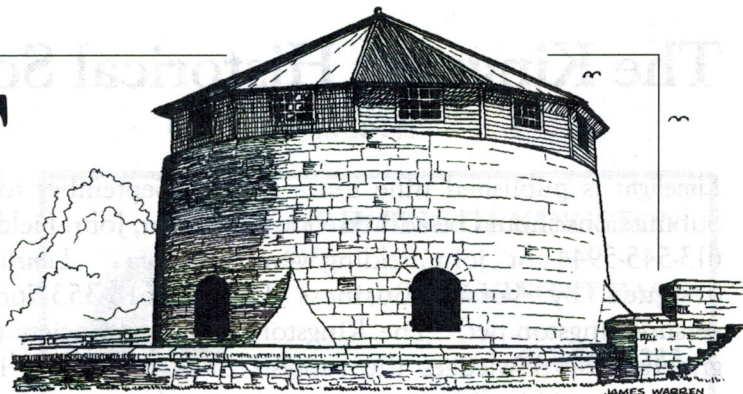


# LIMELIGHT

Newsletter of the  
Kingston Historical Society

vol 10 no 5 May 2008 ISSN 1488-5565



## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

**T**he discussion I find engaging and highly controversial is the wide gulf that obtains between popular history and academic (or professional) history. I have never considered myself an enthusiastic supporter of popular history because of its inordinate attention on details, largely of dubious relevance and its reliance on techniques best left to the novelist. Much of this does not make for a sound and accurate history. But as I become older, I am not quite so sure.

Allow me to focus briefly on two of Canada's foremost popular historians Pierre Berton and Peter Newman. Berton's books on the construction of the CPR across Canada generated such a public response that these two books became spectacular bestsellers. They were followed by bestsellers on War of 1812, the Klondike, Vimy Ridge, and the Arctic. Berton's writings convey an unmistakable impression that Canadian history is exciting and engagingly dramatic. Academic historians counter that Berton's methods depend on the way he could tell a compelling story which tends to downplay accuracy. Berton responded to his critics by asserting that academic historians were incapable of capturing a wide audience.

In his work, Peter Newman has focused on the Hudson's Bay Company, the Bronfmans and the Canadian Establishment.

Academic historians have been hypercritical of Newman's work claiming he has unnecessarily popularized his selected subjects, the over-

bloated prose, and the use of the imaginative techniques of novelists. Responding to his critics, Newman argued that his methods "made history interesting" and that history is too important to be left to academic historians whose contributions he styled as "boring pendants".

The works of popular historians can serve as rough and ready introductions or even spur an interest in any area of Canadian history. This is where the works of popular historians have a value that overshadows many of the strictures that have been persistently leveled at it.



*Edward R. Grenda*

## THIS MONTH'S MEETING

Wednesday, 21 MAY, 7:30PM

**"Lord Stanley and Sir John A. Macdonald:  
A long and dear friendship"**

Jason Wilson and Kevin Shea

(co-authors of *Lord Stanley, The Man Behind the Cup*  
and members of the Society for International Hockey Research)

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

Refreshments All Welcome

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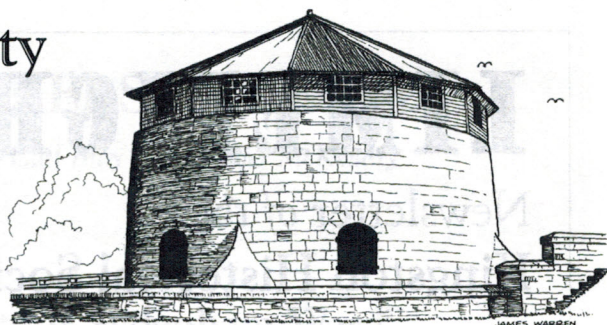
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# The Kingston Historical Society

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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Warren Everett	Carol White

The KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY invites you to an event that combines commemoration, history, and conviviality in a special outdoor setting.

Please join us on Friday, 6 June at 1:30 p.m. in Kingston's Cataraqui Cemetery to remember Canada's first Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, who died on 6 June 1891.

