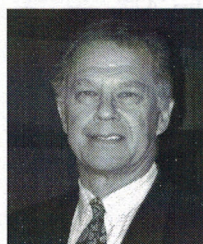
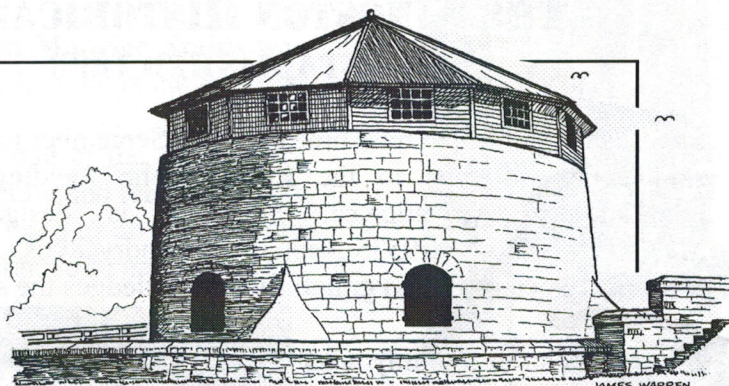


# LIMELIGHT

NEWSLETTER of the  
KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

vol 9 no 4 April 2007 ISSN 1488-5565



## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Local historical societies can play a pivotal role in cultivating an understanding and an acute awareness of the heritage, culture and traditions of a community. Perhaps one of the paramount characteristics of a local historical society is what can be called the “mix” of its members’ interests and pursuits which, in turn, brings together a wide diversity of individuals – from amateur historian, those simply interested in history to professional historians. And this, indeed, stimulates involvement in such tasks as paper presentations, written essays, history-oriented tours, commemorations, museum operations, collection of primary resources, traditional research, historical preservation and simple traditional discussions. Given that local societies usually touch upon innumerable facets of a community’s socio-cultural components the upshot is usually a vibrant group of people who foster an appreciation and sense of history in the community.

I am of the view that the Kingston Historical

Society has accomplished this with varying degrees of success during its 114-year history. The intellectual and cultural atmosphere that the Society has created in Kingston certainly is largely free of intellectual strait jackets and doubtless has commanded respect from the general population in the city.

My first month in the Society’s president’s chair has had its challenges. Al Cohoe, one of the Society’s unswerving supporters and past president (1976-77), passed away in early March. I have extended condolences to the family on behalf of the Society. As well, a prominent Canadian historian with Kingston roots, Sydney Wise, died on 8 March in Ottawa. He taught history at RMC and Queen’s University before moving to Ottawa in 1966. Past president, Bill Fittell, has kindly written an article (p. 3) of appreciation of the two gentlemen.

*Edward Grenda*

***THIS MONTH’S TALK (after a KHS  
Special General Meeting at 7:30PM ~ see p. 2)***

**WEDNESDAY, 18 APRIL**

**“STUDENT MEMORIES OF QUEEN’S IN THE 1880s”**

**by Reverend Bruce Cossar**

**Wilson Room, Kingston Public Library, Johnson @ Bagot**

refreshments

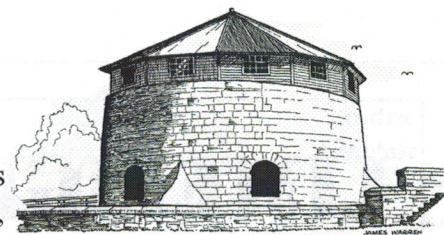
all welcome

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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](mailto:john.fielding3@sympatico.ca). *Limelight* is designed by 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

website [www.kingstonhistoricalsociety.ca](http://www.kingstonhistoricalsociety.ca)

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## KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, **18 April 2007** at 7:30PM in the Kingston Frontenac Public Library



1. Call to Order.
2. Proposed Constitutional and By-Law Amendments:
  - i. CONSTITUTION, Section III, paragraph 2 *to read*: Members of the Council, with the exception of the Past-President and the appointed Councillors, are to be elected annually by the membership of the Society.
  - ii. BY-LAW, Section III, paragraph 5 *to be added*: Each member shall be eligible for nomination for election to any of the elected positions of the Council.
  - iii. BY-LAW, Section III, paragraph 6 *to be added*: Each member may nominate any other member for election to Council membership. Each nomination shall be submitted to the Nominating Committee, in writing, not later than fourteen days prior to the date scheduled for the next Annual General meeting. Normally, the nominator will have received prior agreement from the nominee that the nomination be submitted.
  - iv. BY-LAW, Section VIII, paragraph 2, second sentence *to read*: It is the duty of the Nominating Committee to present to the Annual General Meeting at least one nomination for each of the four elected executive officer and seven elected Councilor positions of the Council. In addition, each valid nomination submitted under the provisions of BY-LAW, Section III, paragraph 6 shall be presented.
3. Adjournment. (The regular monthly presentation follows the Special General Meeting.)



