West***      John U. McClellan House      circa 1856

This symmetrically framed house has identical shed-roofed wings on either side; the roofline of a 1½ storey, 1870s addition is visible at the rear. The house belonged to John Unger McClellan, eldest son of William McClellan and by 1871, his son Andrew and wife Emilene Dods were living here. Later it housed employees of the nearby carriage works. In the 1940s, when it was the home of Gordon and Isabel Stubbs, log walls were uncovered in the front centre part. This suggests that the frame structure was built around an earlier log house, likely the dwelling marked on Alton's 1857 map.

4



***7 Agnes Street***      Ontario Cottage      mid-1860s

This Regency style frame cottage was likely built by John L. McClellan on land purchased from Hugh C. Russell in 1866. Characteristic of the style, the house has a centre entrance flanked by symmetrically positioned windows and a hip roof. R.S. Wilkinson owned the property from 1874 until 1897. It was later owned by local industrialists and probably used to house workers.

5



***1422 Queen Street West***      \* Dods-Long House      mid-1870s

This 2 storey, Italianate style residence with red brick veneer and yellow brick detailing (now painted) was built by foundry owner Alexander Dick during a period of considerable affluence in Alton. As Dick lived in an 11 room house on Amelia Street, this beautiful home likely housed family members or employees. The house is shown on an 1894 fire insurance map. In 1908, retired woodworker William Dowsnell purchased the house and lived here with his

wife Christina and their three adult daughters. From 1916 until 1980 the property was owned by Madill family members.

6



**1417 Queen Street West**      'Four Square' House      circa 1905

This 2 storey red brick Edwardian Classical style house, built prior to James Algie's marriage to Sarah Dale, is a 'four square', with all sides equal in size. It has an asymmetric floor plan; the full width verandah with decorative brackets along its eaves is supported by classical columns on brick bases. Although James and Sarah moved to Brampton in 1911, the Algie family retained ownership of the house until 1915. By 1920, station agent Charles Cuthbert and his wife Mabel had purchased the home. Martin and Sarah Stubbs lived here in the 1930s and their daughter Madaline Stubbs acquired it in 1941. In 1954, Carman and Isabel Corbett retired here from their nearby farm. The original front dormer window has been replaced by a recent attic addition.

7



**1409 Queen Street West**      Early cottage      circa 1857

This 1½ storey frame Ontario Cottage was built in Neoclassical style with a centre entrance flanked by symmetrically placed windows. The original return eaves are visible on the gable ends. It is marked on the Alton 1857 map and was one of only a handful of buildings along Queen Street West at that time. 1½ storey cottages were a preferred building style because they were taxed as if they were single storey buildings. The house is now clad in board and batten.

8



**1414 Queen Street West**      Nettie Dorrington House      circa 1899

This 1½ storey late Neoclassical style house was built by William Algie for his eldest daughter Janet shortly after her 1898 marriage to knitter, William A. Dorrington. The house is clad with very dense red bricks imported from the USA and has very unusual terra cotta hood moulds (drip moulds) over the gable end windows. "Nettie" sold the house to 'Western Rubber Co' in 1945. Stan Hedge, the rubber mill's engineer, lived here with his wife Sadie until the mid- 1970s.

9

A



**1402 Queen Street West**      \* 'The Beaver Woollen Mill' Complex  
**Entrance to the Alton Mill Arts Centre and Shaw's Creek**

Now restricted to pedestrians, this bridge over Shaw's Creek was the original entrance into the woollen mill for wagons, carriages, carts and later automobiles. In 1857, Provincial Land Surveyor Charles Wheelock surveyed Shaw's Creek and identified nine mill privileges, eight of which were eventually developed. In October 1880, William Algie purchased mill privileges #5 and #6 from Kenneth Chisholm. Algie's mill and dam were built on #5, while the mill pond sits on #6. During the flood of 1889, Algie's dam held longer than others which allowed those living downstream time to reach safety.

B



**\* 'The Beaver Knitting Mill'**      circa 1881

This stone mill complex, constructed by William Algie and operated as 'The Beaver Knitting Mill,' was known nationwide for its fleece-lined long underwear. The mill complex was also referred to as the Algie Woollen Mill or the Lower Mill. The mill was enlarged twice, sustained massive damage in the disastrous 1889 flood and later survived a 1905 fire. By 1908, 60 employees worked as reelers, twistors, carders, spinners, knitters, dyers etc. A 1913 addition is commemorated with a date stone on the east side by the pedestrian entrance. After William Algie's death in 1914, the mill was acquired by his brother-in-law, John M. Dods. James B. Dods inherited the mill



operations from his late father in 1923, and by 1932, in the midst of the depression and faced with changing textile trends he closed the mill and moved the machinery to his Orangeville knitting mill. In 1935, the property was sold to the 'Western Rubber Co.' owned by Fredrick N. Stubbs and Sons who converted the mill for rubber production. It operated from 1935 until 1982 manufacturing items ranging from WW2 government contracted condoms and latex gloves to balloons for Disney. It was the longest-running water-powered mill on the Upper Credit River system.

