



## ***AUCHMAR ADVOCATE***

**Published by Friends of Auchmar**

**Writer/Editor: John Kajaste**

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### ***BEYOND THE FRONT DOOR***

**Inside the Auchmar Manor House: Vignettes**

#### **ELSIE**

**EARLY SPRING 1951.** The last two weeks brought changes. The cardinals, chickadees and blue jays could still be heard in the trees and woods. Now, they were joined by the early arrival of robins. The ice was weakening at Cootes Paradise, creating the end of pond hockey season. The snow was almost completely gone, though in the shadows of yards it remained, and the kids were clamouring to ride their bikes.

The three friends and workmates arrived early this morning to have coffee at the Honey Dew Diner before walking to work at the Hamilton Spectator building.

In the basement where the printing presses were, the typesetters worked diligently at ensuring they had the correct font types while they mocked up the broadsheet.

One of them took a step back while reading the copy sent down. He recognized the name. Buchanan.

His uncle worked for Harry Greening, looking after the pool and grounds, at the Greening home on Chedoke Mountain. He had heard stories from his uncle about Hamilton's old families. The Buchanan family was one of these. He recalled that they owned Auchmar, the son and the daughter, something like that.

They read the copy of the obituary again, making sure each important detail was correct.

*"Helen Elizabeth Jamison Buchanan. At Binbrook in the home of Mrs. E. Wright. Member of the MacNab Street Presbyterian Church. Service in the chapel of Blachford & Wray's Funeral Home at 3:30. Interment will be at Hamilton Cemetery."*

The foreman read the copy once again. The March 28<sup>th</sup> edition would have several obituaries. They broke for lunch. Some had brown bagged lunch from home. Others slipped out for a quick walk or down to the Honey Dew for a sandwich.

That afternoon, upstairs in newspaper offices, someone was going through the archives for background information and calling the library. There would be a follow up biographical piece about Miss. Buchanan in the March 29<sup>th</sup> editions.

The following is excerpted from the Hamilton Spectator dated March 29, 1951.

### **Last Survivor of Old Family Has Succumbed (Death Claims Miss Helen Buchanan)**

"Miss Helen Elizabeth Jamison Buchanan whose death at Binbrook was reported in yesterday's Spectator was for many years a prominent personality in the city and was known for her sympathy for the less fortunate and for her deep interest in missionary work."

"One of the 11 children of the late Honourable Isaac Buchanan, one of Hamilton's leading citizens in the 1860s, Miss Buchanan was born at Auchmar House, the beautiful home built on the brow of the Mountain by her distinguished father."

"A woman of cultivated tastes and charm of manner, Miss Buchanan was deeply interested in charitable organizations. Her family had long been connected with MacNab Street Presbyterian Church and had given generously to the building of it. Miss Buchanan was one of its most active members."





Elsie at Niagara 1930s

Elsie Buchanan passed away on March 27, 1951 in her 86<sup>th</sup> year.

Throughout her decades, she saw 11 Prime Ministers govern Canada, beginning with Sir John A. Macdonald and finishing with Louis St. Laurent. She witnessed global events, discoveries, disasters, and the best and worst of the human spirit, which shaped the decades and eras.

Inventions such as the telephone, and electric light, country defining achievements such as the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railroad across the land, discoveries made in university laboratories such as insulin at the University of Toronto, and the birth of the airplane.

There were precedent setting events which shaped young Canada. Among these were the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919, the On to Ottawa Trek and Regina Riot of 1935 and the Persons case before the Supreme Court of Canada in 1929.

There was The Great War and World War II, which bookended the Roaring 20s and the Great Depression.

Remarkable were the events Elsie witnessed.



Marie Ratte and Elsie Buchanan



# THE FRIENDS OF AUCHMAR

## Partnerships, Events and News



Voices of Auchmar Speaker Series



Isaac Buchanan, Canada 150 Event

### Doors Open Hamilton 2025.

The Friends of Auchmar was pleased to work with the City of Hamilton and the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario, Hamilton Branch in featuring Auchmar as part of Doors Open



*Auchmar Manor House*  
*Call for a Volunteer Coordinator*  
**Doors Open Auchmar 2025**  
**Sat May 3 & Sun May 4, 10am - 4pm**

**Doors Open Hamilton**

CONTACT: [doorsopen@friendsofauchmar.ca](mailto:doorsopen@friendsofauchmar.ca)  
AUCHMAR MANOR HOUSE West 5th at Fennel



**AUCHMAR ESTATE**  
**Doors Open Hamilton**

*Call for Volunteers*  
**Sat May 3 - Sun May 4, 2025**

An exciting opportunity to participate in this annual heritage event at Auchmar Manor

**Shifts:** Saturday, May 3, 10 am -1pm and 1pm - 4pm.  
Sunday, May 4, 10 am -1pm and 1pm - 4pm.

**Doors Open Hamilton**

CONTACT: [doorsopen@friendsofauchmar.ca](mailto:doorsopen@friendsofauchmar.ca)  
Auchmar Manor House  
West 5th at Fennel Ave., Hamilton

Hamilton. The Friends of Auchmar developed a content rich experience for volunteers and visitors.

Doors Open Hamilton was May 3rd, 2025 and May 4<sup>th</sup> 2025, from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. unless otherwise specified.

Thank you to all of the volunteers who made this a successful event.

Lisa Abbott, Director of Tourism, Culture and Heritage, was there to present the overview of the City of Hamilton 10 year restoration plan.

