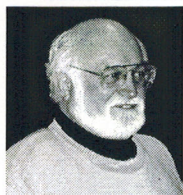
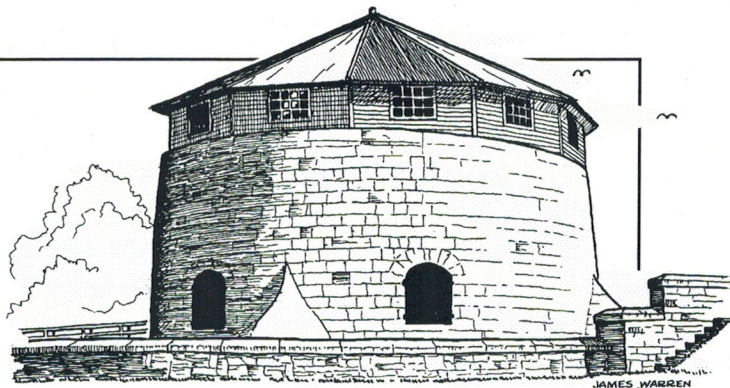


LIMELIGHT

NEWSLETTER of the
KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

vol 4 no 8 November 2002 ISSN 1488-5565



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

November is a good month to contemplate the nature of memory. History is constructed out of the way we remember things. Apart from the scholarly exercise of researching past events, peoples and ideas, our collective memory is a product of both informal and ritualised rememberings.

For some of us, November brings back memories of "Guy Fawkes Night," the cry of "Penny for the Guy," and chanting that well-worn piece of ideologically-charged doggerel,

*Please to remember
The Fifth of November,
Gunpowder treason and plot;
I see no reason
Why gunpowder and treason
Should ever be forgot.*

Given the Papist-Protestant antagonisms that were being commemorated, perhaps some things are best forgotten.

But few will fail to remember the significance of that other day of memory in November, Re-

membrance Day. In schools, churches, public squares, and parks throughout Canada, the past sacrifices made by the military in their service for Canada are commemorated in a well-established ritual of remembrance: swords and crosses; poppies and bugles; hymns and silence.

Nowhere is this more evident than at the National War Memorial at Ottawa. Here, in what is becoming increasingly one of the nation's most prominent places for ceremonial, at the eleventh hour, Canadians will share "a collective heart-beat." For various reasons, 11 November 2002 will prove to be a particularly poignant "Remembrance Day."

Perhaps the real lesson to be learned from these memory-exercises is that they shouldn't be restricted to November. Perhaps we should learn something from our neighbours to the east and proudly acclaim, "*je me souviens*" on a daily basis because we have a lot to remember and be thankful for as Canadians.

Brian S. Osborne

OUR NEXT MEETING: *see also back cover*

Louis E. Grimshaw

***"No. 1 Armoured Train: Kingston's Connection
with Pacific Coast Defence in WW II"***

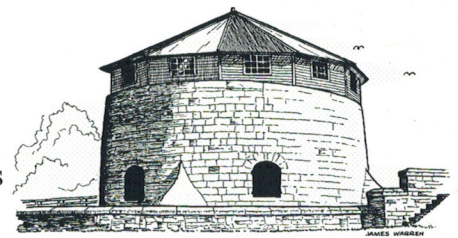
Wednesday **20 NOVEMBER** at **7:30 PM**
in the Wilson Room,
Kingston Public Library, Johnson St at Bagot
all welcome! refreshments



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THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ESTABLISHED 1893



Murney Tower by James Warren

Limelight is published nine times a year - September to May. Submissions should be addressed to the **Editor**, Brian Osborne, 613-533-6042, email osborneb@qsilver.queensu.ca. *Limelight* designer, Jennifer McKendry, 613-544-9535, email mckendry@kos.net. The Kingston Historical Society (KHS) gratefully acknowledges the support of *Limelight's* sponsors.



KHS holds monthly talks or events, usually at 7:30 PM on the third Wednesday of the month, September to May, usually in the Wilson Room of the Kingston Public Library on Johnson St at Bagot St. Special annual events include a dinner and talk honouring the birthday of Sir John A. Macdonald in January and a ceremony marking his death in June. **New members are welcome!** - individual \$35, family \$40, institutional \$40, student \$25; memberships include *Historic Kingston*, published annually by KHS.

