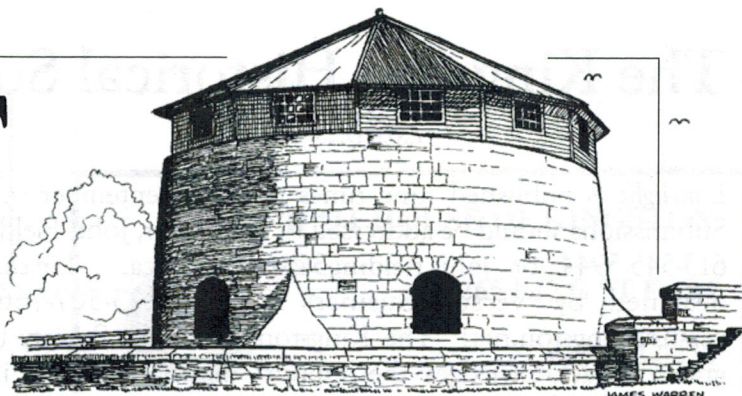


LIMELIGHT

Newsletter of the
Kingston Historical Society

vol 10 no 7 October 2008 ISSN 1488-5565



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

In addition to the presentations and recording of the history of the Kingston area, the Society has taken the initiative to have plaques erected to mark significant events and individuals in Kingston's history. The Society has also played a critical role in encouraging municipal provincial and federal governmental agencies to install plaques and other historical markers to commemorate or celebrate important Canadian historical developments.

Recently in a letter to the City of Kingston, the Society, following a resolution passed at a general meeting several years ago, recommended that the City rename Breakwater Park, on the shore of Lake Ontario, after Lieutenant Colonel John Bradstreet. In August 1758, Bradstreet led his British troops through northern New York State, crossed Lake Ontario, landed in Kingston in the Breakwater Park area, and then proceeded to lay siege to Fort Frontenac, then under French control.

In late September, the city of Kingston announced that it will begin a set of procedures to determine whether Breakwater Park should be renamed Bradstreet Park. The process will entail public meetings and an

online survey to ascertain whether there is public interest in the renaming proposal. In the final analysis, City Council will determine whether the park is to be renamed.

I urge Society members to follow the development closely in the local print and electronic media and contribute, if they wish, as they see fit.



Belated congratulations are extended to several members of the Society's Council who received Ontario Volunteer Service Awards at a ceremony held at the Ambassador Hotel in late June. This award, overseen by the Ministry of Citizenship (Ontario) is given to individuals nominated by their respective organizations for continuous service to the organization for various periods of time, spelled out in five year increments. The Society's recipients were: Jack Pike (15 years), Douglas Petty (15 years), Betty Andrews (5 years), and Alan MacLachlan (5 years).

Edward R. Grenda

THIS MONTH'S MEETING Wednesday, 15 OCTOBER, 7:30PM "Art Collecting Society of Kingston"

Presented by

Janet Brooke

Director at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre
Meeting at Memorial Hall in City Hall

in conjunction with

Queen's University Archives Annual Lecture

There will be no business portion of the meeting.

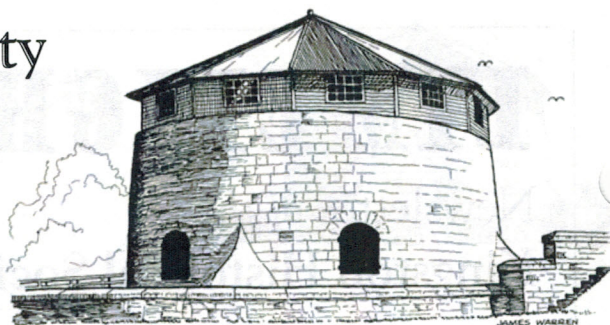
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The Kingston Historical Society

established 1893

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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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Maurice Smith, *Past President*
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Robert Andrews	Heather Home
Paul Banfield	Douglas Petty
Ellie Deir	Gordon Sinclair
Warren Everett	Carol White

25th Anniversary Archaeology Public Lecture

"Living on the edge from Kingston to Kouchiching: Who are these people anyway?"

