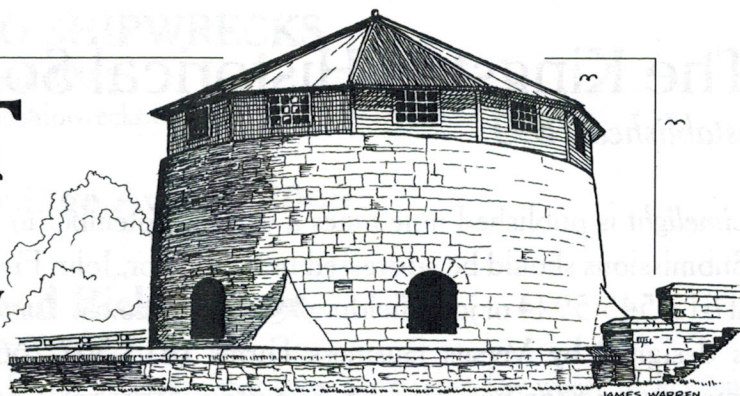


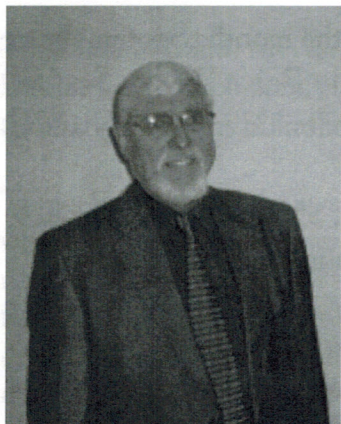
LIMELIGHT

Newsletter of the
Kingston Historical Society

vol 11 no 6 September 2009 ISSN 1488-5565



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Here we go into Indian Summer trusting that all have had a very safe, enjoyable and a not too wet summer season. The summer for the KHS began with the 6 June Commemoration Ceremony at Cataraqui Cemetery which was under the deft leadership of Robert Andrews. The Committee is a well oiled operation with a committed group composed of Barbara Bonner, Peter Radley, Ted Huber, Donna Lusk, John Coleman and Robert Andrews. Also to Brian Osborne, our thanks for suggesting Ged Martin to be our speaker and for being the liaison with him.

As we progress into autumn another KHS informative and entertaining program awaits you. Our fall program has been fleshed out by Edward Grenda, the Program Chair. As you view the new island-scape, the fall line up begins with D'Arcy Jenish on 'Why Wolfe Island is in Canada'; followed by Bruce Cossar in October with his topic "Energy, Shrewdness and Integrity: Robert Drummond in Kingston (1828-1834)"; and Paul Banfield et al in November speaking about

"Early Scenes of Kingston".

Our September meeting will be followed by our annual Autumn Excursion on Saturday, 19 September, and is a pot pourri of activities which includes a visit to Parkwood (Col. Sam McLaughlin's Estate), a tour of Victoria Hall in Cobourg, a walking tour of Cobourg's colonial architecture and a guided tour of the National Air Force Museum in Trenton. All this plus lunch at the 1835 Cobourg Woodlawn Inn.

Winter brings, our Christmas Party, which again will be held in Fort Frontenac and includes the KHS Awards. Also please mark 11 January 2010 on your calendar, as we have Charlotte Gray, as our guest speaker for the Sir John A. Dinner. Ms. Gray is author of many books on Canadian history including *Sisters in the Wilderness* and *Nellie McClung*.

Murney Tower National Historic Site has had a very successful summer with attendance throughout the tourist season that is much higher than in recent years. All of which is due to the dedication of Warren Everett, his committee and the staff at the Tower.

Please check out the new website: www.stoneskingston.ca which gives an 'on line' view of The Social History of Kingston. Jeremy Heil, a Queen's archivist and a member of our KHS Council has been a key individual in the production of this site. There is more to announce but that shall wait until later. Welcome back, one and all.

Alan MacLachlan

THIS MONTH'S MEETING

Wednesday, 16 September, 7:30 PM

D'Arcy Jenish
Author & Journalist

"Why is Wolfe Island in Canada?"

