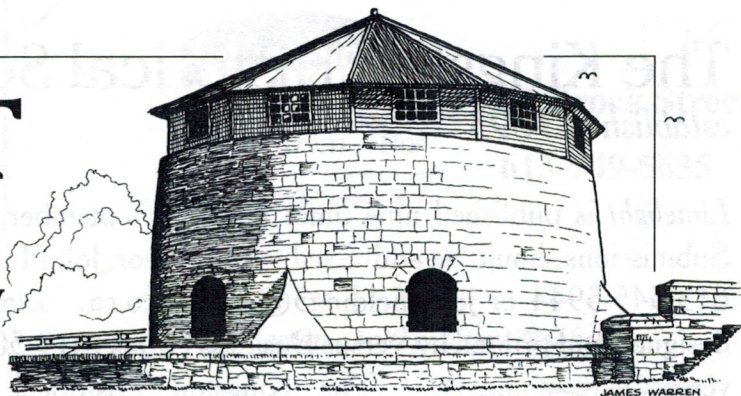


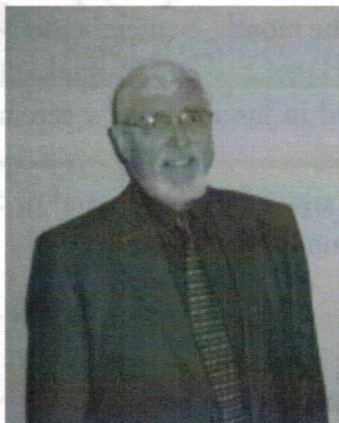
LIMELIGHT

Newsletter of the
Kingston Historical Society

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



At our Annual General Meeting (AGM) last month Robert (Bob) and Elizabeth (Betty) Andrews stepped down as members of Council. Bob, as Publications Chair and the Awards Chair for many years, served the Society with diligence, energy and creativity. Betty, our Membership Chair, maintained the rolls with accuracy, streamlined the process and was always at the ready to encourage one to become a member. We are also changing editorship of *Historic Kingston* as Paul Banfield, who has been at the helm for several years, is retiring. On behalf of the Society I extend our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for their contributions to the Kingston Historical Society.

The 2010 team has two new members, Alicia Boutillier and Cheryl Des Roches, and on behalf of the Society I bid them a hearty welcome. Alicia is the curator of Canadian Art at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre and Cheryl is an Assistant History professor

at the Royal Military College. Their expertise and energy will be excellent additions to our Council. Hazel Fotheringham will take over as the new editor of *Historic Kingston*.

The AGM, through the committee reports and the input from the members present, has made clear that we as a historical society are most vibrant. Yet, we must not rest on our laurels. Though our membership numbers have remained stable over the past few years, it behooves each of us to reach out and bring in at least one new member in the coming year. Your Projects Chair, Gordon Sinclair, has undertaken to head up the 2012 conference "Sideshow or Main Event: Putting the War of 1812-14 in regional contexts" which is hoped to attract papers from both sides of the border. The 200th anniversary of Sir John's birth is fast approaching and your Council is well aware of this and is involved in several initiatives with this important celebration in mind. This coming decade promises to be one filled with a passionate dynamism witness the expertise, exuberance and experience that abound in our Society.

With this in mind, if you have an idea for your society to explore, please contact us at our e-mail address: kingstonhs@gmail.com.

Alan MacLachlan

THIS MONTH'S MEETING

Wednesday, 17 March, 7:30 PM

Work Hard, Play Hard:

The Making of a Nurse in Kingston, 1890 - 1970

Paul Robertson, Curator, Museum of Health Care

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

Refreshments All Welcome

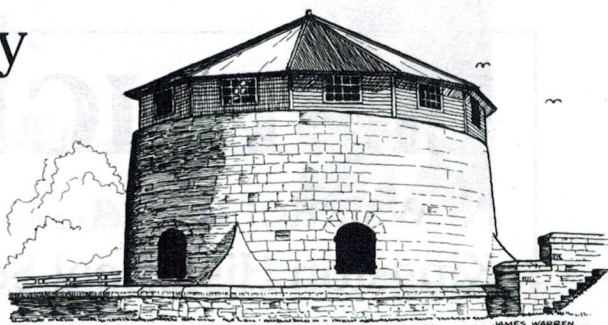
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The Kingston Historical Society

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.

