

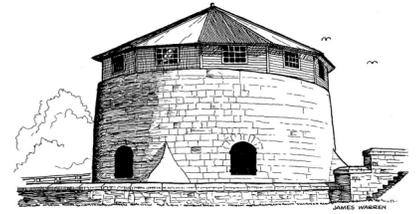
Limelight

Newsletter of the Kingston Historical Society

Kingston Ontario Canada

Volume 21 no 4 ISSN 1488-5565

April 2019



KHS MEETING 17 April 2019

Seniors Centre 56 Francis Street *Gathering at 7 for 7:30pm*

Dr. Brent Raycroft presents Lord Sydenham:

Our last Governor General and our first Prime Minister

Canada first came into existence as a political entity with that particular name when Upper Canada and Lower Canada were united in 1841 and became a single province in British North America. That act of unification, which seemed next to impossible after the Durham Report of a few years earlier, was achieved by Charles Poulett Thomson, Lord Sydenham. There were Governors General after him, but none would wield executive power as fully and effectively as he did. Similarly, our first “Prime Minister” was John A. Macdonald, but decades before Confederation it was Lord Sydenham who brought together the founding colonial cultures, French and English, in a workable democracy that would make Confederation possible. My talk will explore the neglected legacy of this remarkable man.



COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Researching Early 20th Century British Immigrants

The Kingston Branch of the Genealogical Society meets Saturday, May 18, 2019 9:30 a.m. Seniors Centre, 56 Francis St.

The speaker is **John D. Reid**

Visitors are welcome Details at <https://kingston.ogs.on.ca/>

KINGSTON REGIONAL HERITAGE FAIR

FRIDAY, MAY 10TH AT QUEEN'S WEST CAMPUS

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO JUDGE GRADE SCHOOL
HISTORY PROJECTS

(FRENCH JUDGES NEEDED ESPECIALLY!)

SIGN UP HERE: [HTTP://WWW.KRHF.CA/REGISTRATION/VOLUNTEERS](http://www.krhf.ca/registration/volunteers)

The Pittsburgh Historical Society

Tuesday April 30th 7:30 p.m. Gore Road Fire Hall at Hwy.15

David More: “Canadian Mariners and Old Kingston”

David More is an award-winning author and historian who has a passion for Canadian maritime history. His presentation will explore the many ways Kingston's history is intertwined with that of Quebec through the untold story of French-Canadian mariners – batteau men, sailing vessel builders, commanders and crews from Quebec. They played essential roles in preserving British rule in Kingston and what was to become Canada between the American invasions of 1775 and the end of the War of 1812. Visitors welcome



Rotary Foundation's Walk, a fundraiser for the Rotary District of 67 clubs in Eastern Ontario, Western Quebec and Northern New York is returning to Kingston for its second year and with a new route. 4 way stations of historical interest are staffed by KHS members. The Rotary Foundation (1.2 million Rotarians in the world), along with Bill Gates as a partner, have raised about \$1.6 billion over the last 20 years, dedicated to eradicating polio in the world. We've almost succeeded.

So join us for this year's walk: \$20 donation. Saturday, 11 May, starting at 10 a.m. at Kingston City Hall.

THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established 1893

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

Reprinting of articles from the Limelight must be accompanied by an acknowledgment 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.

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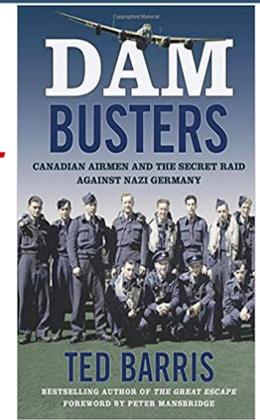
President's Message Warren Everett



Each March marks the beginning of the new council year for the KHS. Our new addition to council this year is Vincent Durant. He brings a wealth of experience to council: keenly interested in history, serves as a tour guide at City Hall and his Blog, *Their Stories, musings on the past*, which is well worth visiting. The new council is hard at work and has a very fine speaker's schedule for the remainder of 2019, beginning in April with a talk on Lord Sydenham by Brent Raycroft. As April ushers in the spring, the days begin to get longer and warmer and we look ahead to the June 6th Graveside remembrance of Sir John A. Macdonald, with a prayer for good weather! This year's speaker will be Christopher Moore, a Canadian historian. At present Mr. Moore is an author, journalist, and, since 1978, a freelance writer. He is a frequent contributor to *Canada's History* magazine and the author of many books. He has twice won a Governor General's Literary Award.