On November 4th, the Cataraqui Archaeological Research Foundation will host the final lecture in its 25th Anniversary Public Lecture Series. Peter Carruthers, will deliver his talk entitled "Living on the edge from Kingston to Kouchiching: Who are these people anyway?". The event will be held in Memorial Hall at Kingston City Hall beginning at 7 pm. Admission is free. Everyone is welcome. For more information, please contact the Kingston Archaeological Centre at 613-542-3483 or carf@carf.info.

The Kingston Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society will meet in the Wilson Room of Kingston Frontenac Public Library, 130 Johnson St., Saturday, October 18, 2008 at 10 a.m. Barbara Bonner, will speak about "Two Wolfe Island Families". Visitors welcome. For further information, visit our website at www.ogs.on.ca/kingston

Speakers for the Fall

November 19th, 2008 – John Olsen:

"The changing landscape of downtown Kingston: the impact of the car on Princess Street."

December -

Christmas party (Date to be determined)

ROUND AND ABOUT KINGSTON: THE FALL OF FORT FRONTENAC

with Brian Osborne

The commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the battle for the control of Fort Frontenac started spectacularly when Kingston's Town Crier, Chris Wyman, in all his splendour, was piped-in by an equally resplendent piper, MacGregor Van de Ven. Following formal greetings by Wyman and an opening prayer, the assembled guests were welcomed by Major Kent Stewart on behalf of several hosts: Maj Gen Hainse, Commander, Land Force Doctrine and Training System; Col Lewis, Commandant, Canadian Land Force Command and Staff College; and LCol Cyr, Commander of the Kingston Military Garrison.

Major John Grodzinski, Professor of History at the Royal Military College of Canada, opened the formal proceedings with a comprehensive and insightful account of the historical context and events that led up to the fall of Fort Frontenac on 25 August 1758. This was followed by a moment of silence and a lament played by Piper Van de Ven.

Maj Gen Hainse then addressed the gathering consisting of the Hon. John Gerretsen MPP, His Worship Mayor Harvey Rosen, his fellow officers, and invited guests from the community of Kingston. He opened his remarks by proposing that the conflict between France and Great Britain 250 years ago had laid "the keystones for the creation of Canada." Noting that "Canada's history is more dramatic than any romance ever penned," Maj Gen Hainse then argued that our nation "was born from this conflict and the merging of these two cultures created the wonderful country that we, in uniform, have so proudly served in years past, and today." Turning to the 250 year "legacy of cooperation and friendship that the Canadian Forces and the City of Kingston enjoy to this day," Maj Gen Hainse proposed that the commemoration was the military's commitment to heritage, its future within Fort Frontenac, and to the City of Kingston.

Maj Gen Hainse then invited LCol Cyr, and Mayor Rosen to join him in unveiling the memorial plaque:

"Fort Frontenac 1673 2008:

On 25 August 1758, a force of 3000 British and colonial troops led by Lt Col John Bradstreet lay siege to Fort Frontenac, an important French outpost on the Upper St Lawrence River. Two days later, the 110 French and colonial forces under Captain Pierre Jacques Payne, Sieur de Noyan surrendered, turning control of the fort to the British.

On the 250th anniversary of the siege, an event of the Seven Years' War, modern Fort Frontenac stands as a symbol honouring the founding peoples of Canada, our military heritage and the proud relationship between the City of Kingston and the military garrison."

Following the unveiling, Mayor Rosen spoke of Kingston's reputation as a proud Canadian military community and "its historic connection to the brave men and women who serve our country on the battlefields around the world." Further, he recognised Fort Frontenac's role as "a glorious reminder of the strength of the military presence in Kingston" and that the unveiled plaque will commemorate "the earliest steps in the evolving relationship between our two founding nations, 250 years ago."

A Benediction and the singing of the national anthem brought these events to a fitting conclusion.

