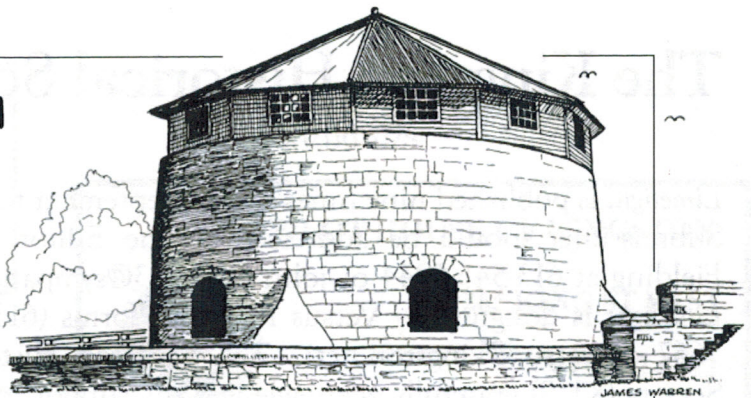


# LIMELIGHT

Newsletter of the  
Kingston Historical Society

vol 11 no 2    February 2009    ISSN 1488-5565



## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

**T**he fates of history have conspired to arrange the bookends of Sir John A. Macdonald's distinguished life in such a fashion that Sir John A's birth took place early in the year (January 11) and his death later in the year (June 6). This proved to be providential for the Society in the sense that these dates enable the Society to commemorate Sir John A's birth and death in an appropriate chronological order - first the birth and then the death rather than the reverse.

As has been the case for the past nine years, the Society recently held another successful Sir John A. Birthday Dinner at the Senior Staff Mess at the Royal Military College. The event was festive and convivial in character, the toasts to Sir John A. both humorous and to the point, and the postprandial talk by Thomas Axworthy was insightful and stimulating. This made for a delightful extension of the Christmas season with a heritage tinge. I would like to express the Society's thanks to Councillors, Warren Everett and Heather Home for organizing this enjoyable occasion.

Given that I am now completing my second term as Society President, this is my last Newsletter column. It goes without saying that it has been an unalloyed pleasure to serve as the President of a vibrant organization embracing Kingston's history in all its aspects which, in turn, provides a valuable context for both our individual and collective lives. Through its publications and talks, the Society has immeasurably contributed to the general awareness of

Kingston's colourful past in its broad diversity. Like history itself, a historical society is provisional, constantly changing, and also subject to new interpretations and purposes by its members.

All those involved in the administration of the Society during the past 116 years have established and maintained an indelible legacy of foresight, innovation, and achievement that few heritage organizations in Canada can match. Clearly, this has enabled the society to endure the tooth of time with dignity and grace.

I wish to thank my colleagues on the council for their assistance and work during my term as president. In addition, I would like to proffer my thanks to you, the membership, whose enthusiastic and unstinting support makes possible the continuing success of the Society's operations and intellectual contributions to the undertaking of our local history. Last but not least, I wish all the best to my successor, Alan MacLachlan, who takes over the presidency at the 2009 AGM mid-February. I will remain connected with the Society as Program Chair for the next little while.

All in all, these were, for me, good, memorable years. I will look back to them with pleasure and pride.

*Edward R. Grenda*

### THIS MONTH'S MEETING

Wednesday, 18 FEBRUARY, 7:30PM

Annual General Meeting & Launch of the much anticipated  
"A TROUBLESOME BERTH"

The Journal of First Lieutenant Charles Allan Parker, Royal Marines:  
The Canada Years, 1838-1840

Wilson Room, Kingston Public Library  
Johnson St. at Bagot

Refreshments    All Welcome

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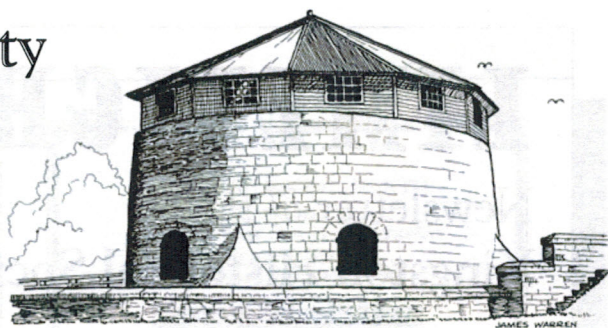
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# The Kingston Historical Society

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 (613-507-7667 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

### Executive

Edward Grenda, *President*  
Maurice Smith, *Past President*  
Alan MacLachlan, *Vice President*  
Ted Huber, *Secretary*  
John Whiteley, *Treasurer*

### Councillors

Betty Andrews	John Fielding
Robert Andrews	Heather Home
Paul Banfield	Douglas Petty
Ellie Deir	Gordon Sinclair
Warren Everett	Carol White