I look forward to seeing you at the April meeting. Remember, if you have an idea for the speaker's series or Heritage dinner or June 6th, please let your council know.

Dam Busters: Canadian Airmen and the Secret Raid Against Nazi Germany.



Fri 26 Apr 11:30 am to 1:30 pm author Ted Barris will give a presentation at the Gananoque Legion based on his recent book *Dam Busters: Canadian Airmen and the Secret Raid Against Nazi Germany*. Of the 20 Canadians who participated in the 1943 attack on three Germans dams, 14 were killed. The raid was featured in the 1955 movie *Dam Busters*. Tickets for the event - \$20 - include a light buffet lunch at the Legion starting at 11:30 am.

The Legion is located at 55 King Street East across the street from the Gananoque war memorial and the Gananoque Town Hall. Handicap access is available off King Street. Parking is available behind the Legion off Pine Street.

This event is part of the 2019 Gananoque Writer's Festival. For tickets contact Playhouse Theatre Box Office at 613-382-7020 or via website www.1000islandsplayhouse.com/boxoffice

Strokestown Park House, Gardens & National Famine Museum

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- Canton, Massachusetts** March 22
The Irish Cultural Centre of New England
- Washington, D.C.** March 25-26
Embassy of Ireland
- Ottawa, Ontario** May 6-7
Parliament Hill ("Irish Day on the Hill") & Bytown Museum
- Eganville, Ontario** May 8
Legion Branch 353
- Kingston, Ontario** May 9
Fort Henry
- Quebec City, Quebec** May 11
McMahon Hall.
- Hamden, Connecticut** June 14
Quinnipiac University

For more information visit www.strokestownpark.ie/great-famine-voices-roadshow/



Beauty in the Eye of the Beholder

by John Fielding

*The World is so full of a number of things,
I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.*

Robert Louis Stephenson, *A Child's Garden of Verses*

I recently picked up Jane Urquart's book *A Number of Things: Stories of Canada Told Through Fifty Objects*.

It was her comment on architecture as an object that caused me to reflect on why I enjoy living in Kingston. As is true for many people who have travelled, I have marvelled at the Great Wall of China, all too many Gothic cathedrals, mediaeval castles and grandiose houses. It was, however, early in our move from Brockville to Kingston that I really became fascinated with architecture as a very interesting and beautiful art form.



9 Kennedy Street

Photo Jennifer McKendry

What inspired me was a tour of historic Kingston in the visitor tourist bus. It was when the tour bus stopped in front of a large, very attractive red clay brick house in Portsmouth, and the guide stated that it was the oldest brick house in Kingston, (Dr. Jennifer McKendry, who knows more about the architecture than anyone, explained in an email that 9 Kennedy Street is the oldest brick building surviving, not the oldest) that a light was switched on and I really started looking around me at Kingston's

incredibly diverse and wonderful buildings. I began watching for clay brick homes, noticing heritage designated plaques on limestone homes, commercial, usually former government, offices and an array of unique features and structures. I have been fascinated to watch the transformation of interesting historic structures blended with modern architecture on display at the Smith School of Business on the Queen's Campus, to see the transition from the ultra-modern steel and glass structure, on the left, to the preserved historic red brick school, in the middle, to the subtle change, on the right, to the limestone structures of the majority of buildings on the Queen's Campus.



Smith School of Business Photo Jennifer McKendry



Smith Robinson Building Photo Jennifer McKendry

Other architectural gems that fit this category are the renovated Smith Robinson Building, formerly the S & R Department Store, and, most recently, the commercial outlets transformed into condominiums at the corner of Brock and Wellington Streets. I am amazed every time I gaze up at this marvelous piece of innovative architecture.

