

# LIMELIGHT

Vol. 2: No 2  
February  
2000

NEWSLETTER OF THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As KHS enters into its third century of existence, I consider it a privilege to become your President. When I was approached late last year to serve in this capacity I was honoured that the council had confidence in a relatively new member to carry out this most important task. I look forward to the support of Council and all members of KHS over the next two years.

KHS's strength has always been the dedicated services of volunteers on committees, projects, and the executive. We have been exceptionally fortunate that these folks have always come forward when needed -- and 1999 was no exception.

Perhaps, the major undertaking for the millennium year is the "plaque book," or more properly, **An Illustrated Guide to Monuments and Markers in the Kingston Area**. The committee - John Grenville, David Kasserra, Jennifer McKendry, William J. Patterson, Edward H. Storey -- has devoted much energy to ensure the publication of this volume by the spring of this year. Moreover, as part of this project, life-members were asked to donate funds towards the publication of the book. The response has been overwhelming and to date we have received over \$2700. I would like to personally thank all those who contributed to this worthwhile project.

Similarly, the Sir John A. Macdonald ceremony -- under the able stewardship of George Henderson -- continued its successful record. Also, Jennifer McKendry ably directed the Portsmouth Village Plaque project, another major undertaking in which Portsmouth "villagers" played a significant role, raising \$300 towards the official unveiling and generally supporting it with unflinching enthusiasm.

Looking to the future, a number of new initiatives have been suggested: local field trips to study the heritage of the Kingston area; a conference of local historical societies; student awards for essays on Kingston heritage; a permanent home for KHS. Finally, maintaining and active enthusiastic membership will continue to be a challenge and I ask all of you to encourage new members to join. (Warren Everett).

## NOTE: FEBRUARY MEETING

The next meeting of KHS will be held at 7.30, Wednesday, 16 February, in the Wilson Room, Kingston Public Library. Speaker: Professor James Pritchard, Department of History, Queen's University. Topic: The Kingston Dry-Dock, the City's newest historical artifact.

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# Kingston Historical Society

ESTABLISHED 1893 ISSN: 1488-5565



**Limelight** is published nine times a year - September to May. Copyright rests in Kingston Historical Society. Submissions should be addressed to the editor. **Past President:** Desmond O'Meara. **President:** Warren Everett. **Vice-President:** Brian Osborne. **Secretary:** Paul Ross. **Treasurer:** Mr. George Dillon. **Councillors:** Carl Bray; Jane Errington; Lou Grimshaw; Alan MacLachlan; Sarah Meharg; Doug Petty; Jack Pike; Stewart Renfrew; Barbara Snyder.

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**Editors:** Jane Errington - (613) 533-2150 and Brian Osborne - Phone (613) 533-6042

## AND ONE FROM THE EDITORS...

Douglas Glover has written a fascinating story set in the landscape and times of Loyalist eastern Ontario -- **The Life and Times of Captain N.** (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1993). In it, he has one of his protagonists ponder why the native peoples speak of dreams, myths, and legends in a way unimaginable to Euro-Canadian writers and readers of history books. His conclusion is simple: "Savages dream in order to remember; we write in order to forget."

Why are we so preoccupied with formal structures of remembering? What are we afraid of forgetting? Think of all the mnemonic devices we construct around us: burial markers; monuments; archives; museums; plaques. And now the issue -- in Kingston as elsewhere -- is encapsulating the present to preserve it for posterity. Time-capsules are being buried everywhere...only to be forgotten.

That must be the ultimate irony: forgetting where you put your commemorative time-capsule! According to the International Time Capsule Society (ITCS) whose "world headquarters" is at Atlanta's Oglethorpe University, "Time capsules usually are lost due to thievery, secrecy or poor planning." Currently, the ICTS is in search of nine time capsules of which little is known.

Kingston nearly lost one. On 8 April 1888, St. Andrew's Church burned down. Construction began almost immediately, but where was the corner stone of

the original church erected in 1820? It couldn't be located. It had been moved during a major expansion in 1837. Eventually the missing stone was found: it contained a lead box holding church documents in an "old-fashioned square bottle," eleven "rare and ancient" coins, and the brass plate recording the 1820 construction and the 1837 addition. The corner stone of the present St. Andrew's was laid on 24 May 1889 -- complete with new memorabilia.

