

Aldershot

Originally known as the area of East Flamborough, the land just east of present day Hamilton became known as Aldershot, named by William Applegarth. William was the area's second settler who emigrated from Durham, England in the 1790s. The first settler was David Fonger. These two settlers, among others such as George and John Chisholm, George Gallagher, Aaron Emery and Charles King, helped develop the area of East Flamborough. Some of these early settlers constructed wharves along the southern shoreline of Aldershot and established market gardens and farms to the north which contributed greatly to Aldershot's early development from a crossroads community known as Aldershot Corners into a bustling town.



Map of Aldershot, detail, 1875
Source: Burlington Historical Society

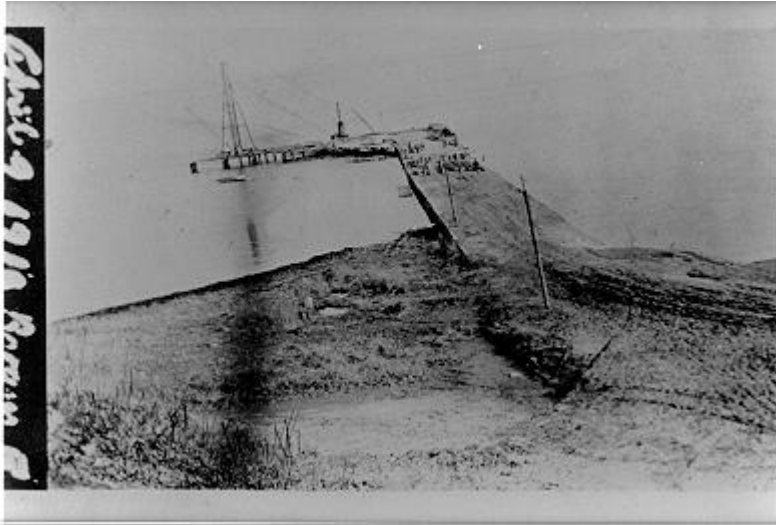
Steamship "Modjeska" and passengers at the Wharf, Aldershot, ca 1919
Source: Burlington Historical Society



Unlike seaports or harbours where large boats and vessels would often dock for many hours or even days, wharves allowed for the quick flow of goods and people. Boats could easily dock, load and unload cargo or passengers. The wharves of the area allowed for the timely movement of goods including agricultural produce, lumber and textiles. One of the more well-known wharves was built in the late 1840s by Colonel Brown, an agent for the North Western Fur Trades Company in York. This particular wharf shipped lumber and stone from the quarries of Waterdown. The goods

shipped from this wharf served the area around the Great Lakes and as far as the Maritimes. Consistent with Burlington's reputation as the "The Garden of Canada" the last shipment from Colonel Brown's wharf before it closed in 1897 was 15,000 to 20,000 barrels of apples.

The location of Aldershot's wharves benefited from the commercial activity generated by Port Flamborough, located westerly near Waterdown. Port Flamborough, one of the area's biggest ports, played a major role in the early economic successes of the towns near the shoreline of Lake Ontario (Lawrence 1993:2).



Brown's Wharf, Aldershot, aerial view ca 1917
Source: Burlington Historical Society

Market gardens were common in the Burlington area dating back to the mid-19th century, dominating much of the area's farm land – this was no different in Aldershot. Early settlers to Aldershot took advantage of the rich soil known throughout the area. George Gallagher and his sons owned four apple orchards in Aldershot that consisted of 2,250 trees as well as 200 cherry trees and a large vineyard (Emery & Ford 1967:111). The Gallaghers were known to be one of the best fruit growers of the area. They were famous for their melons, tomatoes, strawberries, raspberries, cherries, pears, plums and apples that were sold under the Sunfruit brand. It was recorded that on September 17, 1927 nearly 250 growers from around Ontario gathered at the Gallagher farm to see the results of scientific apple growing (Emery & Ford 1967:111). The Gallagher's specialty was melons. During a peak cantaloupe season in August 1931, the Gallagher farm shipped 2,000 20qt. baskets to Toronto every week as well as to Montreal and Winnipeg (Turcotte 1989:64).

