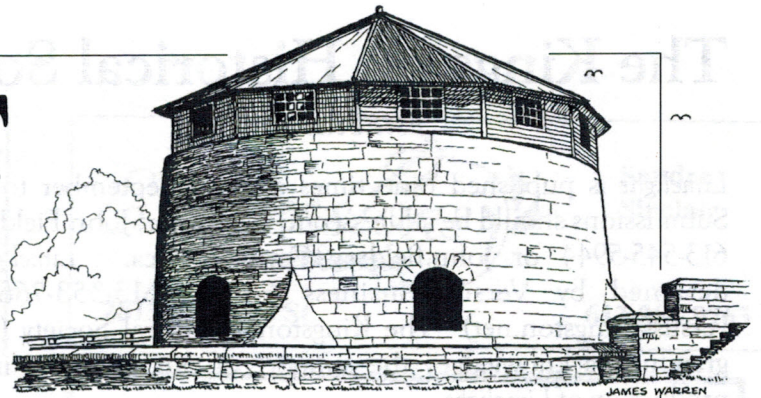


LIMELIGHT

Newsletter of the
Kingston Historical Society

vol 10 no 1 January 2008 ISSN 1488-5565



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As the Society enters its 115th year of operations, its future prospects, insofar as I am concerned, appear to be bright and promising. From the recent designation of the Murney Tower as a part of a World Heritage Site where the Society's museum is located, to the well-established public commemoration of Sir John A. Macdonald's birth and death, to the publication of history books, to the presentation of high quality lectures, the Society continues to thrive and serves as Kingston's impressive memory bank. It is for this reason that my Council colleagues and I are enormously grateful for the active and enduring support we receive from the Society's membership year after year.

Congratulations are in order for John Pike and Brian Osborne who, at the Society's Christmas Party, received the Society's highest award for their innumerable contributions to the preservation and dissemination of Kingston's heritage and their unstinting dedication to the Society. It goes without saying the awards are richly deserved.

Clearly, much of the Society's work takes place behind the scenes by Council members. This work requires time, energy and commitment which, on many occasions, comes close to being a second job for those directly involved. I would like to take this opportunity to salute and thank my Council colleagues in this connection.



Indeed, it was a pleasure personally to meet many Society members at the recent Christmas Party at Fort Frontenac. Your kind comments and questions were much appreciated. My colleagues and I hope to see many of you again at the January 11th Sir John A. Commemorative Dinner at the Royal Military College. Doubtless these are impressive ways to conclude and to begin the Society's new year.

Edward R. Grenada

THIS MONTH'S MEETING

Wednesday, 16 JANUARY, 7:30PM

Maurice D. Smith

Past President and Curator Emeritus

**The Intriguing Early History of RMC's
"Stone Frigate" and some of the
Illustrious People who conceived and built it.**

Wilson Room, Kingston Public Library, Johnson St. at Bagot

Refreshments All Welcome

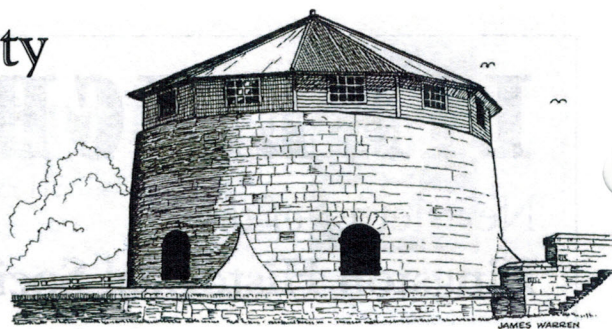
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The Kingston Historical Society

established 1893

Limelight is published nine times a year - September to May. Submissions should be addressed to the Editor, John Fielding at 613-545-5944 or john.fielding3@sympatico.ca. *Limelight* is designed by Versus Business Forms (613-353-7667 or versus@kingston.net) The Kingston Historical Society (KHS) gratefully acknowledges the support of our sponsors in the production of *Limelight*.



Murney Tower by James Warren

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 Street at Bagot Street. 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! Membership rates are \$40 individual, \$50 family, \$50 institutional or \$25 student. Memberships include *Historic Kingston*, published annually by The Kingston Historical Society.

Kingston Historical Society

Box 54, Kingston, ON K7L 4V6
www.kingstonhistoricalsociety.ca

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Edward Grenda, *President*
Maurice Smith, *Past President*
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Paul Banfield	Ted Huber
Ellie Deir	Douglas Petty
Warren Everett	David St Onge
John Fielding	Carol White

Important Announcement

The Kingston Historical Society will hold its Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, 20 February 2008, 7:30 PM in the Wilson Room of the Kingston Public Library.