This annual commemorative ceremony features members of the Fort Henry Guard, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, local schools, Bellevue House staff in period dress, as well as many dignitaries and representatives of local organizations who will be laying wreathes at the grave. The guest speaker for this, the 117th graveside ceremony commemorating the death of Sir John A. Macdonald will be Mr. Roy MacSkimming, who is a well known Canadian author, journalist and poet. In 1969 he co-founded New Press in Toronto where he has published over 120 titles, principally on Canadian political, social and cultural issues. In 1974, MacSkimming became books editor, literary columnist and publishing reporter at The Toronto Star. He has also worked with the Canada Council for the Arts and the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee. The author of a number of critically praised novels his most recent non-fiction work, *The Perilous Trade: Publishing Canada's Writers*, grew out of his career in and around Canadian book publishing. He has also written two books on hockey, including *Cold War: The Amazing Canada-Soviet Hockey Series of 1972*.

Mr. MacSkimming has recently authored the novel, *Macdonald*, which recreates the final days of Canada's founding genius, Sir John A. Macdonald. Peter C. Newman calls it "a singularly well-crafted novel that deserves top place among the books on Canadian history that matter." Nino Ricci writes, "Roy MacSkimming not only brings Macdonald to life, he brings him into our hearts."

Before and after the ceremony, all visitors are welcome to tour the historic and picturesque Cataraqui Cemetery (972 Purdy Mills Road, off Counter Street). Refreshments will be served in the outdoor chapel following the ceremony. We look forward to seeing you, your family, and your organization or group.

NOTE: in case of severe weather conditions, the event will take place in Christ Church Parish Centre, 990 Sydenham Road (parking available).

Alan MacLachlan - Sir John A. Macdonald Commemoration Committee



## IN MEMORIAM

### ALEXANDER (SANDY) GRANT MACLACHLAN (1924-2008)

Kingston's gentle diminutive giant has left us and we're the poorer for it. Alexander (Sandy) Grant MacLachlan left us during the early hours of April 15, 2008 in Toronto, many miles from his beloved Kingston. A veritable human dynamic, Sandy spanned the gamut of activities from the military, the businessworld, the Scouting movement to history and heritage preservation. His contributions to the community at large were many. He was also a Life Member of the Kingston Historical Society.

Except for a fifteen year absence in his youth, Sandy was a lifelong Kingstonian. Born in Kingston on August 12, 1924, Sandy was the son of Grant and Sara MacLachlan and was educated in Ottawa and Kingston schools.

Sandy saw action with the Canadian Navy during the tail end of World War II. He served as a radar officer on North Atlantic convoys aboard the HMCS Huron. Following his war service, Sandy earned a degree in Electrical Engineering at Queen's University. Interestingly, while at Queen's, Sandy was the pipe major of the Queen's Pipe Band. This intense involvement with the bag pipes was to continue until the end of his life.

For over thirty years, Sandy was a lumber dealer in Kingston operating the MacLachlan Lumber Company. As a Centennial project in 1967, Sandy secured a log house in North Gower, Ontario, disassembled it and brought it to Kingston to be erected on the company lumber yard on Princess Street. This reassembled house eventually became the unique MacLachlan Woodworking Museum. It represented an interpretative history of wood, the innumerable uses of and the history of woodworking tools and associated artifacts.

Following the cessation of operations of the company in the early 1980's, the movement of the Museum from the downtime site to Grass Creek Park took place. This endeavour was successfully brought about by Sandy's patient efforts and the active support of the local heritage community.

Sandy's involvement with the Museum sparked an interest in architectural preservation. He joined the Frontenac Heritage Foundation. During the late 1970's, Sandy was project chair for the restoration of the former Sir John A. Macdonald house on Rideau Street.

Sandy had an impressive Scouting career in Kingston. From the 1950's to the 1970's, Sandy served on the Kingston District Scouting Council as well as countless local Scouting committees.

Sandy found time to serve on boards and committees of the Grenville Park Association, St. Margaret's United Church, HMCS Huron and HMCS Cataragui Association and the Clan Lachlan Society.

Sandy was enormously proud of the MacLachlan Woodworking Museum. It was his creation and idea and enduring legacy to Kingston and the Canadian woodworking heritage. During the early stages, Sandy painstakingly developed the Museum piece by piece through gifts and numerous auction sales forays. During the past nine years, Sandy served as Vice Chair of the Museum's Committee. His contributions were always sound and helpful.

As Chair of the Committee during the same period, I had the pleasure to work with Sandy almost on a daily basis. We travelled many miles together to farms north of Kingston to check into the possible contributions. As a result of Sandy's vision and efforts the City of Kingston now has a uniquely significant museum. No other museum has the type of quality woodworking artifacts as the current MacLachlan Woodworking Museum.