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

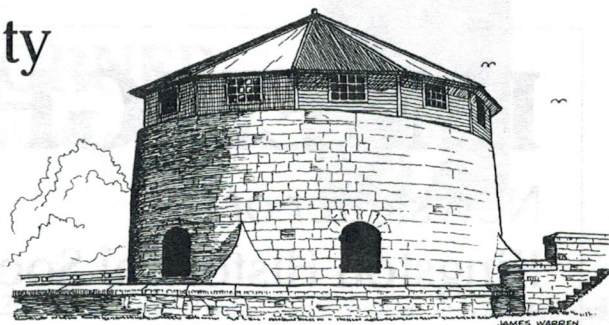
Refreshments All Welcome

The Kingston Historical Society

established 1893

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(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

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www.kingstonhistoricalsociety.ca

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George Wilkinson Vosper Passed Away 24 May 2009

Text and photo provided by Jennifer McKendry

Throughout his long record of community service, this third generation Kingstonian displayed a deep awareness of the role which knowledge of the past plays in the development and maintenance of civic pride and identity. Mr. Vosper worked diligently to preserve Kingston's history and heritage as a City Alderman, a member of the City Planning Board, Committee of Adjustment and LACAC, as a founding member of the Frontenac Heritage Foundation and as a private citizen. His engineering training and experience, as well as his wartime and subsequent service with the Royal Canadian Navy, provided a basis of effectiveness in these many ventures. The restored front entrance portico of the City Hall, Confederation Park, the portion of the St. Joseph's Church parish house incorporated in the Kingston Public Library building and, particularly, the Ontario

Heritage Act will stand for many years as testimony to his effort and achievement. Mr. Vosper's personal generosity has resulted in the acquisition of important art and photographic collections by local institutions. On 8 December 2004 at Fort Frontenac GEORGE WILKINSON VOSPER was awarded the KHS Award recognizing his many contributions to our community.

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The SEVENTH ANNUAL KHS AUTUMN EXCURSION

Saturday, 19 September, 2009

- Tour of PARKWOOD the former estate of Col. SAM McLAUGHLIN
- Lunch at the charming 1838 Cobourg WOODLAWN INN
- Afterwards, an architectural walking tour of Cobourg given by two members of the Cobourg Branch of the Ontario Conservancy Association including a tour of VICTORIA HALL
- Last but not least a tour of the NATIONAL AIR FORCE MUSEUM in Trenton.

Join us for this annual outing by motor coach the cost per person \$90.00

Meet at 6:45 AM at George Richardson Stadium Parking Lot

Please note that there are three walking tours on the excursion.

PUT YOUR PHONE NUMBER ON THE CHEQUE OR PAPER WHEN MAILING

First come first served by MAIL for tickets, maximum number of people: 50

Cut Along The Dotted Line

The SEVENTH ANNUAL KHS AUTUMN EXCURSION

Saturday, 19 September, 2009

LUNCH OPTIONS

___ Traditional Caesar Salad or ___ Maple Butternut Squash Soup

Please select one of the entree options below

___ Roasted pork loin with apricot-shallot stuffing

___ Beef Bourguignon with vegetables and roasted potatoes

___ Honey Roasted chicken breast with lemon and garlic

Apple Crisp a la mode for dessert - Coffee or Tea

A glass of wine is included with your meal

Number of people ___ X \$90 = Total cheque amount \$___

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6 June: The 116th Sir John A. Macdonald Graveside Ceremony

The dazzling sunlight made the afternoon commemoration all that much more spectacular. With aplomb, humour and grace, Robert Andrews, unfolded the program with over 150 people present. Donna Ivey stepped forward and with vivacity



Society members and friends gathered at Sir John A.'s gravesite in Cataragui Cemetery.

was given by Dr Ged Martin of the University of Toronto and then thanked by Robert Andrews. In his talk "Sir John A. Macdonald: Kingston: 1841-1891" Dr. Martin presented a paper that will be included as always in our next Historic Kingston Lecture.

Following the traditional laying of wreaths, 12 organizations affiliated with Sir John, the lament was read with the last Post and Reveille by the bugler. Canon Michael Caswell who had also given the opening prayer rose and joined Donna Ivey in the singing of "God Save the Queen".

