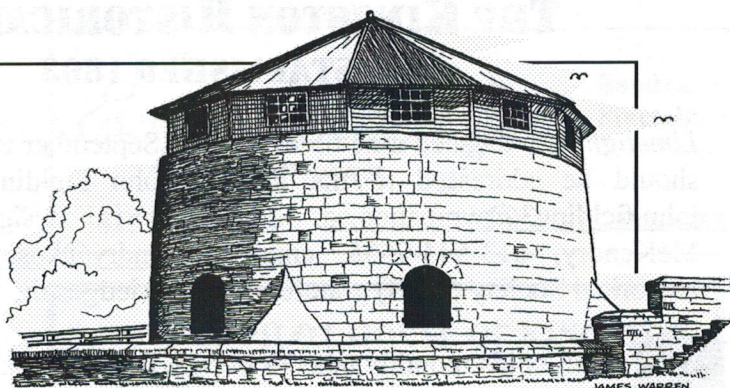


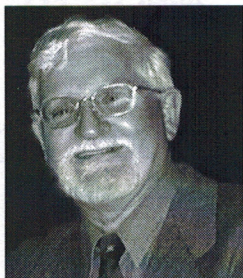
LIMELIGHT

NEWSLETTER of the
KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

vol 8 no 9 December 2006 ISSN 1488-5565



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



The Last Post has sounded and the Cenotaphs are once again lonely sentinels waiting to be called to duty in a year's time. Remembrance Day is not a national holiday in Canada. The laws governing this day vary from province to province. If you would like to endorse the Remembrance Day Petition to the Government of Canada, you can do so at

www.petitiononline.com/nov11th/petition.html or contact the petition's author, Robbin MacQueen, at rmacqueen@amtelecom.net. From what I gather, this is a grass roots movement.

The speaker at our annual Sir John A Macdonald Dinner on 11 January 2007 is Dr. H.V. Nelles. He has written "a lively and opinionated little history of a very big country" called, *A Little History of Canada*, published by the Oxford University Press. I have read this book and found it true to the blurb on the dust jacket.

This is the work of a mature historian of great skill. I highly recommend it as a great read that would grace the contents of any Christmas stocking. The organizers of the dinner event—where you will hear Dr. Nelles speak—have done their best to control costs. The setting at the RMC is magnificent; please consider attending. A ticket order form is included with this newsletter (and we will be pleased to take your reservations at the 13 December Christmas party).

Finally, as one of the many benefits of KHS membership, there is our annual Awards Ceremony and Christmas Party at Fort Frontenac on Wednesday, 13 December (*see back cover*). Snack food, singing and conviviality is there for your enjoyment (and a cash bar!). All the members of Council hope you will attend. For those with travel problems, please call me at 613-542-6151.

Maurice Smith

THIS MONTH'S EVENT

WEDNESDAY, 13 DECEMBER, 7:00PM

CHRISTMAS PARTY & AWARDS CEREMONY

at the Officers' Mess, Fort Frontenac

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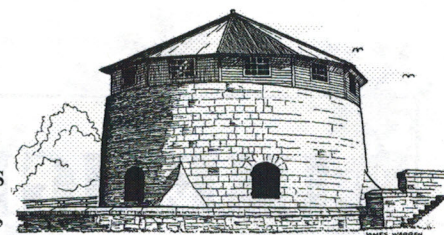
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THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ESTABLISHED 1893



Murney Tower by James Warren

Limelight is published nine times a year - September to May. Submissions should be addressed to the **Editor**, John Fielding, 613-545-5944, john.fielding3@sympatico.ca. *Limelight* is designed by 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

website www.kingstonhistoricalsociety.ca

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Your membership in the Kingston Historical Society provides you with the following benefits:

- ✿ 7 stimulating & informative lectures on regional history
- ✿ December's festive party & award ceremony
- ✿ A discount on ticket prices for the Sir John A. Macdonald Birthday Dinner in January
- ✿ The Society's annual journal *Historic Kingston* (this year's now being mailed)
- ✿ 15% discount on purchases at Novel Idea with presentation of current membership card
- ✿ 9 informative newsletters keeping you up-to-date with Society events and activities
- ✿ A discount on the price for the annual Fall Excursion to great heritage locations
- ✿ Free admission to the Murney Tower National Historic Site
- ✿ Our informative website is www.kingstonhistoricalsociety.ca