## THEY SERVED WITH DIGNITY AND DISTINCTION

*Our Society lost two good friends and stalwart supporters of Kingston and Canadian heritage within one week last month.*

by Bill Fittsell



**ALLAN J. COHOE**, 95, the 25<sup>th</sup> president of KHS, died 3 March, in Kingston. Allan, who completed a 43-year Royal Bank career in Kingston, served as president in 1976-77, following the late Bogart Trumpour and preceding Neil A. Patterson. As

President of the KHS Allan, noting the formation of a vigorous local branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society and an active Frontenac Heritage Foundation, urged the KHS to redirect its energies and "concentrate on developing even better research and publication of the unexamined records of local history."

True to his profession, in 1981, he presented a meticulously researched and written paper on "Early Banking in Upper Canada." Modest to a fault and ever the gentleman, he never discussed his Second World War service that earned him six medals and a certificate from Field Marshal R.L. Montgomery for "outstanding good service" and "great devotion to duty." He was quite content to let his late wife, Margaret (Peggy) Cohoe take the lead in KHS with numerous papers, as he did quiet service with the Masons, Shriners, Kinsmen Senators and St. Lawrence College.

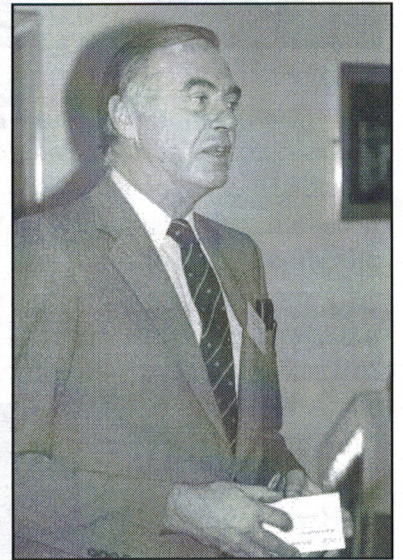
In the eyes of his daughter, Fran Tymchyshen, her father was "steadfast, true, gentle and kind". Allan Cohoe was a man who loved to ski, to sing, to cook and to give. Years ago, Allan donated his father's woodworking tools to the MacLachlan Woodworking Museum and, now his son, Albert, is arranging to donate his papers and books to our Society. Allan Cohoe was a generous supporter of the Kingston Historical society whose contribution was much appreciated. Rest easy, good and faithful servant.

**SYDNEY F. WISE**, 82, a retired professor and former KHS member, died at his Ottawa home on 8 March.

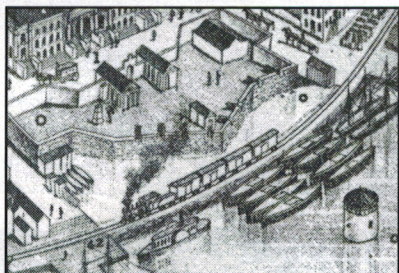
Sid Wise started his 16-year residency in Kingston as "a demonstrator of history" at Royal Military College of Canada and left as a professor of history at Queen's University. In the interim, he

presented an illuminating paper on "The Rise of (Attorney General) Christopher Hageman," (1965) He moved to Ottawa where he served as chief historian of the department of national defence and as professor of history at Carleton University but never forgot the Limestone City. In 1973, he returned for the city's tercentenary to deliver the keynote address at the Ontario Historical Society's AGM. The topic was "A Personal View of Kingston," an insightful paper that should be required reading for any newcomer, novelist or history student. A man of broad interests, he co-authored with Douglas Fisher, *Canada's Sporting Heroes, Their Lives and Times* in 1974. In 1983, he returned to Kingston as speaker to help KHS and OHS mark the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Rideau Canal.

A past president of the Canadian Historical Society, Prof. Wise left a legacy, if not an epitaph with this statement about the important values derived from the preservation of our visible heritage: "...to fight such battles requires a good deal of courage as well as an ability to get the message across and a willingness to get into the political arenas where decisions are made."