Sandy's boundless energy, enthusiasm, knowledge, and effervescent personality will be missed by all those he touched in his many-faceted life.

Rest easy, Sandy. Rest easy.

Edward R. Grenda

Chair of the MacLachlan  
Woodworking Museum Committee  
(2000-2008)



photo courtesy J. McKendry



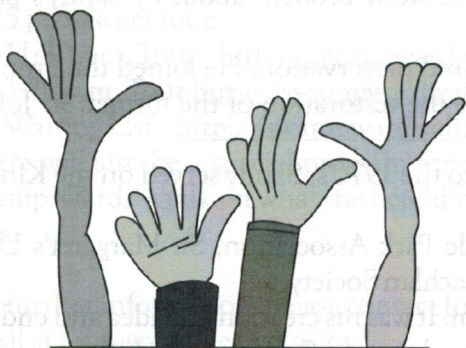
## Early Directory Listed 107 Telephones Here

The following list of Kingston's first telephone subscribers was reproduced from a pocket-size telephone directory issued in November 1883, which listed the names and addresses of practically every Bell Telephone subscriber in Ontario, outside of one or two of the larger cities.

It will be noted that no numbers are shown on the list. The limited number of subscribers precluded the necessity for telephone numbers. The operators who grew up with the service had no difficulty in remembering the switchboard positions of 500 or more subscribers but it became increasingly difficult to train a new operator. When it became necessary to insist on telephone calls being placed by number many subscribers were indignant. "I want to talk to Dr. Sawbones and I don't care what number he has." "I don't want to talk to a number; I want to talk to the butcher." "Don't try to tell me you don't know the number Sally when you operate the switchboard; connect me with Maggie Tidbits." These are typical of the remarks made by the outraged subscribers to the operators.

The Kingston telephone agency was one of the first in the Dominion to provide 24-hour exchange service. In many centres before the turn of the century the office hours were 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. week days; 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday and 10 a.m. to 12 noon and 2 to 4 p.m. holidays. At the top of the first page of Kingston subscribers in the 1883 directory is the note "Office always open."

Of the 107 telephones in service, in 1883, only 25 were in residences as compared with 82 in business establishments.



# VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

### Would you like to help our Society?

There are a number of Committees who may be able to use your talents and energy.

They are: Program, Publications, Awards, Sir John A. January Dinner, Sir John A. Graveside Ceremony, and Murney Tower.

If you would like to make a contribution please contact our President Edward Grenda 613-544-3715 or by email at [erg@kingston.net](mailto:erg@kingston.net)

NOTICE of The 5th ANNUAL AUTUMN EXCURSION  
MANSIONS of the 1000 ISLANDS Excursion: Saturday 4 October 2008

Guided tours of Singer Castle on Dark Island, The Remondini

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spaces available!

If you want to be put on the waiting list, please contact Alan MacLachlan at 613-549-8841



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 Central Office Ontario St.  
 Office Always Open  
 C.W. Stringer, Acting Agent

Anglin, W.B. and S., Saw and Planing Mill, Bay St.  
 Bajus, P., Brewery, Wellington St.  
 Bank of Montreal, King St.  
 Bawden and Machar, Barristers, King St.  
 Birmingham, C. residence, Sydenham St.  
 Brame, H., undertaker, Princess St.  
 Breck, J. A. residence, Union St.  
 British American Hotel, Clarence St.  
 British Whig, King St.  
 Britton and Whiting, Barristers, Clarence St.  
 Burnett House, Ontario St.  
 Campbell, Col., residence, King St.  
 Carruthers Bros., Financial Agents, Clarence St.  
 Carruthers, J., residence, Earl St.  
 Carruthers, J.B., residence, West St.  
 Chown and Cunningham, Stove Foundry, King St.  
 Chown and Cunningham, Stoves and Tinware, Bagot St.  
 City Hotel, Princess St.  
 Court House  
 Cousineau, F.X., Dry Goods, Princess St.  
 Crawford, J., Grocer, Princess St.  
 Crothers, H. and W.J., Bakers and Confectioners, Wellington St.  
 Daily News, Princess St.  
 Drennan, W.M., Furniture Manufacturer, Princess St.  
 Duff, Col., residence, Princess St.  
 Federal Bank, Wellington St.  
 Fenwick, G. S., residence, King St.  
 Fenwick, Dr. K. N., residence, William St.  
 Fenwick, Hendry and Co., Wholesale Grocers, Ontario St.  
 Folger and Hanley, Ticket Agents, Brock St.  
 Gildersleeve, C.P., Steamboat office, Clarence St.  
 Grand Trunk Railway, Freight Office, Johnson St.  
 Grand Trunk Railway, Station, Montreal St.  
 Great North-Western Telegraph Co., Clarence St.  
 Greet, Thos. Y., residence, Barrie St.  
 Griffin, G., Post Office, Clarence St.  
 Gunn, A. and Co., Wholesale Grocers, Ontario St.  
 Harty, Wm., residence, Johnson St.  
 Henderson, J.S., Grocer, Brock St.  
 Hendry, J.A. and Bro., Wholesale Grocers, Ontario St.  
 Hewitt, Col., residence, Emily St.  
 Hobart, G.S., Druggist, Princess St.  
 Hoppins, A., residence, Bagot St.  
 Horsey, R. M., Hardware, Princess St.  
 Irwin, Dr. C.A., residence, Cor. King and William Sts.  
 King, J., George, Druggist, King St.  
 Kingston Car Works, Montreal St.  
 Kingston Cotton Manufacturing Co.  
 Kingston Hosiery Co., King St. W.  
 Kingston and Montreal Forwarding Co., wharf  
 Kirkpatrick, Geo. A., residence, Emily St.  
 Kirkpatrick and Rogers, Barristers, Ontario St.  
 Knight, A. P., residence, William St.