And now the Greater Kingston Chamber of Commerce, Alcan Aluminum Kingston Works, and the City of Kingston are sponsoring a time-capsule to record "life in Kingston at the turn of the century. An aluminum sleeve within a sleeve will contain items that reflect life in Kingston in 2000. It will be sealed as part of this year's First Night festivities and buried later in a special ceremony.

Several issues emerge. Where will it be buried? Surely not another piece of cultural bric-a-brac to take away another piece of City Park? Why not in front of City Hall? At least we'll all know where it is!

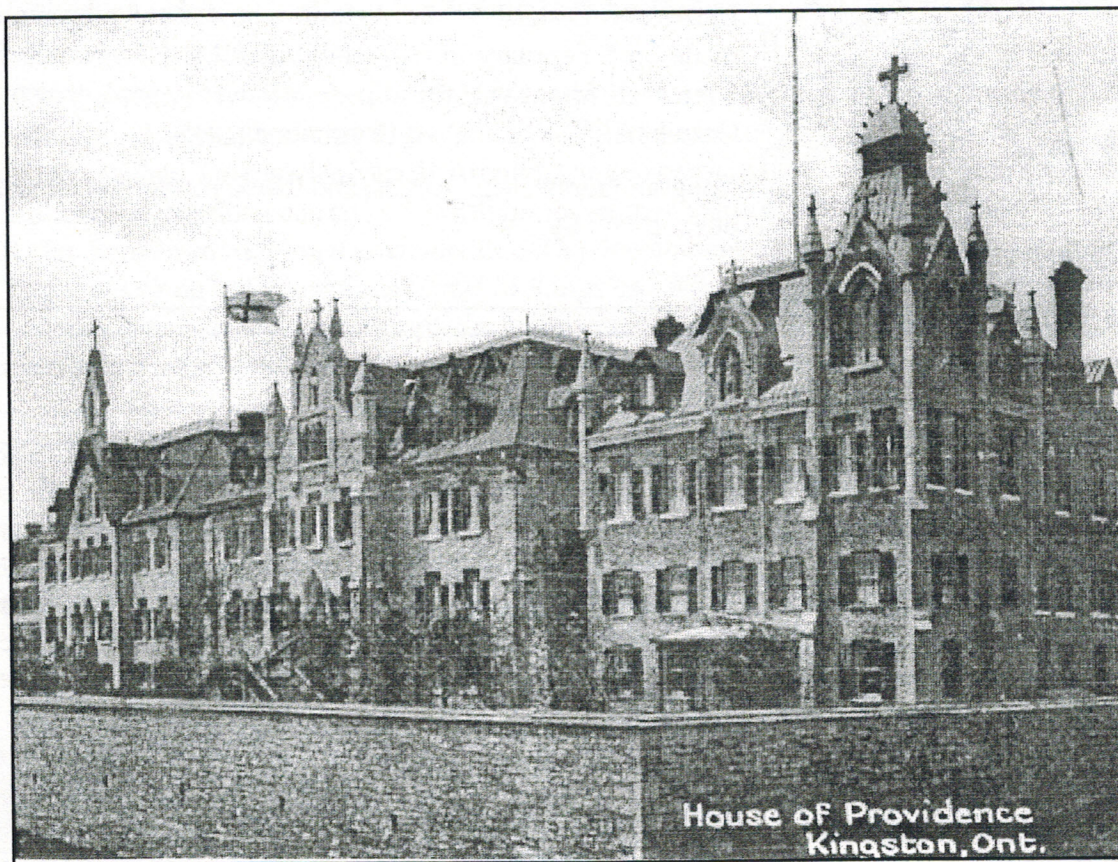
And what should go in it? To date, suggestions range from the prosaic to the predictable: city flag; map of the new city; commemorative coin; **The Ice Storm** book; newspapers; telephone directory; city pin; Queen's tam; messages from VIPs; a "description of our latest computer capabilities"! At least the "Tragically Hip" make the list. So, why not a copy of the most recent book on Kingston: Margaret Angus's **The Kingston Connection: The Story of Kingston as the Capital of the United Provinces of Canada?**

If you have ideas, contact the Chamber of Commerce or fax 548-4743.



