



Limelight

Newsletter of the Kingston Historical Society

Kingston Ontario Canada

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September 2017

A Message From the President

Dr. Marcus R. (Marc) Létourneau

Welcome back to everyone from what I hope was an enjoyable and safe summer.

It has been an interesting time for history and heritage in the City. From the proposed development on the Kingston Dry Dock NHSC site; to the future of the Kingston Penitentiary NHSC; to the debate on the renaming or removal of monuments and buildings; to the close of another successful season of the Murney Tower Museum NHSC; and, the Society's hiring of a Curator to assist with the future development of the Tower, there has been something happening almost constantly.



I cannot forget to acknowledge Maurice Smith, a past president of the Kingston Historical Society and curator emeritus of the Marine Museum of the Great Lake. Maurice was recently awarded the Ontario Historical Society's Carnochan Award. Congratulations!

Like some of you, I took advantage of the Canada 150th free admission to Parks Canada sites, and visited a number of sites across Ontario, Quebec, and the Maritimes, including one of the Martello Towers in Quebec City. I also had the chance to visit several sites in the US, and connect with some of my American colleagues. Although I have visited some of these sites previously, what struck me was how there is a growing awareness of the multiplicity of narratives and meanings (both positive and negative) associated with these sites, and of the relationship between these narratives to individual and group identity. How to engage with these divergent understandings and narratives is still a dynamic process, and there is no one universal answer. I think it will be interesting to see how organizations, governments, and individuals respond. This will not be an easy process; having a French-Canadian father and an English-Canadian mother, I recall one memorable Thanksgiving weekend many years ago where there was a particularly animated discussion concerning what "really happened" at the Plains of Abraham.

I also was struck at several sites that there is still a debate concerning who should have access and be able to engage with history and heritage. At one site I visited, the docent actively tried to dissuade me from visiting a particular building with my family; the individual's thinly veiled position was that it was not appropriate for children. (The exact response when we arrived was "the children's exhibit is over in THAT building.") It was only after both my wife and I explained that our children were very familiar with historic sites (and that both my wife and I worked in aspects of the heritage field) that the individual begrudgingly relented. While we did not experience this attitude at any other parts of the site, and in fact received a number of compliments concerning how our children behaved, this experience nonetheless soured our visit. It was notable that while this site was actively trying to attract families and children, there was still a sense on the part of some individuals concerning who belonged or should be permitted. For me, this experience only reinforced the need for greater discussion and debate concerning how we as a Society and as individuals can make interested individuals feel welcome and engaged. I have nurtured a passion for history and heritage since I was quite young, and was lucky to have been supported in my interests. Our Society is already an active sponsor of the Kingston Heritage Fair, and there are some exciting initiatives in development. However, we need to ask what more we can do to encourage new members as well as the next generation of historians and conservationists.

I expect this fall and winter to continue to be a busy time for the Society. We have a number of exciting speakers, publications, and events upcoming. I encourage everyone to continue to attend our sessions and events, and as always, if there are thoughts and suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to seeing you all!

President's Message,	1	About Us , Announcements	2	Palimpsests Of Kingston History	3,4,5	Speaker's Corner	5
Murney Tower Opening	4, 5	Sir John A June 6 Event	7, 8				

We note with regret the passing of Dr. Ruth Stanley in February, and of Margaret Noakes in April, and of Katherine Ferguson and of Dorothy Geiger in May, and of Joyce Waddell-Townsend in August, all KHS members of long standing.



THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established 1893

LIMELIGHT is published nine times a year, September to May. Please forward submissions to the Editor Betty Andrews. betty.andrews@gmail.com Reprinting of articles from the *Limelight* 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 its sponsors in producing *Limelight*.

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Annual dues may be paid anytime before 1 Jan 2018 to our treasurer or membership chair.

\$300 Sponsor \$60 Family
 \$50 Individual \$25 Student
 \$60 Institutional

Kingston Symphony Book Fair

Sept 6-10, 16 & 17

Thurs & Fri 10 AM - 8 PM

Sat 10 AM - 4 PM

Sun 10 AM - 3

Sept 16 All Books 1/2 Price

Sept 17 -- BLOWOUT!