Leslie, Wm., Jr., residence, George St.  
 Locomotive Works, Ontario St.  
 Loynes, S. and Co., Grocers, Princess St.  
 MacDonnell and Mudie, Barristers, Clarence St.  
 MacNee and Minnes, Wholesale Dry Goods, Princess St.  
 Martin, W.C., Opera House, Princess St.  
 Merchants Bank, King St.  
 McCammon Bros., Livery Stable, Princess St.  
 McGill, S.C. residence, King St.  
 McKelvey and Birch, Plumbers, Brock St.  
 McMahon Bros., Hardware, Princess St.  
 MacMillan, John, Malster, King St.  
 Muckleston, J., Hardware, Princess St.  
 Muckleston, J., residence, West St.  
 Nisbet, F., Bookseller and Stationer, Brock St.  
 Oliver, Dr. A.S., residence, King St.  
 Parkhill, J. Y., Grocer, Princess St.  
 Phalen, Dr. D., residence, Bagot St.  
 Police Magistrate, residence, Princess St.  
 Police Station, Ontario St.  
 Power and Son, Architects, Wellington St.  
 Rathbun, H.B., and Sons, Lumber Merchants, Beverley St.  
 Rathbun, H.B., and Sons, Lumber Merchants, Queen St.  
 Redden, Jas., Grocer, Princess St.  
 Rees Bros., Baker and Confectioners, Princess St.  
 Reid, James, Furniture Manufacturer and Undertaker.  
 Richardson, Jas. and Son, Grain Dealers, Wharf, Princess St.  
 Richmond and Boyden, Dry Goods Princess St.  
 Robertson Bros., China and Glassware, Princess St.  
 Roberston, Geo. and Son., Wholesale Grocers, Ontario St.  
 Robertson, B.W., residence, Brock St.  
 Rockwood Asylum, Portsmouth  
 Royal Military College, Pittsburg.  
 Sabre Bros., Hay Dealers, Hay Market.  
 Saunders, Dr. J., residence, King St.  
 Scott, N.K., Grocer, Princess St.  
 Skinner, Henry, wholesale druggist, Princess St.  
 Smythe, E.H., Barrister, Ontario St.  
 Smythe, E.H., residence, West St.  
 Spottswood, Geo. A., Saloon, 86 Wellington St.  
 Stevenson and Co., Piano Manufacturers, Ontario St.  
 Swift, James, Coal Dealer, St. Lawrence Wharf.  
 Swift, J., residence, King St.  
 Tete du Pont Barracks, Ontario St.  
 Union Hotel, Ontario St.  
 Waddington, Wm., Butcher, King St.  
 Wade, Henry, Druggist, Brock St.  
 Walkem and Walkem, Barristers, Clarence St.  
 Water Works Department, Ontario St.  
 Wilkinson, G.M. and Sons, Grocers, Princess St.  
 Wilkinson, G.M. and Sons, Grocers, Wellington St.  
 Wilson, W.J., Druggist, Princess St.  
 Wilson and Davis, Livery Stable, Clarence St.  
 Windsor Hotel, Princess St.

