

LIMELIGHT

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NEWSLETTER OF THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

2001 was a very good year for the Society. It began with the highly successful Sir John A. Macdonald birthday-dinner and ended at a wonderful Christmas Party at the Royal Military College. Next year, Kingston will encounter a new concept to promote community heritage: "Doors Open Ontario." Promoted by the Ontario Heritage Foundation, it is anticipated that a number of Ontario communities will participate in this innovative approach to the celebration of heritage.

"Doors Open" is a concept that was first proposed and carried out in the United Kingdom. It proved to be so popular that it spread throughout Western Europe and, eventually, to Toronto in 2000. The purpose of "Doors Open" is to nurture an awareness of the built cultural and natural heritage in a community. This is done by providing free access -- for residents and visitors alike -- to buildings and properties of architectural and historic value. Some of these are generally closed to the public. Heritage homes, estates, commercial buildings, court houses, churches, museums, and manufacturing facilities are a few examples of sites that may open their doors to the public. As an aside, the most popular site in Toronto for the last "Doors Open" was the Don Jail. People lined up in the early morning hours in order to make sure they get in for a tour! The list of potential sites for Kingston has not yet been finalized. However, if some of the ones proposed are available, it may finally answer the question that many of us have voiced over the years: "I wonder what it's like in there?"

The date for "Doors Open Kingston" is Saturday, 11 May 2002. Because this is a community effort, it will require volunteers. Once the nature of the programme is firmed up, I will be requesting support from the membership to help make this exciting initiative a success.

In closing, I wish you all a prosperous and Happy New Year. See you on 11 January at the Senior Staff Mess at R.M.C. for the 2002 Sir John A. Macdonald dinner. (Warren Everett)

OUR NEXT MEETING

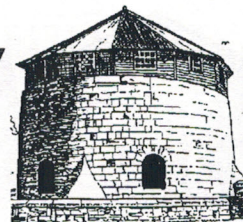
- Date:** Friday, 11 January 2002
- Place:** Senior Officers' Mess, R.M.C.
- Time:** 6.30 p.m. for 7.00
- Speaker:** Hon. Flora MacDonald
- Title:** "Sir John A. Macdonald: The Visionary"

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Kingston Historical Society

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AND ONE FROM THE EDITORS...

Christmas came early to Kingston this year. In mid December, after an intense campaign by a number of local leaders, Minister of Heritage, Sheila Copps, promised an additional \$5 million for the restoration of Fort Henry. Our community and its history is more secure in 2002 than it was in 2001. Certainly, there is still much to do to ensure the integrity of the Fort. The Community Action Group has yet to work out priorities and how the restoration will proceed. But those who "first footed" across the boardwalk and through the gates to mark the arrival of 2002 must have done so with a little more confidence this year. They were able to celebrate the promise that Fort Henry will continue to dominate our landscape as it has done for more than 170 years. They rejoiced in the fact that it will continue to be Canada's top tourist attraction and, more importantly, a vibrant memorial to those who worked and played and rang in the New Year there in the past.

Throughout much of the 19th century, New Year's celebrations were much more muted than they have been for the last 100 years. For the officers and men of the British regiments who garrisoned Fort Henry, the arrival of 1 January was often like any other day. Certainly, many had enjoyed a good dinner and might have watched the illumination of the town the night before. And the first families of Kingston marked the arrival of the New Year by attending the Commandant's or Mayor's levees. But for many, what was also important was that the first day of January marked the beginning of a new season. Sir Desmond O'Callaghan is quoted in A. Britt Smith's fine collection, *Kingston! Oh Kingston!*, that many British officers in the mid 19th century were introduced "into the science and mystery of tobogganing" when they took up sliding down Fort Henry Hill. In January and February, townspeople wrapped themselves up and went skating or ice yachting on the bay. Others "went to the races" and wagered on their favourite trotter. For many in town, the arrival of winter snow and cold presented the opportunity to visit friends and relatives, travelling by sleigh over roads that were often impassable only a few weeks before.

We now live in a very different time and inhabit a very different world. But we are surrounded in Kingston by so many historic sites that help us to keep in touch with the people, the activities, and the rituals of the past. So "Congratulations and Thanks" to all those who have worked and continue to work to ensure that one of our most important symbols of who and what we are - Fort Henry - remains intact and open to the public.



SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY DINNER

The second Kingston Historical Society annual dinner marking the birthday anniversary of Canada's first prime minister will be held on the evening of 11 January, 2002, in the Senior Staff Mess at the Royal Military College of Canada. Participants should follow the route within the R.M.C. grounds indicated on the map below and should be prepared to present photographic identification, i.e., drivers licence, at the guardhouse. A commissionaire posted at the boathouse will direct drivers to the parade square where they should park.

The programme and menu for the evening are shown below. There will be a cash bar for preprandial drinks and dinner wine. The cost of the dinner is \$30 per person.

Programme

6:30 - cocktails, main lounge
7:30 dinner, dining room

Toasts during dinner:

The Queen, proposed by Sir Andrew Burns,
British High Commissioner to Canada

Macdonald the Scot, proposed by Mr. David Smith,
Kingston St. Andrew's Society

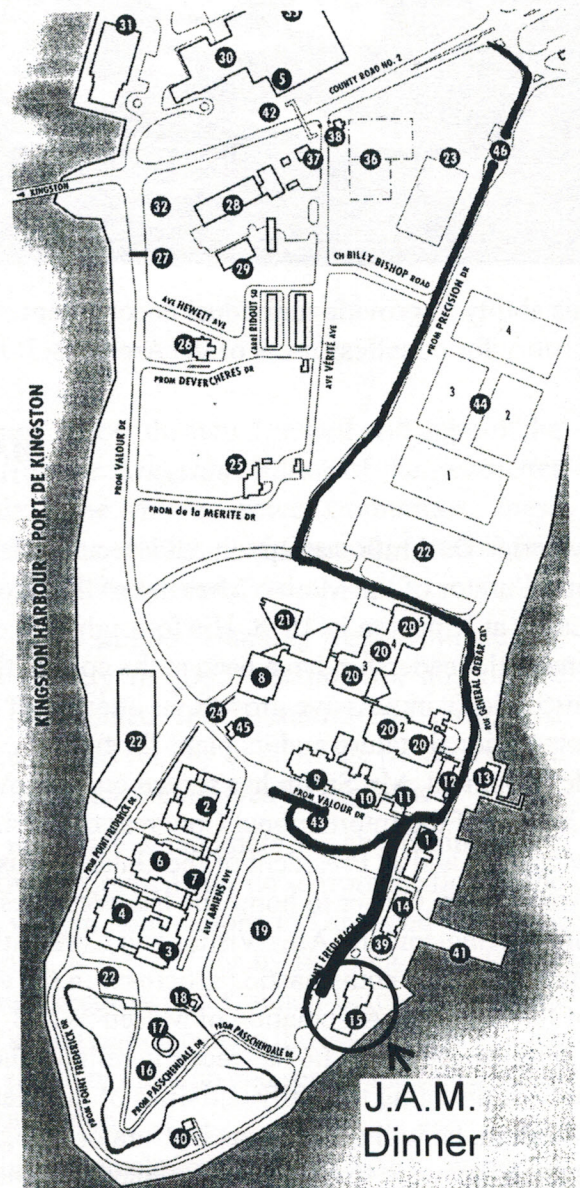
Macdonald the Kingstonian, proposed by Her Worship Mayor
Isobel Turner

Macdonald the Canadian, proposed by Mr. John Gerretson,
MPP for Kingston

Address following dinner, in the main lounge
Speaker: The Honourable Flora Macdonald
Subject: *Sir John A. Macdonald: The Visionary*

