



LIMELIGHT

Newsletter of the Kingston Historical Society
Kingston Ontario Canada

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Leo Grimshaw



Another busy month for the Society. Work on finalizing the printing and distribution of *Historic Kingston* continues at a fever pace, having been delayed by several factors beyond our control. The Murney Tower Museum is being prepared for opening, with new security systems in place. A new de-accessioning policy has been adopted by Council. Plans and arrangements for the Sir John A Memorial Service are near completion.

For long term planning, a survey has been circulated to all members either in paper form or available on the website. ***Everyone is urged to complete the survey and return it as soon as possible.***

Many late membership renewals have come in, for which we are very grateful. However, the search for new members and volunteers is continuous. Everyone can help by recruiting new members, both established Kingstonians and people who may be new to the city and wish to learn more about it. We are still looking for someone to come forward and volunteer for the position of Program Chair. In the meantime any suggestions for speakers can be forwarded to me, together with the contact information and potential subject matter for the suggested speaker.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS *of historical interest*

The Kingston Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society will meet at the Kingston Seniors Centre, 56 Francis St., on Saturday, May 21st at 10 a.m. Bob Thomas, one of our members, will speak on "From Cloth to the Cloth: Archibald Stevenson - a Presbyterian Missionary to Canada". Visitors welcome.

Further details at www.ogs.on.ca/kingston
mmacdermaid@xplornet.ca

Jane's Walk - Kingston

Come for a stimulating selection of tours on a variety of subjects throughout Kingston including the Inner Harbour (both English and French), Barriefield Heritage District, Williamsville Main Street, Old Sydenham Heritage District, the Insane Asylum and Church of the Good Thief.

When: Saturday May 7th & Sunday May 8th, morning and afternoon, rain or shine

Who: a co-ordinated effort of neighbourhood associations and community organizations

Info: For details on the walks, start time, location, duration, accessibility see <http://janeswalk.org/canada/kingston/> or contact Kingston co-ordinator John Grenville through the website.

KHS Meeting **Wednesday, May 18, 2016** **Seniors Centre**

John Cartwright: Success for political refugees – the Cartwright family in Kingston, 1792 to the present.

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Can You Escape From Murney Tower?

Celebrate the Grand Opening
of our newest (and oldest)
escape room on May 20!

(Family friendly)



Advance bookings available now at improbableescapes.com

THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established 1893

LIMELIGHT is published nine times a year, September to May.

Please forward submissions to the Editor Betty Andrews. betty.andrews@gmail.com

Reprinting of articles from the *Limelight* must be accompanied by an acknowledgement of the Society, the issue and date. All photo credits and by-lines must be retained.

The KHS gratefully acknowledges the support of our sponsors in producing *Limelight*.



KHS MEETINGS take place at 7:30 pm on the third Wednesday of the month, September to May, except in December, when the meeting takes the form of an awards ceremony and gala, and is held at a different time and location. Until further notice, meetings will be at the Seniors Centre, 56 Francis Street.

At regular meetings refreshments are available; a small donation is appreciated.

Two annual events are held celebrating Canada's First Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald (1815—1891): a formal dinner on the Saturday closest to January 11th honouring his birth, and a service on June 6th at the Cataract Cemetery National Historic Site commemorating his death.

2016-17 KHS Executive Council

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Feedback welcome.

The Kingston Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.



NEW MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!

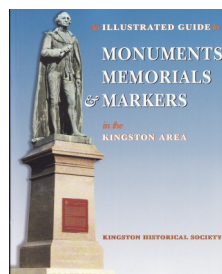
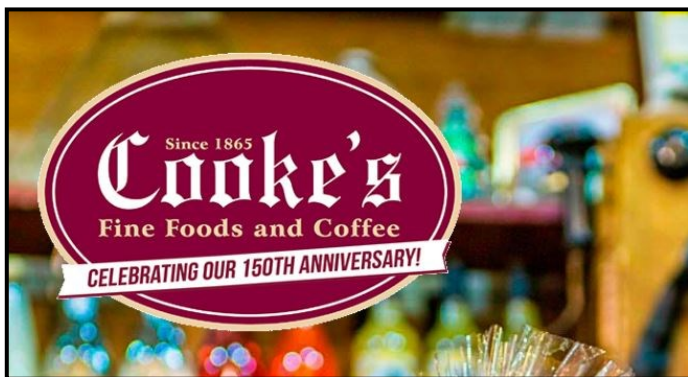
Membership includes an invitation to attend monthly meetings; nine issues of *Limelight*, delivered electronically or in hardcopy; and a copy of *Historic Kingston*, the KHS annual journal containing the substance of the papers delivered at the monthly meetings. Membership also includes free admission to the Murney Tower, Kingston's oldest museum; and a discount at some of our sponsors' places of business.

