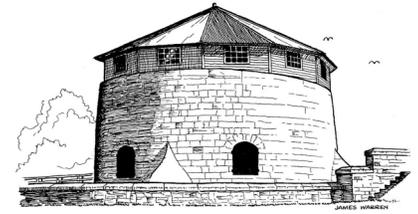


Limelight

Newsletter of the Kingston Historical Society

Kingston Ontario Canada

Volume 20 no 9 ISSN 1488-5565 December 2018



Awards Night ~ ~ ~ Christmas Party

Renaissance Event Venue 285 Queen Street

Wednesday, 5 December 2018

Cash Bar and Hors D'oeuvres at 6

Awards presentation at 7 p.m.

\$10 donation at the door

In this Issue

Next Meeting 1 Correction 1 President's Message 2 Murney Tower 3 Speaker's Corner 3
In Search of White Oak Peter Davy 4, 5, 6 Heritage Dinner 7 Membership form 8 Sponsors 3, 8

Correction Paul Banfield, Queen's University Archivist, has kindly drawn our attention to two corrections of facts required in the "On Ahead" segment on page 6, entitled *The Spirit of Ferncliffe*, highlighting the special gift from the Joanne Gervais Art Studio in Elginburg. It is stated that Agnes Maule Machar's father, The Rev. Dr. John Machar, was "the first principal of Queen's College University." In point of fact the good divine was the *second* principal of Queen's, serving in that capacity from 1846 until 1853. The *first* Principal of Queen's was The Rev. Thomas Liddell (1841-1846), who arrived in the town, as it was then, with the College's Royal Charter. In addition, the correct name for Queen's in 1841 was "Queen's College, Kingston". The term University did not creep in to the title until the following decade when it was known for a time as "University of Queen's College".

THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established 1893

LIMELIGHT is published nine times a year, September to May.

Please forward submissions to the Editor betty.andrews@gmail.com

Reprinting of articles from the Limelight must be accompanied by an acknowledgement of the Society, the issue and date. Photo credits and by-lines must be retained.

The KHS gratefully acknowledges the support of its sponsors in producing Limelight.

2018-19 KHS Executive Council

President: Warren Everett Vice President: Past President: Marcus Létourneau
Treasurer: Peter Ginn Secretary: Don Richardson Webmaster: Peter Gower
Editor, Historic Kingston: Peter Gower Editor, Limelight: Betty Andrews
Director, Murney Tower: Graeme Watson Membership Chair: Paul Van Nest paulvannest@cogeco.ca

Councillors
Joe Brites Duncan McDowall Alan MacLachlan
Tabitha Renaud Anne Richardson Marc Shaw Paul Van Nest

President's Message

Warren Everett

Following the fascinating talk presented on 21 November 2018 by Peter Gower on the legacy of Captain George Richardson, and looking forward to our Awards Night and Christmas party on 5 December, I was reminded of the story of the Christmas truce in the trenches of 1914. Although known by many of you, I thought it worthwhile to recall this time, particularly as we leave the 100th anniversary year of the Great War Armistice.



This truce was a series of widespread but unofficial ceasefires along the Western Front of World War I around Christmas 1914. Soldiers from both sides of no-man's land ventured into no-man's land on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day to exchange food and souvenirs. Many of the meetings ended in carol singing and it was said the soldiers played football with one another. Peaceful behavior was not ubiquitous; fighting continued in some sectors and in others the sides met to discuss little more than arrangements to recover bodies. The Christmas truce was particularly significant due to the number of men involved and the level of their participation. In the very peaceful sectors, the number of men openly congregating in daylight was remarkable. The Christmas truces are often seen as symbolic moments of peace and humanity amidst one of the most violent events of human history.