Kingston Historical Society
Box 54, Kingston ON K7L 4V6 Canada

phone 613-544-9925
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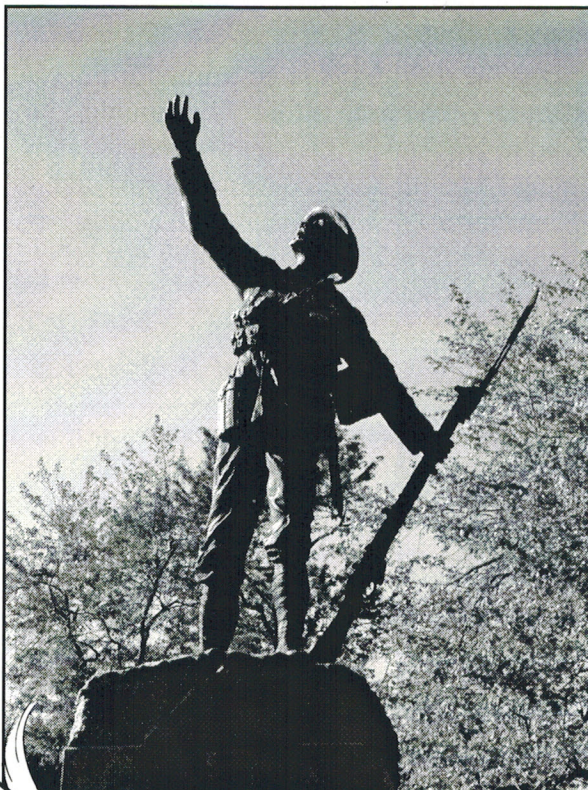


Photo: Jennifer McKendry

AN INVITATION

The Saint Andrew's Society of Kingston has extended a "very warm welcome" to all members of KHS to join them on the occasion of their annual **St Andrew's Ball**, "an evening of Scottish culture and fare." The event will be held at Kingston's downtown Holiday Inn, at 6:30 PM, Saturday **23 November**. The guest speaker will be Sir Andrew Burns, British High Commissioner. The ticket price is \$50 per person. For more information, contact Douglas Smith (548-3737) or Maureen Bale (546-2825).



To the end, to the end, they remain.

The Christmas Party

TUESDAY 10 DECEMBER 7:30 PM



at the DOMINO THEATRE, 370 King St West
(in the former Morton Brewery & Distillery Complex)

Patricia Beharriell will speak about "The Domino Affair"

Patricia is the Domino Theatre archivist and co-author with Ken Weston of *The Domino Affair*, which celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Domino Theatre with a visit to the past and the theatre's aches, pains, joys, and triumphs. It promises to be an entertaining presentation on an institution that has evolved over the years into one of the prominent highlights of Kingston's cultural landscape.

Also, this is the evening when KHS presents its **awards** to those people we wish to honour for their efforts and good services on our behalf.

Do come along and enjoy an evening of intellectual stimulation, conviviality, socializing.... and, of course, **the refreshments**.

Please contact Alan MacLachlan (549-8841) or Brian Osborne (533-6042) if you need a ride.



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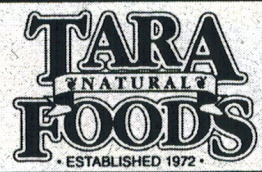


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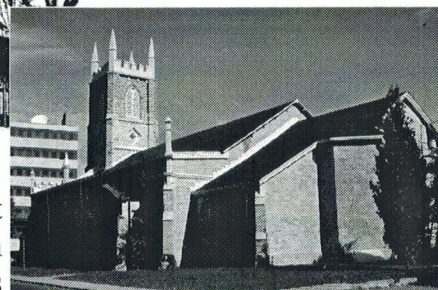
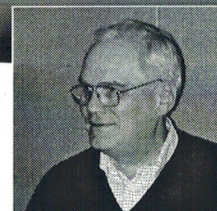
* special KHS price



IMAGES OF KINGSTON:

STUARTVILLE

by Stewart Renfrew



I have always been fond of St James Anglican Church (above and right). For me, it is Kingston's most perfect

example of a parish church. Lacking the pretensions of lofty arches and aggressively pointing spires, St James' is an unassuming church where people can gather in a lovely setting to contemplate their relationship with the Almighty.

