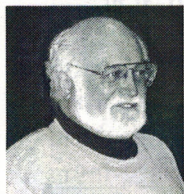
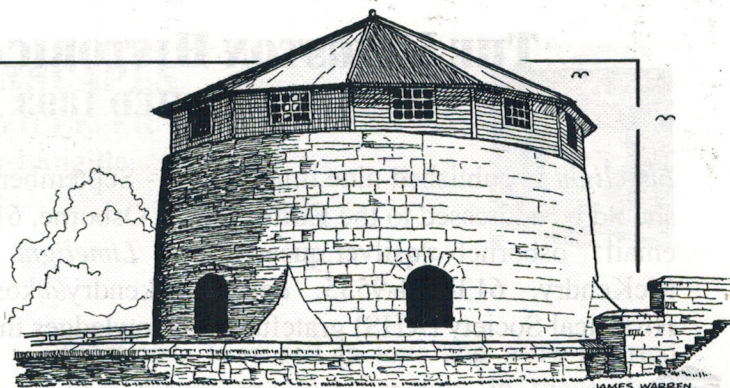


# LIMELIGHT

NEWSLETTER of the  
KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

vol 5 no 2 February 2003 ISSN 1488-5565



## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

According to the "Documents" in *Historic Kingston*, vol. 6 (1957), p. 46, "The minutes of the regular meeting held the 5th Jany., 1894 and the inaugural meeting of 24th Nov., 1893, were read and confirmed." That means that in November 2003, the KHS will be celebrating its 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Does anyone have any ideas about what we should do to make the November meeting a special occasion? Surely, we must do something to mark this milestone in our splendid history.

One thing is certain, the KHS in 2003 would probably shock the staid bunch in 1893: trips to Ottawa; forays into the Masonic Lodge, the Domino Theatre, and Agnes Etherington Art Centre; wine, cheese, and goodies at the annual Christmas Party.

And then there's the Society web-site ([www.heritagekingston.org](http://www.heritagekingston.org)). Thanks to our volunteer web-master, Ken Watson of Elgin, we

occupy a piece of cyberspace that provides a service to all. And, thanks to the KHS Plaque Committee, over the last few weeks, there have been some changes. Browsers seeking more information about KHS and Kingston can now find the following: summary history of Kingston; chronology to 2003; bibliography; map of 1878; postcard of downtown c1905; Gray's 1828 view of Kingston; some general views of Kingston; and a section on Sir John A. Macdonald featuring an account of "Macdonald's Kingston," together with a relevant map and captions. Very soon visitors to the site will be treated to a searchable database on over 190 regional markers and memorials.

I wonder what that first band of KHS members in 1893 would have thought about all of this? Do share your thoughts with me at the AGM on 19 February.

*Brian S. Osborne*

### *THIS MONTH'S MEETING:* WEDNESDAY, 19 FEBRUARY at 7:30PM

- in the Wilson Room, Kingston Public Library
  - the Annual General Meeting
  - presentation on Festival of the St Lawrence
    - show and tell

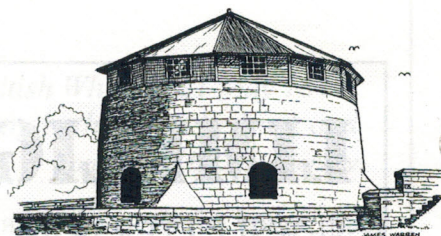
please contact Alan MacLachlan 549-8841,  
if you wish to present an artifact  
*Please see also p. 5*

- president's message, 1
- masthead, 2
- book notice, 2
- "Name That Artifact," 2
- Honouring John Grenville, 3
- Speakers' Corner, 4-5
- the Causeway bridge, 6
- Switzerville, 7
- Gas Light Co. 1849; factories in 1895, 8



# 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](mailto:osborneb@qsilver.queensu.ca). *Limelight* designer, Jennifer McKendry, 613-544-9535, email [mckendry@kos.net](mailto: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

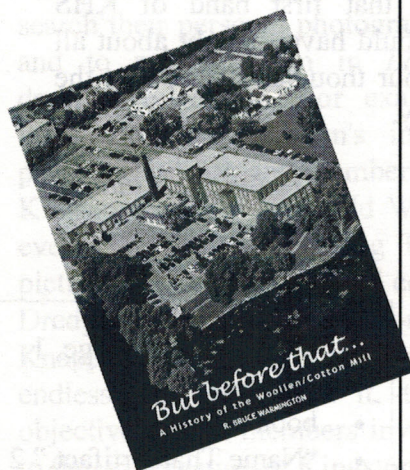
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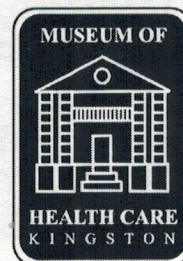
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*Webmaster:* Ken Watson



***But before that...a History of the Woollen/Cotton Mill, Kingston, Ontario*** by R. Bruce Warmington. Too frequently neglected in architectural studies are industrial buildings. This new history, generously illustrated in colour and black-and-white, helps us to appreciate this important aspect of our culture. The author takes us from the 1881 mill's recent renovations for a variety of tenants—ranging from a restaurant to a newspaper—backwards in time to his final chapter on the site's earliest history, that is, Molly Brant's home in the 1780s. Along the way, we learn about the techniques of cotton and wool manufacturing, as well as certain structural aspects of the building itself.