Major General Hainse, Mayor Harvey Rosen and Lieutenant Colonel St Cyr unveiled the plaque.

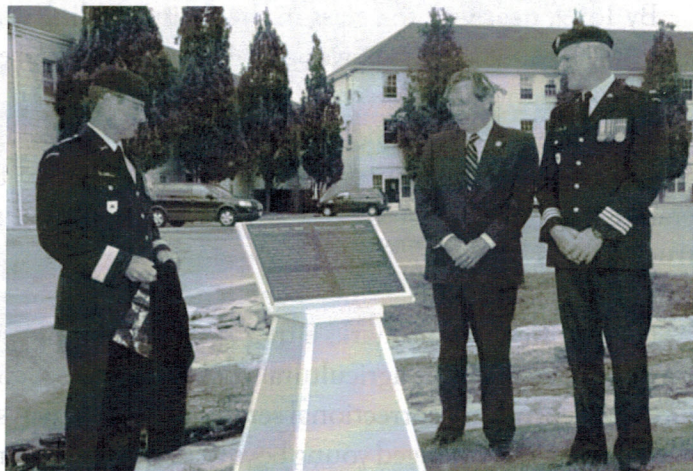


Photo courtesy of Jennifer McKendry

KINGSLAND AND THE CRYSTAL PALACE

By Bill Fittell

A half century ago, the western boundary of the City of Kingston didn't extend far beyond the Highway 2-Bath Road "traffic circle." Along the borderland in Kingston Township ran a gravel road where rifle-totting guards on horseback directed gangs of prisoners to fields where they spread manure and mowed hay. The roadway had a palatial name and the plot of fertile land, once the site of Kingston's first fair, bears a regal title today.

"Kingsland," an 80-unit condominium development launched by the Dacon Corporation in 1978 was truly "The King's Land." It anchors the north-east corner of the original 100-acre plot extending from Bath Road along Palace Road to Front Road that was purchased by King William IV in 1833. Leased to the Frontenac Agricultural Society, the land became the show place for Eastern Ontario products and the site of ploughing matches and horse races.

Smack in the centre was a unique, cross-shaped, multi-glassed building, the Crystal Palace, remarkable for its time that gave its name to the road that links Wright Crescent. It was Canada's first permanent exhibition hall, claims architectural historian Jennifer McKendry, who prepared a detailed, 43-page Archaeological Assessment Report for the Cataraqui Archaeological Research Foundation and the 42-year-old Calvin Park Library, soon to be replaced with a new structure.

"Kingston's Crystal," a Lilliputian reproduction of Prince Albert's magnificent glass structure, built for London's great exhibition of 1851, was constructed in 1856. "A splendid building (erected) with noble determination to keep pace with the spirit of the times," was the way Baron de Longueuil described the 190 by 56 foot structure with 60-foot cupola. The Chronicle and Gazette recommended iron framing for the "glass house fragile as a proverb." However, the budget of 3,600 pounds sterling restricted framing to timber, but required "glass of great strength and thickness" from the suppliers of the original Crystal Palace.

For the next 30 years, these 23 acres of land, situated on Kingston Township Lot 20, was the place to go each autumn. Outside of fall fairs it had a storied history. In 1862, it was offered to the military authorities to house Britain's 62nd Regiment, 600-strong, newly-arrived from Halifax. Fifteen years later, Kingston council considered, but rejected the federal government's request to remove "The Palace" and continued to rent the property for \$50. In 1881, Kingstonians flocked to the site to see a hot air balloon ascension, but left, like the balloon, deflated.

Finally, in 1887, the federal government got its wish. The agricultural society obtained 29 acres of land in the northerly portion of Rideau Ward (York and Alfred) and relocated its buildings there. "The (rebuilt) Crystal Palace will be a magnificent structure (216 x 176) with the dome extending 70 feet about the main building," trumpeted The Daily British Whig in May, 1888. In September, prime minister Sir John A. Macdonald, opened the provincial exhibition at the new site and newly-arrived Governor-General, Lord Stanley admired the Palace exhibits.