785 Sir John A Macdonald Blvd., Unit 7A



Festival Activities

Dry Stone Festival Workshop
 Learn to build – and help restore – the dry stone walls at St. Mark's!
 Registration required: DryStoneCanada.com

- Free Children's Workshop
- Scheduled Tours of St. Mark's
- School Museum
- More activities including walking tours of Barriefield Village

- Demonstrations**
- Demonstrations of Stone Carving and Stone Shaping
 - Travel display showcasing dry stone tours
 - Derusha Tools for dry stone walling - demo & display
 - Merchandise for sale
 - Info about the Hot Lime Mortar workshop in October 2017

Dry Stone Festival 2017

St. Mark's Anglican Church
 268 Main St., Barriefield Village, Kingston, Ontario
 September 30 & October 1, 2017

Free general admission - 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

See DryStoneCanada.com for details about the dry stone workshop.

Funded by:
 Frontenac Heritage Foundation, Dry Stone Canada, PCBF, CFKA & KEDCO

How do you **Capture Kingston?** Show us **September 14th** at the Tett Centre in the Malting Tower at 7 PM. From photographs to art projects, *Bring Your Thing* and share with us how you Capture Kingston. Local museums will share something from their collections and Jennifer McKendry, author of *Early Photography in Kingston from the Daguerreotype to the Postcard*, will reveal Kingston through images.



CAPTURE KINGSTON

SAVE THE DATE !!!!

This is the first announcement for the Sir John A. Macdonald birthday dinner which will be held on **Saturday, January 13, 2018**.

Additional information will be forthcoming in further editions of *Limelight*. If you require details, please feel free to contact Anne Richardson at: richanne@hotmail.ca

The Kingston Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society will meet on Saturday, September 16 at 10 a.m. at the Kingston Seniors Centre, 56 Francis St. Gail Dever, well-known genealogical blogger and speaker from Montreal, will outline the "Creme de la Creme of Online Resources for Quebec Research". This will cover both English and French records. Visitors always welcome. Further details at www.ogs.on.ca/kingston

Community Announcements

The next meeting of the Kingston Historical Society Wednesday, September 20, 2017 7:30pm **Lucinda Bray: Kingston's First Airfield** Seniors Centre

Can you help?

My name is Laura Madokoro and I am an Assistant Professor in the Department of History and Classical Studies at McGill University.

I am currently undertaking new research on the history of sanctuary in Canada from the 1800s to the present. I am looking at both religious and secular acts of sanctuary, meaning the tradition of protection offered by Judeo-Christian churches and other religious institutions as well as protection offered by ethnic and local communities in the face of state efforts to arrest, prosecute or deport individuals for various reasons.

To date, my research team has uncovered dozens of sanctuaries by exploring digitized historical newspapers from across the country available on line. However, I believe the bulk of the relevant material related to sanctuary rests in the local communities where sanctuary offers once took place.

I am writing to you in the hopes that you might assist me with this research by disseminating my email to members of your association. I am most interested in learning about any sanctuary offers that might be captured in archival / museum / library holdings and would appreciate guidance on searching these holdings. I also suspect that many stories of sanctuary are not captured in archival repositories but rather are housed in the memories of people who live and work in the communities where sanctuary once took place. I would therefore appreciate any assistance in terms of tracking down local histories / local lore. I would be happy to answer any questions or concerns you might have. I can be reached at laura.madokoro@mcgill.ca.

Palimpsests of Kingston History
McMahon Bros. Hardware
by David McCallum

The poetry of history lies in the quasi-miraculous fact that once, on this earth, on this familiar spot of ground walked other men and women as actual as we are to-day, thinking their own thoughts, swayed by their own passions but now all gone, vanishing after another, gone utterly as we ourselves shall be gone like ghosts at cockcrow. – G.M. Trevelyan

Like the details of an overpainted antique painting which begin to reappear through the more recent work of art which covers it, advertisements painted long ago on Kingston walls re-surface, ghostly reminders of business enterprises long since forgotten.

