

## ***PORT CREDIT HARBOUR & THE STONEHOOKERS***

Always a natural safe haven from lake storms, the harbour proper began when the Port Credit Harbour Company was founded in 1834. The construction of two wharves and a warehouse allowed for the export of goods by loading them onto larger boats that could go long distances to other parts of Canada and the world. The harbour reached its peak around 1900 with the advent of stonehooking; one of the primary building materials for construction in Toronto was shale from the bottom of Lake Ontario. The vessels that raised this stone were called Stonehookers and a great many of them were based at Port Credit. The trade started in the mid 1800s and lasted till about 1910 when inland quarries opened up, reducing the need for the stonehooking fleet. The peak of the trade was 1881 when twenty-three stonehooking vessels operated out of Port Credit. The harbour still exists today but it is no longer used for shipping or stonehooking, but is home today to recreational activities.

### ***WILCOX INN (c.1850) 32 Front Street S.***

In 1850, Captain James Wilcox built this Georgian Survival home. He operated it first as an inn, intended as a haven for weary sailors and harbour workers, for three years. Sometime before 1855, he returned to his former employ as a Lake Captain, engaging in all kinds of lake trade, including stonehooking, commercial fishing, lumbering, and transporting all sorts of goods between Hamilton, Port Credit and Toronto. Over the years, the Wilcox Inn served a variety of purposes. By 1888 however, it was used as community hall for social gatherings. In 1891, the inn was renovated and used for church services. Later, the old inn became the meeting hall for the first Peel Temperance Society, under the direction of Captain John Miller. The Wilcox Inn was restored in 1988, used for a time as an artists' gallery, and is now a private residence.

### ***ABRAM BLOCK HOUSE (c.1850) 42 Front Street S.***

This private residence was the home of Abram Block Jr., a stonehooker captain. Block was also involved in shipbuilding and repair with his partner, John Miller, who was the lighthouse keeper. Until the decline of the stonehooking trade in the 1920s, many local families depended upon the hauling of building stone for their livelihood.

### ***THOMPSON HOUSE / "The Old Fort" (c.1852) 48 Lake Street***

It is believed that this private residence was constructed on the site of an old trading post due to the number of artifacts uncovered during excavation of the cellar. The house was the residence of John Thompson, a wharfinger and first harbour master for the Port Credit Harbour Company.

### ***PARKINSON HOUSE (c.1900) 37 Mississauga Road S.***

Eliza Jane Peer and Risdon Morville Parkinson built this brick house around 1900. Risdon was an active community member, and had a distinguished career as a local politician. The bricks for the construction of this house were supplied by the Port Credit Brickyard which was located southwest of the house. The Port Credit Brickyard was founded in 1891. The brickyard and the St. Lawrence Starch Company were Port Credit's two primary industries at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The brickyard closed in 1927. The historically designated Parkinson house remains a private residence.

### ***LYND HOUSE (1910) 15 Mississauga Road S.***

Prior to the construction of this house, James Robinson Shaw's tavern was located here. Shaw, a staunch Methodist, found that managing a tavern was not desirable and he closed the establishment after only one year. The house was then used as a residence until the Rev. Garnet Lynd, James Robinson Shaw's grandson, tore it down. Rev. Lynd built the present house in 1910.

### ***PORT CREDIT FIRE HALL (1955) 62 Port Street***

This two-storey red brick building is the oldest fire hall remaining in Mississauga. The fire hall was officially opened on December 12, 1955. Built by local builders H. Lee & Sons, the building originally served as a combination fire hall and police hall for the village of Port Credit. The fire hall was originally staffed by a volunteer fire brigade.

### ***HARRISON HOUSE (c.1879) 54 Port Street***

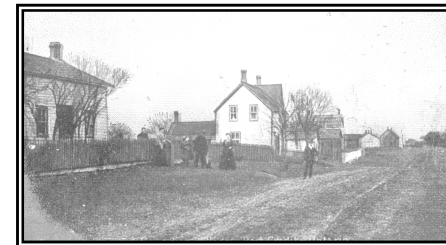
David Harrison was born in Ireland in the late 1830s. His father, David Sr., settled in Port Credit around 1840. David Jr. made his living initially as a carpenter and farm labourer, with forays as a sailor aboard the old stonehooking barques "Defiance" and "Swallow". He also assisted in laying down the first corduroy road along Lakeshore Road. This property was granted to David Harrison in 1879 and the house stayed in the Harrison family until 1981.

