

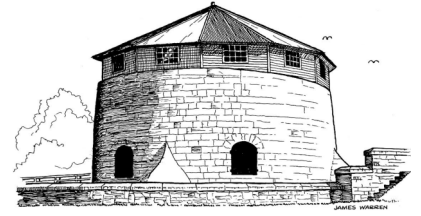
# Limelight

## Newsletter of the Kingston Historical Society

Kingston Ontario Canada

Volume 21 no 5 ISSN 1488-5565

May 2019



Next KHS meeting – *change of venue*

Wednesday, May 15th: 7.30 p.m.

**at the Military Communications and Electronics Museum**

Highway 2 at the east end of CFB Kingston

**Bill Patterson:**

“The 1st Battalion, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Highlanders, 1940-1945:  
The Kingston Connection”

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### COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### **Researching Early 20th Century British Immigrants**

##### **The Kingston Branch of the Genealogical Society**

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/>



Under the Church Hall

[lowerburialground.ca](http://lowerburialground.ca)

### **Volunteers wanted for An Historical Adventure!**

This summer, the Lower Burial Ground Restoration Society is sponsoring a cleaning and an inventory of the Material Culture under the Church Hall of St. Paul's Church. The Church Hall was built on part of the Lower Burial Ground. Project Co-ordinator Susan Bazely, Assistant, Paulina Marczak.

Volunteers will attend a one hour training session in late May featuring □ an historical overview □ a cemetery and gravestone overview □ procedures, methods and recording □ a health and safety briefing □ an orientation tour.

No commitment until after this training. Activities in June, July and August, in 3-hour sessions, 3 days a week. Interested? Contact Susan Bazely at

[s.bazely@queensu.ca](mailto:s.bazely@queensu.ca)

# 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](mailto: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.*

## MAILING ADDRESS:

Kingston Historical Society  
P.O. Box 54,  
Kingston ON K7L 4V6  
[kingstonhs@gmail.ca](mailto:kingstonhs@gmail.ca)  
[www.kingstonhistoricalsociety.ca](http://www.kingstonhistoricalsociety.ca)



## 2019-2020 KHS Executive Council

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

**Councillors**  
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Tabitha Renaud   Anne Richardson   John Whiteley   Paul Van Nest

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

## President's Message

*Warren Everett*

It's the time of year to look back at the achievements of the past season and look forward in anticipation to the next one. Firstly, a sincere thanks to all of the members of Council for their support in the leadership of the Society.

The speaker's programme this year was varied and first rate; my thanks to Marc Shaw for this success. The speakers programme is an important facet of membership. Next season's programme looks to be just as successful. We have John Morgan speaking on Alexander Mackenzie, David Gordon talking about Two Visions for Sydenham Ward, and our own John Grenville speaking on the Kingston Fortifications and Britain's response to the American Civil War.

I would like to thank our sponsors for their continued support of the monthly newsletter. Their financial support has contributed a great deal to the success of Limelight and of the Society. The newsletter is a vital part of membership, keeping all of us informed about events and issues of the Society. The success of Limelight is due to the first-rate efforts of Betty Andrews, our editor.

Each year as part of our membership, each of us receives a copy of the Journal; a fine publication, compiling all of the talks, both at regular meetings and the annual Gravesite commemoration. Peter Gower has done yeoman service this year bringing the production of the journal up to date.

The Murney Tower has been under wraps all this fall and winter and I, for one, look forward to see the changes. Remember, as a member of the Society, your entry is free. The leadership provided by Graeme Watson at the tower has been impressive. He and his team have been hugely successful in their efforts to acquire the grants that keep the museum financially sound.

In closing, I would be remiss in not thanking Paul Van Nest for his topnotch labours in increasing the membership. Remember, it is a vibrant membership that is the key to the long term success of the Society.



**KINGSTON REGIONAL HERITAGE FAIR**  
**FRIDAY, MAY 10<sup>TH</sup> AT QUEEN'S WEST CAMPUS**

REGISTRATION 8 A.M. JUDGING 9:30 ON

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO JUDGE GRADE SCHOOL HISTORY PROJECTS  
(FRENCH JUDGES ESPECIALLY NEEDED)

COME AND BE IMPRESSED BY THIS GENERATION

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

**Re-Imagining Places of Faith**

June 1, 2019 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Spire at Sydenham Street United Church  
82 Sydenham Street, Kingston, ON

A Joint Workshop organized by the Frontenac Heritage Foundation in cooperation with an ecumenical team and with the assistance of The National Trust, and Faith & the Common Good.--

Places of faith anchor and shape our communities. Yet many congregations are facing declining attendance and insufficient funding to maintain and operate their historic buildings. These important community assets are in a period of transition, and the Eastern Ontario area is no exception.