## THE SISTERS OF PROVIDENCE PRESERVE THEIR HERITAGE

The Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul -- the only congregation of "women religious" founded in Kingston -- came into existence on 13th December, 1861. Since that time they have expanded their ministry across Canada from Montreal to Vancouver and have missions in Guatemala and Peru. In Kingston, they have been involved in education, health-care, and other social ministry such as the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the operation of group homes. The House of Providence was their first institution in the city of Kingston in 1861. In 1970, the name was changed to Providence Manor. In 1910, St. Mary's of the Lake Orphanage opened. During World War II, the military used the building and, in 1964, it re-opened as St. Mary's of the Lake Hospital. In 1991, Providence Manor and St. Mary's of the Lake Hospital formed Providence Continuing Care Centre. The third large Kingston institution of the Sisters of Providence is Providence Motherhouse -- often referred to as Heathfield. This 1932 structure houses the general administration of the Congregation, a retirement home for its members and, the Providence Spirituality Centre.

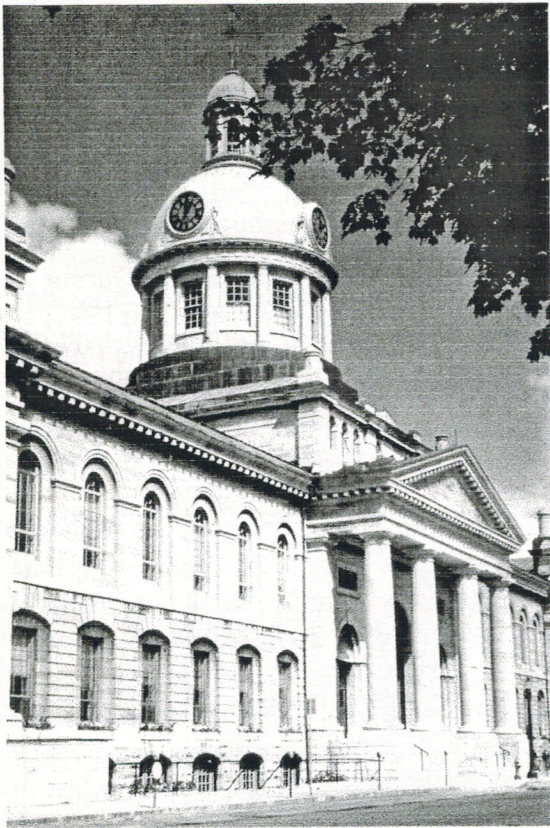


Over the past couple of years, the Congregation has been engaged in a major renovation project. Part of the renovations included the establishment of the "Printing Room Museum" at Providence Manor. The sisters operated the Printing Room -- or Guardian Office -- from 1898 to 1989. In May of 1999, they officially opened the Museum. It is open for visits by appointment.

Another part of the renovations provided for the establishment of a new Heritage Room Providence Motherhouse. This room, which was opened on 13th December, 1999, tells the story of the Congregation through material culture. The Archives of the Congregation have benefitted from the renovations and have been able to expand in size to accommodate the records and the staff comfortably.

For more information about the heritage of the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul, visit their website: [www.providence.ca](http://www.providence.ca), or contact Sister Gayle Desarmia, Archivist (e-mail: [archives@providence.ca](mailto:archives@providence.ca); PO Box 427, Kingston ON K7L 4W4).