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

History-Related Meeting Announcements

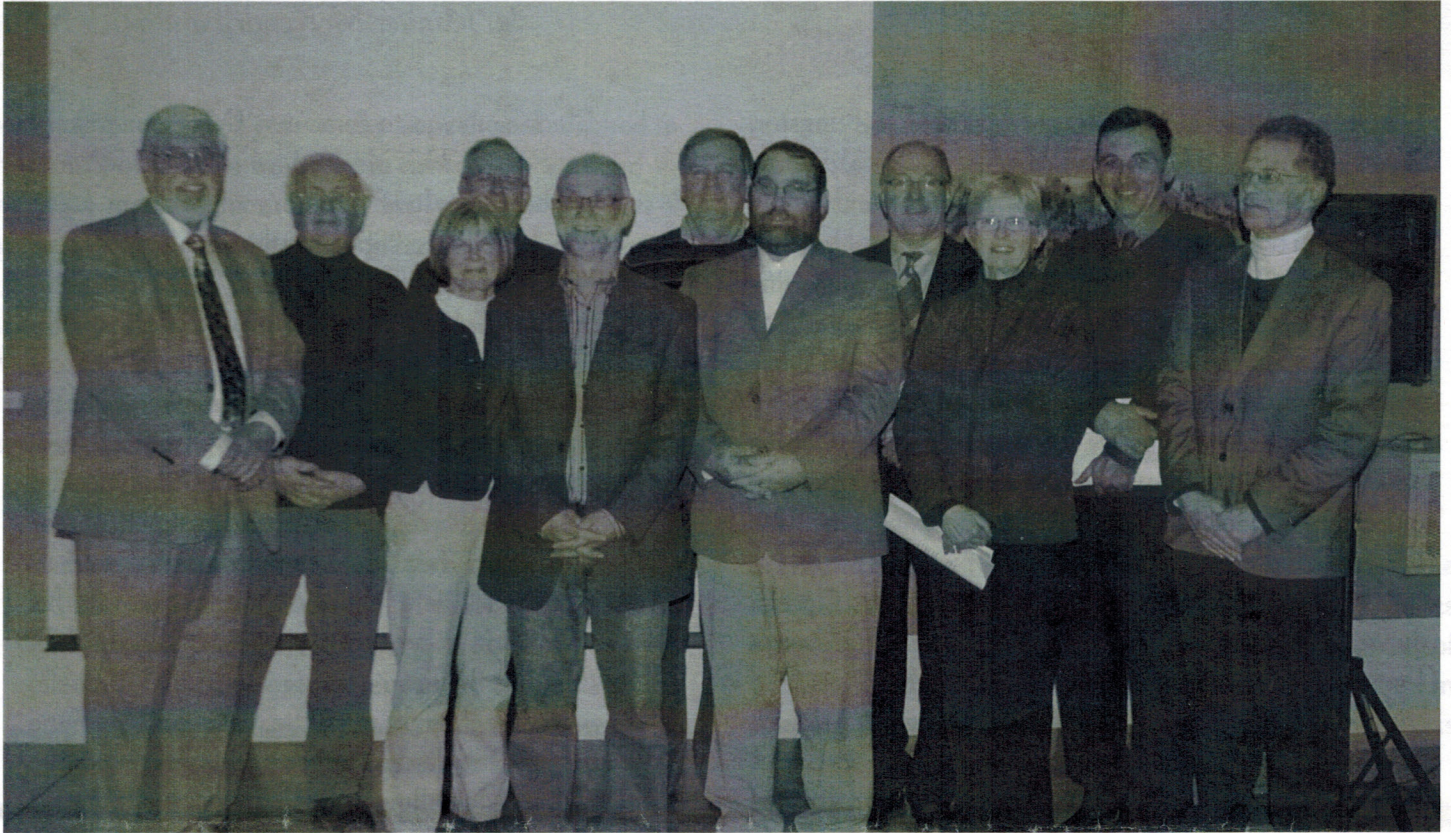
The Kingston and District Branch, United Empire Loyalist Association of Canada will meet on Saturday, March 27, 2010 at St. Paul's Anglican Church hall, corner of Queen and Montreal Streets. The Springer Municipal Parking Lot is located across Queen Street from the church. Come at 1:00 pm to browse our Library holdings before the meeting starts at 1:30. Our speaker will be **Clark Day**, well-known in Kingston and area for his association with good food and fine dining. Clark will tell us about "Taverns and Restaurants" from Loyalist times forward.