Join us at this unique event where local faith groups, heritage experts and community organizations will share their experience, and concerns, and develop creative solutions to the challenges confronting places of faith in *Eastern Ontario* in an interactive and engaging format.

**Cost: \$25.00 per person      Lunch and refreshments  
will be provided.**

To register online, visit

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/re-imagining-places-of-faith-tickets-57529514326>

For those who wish to register by mail or for more information:

Contact Penny Sharman [PSarman@cogeco.ca](mailto:PSarman@cogeco.ca) 613-766-2599

**Great Famine Voices Roadshow**

Come and share your family memories and stories about coming from Ireland to America during the Great Famine Voices Roadshow.

The Irish National Famine Museum at Stroketown Park in Co. Roscommon and Irish Heritage Trust are bringing the Great Famine Voices Roadshow (in partnership with Parks Canada) to **Fort Henry National Historic Site, Kingston (1 Fort Henry Dr, Kingston, ON K7K 5G8) on May 9th, 2019.** (3.00pm – 6.00pm) The purpose of the Roadshow is to bring together Irish emigrants and their descendants to share family memories and stories of migration from Ireland to Kingston, Ontario, and Canada, especially during the period of the Great Hunger and afterwards. A selection of these stories will be gathered for the Great Famine Voices online archive: <http://greatfaminevoices.ie/> The Roadshow is a free open house event that will include a reception with light refreshments and feature short talks by Caroilín Callery from Stroketown Park House and the Irish National Famine Museum, Professor Mark McGowan (University of Toronto) about Famine Irish orphans in Quebec, and others. It will also provide an opportunity to share family memories and stories. It is funded by the Government of Ireland Emigrant Support Programme.

For more information,  
[faminestudies@irishheritagetrust.ie](mailto:faminestudies@irishheritagetrust.ie)

or <http://www.strokestownpark.ie/famine/roadshow/>

**Jane's Walk Weekend**

This year Jane's Walk Kingston has a great selection — fourteen different walks including a number of brand new ones. The walks are given by volunteers, are free, happen rain or shine, and usually take about 60-90 minutes.

This is the fifth consecutive year for the Jane's Walk Weekend in Kingston.

<https://janeswalkkingston.wordpress.com/#2saturday>

Details at <https://janeswalkkingston.wordpress.com/#2saturday>

The name "Sydenham" is encountered almost daily by Kingstonians – Sydenham Street, Sydenham Ward, Sydenham Village. But the man behind this legacy is only vaguely remembered, overshadowed by other Kingston "fathers" who have found more prominent glory in the national panoply. At its April meeting, the Society learned from Dr. Brent Raycroft that the man attached to those Kingston landmarks deserves better recognition. Lord Sydenham, Charles Poulett Thomson, was the first governor of the United Canadas – today's Ontario and Québec – in the early 1840s. Raycroft argued that as a progressive Whig politician sent from England, Sydenham pushed these colonies toward responsible government, party rule, and the rudiments of biculturalism. His tenure was short, barely two years, before he succumbed to injuries from a fall from his horse. (He is buried beneath St. George's Cathedral.) But his legacy remains, not just in street names but in the central values of Canadian life. Raycroft has implanted his interpretation of Sydenham in an imaginative prose poetry narrative, *Sydenham*, available at Novel Idea.



**Dr. Brent Raycroft**

## MUSEUMS OF KINGSTON

### *Fairfield House*

*by Barbara Snyder*

Fairfield House stands west of Kingston on the lakefront on land granted to William Fairfield as a Loyalist in 1784. This timber-framed farmhouse was built in 1793 as the family's second dwelling on the farm being cleared and established for their support. Five generations of Fairfields lived here before the house was donated to the Province in 1959 to be preserved as an historic site. The family had continued seasonal use of the house until 1973. The house was prepared to share its heritage with the public and opened in 1984. Fairfield House is now the property of Loyalist Township.

By the early 1980s, typical approaches to historic houses were either to refurnish their interiors to suggest tastes in the past or to restructure the interior for exhibit and programming space. Fairfield House had a different treatment. It has been respected as a significant artifact in its own right, reaching 225 years of use in 2018. Although the house has not been reworked into a refurnished interior, all furnishings seen in Fairfield House belonged to Fairfields living there before 1900.

