



LIMELIGHT

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NEWSLETTER OF THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

We have had an excellent year thus far and I would like to thank all of the members who have put forth so much effort to ensure our successes. But as this will be the last issue of **Limelight** until the fall, I would like to spend a few lines on hobbyhorses and some miscellaneous rambling.

First, a vote of thanks to Margaret and Bernard Burdsall who have played a key role in the Society and especially with the distribution and management of **Historic Kingston**. Sadly, following this year's issue, Margaret and Bernard will leave the Publications committee. I would like to thank them both very much for excellent service to the Society. Their good efforts and wise counsel will be missed.

Which leads me to my second point, involvement. A healthy society needs a full and active participation by its general membership. At present, there are vacancies in the Murney Tower National Historic Site and the Publications committees. Both of these committees would welcome your support. Please contact the Editors or me if you are interested.

And, finally, there is the matter of raw numbers. Did you know that the Gananoque Historical Society has in excess of 1000 members -- 1,118 in fact? At first, I thought it was an optimistic misprint in their February 2000 newsletter. But it's true. We, on the other hand, currently boast a mere 267 members. Yet, in the 1970s, KHS had over 600 members and was considered the leading historical society in Ontario. We had been recognized with an "Award of Merit" from the American Association for State and Local History and a second award from this group in 1967. Similar awards followed from the Canadian Historical Association in 1965 and from the OHS in 1968. We have a rich tradition of leading the way and continue to do so today. We need to continue our vitality, and one sure way of doing this is to increase the membership. I offer a challenge to each of you over the summer months to bring in a new member in September.

Nevertheless, despite our size we are a vital organization and between now and September there are a number of events not to be missed. Wednesday, 24 May will be KHS members' day at the Murney Tower. Helen Cooper will be the guest speaker at our

annual gathering at the graveside of Sir John A. Macdonald at 2.30 p.m. on the 6 June. And this year is the 150th anniversary of Cataraqui Cemetery, with their commemorations in August.

In closing, I wish all members an enjoyable summer and I look forward to seeing you again in September -- together with some new members by your side. (Warren Everett).

NOTE: MAY MEETING

The next meeting of KHS will be at 7.30, Wednesday, 17 May, the Wilson Room, Kingston Public Library.

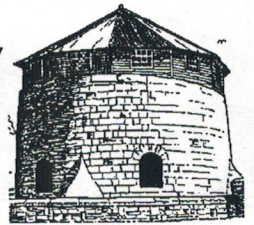
Speaker: Mr. Mark Thompson
Topic: "St. Mary's Cathedral's Stained Glass Windows."

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Kingston Historical Society

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Memberships: Individual, \$35; Family, \$40; Institutional, \$40; Student, \$25.

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AND ONE FROM THE EDITORS...

In August 1912, *The Canadian Courier* addressed the current practice of commemoration:

It is a question if the simple statue lends itself to this climate. There is something peculiarly unfitting in the bronze statue of a bare-headed man struggling with the icy blasts of winter. It might be better for us to substitute memorials for statues.



This angst about "marking" history was taking place at a time when Quebec was engaged in an active programme of didactic statuary. Indeed, such was the growing enthusiasm for creating outdoor pantheons of monumentalized heroes and national stories that the period 1870-1914 has been said to have experienced "statumania"! Certainly, the establishment of the "Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada" in

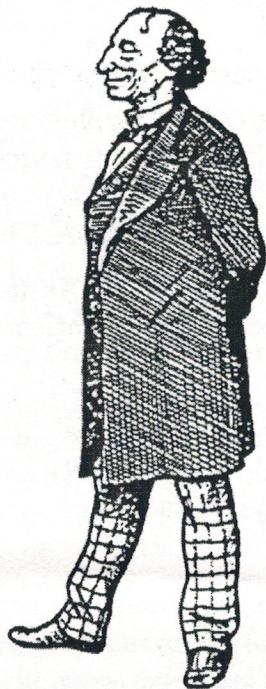
1919 was intended to ensure that the Dominion did not flag in telling its own version of the national story.

Given Kingston's role in the chronicle of Canada, it is not surprising that we are well served with plaques and monuments -- over 190 of them! And now -- thanks to John Grenville, David Kasserra, Jennifer McKendry, William Patterson, and Edward Storey -- our most recent publication, **An Illustrated Guide to Monuments, Memorials & Markers in the Kingston Area** tells us all about them. No mere gazeteer or guide, it is a rich set of vignettes of our community's history.

And, by now, you should have all received an invitation to attend the book launch party scheduled for 13 May at Bellevue House. Apart from celebrating the conclusion of a well-conceived and well-executed project, it is also the opportunity for us to have our own KHS Millennium Party. After all, this is our Millennium Project.

So come along and enjoy the usual convivial camaraderie of a KHS festive event -- as well as the wine and cheese and other goodies. And it's also a chance to save some money. You will be able to purchase a copy of **Monuments, Memorials & Markers** for \$24.95, thus saving a mailing charge of \$4. The volume will also be available at regular KHS meetings, commencing with the one on 17 May. Thereafter, you'll be able to seek it out in local bookstores, or buy it by mail order -- but with an extra \$4 added on!

Do come and enjoy yourselves on 13 May, buy another addition to your personal library of Kingstonalia, and buy an extra one as a present for a friend.