**The Museum of Health Care** presents its third annual "Name That Artifact" Game Show Night. Try to identify weird and wonderful items from the Museum collections or just watch the fun! Prizes for knowledge and creativity! Thursday, **27 February** at 7 PM, B139 Botterell Hall, Arch and Stuart Streets, Queen's University. Free. More info: email [museum@kgh.kari.net](mailto:museum@kgh.kari.net) or call 548-2419.





## HONOURING JOHN GRENVILLE

On 17 December 2002, friends and colleagues gathered at Bellevue House for the presentation of the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal to John Grenville for his contribution to Canada and his fellow Canadians through his work in the field of heritage.

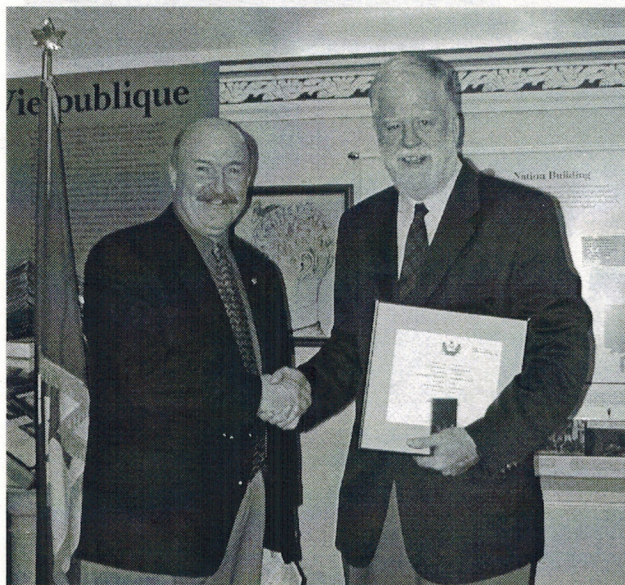
Acting as Master of Ceremonies, Doug Stewart (below left), Superintendent of the Rideau Canal National Historic Site, presented a brief resume of John's career in heritage ranging from his service in the Fort Henry Guard in 1970 to his present duties as Parks Canada's Area Superintendent for Kingston working out of Bellevue House. Doug also spoke of John's recognized expertise in the field of historic site

management and protection. In particular, he highlighted his initiative in helping found the *Ontario Alliance of National Historic Sites* owned and operated by governments, associations, and individuals other than Parks Canada. Because of the success of the Ontario model which John helped establish, current plans call for its expansion nationally as *Canada's Family of National Historic Sites*. It was abundantly clear to all present that John Grenville's contributions to heritage in Canada have been significant.

In presenting the Queen's Medal to John, Peter Milliken (above left), Speaker of the House of Commons and M.P. for Kingston and the Islands, argued that the granting of such honours is a tangible and lasting way to pay tribute to people whose achievements have benefited their fellow citizens, their community, and their country: "It provides an opportunity to look back and recognize those who made Canada what it is today, and to look forward and recognize those who are actively involved in our country's future." In particular, he spoke to the importance of nurturing our sense of who we are as a nation and as Canadians and praised the efforts of those such as John Grenville who protect our heritage and tell our stories.



The Kingston Historical Society congratulates John Grenville on this well deserved award.



photos by Jennifer McKendry





# THE THIRD ANNUAL SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD BIRTHDAY DINNER

On a typically cold Canadian 12 January, over 140 KHS members and friends gathered at the Officer's Mess of RMC to celebrate the birth of Canada's first Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald. The toasts were made by our guests: "The Queen," proposed by Brigadier-General J.



Leclerc, Commandant of RMC; "Macdonald, the Scot," proposed by Maureen Bale, past president of the St. Andrew's Society; "MacDonald, the Kingstonian," proposed by Mayor Isabel Turner; and "Macdonald, the Canadian," proposed by the Honourable John Gerretsen, MPP for Kingston and the Islands.

Following the dinner, the guest speaker, Hugh Segal (*left*), presented his address, "Nation Building and the Conservative Mission: Lessons from Sir John A. Macdonald." Emphasizing the essential humanity

and appealing frailties of Canada's first prime minister, our speaker highlighted a major attribute: the emphasis Sir John placed on coalitions in his search for the greater good of the nation as opposed to the pursuit of mere partisan politics. The address was received with a standing ovation, and ended a wonderful celebration of, and tribute, to Sir John.

