

LIMELIGHT

Newsletter of the Kingston Historical Society
Kingston Ontario Canada

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March 2016



2016 Executive: Peter Ginn, Peter Gower, Lou Grimshaw, Graeme Watson ; Anne Richardson; Betty Andrews; Don Richardson; Paul Van Nest; John Whiteley Absent: Joe Brites, Nancy Day, Marcus Letourneau Photo: Corinne Harrison

MARCH MEETING

Maxime Chouinard, Curator of the Museum of Health Care at Kingston.

"The cholera epidemic of 1832 in Kingston"
Wednesday, March 16, 2016 at 7:30 pm

Seniors Centre, 56 Francis Street

2016 Annual General Meeting

"History Moments"

President Peter Gower introduced the speaker for the evening, Peter Lockyer who presented a program of **History Moments**. He showed short vignettes of local historical significance, such as Dr. James Collip, the lesser known progenator of insulin; and how Trenton was once Hollywood of the North. His website: [History Lives Here](http://HistoryLivesHere.com).

The AGM followed Mr. Lockyer's talk with approximately 45 members in attendance. Reports were given by the President, and the Secretary, with annual summaries contained in the printed Annual Report that was distributed before the meeting.

The President, Peter Gower, reported on another successful year; from the great weather enjoyed at the June 6th Sir John A. graveside ceremony to the initiation of the strategic plan and then welcomed the new President, Lou Grimshaw to the helm.

The Secretary, Don Richardson, made a special thank you to departing President Peter Gower on behalf of the Society for his valued service to the Society and beyond as Peter finished a three-year term. A hearty round of applause acknowledged Peter's contributions to the KHS.
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Sir John A. Macdonald Birthday Dinner—January 9, 2016

A MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW PRESIDENT

Lou Grimshaw



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

My inaugural message to The Kingston Historical Society is somewhat thin, having been elected only a couple of weeks ago. However, I can say that we have an interesting year ahead of us. We have an excellent Council, most of whom have been re-elected, and I am looking forward to working with them. There are a few issues to deal with and of course all the regular activities and events coming up. We can all look forward to an active and productive year ahead.

Lou Grimshaw
President

2016-17 KHS Executive Council

President: Lou Grimshaw
Vice-President: Marcus Letourneau
Secretary: Don Richardson
Treasurer: Peter Ginn
Past President: Peter Gower

Historic Kingston Editor: Virginia Letourneau
Limelight Newsletter Editor: Betty Andrews
Murney Tower Director: Graeme Watson

Councillors:
Betty Andrews
Joe Brites
Nancy Day
Ben Holthof
Anne Richardson
Paul Van Nest (Membership Secretary)
John Whiteley
Webmaster: Mark Nardi



THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established in 1893

LIMELIGHT is published 5 times a year in January, March, May, September and November. Please forward submissions to the Editor, Betty Andrews betty.andrews@gmail.com. Printing of articles must be accompanied by an acknowledgement of the Society, the issue and date. All photo credits and by-lines must be retained. The KHS gratefully acknowledges the support of our sponsors in

KHS MEETINGS are usually held at 7:30 pm on the third Wednesday of the month, September to May. For the next few meetings, we will be at the Seniors Centre on Francis Street. Refreshments are served; a small donation is appreciated. Annual events include a formal dining experience with a special presentation honouring the birth of Sir John A. Macdonald, on the Saturday closest to January 11th, and a service commemorating his death at the Cataraqui Cemetery National Historic Site on June 6th.

Canada's First Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, was born in 1815 and passed away in 1891.

NEW MEMBERS are always welcome! Membership rates are \$50 per individual, \$60 for families, \$60 for institutions and \$25 for students. Membership includes: an invitation to attend our monthly meetings; 5 issues of *Limelight*, our newsletters; and a copy of *Historic Kingston*, the annual journal published by the KHS.

MAILING ADDRESS:

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kingstonhs@gmail.com

www.kingstonhistoricalsociety.com

(website migration from .ca to .com is ongoing)

Please see new website for more photos of all KHS events, including Sir John A's Dinner. Feedback welcome.

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD DINNER

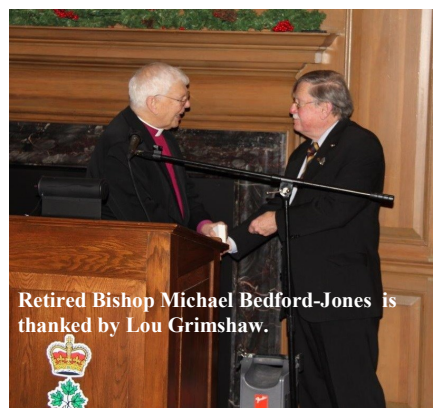


John Hall playing beautiful piano.

The Sir John A. Macdonald birthday dinner was held this year on January 9, 2016 at the Senior Staff Mess of the Royal Military College. When we arrived, everything had been made ready for our evening by the staff at the mess.

The reception prior to dinner was a very enjoyable time with John Hall on the piano. He played tunes which included music from Donna Ivey's Sir John A. Macdonald Music Book. Doug Green piped our head table in to dinner. Grace was offered by guest speaker, Retired Bishop Michael Bedford-Jones. Everyone seemed to have a great time, and throughout the dinner excellent conversations flowed at the various tables. The toast to the Queen was given by Brigadier General Sean Friday, RMC Commandant. The toast to Sir John and the Confederation of Canada was made by Sir John A. aka Brian Porter.