C



### **Stone Drive Shed**

This stone garage is built into the base of the hill and sits opposite the mill entrance and bridge across Shaw's Creek. It was likely originally used as a drive shed or livery. 'The Country Forge' now occupies the building.

### **Walking Trail**

A marked walking trail starts almost directly above the stone drive shed. It branches into two trails: one heads to the Millcroft Inn and the other heads to the top of the Pinnacle.

D



### **Wool Warehouse**

circa 1880s

To the north of the mill are the remnant stone walls of what was originally a large, rectangular single-storey wool warehouse. While under ownership of the 'Western Rubber Co.,' the building was used for making balloons. In 2008, the walls were stabilized and the structure, now referred to as the 'Annex', provides a venue for outdoor programming such as the Fire and Ice Winter Festival.

E



### **Mill pond and Millrace**

circa 1881

West of the mill complex is its mill pond which is held back by a concrete dam. The millrace remains intact under the mill building where water from the mill pond was channeled to power the mill machinery. The mill's turbine was upgraded in 1918 by John M. Dods who installed a 50 horsepower hydraulic turbine, the first of its kind in the region. The mill pond was popular for leisure activities such as boating and swimming in summer and skating in winter. It is the site of the Alton Millpond Hockey Classic, an annual hockey tournament which raises funds for the rehabilitation of the pond.

F



### **'The Drummers Snack' Fair**

By the early 1900s, William Algie and his wife Phebe had set up a community trade fair. Held on the last weekend of July, the event started with a procession of salesmen or 'drummers', led by the village band, who walked from the train station to the Algie mill property. While the salesmen sold their wares, village folk and farmers from the area came for the weekend to buy, be entertained with concerts, races etc and be fed from a makeshift outdoor kitchen on the grounds of the Algie's home.

***The tour continues along the sidewalk on the south side of Queen Street West and references buildings on both sides of the road.***

10



**1401 Queen Street West**      Romanesque Style House      circa 1899

This house, built for members of the Algie family, is clad in the same imported red brick as that used at #1414 across the street. The house is characterized by a double arched entry with intricate brickwork detailing and terra cotta hood (or drip) moulds above the entry and windows; three symmetrical and identical roof gables face north, east and west. Dr. James Algie lived here for a short time, keeping a horse and buggy in the carriage house to the rear for visiting patients. In 1903, the house was purchased by knitter William Algie Jr. and Bertha Dale Algie. William, Bertha and their sons moved to NY State in 1909 at which time the house was sold to William's aunt-by-marriage, Elizabeth Culligan. Ethel Culligan Houston inherited the house in 1945, living here with her husband John Willard Houston until the late 1950s when the property was purchased by Jack Robb.

11



**1398 Queen Street West**      Science Hall      circa 1885

This stone building is late Neoclassical in style with a parged limestone finish. Known as Science Hall, it was built by mill owner William Algie as a community venue for lectures, concerts, plays and recitals. Algie was a 'Free Thinker' who believed that science together with knowledge and books provided life's answers, rather than religious dogma. He frequently invited guest lecturers from Europe and the USA and supported a full orchestra as well as a citizen's band. The hall also housed the Alton drama club organized by Algie's brother Robert, a local merchant. After William Algie's death in 1914, the hall was sold to 'Dods Knitting Co.' and by the 1930s, had been converted into three apartments occupied by the Nicols, the Browns and the Woods. The latter started Woods Bakery in their unit. In 1935, the building was sold to 'Western Rubber Co.' and converted into two residences. After the death of Fredrick N. Stubbs, the house was acquired by Ralph and June Stubbs.

12



**1387 Queen Street West**      Ontario Cottage      circa 1857

This Neoclassical style frame cottage with its centre entrance and symmetrically placed windows is marked on Alton's 1857 map. The original rough-cast exterior cladding is still visible on the east end wall. In 1904, the house was purchased by Joseph S. and Mary E. Smith Dods. By 1921, Joseph had risen from being a wool carder to mill manager and they lived here together for 55 years. She sold the house in 1962 to Glen and Evelyn Campbell.

13



**1386 Queen Street West**      William Algie House      circa 1881

Situated with a commanding presence above the lower mill pond, this very large 2 storey red brick Italianate style home was built for 'Beaver Knitting Mill' owner William Algie and his wife Phebe Ward. The house is symmetrical with decorative paired brackets around the eaves and a projecting front bay, which extends into an attic dormer through the hip roof over the ornate covered entry. A beautifully detailed porch encircles three sides of the home. Village garden parties were frequently held on its expansive lawns. In 1915, the house became the property of John M. Dods and in 1935, was purchased by 'Western Rubber Co.'. Fredrick and Alberta 'Pearl' Stubbs lived here together from 1935 until his death in 1941; Pearl continued living here until her death in 1958 after which it became the home of Gordon and Isabel Stubbs.



