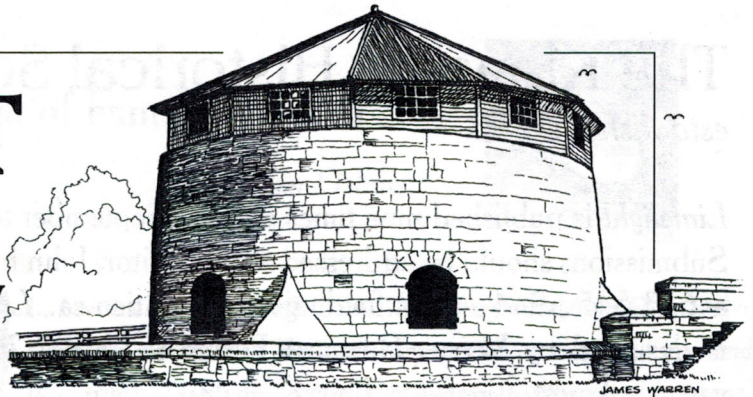


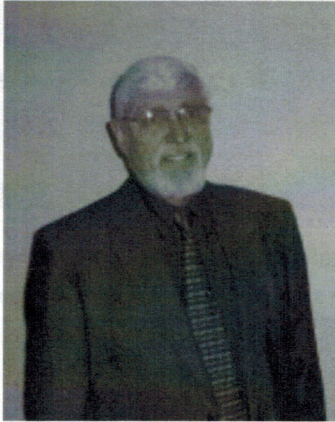
LIMELIGHT

Newsletter of the
Kingston Historical Society

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



The KHS Annual General Meeting, commonly referred to as the AGM, is a wonderful opportunity for the members to rediscover what has transpired during the previous year within the Society. The review of past speakers, activities, presentations and new endeavours undertaken by your council are found in the reports from the committee chairs. Also the treasurer's report will review the accounts and the fiscal information for the past year. Members may ask questions regarding the direction that the Council has taken the Society as well as future courses and endeavours. The election of officers and board members is an integral part of the AGM and if you are desirous of being on the board please contact Edward Grenda, the past president.

In previous years we have done away with having a formal presentation following the AGM and instead have had 'A Show and Tell' session or an Auction and a Silent Auction. This practice has been well received and many have said that it is a delightful way to end the AGM. We shall have another 'auction' event this year with much thanks to Doug Petty and Warren Everett.

A further addition to the evening will be the showing of *The Grand Story*, a DVD history of the Grand Theatre, 1879 – The Present which is hosted and narrated by Kingston's Doug Thorne. It has incorporated live footage, photographic stills and much more as this local entertainment venue's saga is regaled.

It is hoped that all the members will take advantage of this excellent opportunity to attend, participate and enjoy.

Alan MacLachlan

THIS MONTH'S MEETING

Wednesday, 17 February, 7:30 PM

Annual General Meeting

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

Special Showing of

The Grand Story

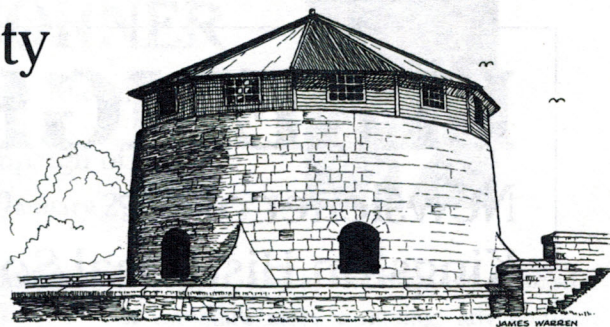
a history of the Grand Theatre
1879 - the present

Refreshments All Welcome

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

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Ontario

The Kingston Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Ministry of Culture of the Government of Ontario

All of us who not only appreciate but also actively promote an understanding and learning of our heritage and history will mourn the death of Lily Inglis who was devoted to the cause of heritage preservation. Lily Inglis passed away on January 11, 2010. Her architectural accomplishments and tireless efforts to preserve the best of Kingston's architectural heritage will be her memorial.



photo by Jennifer McKendry

Sir John A Macdonald Dinner on January 11th

Photos by Peter Ginn and text by John Fielding

As usual the menu provided by the Senior Staff Mess of Royal Military College was of great interest to our Society members and friends such as The Honorable Peter Milliken.