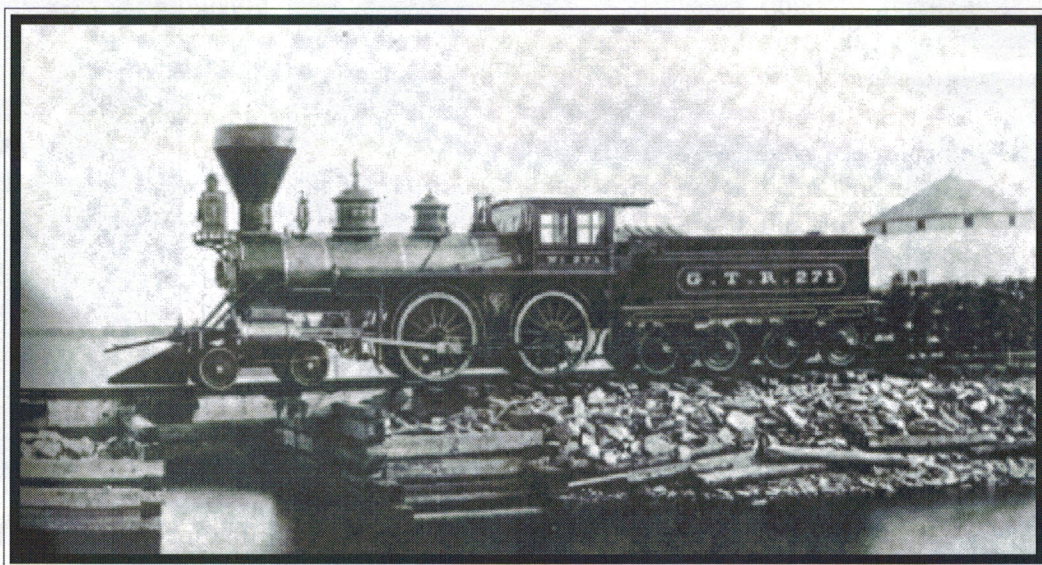






# On the 'Track' of an Early Photograph Showing G.T.R. Train # 271

by George Dillon and David Page



1873

illustrated in  
*To Preserve &  
Defend*, ed. G.  
Tulchinsky  
(1976), pl. 24

During the city's preparations in late October 2006 for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of rail travel on the Grand Trunk Railroad between Toronto and Montreal, several committee members remembered seeing a picture of a 19th-century locomotive parked on a track built in the water south of the Market Battery (*above*). The photograph was reproduced in the form of a postcard about 20 years ago. This is our account of the slightly maddening search for details associated with locomotive G.T.R. 271.

The book, *Constructed in Kingston*, by McQueen & Thomson indicates that G.T.R. 271, a 4-4-0, was one of a lot of 12 "American-style" locomotives ordered by the Grand Trunk from Kingston. This model had several new features: the pivoted front truck that allowed the engine to move around much sharper curves; the enclosed cab that gave protection to the engineer and fireman in inclement weather; and the large five to six feet diameter driving wheels. The funnel-

shaped smoke stack which indicated that the engine burned wood had a screen to stop cinders from escaping and setting fire to the surrounding countryside. Of the two domes on top of the boiler, the larger was the steam dome with a safety valve. The smaller dome contained sand which was used to help traction. Engines at this time had a very prominent "cow catcher". The total range of this engine with a full load of cordwood was about 25 miles. Conversion to coal as the main fuel took place in the late 1870s and early '80s.

David Page, an ex-CPR locomotive maintenance employee, and I had numerous discussions about the gauge of this new locomotive. The G.T.R. had been built to what was called "provincial gauge", which was 5'6". By the late 1860s, it was evident that the United States had accepted 4' 8 1/2" as the standard gauge as originally set by the British government. If the Grand Trunk wanted to interchange



its freight cars with the United States it was going to have to convert. The question was to what gauge was this brand new locomotive built? After much researching, we concluded that GTR Engine 271 was built to the standard gauge. Colin Churcher, on his webpage [www.railways.incanada.net](http://www.railways.incanada.net), states that the Grand Trunk converted its gauge between Stratford and Montreal, 421 miles of main line, 60 miles of siding, on the 3 and 4 October 1873, all within a 24-hour period. This is confirmed in an article, "Adieu to Broad Gauge" in the *British Daily Whig*, 3 October 1873. It is rather interesting to note that the *Whig* reporter says the Grand Trunk converted to "narrow gauge," given that a narrow gauge is actually anything less than 4 feet, 8½ inches in width.