The Retirees' Association of Queen's is presenting the third in a series of forums to strengthen links between Queen's and Kingston. Brian S. Osborne, Professor Emeritus, Queen's University, will speak on: "SUSTAINING KINGSTON: OLD PATHS, NEW DIRECTIONS". The event will take place in Memorial Hall, City Hall, on Tuesday 30 March at 7.30 PM.

The Kingston Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society will meet in the Wilson Room of Kingston Frontenac Public Library, 130 Johnson St., Saturday, March 20, 2010 at 10 a.m. Helen Coffey and Joyce Fingland will speak about "Publishing my Family History", describing two different approaches to publishing. Visitors welcome. For further information, visit our website www.ogs.on.ca/kingston

The Kingston Historical Society Council for 2010

Photo by Peter Ginn



Left to Right: Alan MacLachlan, President; Peter Ginn; Hazel Fotheringham, Historic Kingston Editor; John Whiteley, Treasurer; Douglas Petty; Warren Everett, Chair Murney Tower Committee; Ted Huber, Secretary; Gordon Sinclair, Vice President; Dorothy Farr; Ross Mackenzie; Edward Grenda, Past President.



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Seeking Freedom in the Wilds of Canada....

by Jennifer McKendry and Rick Neilson

The enumerator of the 1851 census for Kingston Township added this note concerning one local family, "[Levin Fisher] was free, his wife [Miriam] and family were slaves; the struggle at the election of General Jackson accelerated their escape and they emigrated to this country preferring freedom and the wilds of Canada to slavery and a more congenial climate." For some of those persons whose ethnic origins were characterized as "African" in the various early Canadian censuses, this land of promise and hope became a nightmare of poverty and despair. Black Tom = whose proper name was Thomas Moore = was one of these people.

A descendant of one of his employers, George Baxter of Cataraqui Grange, 1412 hwy 15, Pittsburgh Township, in an article published in the 1970 issue of *Historic Kingston*, recorded a dignified moment in Black Tom's life = his relationship with W.L. Mackenzie, one of the leaders of the 1837 Rebellion in Upper Canada and brother-in-law to George Baxter. Isabel Baxter wrote:

William Lyon Mackenzie often visited the Baxters before and after the rebellion. One dark evening, he got off the train at Rideau Station and started to walk across the hills. A storm came up and he lost his way. In the distance he saw a light which he followed to the door of a cottage in the hills. It was owned by Black Tom, an escaped slave from the United States, who worked for George Baxter. When Mackenzie told him who he was, the old slave was overjoyed to meet the man who was fighting for liberty. He bowed over his hand, because to him, he stood out as the friend of the underdog. Black Tom took a lantern and guided him over the hills to Cataraqui Grange.

Black Tom lived near Kingston Mills, where Mackenzie must have disembarked from the train at some point after 1856 (when the tracks were laid) and 1861 (when Mackenzie died). The Baxter home was at some distance southwest of the village. There is no reason to doubt this story but family lore contains one more, which is difficult to substantiate:

Black Tom was to come into [Mackenzie's] life once more. This is a story which was never told at the time. It is the story of William Lyon Mackenzie's escape to the United States. When a price was on his head, he turned to his brother-in-law, George Baxter, for help. George had him hide in the third storey of Cataraqui Grange, where there were double walls. He hid behind these partitions, and although the red coats, as the family called them, searched the house and camped on the lawn, they didn't find him. My father told us that the soldiers followed Peter Baxter and his wife when they went for walks below the hill, thinking they were taking food to Mackenzie, who they thought might be hiding in one of the caves. One day my father told my sister, Anne (Mrs. McCallum) the real story which his grandfather had told him, but made him swear not to tell, as the family were in enough trouble already through their connection with William Lyon Mackenzie. This is the story = After hiding several days in the attic, Mackenzie donned great grandmother Baxter's clothes which was quite possible, as he was a small man. Black Tom took him to his cabin one dark night. Then on another, he guided him across the road and through the forest to Lake Ontario where a boat was waiting for him to take him across to the United States.