Fairfield House was built by hand from local timber and limestone by men using skills learned before war disrupted their lives in the mid-1770s.

When visitors enter Fairfield House, they are within the artifact that is the focus of their guided tour, from limestone cellar to high-raftered attic. The house is being preserved to have visible its original building material and techniques, as well as changes the family made during the 1800s. Visitors are encouraged to take a "closer look" at the physical evidence that tells the story of the construction of the house and its use by the family. Awareness of tool marks, paint layers, hardware types, or structural techniques can be applied to any building. An aim at Fairfield House is to foster an appreciation of primary evidence and of preservation of built heritage.



Fairfield House is at Amherstview in Fairfield Park, where there is parking just west of the Gateway of the Loyalist Parkway. The walk to the house follows the first road joining Kingston and settlement to the west. Views across the lake connect with the essential transportation link that preceded the road. The picket fence opens for access to the limestone front yard and the 1793 homestead with verandahs added about 1860.

Guided tours are available from Canada Day through August. The regular weekly schedule is Wednesday through Sunday, from 11 AM to 4:30 PM. If the student staff is available, the house will be open on the Labour Day weekend as well. The Fairfield Homestead Heritage Association, with a working agreement with Loyalist Township, provides the summer staff and can arrange tours at other times. During the summer season, contact the House at 613-384-2813. At other times, contact the Association at 613-389-1907.



## The Speers Family and the Old Stone House

By Bev Honsberger

My most cherished childhood memories centre around the farm formerly behind 'the old stone house', and around Wellington and Samuel Speers, my grandfather and great-uncle.



Their parents, Samuel and Margaret, acquired the 270-acre farm and house in 1883. The gents above were young, as they had been born on Amherst Island. The family raised Holstein cows, sheep and chickens. To play on the grounds was a child's dream.

More than one family resided within the walls. Wellington married Ellen Morrow and Rachel married a Browning. Father and children lived there after Rachel died young.

Joy Speers, my mother, was born there and later married from there.

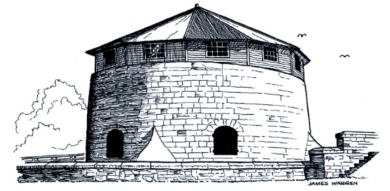
Her cousin, Paul Speers (son of Isaac), from Salt Lake City, would share in her Kingston revisits as they took turns visiting each other in Toronto and Salt Lake City.

Her sister Ida married Arthur Willis Trudell and had one child, Garnet. One of Arthur's ancestors, Captain Michael Grass, is credited as one of the founders of Kingston.

The property was sold in 1960 to William Henderson of Kingston, and the Speers brothers moved to Alexander Street in Kingston. They lived there until their deaths, one week apart, in December 1975.

## **Murney Tower    Operated by the Kingston Historical Society**

Murney Tower Museum participated in the Second Annual March of the Museums! March of the Museums was a collaborative initiative that used the Military Communications and Electronics Museum site as a programming venue. It was a partnership between Military Communications and Electronics Museums, Frontenac County Schools Museum, Royal Military College of Canada Museum, Murney Tower Museum, the Miller Museum of Geology, the Museum of Health Care and the Kingston Association of Museums, Art Galleries and Historic Sites. The premise was to offer a “pop-in” event that was free for families looking for activities during the March Break. Murney Tower and RMC Museum once again partnered to paint and build a Martello Towers - using Styrofoam cups, Muffin tin liners and craft paint or markers, participants could design and decorate their own Martello tower. This year also included ‘Make Your Own Solider’. The other sites also offered activities such as pen and ink writing, Morse Code beading and Elenco Snap Circuits® kits and a dress up station! The museums were lucky to have the help of volunteers, including Queen’s University students from the History and Education departments.



**Volunteer Pte. Raymond and participant Edward**

## **Murney Tower is opening for the season Friday, May 17, 2019.**

Come in and see all the new exhibits on the barracks level and find out about the work that was done during the off season! We look forward to your visit!

### **My Practicum with the Kingston Historical Society**

**By Mercedes Kellar**

For three weeks in March and early April of 2019, I did my alternate practicum (or alt prac) with the Kingston Historical Society and Murney Tower. The first three days I assisted with the March of the Museums programming at the C&E Museum. Manning the Miller Museum station was a fun experience. We were given real fossils to make casts out of and it's such an experience to hold something, knowing it was living 70 million years ago.