## CONGRATULATIONS

For some four decades, Margaret Angus has been the doyenne of Kingston's community of historical scholars. For many of us, her **Old Stones of Kingston** was our introduction to this distinctive place and it has stood the test of time as a good read. And she is still demonstrating her skills as a scholar and communicator. Her most recent book is **The Kingston Connection: The Story of Kingston as the Capital of the United Provinces of Canada** (Quarry Press). Funded by several local donors, the Frontenac Historic Foundation, and the Canada Millennium Partnership Program, some 4,000 copies will be distributed to Grade 7 and 8 students in the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic School Board and the Limestone District School Board. The formal presentation was made on 5 February in City Hall when Mrs. Angus handed over copies of **The Kingston Connection** to Board chairmen Wilf Garrah (ALCSB) and Ross Drummond (LDSB).

Congratulations, Mrs. Angus, and thank you for yet another gift to our community.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 1999 AGM was held on Thursday, 27 January 2000 in the KPL's Wilson Room. Members were informed of the year's activities by reports from the outgoing President, Desmond O'Meara, whose energetic and wise leadership was formally recognized. The Chairs of the various KHS committees presented reports and warm thanks were extended to the outgoing KHS Secretary, Marjorie Simmons, Membership Secretary, Margaret Burdsall, and Councillor, Mary Clarke. Particular reference was made to those who served us in such important KHS ventures as the Monuments and Markers volume, the Macdonald Commemoration, the Murney Tower Museum -- and the splendid participation of the Portsmouth Villagers in the erection of the plaque in their community.

A crucial matter for the future well being of KHS was the establishment of the council for 2000: President, Warren Everett; Vice President, Brian Osborne; Past-President, Desmond O'Meara; Secretary, Paul Ross; Co-editors of **Historic Kingston** and **Limelight**, Jane Errington and Brian Osborne; Treasurer, George Dillon; Museum Committee Chair, Ed Grenda; Membership Secretary, Barbara Snyder; Programme Chairman, Alan MacLachlan; Awards Committee Chair, Jack Pike; and Councillors Lou Grimshaw, Carl Bray, Sarah Meharg, Doug Petty and Stewart Renfrew.

The final business matter was a motion moved by Marjorie Simmons authorizing the establishment of a Finance Committee to be chaired by Warren Everett.

Following adjournment, members indulged themselves in a light-hearted quiz on the microscopic details of Kingston's streetscapes, with prizes generously provided by the Kingston Brewing Company.

## NEW MEMBERS

In line with our incoming president's admonition that we seek out new members, it is a pleasure to welcome three people to the ranks of the society: Barbara Snyder, who is also taking on the role of KHS membership secretary; and Anna and Augustus (Gus) Dierick. Welcome all!



## OUR PARTNERS IN HERITAGE

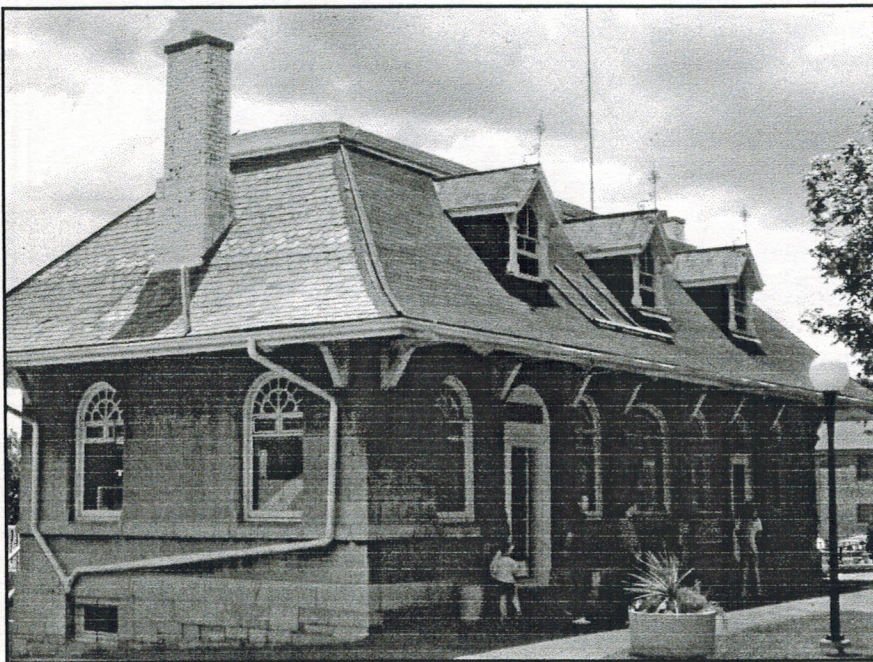
Over the last few weeks, several meetings have demonstrated the broader community of interests, changing approaches, and new initiatives in areas of interest to KHS.