Built in 1845 at the corner of Union and Arch Streets St James' began as a mission church in what was virtually a slum on the outskirts of Kingston. Like the other villages I have written about in *Limelight*, Stuartville or Stuartsville (the name is as informal as the boundaries of the place!) owed its existence to its location outside the city-limits: it offered the less well-off an inexpensive place to live. Populated for the most part by unskilled labourers and prison guards, there were also mariners, ship's carpenters, shoemakers, widows and orphans, and the like. They lived in rude frame-dwellings and were known to make much use of the many taverns in the vicinity. The water supply was often polluted, and cholera and typhoid raged through the area on a number of occasions. Stuartville was developed by Archdeacon George Okill Stuart on Lot 24 of Kingston Township, part of his family's loyalist land grant. In fact, for many Kingstonians, the district between Union Street and Johnson Street and west of Barrie Street was known as "Stuart's Slum."

Following annexation by the city of Kingston in 1850, brick and stone buildings began to replace the frame-structures and Stuartville began to lose its bad character. The population was becoming more reputable; the number of unskilled labourers fell from 55% to 29% in the years between 1861 and 1871.

But not all residents of Stuartville were disreputable. Even in

its early days it could boast a medical doctor, a school-teacher, an army quartermaster, and a lawyer and sometime Kingston mayor, Thomas Kirkpatrick. In the late 1830s, Archdeacon Stuart built his home, Summerhill (below), there and several streets in the neighbourhood (Arch, Deacon, George, Okill, and Stuart) commemorate the good Archdeacon.



Photo by Jennifer McKendry

For a short time, in the early 1840s, when the United Legislative Assembly of the Canadas was housed in the newly-completed hospital building, the future of the area must have appeared to be secure. But when the government left Kingston, the bubble burst.

For some reason the Stuart family was not pleased with its imposing new mansion and preferred to live elsewhere. In 1854, the trustees of Queen's purchased Summerhill. Over the years, the university has transformed the area until the only easily recognizable elements of old Stuartville are the hospital, Summerhill, St James, and the names on the streets. Now, Deacon Street is about to be forgotten too as it has been taken over by the University and replaced by a very attractive walkway (below). Perhaps though, if we

asked nicely, Queen's could find a few pennies to install a sign designating it the "Deacon Street Walkway"!