However, as H. Pearson Gundy, editor of *Historic Kingston*, added in a note to Isabel Baxter's article, Mackenzie's escape after the debacle at Montgomery's Inn on 7 December 1837 did not involve this geographical area, according to Mackenzie's reminiscences.

In 1863, the *British Whig* reported that Black Tom, "an escaped slave, an honest, hard working fellow with a large family of [six] children," lost his two cows to starvation during a general scarcity of hay in the area. He had lived in Pittsburgh Township for 20 years while

working for various farmers. An appeal was launched to his employers and neighbours to contribute to a fund to buy him a replacement cow. This was successful but a second cow he acquired was killed by a train. Things deteriorated to the point that, in the spring of 1870, he was incarcerated in the town jail for 30 days under the Vagrant Act. On 12 December, his tragic end "on the lonely and miserable rocks at Kingston Mills" was described in the newspaper:

Poor Old Man - Who in Kingston did not know old Black Tom, who lived a hermit's life with his interesting family (often to be seen on the streets and market) on the lonely and miserable rocks at Kingston Mills? Once or twice a week he would walk the tiresome six miles to market, with his small stock of brooms made by his own hands, the sale of which supported his family.

Then a year or more ago, he was missed, the infirmities of age having come surely upon him and taken away his strength, compelling him to stay at home, and allow his family in return to support him. Last week he wandered from home. For two days he was missing, and on the third his body was found where he had laid down and quietly suffered his soul to take its flight. Tom was once a slave, and had seen hard times before and since he made his escape. - Poor Tom!

Perhaps it is fortunate that he died before he could witness his wife having to turn in their sons, James and Anthony, for setting fire to a hay stack in the spring of 1872. The brothers received a sentence of five years in reformatory at Penetanguishene for arson. For some, this land of milk and honey had become one of bitter gall.



"The lonely and miserable rocks at Kingston Mills" as portrayed by Thomas Burrowes in 1830. With his back to the hamlet, the artist was looking over the Great Catarqui River towards Kingston on the horizon. The site of the Baxter home was more or less on the high land on the upper left. Archives of Ontario C 1-0-0-0-77

THE MILITARY AND SPORT:

The Fiftieth Anniversary Of The Constantine Arena at The Royal Military College

with Edward R. Grenda



Given its age and its unarguably prominent role in the development of Canada, Kingston displays numerous strands in its rich heritage tapestry. I am, of course, referring to its socio-cultural facets – from, among others, the arts, commerce, sport, education, military to politics. Almost invariably, there are occasions when several of these elements seamlessly intertwine especially during the celebration of keynote anniversaries. Such was the case on Friday, February 12, 2010 on the Royal Military College (RMC) campus when sport and the military were conjoined. The Royal Military College celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of the Constantine Arena. The Arena was named after Major-General Charles Francis Constantine who was the eleventh Commandant at RMC from 1925 to 1930. He combined a distinguished military career with an equally impressive career as an athlete and sport official. The Arena was officially opened on January 23, 1960.

The event was a pre-game ceremony at centre ice at a regular Ontario University League hockey game featuring RMC and the University of Toronto at the Constantine Arena. A major figure at the ceremony was a member of the current Kingston Historical Society Council, Peter Ginn, grandson of Major-General Constantine. During the ceremony, Mr. Ginn dropped the puck between the sticks of the captains of the RMC and University of Toronto teams to mark the anniversary. But it was not just an ordinary puck that he dropped for the ceremonial faceoff. It was the puck with a commemorative engraved plate that was dropped by his grandmother, Mrs. Marie Constantine, at the 1960 ceremonial faceoff inaugurating the then new rink. Mr. Ginn kept the puck from that opening night a half century ago. The first game was a contest between RMC and Loyola College from Montreal. Interestingly, Mr. Ginn was at the center ice ceremony with other family members when his grandmother was invited to drop the puck at the opening game.

At the fiftieth anniversary ceremony, Peter Ginn's mother, Mrs. Ann Ginn who is now a vibrant ninety years of age, was in attendance as well as Mr. Ginn's wife, Alison, and his first cousin, Suzanne Hamilton. As with most hockey ceremonies of this type, it was brief, yet poignant and memorable.