There are eleven nominations to the Council of the Kingston Historical Society. The following is the proposed slate of candidates for the eleven elected positions:

### Executive

President: Alan MacLachlan  
Treasurer: John Whiteley

Vice-President: Gordon Sinclair  
Secretary: Ted Huber

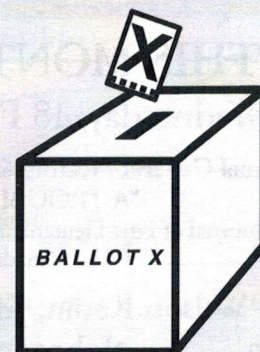
### Council

Elizabeth Andrews  
Dorothy Farr  
Jeremy Heil  
Doug Petty

Robert Andrews  
Peter Ginn  
Ross McKenzie

As Past President, Edward Grenda will also be a member of Council

Other Nominations: According to Part III, Section 6 of the KHS Constitution if there are other nominations for the elected positions they are to be received by the nominating committee in writing at least 14 days prior to the February 18, 2009, AGM. The nominations are to include the agreement of the nominees.





## SPEAKERS' CORNER

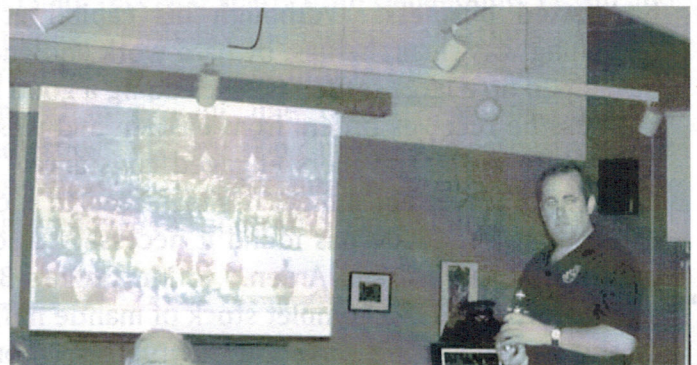
with John Fielding



Good speakers show their enthusiasm, are knowledgeable and, in Mike Boese's case, demonstrate their dedication to the topic they are presenting. KHS members were the beneficiaries of the thorough preparation of Mr. Boese as he presented an overview history of the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery (RCHA) and as they are popularly called, the "Gunners". Mike Boese is the RCHA Brigade curator and historian for Kingston. Mike traced the history of the RCHA back to their earliest days as an artillery battery participating in the Fenian Raids. They officially became the Kingston Battery in 1871 and the RCHA in 1905.

Many famous Canadians have emerged from the ranks of the "Gunners" including Major General Sir George French, Major General Sir Sam Steele, Lieutenant Colonel John Alexander McCrae, and even our own John Matheson. Mike told the RCHA's remarkable story of contribution, dedication to duty and sacrifice during times of war and peace. We also had the opportunity in this multi-media presentation to pass around a 18 pound shell yes it actually feels like it does weigh 18 pounds.

Mike used slides and artifacts from his own collection as well as that of the RCHA Brigade Association in Kingston to animate and illustrate the colourful history of the "Gunners".



The evening concluded when Mike Boese was appropriately thanked by a past president of the KHS Bill Fittsell who took the opportunity to pay his RCHA Association membership.



# The Daily Whig Special Number December 1886

In last months *Limelight*, I provided an introduction to Carl Fechter's Special Number to the *Daily Whig* of December 1886 (1886). He discussed the changes he had seen along the street in the previous 40 years. Unfortunately there was insufficient space for the editor could provide. The complete article has therefore been posted on the Society's website [www.kingstonhistory.ca](http://www.kingstonhistory.ca) section!" for those who want to read it in its entirety.

This month, I have transcribed a series of short pieces Fechter included in his Special Number dealing with three commercial establishments. Ohlke's establishment was at 115 Brock Street. The site of his shop is now occupied by the Hanson Memorial Parking garage on King Street east (between Brock and Princess). If you visit there today, you will find The Cambodian Village Restaurant. The site of the Princess the Seven Cent store was on.