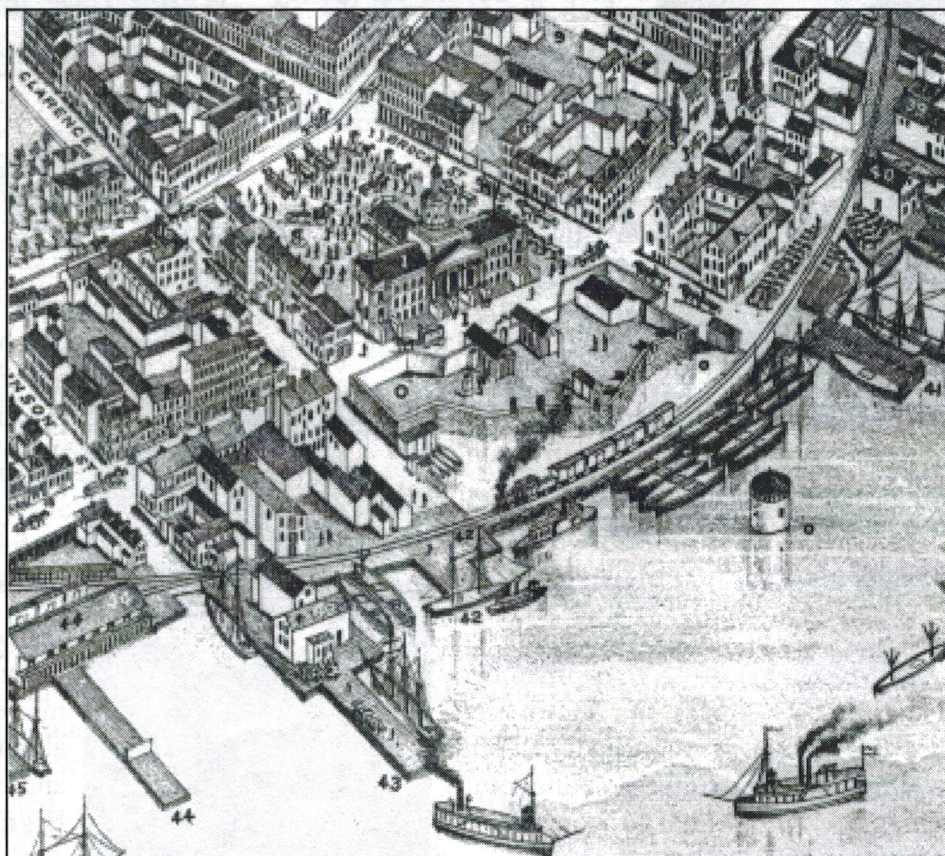
Wilkins in *Haliburton by Rail*, 1992, states that gangs of 10 track layers were responsible for converting every 2½ miles of track. Local conversion commenced at 1PM shortly after the last Montreal-bound broad gauge train had passed Kingston. Wilkins states that for this conversion the Grand Trunk ordered 300 new locomotives. Engine 271 was one of a batch of 12 new engines ordered from Kingston. These new locomotives could pull heavier loads and were less susceptible to break down.

Engine 271 survived with some reconstruction and number changing until it was scrapped in October 1908. It was probably upgraded in the 1880s or '90s with a coal-burning fire box, Westinghouse air brakes and the Janney automatic coupler, all requirements for mainline North American railroads.

The 1875 Brosius birds-eye view of Kingston (right) shows the water gap between the edge of the Market Battery and the GTR embankment causeway, built 1857-59 and connecting with land

acquired in 1856 by the Grand Trunk. Bounded by the waterfront, Ontario, Johnson and William Streets, this land was the site of the "Kingston Branch Station, G.T. Railway" (sometimes known as the Hanley Station, now a restaurant on Ontario at Johnson Streets). Our educated guess is that the dead water space between the shore and train embankment was filled in with rubble when the Market Battery was demolished in the 1880s. Bennett & McCuaig, *In Search of the K&P* (1981), state that the rival stone train station of the Kingston & Pembroke Railway (now the Tourist Bureau across from City Hall) was erected in 1885. At the same time, the K&P built its small rail yard on the site of what had been the Market Battery. Tradition tells us that the two guard houses at the entrance to RMC were built from stones salvaged from the Market Battery.

The CPR abandoned its yard in front of City Hall in 1966 and the CN, successor to the Grand Trunk, removed its track in the early 1970s.