Advertisements hand-painted on building walls were once one of the most common forms of business promotion in this city. The Grand Truck Railway Inner Station (now Frankie Pesto's) was an exuberant example of this kind of advertising.



Queen's University Archives
V027 - Item 8241 A

Library and Archives Canada
PA-062177
Rifle Brigade Album (c.1852-1869)



"University Drug Store" c. 1922-23 Detail from wall advertisement at 260 University Avenue

Visual representations of the products sold, like the giant boot hanging over Sutherland boot and shoe store at 103-5 Princess Street (recently demolished), were also a familiar form of advertisement on Princess Street. (The Sutherland family was in business at 103-5 Princess St. c.1885-1927.)



In 1886 the Kingston Electric Light Company was incorporated and with the introduction of neon lighting to North America in 1923, hand-crafted, overhanging neon signs proliferated on Princess Street in the 1930s, through the 1960s.



Princess Street, Kingston, Ontario, Canada. 7.

Postcard/ photographed in 1935/ Collection of J. McKendry



Queen's University Archives V23-Par-28

Wall signs continued to be seen alongside electric signs well into the 20th century, as shown in this photograph from VE Day, May 8, 1945. (Joseph Abramsky and Sons operated at this location from 1903 until 1977.)

Painted wall advertisements and prominent overhanging signs disappeared by the 1970s, due to changing tastes and accompanying legislation. But a relic of a wall sign from the 19th century can still be dimly seen on a wall overlooking Tara Foods on Princess Street. McMahon Brothers Hardware was in business from approximately 1883 to 1891 at 85-7 Princess Street, and a sign advertising this business was painted on the building's side brick wall during that time.

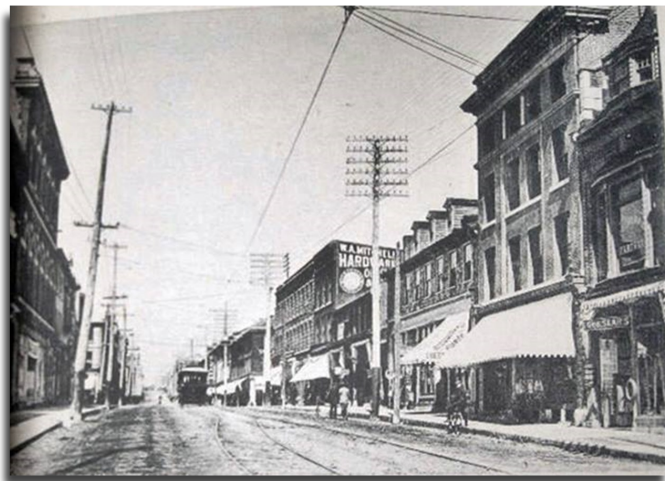
*"McMahon Bros. Hardware", c. 1883
- 1891*

In approximately 1893 the business at 85-7 Princess Street changed ownership and became W. A. Mitchell Hardware. The McMahon Bros. name was painted over and replaced with W. A. Mitchell. (As can be seen in the black and white photograph below, the owners' names were exchanged, but the word "Hardware" remained un-changed.)

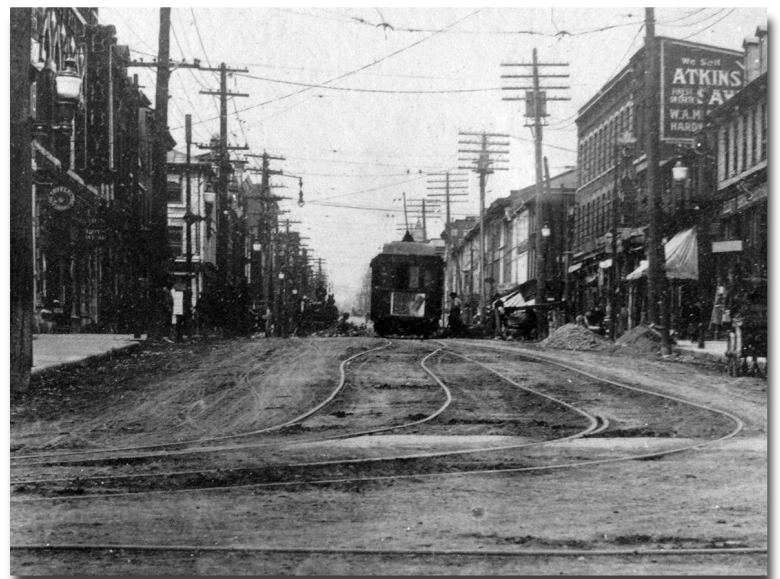
*"W.A. Mitchell Hardware", c. 1893 - 1918
Photo: Vintage Kingston
Facebook.com/Vintage Kingston*