More next month, Peter C. Ginn

## P. OHLKE, BROCK STREET

### His Prosperity as a Gilder and a Picture Framer -- His Branch Store

P. Ohlke, gilder and picture framer, whose factory and show rooms are on Brock Street, No. 115, is doing an extensive business. His work gives entire satisfaction. Mr. Ohlke was born in Great Tipplen, Province of East Prussia, thirty-five years ago. His parents are well-to-do and reside upon a large farm. In 1870 Mr. Ohlke started for America. He landed in Montreal and in that city remained two years. During one year he was a conductor upon the street cars; the other he spent in steamboating. In 1872 he reached Kingston and in 1883 he started business. Although his capital at the beginning was small, he has, by hard work and energy, developed up a large trade. Besides doing a good local business he receives orders from eastern and western cities. He keeps travellers engaged constantly. The business of the establishment has increased to such an extent that Mr. Ohlke has found it necessary to open branches at Odessa and Arden. In Mr. Ohlke's Brock street store there is a complete stock of mantle mirrors, oil and steel engravings, arthotyes, statuettes, chromos, lithographs, mouldings in plush and lacquer and of every other description. Mr. Ohlke makes a specialty of manufacturing easels and plush ornaments. He keeps a very large collection of Christmas cards and a variety of fancy and ornamental goods. Lately he made improvements in his store by enlarging it and putting in new fixtures. His work room is 30 x 36 ft., and here a number of persons are kept employed throughout the year.

## THE SEVEN CENT STORE

A Hive of Industry -- Its Proprietor Has a Large Share of the Trade  
When our reporter visited the seven cent store, located at the corner of Princess and Wellington streets, he found a busy place. There were many purchasers. These were being waited upon by a number of attentive lady clerks. At this season the store is one of the liveliest in the city. Mr. Woods, the proprietor, an American, is very popular with his customers. He has had considerable experience in the business world. He was in New York, where he kept a large store, and in 1866 he opened a dry goods store in Auburn, N.Y., and was very successful. After a few years he went back to New York, and for a time was engaged in the large store of A.T. Stewart of the shawl department. Afterwards he came to Kingston and started a dry goods business. When he was appointed to superintendent the business of the men, who acted as agents for pictures in Canada, and had Toronto for its headquarters. Mr. Woods managed the business for five years (about five years ago) came to Kingston and started a store, four doors above his present store. It was very successful here. Every nook and corner of the premises is occupied by novelties, including sleighs, musical instruments, cups, saucers, glassware. In the jewellery line he has a complete stock, which he retails at cheap prices. He also has a lot of American novelties which he sells for the money he asks for them. Take a look during Christmas season.



his tour of Princess Street as it existed in his  
 nt room to fit the entire article into the space  
 society.ca/ within the "Write on Kingston

establishments in downtown Kingston.

Spangenburg's Jewellery was located at 347  
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Varied Career

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THE SEVEN CENT STORE.

This distant photograph was taken by Margaret Henderson in 1906 and published in Jennifer McKendry's, *Early Photography in Kingston*, 2007 (2nd ed., 3rd printing), plate 43. The correct spelling is Spangenberg, which is what is used on p. 6 of the *British Whig Supplement*, but it does appear as Spangenburg in the Fechter article.

The illustration shows one of the "novelties" sold in the Seven Cent Store, a cast-iron match safe that one hung on the wall; it is decorated with grape vines in relief.

Illustrations provided by Jennifer McKendry

## F. W. SPANGENBURG

His Jewellery store King Street,  
 is Constantly Undergoing Improvement.

The most attractive jewellery establishment in Kingston is that of F.W. Spangenburg, King street, No. 347. It was established in 1845 by Mr. Geo. Spangenburg, sr., who conducted business up to 1870, in which year the present proprietor took charge. He has done a prosperous business. He has made important changes and enhanced the attractiveness of his shop. This year the business department was increased in size, a new and handsome block floor laid, and large plate glass windows inserted. The store is now large and spacious and fitted up with elaborate ebony show cases, which contain a complete stock of fine watches, of every grade, electro silver plate, the rarest gems in diamonds and other precious stones, and beautiful articles of every description, suitable for Christmas presents. Everything is fully warranted as represented. Mr. Spangenburg is well-known in the community, and what he says can be relied upon. He manufactures jewellery, and the work on watches and clocks receives close attention, being done by those who are thoroughly competent. It might be stated that this establishment makes a specialty of manufacturing fine jewellery and diamond setting. A very large business is carried on in the city, and many orders are received yearly from Gananoque, Picton and Winnipeg. Probably the largest collections of clocks carried by any jewellery firm in this section, is in this store. An elegant line of brass goods, sconces, candlesticks, etc. are also carried. We earnestly advise those who wish to select suitable Christmas presents for their friends to call upon Mr. Spangenburg.





# The Sir John A. Dinner for 2009

Written by Heather Home  
Photos by John Fielding

To absolutely nobody's surprise the Kingston Historical Society's Sir John A. Macdonald dinner was a huge success again this year. There was a warm reception in the lounge of the Staff Officer's Mess at the Royal Military College which helped to melt the icicles that had formed on the approximately 120 members and guests who were in attendance.

Sir John A and Lady Agnes (Brian and Renee Porter) pose with Peter and Alison Ginn



The Piper called dinner at 7pm and once the members and guests made their way to the dining room, Bruce Cossar lead the group in saying Grace. Dinner was enjoyed by all, with numerous toasts to the Macdonald throughout.