One new twist this year saw father and son toasts to Sir John from Councilor Mark Gerretsen as Acting Mayor and The Honorable John Gerretsen MPP.



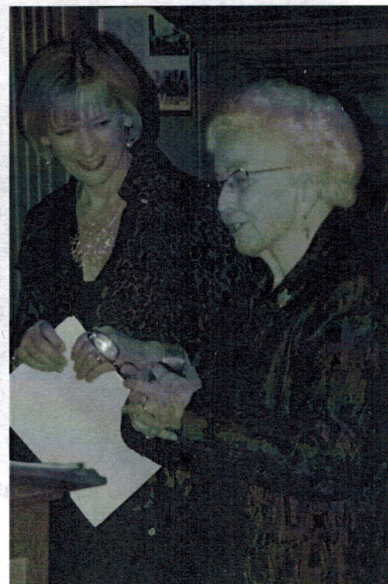
Again this year Sir John A made an appearance in the person of Brian Porter who gets better every year in his role as the "Great Man".



A number of our members who share Sir John's Scottish heritage came appropriately attired.



Our course the evening would not be complete without a presentation on Sir John and this year we were especially fortunate to hear Charlotte Gray speak on Sir John's Women. Donna Ivey expressed the gratitude of all those in attendance.



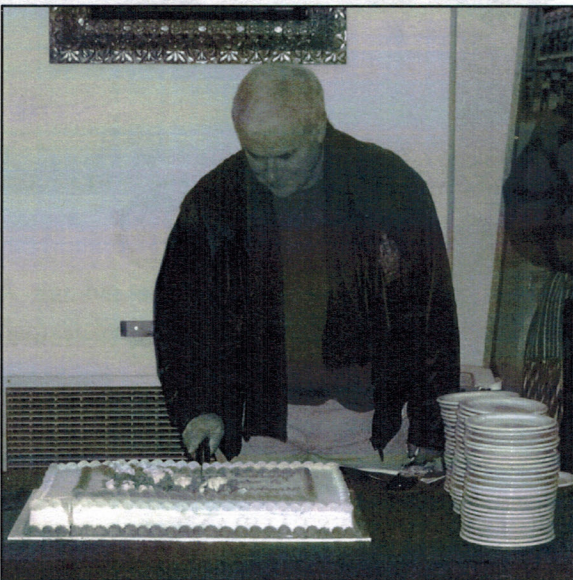
MACDONALD REMEMBERED ON HIS BIRTHDAY, 11 JANUARY

Story & photos by Jennifer McKendry

On a typical Canadian winter day, with snow on the ground and enough of a nip in the air to make for rosy cheeks (even rosier for those nipping...), Kingstonians wished Sir John A. Macdonald happy birthday at his statue in City Park. While on the whole an informal affair, there were some formal introductions, speeches and thanks — even an unveiling. Two mock-up signs commemorating Macdonald in both official languages were unveiled by John Gerretsen, M.P.P. The final signs will be placed strategically along highway 401 to promote Kingston as "VILLE DU 1^{ER} PREMIER MINISTRE DU CANADA" and "HOME OF CANADA'S FIRST PRIME MINISTER".



Mark Gerretsen spoke as the Deputy Mayor on behalf of the City (*right*) and watched as his father John unveiled the signs (*above*).



Walking beavers, very young Macdonald fans and costumed devotees enjoyed the day. Arthur Milnes singled out our own Lou Grimshaw as a descendant of an American president (*above left*). Peter Milliken, M.P., did the honours at Bellevue House, where coffee and birthday cake were offered (*left*).





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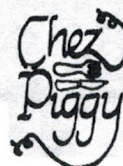
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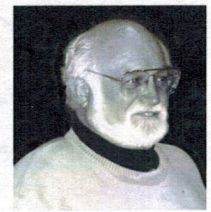
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"The Pig with a Peel"

PAN CHANCHO 44 Princess St 613-544-7790

Round and About: Kingston's "Pageant of Famous Women"

with Brian Osborne



In her fine address to KHS on 11 January, Charlotte Grey had a wonderful riff off Mrs. Pearson's comment about successful men and their surprised wives. It led her into her discussion of the role of the several women in Sir John A's life.