Of course, the Neoclassical Kingston (Frontenac County) Courthouse and our magnificent City Hall with its landmark dome, elevated on a ring of windows and topped by a cupola, are incredible, but it is those lovely smaller homes and older storefront facades that, after 30 years of living in Kingston, I still keep discovering and seeing with new eyes.

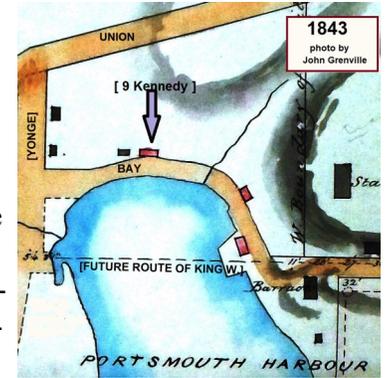


165 Wellington Street

Photo Jennifer McKendry

STILL STANDING: Looking at Regional Architecture with Jennifer McKendry

A limited number of brick buildings constructed with hand-made bricks appeared in the Kingston area as early as 1800, but, aside from the minor use of brick in the fireplace systems of certain stone and frame buildings, the earliest known surviving and well documented all-brick (with stone foundations) example dates from 1819, namely, the Gardiner House at 9 Kennedy Street in Portsmouth Village (part of Kingston since 1952). The front walls are formed in Flemish bond (alternating stretchers and headers in the same row), while the end and rear walls are in common bond (rows of headers separated by 2 or more rows of stretchers). The bricks could have been brought by ship, given the property's access to the waterfront (which was later filled in), or made locally, given that clay beds provided the raw material to make bricks in connection with building the nearby penitentiary in the 1830s.



English emigrant James Gardiner bought 50 acres with a small water frontage on the bay in 1819. Gardiner died in 1822, by which time it was a thriving farm. His widow Sarah advertised it for lease in 1823: there were hay and wheat fields, an orchard, a good barn, coach house, and the main house with eight rooms, a good cellar, and considered "suitable for any gentleman."

The property's waterfront was under duress in the 1860s, when the village started to fill in the harbour to gain a building site for a new stone village hall (today located in Aberdeen Park and facing King West). Thus Kennedy Street, once logically called Bay Street, is today more than a block removed from the lake.

The owners in the 1970s restored the house including rebuilding the chimneys, beehive bake-oven and cooking fireplace; removing a late verandah; and filling in inappropriate openings – the upper-centre doorway was restored as a window and a main-floor modern window on the east wall bricked-in with bricks rescued from a building under demolition on Ontario Street near Johnson. The restoration permits us to appreciate the house's Georgian symmetry.

Jennifer McKendry features 9 Kennedy Street on the front cover of her recent book, *Bricks in 19th-Century Architecture of the Kingston Area*, available at Novel Idea.

Photo credit: Jennifer McKendry



Murney Tower
Operated by
the Kingston Historical Society



Murney Tower Museum
Improving Accessibility
for Guests

On 12 July 2018 Dave Wreggitt from Kingston3DTours met with Graeme Watson, the Tower's Director, to discuss creating a virtual tour for the museum in order to improve accessibility for guests who are unable to navigate through the Tower. Not only will this new technology give visitors' an opportunity to explore the entire site; it will also provide an at home preview of the Tower for those interested in making a visit, which, it is hoped, will spark people's interest and increase the Tower's attendance and revenue.

Throughout the month of July, Dave made several detailed scans of Murney Tower with new camera technology. These scans are converted into interactive 3D tours in multiple formats including Dollhouse and Floor plan mode, as well as a video walkthrough and interactive walkthrough.

Visit <https://bit.ly/2wZ9Vgv> for the virtual 3D tour.