The majority of my three weeks was spent in the KAM office working on educational programming. My main role with Murney Tower was to re-vamp their educational programming for grade seven. Within my educational studies my focuses are on music and history for grade seven through grade twelve. This has been a great opportunity for me to experience education in a different setting. The goal of alternative practicum is to work in a non-traditional classroom setting while still doing something related to education.

It's been a wonderful experience and something very different from classroom teaching. It's been really good to get a glimpse into the museum side of education and to develop programming. The thought process is a different one when working with a site. From “How do I interpret and deliver the curriculum” in schools to “How do I align the information that's important for the site with the curriculum in a meaningful way” on a site. I was given many resources to pull from and a lot of freedom in designing the programming. The end result is a two day activity that is very hands on for grade sevens. It begins with them building their own small model tower, thinking about the reasoning behind the construction and the considerations taken into account when deciding how to defend an area. The second day takes them on a virtual tour of the tower; it focuses on teaching about the conflicts in the 1840s and the lives of those in and around the military in the early to middle 19<sup>th</sup> century. Following that the class can either get a visit from Murney Tower staff, or take a tour of the site.

Overall it was an excellent experience working with Murney Tower and it's been a good opportunity to try something different and see education through a different lens.





# PAN CHANCHO

the pig with a peel

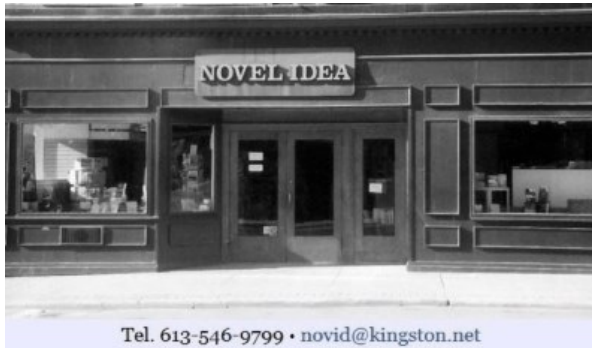
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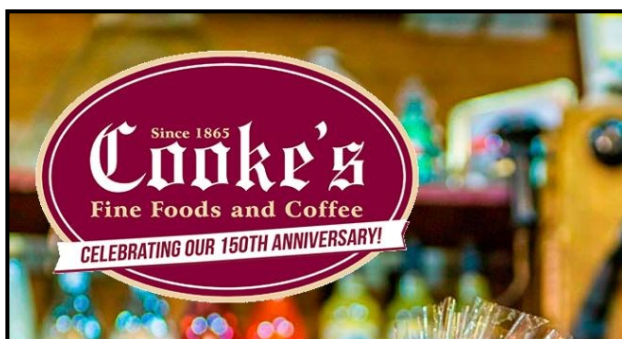


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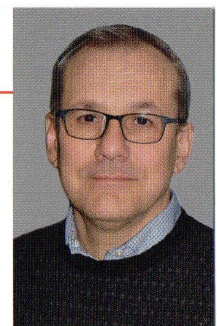
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**The Kingston Historical Society presents**

***The Graveside Commemoration Service  
for Sir John A. Macdonald***

**Thursday, June 6, 2019 at 1:30 p.m.**

**Cataraqui Cemetery National Historic Site**

**927 Purdy Mills Road, Kingston, ON**

**The public is invited to join the Kingston Historical Society, members of the Fort Henry Guard, Bellevue House Historical Ambassadors, The R.C.M.P., representatives of the Cataraqui Cemetery National Historic Site, and many special guests and dignitaries from local, provincial and national organizations.**

**Wreathes will be laid surrounded by solemn formal pageantry to mark the 128th anniversary of the death of Sir John A. Macdonald, Canada's First Prime Minister.**

**GUEST SPEAKER: *Christopher Moore***

**Author of 15 books on Canadian history including *1867: How the Fathers Made A Deal* and *Three Weeks in Quebec City: The Meeting that Made Canada*.**

**Topic: “*John A. Macdonald and Reconciliation*”**

**Information:** Alan MacLachlan, Commemoration Service Chair

Cell (613)453-7078; Email: [alaquide20@gmail.com](mailto:alaquide20@gmail.com)

Location in unfavourable weather is Christ Church Cataraqui, 900 Sydenham Road, Kingston.