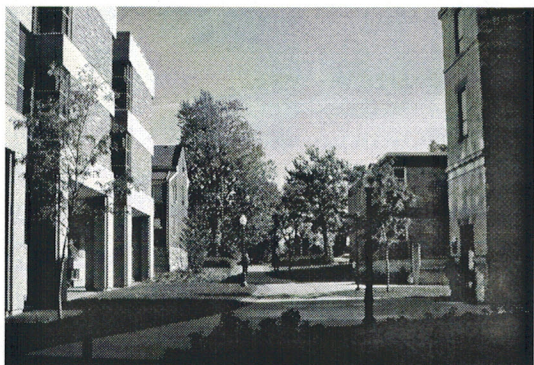


Photo: J. McKendry


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THE NAN YEOMANS PROJECT

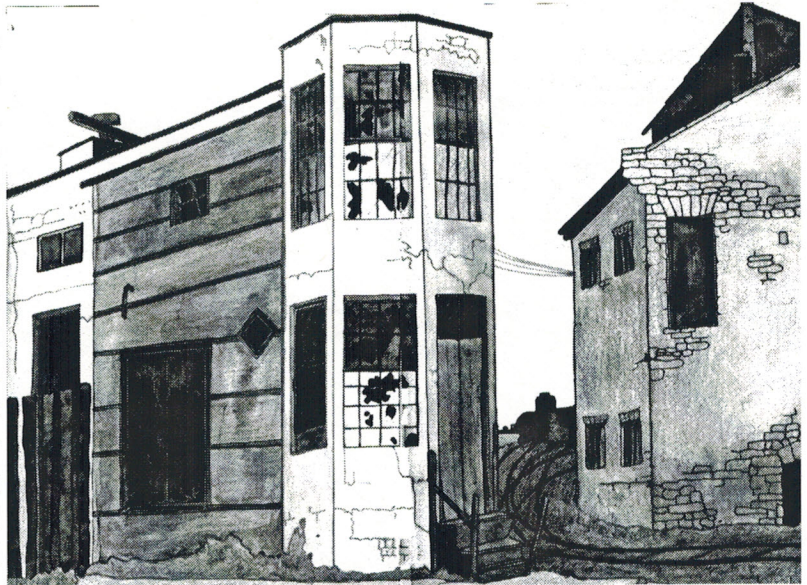
by Margaret Moore O'Meara

A group of citizens, mainly of the Kingston artistic community, have decided to make a video of Nan Yeomans's life and work. Nan's first claim to fame is that she is a very fine artist with a unique style. Primarily a printmaker, her works of art are important at many levels. First, there is the intrinsic artistic merit of her work. Then, there is the remarkable length of her career. Her work portrays Kingston from the postwar years when she was a young student, and recalls a period that many have forgotten, and most of us never knew existed; the view of the foot of Princess Street in 1950 (*right*) is an example. She has now reached her eightieth birthday and, having worked continuously over the years, has created a unique record for Kingston.

Nan is not an artist working in an isolated studio, unaware of the world around her. She is most active in the community and has been a faithful and active member of KHS for over thirty years. A founding member of the Kingston School of Art, she is a tireless worker there as in many other community activities; Nan is always the first to volunteer to do even those mundane tasks that others avoid.

So, the proposed video will not only publicize her work now, when she is able to appreciate the honour, but it will also be a record of a period of Kingston's history for future generations. It will be an important research tool for artists, historians, interested citizens, and future students.

If it is to be successful and have lasting value, a video of this sort must be of a professional quality. While the bulk of the work is being done by



The Foot of Princess Street # 2 watercolour 1950

volunteers, a well-known Kingston film-maker, Valerie Westgate, has been hired to produce it. She is presently developing plans for the production of this video. That means money. Foundations and those who supply funds like to see a portion of the money coming directly from the community. Letters of support are also welcome.

KHS members wishing to assist this project should make their cheques payable to Kingston Arts Council (Nan Yeomans Project) and mailed to The Nan Yeomans Project, 93 Hillcrest Avenue, Kingston, K7K 4L7. For more information: (613) 542-5834.

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Looking for the perfect Christmas present?

Look no further than at the 20 November KHS meeting: presenting our **An ILLUSTRATED GUIDE to MONUMENTS, MEMORIALS & MARKERS in the KINGSTON AREA**, available for just \$24.95 at the meeting or \$29.95 postpaid (cheque or money order to the Kingston Historical Society, include your name & mailing address) from The Kingston Historical Society Book, P.O. Box 54, Kingston ON K7L 4V6.

"no city has such a splendid guidebook" Jack Granatstein

LANDSCAPES/INSCAPES

I REMEMBER ALFIE PIERCE

by Shirley Gibson-Langille

In 1950, Mom, Dad, and I moved to 200 Union St W., one block from the old Richardson Stadium. That same year, I saw my first Queen's football game and got my first glimpse of Alfie Pierce, the mythic figure who came to be regarded as a kind of talisman for the Queen's "Gaels" and the university as a whole.

It was an impressive sight. Alfie stood on the playing field greeting the players as they ran onto the field. He was dressed flamboyantly in Queen's colours, a blue long jacket, a gold vest with red buttons, red trousers, and a distinctive shako. I'll never forget the ritual that followed. Accompanied by a couple of cheerleaders, Alfie shuffled onto the field.

"What's the matter with Alfie?" demanded the cheerleaders.

"He's all right!" the fans roared.

"Who's all right?"

"Alfie!"

"Who says so?"

"Everybody!"

"Who's everybody?"

The reply came thundering back: "Queen's! Queen's! Queen's! *Oil Thigh Na Banrighinn Gu Brath! Cha Gheill! Cha Gheill! Cha Gheill!*"

As the noise died down, Alfie turned around, returned to the grandstand and the game started.