It reminded me of another tribute to women. Sometime in 1980, Misses Keitha and Hazel Smith donated a photograph to KHS. It is entitled "Part 2: The Pageant of Famous Women." Taken by Morrison Photo, this image depicts a dramatic montage held by the Kingston Y.M.C.A. in February 1925 and it appears to have been a competition judged by one, Mrs. G.A. Bateman.

Not all the people in the photograph were women. Four men performed procedural roles as "Herald" (J.C. McBride), "Piper" (Pipe Major A.S. Stewart) and "Soldier Attendants" (Messrs. Cassidy and Wood). No doubt, they joined in with the large audience in the singing of "Rule Britannia," "Oh, Canada," and "God Save the King." These renderings of the dual imperial-national identity were also reflected in the staged display. See if you can match titles, names, and subjects.

Of course, royalty was to the fore with Queen Elizabeth (Miss K. Easson) and Queen Victoria (Mrs. L.A. Guild) up front and centre. But where was that other eidolon of British identity, Boadicea? Perhaps she was rendered in the appropriated image of Britannia (Mrs. T.H. King). Nor were biblical allusions neglected with impersonations of "Ruth the Gleaner" (Mrs. J. Angrove), the Queen of Sheba (Mrs. C. Nash), and Queen Esther (Miss Yampolsky).

Iconic historical heroines were prominent with Mary Queen of Scots (Miss D. McClelland), Madelaine de Verchers (Miss P. Coates), Grace Darling (Miss K. Smith), Laura Secord (Miss Bureau), the Maid of Lucknow (Mrs. J.L. Jerome), Joan of Arc (Miss N. Best), and Florence Nightingale (Miss B. Wilson). Nor were more prosaic subjects neglected: Mother Goose (Mrs. G. McCallum), a "Fish Wife" (Miss M. McFayden), a Salvation Army Girl (Mrs. Boshier), a quintessential "Mother" (Mrs. Wm. Peters), and Francis Willard (Mrs. J.O. Joliffe), the dour suffragette and the founder of that travesty, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union! The social profile was completed by an eclectic set of ethnic themes including a "Scotch Girl" (Miss Jean Duncan), an "Italian Girl" (Miss Abuckle), an "Indian Woman" (Miss W. Guild), Irish Colleens (The Misses Jean and Nellie Duncan), and the exotic "Japanese Maidens" (The Misses Q. Gimblett, M. Nancarrow, H. Wright). Of course, no celebration of the time could omit the Harriet Stowe's classic, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and it was represented by Miss Opehlia (Mrs. E. Godwin), Topsy (Clara Drysdale) and Eva (Jean Wilson).

But what is surprising is the number of opera stars. No fewer than five of the thirty subjects were devoted to singers, operatic and popular of the late C19th. and early C20th., some still famous while others are now forgotten. All of us will remember Jenny Lind (Mrs. L.J. Foster), the "Swedish Nightingale" who was as famous for her voice as for her generous support of cultural and humanitarian causes. Equally, Madame Nellie Melba (Mrs. J. Evans) was indisputably Australia's first superstar and, in her time, one of the world's most famous women. But how many of us have heard of Mary Garden (Miss O. Derry), a Scottish soprano and dramatic actress with a career spanning opera, silent movies, and public lectures. Or again, there's Amelita Galli-Curci (Mrs. L.M.C. Collins), an Italian operatic coloratura soprano who performed with both the Chicago and Metropolitan Opera companies, and who recorded duets with Enrico Caruso, and Madam Nordica (Miss. V. Saunders), an American dramatic opera soprano known as Giglia Nordica, the "Lily of the North." But we should all be reminded of Madam Albani (Miss. M. King) who, born in Chambly, Que., was the first Canadian singer to become an international star, and who sang the solo role at Queen Victoria's funeral service in 1901. Perhaps at least some of them had appeared at Kingston's main cultural forum of the day, The Grand Theatre.

All this said, this historical document prompts several further questions. If this image was "Part Two," what was "Part One" and where is it? Does anyone remember the donors of this rich document, the Misses Smith? Are there any continuing family linkages to the names I've mentioned? Does anyone know more about this pioneering statement of the role of women in our history?

I'd love to know. I'll do some checking to see what I can find and report back.