By 1899, nearly all the glass in the main building was broken by vandals. In 1912, Kingstonians flocked to the fairgrounds to see a biplane swoop over the Crystal Palace. By 1918, it had survived a fire and a Whig writer expressed the wish "that the old wreck would burn."

In 1938, the fair board changed its name to the "Kingston and District Agricultural Society" and somehow kept its once admired edifice intact. For schoolboys, the old structure presented a daring challenge a mark of manhood to scramble up the rafters inside the dome and to retreat undetected. As the Second World War closed in 1945, the structure was dismantled and plans started for what became a more permanent public building. The Kingston Community Memorial Centre opened in 1951.

No historical plaque marks either structure but the original Palace site where ploughmen turned up fairgoers' lost coins has markers of its agricultural past. Almost hidden between the poplar trees and Kingsland's brickwall in the north-east corner are correctional services' four, six-inch square concrete posts where the fairgrounds' old wooden or wire fence once challenged young boys to vault and explore the world.

(Past-president Bill Fittell and his wife, Barbara, have resided in Unit 79 on Kingsland Crescent since 1979.)

Sir John A. Macdonald Anniversary Dinner



Mark your calendars now for the annual Sir John A. Macdonald anniversary dinner Friday January 11, 2009. Our guest speaker this year will be Professor Tom Axworthy, Queen's University.

The dinner will take place at the Senior Staff Mess at the Royal Military College. Cost for this year's dinner has not been finalized, but will be commensurate with past years. Details of the menu and the cost will appear in the next issue of *Limelight*.

Please contact Heather Home, 613-544-5596 or Warren Everett, 613-545-9316 for more information.