Some time later, another sign was painted over the original W. A. Mitchell Hardware sign, this one promoting "Atkins Saws", with the name W. A. Mitchell now located at the bottom of the sign.



About 1919, the hardware store changed hands again and became Stevenson and Hunter Hardware (until 1937). Presumably the sign on the outside wall was again changed, or possibly just painted over. And now, a single layer of paint advertising the McMahon Brothers' business has re-emerged after more than 125 years, like a palimpsest from under countless other layers of paint, perhaps, to remind us of the strata of businesses which have occupied

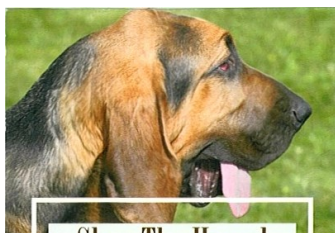


Facebook.com/Vintage Kingston

these premises, and of the generations of families who have run and have patronized those businesses. This, in my opinion, is why heritage conservation is important: it is proper to reverence those who have gone before and have bequeathed to us everything we now have. It is not because of the limestone and brick facades.



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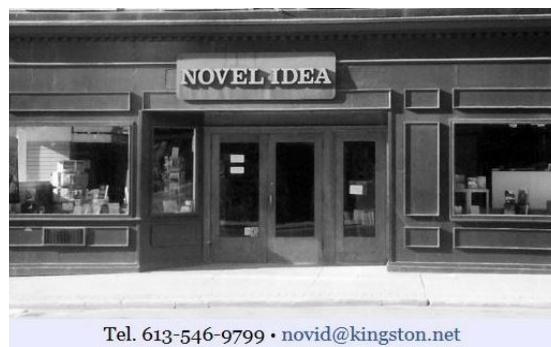
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ST. ANDREW'S KINGSTON CELEBRATES 200 YEARS The student tour guides at Kingston's historic St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church were attired in heritage ensembles this year to mark the special anniversary of the congregation, founded in 1817. Many well known historical Canadian figures have attended this church including Sir John A. Macdonald, Oliver Mowat, Billy Bishop (World War I flying ace), author Robertson Davies, and social activist, writer and poet Agnes Maule Machar. The summer guides this year are: (L to R), Kerith Tung, Sam Ruder, Sarah Gordon, and Amelia Nicholas.



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

Paul Van Nest and speaker Bill McKone Photo Eva Barnes



The Fenian Movement

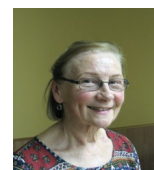
by William (Bill, Liam) McKone of Vermont

The word 'Fenian' is the adjective of the Celtic word 'Fian': warrior. Best known was Finn McCool, a defender of the king in the 3rd c CE. Following on the heels of the Viking raiders between 600 and 900, the Normans conquered the island in 1170. Following Henry VIII's imposition of the Church of England, their Catholicism and their language was suppressed as well as their freedom, all of which lead to constant uprisings and brutal put downs. And then in the 1840s, the potato famine hit: the population of about 8 million was reduced by 1 million deaths and 1 million emigrants. Much of this famine, however, was attributable to the British landlords continuing to export produce to England for profit, hence the spectre of genocide. In 1848, John O'Mahoney led yet another uprising. Of course it failed and he fled to America. 10 years later, he formed the Fenian Brotherhood in America while James Stephens formed the Irish Republican Brotherhood in Ireland, the latter clearly an underground organization. In the United States, Irish immigrants in the Brotherhood joined state militia units where they were trained, anticipating an invasion of Ireland. However, the American Civil War 1861-65 put that plan on pause and many Irish fought for both the North and the South. Bill then spoke of the Vermont Brigade, led by Thomas Meagher, born and raised in Waterford, known as the Irish Brigade.