SPEAKERS' CORNER

with Edward Grenda

"Reflections on Rene-Hippolyte Laforce and the British Campaign of 1759"

by David More (January 20, 2010)



David More

A novelist specializing in 18th and 19th North American events, a local historian, and a hospital administrator, David More presented a talk on one of Canada's most intriguing, adventurous, colourful and remarkably versatile characters – Rene-Hippolyte Laforce. Yet Laforce remains virtually a mysterious and little-known figure in Kingston's history as well as early Canadian colonial history.

Laforce's career embraced the Seven Years' War, the American Revolution, and the Loyalist Settlement in Kingston. Significantly, some of Laforce's actions during this crucial period in Canada's history had critical ramifications for the major North American powers (Britain and France) who were vying for control of the continent.

Resourceful and multi-talented, Laforce occupied numerous roles during this period. He was a surveyor, woodsman, an Iroquois interpreter, ship builder, ship owner, and merchant ship captain. It is

notable that he served in both the French and British navies and armies. It is no exaggeration to claim that Laforce was one of the few, if not the only, individual to have been a participant in the first and final battles of The Seven Years' War in North America. Laforce was the commander of the French fleet in the first and only naval hostilities involving British and French forces in 1756 on Lake Ontario. He was involved with the French military in assaults on Fort Niagara and Fort William Henry and the sieges at Fort Frontenac and Fort de Levis. Sent to France as a prisoner of war, he was shipwrecked along with other prisoners off the coast of Cape Breton Island during the winter. He walked over a hundred miles to Louisbourg to reach a safe haven.

During the early 1770's, he settled in Quebec where he became involved in merchant shipping and ship building. Quite remarkably, he saw action in the Battle for Quebec in 1775 for the British serving as Governor Carleton's Captain of Militia Artillery. Subsequently, he became Commander of the British dockyard at Carleton Island in the St. Lawrence River during the American Revolution. Also, he was appointed Commodore of British navy on the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario. He operated the Kingston Dockyard prior to the War of 1812. The latter arrangement was Laforce's second major term in Kingston. He was present at the siege of Fort Frontenac in August 1758 when Colonel Bradstreet led a force of 3000 men. He was fortunate enough to escape to Montreal during the course of this battle.

Mr. More concentrated on Laforce's mysterious and controversial role in the French defence of Fort Niagara during the four-pronged British campaign in the summer of 1759. During this period, Laforce was still in command of naval forces on Lake Ontario. On a scouting mission to Fort Oswego in the eastern sector of Lake Ontario on June 27, 1759, Laforce found no British military personnel there. Shortly thereafter, Laforce's ship, "L'Outaouaise", was damaged during a violent thunderstorm and had to undergo repairs down the St. Lawrence River. On July 6, Laforce arrived at Fort Niagara and reported to the Fort's Commander (Pouchot) that he had not seen any British troop activity in Oswego. Astonishingly, the British forces arrived at Fort Niagara on the same day and a battle for Fort Niagara occurred almost immediately after Laforce's arrival. Laforce's naval role in this battle was considered insignificant. He was ordered by Pouchot to intercept a reported incoming store of British supplies from Oswego. No supply convoy was found. When Laforce returned to Fort Niagara on August 4, 1759 the British flag was flying over the Fort which withstood the British attack for nineteen days before succumbing to superior British forces.

The question that rises to the surface is this: how did Laforce miss sighting the British army rowing along the south shore of Lake Ontario? If Laforce had been able to confront the 300 British bateau, the probability of an attack on Fort Niagara would have been wholly prevented. And if the French forces at Fort Niagara were triumphant, the approximately 1000 soldiers would have been available to support Montcalm in Quebec in September 1759.

Historians have attempted to explain Laforce's actions prior to the Battle of Fort Niagara in various ways: incompetence, neglectful, unsuited for war command, only a merchant seamen, unimaginative, a victim of strong southwest winds. Mr. More suggested that Laforce's journal could have provided explanations. However, all that remains is the period between July 6 and July 14 and nothing more. Mr. More concluded that all explanations with the data that now obtains remain speculative and, this being the case, Laforce's actions during this critical period remains one of history's intriguing mysteries.

Mr. More was thanked by Robert Andrews, Councillor of the Kingston Historical Society and was presented with a Society pewter pin.