### ***MASONIC TEMPLE (c.1845) 47 Port Street***

One of the most important influences on Port Credit's social and religious development was the introduction of Methodism. The primary leaders in the Methodist movement were Rev. Peter Jones, a Mississauga chief of Welsh and Native heritage, his brother John, and Egerton Ryerson, who would eventually establish Ontario's public school system. The Jones brothers began preaching, in 1826, to the Native Mississaugas, who erected a shelter to serve as a chapel and a school. In 1828, the church was rebuilt as a log mission house, and then in the mid 1840s a new lime and lumber building was constructed on Lakeshore Road. In 1894, this building was moved to its present location where it was used as a community hall. The local Masonic lodge bought and renovated the building in 1915.

### ***DELANEY HOUSE (c.1860) 32 Peter Street S.***

A newspaper clipping in the William Perkins Bull Collection explains that the Gothic Revival frame house at 32 Peter Street South served as the first place of worship for Roman Catholics in Port Credit. The house originally stood on the site where the first St. Mary's Church was built in 1880, and was moved to the corner of Bay and Peter Streets.



**Lakeshore Road, Port Credit, c. 1900**

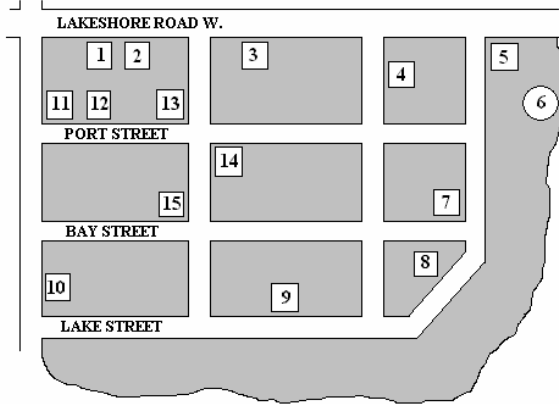


## ***Old Port Credit Village Heritage Conservation District***



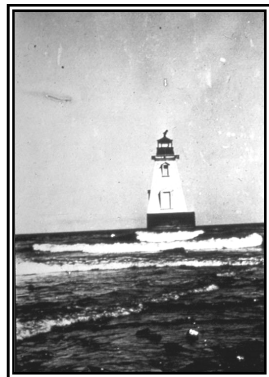
### ***A Heritage Tour***

Originally surveyed in 1834, the streets of Old Port Credit Village still retain the survey grid pattern. The village streets are characterized by a remarkable number of preserved residential and institutional buildings dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Most are modest vernacular, clapboard, and shiplap buildings built by and for those who made a living on the water: mariner, sailor, stonehooker, fisherman, wharfinger, tradesmen and labourers. Old Port Credit Village provides more than just picturesque reminders of the past. A walk through the village today offers glimpses of the truly unique vestiges of our past. In 2005, the distinctiveness of historic Old Port Credit Village was recognized as it was designated as Mississauga's second Heritage Conservation District.



### OLD PORT CREDIT VILLAGE

1. Clarke Hall
2. First United Church
3. St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church
4. Peer House
5. Port Credit Lighthouse
6. Port Credit Harbour
7. Wilcox Inn
8. Abram Block House
9. Thompson House
10. Parkinson House
11. Lynd House
12. Port Credit Fire Hall
13. Harrison House
14. Masonic Temple
15. Delaney House



**Original  
Lighthouse,  
c. 1930**

### HISTORY

The story of Port Credit begins long before the arrival of non-Native settlers. Archaeological evidence suggests that Iroquois, Algonquin and Ojibwa speaking peoples were attracted to the Credit River Valley over a period of thousands of years. By 1700 the Ojibwa had driven the Iroquois from the North Shore of Lake Ontario, and a group of Ojibwa, known as the Mississaugas, had settled around the mouth of the Credit River. In the 1720s, the French had established many trading posts around Lake Ontario, one of which was located at the mouth of the river. The Mississaugas referred to the river as "Missinihe" or "Trusting Water", but the river came to be known as the Credit River, a name derived from the custom of trading on credit. After the decline of French power in the region, the British established their own trade with the Mississaugas, building a trading post and Government Inn on the east bank of the mouth of river in 1798. On August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1805, at the mouth of the Credit River, the Mississaugas signed a land treaty with the British Crown. The Mississaugas reserved a one-mile strip of land on either side of the River (currently running from Rhododendron Gardens to Hiawatha Park). The Mississaugas signed another treaty in 1818, and a third treaty in 1820. The result was that the Mississaugas were left with a 200 acre reserve of land. In an effort to assimilate the Mississaugas, the Government built a village for them, north of Port Credit in 1826, at the site of the Mississaugua Golf and Country Club. Old Port Credit Village was surveyed in 1834, and construction of a harbour began almost immediately. In 1847, the Mississaugas, whose numbers had been severely reduced by disease, relocated to the New Credit Reserve near Brantford, Ontario. The departure of the Natives opened up the Credit River to commercial expansion and Port Credit went through a period of tremendous economic growth as a harbour. This prosperous period ended in the mid-1850s as a result of both a great fire, which destroyed the west end of the harbour, and the construction of the Grand Trunk and Great Western Railways, which diverted commerce away from the village. Towards the end of the century, the stonehooking trade kept the port alive, and Port Credit slowly began to recover. The arrival of the St. Lawrence Starch Company, in 1889, and other large industries, such as the Port Credit Brickyard, revitalized Port Credit's economy. Port Credit soon became a shopping area for tourists and travellers. Port Credit became a "police village" in 1909 and was incorporated as a "village" in 1914. It acquired Town status in 1961 and was amalgamated into the City of Mississauga in 1974. Port Credit has changed countless times over the last two centuries, but it still retains much of its architectural character and early street names.