Sponsors receive monthly advertising in *Limelight* and, it is hoped, the patronage of KHS members.

MEMBERSHIP RATES

\$50 Individual	
\$60 Family	\$60 Institutional
\$25 Student	\$300 Sponsor

If you are interested in the advantages of being a sponsor, please speak to the president or to the membership chair.



Book Sale!

An Illustrated Guide to Monuments, Memorials, & Markers in the Kingston Area by John H. Grenville, David C. Kasserra, Jennifer McKendry, William J. Patterson, and Edward H. (Ted) Storey. Published by the Kingston Historical Society, 2000, Paperback, 244 pages. This book includes texts of more than 190 plaques, monuments, and memorials.

Illustrations, additional information, related markers, and readings are provided for each entry. Visitors and residents alike will find this a fascinating and useful guide to Kingston's historic past. Markers are grouped geographically for ease in touring, assisted by helpful maps.

Regular price: \$25.00 plus \$8.00 shipping. Sale price May through September, 2016: \$12.00 plus \$8.00 shipping. There is no shipping charge if the book is picked up at the May, September, or October 2016 meetings of the Society. Orders can be sent by mail to the Kingston Historical Society, P.O. Box 54, Kingston ON K7L 4V6, e-mail: kingstonhs@gmail.com, or via the website: www.kingstonhistoricalsociety.com

STILL STANDING:

Looking at Regional Architecture with Jennifer McKendry, Architectural Historian

In the mid-19th century, Portsmouth Village (since 1952 a part of the City of Kingston) had a significant number of Irish Catholic families in need of religious services. They had to make the long trek by walking, horseback or buggies to churches in Kingston, in particular St Mary's Cathedral built in the 1840s. It was not until 1892 that the cornerstone of **Church of the Good Thief** was laid by Bishop Cleary at 743 King St W. in Portsmouth.

After such a long wait, it seems ironical that the church, now closed, is under consideration on how it should be used in the future. Of course, in the 1890s, optimism ran high and this was no modest village church – rather it was a bold essay in Romanesque Revival with strong round arches by one of the finest architects of Ontario's late 19th-century Catholic churches, namely Joseph Connolly of Toronto. His command of medieval revival styles is demonstrated at the Church of Our Lady (1877) in Guelph, St Michael the Archangel (1886) in Gananoque, Church of the Holy Name of Jesus (1887) in Kingston Mills and the new front on St Mary's Cathedral plus its chapel (1890) in Kingston, to name only a few.

Quarried locally, limestone was shaped by convicts in the stone workshops of the nearby penitentiary but the church was constructed by free workmen. It was not until 1952 that a statue was added to the church's front to explain in three-dimensions that the good thief was St Dismas, bound by ropes. Crucified next to Christ, he sought redemption, an inspiration for the convicts in KP, as the Bishop made clear when laying the cornerstone: "That the heart of Christ Crucified may more quickly and more efficaciously be inclined towards criminals paying the penalty of offended justice."

Also of architectural importance is the manse of 1895 with its red brick chimneys ornamented with crosses.



top to bottom

- A front porch was added in 1997, photo J. McKendry©
- Note the iron fringe on the church roof ridge and the brick manse with its open verandahs in an early painting, which shows the asymmetry created by
- The nave's exposed wood ceiling and gallery add richness to the interior,
- photo J. McKendry©

*Speaker's Corner
by Lou Grimshaw*

The General Meeting of the KHS on 20 April was attended by over 50 people. The speaker was Lucinda Bray, who spoke on Daily Life in the 1940s in Kingston's Wartime Housing Neighbourhood.