This Directory was published in the Whig Standard in the early 1940's.  
 We have it thanks to Judith Shirreff and Peter Ginn.



# SKELETON PARK THE UPPER BURIAL GROUNDS PLAQUE UNVEILING CEREMONY

At Clergy Street East and Ordnance Street

Sunday, 25 May at 1:30 p.m.

The Kingston Historical Society, in cooperation with the McBurney Park Neighbourhood Association and the City of Kingston, will unveil a plaque to mark the historical significance of the Upper Burial Grounds, officially known as McBurney Park but known locally as Skeleton Park. The ceremony begins at 1:30 p.m. and includes an address by Brian Osborne on the history of the park, once a municipal cemetery in use from 1816 until 1864. After a period as an inactive graveyard, it became a city park in 1893.

Jamie Swift and Laura Murray have been conducting interviews with some long-time and former residents of that area. They will share a few anecdotes from this community project as part of the plaque unveiling ceremony.

Please bring your own lawn chair

Rain location Queen Street United Church, corner of Queen & Clergy East

On behalf of the McBurney Park Neighbourhood Association, Jamie and Laura will also be providing two **walking tours** of the area at 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. On-line reservations are required for the walking tours, maximum of 25 people per tour.

11:30 a.m. Tour <http://swampwardwalkingtour1.eventbrite.com>

3:30 p.m. Tour <http://swampwardwalkingtour2.eventbrite.com>

Waiting List <http://swampwardwalkingtourwaitlist.eventbrite.com>

There will also be a special program for children at 2:30 p.m. - "Kids in the Swamp Ward," a talk on what the neighbourhood was like for kids in bygone days.

For further information, please contact John Grenville at 613 546-9644 or by email at [john.grenville@pc.gc.ca](mailto:john.grenville@pc.gc.ca)



The only surviving grave marker for the Reverend John Barclay who died in 1826.

Photograph by J. McKendry



Detail from Brosius's bird's-eye view of Kingston in 1875, at which time it was closed as a cemetery but not yet designed as a city park (which happened in 1893).



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## SPEAKERS' CORNER

*Prepared by Carl Bray and Jennifer McKendry*

### "A Heritage Conservation District for Sydenham Ward"

Presented by Carl Bray

A large and attentive audience heard a presentation on the topic of Sydenham Ward, a familiar downtown neighbourhood now under consideration for designation as a Heritage Conservation District under the Ontario Heritage Act. Dr. Bray is the lead consultant of a team hired by the City to study the area (bounded roughly by Barrie, Johnson, and King Streets). Although Sydenham Ward has been identified by the City as a special area for many years, it has still been the subject of post-WWII urban renewal schemes (to remove "blight"), and it is recent efforts by groups such as the Sydenham Ward Tenants' and Ratepayers' Association that persuaded the City to pursue designation. The intent of the current study is to identify the heritage character of the area and to describe its "character defining elements", prior to making a case for designation and confirming the District boundary.



It has been almost thirty years since the last time the City designated a heritage district, and much has changed in heritage legislation and practice since then. Dr. Bray began his talk by providing a capsule summary of the new Provincial requirements for conservation of cultural as well as natural features. He followed with a seven minute silent slide presentation (prepared by his consulting team member Jennifer McKendry) that provided a visual chronology of the area's history as well as a series of images taken along each street. He then described the step-by-step process of researching the area, noted that the study team is testing a new inventory template for heritage properties, and showed how a combination of interviews, historical research and site visits followed the approach suggested in the guidelines recently issued by the Provincial Ministry of Culture. He then reviewed the issues raised in comments received so far, and concluded by asking for the audience's help in describing the area's character.



Heritage conservation district studies are fascinating because they address "sense of place", or the meanings and values people hold for a particular area. Whereas most land use planning regulations deal only with the bare functional aspects of a neighbourhood, heritage legislation gets to the heart of what local residents and others understand to be the essence of that place. A district study is holistic, looking not only at buildings but also at streetscapes, views, cultural landscapes and, in a cursory fashion, areas of archaeological potential. The interweaving of schools, churches, shops, offices, libraries, courts, and parks with a variety of housing is added to the associations held for such places by people throughout history. The area's slow evolution since the 1600s also provides visual evidence of each stage of development. The sum of these elements is "heritage character".

Judging by the many thoughtful questions that followed the presentation, some members of the audience were wary of the potential restrictions designation could place on their property, but there is widespread interest in the idea of designation and support for the intent of the study to conserve what is essential to the area's character.