The gathering retired to the Cataragui Cemetery for a picnic following the commemoration. A special thank you to the constables and the Cataragui cemetery staff all of whom contributed to Brian Osborne for coordinating the contact and arrangements.

This event was the result of the assiduous combination of efforts.



Master of Ceremonies Robert Andrews



Dr. Ged Martin

Alan MacLachlan, Committee Chair
photos courtesy of Jennifer McKendry

and meticulousness, our novice Master of Ceremonies, led us in our national anthem. The key note address in Edinburgh, who was introduced by Alan MacLachlan 'Sir John A. Macdonald and the Electoral Politics of with different insights of our first prime minister which ston.

ll, which included our three levels of government and as played by the Fort Henry Guard piper concluding in Fort Henry. The Benediction was given by Rev. scripture Reading and the Opening Prayer. We then Save the Queen"

y outdoor chapel for refreshments and conviviality goes to the staff of Bellevue House, the R.C.M.P. hom made this graveside ceremony one of colour, pageantry and tradition. Also a special appreciation is extended reception of Ged Martin

efforts of Barbara Bonner, Ted Huber, Peter Radley, Robert Andrews, Donna Lusk, Mark Bennett.



KHS President and Committee Chair Alan MacLachlan



Fort Henry Guard at the gravesite

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SOS Marine Heritage Award 2009

Walter Lewis and Rick Neilson

There are many individuals involved with marine heritage but we recognize that there are a select few whose dedication deserves special recognition. The SOS award is presented yearly to someone who demonstrates a special effort promoting marine heritage conservation.

The Master Award, with an engraved plate recording each award, is on display in the SOS Head Office, or other public location and a personalized plaque is given to each recipient. For the foreseeable future, the Master Award will be on display at the Marine Museum of the Great Lakes at Kingston for all to appreciate.

This year, unusually, the award recognizes the exceptional efforts, over many years, of two Ontario authors and researchers who have transformed a wide range of publicly accessible, but diverse and awkward sources of information, into an online resource that responds readily to the enquiries of all sections of the diving and historical research communities. Their website, the Maritime History of the Great Lakes, is an extraordinarily detailed repository of all manner of information benefiting divers, researchers and the idly curious. It represents many years of dedicated and painstaking work by the two individuals recognized today. Besides this major work, they have found time to write many articles for historical journals and to produce a wonderfully readable book titled River Palace, which is about the long working life of the steel-hulled paddle steamer Kingston -- better known to many as the wreck of the Cornwall.

Walter Lewis is a professional librarian whose work is strongly inclined towards the drive to provide better access through digital archiving and the exploitation of computer technologies. A Masters in History from Queen's University accurately reflects a long-standing interest in historical topics. He has a particular interest in the history of the Great Lakes and the relationships between the shipping industry, government and the commercial interests of the steamboat trades.

Sharing the Award this year is **Rick Neilson**, a highly respected member of the Ontario dive community with an enviable record of research-led wreck discoveries. He has a reputation for scrupulous investigation and impeccably accurate reporting. He shares the distinction of a substantial body of published works with his colleague and fellow author.

Both of the recipients have, for many years, been at the forefront of the campaign to preserve and protect Ontario's maritime legacy. Their articles and oral presentations contribute significantly to the essential work of educating the public and informing each generation of divers and avocational nautical archaeologists.

For their long-standing dedication to the promotion and preservation of marine heritage and their contributions to research and the written record of its many facets Save Ontario Shipwrecks have bestowed this award upon:

Walter Lewis and Rick Neilson.

CONGRATULATIONS !

The Kingston Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society will meet in the Wilson Room of Kingston Frontenac Public Library, 130 Johnson St., Saturday, September 19, 2009 at 10 a.m. "I Appeared on Ancestors in the Attic" - three local people will discuss their experience on the History Television show "Ancestors in the Attic". Visitors welcome. For further information, visit our website www.ogs.on.ca/kingston

SPEAKERS' CORNER

with Edward Grenda



It was perhaps fitting that the last talk prior to the summer break (on May 20, 2009) should deal with “public waters” in Kingston and the images of sunny hot weather, swimming, beaches and summer waterscapes such a topic normally evokes at that time of the year.