Menu

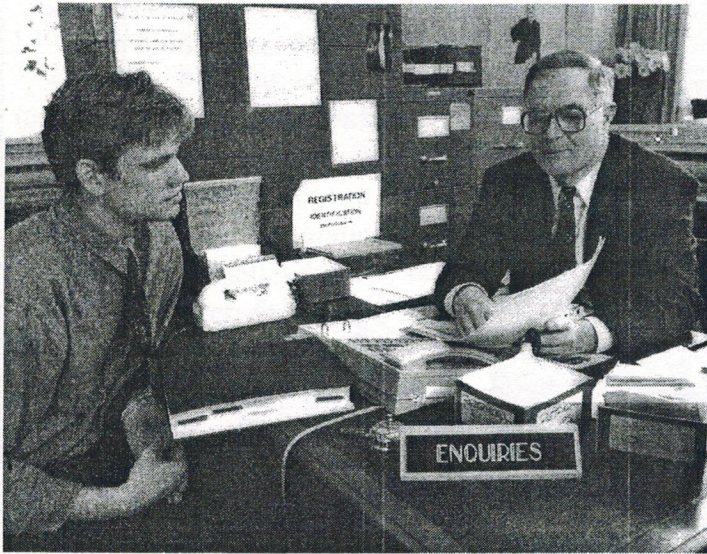
Garden Salad
Onion Torte
Pork Tenderloin with Green Pepper Sauce
Roasted Potatoes
Carrots
Snow Peas
Almond Amaretto Mousse Cake
Coffee/Tea



Individuals with special dietary needs should contact either Alan MacLachlan (549-8841) or Jack Pike (546-9187).

KHS AWARDS - 2001

GEORGE F. HENDERSON



George Henderson has rendered long and distinguished service to the Kingston historical community. Over a period of no less than eighteen consecutive years, he held office on the executive or council of the Kingston Historical Society. His dedication and leadership during thirteen years as chairman of the committee planning the annual memorial service at the Sir John A. Macdonald gravesite has been instrumental in establishing it as an event of national significance. He has presented numerous and always carefully researched papers at society meetings. However, it is in his professional role as an archivist at Queen's University that George's most lasting contribution may lie. His contagious enthusiasm for historical research and

his ability to provide individual encouragement has been a stimulus for success and continuing interest in history for countless users of the Archives. It is a pleasure to honour George F. Henderson with this award.

MAURICE D. SMITH

Maurice D. Smith was appointed Executive Director and Curator of the Marine Museum of the Great Lakes at Kingston in 1978. His foresight and energetic leadership have been at the core of this institution's impressive growth, its attainment of an international stature and its plans for future development. Mr. Smith has served on the governing Council of the International Congress of Marine Museums and as President of the Ontario Museums Association. Closer to home, he has been President of the Kingston and Area Visitor and Convention Bureau and an enthusiastic participant in the affairs of the Kingston Association of Museums and Galleries. Although he has recently relinquished the duty of directing the daily activities of the Marine Museum, he will continue as its Curator. Kingston is indeed fortunate to have the continued presence of Maurice D. Smith within its museum community.



(Submitted by Jack Pike, Chair KHS Awards)



KHS NOMINATIONS 2002

At the KHS Annual General meeting to be held on 20 February 2002, the Society's Nominating Committee (D.O'Meara, B.Osborne, Dave Nelson, and W. Everett) will present the following slate of candidates to the membership:

Executive

President	Brian Osborne
Vice-President	Carl Bray
General Secretary	Doug Petty
Treasurer	Desmond O'Meara
Past President (Ex. Officio)	Warren Everett

Council

Linda Cyr
Jack Pike
Barbara Snyder
Louis Grimshaw
Alan MacLachlan
Sarah Meharg
Robert Andrews



As specified in the Constitution, the new Council will appoint the following: Editor of *Historic Kingston*, Editor of the newsletter (*Limelight*), and Chair of the Murney Tower Committee. These appointees will also serve as members of Council. Council will also appoint chairs of other Society committees.

Any member of the Society in good standing may nominate any other member of the Society in good standing for any office. Incumbents may be nominated for an additional term, and nominations may be submitted for any or all of the positions to be filled. Volunteers may nominate themselves for any office.

Members wishing to nominate a candidate for any position as a member of the Executive or Council may do so from the floor at the AGM, by submitting written nominations to Desmond O'Meara, 106 Yonge St., Kingston, K7M 1E7, or by handing them to any member of the present Executive and Council before 7 February 2002. Submission of a nomination carries the assumption that the nominee is willing to stand for election and serve, and that this has been verified by the nominator.