KHS is vibrant and active, thanks to the continued support of its valued members. The President and the Council are working very hard to ensure that the Society remains healthy and continues to offer a stimulating program each year. As your 2006 membership ends on 31 December, please renew at the party on 13 December or mail in your membership form and cheque. If you have misplaced your renewal form or need another for a friend, please contact Ted Huber at 613-572-1315 or email tedjhuber1@yahoo.com. Membership runs 1 Jan. to 31 Dec. 2007. Knowing that our Society's strength comes from its membership, the Council invites you to encourage friends and family to join.



Remember: as we approach the holiday season, a membership makes a great gift for anyone interested in Canadian history!

SPEAKERS' CORNER

with John Abbott

Photograph by Jennifer McKendry



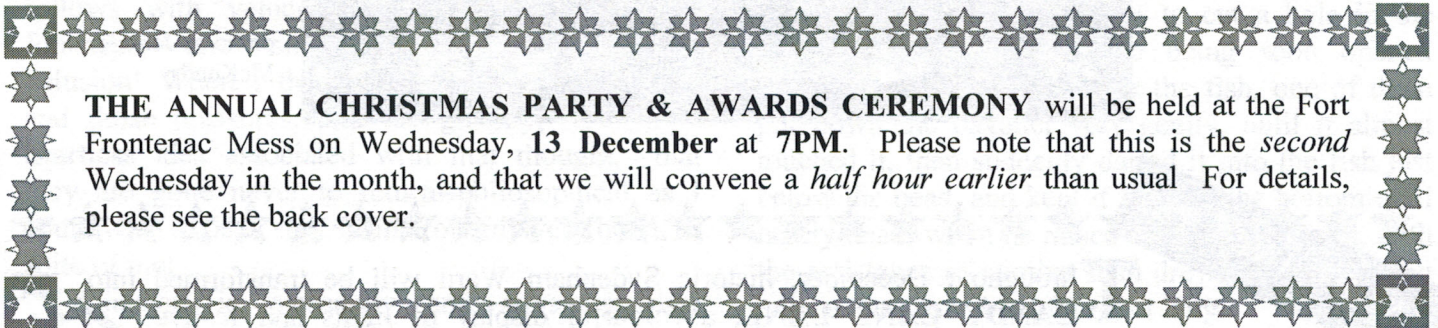
Cancer, as a recent series of articles in *The Globe and Mail* attests, is the most common and greatly feared scourge of the human body. The search for cures – indeed for “the cure” – has a long and chequered history, one whose course is not yet run. Before medicine became an organized profession with the right to license and regulate, folk remedies reigned. After government conferred the right to regulate upon the profession, remedies generated outside the system tended to be denigrated as quack cures. When a substantial body of public opinion sided with the “quacks,” however, governments were apt to appoint commissions of inquiry. In the 1930s, a Bracebridge nurse, Rene M. Caisse, compounded a remedy from four herbs, and called it Essiac. Her career and cure is the subject of *Clinic of Hope*, a biography by **Donna Ivey**, an active contributing member of the Society



(published by Dundurn Press). At the Society's November meeting, Donna drew upon previous and present research as she examined the problematic role of a former Queen's Principal, who was appointed to the Commission for the Investigation of Cancer Remedies in 1938. Her presentation, “The Unfinished Curriculum Vitae of R.C. Wallace, Principal of Queen's University, 1936-1951,” offered sympathetic insight into Principal Wallace's character and role, and raised intriguing questions about the official disposition of the records associated with the Commission's work.



On Wednesday, **17 January**, in the Kingston Public Library, we will hear from **Bob Andrews** about “A Glimpse into the Journal of 1st Lt Charles Allan Parker, Royal Marines.” More about this in next month's *Limelight*.



THE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY & AWARDS CEREMONY will be held at the Fort Frontenac Mess on Wednesday, **13 December** at **7PM**. Please note that this is the *second* Wednesday in the month, and that we will convene a *half hour earlier* than usual. For details, please see the back cover.