- 14  **1380 Queen Street West** Algie Family House circa 1881  
Overlooking the lower mill pond, this 1½ storey Victorian Gothic style stone residence with its steep gable roofs was constructed at the same time as the original mill on the current mill site. It too used coursed local limestone quarried east of Alton; its modern rear addition is clad in board and batten. It appears that until the early 1900s, this was the home of William Algie's parents Matthew A and Janet Algie as well as their daughter Agnes and later their married daughter Elizabeth Thurson. In 1915, the house became the property of John M. Dods and in 1935, that of 'Western Rubber Co.'; after Fredrick N. Stubbs' death in 1941, the house was acquired by Harold and Annie Stubbs.
- 15  **1379 Queen Street West** Rusticated Block House circa 1900  
Shortly after 1898, this Edwardian Classical style house was built by James McClellan using rusticated concrete block, a popular early 20<sup>th</sup> century building material. Of note, its front entrance faces east not to the street. It has a hip roof, side dormer and heavy flat concrete lintels and sills. McClellan, a farmer, was one of the original land owners in the core of Alton. In 1911 the house was purchased by Everton Dodds Barber and his wife Hannah Jane Dick. Everton was the son of carriage maker James Barber; Hannah was the daughter of foundry owner Alexander Dick. Hannah lived here until 1959.
- 16  **1375 Queen Street East** Elizabeth Riddall Cottage 1870s  
This house was built as a 1½ storey Neoclassical style cottage by James and William Riddall in their sister Elizabeth's name. The exterior fieldstone walls are parged with limestone mortar. Over the years, upper windows were added while lower windows and door opening were altered. In 1883, wool spinner James Culligan and Janet (William Algie's sister) purchased the house for their family; it remained in Culligan family hands for 56 years.
- 17  **1367 Queen Street West** Jack Lak House 1950s  
Recently renovated, this house was built as the residence of Jack Lak who operated the sash mill at 1590 Queen Street East until the 1960s. Mrs. Lak was a teacher at the Alton School in the 1950s-60s.
- 18  **1365 Queen Street West** Edwardian Classical House late 1870s  
This 2-storey house evolved from a single storey cottage purchased in 1883 by woollen mill owner Benjamin Ward to house workers. The cottage was given to Fanny Ward Dods in 1900 and shortly after was enlarged into the two-family frame house now standing. It remained in the Dods family until 1956 when it was sold to Miss Ottie Gibbs. The structure has subsequently been converted to a single residence with a centre entrance replacing the two original doorways. The lower front windows are original.
- 19  **1349 Queen Street West** James Algie House circa 1894  
This 2-storey house was built by stone mason James Algie, William Algie's uncle. It was acquired in 1903 by James Algie's daughter Mary C. Algie McClellan the wife of Chester McClellan, a merchant, miller and cousin of John M. Dods. Built from quarried stone it combines a Victorian Gothic centre gable with the hip roof and four- square floor plan typical of Edwardian Classical style. William Hodgson inherited the house in 1928 and in 1955 it was purchased by Wesley and Myrtle Mackie, who lived here for many years.

20



**1341 Queen Street West** Jane Berry House circa 1887

This 1½ storey Victorian Gothic stone cottage was built for Jane Berry who later married Arthur Walker. The fieldstone exterior is parged with limestone mortar in an ashlar finish replicating quarried stone. Note the decorative verandah trim, elongated window keystones and limestone window arches, sills and quoins. After the shed-roofed fieldstone rear wing was built, the original front door was converted into a window. In 1897, the Walkers sold the house to Margaret M. McDougall. In 1915, David Patterson bought it and his estate sold it to James Adams in 1944. In 1964, retired school teacher Edith M. Knechtel purchased the house.

21



**1334 Queen Street West** \* Worker's Cottage pre-1869

This house, built as mill workers' accommodation, was positioned over a spring to provide indoor running water. The stone exterior was parged with limestone mortar. After changing hands several times, it was purchased in 1880 by mill owner William Algie. After his death in 1914, it became part of his mill holdings purchased in 1915 by John M. Dods and then in 1935 by Fredrick N. Stubbs and Sons. By 1949, Harold B. and Annie Nunn owned the building which later housed Bailey's Machine Shop which became Early's Shop. In the 1980s, the original hip roof was replaced with the present mansard roofline over what is now a private residence.