Once the war ended, the Fenian Brotherhood decided to attack Canada instead of Ireland with the intent to draw British troops from Ireland giving their compatriots in Ireland a better chance of success. In 1866, one year before Canada's Confederation, they struck but weakly, crossing at Buffalo leading to the battle of Ridgeway and from Vermont towards Montreal. Here they were easily turned back by regulars and the French Canadian militia. Some of the Irish who were captured were tried and imprisoned in Kingston's Penitentiary. Others were deported to Australia and Tasmania. Bill then briefly continued the story of Irish militants leading up to the 1916 Uprising, the resulting peace and partition of Ireland. He concluded with recent history of the Irish Republican Army and its fight against the British from the 1960s until the peace accord in 1998.

Eithne Dunbar gave a brief synopsis of a group of Fenians who were shipped to Australia, one of whom escaped. True to his word, he and supporters in Boston bought a ship which rescued the others. This October, an Irish song writer will present this story in song in Brockville on Friday, 27 October. She concluded by singing a beautiful Irish ballad. More information will follow in September.

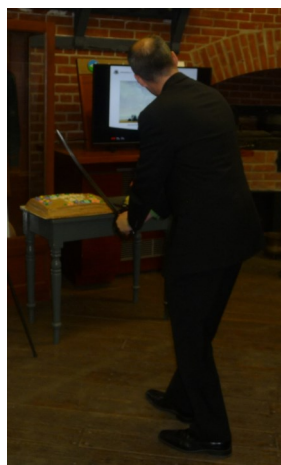
Eithne Dunbar
Photo Eva Barnes



2017 marked the 92nd Season of Kingston's oldest museum, and celebrations were in full swing last May.

To kick off the season, Murney Tower was thrilled to welcome a number of esteemed guests including Mayor Bryan Paterson and Town Crier Chris Whyman to witness the unveiling of a new painting by local artist, Don Connolly. The painting, which depicts Murney Tower in both 1867 and 2017, brings to light the rich history of Canada's first capital, commemorating the country's 150th birthday. The event featured tasty treats and live music from Kingston folk quartet, Fiddle Earth, as visitors, both local and foreign, were invited to celebrate the opening of Murney Tower, and the history that it displays.

Graeme Watson, Murney Tower Director, with Town Crier Chris Whyman and artist Don Connolly.



Mayor Bryan Paterson cuts cake



Brent Schneider and Mary Agnes Kennedy Photos by Peter Ginn

Murney Tower Opening

Oyez, Oyez, Oyez

My Lords Ladies and Gentlemen, Pray heed the following proclamation,

Be known that in the year of the Lord 1846, the same year Kingston became incorporated as a city, the Royal Engineers oversaw the construction of a Martello Tower on this spot. Many a fine Kingston mason, craftsman, and worker with strong back ensured that the construction of this mighty Tower took just 6 months.

Today Parks Canada, the City of Kingston, and the Kingston Historical Society invite all visitors from far and wide to come visit Canada's First Capital and the Murney Tower, Kingston's oldest Museum.

In honour of the 150th anniversary of the founding of the great Dominion of Canada, the Murney Tower Museum is pleased to have his worship Mayor Brian Paterson unveil a painting of the Tower by local artist Don Connolly.

With the unveiling, we mark the official opening of this integral part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Murney Tower Museum for its 92nd season.

Your worship the honour is yours.

Pictured is Alison Ginn in an 1860s working woman's ensemble, which she created and wore at the *Weavers and Spinners* demonstration booth at *First Capital Day* celebrations on June 15th, 2017 at City Park. Her cotton cap, which is authentically styled, was purchased in the United States.