The Kingston Historical Society is pleased to announce that the speaker for the John A. Macdonald Dinner on Thursday, **11 January 2007** is Professor **H.V Nelles**, a scholar with penetrating insight into Canadian history.

Please note: The barrier at the RMC guardhouse will probably be closed. Drivers should be prepared to provide their names and identification (driver's license is appropriate). On the other hand, explanation that the purpose of entry is to attend the KHS dinner may be all that is required. Business suit for gentlemen and equivalent attire for ladies. Please see **the insert** included with this newsletter for details and a mail order form for dinner tickets.

HISTORIC ORGAN CELEBRATED

It's old, majestic and produces sweet sounds. The 108-year-old Casavant organ at Providence Manor has been recognized as an historical instrument by the Royal Canadian College of Organists (RCCO). Casavant is the oldest continuing name in North American organ building.

A citation was presented during a ceremony in Our Mother of Sorrows Chapel following Mass on 11 June. Sister Gayle Desarmia, Archivist, received the citation from Carol Ramer, president of the Kingston centre of the RCCO.

During her welcome, Sister Marian McCallum spoke briefly about the history of the

organ, "On 21 November 1898, this Chapel of Our Mothers of Sorrows was blessed and dedicated. On that day, our Casavant organ, which had been installed earlier that month at a cost of just under \$1,100, was played for the first time."

Co-ordinator of Pastoral Liturgy with the Sisters of Providence, Albert Dunn, was guest organist during the special Mass. He said playing the Casavant Pipe Organ is like traveling back in time, "The feeling of playing an instrument of 1898 puts one in touch not only with all those who have graced its bench before, but also with the technology of the time."



photo by Jennifer McKendry

CANDY CANE LANE

Throughout December, historic Sydenham Ward will be transformed into **CANDY CANE LANE**, a colourful display of lights and festive decorations. The holiday route will be the scene of several special events, including the annual Jingle Bell Walk, a Victorian Skating Party at Market Square, Santa at the Greenwoods Inn and the inaugural Dickens Family Weekend. Inns and residential homes along King, William, Sydenham and Earl Streets will be showcased.

KEDCO is hosting this annual event with the help of Historic Inns of Kingston and their neighbors in the Sydenham Ward. Along Candy Cane Lane, visitors can indulge their Christmas spirit by depositing, in decorated food bins along the route, non-perishable food items for the Partners In Mission Food Bank.

Look for holiday lights sparkling between 6 and 10 each night until 31 December!



PAGES FROM THE PAST...

Published in 1828, this description of Kingston by P.A. Finan in his *Journal of a Voyage to Quebec, in the Year 1825, with Recollections of Canada, during the late American War, in the Years 1812-13* tells about a strange encounter in 1812. (compiled by Jennifer McKendry)

In August, 1812, I embarked at Quebec, with my mother and family, on board a small sloop, for Montreal, on our way to Kingston, Upper Canada, to join my father who was there at the time with his regiment....

Oh Kingston! Kingston! how shall I venture to speak of you! how shall I venture to recall to mind the days that I have spent within your happy precincts! Could I but bury them in Lethe's stream, could I but hurl them into the gulf of oblivion, then would my mind be at rest and no longer experience what the recollection of them excites. But ah! no

*While pensive memory muses,
On delights too quickly flown,*

it awakens in my breast a transitory joy; but oh, how fleeting! scarce does it dart across my enraptured mind, representing scenes, delightful scenes, of pleasures that are past, never more to be enjoyed—of days that are gone, never to return—when its sting, its poignant sting, follows with velocity, in its light-trod footsteps, and snatches the fond delusion! When I think of those days and those pleasures, and the gloomy, heartless idea associated with that thought,—that they are gone never to return—philosophical as I could wish to be, a sigh steals from my very heart, in spite of me!

Kingston is pleasantly and advantageously situated on the west side of the Lake of the thousand islands, about nine miles from the lower end of Lake Ontario. A beautiful bay, about a mile broad at the town, but expanding to the dimensions of a small lake farther down, is formed by a peninsula, which extends in a southerly direction into the lake, upon the southern point of which is a battery. On the eastern side of this peninsula there is another bay much smaller than the former. Here the vessels of the Royal Navy generally lie; the dockyard, arsenal, &c. being on the eastern side of the peninsula.