For further information on Kingston3DTours, visit their website at <https://www.filmstreamvideo.com/>

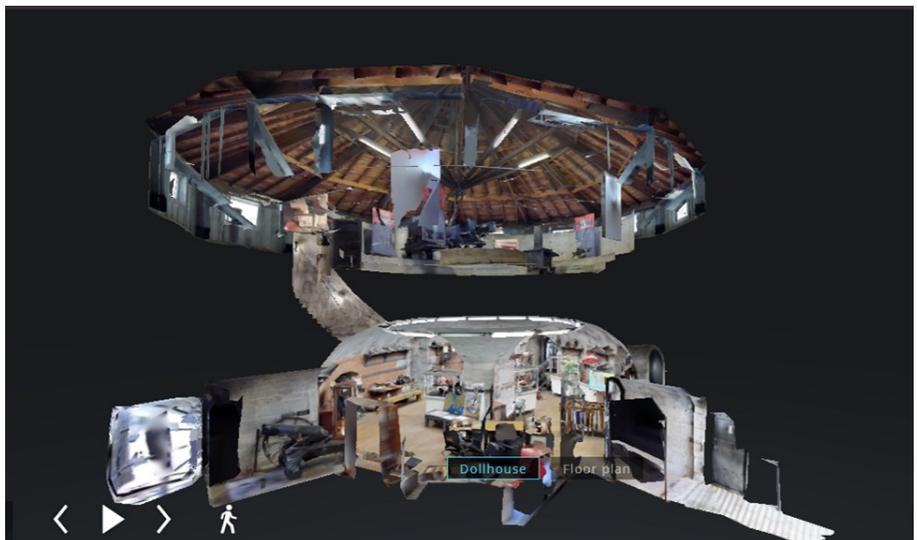


A Dollhouse view of the Gun Platform with interactive circle markers to navigate through the level.



The Floor plan mode shows the bird's eye view of the Barracks.

The Dollhouse view of the Barracks and Gun Platform.





Since its opening in 1835, Kingston Penitentiary has both fascinated and haunted Kingstonians. In recent years, thousands of Canadians have toured the now-defunct institution, eager to experience its sinister nooks and crannies and the secrets they hold. At its March meeting, the Society's members were taken on a much more intimate tour of "KP" by Cameron Willis, a historian with Corrections Canada. Drawing on his meticulous knowledge of "the Pen's" records – prisoner mug shots, Department of Justice criminal records and outside press coverage of its problems – Willis used the years of World War I as a prism through which to evaluate the prison's success as a place of incarceration and rehabilitation. The picture he painted was not pretty. Rampant trafficking in contraband tobacco, drugs and even chocolate corrupted not just the "cons", but many of their warders. Royal commissions investigated the dysfunction, but to little avail. To illustrate the malaise, Willis focused on the life and times of one notorious inmate – Alex Rose, a Toronto thug and escape artist who perfected the lucrative art of smuggling drugs to his fellow felons. Ironically, Rose would eventually find glory in death on the frontlines of the war in France, where prisoners were released to serve their country, a country desperate for manpower to defeat the Germans. Can there be a more interesting tale of crime and punishment in Kingston of yore? A full version of Cameron's talk will appear in Historic Kingston's 2019 volume.

THURSDAY, 6 JUNE 2019 1:30 p.m.
ANNUAL SERVICE OF COMMEMORATION
for SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD
at Sir John A. Macdonald's gravesite, Cataraqi Cemetery

Guest Speaker: Christopher Moore

Christopher Moore has written or co-authored over fifteen books on Canadian history and has twice won the Governor General's Literary Award for non-fiction. Moore's books include *1867: How the Fathers Made a Deal* and *Three Weeks in Quebec City: The Meeting That Made Canada*. His provocative commentaries on history and politics have appeared in the *Globe and Mail*, the *National Post*, *Maclean's*, *The Literary Review of Canada* and other periodicals.

Letter to the editor...

An historic part of wartime Kingston, informally spoken of as "the wartime housing," comes to life in articles by John Grenville and Lucinda Bray in Historic Kingston Vol. 66. Some 40 pages of very interesting reading give you the feeling of walking these streets past this humble architecture that housed the employees of ALCAN and other industries, all making equipment to use in the 1939-1945 World War II. Thanks to the Kingston Historical Society for telling us the real story about "the wartime housing."