Sir John with close friend, KHS member, Brian Porter



photo: Lewis EMC Press



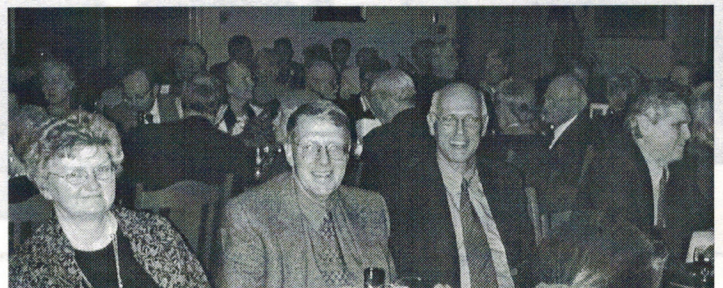
*above left:* Assunta Gerretsen and Maureen Bale



*above right:* John Turner and Gordon Bale

photographs by Jennifer McKendry  
(unless otherwise noted)

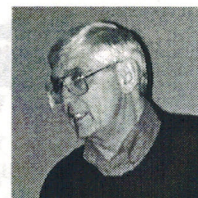
Check our website for colour photographs of the dinner! [www.heritagekingston.org](http://www.heritagekingston.org)





# SPEAKERS' CORNER

with Alan MacLachlan



**THIS MONTH'S MEETING:** WEDNESDAY 19 FEBRUARY at 7:30PM in the Kingston Public Library. The AGM will include the election of KHS officers (described in January's *Limelight*, back cover) and receipt of reports. Following the AGM, Dr Adrienne Shannon, Project Director of the proposed **Festival of the St Lawrence**, will make a presentation about the planned initiatives in music, art, and history. Next in the programme, members are cordially invited to explain their artifacts for a "show and tell" session. Please contact Alan MacLachlan at 549-8841, if you wish to be a presenter (each presentation is limited to two minutes). During refreshments, members will have an opportunity to discuss artifacts individually with the presenters.

On **19 March** we look forward to Bob Andrews's talk on "Colonel Bradstreet and the Battle of Fort Frontenac." He will discuss the Bradstreet incursion during the Seven Years War by using documents and letters from the various participants.



*left:* John Gerretsen and  
Donna Segal



*top right:* Mayor Isabel Turner  
*bottom right:* BGen. Jean Leclerc





Don't forget to check out our website for  
colour pictures of KHS events! [www.heritagekington.org](http://www.heritagekington.org)

# **RESTAURANT**

68-R Princess St 549-7673

# **PAN CHANCHO**

44 Princess St 544-7790



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## LANDSCAPES/INSCAPES

### A BEDROOM IN SWITZERVILLE, ERNESTOWN

by Shirley Gibson-Langille



When I painted this picture, I found it was possible to concentrate on two images at the same time!

One February morning in 1990, I found myself in Switzerville. I stopped to talk to Peter Miller who was standing in front of his beautiful brick house. The east wing was built by his great-grandfather in the 1830s and the addition was built by his grandfather in the 1880s. Peter had to leave for an appointment so he sent me to introduce myself to his wife, Dorothy.

Dorothy welcomed me with a smile and showed me through their home. An antique piano, old photographs, a tall corner cupboard were only a few of the things that gave the house its charm.

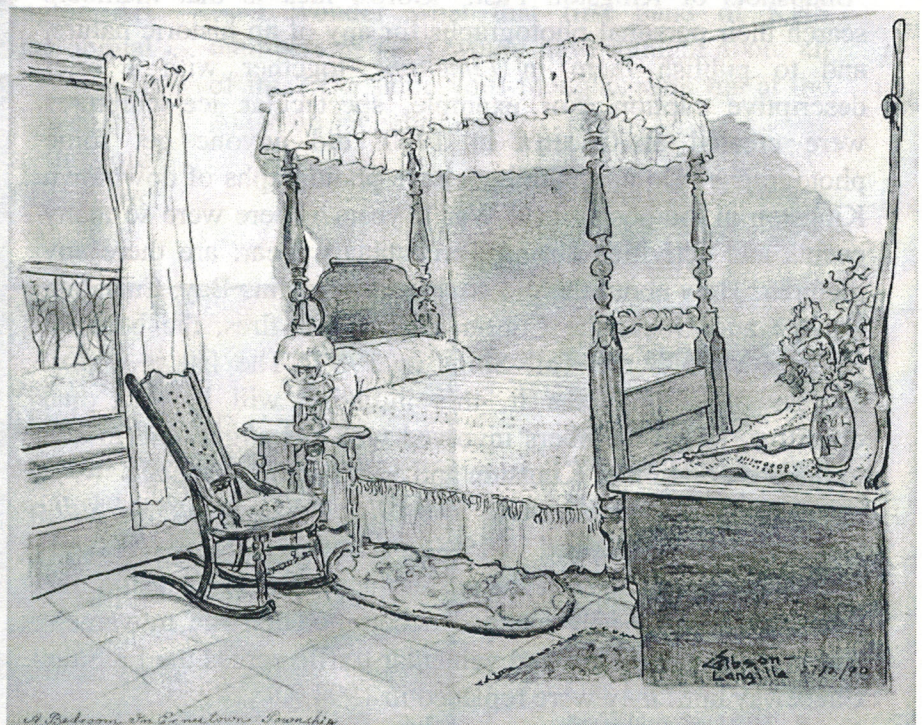
Upstairs in Dorothy's bedroom there was a lovely canopy bed. She told me I could stay and paint it. At first, I thought it would be impossible to concentrate as Dorothy set herself up on a chair behind me. This was not the case. As I worked, Dorothy talked and she painted a fascinating mental picture for me of her life and view of Switzerville, the way it used to be.