The following changes were made in the Constitution at the 2007 AGM and should be taken into account at the 2008 AGM.

1. 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."
2. 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."
3. 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."
4. 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."

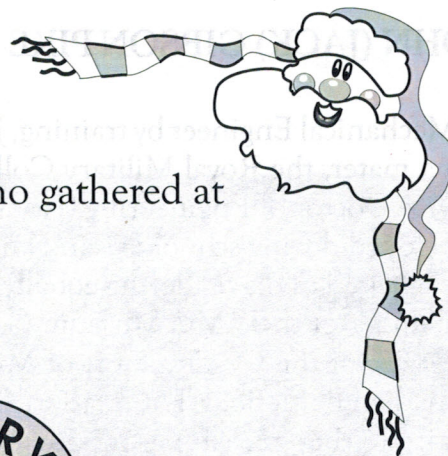
From the Editor

Last month I credited Jennifer McKendry with photographs of the two 1934 Davis Leather factories. Jennifer, of course, was not around in 1934 to take those photos but she was kind enough to provide these images from her collection. They were published in 1934, *The Davis Family and the Leather Industry 1834-1934* by B.P. Davis and C.L. Davis.

John Fielding

Christmas Party 2007

Christmas was celebrated early for KHS members who gathered at Fort Frontenac Officer's Mess on December 6th.



We enjoyed the singing of Christmas carols by Gordon Sinclair and the other members of his quartet from the Kingston Chamber Choir.



We listened as the KHS Awards of Recognition were presented to three very deserving individuals.



And we chatted, relaxed, and enjoyed the traditional appetizers.



JOHN (JACK) GIBSON PIKE

A Mechanical Engineer by training, Jack gave long and faithful service as a professor of that discipline to his alma mater, the Royal Military College of Canada, service recognized by RMC with the granting of the degree Doctor of Engineering (Honoris Causa) in 2003. Jack's longstanding interest in history, an interest developed during schooldays in Hamilton, Ontario, and honed by the unique education gained at RMC, has resulted in his rendering equally strong leadership in numerous heritage related activities. He has been a member of the RMC Museum Committee since 1960 and its chairman since 1973. He was president, 1994-97, of the Organization of Military Museums of Canada and is currently a board member of the Canadian Battlefields Foundation. He chaired the parish group which managed and raised the funds for the restoration of St. James' Anglican Church, here in Kingston. Jack's service has also had significant impact on the affairs of the Kingston Historical Society. He served for fifteen years as a member of Council and for fourteen of those years as chair of the Awards Committee. His advice on matters organizational, constitutional and historical will surely continue to be sought and given. The Kingston Historical Society is honoured to bestow a 2007 Kingston Historical Society Award upon Dr. Jack Pike.



Jack Pike received his award from the President Edward Grenda and Awards Committee Chair Robert Andrews.

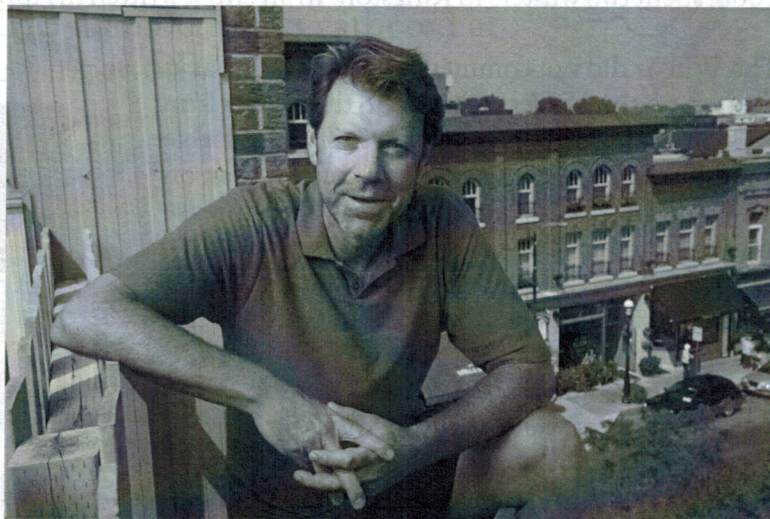
Kingston Historical Society 2007 Award Citations