These bays are very deep, sufficiently so to

admit of the first rate men-of-war lying at the wharfs, and the water is quite still, and so remarkably clear that I shall notice here the following circumstance, in order to convey some idea of it. One day in winter before the ice had become very thick, while skating upon that part of the small bay where the men-of-war lie, I was stooping down to arrange the strap on my skate, when, looking downwards, I observed something moving slowly along the bottom, and putting my head nearer the ice, I discovered it to be a large fish.

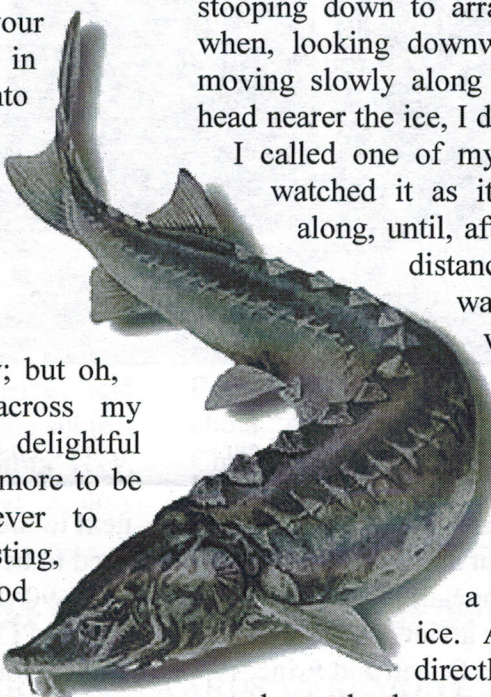
I called one of my companions, and he and I watched it as it continued to move slowly along, until, after proceeding a considerable distance, it stopped in shallow water, when my companion

went to the barrack upon the peninsula, a short distance from us, and informed some of the soldiers who came to the spot, bringing with them a long pole with a bayonet fastened to the end of it, and a hatchet to cut a hole in the ice.

A hole being soon opened directly over the fish, one of them put down the bayonet very gently, until it almost touched it, then suddenly darted it into the fish just below the head, and kept it fixed to the bottom until nearly dead, when he raised it to the hole, and, with the assistance of another man drew it out; it proved to be a sturgeon about four feet long.

Kingston was not a large town at this time, but considering its distance up the country and other local disadvantages, it was a very good one. It contained a number of very good houses, but the streets were neither paved nor lighted. It is built where the old fort Frontenac formerly stood, part of which still remains.

The public buildings are few, consisting of a small neat Protestant church, a R.C. church, gaol, barracks, &c. A printing office was established, and a newspaper published; and here was the best and most extensive classical school in all Canada.



LANDSCAPES/INSCAPES

WELLINGTON STREET AFTER MIDNIGHT: 1962

by Shirley Gibson-Langille



This is an oil I painted inside my locked car after midnight in 1962. Now don't ask what I was doing painting there at that time of night! Let's just say that I enjoy painting at all times. Anyway, I didn't have any trouble finding parking at that time!

My "midnight canvass" is a view of the south side of Wellington St between Queen and Princess Streets. It shows part of the "Kingsbury Barber-shop" at the front of the alleyway that leads to some small living quarters behind. Next to the alleyway at 201 Wellington St was "Millard's Smoke Shop," No. 199 was the door that led to the apartments above, and No. 197 was a shoe repair shop. All of these buildings were built about 1855.

It was real eerie out there so late at night. It wasn't a good place to be! Not only was it a hangout for homeless people but just up around the corner on Princess Street was the "Wine Store" and down around the corner was the old "Grand Hotel."

I was parked just below the back of the "Model Food Market," where you could regularly see people picking through the garbage for food. I even had people banging on the window and trying to get into my car. Of course, it scared me a bit but I wasn't too

worried as I only lived across the street over the "Superior Propane Office" at 207 Wellington St, next to the "Kingsbury Barbershop." This building used to be the "Crother's Biscuit Factory," dating to 1885-90. When my grandmother saw my apartment, she said I lived in a biscuit box!