She was Dorothy Rutherford when she left her home in Kingston to teach school in Switzerville. Everyone spoiled her by inviting her for evening meals and week-end dinners. In those days, there were many community events such as dances, picnics, showers, and shivarees, as well as school and church activities. She met Peter Miller at one of these

functions. They fell in love and were married. That meant she lost her job: in those days, female teachers had to be single. Eventually, she and Peter had one son who grew up, and moved out West.

For over thirty-five years, Dorothy shared the house with Peter's mother, Florence. She was very fond of her and missed her when she died. Peter's mother had also taught school in Switzerville back in 1911. Dorothy reflected on how sad she had been when the school closed in 1966 and then their church, two years later. After these events, Switzerville was never the same again!

When Peter came home, we all had coffee and boiled raison cake in their large kitchen that had once been the Switzerville post-office. Peter and Dorothy are gone now, but I will never forget them!





## A GIFT FROM THE PAST

*This optimistic view of the gas lighting works is taken from the Daily British Whig of 21 May 1849. As it turns out, it became an inheritance for our generation of tar creeping in the city's bedrock and possibly creating health problems at the OHIP building:*

*contributed by J. McKendry.*

**THE GAS WORKS.** The necessary buildings at the Gas Company's Station in Queen Street are so far completed, that the Secretary has commenced advertising for tenders to do the requisite excavation in the streets, preparatory to laying down the pipes. This looks well, and shows that the Company are in earnest to have the city lighted by the Fall of the year. Gas has become no longer a luxury but a necessary of life. In almost every city and every town of the habitable globe it is universally used; the exception being only in favour of those places too small, or too poor to pay the expense of creating it. Happily, Kingston is not one of those places, the exceptions, bad as the times are, and impoverished as are the people. Light must be procured, and the cheapest and the brightest light is unquestionably the best. Gas possesses those

advantages above all others. It is better than [whale] oil, tallow and lard, and much safer than camphene; and yields to wax along in purity and brilliancy. But why should we utter vapid truisms? All the world acknowledges the usefulness of the article and all the World will patronize the Company; - that is, all the little world of Kingston. Despite the scarcity of cash, the installments on the shares have hitherto been promptly paid up; and why? because Gas Companies are known to be lucrative concerns, yielding a large percentage on the capital invested. Those who have money by them should reflect on this, and make inquiry of the Secretary, Mr. Wotherspoon, whether any shares are still unsold. From 25 to 35 percent, when Bank Stocks only pay Six percent, is not to be lightly sneezed at.

## SNAPSHOTS OF KINGSTON'S PAST

**Gord Smithson** has suggested something new for *Limelight*: "Snapshots of Kingston Past." Gord's idea is that members search their personal photographs for any of an historic nature, and to publish them in *Limelight*, together with a brief descriptive caption. For example, spectacular ice-sculptures were created at Queen's in 1960: did anyone get some photographs? Do any members have photographs of downtown Kingston in the post-World War II years? There were so many events and activities during Tercentenary Year: are there any pictures? How about the old coal yards, Anglins Bay, Canadian Dredge and Dock, the Cotton Mill, major fires, the boats at Knapps Marina, the Tall Ships in 1984? The list is almost endless. As Gord sees it, this initiative will have a dual objective: to get members involved with *Limelight*; and to add to the preservation of Kingston and area's picture heritage.

Here is his contribution, *The Old Walkway on La Salle Causeway*, photographed in 1980. Part of the large fixed steel-framed bridge situated at the eastern approach to Kingston, the planked walkway and roadbed accommodated the movement and noise of pedestrian and vehicular traffic across the La Salle Causeway until they were replaced in 1994.