22



**1315 Queen Street West** Andrew Keys House circa 1857

This 1½ storey Neoclassical style Ontario Cottage with centre entry and symmetrically placed windows was built by blacksmith Andrew Keys and is noted on the 1857 Alton map. The rear saltbox addition was built at a later date. The house was purchased in 1892 by John B. Madill, a butter-maker who later became an engineer. He died in 1918 leaving his wife Elsie and four young children. In 1943, their daughter Amanda Jean Madill and her husband William T. Parker inherited the house. She lived here into the 1990s.

23



**1309 Queen Street West** Late Neoclassical House early 1900s

This 2-storey, late Neoclassical style frame house with its clean lines and simple gable roof was built by mill owner John M. Dods as housing for mill workers, a common practice at the time to attract and retain workers. In 1930 his estate sold the house to John R. Simpson and his wife Catherine, a local school teacher. The house exterior is now clad in modern siding and the main floor windows have been altered.

24



**1310 Queen Street West** Worker's Cottage pre-1873

Originally built as a Neoclassical style Ontario Cottage, Dutch Revival style roof lines have dramatically altered this cottage. In 1873, the house was sold to Archibald Dick, owner of the Dixie Hotel, as housing for his hotel staff. Around 1888, Dick moved to Owen Sound and from then until the 1950s, it was owned by Margaret Moore McDougall, daughter of saddler James Moore.

25



**1302 Queen Street West** 1950s Bungalow circa 1951

Originally built as a single-story bungalow by Ernest Gooderham, new roof lines and exterior cladding have dramatically altered this early-1950s home.



26

**1301 Queen Street West** Italianate Style House

early 1900s

This L-shaped 2 storey house was built by house carpenter William H. Maxwell for John M. Dods' niece Jeannette Dods and her husband John Erskine, a mill worker. It is Alton's only yellow brick house and has an asymmetric floor plan, decorative brickwork under the main floor windows, bracketed fretwork and coloured glass in the transom and main floor window lights. Everton Erskine inherited the property, living here until 1951, followed by the family of Sam Kannawin. In 1956, it was purchased by Gordon and Christina Adams who modernized the basic services.

27

**1267 Queen Street West** Alton Legion

1970

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 449 is named after Wallace Lloyd Algie, son of Dr. James and Rachel Algie and grandson of Matthew Algie. Algie, who died at Cambrai in 1918, is buried in France and was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for gallantry. A cenotaph near the Legion entrance honours local men who lost their lives during the world wars.

28

**15 James Street**

Worker's Cottage

mid 1860s

This frame cottage, now clad in board and batten siding, was originally built to house mill workers. It is an excellent example of Neoclassical style with a centre entrance balanced by symmetrically placed windows. There is a shed roofed addition to the rear. By 1882, it was owned by mill worker Matthew Algie, a brother of William Algie. In 1884, Matthew died at age 29, leaving his wife Elizabeth Little and infant daughter Lucinda May. In 1923, title to the house passed to Elizabeth Little Algie Culligan.

29

**10 Bridge Street**

Richard Wilkinson House

circa 1855

This Victorian Gothic style Ontario Cottage is noted on the 1857 Alton map. In 1875, farmer /miller Richard Wilkinson sold the house to Walter McClellan. McClellan sold it to Benjamin Ward in 1883 as housing for mill workers. Leonard Lovell purchased it in 1900 and added a brick veneer over the original exterior cladding. In 1924, he sold it to his daughter Bertha and son-in-law Clifford Sibbald who enlarged and enclosed the verandah. They lived here until 1971. A modern shed roofed extension encloses an earlier rear addition.

30

**On Bridge Street near mill** Ontario Cottage

mid 1860s

This 1½ storey cottage, Neoclassical in style, faced toward Ward's mill. Its original verandah has been enclosed creating a saltbox effect. Although this house is not shown on the 1857 Alton map, its proximity to the mill suggests that it was probably a worker's cottage or a pre-1880 mill owner's home. It may have been the house that Tom King and his family lived in after 1913. It now serves as the office for the Millcroft Inn.



31



### **Bridge over Shaw's Creek**      Mill Privilege #8

Shaw's Creek is located in the upper reaches of the Credit River watershed and joins the main Credit River east of the village. Shaw's Creek drops just over 100 feet as it flows through what is now Alton and in 1857 Provincial Land Surveyor Charles Wheelock identified nine mill privileges, eight of which were developed by the 1880s. Millcroft Inn is one of two remnant stone mills standing along the creek and is a reflection of Alton's water-powered industrial origins.