My four windows faced the street. Every garbage night, I used to see an old bag-lady come and search through all the garbage-cans on the street. I used to feel sorry for her, as I figured she must have a lot of children to feed. She came all the way from Barriefield Village where she lived. Later, when she hadn't been seen for sometime, they investigated and found her dead in her house. It was crammed full of garbage but they found thousands of dollars hidden under her mattress!

But today, in 2006, it has all changed on me: 207 Wellington St is "Kelly Kennedy State Farm Insurance" and 205, recently the "Scherzo Pub," is for lease. "Serves You Right" is 203, the "Village Timekeeper" is deep inside the alleyway, "Green Door Vitamins" is 201, and "Antiques Etc." is 197.

But my painting records for us what it was like 44 years ago. *Tempus* is always *fugiting*!

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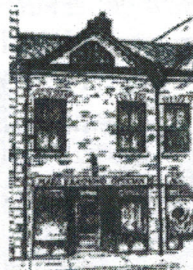
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THE ANNUAL KHS
CHRISTMAS PARTY
& AWARDS CEREMONY
WEDNESDAY, 13 DECEMBER

7:00 PM

at the Officers' Mess, Fort Frontenac

Enter off Ontario Street through the main stone arch (opposite Place d'Armes),
and park in the courtyard adjacent to the Mess.

The focus of this year's gathering will be the annual presentation of the KHS Awards to
those recognised for their service to the Society and the community.



Cover of the Wiemann & Muench Catalogue of
Holiday Goods 1905, collection Jennifer McKendry

*A receiving line
will wish us
compliments of the
season. A cash bar will be
open. At 7.15 a quartet of choristers,
anchored by Gordon Sinclair, our
Treasurer & the leader of the
Kingston Chamber Choir, will lift
their voices. At 7.40 the KHS
Awards ceremony will begin,
followed by a light buffet of
finger foods. After an interval,
those who wish to sing
Christmas songs and carols
will gather round Sandra
Sinclair at the piano.*

*Please note: As guests of the Officers'
Mess, gentlemen are required to
conform to the Mess dress-code of
jacket and tie.*

*Also: John Abbott will be pleased to
receive payment for tickets to the
Macdonald dinner (11 Jan.
2007—see insert).*

THE 7TH ANNUAL KHS DINNER TO CELEBRATE SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD'S BIRTHDAY

Guest Speaker: H.V. Nelles

Before Dr Nelles came to McMaster University's history department, the award-winning scholar was York University's Distinguished Research Professor in History. He has also taught Canadian history at Harvard University, Oxford University, Cambridge University and he was the first professor of Canadian studies in Japan. In 2004, Dr Nelles was appointed as McMaster's L.R. Wilson Professor in Canadian History.

His recent book, *A Little History of*



Canada, covers all the major political and cultural shifts that have taken place in Canada since the arrival of the Europeans and suggests that the enduring theme of Canadian history is one of transformation.

Dr Nelles won the Canadian Historical Association's prestigious Sir John A. Macdonald Prize for the best book in Canadian history for *The Art of Nation Building: Pageantry and Spectacle at Quebec's Tercentenary*

photo: Deborah McIvor

THURSDAY, 11 JANUARY 2007 6:00 PM for 7:00 PM

in the Senior Staff Mess of the Royal Military College.

Please see page 3 of December's *Limelight* for details about dress and parking.

Chef's Salad	Oven Baked Stuffed Potatoes
Creamy Vegetable Soup	Vegetables
Chanterelle Stuffed Chicken Breast with	Triple Chocolate Cheese Cake
Cardamom Sauce (or Vegetable Stir-Fry)	Coffee - Tea



Please send me _____ tickets at \$40 each for KHS members, total \$ _____

Please send me _____ tickets at \$50 each for non-members, total \$ _____

Cheques payable to the Kingston Historical Society; mail (to arrive no later than **4 January 2007**) to:

John Abbott, Programme Chair
1098 Johnson Street
Kingston, ON K7M 2N5
Information: 613-545-0311

(Or hand in to John at the KHS Christmas party on 13
Dec.— please see newsletter back cover for party details)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

Please advise us if a vegetarian plate (Vegetable Stir-Fry) is required _____