In 1989, I decided I would bring back the ghost of Alfie at my Cataraqi Village Art Show. I got Gordon Raymo to play Alfie's ghost. I was told that Herb Hamilton, Mr. Queen's, knew Alfie and would be the perfect person to talk on him. He agreed and, on Friday 30 June, we went for a picnic in Cataraqi Cemetery. We had a marvellous day. He talked about Alfie and later took me to the Alumni Office and showed me Alfie's file and the glass display-case with Alfie's Tricolour costume.

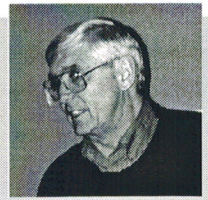
Alfie was the son a runaway slave who operated a livery serving stage coaches. He began his association with Queen's when he was 15, a few years before he became orphaned. The story goes that he was playing in the yard of the Gordon Street School (where Ban Righ Hall now stands), and caught the eye of Guy Curtis, a Queen's athlete. He invited Alfie over to the Queen's playing field and so began Alfie's career with Queen's and the "Golden Gaels." Alfie served as team-handyman and masseur, as well as developing his role as a mythic figure in the university. In the winter months, he lived in the Jock Harty Arena, moving to the Richardson Stadium during the summer. When Alfie died in 1951 at the age of 77, tributes poured in from Queen's alumni everywhere and a large crowd attended his funeral at St. James. Buried at Cataraqi Cemetery, his headstone provided by the Class of Medicine '34 reads, "Alfie Pierce, 1874-1951, A faithful servant of Queen's University."

On 30 September 1989, at the opening of my Cataraqi Show, Herb was there to greet Alfie's ghost as he arrived from the cemetery. He proceeded to tell the fascinating tale of Alfie's life. But I sometimes wonder if we know the whole story. What must it have been like to have been a "gentleman of colour" during those years? And what must Alfie have thought about his role as mascot and entertainer for a crowd of football fans? I now look back from the vantage point of the C21st and ponder how this romanticised vignette from our past serves as a window into our former values and sensitivities.

How fortunate I am to have these rich and sometimes contentious memories to add to my pallet of life!



SPEAKERS' CORNER with Alan MacLachlan



*forthcoming: the No. 1 Armoured Train --
one of the most unusual units ever created in the Canadian Army*



Photos: Jack Pike

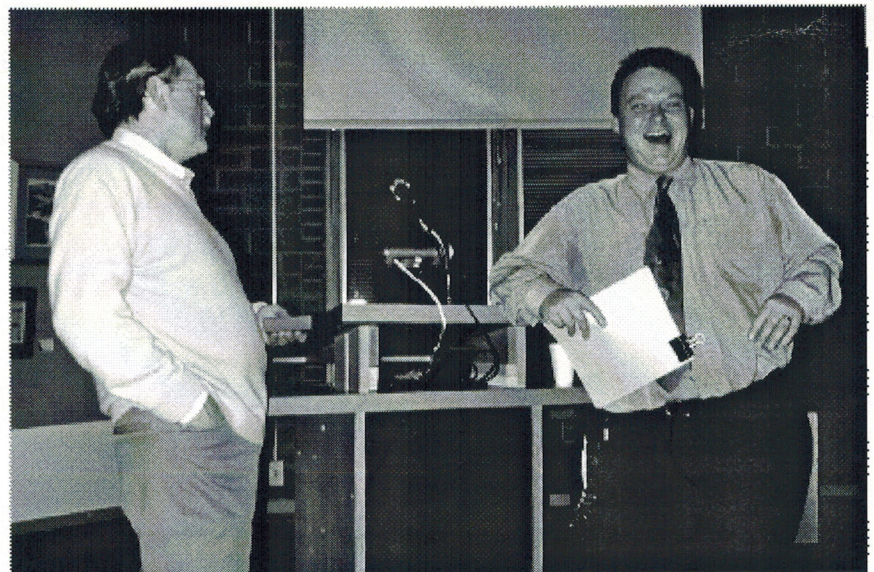
Sir Andrew and Lady Burns cordially received 31 KHS members at Earnscliff (left) in Ottawa on Saturday 5 October. After being given an extensive history of Earnscliff (which was built by Thomas MacKay who also constructed Rideau Hall), Lady Sarah gave us a tour through the house. The grounds and view of the Ottawa River and the Gatineau Hills are spectacular. Following lunch at the National Art Gallery, we ventured into the Gatineau Hills to Kingsmere and were received at "The Farm" (right) by one of Peter Milliken's staff,



Harry Rideout. "The Farm," as William Lyon

Mackenzie King called it, was built in the late 1800s. It was King's residence and today it is the residence of the Speaker of the House of Commons. The informative tour was superb.