Floyd Patterson, member of the Kingston Historical Society.

MUSEUMS OF KINGSTON AND AREA

South Frontenac Museum

by Alan Boyce

The South Frontenac Museum is a relative newcomer among the fifty-plus museums in Frontenac County. It opened in 2015 in the Old Limestone Schoolhouse in Hartington, with a large exhibit of tools, furniture, books, and archival documents. Since then, we have been figuring out how to run a museum.

The roots of the Museum were with the Verona Area Heritage Society late in the last century – the mid-1990s. It has since broadened its horizons to become the Portland District and Area Heritage Society and ultimately to its current brand as the South Frontenac Museum. Our mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and share artifacts and stories related to the natural, cultural, social, and economic history of South Frontenac and Eastern Ontario. This year's strategic planning activity will bring further refinement to our focus and brand.

We are also overhauling the exhibits at our main site at 5595 Road 38 (30 minutes north of Kingston on Gardiner's Road) for the summer of 2019. This year's theme is The First World War in South Frontenac – Before, During, and After. The centrepiece of the exhibit is our extensive collection of artifacts and records related to the 146th Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force – a battalion created to recruit soldiers from the counties of Frontenac, and Lennox and Addington. Supporting displays illustrate the contribution of women to the war effort as nursing sisters and on the home front, and there will be exhibits of tools and other artifacts used locally during the period of 1900 through 1930.

In the longer run, the goal of our Museum is to offer insights into life in this harsh but beautiful country. We think that there is a story here:

Over the millennia, the lives of people in this area have been shaped and their livelihoods constrained by the Frontenac Arch – the rugged granite outcrops, dense forests, and myriad of lakes and ponds that stretch between the Canadian Shield and the St. Lawrence River.

Canada's first peoples hunted and fished here over 7,000 years ago; their part of the story needs to be told. History since the mid-1700s is easier to uncover because of the many records and artifacts passed to us from war refugees: the United Empire Loyalists fleeing north from New York and Pennsylvania. These pioneers first made their living from the forests, cutting trees in the winter and floating them across the flooded lands in the spring to be shipped to markets in North America and Europe. The lumber trade was gradually replaced by farming, until industrialization and the much larger and more fertile lands of Western Ontario and Western Canada put most of them out of business. Today, the largest part of the local economy is from the waterfront properties of cottagers, commuters, and retirees. We are back to an economy driven by hunting and fishing.

Bits and pieces of our story are presented at other museums, but we believe that it should be collected and presented to visitors here in South Frontenac, where the history has been unfolding since the rocks were being formed and the waters started to pool between them.

We would love to have your help to interpret and tell this history. With the area's small population and with the many professional and cultural diversions in Kingston, the Museum's biggest challenge is resources. We really are just starting out, so we have many opportunities for people to contribute in collections management, exhibits development, program design and development, and as always, marketing and outreach. Please email the Secretary, Alan Boyce at arboyce@gmail.com if you are interested in being involved in setting the future direction of the South Frontenac Museum.



The South Frontenac Museum is open Saturdays, Sundays, and Wednesdays from 1:00pm-4:00pm between the May long weekend and the Labour Day long weekend. Groups can be accommodated with specific program plans and fun age-appropriate activities.

We are located at 5595 Road 38, Hartington, Ontario, K0H 1W0. If you come by bicycle, we are 200 metres off the KP Trail at Boyce and Holleford Roads in Hartington, 24 km north of the Invista Centre. We hope to see you this summer!

Telephone: 613-376-3027, extension 2600

Website: <http://SouthFrontenacMuseum.ca>

Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SouthFrontenacMuseum/>



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CITY OF KINGSTON

City Hall tour guides wanted

Interested candidates are invited to attend the Tour Guide Annual General Meeting on April 16 to learn more about being a City Hall tour guide. This information session will be held from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. in Memorial Hall at City Hall. Visit www.CityofKingston.ca/CityHallTours for more information on the tours and the history of Kingston's City Hall.