32

A



### **55 John Street**

\* Millcroft Inn Complex

#### **\* Alton Knitting Mill**

1881 datestone

In 1880, Benjamin E. Ward purchased a pre-1857 woollen mill from Emery Kennedy and he replaced it with a four-storey stone building which he called the 'Alton Knitting Mill.' Quarried stone was transported by train from Inglewood and lime kilns east of Alton produced the mortar. In 1892, surrounding land was leased to Samuel Barber to store finished carriage production. In 1900, Ward sold the mill operation to his son-in-law John M. Dods. Although re-named 'Dods Knitting Mill', it continued to be locally known as the Upper Mill. James Barber Dods inherited the mill in 1923, retaining it until 1965 when it was converted to a restaurant known as 'McKenzie's Mill'. In the late 1970s it became 'The Millcroft Inn' and remains today as an excellent example of adaptive re-use.

B



#### **Mill Date Stone**

Made from red sandstone, the date stone is located on the south-west side of the main building just below the roofline. It reads 'Alton Knitting Mill, A.D. 1881.'

C



#### **Heritage Canada Plaque**

The Millcroft Inn was awarded the National Award of Honour for Heritage Preservation by Heritage Canada in 1978. The plaque is on the wall adjacent to the entrance to the Millcroft Inn.

D



#### **\* Little Mill**

circa 1881

This stone outbuilding was originally a warehouse for Ward's woollen mill. It was connected to the mill by a steel catwalk which was forged at former foundry (Amelia Street at Queen Street West) owned by Alexander Dick. This building is now used as a conference facility for the Millcroft Inn.

E



#### **Upper Mill Pond and Dam**

late 1840s or early 1850s

The mill pond, visible from the Inn's outside patio, has existed since William McClellan built the first wooden dam across Shaw's Creek. The dam was re-built after the disastrous 1889 flood. The water pressure in the mill pond created enough power to drive a turbine located in the mill basement. When the creek's water table later dropped as a result of deforestation, a steam driven generator with a coal fired boiler was added to supplement the creek's

water power. Remnants of an entry to the stone dye house, lost in a 1917 fire, are visible just below the dam on the far side of Shaw's Creek.

33  
A



**55 John Street**

\* Ward-Dods Millcroft House and Gardens

**\* Benjamin Ward House**

circa 1881

Facing Bridge Street, this 2½ storey red brick house with contrasting yellow brick trim was built for mill owner Benjamin Ward on land he purchased in 1880. The building's fretwork reflects its Victorian Gothic origins while three Italianate style turrets with dentillated trim add further dimension. The house was part of Ward's sale of his mill property to son-in-law John M. Dods. James Barber Dods was born here in 1905 to Dods' second wife Cora Barber; the house remained in the Dods' family until after Cora's death in 1952. It was later owned by Lockwood and Mary Stubbs, after which it became the Steldon School. In the early 1980s, the building was restored as 'The Manor House' and remains part of the Millcroft Inn complex.

B



**\* Mill Owner's House Gardens**

circa 1913

Benjamin Ward's house was noted for its landscaping, and Cora Barber Dods later expanded the beautiful south-facing gardens. Sometime before WW1, she hired Tom King, a gardener originally from Liverpool England, to augment the property's landscaping and to plant and tend its gardens. Tom and his wife Alice lived on the mill property. The gardens and property surrounding the house are accessible to the public.

***The tour continues on Bridge Street which can be reached via a path at the south-east corner of the gardens.***

34



**34 Credit Street**

Stone Saw mill

circa 1855

This fieldstone building sits on the 7<sup>th</sup> privilege along Shaw's Creek and is likely the saw mill marked on the 1857 Alton map. In 1894, the building was converted for use as the 'Credit Valley Creamery' by Smith and Russell, proprietors of the Shelburne Creamery. Known as 'Smith's Creamery' from 1904 until 1914, it was sold in 1922 to Dods Knitting Co. Clifford Sibbald, a bookkeeper who took up beekeeping in the 1930s later leased the building for honey processing. After Sibbald retired in 1969, the building was altered for residential use. The dormer windows are modern additions.

35



**56 Credit Street**

Restored Barn

circa 1900

Originally a cow barn, this building had been converted into a summer cottage by the 1950s and is now a private residence. The building has a stucco finish and the chimney is built of 'tapestry' brick, popular in the 1910s to 1930s.

***The tour continues on Amelia Street. Walk there either via walking trails to the Alton Mill Arts Centre or across Queen Street West***





### **Walking Trails to Alton Mill Arts Centre**

**Lower Trail along north side of pond** Enter from east side of Credit Street across from south edge of the parking area.

**Upper Trail along the base of the Pinnacle hill** Enter from east side of Credit Street across from the NE corner of the parking area.

36



#### **20 Amelia Street**

Alexander Dick Residence

mid-1870s

This 1½ storey red brick Victorian Gothic house with steep side gables and contrasting yellow brick trim (now painted) was built for Alexander Dick, the owner of the Dick Foundry, a major industry which was located at the corner of Amelia Street and Queen Street West. The 1881 census indicates that the house has 11 rooms. The rear addition has crenellated detailing along the roof edge. In the 1970 and 1980s, the house became Hillview School for children with special needs. It has been restored to a private residence.