John McDermott, a well-known Canadian singer sang this beautiful song, Christmas in the Trenches, about the Christmas truce. It is available on YouTube. Try this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-gx2cAUo7i4&list=RD-gx2cAUo7i4&start_radio=1&t=0

I look forward to meeting many of you on December 5, at 7 pm, at the Renaissance Event Venue. I wish you and all your families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

MAILING ADDRESS:

Kingston Historical Society
P.O. Box 54,
Kingston ON K7L 4V6
kingstonhs@gmail.ca
www.kingstonhistoricalsociety.ca



The Kingston Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

KHS meetings featuring speakers on topics of historical interest are held on the third Wednesday of the months from September to May at the Seniors Centre, 56 Francis Street, Kingston, except in December when an awards ceremony and gala is held, usually at a different time and location. There are two annual events, the celebration of the life of Canada's first Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald, held at his graveside in the Cataraqui Cemetery National Historic Site on 6 June, the day of his death in 1891; and the Society's Canadian Heritage Dinner held in Ontario Heritage Week in February.

Historic Kingston, the journal of the proceedings of the Kingston Historical Society, is published annually, and is free to members.

MEMBERSHIP RATES

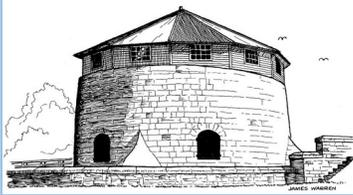
\$300 Sponsor

\$50 Individual

\$60 Family

\$60 Institution

\$25 Student



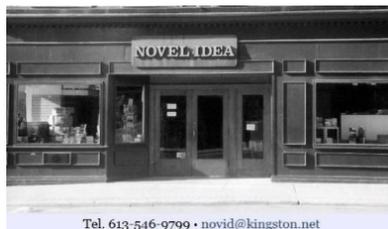
Murney Tower Operated by the Kingston Historical Society

Murney Tower Director Graeme Watson received his Certificate in Museum Studies from the Ontario Museum Association in October. The nine courses required are taught at host museums in Ontario, or are online. The Certificate is designed for volunteers who can only attend part time. Graeme has already put his new knowledge to good use at your museum.



Murney Tower Museum Director Graeme Watson and Kingston's Town Cryer Chris Whyman traveled to Queen's Park on 26 November to meet the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport, The Honourable Michael Tibollo. They visited the Murney Tower display in the main hall of the Legislature.

Graeme shows them a miniature teaching model of the Tower.



Tel. 613-546-9799 • novid@kingston.net



Marc F. Raymond
OPTICIANS LTD
324 King St E.
613-549-2020



Joe Brites
Sales Representative

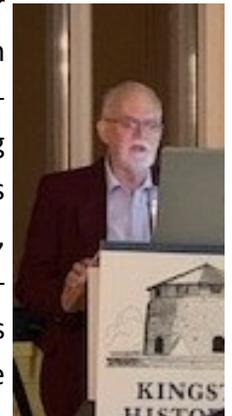
Direct: 613.329.2184
Office: 613.384.5500
Fax: 613.384.6800
Email: jnbrites@aol.com



Speaker's Corner

by Marc Shaw

A good-sized crowd braved the cold on 21 November to hear Peter Gower speak on "The Kingston Legacy of George Taylor Richardson". Richardson was a popular local athlete and businessman from a very wealthy family. When he enlisted in the First World War he wrote a will designating his brother and sister to administer his considerable estate in the event of his death. He was, tragically, killed in France in 1916 and the resulting legacies to Queen's and Kingston were far-reaching — the Richardson Bath House and the George Richardson Memorial Stadium being but two examples. Peter's presentation was entertaining, very well-researched and copiously illustrated; many questions and comments followed the presentation — including a couple of personal reminiscences of encounters with the Richardson family. This was a strong ending to a year of excellent presentations in our Speakers' series. On to 2019!