The paper was in effect a sequel to John Grenville's January paper on Wartime Housing. Lucinda described how the area was thrown up almost instantly in 6 months in 1941-42 to house workers at the Alcan plant and others. She described the houses, their construction, and location in the community then known as "Kingston Heights" (later "Kingscourt"). She further described community life as it developed, with many activities and few services. Hundreds of houses were built but there were no grocery stores, transit stops, police or a public school. By the end of the war, the original plan to dismantle the "temporary" wartime housing was changed and the properties were sold to tenants and others. Through a series of historical photos and maps, she illustrated how the streetscape remains some 75 years later despite minor changes in the dwellings.

The subsequent animated question period reflected the interest generated by Lucinda's account of an historical period within the lifetimes of almost all of those present.

Upcoming KHS Papers:

18 May: John Cartwright - "The Early Cartwright Family in Kingston"

21 September: Marcus Letourneau - "Ronald W. Way".



Mayor Bryan Paterson, and Eva Barnes from the City Hall tour guiding programme, welcome Girl Guides to Kingston's historic civic landmark on April 4th. Photo Christina Thomson.

MURNEY TOWER



Another great season for the Society's own museum is almost upon us. This year many improvements to the Murney Tower are being realized thanks to a generous Heritage grant from the City of Kingston. In addition to such features as a new greeting desk, enlarged video display, and improved security system, there are also exciting events taking place over the summer. The museum has the honour of being selected as the kicking-off location for the 2016 Kick and Push festival. The Cellar Door Project, which has previously mounted performances at many famous Kingston locations, has written a historic illustration play for the Tower, which it will be performing nightly at the museum during the festival. The museum has also partnered with Improbable Escapes, a local company offering Kingston the global phenomenon of escape rooms. After regular museum hours the entire Tower will be transformed into a large escape room.

Come and enjoy Kingston's oldest museum and see the changes. The museum is open every day from Thursday, May 21st until Labour Day. Hours 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. Admission is free for KHS Members; Seniors, Military and Children \$4; Families with children \$12; Group rates available.

The Tower is located at the corner of Barrie and King streets

murneytower@gmail.com (613) 507-5181

Marine Museum



After thousands of volunteer hours by the Marine Museums restoration boat building crew, they set sail in Kingston Harbour. She is named after her last owner, the late Angus Mowat (father of Farley) who rescued the boat and then re-rigged her as a sloop. The restoration was preceded by extensive research. Her symmetrical lines are just visible.

So what is a Curator Anyway?

Maurice D Smith

Curator Emeritus

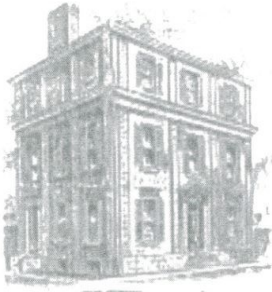
First and certainly important for me is that it is one of the best jobs in the world. Now, having said that, there are some challenges, the first being that you must have a deep knowledge – in my case, of maritime history. You can use the Lawrence Olivier technique, start with the exterior details – world history, and then work into the interior, the regional maritime narratives. Or, the other way around. But whatever technique is used, you cannot get by with just local or international history alone; the two histories are inter-related.

Mariners were among the first global traders and they carried their ideas to other countries and brought new ideas back from them to their own ports of call. A good example of such imported ideas is seen in the “Mowat” boat, a beautiful clean-lined twenty-five footer in the Marine Museum collection, built near the west end of Prince Edward County around 1909. These wooden boats were built in the hundreds, but now only a few survive. They ‘fished’ out of eastern Lake Ontario, and in larger numbers, out of Collingwood on Georgian Bay. The design was later shipped to a fishing community on Lake Winnipeg. It was Mr. Watts, a man in his late 20s, who brought his boatbuilding skills and the designs he knew to our Lakes from Sligo, Ireland, in the mid-19th century

A curator will take the historical narrative about the lives and activities of those who lived in coastal communities and match it to what is known about the boat – its construction and how it was used – and then try to answer one of many questions: why this particular object provided a successful living for hundreds who populated our ports along the Lakes.