37



#### **50 Amelia Street**

Worker Cottage

circa 1880-90

Originally built as a frame Neoclassical style worker's cottage, this house now has a shed-roof dormer addition. It was likely built by Alexander Dick who operated the Dick Foundry and who owned the surrounding land, including this lot. The foundry grew into a major industry in this period as did William Algie's adjacent mill which fueled the need for local housing.

38



#### **46 Amelia Street**

Worker Cottage

circa 1880-90

Originally built as a frame Neoclassical style worker's cottage, this house has a more recent addition at the front. The house was likely built by foundry owner and local industrialist Alexander Dick as was frequently done to attract and retain employees.

39



#### **37 Amelia Street**

Worker Cottage

circa 1880-90

Originally built as a frame Neoclassical style worker's cottage, this house now has a gable end roof over the enlarged second floor. The house was likely built by Alexander Dick who operated the nearby foundry and who owned the surrounding property. Dick, a machinist who was born and raised in Albion, came to Alton in the early 1870s. He purchased and converted George Dods' axe and edge tool factory into his foundry.

40



#### **1456 Queen Street West**

\* Mechanics Institute

circa 1882

This single storey, three-bay frame building with red brick veneer cladding is the last remaining free-standing Mechanic's Institute in the Town of Caledon. Built on land provided by Robert Meek, mill owner William Algie, who served as its first president, financed construction. In 1888, the institute held almost 1,000 volumes and it operated for over 100 years until a new library opened on Station Street in 1992. NOTE: The first Mechanics Institute opened in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1821. Often funded by mill owners, institutes were created to provide education for an emerging group of skilled workers (mechanics) who built and maintained the equipment that powered the industrial revolution.



41



**1460 Queen Street West** Turn-of-the-Century House circa 1900

This 1½ storey frame house with the 'clipped' centre gable end to the street has a west facing dormer window more typical of Edwardian Classical style. The house was built after the 1898 Alton fire insurance map was printed. Note the coloured window lights. In 1989, the house was clad with a modern brick veneer with contrasting brickwork trim made to resemble the Victorian Gothic style of the neighbouring Mechanics Institute.

42



**1470 Queen Street West** Robert Meek House mid 1880s

This house was DEMOLISHED in September 2017. A new house is set on the same footprint.

43



**1481 Queen Street West** Commercial Building circa 1949

In 1941, grist and chopping mill owner, Wylie Houston, acquired a vacant property and, in 1949, built this commercial building, leasing the east half as Alton's new Post Office. Postmaster Hilton Cameron purchased the building in 1955 and, after his death, his widow (Marjorie) Jean served as postmistress until 1980. In 1984, Canada Post closed the post office. CIBC leased the west half of the building until the 1980s. The building has been converted to a private residence.

44



**1475 Queen Street West** Wood's Bakery circa 1938

After a 1937 fire destroyed the building housing Wood's Bakery, Vernon Woods and his wife re-built their bakery business. They lived with their family above the store and later incorporated the Lucky Dollar grocery into the business. In 1958, Vernon Woods Jr. and his wife Evelyn purchased the store from his parents and in 1966 they sold the store and business to Gavin and Vera Ray who operated it as 'Ray's Bakery'. Donna Ray and her husband Dale Perkins later took it over. Ray's Bakery has become an Alton destination and is now managed by Jason Perkins.

45



**1469 Queen Street West** McCartney's Hardware circa 1899

This commercial building was built for hardware merchant Samuel Albert McCartney. The building was constructed using balloon framing with cut stone as the exterior cladding. Note the round shaped parapet, iron tie-rod plates on the side walls as well as the detailing on what is the original storefront. In 1903, McCartney moved to Orangeville and sold the building to William White, a former harness maker and Alton's first magistrate. White opened a general store in the premises. In 1920, the building was sold to Alonze Tennyson who opened Tennyson's General Store. In 1923, James Hilliard converted the building to a barber shop.

46



**1465 Queen Street West** George Harrison House circa 1870s

This 1½ storey frame Ontario Cottage is Victorian Gothic in style and its centre gable window has unusually fine tracery details. The house, built by George Harrison for his widowed mother Rachel Wilson Harrison and his sister Rachel, remained in their family until 1903 when it was sold to John M. Dods. Dods owned the stone mill property on the west side of Alton, now the Millcroft Inn and this cottage was likely used as housing for workers. In 1945, Dods' widow Cora Barber Dods sold it to Arthur Lovell.