Information about the Auchmar Challenge was made available.

The ribbon cutting ceremony was held each day. Hamilton Mountain Member of Provincial Parliament Monica Ciriello did the honours on Saturday.

Newly elected Member of Parliament for Hamilton West, Ancaster and Dundas John Paul Danko performed the honours on Sunday.

Though the weather didn't co-operate Saturday, more than 600 people visited the estate.



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony with Monica Ciriello



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony with John Paul Danko



## THE AUCHMAR CHALLENGE FUND



# AUCHMAR CHALLENGE FUND

The Auchmar Estate was retained by the City of Hamilton as a Community Restoration Project. Heritage Hamilton joined the community with an Auchmar Challenge Fund in which the Foundation will match dollar-for-dollar donations from the community for an approved restoration project at the Auchmar Estate up to \$25,000.00.

Donate today by following this link → [Donate to the Auchmar Challenge Fund](#)

After clicking the above link, please include a “message to charity” on the donations page, indicating that you are donating to the Auchmar Challenge Fund. A charitable donation tax receipt will be issued by Heritage Hamilton Foundation for all donations.



## THE PHOTO GALLERY

This issue, the Photo Gallery remembers Elsie Buchanan.

The following were some of Elsie's family possessions.



(1)



(2)



(3)



(4)



(5)



(6)

## DOUG EMBLETON



Doug Embleton

### IN HAMILTON, DOUG EMBLETON

passed away in his 97<sup>th</sup> year, this June 2, 2025.

The families and individuals who have a direct connection to the Auchmar Estate are now fewer and fewer in number. Whether, those connections belong to the Buchanan family, the Young family, or Hungarian Sisters of Social Service, they are emissaries of living history.

Doug was an emissary.

His father, Harry Embleton took an offer of employment with the Young family after they purchased Auchmar. Harry was the stablemaster and responsible for the care of the family well bred horses.

Harry and his wife resided in the Gatehouse located on the edge of the mountain brow. Doug was born in 1929 and his early years were spent on the estate.

After the Young family sold the estate, after a long professional career, after raising a family, retirement loomed.

Doug was a member of the Hamilton Mountain Heritage Society.

While the H.M.H.S. was developing the book *Mountain Memories*, it was Doug and Stewart Leslie, who decided to visit Mrs. Viva Voelker, the widow of Flight Lieutenant Philip A. Voelker, who ran the rehabilitation program at Auchmar (known as R.C.A.F. Convalescent Hospital No. 2).

From this meeting came the fortunate discovery of original films taken by Dr. Voelker and the production of *Auchmar, The War Story* DVD by the Hamilton Mountain Heritage Society.

In later years, Doug spoke with the Friends of Auchmar Board about his life on the estate, regaled us with stories, participated in the *Voices of Auchmar* Speakers Series, and spoke as part of panel at Friends of Auchmar event *Auchmar, The War Years*, at the Westdale, which showcased the Voelker films.



## CONTACT US

**LOOKING TO REACH** the Friends of Auchmar and not sure how? Do you want to attend our public meeting? Would you like a little bit of information? Do you have a comment? Would you like to become involved? Do you have a memory or story about Auchmar that you wish to share?

Here are the ways:

Website: [www.friendsofauchmar.ca](http://www.friendsofauchmar.ca)

General Information Email: [info@friendsofauchmar.ca](mailto:info@friendsofauchmar.ca)

Membership: [membership@friendsofauchmar.ca](mailto:membership@friendsofauchmar.ca)

X: @FOAuchmar.ca

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/friendsofauchmar](http://www.facebook.com/friendsofauchmar)

OR

Just come up and speak with us.



## PHOTO CREDITS

Page 1: (1) Auchmar Estate Grounds in Spring, 3 photos (John Kajaste).

Page 2: (1) H.E. J. Buchanan, Elsie Buchanan Archive, (Vasseur and Martin Family Private Collection).

Page 3: (1) Elsie Buchanan, Elsie Buchanan Archive (Vasseur and Martin Family Private Collection) (2) Marie Ratte and Elsie Buchanan (Vasseur and Martin Family Private Collection).

Page 4: (1) Voices of Auchmar Speaker Series (F.O.A. Events) (2) Isaac Buchanan Canada 150 Event (F.O.A. Events) (3) Doors Open Auchmar (F.O.A. Events) (4) Doors Open Auchmar Call for Volunteers (F.O.A. Events).

Page 5: (1) Ribbon Cutting Monica Ciriello (F.O.A. Events) (2) Ribbon Cutting John Paul Danko (F.O.A. Events).

Page 6: (1) Auchmar Challenge Fund (Heritage Hamilton Foundation) (2) Auchmar Estate (Hamilton Public Library)

Page 7: Photo Gallery. (1-4 inclusive) Broaches and plate (Vasseur and Martin Family Private Collection) (5) Tea Setting (Ibid). (6) Glassware (Ibid).

Page 8: (1) Doug Embleton (Fotograf Geissler).

Page 10: (1) Auchmar Estate (Hamilton Public Library).

## REFERENCES

1. "Elsie" Buchanan obituary, Hamilton Spectator, March 28, 1951. Elsie Buchanan Archive (Vassuer and Martin Family Private Collection.)
2. H.E.J. Buchanan Biography, Hamilton Spectator, March 29, 1951. Elsie Buchanan Archive (Vasseur and Martin Family Private Collection).