The group retired to the RMC lounge to listen to keynote speaker, Ret. Bishop Michael Bedford-Jones who was Dean of St. George's Cathedral, from 1991 to 1993 and was consecrated as bishop in 1994. He retired as Bishop of Trent-Durham in 2008. During his career he was the director of the Toronto Parish Training Programme, the Chair of the Ontario Provincial Commission on Theological Education, and played a role in the curriculum review of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges in Toronto. As well, he was involved in Christian-Muslim dialogue.



Retired Bishop Michael Bedford-Jones is thanked by Lou Grimshaw.

Of interest to KHS members was Ret. Bishop Bedford-Jones' family history, and how it was part of Sir John A's life. He spoke to us on "My Great Grandfather and Sir John A." Bishop Michael Bedford-Jones was an insightful and engaging speaker which really helped to finish off the evening on the right note.



President Peter Gower, Sir John A. Macdonald and Brigadier General Sean Friday

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to Warren Everett for his assistance in organizing this year's event. As all who were present agreed, it was a most enjoyable evening and we look forward to seeing everyone again next year!

Submitted by
Anne Richardson

Photos: Graeme Watson



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Kingston Historical Society Meetings

**All meetings are held at the Seniors Centre at
56 Frances Street and begin at 7:30 p.m.**

March 16: Maxime Chouinard: The cholera epidemic of 1832 in Kingston. Maxine is Curator of the Museum of Health Care at Kingston.

April 20: Lucinda Bray: Social aspects of daily life in Kingston Heights during the war years.

May 18: John Cartwright: Success for political refugees: the Cartwright family in Kingston, 1792 to the present.

June 6: Sir John A Macdonald Graveside Ceremony in Cataraqui Cemetery, 1.30 p.m. Speaker to be announced



MEETINGS AND EVENTS

The Kingston & District Branch of the United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada will meet on Saturday, March 26, 2016 at 1:00 pm at St. Paul's Anglican Church Hall, Montreal and Queen Streets. Speaker will be Brandt Zätterberg UE on "Loyalist Landings on the Bay of Quinte". Brandt Zätterberg UE traces his roots to the earliest European settlements in North America and the Loyalist migration to Upper Canada. He has been a family historian for over 25 years and the Captain of a re-created bateaux company for 15 years. He was awarded the Queen's Jubilee Medal in 2002 as a volunteer within the heritage and cultural community.

Join us for a sandwich and squares lunch beforehand – \$3.50 if you're not one of those who brings food. Arrive from 11:30 a.m. before we sit down together at 12:00 noon. Visitors are always welcome. Further info from Carol at 613-546-2256.

The Housing Crisis in Kingston: The response by Wartime Housing Limited
Presented by John Grenville

Over 50 people braved the cold weather on January 20th to hear John Grenville talk on *The Housing Crisis in Kingston: The response by Wartime Housing Limited*. Wartime Housing Limited (WHL) was founded in 1941 to build housing for those involved in defense projects. It lasted until 1947. WHL chose the Kingston Airfield site for its project in Kingston Heights, now known as Kingscourt. The prewar housing situation was acute. The depression meant that poor buildings with few facilities had not been maintained. By 1942, the vacancy rate in Kingston was 1%. In 1939 Kingston had shipyards and locomotive works, both of which took on war work.

The defense workforce increased when Alcan and CIL (DuPont) started up here. 40% of war-planes were made of Canadian aluminum, and CIL was one of only two plants producing nylon. There was also a heavy military presence, and families followed husbands on postings. In 1940 the population increased from 25000 to 30000 in a short period.

By May 1941 there was considerable overcrowding so 250 new bungalows were planned. A local advisory committee of prominent citizens was formed, and the site was chosen. The plan used short streets and cul-de-sacs, with lots being a minimum of 40 x 100 feet with no garages. Backyards were to be common areas: this was not liked by residents. There were three house designs, and rents were \$22, \$25, or \$30 per month. The housing is still very identifiable, and John Grenville showed contemporary photographs of houses which still show details of WHL houses, such as asbestos cement shingles. Foundations were on cement poles, so that the houses could be moved when no longer needed.

The workmen had to build their own housing first and in April 1942 families moved in. There would be 450 children, with 250 preschool, and rooms had to be added to existing schools. By 1944, 325 houses had been built.

In 1945 the houses were still federally-owned, and as war workers moved out, veterans moved in. In May 1949 utilities were assumed by the municipalities and the houses could now be bought. Today, perhaps 98% of the houses remain.

The usual lively question and answer period followed, and John was thanked by Helen Findley.



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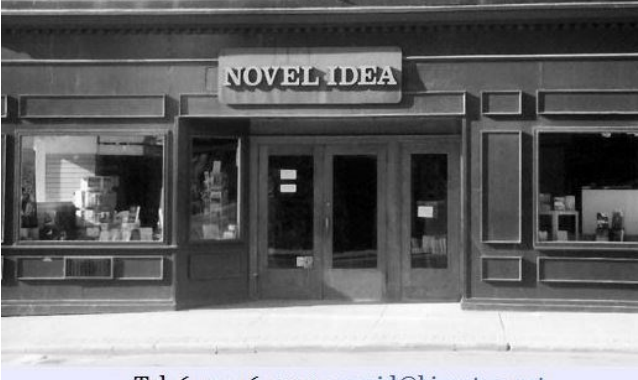
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