47



**1459/1461 Queen Street West** William White Block circa 1887  
 This double storefront, 2 storey red brick commercial block is typical of late 19<sup>th</sup> century main street design. The individual units, each with their different architectural detailing, are defined by the use of yellow brick trim. The interior is subdivided by a shared “party” wall. The commercial block, built by William White, a harness maker, was purchased in 1889 by Dr. James Algie. The east half, #1461, was used primarily as a drug store and medical offices but is no longer in commercial use.  
 \* The west half, #1459, was primarily used as a general store including Algie’s (Robert), Mason’s, Chantler’s and Cameron’s.

48



**1 Victoria Street** Ontario Cottage early 1870s  
 This 1½ storey frame cottage is Neoclassical in style and was likely built as worker accommodation by John L. McClellan. From the mid-1870s, ownership was traded among several local industrialists. The rear salt box wing was added after 1898; the front window has been altered and the exterior is clad in modern siding.

### Other Points of Interest



#### **The Pinnacle**

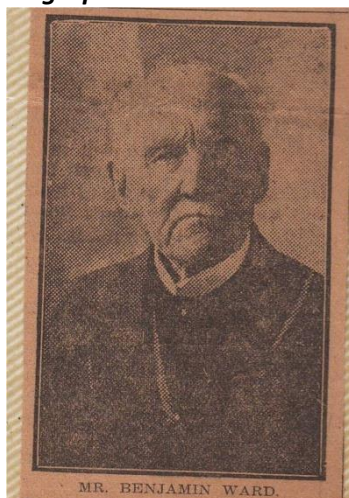
The Pinnacle is a large morainic hill on the north side of Shaw’s Creek that rises steeply north of Shaw’s Creek behind the Upper and Lower mill sites and looms over the Alton settlement area. The hill was completely denuded of trees by 1890. The combination of the Pinnacle and Shaw’s Creek defined the shape of the village as it grew and both remain key local focal points.



#### **The Pinnacle and Sir Edmund Hillary**

In 1985, Sir Edmund Hillary, accompanied by school children from Alton Public School and Belfountain Public School, climbed the Pinnacle hill to plant a flag promoting the Millrun Complex, now the Alton Mill. His ascent was recognized with the presentation of a chocolate mountain, which he shared with the school children.

### Biographies



**Benjamin Ednam Ward** emigrated at age 20 from England to the USA circa 1849. There, he married Constance Masterson with whom he had nine children. As a woollen knitter Ward worked in knitting mills near Boston, MA, Troy, NY, and by 1870, in Ancaster, Ontario. There, the Ward’s eldest daughter Phebe met and married William Algie whose father owned a knitting mill near Ayr, ON. In the mid-1870s, Ward moved to Cataract, south of Alton, to operate a woollen mill. From 1875 to 1882, he and William Algie rented the Riverdale Woollen Mill in Inglewood. In 1880, he moved to Alton where he bought 4 lots and water privilege #8 on which he built his stone woollen mill. In 1900, Ward retired to Toronto and in 1921 took his 44<sup>th</sup> trans-Atlantic trip to England, travelling alone. He died in 1924 at age 95 and is buried in Mount Pleasant Cemetery in Toronto.

*John traded farming for industry to work with his father-in-law, Benjamin Ward, and in 1900 purchased Ward's mill operation. John was no stranger to milling since his grandfather, William McClellan, built the first dam and woollen mill along Shaw's Creek. John was a brother-in-law of William Algie, owner of the 'Beaver Knitting Mill' who had married Fanny's eldest sister Phebe. After Fanny's death in 1903, John married Cora Barber, daughter of Alton carriage maker Samuel Barber.*



**William Wallace Algie** was born February 19, 1850 in Ayr, Ontario, the eldest son of Matthew and Janet Algie who emigrated from Scotland circa 1849. Matthew operated a woollen mill near Ayr for 30 years and son William is listed on the 1871 census as a wool carder and spinner. On Christmas Day 1871, William married Phebe Ward, daughter of Benjamin Ward who at that time operated a woollen mill in Ancaster. With these close family ties, it is hardly a coincidence that William Algie and Benjamin Ward both acquired industrial property along Shaw's Creek in 1880.



**Fredrick Neelands Stubbs** was born June 24, 1883 in Caledon Village to Samuel and Sarah Stubbs. He married Pearl Fagan and they had four sons: Harold, Ralph, Lockwood and Gordon. Fred was very entrepreneurial and after a stint of hotel ownership in Medicine Hat, Alberta, the family returned to Ontario where he pursued the emerging potential of latex products initially used for retreading tires. In 1927, he founded the 'Western Rubber Co of Canada Ltd.' and in 1935 purchased the former Beaver Knitting Mill's property in Alton which he and his sons converted to rubber processing. Fredrick died unexpectedly in 1941, but wartime contracts for rubber gloves and other latex based products created a growing business assumed by his sons. From 1977 to 1982, the business was owned and managed by his granddaughters Marilyn and Mary June Stubbs and their husbands Clare and Lyle Cooney.