The Emerys were another of these pioneering fruit farming families, they also owned orchards in Aldershot. Emery's Farms and Fruit Market operated for many years and is known for shipping the first Canadian apples abroad. One time, the Emerys tried to ship apples to South Africa, but the shipment never arrived. To ensure this mistake was not repeated, family members would accompany the apples on the cross-Atlantic voyage (Turcotte, 1989:67).



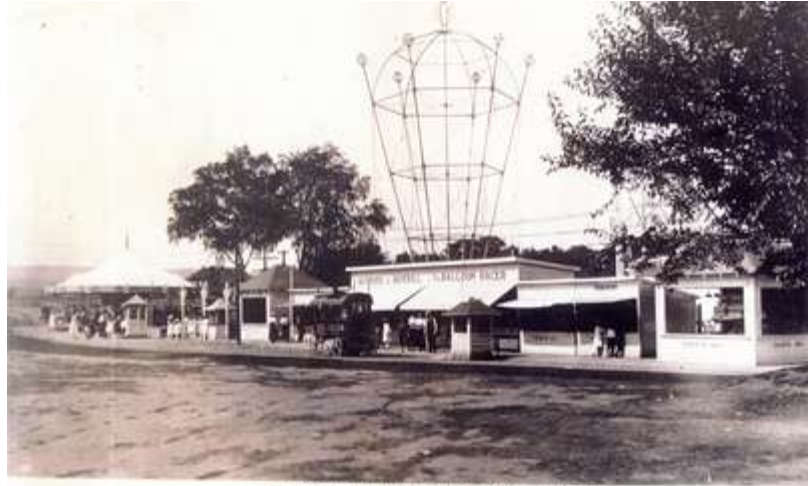
The Roller Coaster, La Salle Park, Aldershot, 1920s
Source: Burlington Historical Society

Aldershot is known to have some of the earliest amusement parks of the area. In the 1880s, George Midwinter operated Bayview, situated at Rock Bay along Lake Ontario. The park had a merry-go-round, a roller skating rink and a track and field area where multiple sports were played. In addition to the park, the property was home to the Bayview Hotel with its winter and summer bar, pool room, restaurant, candy store and

ice cream parlour (Emery & Ford 1967:117). Other amusement rides in Aldershot could be found at La Salle Park.

Like many towns in Ontario, Aldershot streets were often named after early settlers: King Road and Job's Lane were named after Charles King and John Rendall Job. Unique to Aldershot, is the 'Birdland' neighbourhood in which streets are named after birds such as Finch, Lark, Flacon, Condor and Eagle. The streets in this small pocket of Aldershot are so named thanks to an influential family, the Filmans, who had an affection for birds.

In 1958, Aldershot amalgamated with the City of Burlington. The goal was to improve services within Aldershot such as the addition of street lights to improved sewer systems. Although the area blended seamlessly with the City of Burlington, the historical remnants of Aldershot can still be seen today in many of the houses along Plains Road and Northshore Boulevard.



The Midway, La Salle Park, Aldershot, 1920s
Source: Burlington Historical Society

Associated Properties:

241 Plains Road West “Gallagher Farmhouse” – The Gallagher House was built circa 1880. It is a Vernacular Victorian Farmhouse that was home to the Gallagher Family, who were well-known fruit growers of the area. They were famous for their melons, tomatoes, strawberries, raspberries, cherries, pears, plums and apples that were sold under the Sunfruit brand.

313 Plains Road West – The Albert Unsworth House was built circa 1882. The Unsworths were a farming family who were prominent in the community for over 160 years.

444 Plains Road East “The John Horne House” – George Horne's family emigrated from England and settled in Aldershot. George's sons, Walter and John, had a successful fruit farm. Part of the property is now the Burlington Golf and Country Club course.

481 Plains Road West “The David Blain House and Inn” – This house was built in 1857 on the site of an old hotel that burned down. The “Blains Inn” was one of the eight Inns on Waterdown Road. In 1854, the construction of the railway through the region initiated the decline of the hotel. The owner of the house, David Blain, was a constable of the County Court for many years.

Sources:

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