On 25 January, a public meeting addressed Phase 2 of the **Lemoine Point Master Plan**. This conservation area is now within the city of Kingston. Contributions of the KHS to the planning process so far were acknowledged and the master plan recognizes "cultural resources" as one of three categories for future action. Eventually, there will be interpretive centres, trails, landscapes, and programs to "enhance understanding and appreciation for this area's geological, archaeological, biological, and cultural heritage."

On 27 January, the **Kingston Regional Arts Council (KRAC)** and the **Kingston Economic Development Corporation (KEDCO)** introduced their "Kingston Cultural Initiative," a two-year project funded by a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The aims include bringing together cultural groups (arts, heritage, museums), individual artists, educational institutions, and businesses to produce a variety of "cultural tourism packages" distinctive to Kingston.

On January 28, the **Kingston Association of Museums, Historic Sites, and Art Galleries (KAM)** held its monthly meeting. Several matters were discussed: (1) The role of non-profit groups in the "Kingston Cultural Initiative" (2) Don Richan, Queen's University Archivist, urged participation in the Heritage Fair, May 11 and 12, MacArthur College. Discussion centred on workshops rather than exhibits and bus-shuttles to "off-campus" sites. Should KHS plan to offer something that would attract a good audience? (3) KAM has a representative working with KEDCO's "packaging" of educational visits to Kingston. What about KHS? (4) KAM is planning to start some "professional development" workshops for members and other interested parties. That's it for January 2000! (Prepared by Barbara Snyder).

## RESTORING THE KINGSTON-PEMBROKE STATION



The Kingston Economic Development Corporation Tourist Information Office located in the former "K&P" Station plans to restore this historic building back to its original architectural splendour. With funding applications in to the Trillium Foundation and the Canada Millennium Partnership Program, the proposal has several objectives: educate Kingston's 2.5 million visitors about local history; to provide skills in Heritage Restoration for students in the Building Construction Internship Program; to improve the quality of visitor experience and possibly extend the length of their stay; to restore a piece of national history and rail heritage.

For more information contact Anne-Marie Harbec, Manager Visitor

Services, Kingston Tourist Information Office, 209 Ontario St., Kingston K7L 2Z1, 1 888 8555 4555, or [tourism@kingstonarea.on.ca](mailto:tourism@kingstonarea.on.ca). Also, see their web site, [www.kingstoncanada.com](http://www.kingstoncanada.com).



## BOOK CORNER

The October 1999 issue of **Limelight** identified a new book of interest to all students of Kingston, Queen's, and social change in Canada: **Their Leaven of Influence: Deans of Women at Queen's University, 1916-1996**, by Maureen Garvie and Jennifer Johnson.

The subject of lively debate from its beginnings, the office of the Dean of Women at Queen's was intended to support women students in a largely male environment. When Caroline McNeill took the position in 1916, some 200 women on campus made up less than a fifth of the student enrolment. By the office's end in 1996, over half the university's undergraduates were women. Over the span of nine decades, through a time of unprecedented feminist transitions, Queen's eight women deans were catalysts in the institution and in the lives of many thousands of women. Each dean brought unique qualities to the office to match the demands of her era.

**Caroline McNeill** (1918-1925), previously Dean of Women at Bates College, Maine, and the wife of a future vice principal, William McNeill, counselled at her desk in Kingston in the mornings and in the afternoons kept in touch with city landladies. Brilliant and lively **Hilda Laird** (Arts '18), dean from 1925 to 1934, took responsibility for students little younger than herself. She moved into the splendid new women's residence, Ban Righ Hall, when it opened after a decade of heroic fund-raising by Alumnae.