Even Sir John toasted his creation, Canada.

After dinner the group returned to the lounge where the speaker for the evening, Tom Axworthy, offered advice to the Liberal Party of today based on lessons garnered from Macdonald's political philosophies of the past.

Tom Axworthy was kindly thanked by The Honourable Peter Milliken on behalf of the Society. Great thanks are due to Warren Everitt for coordinating the event, and Brian Osborne for arranging for the speaker.



Dr. Axworthy was introduced by Heather Home.



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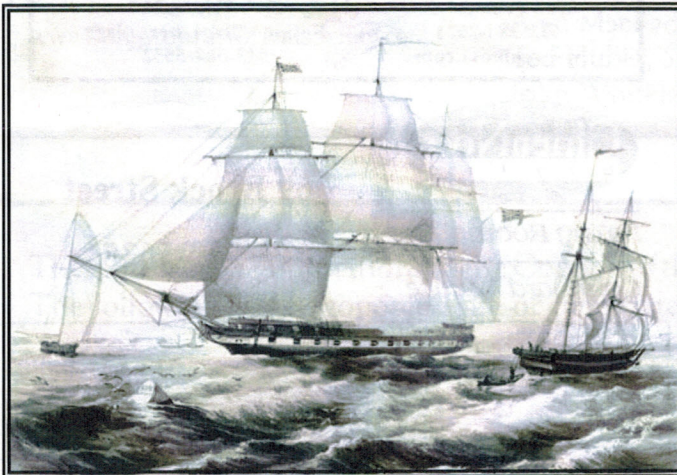
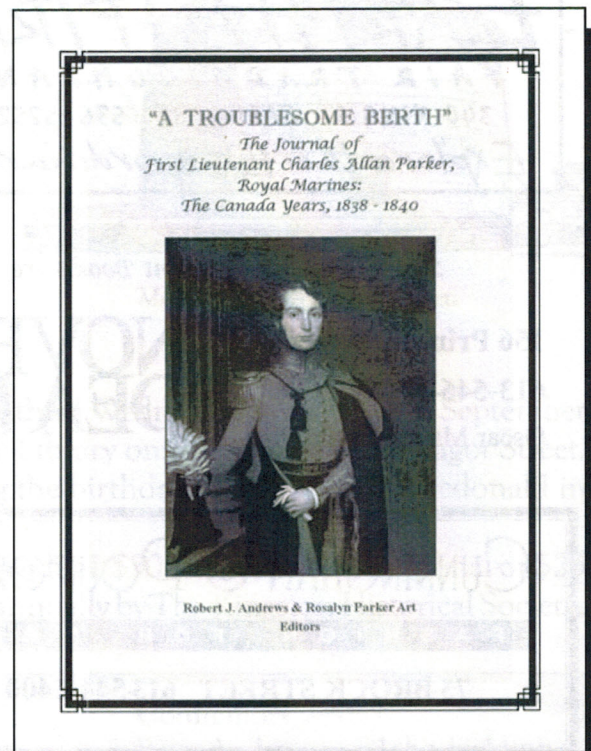
The Kingston Historical Society announces the publication of

**"A TROUBLESOME BERTH" *The Journal of First Lieutenant Charles Allan Parker, Royal Marines: The Canada Years, 1838~1840***

edited by Robert J. Andrews & Rosalyn Parker Art.

It features Parker's own stirring, insightful, and witty remarks during his military tour in the Maritimes, Lower Canada, and Upper Canada, during and after the troubled times of the Rebellions of 1837 and 1838. Wounded during the Battle of the Windmill, he continued to lead his men: "*the first battle in which I had the honour to serve and bleed for Victoria.*"

His journal, offered for the first time to the public, is amply annotated by the editors, including an essay on his biography and career, maps and images tracking his journey, notes on the ships and people he mentions, and much more. Reasonably priced at \$40, it includes a dozen colour plates, index, references, and a foreword by Dr Brian S. Osborne. Perfect bound cover in colour, 336 pages, 8.5 x 11, 75 illustrations, ISBN 978-0-919770-12-6.



Parker's ship, HMS Pique, in 1837

*Please join us to launch this publication on Wednesday, 18 February, during the Society's AGM beginning at 7:30PM in the Kingston Public Library. Bob Andrews will give a short presentation on Parker's Journal.*



*If you are unable to attend the book launch on 18 February, please buy your copy at Novel Idea, Princess at Bagot Streets, or via this mail order form. Please send a cheque, payable to the Kingston Historical Society, to:*

The Kingston Historical Society —  
Parker Journal  
P.O. Box 54, Kingston ON K7L 4V6

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