Photo Eva Barnes



The Rock and the Sword: A History of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Kingston by Brian Osborne was first published in 2004, and sold out completely. An updated version was launched in May to mark the 200th anniversary of the congregation. Brian has written a new chapter to cover the interlude between 2004 and 2017.

Brian Osborne signs a new issue of his St Andrew's church history with Eva Barnes assisting at the sale, May 21, 2017.

Photo Jack Barnes



The Commemoration Service of the Death of Sir John A. Macdonald

by Alan MacLachlan

This past 6 June reminded me of Jane Morgan's song "The Day That The Rains Came Down". However, the spirits of those who were present for the Commemorative Service of the Death of Sir John A. Macdonald were not dampened. Father Blair Peever and his staff of Christ Church Cataraqui rose to the occasion and were most amenable to an indoor event on short notice.

The forty young voices of St. Marguerite Bourgeoys Catholic School Choir under the direction of Ms Alison Bogle, were marvellous with their singing of our National anthem and sundry other Canadian folk songs. Peter Radley, reprised his role as Master of Ceremonies with his usual adroitness, alacrity and flexibility.

The service began with a Bible reading and prayer by Rev. Blair Peever, followed by our guest speaker, the Honourable Hugh Segal O.C. . Ont. For this sesquicentennial year of confederation, our guest speaker presented an address entitled, "Beyond 150 - The Real Sir John". The full text of his address will be found in the 2017 *Historic Kingston*.

Following the laying of fourteen wreaths from the three levels of government and organizations affiliated with Sir John, the lament was played by the Fort Henry Guard piper. This traditional ceremony concluded with the last Post and Reveille by the bugler from Fort Henry. Benediction was given by Father Blair Peever. We then rose and joined the St. Marguerite Bourgeoys Catholic School Choir in the singing of "God Save the Queen". Following the commemoration, the gathering retired to the foyer of Christ Church and the outside entrance for refreshments and conviviality.

We gratefully acknowledge the roles played by the Reverend Blair Peever and the staff at Christ Church Cataraqui, the staff of Bellevue House, the Cataraqui Cemetery staff, the R.C.M.P. Sgt. Howard and the Fort Henry Guard, all of whom made this ceremony one of colour, pageantry and tradition. We are indebted to Eva and Jack Barnes and to Peter Ginn for being photographers of the event.

The success of this event, especially given the unforeseen weather conditions, was the result of dedication and attention to detail by the committee: Alan MacLachlan Chair: Barbara Bonner, Peter Radley, Brian Osborne, Bob Lemmon, Don Richardson, Mark Bennett, Eva Barnes, Marcus Létourneau, and George Muggleton.



Milong Wang, Johanna Strong,
Marlisa Hows, Henry Jeong.



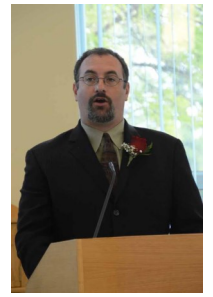
St. Marguerite Bourgeoys
Catholic School choir



RCMP officer
with Alan
MacLachlan,
Program Chair



Peter Radley with
Ms Alison Bogle,
Choir Director



Marcus Létour-
neau, President
KHS

Photos by Peter Ginn

The Reverend Blair
W. Peever



Dr. Teri Shearer
Deputy Provost
Queen's University

The Honourable Hugh
Segal, OC, O, Ont



Dignitaries
and crowd



Eva Barnes and The Honour-
able Peter Milliken
Photo Jack Barnes



Mayor Bryan Paterson, Eva Barnes,
The Honourable Hugh Segal OC, O,
Ont
By Jack Barnes



Fort Henry
colour party
Photo Jack
Barnes



Worshipful
Master,
Steve
Ramey of
the Ancient
St John's
Lodge No.3
Photo Peter
Ginn



Shirley Blakey IOOF
Catarauqui Granite Lodge #10
Photo Jack Barnes

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