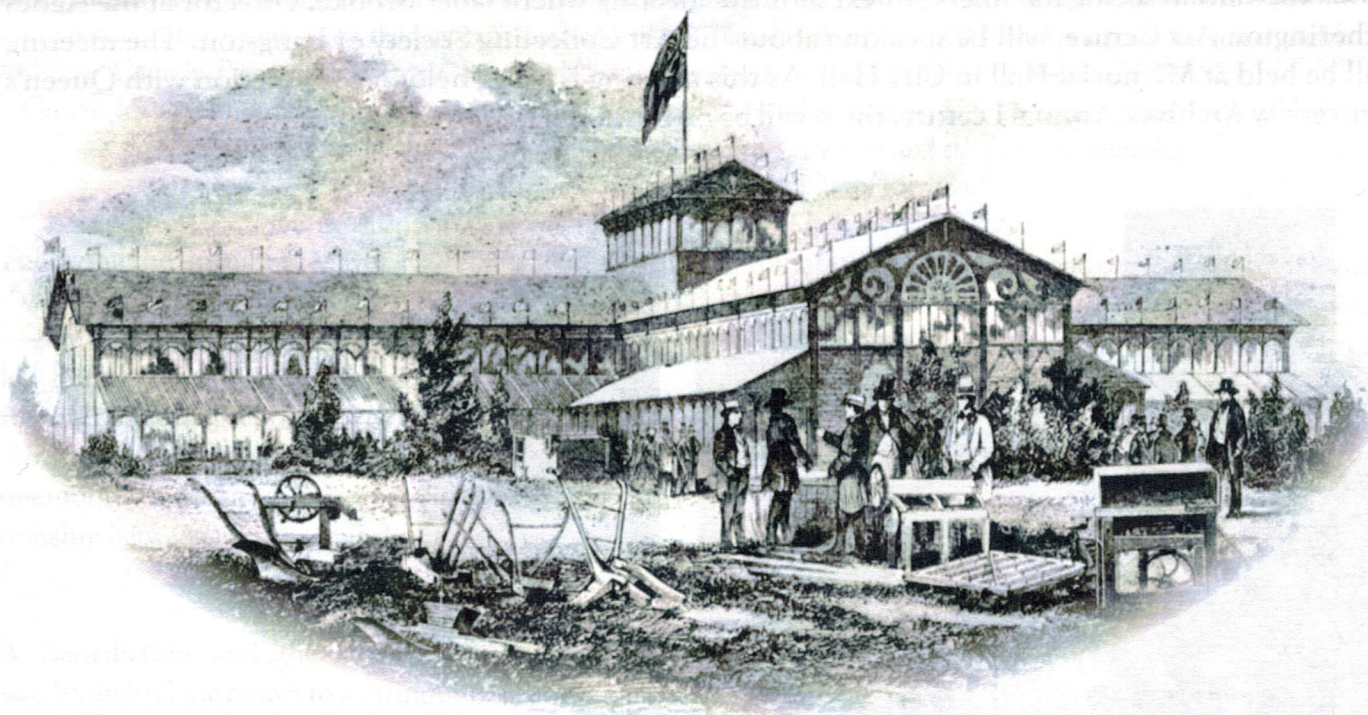


Illustration of the Crystal Palace courtesy of Jennifer McKendry

SPEAKERS' CORNER

with Heather Home

The opening talk of the 2008/2009 Kingston Historical Society program season was presented by John Pereira and Lisa Holmes. KHS Council member Alan MacLachlan, who has served on the Board at Ongwanada for a number of years, arranged the evening's talk. Alan thought the membership would appreciate hearing the history and future of Ongwanada, an organization that has had a history of varied specialty but one focus: caring for individuals in this community.

The evening's presentation was two-fold ~ first, to talk about the current mission of the organization and secondly, to look at the history of the organization. When Ongwanada (an Ojibwa term for "our home") was first founded in 1948 by Dr. Bruce Holmes Hopkins, it operated as a tuberculosis sanatorium. Over the next 50 years, the organization evolved into a chronic care hospital, a facility for children and adults with developmental disabilities, and most recently, a non-profit organization providing community-based support to approximately 600 individuals and their families in Kingston and eastern Ontario.

After the presentation a lively question and answer period ensued where Robert Seaby, the Executive Director of the organization, was on hand to field some of the questions regarding the history of the organization and the changing landscape of healthcare provision in the Province of Ontario. Refreshments were provided by Ongwanada.

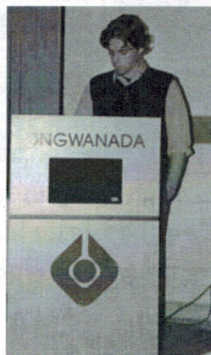
I look forward to seeing members at next month's meeting where Janet Brooke, Director at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, will be speaking about the Art Collecting Society of Kingston. The meeting will be held at Memorial Hall in City Hall. As this meeting is being held in conjunction with Queen's University Archives' Annual Lecture, there will be no business portion of the meeting.



Lisa Holmes of Ongwanada



Chief Executive Officer Bob Seaby



John Pereira of Ongwanada

Photos courtesy of Peter Ginn

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The Kingston Historical Society



Award Nomination Form

The Kingston Historical Society Award was created in 1993 to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the founding of the Kingston Historical Society. It is presented from time to time to those worthy individuals, groups or institutions in recognition of outstanding contributions to the preservation and interpretation of local history.

Members of the Society are encouraged to be part of these deliberations by nominating individuals or groups whom they feel have met the criteria for the Award, by making nominations using this form. Completed forms may be mailed to the Awards Committee, Kingston Historical Society, Box 54, Kingston ON, K7L 4V8 or to Robert J. Andrews, Chair of the Awards Committee, 15 Church Street, Gananoque ON, K7G 2M9, or at andrewser@sympatico.ca Please use the format below if responding via e-mail. The deadline for nominations is 1 November 2008.

Name of **NOMINEE**: _____

Address of Nominee: _____

Postal Code: _____ Telephone Number: _____

Name of Nominator [KHS Member] _____

Address: _____

Postal Code _____ Telephone Number _____

Please give as much information as possible about your nominee. Details which are obvious to you may not be known by members of the Awards Committee.