IN SEARCH OF WHITE OAK

Article by Peter G. Davy, signed on his 87th birthday 05 10 2018

Alleged to be the ninth Peter of the Davy name

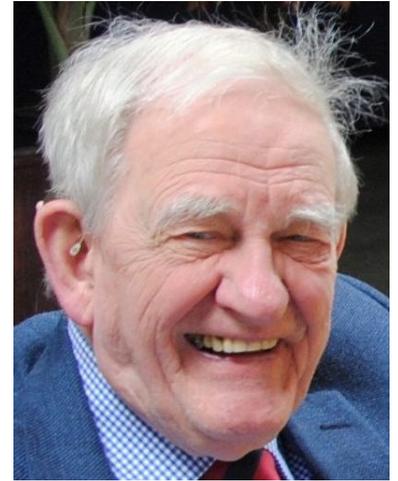
Partial history of the DAVY Farm and Farmhouse

351 Mud Lake Road, R.R.3 Odessa, Ontario, loosely from 1806 to the present

This is a true story, allowing that some of the many details we might have to call “hearsay”. The time in question is late 1700s to early 1800s, right after the end of the American Revolution. Five brothers of the surname DAVY, John, Michael, Thomas, Henry and Peter came up from the part of central New York State near the village of Little Falls on the Mohawk River and went to the area around Bath, Ontario, on the shore of Lake Ontario, about 20 miles from Kingston.

This is the story of one of the brothers, Peter Davy, my great, great grandfather. He was the last of the brothers to arrive, and was among a group who were labelled “Late Loyalists”.

He, and whatever family he had then, lived for a while with one of his brothers near Asselstine’s Factory, south of the village of Odessa. All the “granted land ” had been taken, but some “Clergy Reserve” land remained and was offered for lease. Peter, being a barrel maker by trade, hoped to find land with some white oak on it. The Millhaven “Creek”, so called today, was, in those days, a river which flowed, from what is now Sydenham Lake, right to Lake Ontario. One day, he and a neighbor named Van Sickler went up the river in a canoe looking for some land that had white oak on it. About a mile above what is now Odessa, they found a site of pleasant woods and fine trees. They beached the canoe and went walking. They heard the sound of water running out of a hill and searched and found that the running water was a spring. They took a drink of what Peter called “the finest tasting water he had ever had”. They walked over the land and found it had lots of white oak, certainly enough for Peter’s needs. He learned it was Clergy Reserve land and was available on a “script lease” from the crown. This was in 1806. He made application, and obtained the leasehold right to 83 acres, and subsequently built a log cabin near the edge of the river (no remains of it found thus far).



Peter Davy



Peter Davy

Some 46 years later my great grandfather, John Peter Davy, (born 1803) built the present farm house which was completed on July 11,1849. The house was built by a group of farmers in a “house raising” which was customary at the time. The house was a typical wooden (clapboard) virtually square “box”, with 2 rooms down and 2 rooms up.

One of the workers wrote a little poem: (Eliza Jane Montgomery)

“John’s industry, and Eliza’ s delight.....

Framed in two months, and raised before night.”

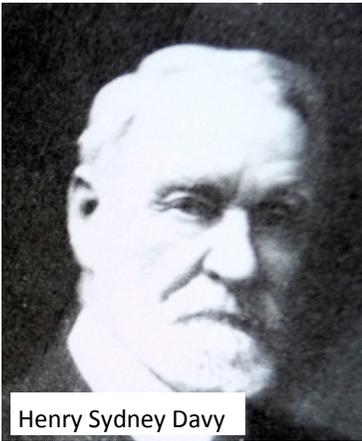


The 1849 building is the wing on the right end in this 1940s picture.

It was customary for a ceremony to be held when the “ridge” (the beam running along the peak of the house to which the “rafters” are attached) had been laid. The story says that one man would get up on top of the peak with a bottle of whisky tied to a piece of twine; he’d swing it around and around his head and let it fly! If it landed without breaking, it was a good omen and they would all stop work and have a party. (It seems there was always a big pile of sand or straw nearby.....!) My grandfather, Henry Sydney Davy, wrote, “I was a lad 6 years of age and I remember the ceremony well.”

I personally doubt the “party part” because they were all a bunch of Methodists and I can’t imagine them indulging in “Devil’s Water!

John Peter finally finalized the purchase of the land — 83 acres — from the Crown for 80 pounds sterling, and got the deed in 1856.



Henry Sydney Davy

To accommodate his growing family, which would total six children, Henry Sidney Davy (H.S. Davy), my grandfather, built a large 2 storey wing on the south side of the house in 1879. There was a dug out basement deep enough to reach the bedrock under that new addition. It was dug with manpower and a big horse-drawn “shovel/scoop.”