Please participate in this extremely important activity to ensure the continuing health and efficiency of the Society. (Desmond O'Meara, Past President and Chair, Nominating Committee)



SPEAKERS' CORNER

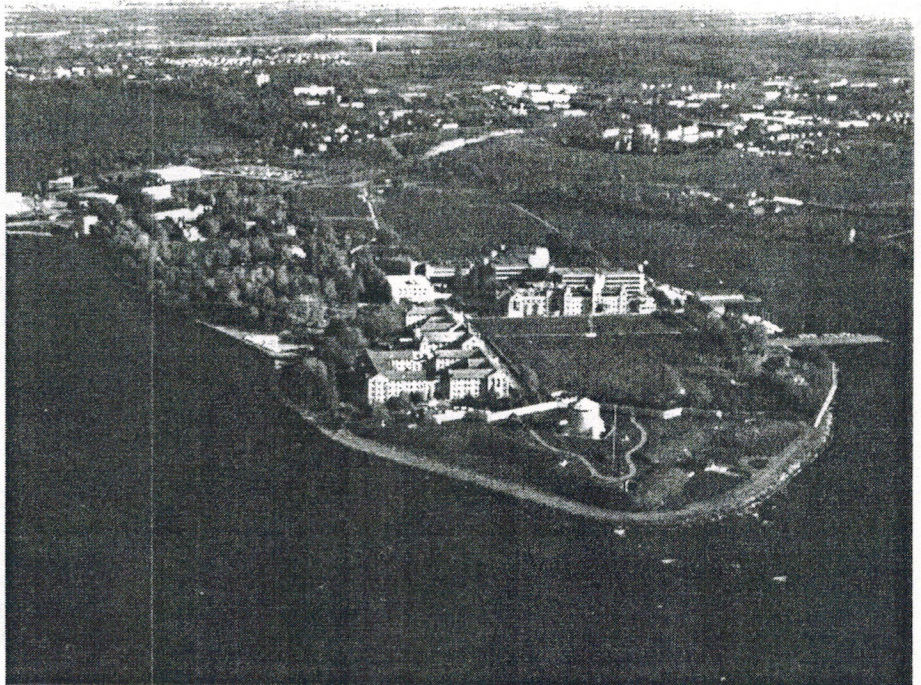
The year 2001 ended for the Kingston Historical Society with two superb presentations in the Royal Military College's historic Currie Building. Constructed in 1922, this building stands as a monument and tribute to Canada's most illustrious general in World War I, Lieutenant-General Arthur Currie. The two presentations were given in Currie Hall, which is, as we were to discover, steeped in much tradition. Prior to the talks, some sixty Society members and friends enjoyed a wine and cheese reception in the Baronial Hall.

Ross Mackenzie, the Assistant Registrar at R.M.C. and the curator for Fort Frederick, gave a wonderful

overview of the historic development of Point Frederick and the succeeding illustrious past of the College. With the use of excellent slides, Mr. Mackenzie took the Society's members and friends on a tour from 1783 through to the present highlighting the major developments under the British with the Naval Dockyard and then with the Canadian military and the training of young officers.

Jack Pike, one of our members and former Professor of Engineering at R.M.C., gave an engaging talk on the early history of the Canadian military as displayed by the insignias and listings of the Canadian divisions and regiments that adorn the wooden railing of the balcony in Currie Hall. The paintings and the reproductions that grace the balcony walls were also included in Jack Pike's talk.

Following the talks and insightful questions and answers, the Society retired to the Baronial Hall for a reception. Many members remarked that they would like to learn more about the other sites on the Campus which is a testimony to how well received the two presentations were. (Submitted by Alan MacLachlan)



REMINDER: SLATES FOR SALE!

WHAT: Auction by Alicia Gordon of artwork by local artists on slates off the roof of St. George's Cathedral, proceeds directed to the restoration and maintenance of the fabric of St. George's Cathedral. Light refreshments will be served.

WHEN: 7.00 P.M., Saturday, 12 January 2002.

WHERE: City Hall's Memorial Hall.