Our speaker was Jamie Linton (Professor of Geography at Queen's University) who initially titled his talk, “The Life and Death of Public Waters in Kingston”. However, because of promising changes he saw in the quality of water on Kingston's extensive waterfront (Lake Ontario, St. Lawrence River, and the Cataraqui River), he decided to rephrase the title of his talk, “The Life and Death (and Life) of Public Waters in Kingston”. The rationale for this alteration will become apparent later in this review.

Professor Linton illustrated talk emphasized that we are generally losing touch with water from the standpoint of public bathing and a variety of water services, not least of which is drinking water. This, he maintained, has critical implications for public spaces such as beaches and also the uses of city waterscapes which, with building construction on a city's shoreline, is gradually becoming diminished. As well this distancing from water and water sources has had a profound impact on how we consume drinking water, especially by way of bottled water.

Professor Linton focused on Richardson Beach in Kingston, one of the few public swimming areas located near the downtown area. He saw the Beach area as essentially a dead place which is highly unused for an area characterized as a public place. Professor Linton contrasted the current situation at the Beach with that of conditions ranging from the turn of the twentieth century to the early 1960s when the Beach was the scene of vibrant life with numerous swimmers and sun bathers occupying the area. A slide Prof. Linton presented showed the Beach in the early 1950s with large numbers of swimmers and sun bathers. The slide also showed an impromptu soccer game being played, a situation pointing to the marked increase of European immigrants to the Kingston area. He pointed out that the Richardson Bathhouse is an architectural gem which with appropriate renovations, could serve the public as it previously did.

Professor Linton argued that the diminution of Richardson Beach as a public swimming area could be attributed to a variety of causes. Apart from the increased use of private and public swimming pools, he indicated that the claim of poor water quality contributed to the decline of Richardson Beach as a public meeting area. However, he noted that the water quality at the Beach as well as in other areas of Kingston's waterfront is relatively good given the measures that were undertaken during the past three decades.

It might be mentioned that Professor Linton was one of the organizers in July 2008 of a Mass Swim at Richardson Beach to have the Beach properly repaired and reinvigorated as a public space with swimming being the major summer activity.

Before the industrialization of the Kingston waterfront, the water quality was generally good. From the late 19th century to the 1960s, industrialization polluted the water and, of course, compromised its quality. In consequence, activities such as public swims in and around the waterfront virtually disappeared. However, with the constant vigilant maintenance of water quality during the last three decades, Kingston's public waters have regained their former satisfactory quality. Hence, Professor Linton's revised title “The Life and Death (and Life) of Public Waters in Kingston”.

In a fascinating manner, Professor Linton, with a series of slides, gave a brief elaboration on the development and use of an important accoutrement of drinking water consumption – the public water fountain. He showed how earlier water fountains were made of stone and endured the harsh Kingston winters. Also, he showed many of the more recent water fountains constructed of steel and porcelain or a combination of the two. He pointed out how many of these fountains were being neglected in their maintenance and are decreasing quite rapidly in indoor and outdoor locations. Perhaps the most ironic slide Professor Linton showed was a water fountain at Queen's University surrounded and virtually obscured by huge stacks of bottled water cartons. Looking at this situation from a skeptical perspective, one could argue that we have altogether lost touch with water. However, Professor Linton expressed an optimistic position in this regard by noting that the publicity of research results on the merits of bottled and non-bottled water coupled with environmental concerns (plastic bottles, etc.) will assist in turning this situation around.

Professor Linton's talk was followed by an enthusiastic and lively exchange of views and observations on Kingston's past, especially with regard to choice swimming areas on the waterfront and area further inland.

On behalf of the Society, Professor Emeritus Peter Goheen, thanked Professor Linton for his talk and presented him with the Society's pin depicting the Murney Tower. Professor Goheen took this opportunity to throw light on Frances E. Willard to whom the drinking fountain near the Richardson Beach Bathhouse was dedicated by the Kingston Women's Christian Temperance Union in 1929.