My father, Henry Mowat Davy, was born in

1884, in what is now the kitchen. My father lived in that house as a child and walked a mile to Odessa school every day until about grade 4. His father, “H.S”, who was a tailor by trade, bought a house in Odessa, right on the main street behind the school, and moved his family there and opened a tailor shop in the front. He was a great reader, writer and speaker and took further education culminating in his earning the position of a Justice of the Peace.



1879 wainscoting

My father finished grade 8, all that was available in Odessa, and worked around his grandfather’s farm until he was old enough, age 16(?) to seek further education. He attended Metzler’s Business School in Kingston until his late teens. He then moved, all alone, to Toronto, and found a job at Eaton’s in the men’s clothing department. He rented a room on (I think) Dovercourt Road. My father was a great talker, like his father, and loved selling. He approached his manager at Eaton’s and asked to go on straight commission instead of on his meagre salary. This was unusual then for a store, but he convinced them, pointing out that if he didn’t sell anything he wouldn’t be cost-



Henry Mowat Davy

ing them any money! They agreed and he was soon making twice as much as in his salaried past. In those days, you didn’t need a license to sell life insurance, and an insurance fraternity called “The Canadian Order of Chosen Friends” had just started and was looking for “organizers” for the areas outside Toronto. The idea was that a person bought a life insurance policy and then became a member of the fraternity. Another similar organization also started and still exists today in a modified form: The Independent Order of Foresters, I.O.O.F. He was very successful, traveling and selling insurance for several years. Then on a trip to Hamilton he met my mother at the train station selling tags (or some such things) for the Baptist church. He was smitten! Those blue eyes, that black hair and a 23 inch waist did him in. He asked her if he might write her

and she acceded. They corresponded for several months, and Miss Shaver and Mr. Davy then graduated to Irene and Harry. Then they got married! He eschewed the traveling life after marriage and went into the real estate business. (He *accidentally* sold a couple of houses by connecting up some insurance customers. No real estate license needed then). He rented a house on Sunnyside Avenue in Toronto and an office on Roncesvalles Avenue, bought a “roll top” desk and moved it to his office using a wheelbarrow! (My nephew still has the desk!) He became a very successful real estate agent, and was a Toronto aderman for seven years.



The Davy Homestead house was rented for decades after H.S., my grandfather, moved, and when he died my father, H.M., took it over.

My father always had a dream of someday renovating the house, rejuvenating the farm and having a country gentleman’s retreat. In 1943 he was successful in getting electricity up the road and into the house. He then completely renovated the house and we, the younger members of the family, enjoyed weekend and week-long sojourns there. He rebuilt the barn, bought three more adjoining farms and set up business as a long distance dairy farmer. He loved that place! A funny anecdote....one time when my sister and I were staying there with Dad, a skunk got into the garbage, which was in a can on the side porch — and



the main door to the kitchen was wide open with just a screen door. A workman got a shot gun and shot the skunk!! Well....the skunk smell permeated the whole house — it was the worst smell I had ever experienced! My sister and I said that there was no way we could sleep in the house that night! My father was non-plussed. He said it wasn’t that bad and immediately lathered himself with Sloan’s Liniment! That, combined with the skunk, was more than Gwen and I could bear, so we went out and slept in the car.



My mother and father died suddenly, in 1949 and 1950 respectively. As I had been accepted at Queen’s, my sister and I moved downtown to live. In 1953, after Carol and I got married, we moved into the old house, and Carol, who was just 19 at the time, gave it a completely new life with major renovations, all the while being careful to preserve the character of the house! She removed — by herself —seven layers of old wallpaper and THEN, she — by herself —wallpapered all the main rooms. There were no painted walls!



Our farm has many legends which I selectively draw upon from time to time. It is a treasure beyond being measured in money. It is a part of all the Davy family members. I was once the youngest, I am now the oldest, and I am charged with preserving the life of this tradition “as long as grass grows and water runs”.