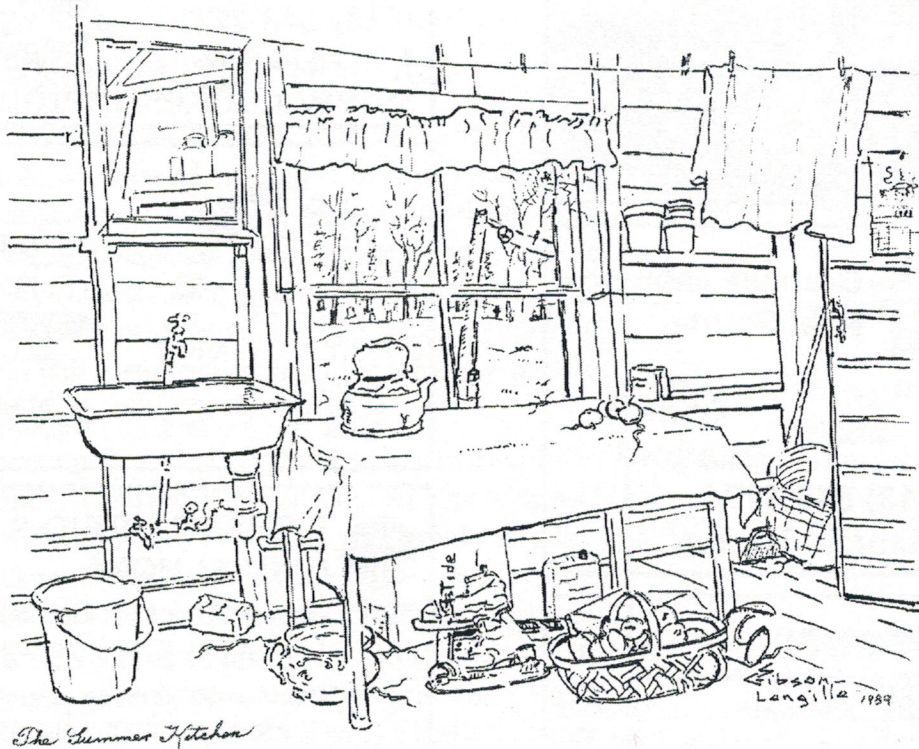
COST: \$10.00 admission fee.

TICKETS: Available at the Church Bookstore (90 Johnson Street, 544-1013), the Cathedral Office (548-4617), or at the door.

LANDSCAPES/INSCAPES: THE SUMMER KITCHEN

It was pouring rain on Wednesday, 18 October 1989. I decided not to go painting in Ernestown and went to visit Jim and Dorothy Wilson instead. They had helped me with the history of Cataraqi Village in my previous show and I wanted to draw their summer kitchen.

They live in the second house on the east side of Sydenham Road off Highway 2, adjacent to Cataraqi Cemetery. Dorothy was the daughter of Ada and James MacKenzie Cooke. Her father built the house in 1903 for his son, Walter, when he got married. The Cookes were market gardeners.



In 1913, when Dorothy was eight, she and her family moved to the house. In those days, there was no electricity and they did their cooking on a woodstove. This made the large kitchen a cozy, happy place all winter. However, when it got too warm, they would move out to the summer kitchen where there was a three burner coal-oil stove. It was Dorothy's job to do the dishes. She would put a dishpan full of water on the stove to heat. One day, she did this and ended up going out to play in the orchard. When she got back everything was covered in coal dust. Not only did she have to wash the dishes, but ended up having to clean the whole kitchen!

Time passed. Dorothy got married to Jim Wilson who had been boarding at the Kish home across the street. They now live in modern times with electricity and all the comforts of home. This drawing of the summer kitchen is as it was in 1989.

I will never forget that day! It was really cold out there and I noticed that the outside door didn't close tight. I realized why when I got a surprise visit from two chipmunks and then a raccoon. They were tame and obviously used to getting treats. I ended up feeding them my lunch. I was sorry later as I became very hungry. I could smell the aroma of homemade soup filtering through the closed main kitchen door. Boy, was I happy when they asked me to join them for lunch!

Dorothy and Jim are the greatest couple and so hospitable. It is now 2002, and we are still the best of friends. I just love to visit them. I'm always greeted with hugs and if I'm lucky I even get kisses from "Blue," their budgie. (Shirley Gibson-Langille)

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