BRIAN STUART OSBORNE

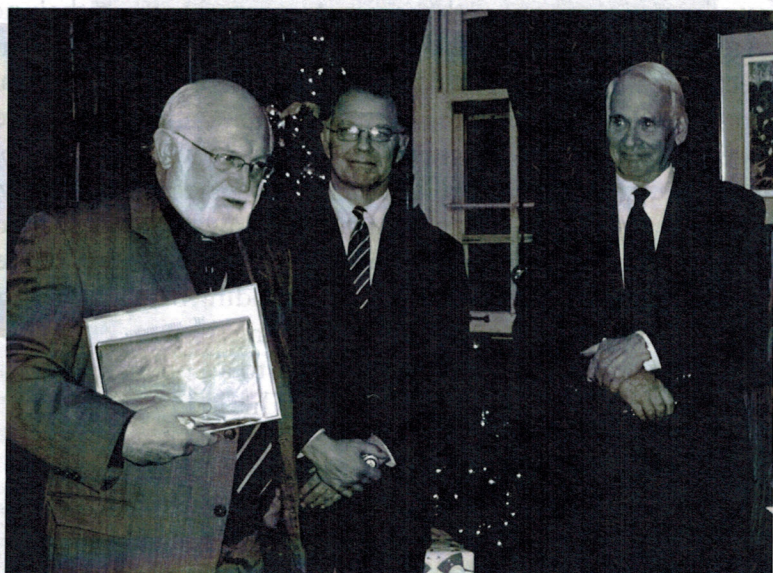
Any task undertaken by Brian Osborne receives his unreserved energy and commitment. These traits along with his wide respect and honours during his career as a professor of geography at Queen's University. These characterize the Champlain Society, as Vice-president of the Royal Canadian Geographical Society, as president of the Ontario agencies, including Canada Post, the National Capital Commission and Parks Canada. Our own Society has also benefited from Brian's stimulating leadership and infectious enthusiasm. Two of his publications, "Kingston: Building on a Foundation" and "The Presbyterian Church, Kingston" provide important records of the Kingston scene. Very recently, it was through his efforts that the Society was extended to include the Kingston Fortifications. The Kingston Historical Society is most honoured to acknowledge his heritage.

KIM DONOVAN

Physical surroundings play a major role in defining the ambiance and character of a community. Through the thoughtful and innovative restoration of heritage buildings, Kim Donovan and his company, Kincore Holdings Limited, have contributed very significantly to both the preservation and the enhancement of downtown Kingston's unique character and charm. Their approach to urban revitalization constitutes a benchmark example of how the varied demands of historic preservation, on one hand, and modern construction materials and techniques on the other, can be brought together to achieve pleasing surroundings and commercial viability. The Kincore projects along Brock Street and in the vicinity of the Market Square provide an intriguing mixture of open walkways and courtyards, classical facades and modern interiors within which a healthy combination of retail, commercial and residential uses co-exist. Kincore initiatives do, indeed, create "spaces for life". The Kingston Historical Society is pleased to honour an individual who is making a significant and lasting impact on the material history and social character of the Kingston community.



Kim Donovan was unable to attend the Christmas Party to receive his well deserved award but we hope to officially present it at a future appropriate occasion.



Award winner Brian Osborne with President Edward Grenda and Awards Committee Chair Robert Andrews.

ability to "think outside the box" have rightly earned
cs have similarly marked his service as an editor for
istorical Society and as a consultant to government
experienced development and growth as a result of

"th the late Donald Swainson) and the award winning "The Rock and the Sword: A History of St. Andrew's
h's vision and persistence that the designation of the Rideau Canal as a UNESCO World Heritage site was finally
and reward the significant contributions of Dr. Brian Osborne to the recording and understanding of our local

"A Troublesome Berth"

Royal Marine Lieutenant Charles Allan Parker, whose Journal, "A Troublesome Berth", the Society will publish in 2008, spent two winters in Kingston. In an entry, written in April 1840, he wrote about the winter of 1839-40:

The Winter did not commence so early this year as the last, on the 15 December 1838 the ice was firm enough for sleighs, and this winter it was passable for the first time on the last day of the year on which day I crossed. The frost was then intense and the second day after taking, it was strong enough for sleighs; So cold was it that the ice did not freeze what is called glare ice, but had all over it a crustation of hoar frost like innumerable tiny Cockle shells, and so white as to resemble snow; this did not prevent skating though it much impeded the velocity. It was fourteen years Since I had worn skais, and that only once in Brathay bay, and though then my progress as a skaiter was not very successful, yet this year I determined to try once more. I was therefore one of the first to put on skais and launched myself with a determined resolution not to mind a fall; my astonishment was not a little, when I found myself going on at a tolerable rate not even falling nor liable to fall. In short I found at once I could skait and that not badly; Now it was difficult to make others believe that I could not or was aware I could not skait before, at last some others taking my advice to make a good push at first and never fear a tumble found out I was right, for they skaited as well as I did, to their no Small astonishment: others dreading a tumble came on the ice as if treading upon eggs, and never went a foot without measuring their length; and indeed it was a laughable spectacle to see them frequently coming down by the run, and there laying rubbing the wounded part. The ice shortened the distance to town in general one half, and from the Dockyard to the Bank of upper Canada by two thirds. My evenings were mostly spent there, when I could get away from the duties of the yard which detained me there very much, though the distance to the bank was no more than five hundred yards. The ice bridge was therefore much longed for by me as it so much facilitated my going to and from thence. The ice has a phenomenon, which is not generally known in England where it freezes but for a few inches, if even over more than three. It is this: After the ice has frozen to some thickness the ice expanding beneath has no vent, this causes a crack and general rising of the ice, which is accompanied by a noise resembling thunder. I can only liken it in imagination to the expiring groan of some huge Leviathan, or the noise that is said to accompany an earthquake. So loud indeed is frequently this noise as to deprive a person unacquainted with it of his breath, and when the crack takes place near, the Sound is not unlike the sharp report of a Small Cannon. ...



Ice skating on the frozen rivers and lakes of Canada was very popular throughout the nineteenth century. This illustration shows the style of the 1890's.

To be continued in next month's Limelight

The Kingston Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society will meet in the Wilson Room of the Kingston Frontenac Public Library, 130 Johnson St., Saturday, January 19, 2008 at 10:00 a.m.

Dr. Richard Bailey from Queen's University Department of History will speak and his presentation is entitled: Stand in Their Moccasins: Bishop George Holmes of Athabasca

Saturday, February 16, 2008 at 10:00 a.m.

Stephanie Stone and Jane Miller, branch members, will speak about their recent research in London, England.

Getting Lost in London, But Finding Your Ancestors Anyway

Visitors welcome

For more information contact: Margaret MacDermaid, Publicity, OGS Kingston Branch, 613 373-2666 dmacdermaid@sympatico.ca

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Established 1865

SPEAKERS' CORNER

with Heather Home



In this month's Speakers Corner some additions, omissions and clarifications:

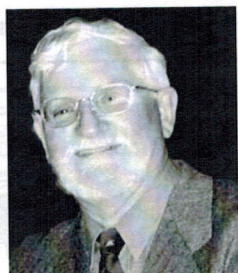
Last month I was so enthralled in the talk that Dave St. Onge gave the membership about Penitentiary Guard Henry Traill, that I wasn't taking accurate notes and made a few errors in my recounting of the story. In the interest of accuracy here are the corrections: Thomas Traill was a retired military officer, not a law enforcement officer; Liliac Maclean was the sister of Dr. Maclean, not his daughter; and John Moodie was the Sheriff of Hastings (Belleville) not Leeds (Brockville)

I wish to extend my congratulations to Dorothy Farr, our guest-speaker at September's meeting, for being the recipient of the Ontario Association of Art Galleries (OAAG) writing award for "Book by a Single Author" for her book "An Artist after All: Daniel Fowler in Canada", published by Agnes Etherington Art Centre in 2006. The jury praised her work as "important scholarly research on a little-known Canadian artist that situates the artist's work in a rich fabric of biography, history and society." This is a prestigious and well-deserved award, and I am glad that the membership had the opportunity to hear about this topic.

Thank you to everyone who attended the Christmas party. It was lovely to take the time to enjoy each other's company in the beautiful surroundings of the Fort Frontenac Officer's Mess. A special thank-you to Gordon Sinclair and the other members of his quartet from the Kingston Chamber Choir for treating us to some Christmas carols.

There's still time to get your tickets for the Sir John A. Macdonald dinner on January 11, 2007. The event will take place at the Senior Staff Mess at RMC (parking for the event will be on the parade square). Our speaker for the evening will be Richard Gwyn, author of the new biography on Macdonald, *John A: The Man Who Made Us*. It is sure to be an entertaining and enlightening program.

I look forward to seeing all the membership at our AGM in February. Until then I would like to wish the best in 2008.



The guest speaker for the KHS regular January meeting is our own Past President Maurice Smith who will talk about the Early History of "Stone Frigate" on the campus of RMC.