## SPEAKERS' CORNER

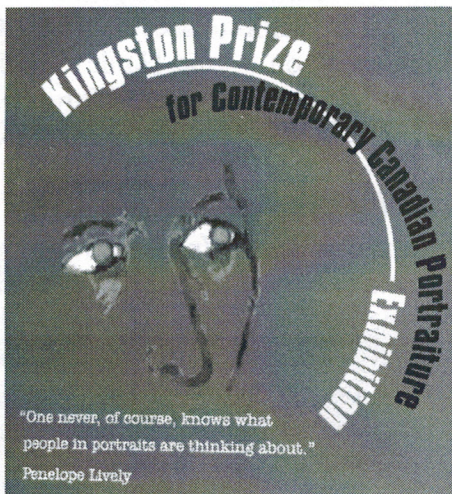
with Heather Home  
photographs by Jennifer McKendry



March's meeting was a joint venture between the Kingston Historical Society and the Kingston Arts Council, and functioned as a fundraiser for the Kingston Prize in Portraiture. The evening got underway with Julian Brown of the Arts Council explaining the importance and history of the Kingston Prize which was established in 2005 as a national portrait competition meant to encourage contemporary artistic representations of Canadians by Canadians.

Introductions aside, **Brian Osborne**, in his usual good humour and intellect, launched into his talk centred on the nature of the gaze, discussing the way in which the viewer looks at and interprets visual representation. Discussing more than just portraiture, Osborne asked the audience to contemplate the role of artistic representation in society: whether early visual representations of people and place are to be looked at as

mere documentary evidence, as social commentary, or indeed, as both. Using Parker's journal as an example, he went on to talk about the ability of text and language to provide visual images in the mind of the reader. Given the extract used—of Parker describing the streets of Kingston—I think members of the Society are in for a rare treat once this journal is published. Osborne provided an intriguing conceptual framework with which to examine the portraits of City Hall.



restoration techniques. In particular note is the portrait of Sir John A. Macdonald which has received treatment on at least six different occasions and has proved to be a valuable tool in understanding the evolution of the practice. Grey went on to describe some of the various techniques she herself has employed on a number of the portraits,

as well as the philosophy that drives her practice, that of intervening as little as possible, to never do something that cannot be easily undone.

After Ms. Grey's talk there were three docents situated throughout City Hall to discuss three mayoral portraits. **Dorothy Farr** (left) of the Agnes Etherington Art Centre provided some interesting background information about John Counter, Kingston's first, and most recurrent, Mayor. **Margaret Bignell** from Queen's University Archives discussed her work in the





conservation of the portrait of Mayor McCammon and **Maurice Smith** was positioned at the portrait of Mayor John Gaskin, with whom he is familiar due to Gaskin's close ties to the shipping industry.

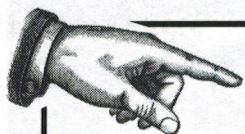
The event was a wonderful success in large part due to the behind-the-scenes efforts of **John Abbott** in the meeting's conception and realization. As my first official event as Programme Chair, I didn't have to do much more than show up, run the projector and enjoy the discussion. John has served the Society extremely well in the past years, creating an innovative and interesting programme. I hope to be able to follow his precedent.

*right:* John A. Macdonald, restored by Gray & Bignell, looked approvingly at the gathering; the handsome gold-leaf frames on the city hall portraits were praised by Gray.



*left:* Marjory Simmons was present to sign her recent book on the portraits in the City Hall collection.

*right:* Margaret Hughes, President of the Kingston Arts Council, welcomed members of KHS to the co-sponsored event.



What sort of place was Queen's College 120 years ago? Who were the profs? What facilities did they have? What did students do apart from their school work? Did they have any college songs? Following a Special General Meeting (see p. 2) at 7:30PM on Wednesday, **18 April** in the library, **Reverend Bruce Cossar** will take us back to that era and answer such questions by introducing us to a man who first enrolled in the College in 1884.

The Marine Museum of the Great Lakes, 55 Ontario Street, presents **THE FIRST ANNUAL DOCKSIDE MARINE SALE** on Saturday, **5 May**. Everything for the sailor, cruiser, paddler, swimmer and diver will be available at bargain rates. Hours: 9AM. to 4PM For more information, please phone Ann 613-542-2261.





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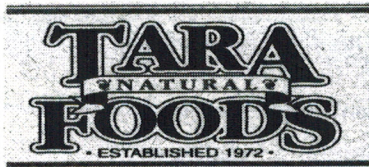
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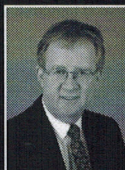
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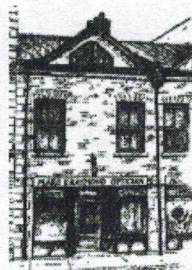
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