## Alton History Timeline

- 1816: Martin Middaugh Jr., United Empire Loyalist, receives a 200 acre grant by Order in Council
- 1819: Provincial Land Surveyor, Samuel Rykman, completes Caledon Twp survey with concessions and lot #s
- 1820: Location ticket is issued to Martin Middaugh for his UEL grant: Lot 23 Concession 4 WHS
- 1820s: Middaugh starts building a mill but dies in 1827 from blood-poisoning caused by an axe wound
- 1834: Early settler Hugh Russell patents Lot 22, land later developed for the village cemetery and school
- 1837: First school SS#15 opens in a log building located near the SE corner of Main and Queen Streets
- 1830s: Mr. Coulter operates a general store adjacent to the log school house
- 1839: Cemetery is established at the same time as the Congregational Church was established in village
- 1839: Elizabeth Middaugh Gaynor, Martin's widow, proves that his settlement duties had been fulfilled. She gains title to the 200 acre lot which forms the nucleus of Alton's future mill industry
- 1847: Elizabeth Middaugh Gaynor sells 50 acres from Lot 23 Conc 4 to James McClellan
- 1849: Elizabeth Middaugh Gaynor sells 50 acres from that same lot to Nicholas Smith
- 1851: Robert Meek opens a general store
- 1852: Elizabeth Middaugh Gaynor sells the remaining 100 acres from Lot 23 Conc 4 to William McClellan
- 1850s: William McClellan builds a saw mill and later a frame woollen mill along Shaw's Creek
- 1850s: Frame school with roughcast exterior is built on the north side of the cemetery; it burns down in 1874
- 1850s: George Dods starts an axe and tool factory on the banks of Shaw's Creek, beside mill privilege #4



- 1850s: Wright brothers build a grist/chopping mill on 3<sup>rd</sup> Line West (Main Street) where it crosses Shaw's Creek
- 1854: A post office, named Alton Ontario opens with John S. Meek as the first postmaster.  
The village also takes the name of Alton
- 1850s: John S. Meek establishes the first hotel in the village, the Alton Hotel
- 1857: John Ford is operating a chair factory along Main Street at Edmund Street  
Robert Rayburn is running a tannery. Merchants include: Wright Bros, J.P Lacey and John McQuarrie
- 1857: Provincial Land Surveyor Charles Wheelock surveys and registers a village plan for Alton
- 1860s: D. McCutcheon builds a grist mill on Shaw's Creek, northeast of the village; it is lost to fire in 1895
- 1860s: Blacksmith Edwin Rowcliffe and wagon-maker Samuel Boggs start making carriages
- 1870: Archibald Dick builds a 3 storey brick hotel called the Dixie House. Guttered by fire, it is re-built in 1890
- 1870s: Jameson and Carroll start quarrying limestone and build lime kilns east of Alton
- 1870s: James and Samuel Barber begin producing open carriages and later make leather top models
- 1871: Toronto Grey & Bruce Railway reaches Alton in April 1871; station is east of village near quarry
- 1873: Machinist Alexander Dick buys George Dods' tool and axe factory and establishes the Alton foundry
- 1879: Credit Valley Railway arrives in December 1879; station is nearer the village at the foot of Charles Street
- 1881: Both Benjamin Ward and his son-in-law William Algie build stone mills along Shaw's Creek
- 1882: Mechanics Institute library is built by William Algie on land donated by Robert Meek
- 1889: A disastrous flood hits Alton, as the mill dams along Shaw's Creek are washed out
- 1890: Alton Aetnas baseball team, coached by Robert Algie, wins first of several county championships
- 1894: Barber Bros and Rowcliffe & Boggs erect a stone building on Queen St. West for their carriage operations
- 1894: Credit Valley Creamery starts up in former stone saw mill just below the 8<sup>th</sup> mill privilege
- 1901: Fire destroys the Alton foundry and the property remains vacant
- 1904: Cement sidewalks are installed on Queen and Main Streets, and extend to the railway station
- 1904: Telephone service is established
- 1904: John Deagle of the Cataract Electrical Company starts wiring the village for electricity
- 1914: Barber Bros carriage works building is converted for use as a shell and munitions factory during WW1
- 1918: Wallace Lloyd Algie is posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for gallantry in WW1
- 1935: Fredrick N. Stubbs and Sons, owners of 'Western Rubber Co.' convert Algie's mill to rubber production
- 1982: 'Western Rubber Co.' factory closes, ending Alton's water-powered industrial history
- 1985: Sir Edmund Hillary climbs the Pinnacle with local school children  
The stone carriage works building is demolished.

*A 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Project of Heritage Caledon in 2016*

*Information courtesy of the Alton Village Association*

*Technical, mapping and heritage support from the Town of Caledon*