Flame-haired, sophisticated **Winnifred Kydd** (1934-39) fended off "panty raids" by male students! She must have found aspects of the job a profound contrast to her prior experiences as a Canadian delegate to the Disarmament Conference and president of the National Council of Women. **Alice Vibert Douglas** (1939-59), even while she was a leader in her field of astrophysics and colleague of international giants like Rutherford and Eddington, spent two decades the height of her professional life looking after the needs of first-year women. **Beatrice Bryce** (1959-71), living in the spacious Victoria Hall women's residence after it opened in



1965, remained firm in the belief that career women could still be "lady-like." As the wave of baby boomers reached the campus, **Evelyn Reid** (1971-80) found the dramatic changes of the sexual revolution created a new climate for all. The work of **Elsbeth Baugh** (1980-93), an experienced psychologist, led to the establishment of the Queen's Human Rights Office. By the time **Pamela Dickey Young** took office in 1993, the number of women undergraduates made individual counselling obsolete. A "position of influence rather than of authority" was no longer viable for dealing with issues of gender inequity. Amid controversy, the office was phased out, and the university replaced the Dean of Women with the University Advisor on Equity.

**Their Leaven of Influence**, the story of all eight deans, grew out of a research thesis by Jennifer Johnson and was further developed by Maureen Garvie (MA '71). Designed by Peter Dorn, it joins two earlier CWA books, **Still Running** (1987) and **A Generous Loyalty** (1992). A second component of the project is an undergraduate academic award to honour the deans of women, funded by book sales and contributions from private and corporate donors. The first award will be made in 2001.

**Their Leaven of Influence** (\$20) is available through Queen's Alumni Affairs (613-533-2060/1-800-267-7837), Campus Bookstore, or Chapters.



## MILLENNIUM PROJECT of the KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO MONUMENTS, MEMORIALS & MARKERS IN THE KINGSTON AREA

The KHS Plaque Committee - John Grenville, David Kasserra, Jennifer McKendry, Bill Patterson, and Ted Storey - is hard at work on the final editing for this book - with design help from Peter Dorn. It records the texts of more than 180 plaques, monuments, and memorials erected by various sponsors including the Kingston Historical Society. The markers are grouped geographically for ease in touring, assisted by helpful maps. More than 180 interesting illustrations are found throughout the *Guide*. The release date is projected as spring 2000: look for it at KHS meetings and in bookstores, as well as by mail order. Here is the entry for

#### ANN BAILLIE BUILDING

One of the earliest nurses' residences in Canada, this stately building symbolizes the development and recognition of nursing as a profession. The home was completed in 1904 for students at the Kingston General Hospital's nursing school, who cared for patients in the wards and operating rooms as part of their training. The building was later named in honour of Ann Baillie, a graduate of the school and its superintendent from 1924 to 1942. Here as elsewhere, a place of their own helped nurses shape a professional role indispensable to health care within the hospital and in the community.

*Location:* George Street

*Type:* Bronze plaque on stone base

*Sponsor:* Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada

*Date Erected:* 1999

*Additional Information:* The nurses' training program at the Kingston General Hospital traces its beginnings to 1886 when the Hospital accepted applications from young women seeking training as nurses. The nursing graduates residing in the Kingston area formed the Kingston Nurses' Alumnae in 1896 and began raising money for the construction of a nurses' home so that the nurses being trained could live outside the hospital. These efforts resulted in the laying of the cornerstone on August 11th 1903 for the new residence. When the home was finished in 1904, it provided accommodation for 26. The stone building in the Ionic Order was designed by William Newlands. A second residence was opened in 1927 providing space for 150 students, with a third nurses' residence completed in 1969 for 306 students. In 1974 the Ontario Government transferred responsibility for training of nurses to the community college system thereby closing KGH's Nursing School. *Readings:* Angus 1973a; Crothers 1973; Lull 1991; Wishart 1997.



Postcard cancelled in 1912. McKendry collection

article contributed by Jennifer McKendry



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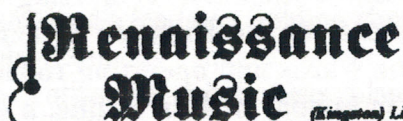
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