On 16 October, the guest speaker at our monthly meeting was **Art Milnes**, a former guide at our Murney Tower, graduate of Queen's and Ryerson, and now a political columnist for the *Whig Standard* and also *The Hill Times* on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. The audience of almost 50 KHS members and guests were entertained and informed by his topic "Mackenzie, Rogers, Benson: Grits in the Home of Macdonald." Milnes interwove anecdotes from the Kingston experiences of these famous politicians into his talk and revealed Alexander Mackenzie, Norman Rogers, and Edgar Benson as concerned Canadians who are interested in the well-being of Canada and its citizens. An interesting revelation was that Kingston has been represented federally as much by the Liberals as by the Conservatives and that it is a myth to believe that Kingston is a Tory bastion. Of particular interest to KHS members was Milnes's frequent allusions to the support and stimulation he and others had received from our own George Henderson, archivist, and Peggy Cohoe.



Lou Grimshaw (on the left), a devoted Tory, thanks October's authority on Kingston's Liberals, Art Milnes. Grimshaw conceded he was willing to acknowledge the merits of deceased Grits. Photo by Jennifer McKendry

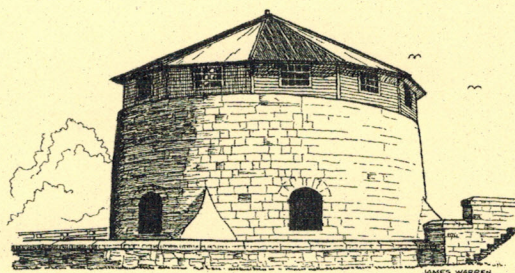
Our 20 November speaker at 7:30 PM is **Lou Grimshaw** who will be talking about the "No. 1 Armoured Train: Kingston's Connection with the Pacific Coast Defence in World War II." He will be discussing aspects of Canadian Railroad history and the link to Kingston's industrial history. The No. 1 Armoured Train was one of the most unusual units ever created in the Canadian Army. This should prove to be a very intriguing talk giving the Society a new perspective on Kingston's involvement in W.W. II.

THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY: MEMBERSHIPS FOR 2003

P.O. Box 54
Kingston, Ontario, K7L 4V6

Dear 2002 KHS Member:

Our membership years begin on January 1. We're hoping you'll be renewing your membership for 2003. There is a renewal form below.



As you know, from September through May, the *Limelight* newsletter informs you about the Society's activities, items related to Kingston's history, and other heritage-related activities in the region. KHS members also receive the Society's annual publication, *Historic Kingston*. With your membership card, you and your guests have free admission to Murney Tower National Historic Site. KHS supports a website at www.heritagekingston.org. Perhaps you would consider giving a gift membership to someone who would enjoy these benefits, but has not joined the KHS.

Financial donations, beyond the membership fees, help extend Society programs. They will be recognized with a tax receipt.

Finally, if continued membership is not for you, remember everyone is welcome to take part in Society activities. We hope you'll attend any that spark your interest. If you're not renewing, please let us know so we will not trouble you with further mailings.

KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM FOR 2003

I am: renewing ☐ Not renewing ☐ New member ☐

as an Individual: \$35 ☐ Family: \$40 ☐ Student: \$25 ☐

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Please use the enclosed envelope and mail to Membership, the Kingston Historical Society, P.O. Box 54, Kingston ON K7L 4V6 or hand this form and payment to Barbara Snyder at the 20 November meeting in the Kingston Public Library or at the KHS Christmas party 10 December at the Domino Theatre. Your support is appreciated.