Shown from left to right: Douglas Hamilton (grandson of CF Constantine), Marie Constantine (wife of CF Constantine), Peter Ginn (grandson of CF Constantine) and Commandant CF Constantine.

Photo provided by Peter Ginn



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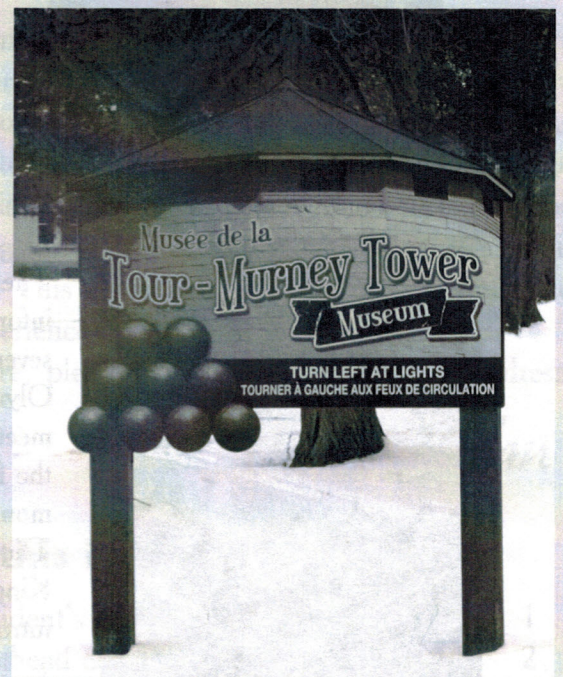
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The Society would like to recognize these members who passed away in 2009: George Vosper and Richard Bray, and Ruby Garrow who passed away in 2008.



A new sign and a new look for a familiar landmark.
(Photo provided by Jennifer McKendry)

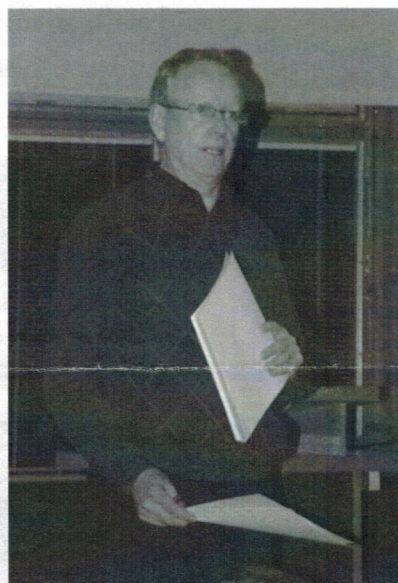
The 2010 Annual General Meeting of the Kingston Historical Society

with Edward R. Grenda

photos by Peter Ginn



The Society's AGM held on Wednesday, February 17, 2010 drew a capacity audience of 68 people at the Wilson Room in the Kingston Frontenac Public Library on Johnson Street. The meeting was approximately 35 minutes in length chaired by Society President, Alan MacLachlan. The book of reports distributed to the attending members crisply summarized the Society's activities and accomplishments during the past year. The Society Treasurer reviewed the Society's audited Financial Reports and noted that the Society's general financial picture was good. In response to a query from a member, President MacLachlan promised that the Society's Council would look into augmenting the Society's membership.



*Treasurer John Whiteley
presents the
Financial Report*

*and Society members
study it carefully.*



Society members enjoying the evening.

There was a "first" registered at the meeting. Member, Floyd Patterson, rose to inform those present that the Canadian Women's Hockey team was leading by several goals over Sweden at the end of the second period in the Vancouver Olympic Winter Games that were taking place at the same time as the Society's meeting. I have spoken to several Society's older members about this and this was the first time that a hockey score was announced at a Society general meeting, monthly or annual.

The meeting was followed by a fifteen minute documentary on the history of Kingston's Grand Theatre prepared by Anglin Productions in Kingston and introduced by Brian Porter from Brockville, better know as Sir John A.

Following the formal business and video presentation, a silent auction of books, a staple of the Society's Annual Meetings, took place. Douglas Petty, Councillor, took the lead in this undertaking as he has during the past decade.