Curatorship in a maritime museum, as in many museums, is the mix of written history from many sources and a technological and scientific knowledge of objects – the historical narrative and the material culture. Out of this, exciting exhibits are mounted and public programming is developed.

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PRIME MINISTER MACKENZIE KING SPOKE AT 1941 SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD CEREMONY

By George Henderson

Seventy-five years ago, on June 7, 1941, a day after the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Sir John A. Macdonald, a ceremony was held at his statue on King Street to remember the life and career of our first Prime Minister. The speakers included Prime Minister Mackenzie King, former Prime Minister Arthur Meighen, and the Minister of Justice, Ernest Lapointe. A large crowd attended the afternoon ceremony. Later King visited Cataraqui Cemetery to place a wreath on Macdonald's grave.

In the days prior to the speech, Mackenzie King's diary contains several references to the writing of the speech. These entries indicate that the Prime Minister worked

particularly hard on the preparation of the speech.¹

The Prime Minister said:

"The fiftieth anniversary of the death of Sir John A. Macdonald has seemed to my colleagues and myself an occasion on which a national tribute should be paid the memory of one whose name and achievement has become an imperishable part of the heritage of Canada.

A formidable opponent and later, an honoured colleague for Sir John Macdonald, Joseph Howe of Nova Scotia, reminded his day and generation that "a wise nation preserves its records, gathers up its muniments, decorates the tombs of its illustrious dead, repairs its great public structures, and fosters national pride and love of country by perpetual references to the sacrifices and glories of the past."

It is in the spirit so eloquently expressed in these words that we, of another generation, old and young, different religious and political faiths, welcome this opportunity to commemorate the life and work of the first Prime Minister of Canada. We are proud to be assembled today in the city with which his great career was so intimately associated, and to surround, on this anniversary, the monument which the citizens of Kingston have erected to his memory. When this brief service is concluded, the wreaths we place on the tomb of the illustrious dead will be an expression, as he would have wished, of our common patriotism.

The union of two historic races into one young and vigorous nation, assisting in arms the other nations of the British Commonwealth in the preservation of freedom, is a high achievement, and a very noble example to many other parts of the world. This valorous role is, today, Canada's greatest gift to mankind. That of it too Sir John A. Macdonald should be a part is the supreme tribute we pay to his memory today.²

As far as can be determined Mackenzie King was the first Prime Minister to visit Kingston to specifically deliver an address in memory of Macdonald. In later years several Prime Ministers including Arthur Meighen, John Diefenbaker, Brian Mulroney, John Turner, Kim Campbell, Paul Martin, and Stephen Harper have visited the city to attend events connected with Macdonald.

¹Archives and Library Canada, William Lyon Mackenzie King fonds, J13 series, Mackenzie King diary, June 3-7, 1941.

² Commemoration Service – Fiftieth anniversary of the death of Sir John A. Macdonald, June 6, 1891. Kingston, June 7, 1941. [Kingston, 1941], pp. 9-12.



THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY presents

The Graveside Commemoration Service for Sir John A. Macdonald

Monday, June 6th, 2016 at 1:30 pm
Cataraqui Cemetery National Historic Site
927 Purdy's Mill Road, Kingston ON

*The public is invited to join the Kingston Historical Society,
 members of the Fort Henry Guard,
 Bellevue House historical ambassadors,
 representatives of Cataraqui Cemetery National Historic Site,
 and many special guests and dignitaries
 from local, provincial and national organizations.
 Wreaths will be laid, surrounded by solemn formal pageantry
 to mark the 125th anniversary of the passing
 of Sir John A. Macdonald, Canada's first Prime Minister.*

Guest Speaker:

"Sir John A.'s Judicious Role - The Rideau Street House History"
Donna M. Ivey, Author of *from Parlour to Parliament*

Information: Alan MacLachlan, Commemoration Service Chair
 (613) 549-8841 or (613) 453-7078 (cell) alaguide20@gmail.com

Alternate location in unfavourable weather:
 Christ Church Parish Centre, 990 Sydenham Road, Kingston