Peter Street is named after Peter Jones (Kahkewaquonaby) who was a Methodist minister and a Mississauga Chief. Peter helped to shape both the Native and non-Native communities around him. Also Mississauga Road South was originally called Joseph Street after Mississauga Chief Joseph Sawyer. The district also includes J.C. Saddington Park, which is largely a man-made park and is named after the former Port Credit Mayor. In 2005, Old Port Credit Village was designated as a Heritage Conservation District.

### CLARKE HALL (1922) 161 Lakeshore Road W.

Mary Louise Clarke and her husband, Alfred Russell Clarke, were among the wealthier Torontonians who established summer retreats at Lorne Park Estates. Mary Louise had Clarke Memorial Hall built in 1922 in memory of her husband. Alfred Russell Clarke was on his way to England for business in 1915, aboard the now famous ocean liner "Lucitania." Although he survived the sinking, Alfred caught pneumonia and died shortly afterwards in a London hospital, never returning to Canada. The hall itself was finished in 1922, and upon completion, Mary donated the hall to the United Church. During the Depression, due to financial reasons, the church gave control of the hall to the Village of Port Credit. For many years the hall was used as a community hall and was the site of municipal offices from 1941 to 1974. The building's classical columns, Italianate brackets, Renaissance Revival Dutch gable and the Spanish clay roof tiles show the architectural eclecticism common during the 1920s.

### FIRST UNITED CHURCH (c. 1894) 151 Lakeshore Road W.

Formerly the Port Credit Methodist Church, this building became an incorporated chapel of the First United Church in 1925. It had been the third meeting place for Port Credit's Methodists, and was originally constructed of red brick. A cut stone extension was added in 1950, and consequently the entire church was sheathed in cut stone to harmonize the exterior. Increasing enrolment in the church's Sunday school led to the erection of the Christian Education wing which was added in 1960.

### ST. MARY STAR-OF-THE-SEA ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH (c. 1880) 135 Lakeshore Road W.

Irish Catholics first immigrated to Port Credit after the war of 1812, with many early Irish families settling in the immediate Port Credit area by the 1830s and 1840s. At first, the faithful travelled to mass at St. Paul's in Toronto or the Fifth Line Church at Elmbank, and later to St. Peter's in Trafalgar or St. Patrick's in Dixie. A Catholic church was eventually built on this site in 1880. The small cemetery contains the graves of many of Port Credit's earliest Catholic settlers. The church itself remained a part of the St. Patrick's Parish at Dixie until 1913. The cornerstone for the present church was laid in 1952. Stained glass windows from the 1880 church have been preserved in this building.

### PEER HOUSE (c.1867) 7 John Street

Built by the Peer family, this clapboard house features a central gable and a decorative vergeboard. Several families of Peers lived in the Port Credit and Clarkson area and they were quite active in the commercial sailing and stone-hooker trades during the latter part of the 19th century. The house is now being used for commercial purposes.

### PORT CREDIT LIGHTHOUSE (1991) 105 Lakeshore Road W.

One of the most familiar sights near any harbour is a lighthouse, and Port Credit has had its share of them. The first was constructed in 1863 by Frederick Chase Capreol, a businessman who wished to develop Port Credit into an industrial town using his organization, the Peel Manufacturing Company. He abandoned this project and the lighthouse was taken over by the Ontario government in 1882. A 1908 flood separated the lighthouse from the mainland and in 1918 the lighthouse closed. In 1936, an accidental fire burned the lighthouse to the ground. The present lighthouse was constructed in 1991 and, while not an historic structure, is a reminder of Port Credit's marine heritage. It is a Peel County pumping station and the home of the Port Credit Business Association. From its deck one can get a very good view of the Credit River and Port Credit harbour.