Canadian Heritage Dinner



Sponsored by the Kingston Historical Society

This year we will be holding the inaugural Canadian Heritage Dinner sponsored by the Kingston Historical Society. The guest speaker for this special event is J.D.M. Stewart, educator and author. He will be referencing his recent book "Being Prime Minister: Behind-the-scenes stories of Canada's Leaders". Behind the politics, discover the lives of Canada's leaders!

A valuable and insightful look at...the people who have held the highest office in the land. A must read...!!
Don Newman, retired senior parliamentary editor for CBC Television

With lively anecdotes and thoughtful insights, Stewart reminds us that there are human beings behind the headlines. This absorbing and original book explores aspects of political life that are too often ignored.
Charlotte Gray, author of The Promise of Canada

Date:	Saturday, February 23, 2019
Time:	6:00 pm with dinner commencing at 7:00 pm
Location:	Senior Staff Mess at the Royal Military College
Cost:	\$70.00 per person

Our meal will consist of the following: Entrée, Potato/Leek soup, PEI vegetables, roasted potatoes plus tea, coffee and squares for dessert. This year we have 3 dinner options for you to choose from, including a vegetarian option. Please choose from below on the registration form.

- Entrée Options:
- Stuffed Chicken Supreme - prosciutto/white cheddar/herb vinaigrette
 - Grilled Salmon Loin - maple, apple, bacon compote
 - Stuffed Risotto Croquette - smoke cheese/tomato coulis/pesto sauce/

Please fill out the tear off portion of the registration form and send it along with your cheque to the address below. **ALL registration forms must be received no later than Friday, February 8, 2019.**

Anne Richardson
c/o Kingston Historical Society
750 Amaryllis Street, Kingston, Ontario K7P 0A9

If you have any questions please feel free to contact Anne Richardson at: richanne@hotmail.ca

NAME(S): _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____ EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

NUMBER OF CHICKEN DINNERS: _____

NUMBER OF SALMON DINNERS: _____

NUMBER OF VEGETARIAN DINNERS: _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: _____

PLEASE LIST ANY FOOD ALLERGIES: _____



James Reid
FUNERAL HOME SINCE 1854

JAMES F. REID

CREMATION & RECEPTION CENTRE

THE CELEBRATION CENTRE

1900 John Counter Blvd. K7M 7H3
Tel: 613-544-3411 Fax: 613-544-3414
jamesreidfuneralhome.com
info@jamesreidfuneralhome.com

CANYON LOGICS

James Reid Furniture
250-256 Princess Street
Tel: 613-548-3022
princess@jamesreidfurniture.net



James Reid Furniture
1880 John Counter Blvd.
Tel: 613-544-4415
counter@jamesreidfurniture.net



CATARAQUI CEMETERY
AND FUNERAL SERVICES

Cemetery • Funeral • Cremation • Monuments

A National Historic Site of Canada

(613) 546-6545 cataraquicemetery.ca

Owned and Operated By The Cataraqui Cemetery Company • Since 1850

Please Renew Your Membership Now

KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL Membership dues are as follows (please check one) - \$50 for an individual membership - \$60 for a family membership - \$25 for a student membership - \$60 for an institutional membership - \$300 for a sponsor. Please speak to Membership Chair Paul Van Nest, 613-544-6802 or email membership@kingstonhistoricalsociety.ca

Additional donation: The Society would sincerely appreciate any additional donation you may wish to contribute to the Society.

Amount: \$ _____

Send this completed application form, along with a cheque made out to the 'Kingston Historical Society':

Kingston Historical Society, Box 54, Kingston ON K7L 4V6

You can also register on-line from our webpage: www.kingstonhistoricalsociety.com > Membership

Membership includes the annual journal 'Historic Kingston' and 9 issues of the newsletter 'Limelight' as well as a discounted fee to selected special events. Some sponsors also offer discounts.

Name: _____

Street: _____ Apt. _____

City: _____ Prov. _____

Postal Code: _____ Telephone: ____ - ____ - _____ I would like to receive my Limelight online _____

Email: _____