DON'T FORGET THE 6TH OF JUNE

Perhaps the most important date in the KHS calendar is 6 June -- the date of our annual tribute to Sir John A. Macdonald (1815-1891). On this day, KHS organizes the event that honours one of the nation's greatest leaders and, undoubtedly, our community's most prominent citizen. Over the years, the memory of Sir John has transcended the partisan politics of his day to become a truly national icon. And that's how we celebrate him on 6 June. Representatives from all sectors of Kingston's society will assemble at Sir John's graveside to hear Helen Cooper's tribute, appreciate the beautiful setting of Cataraqui Cemetery, and enjoy the music, refreshments, and conversation. And remember, this is a special 6 June event: it marks the commencement of the events scheduled to mark the 150th. anniversary of the Cataraqui Cemetery. So mark it in your calendar:

When: 2.00 p.m., 6 June

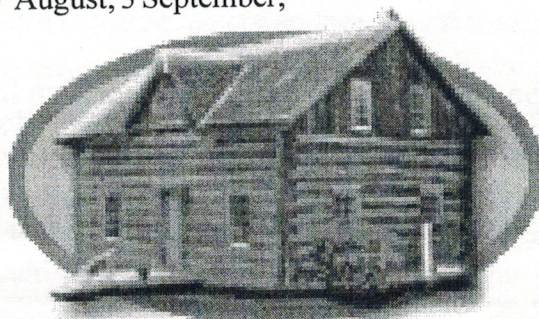
Where: Sir John A. Macdonald's gravesite, Cataraqui Cemetery.



WORKING IN WOOD -- AND MUCH MORE

The MacLachlan Woodworking Museum is located on Highway 2, one kilometre east of the Joyceville Road. It tells the story of wood in nineteenth century life. Everything from bringing home the timber to making it into tools, household items, barrels, carts, and more! It houses a great collection of woodworking tools that animates the story of early homesteaders and local tradespeople - both women and men. A full programme of events is planned for Summer 2000.

- "Before Routers: Using Hand Planes": 9 and 23 July; 6 and 20 August; 3 September;
- "Blacksmithing": 22 July; 26 August;
- "Observation Hive": 2, 16, 30 July; 27 August;
- "From Pulp to Paper: Making Home-made Paper": 29 July;
- "Garden Herbs and Overseas Spices": 8 July;
- "Of Wax & Wicks: Candle-making Projects": 5 August;
- "The Roof Over Our Heads: Making Cedar Shakes": 19 August;
- "For Our Feathered Friends: Making Birdhouses": 2 September;



Also, bread from the outdoor oven will be available every Thursday in July and August. There will be special demonstrations on Canada Day (1 July), and Sheep Dog Trials on 12-13 August.

Where: 2993 Highway 2 East. Joyceville Road exit from 401.
When: Victoria Day Weekend-Labour Day Weekend, Daily, 10am-5pm;
 1 April-30 November, Wednesday-Sunday 12 noon-4 pm;
 1 Dec-31 March, groups by appointment

Contact: (613 542 0543) www.city.kingston.on.ca/culture/macLachlan



AND WHAT WERE YOU DOING ON MAY DAY?

In 1826, in his "Rough Journal or Memorandum" J.B. Marks of Barriefield reported the events -- prosaic and dramatic -- that occurred on 1 May:

"Mild and Cloudy with steady Rain after twelve. Grubbing in the Morning & Cutting Potatoes afternoon. Frank Vido lost his left hand blowing up Rock for the Celler".

In 1839, Anne Langton (H.H. Langton ed., **A Gentlewoman in Upper Canada: The Journals of Anne Langton**, Toronto: 1950), after two years residence in the colony, was quite settled on her brother John's farm just outside Fenolen Falls recorded,

"My journal missed the post owing to a storm we had on Sunday, [2 days before] a sort of miniature storm it would appear to you islanders. Nevertheless, it unroofed our root-house, uprooted sundry tress, carried the cover of the hot-bed a considerable distance, overthrew fences and might have been the destruction of the Alice (their boat). ...but today is beautiful".


Two years later, she recorded more prosaically,

"My mother and I were busy all this morning, dismantling [John's house] that the walls may be washed with scalding lye, a most desirable thing occasionally in sunbaked log-houses, to keep them clear of insects. We have had the first nice spring rain today, which makes us look forward to a better supply of milk and butter".

In 1846, Francis Stewart (E.S. Dunlop ed., **Our Forest Home**, Montreal: 1902) recorded in early May,

"This is an unusually backward season, everything is somewhat later than it ought to be. The ground was, till lately, covered with deep snow...This is a lovely day, warm and bright, the birds and insects and everything seeming to rejoice. Vegetation has commenced and is making rapid progress, the lilacs bursting into leaf, the grass is growing green and fruit tress changing from the stiff wintry gray to the reddish tinge which soon turns to green".


John Collins Clark of Lot 34, Concession I, Ernestown Township, kept a record of climate and events in his neighbourhood from 1831 until his death in 1864. His entry for 1 May 1861 reads,

"Wednesday 1st. Brisk wind N, cloudy A.M. - fair P.M. and quite cold; frosty night. Mrs. George Howarth confined of a stillborn daughter. Strong, the Indian who was in Picton jail for the murder of Mr. and Mrs. Peterson of Hallowell, hung himself in his cell at night; his trial was appointed for next week". — 

NEWS FROM OTHER SOCIETIES

The Lennox and Addington County Historical Society Banquet will be held on Friday, 26 May 2000 at 5:30 p.m., at the Camden Braes Golf and Country Club. (\$30 single, \$55 couple). The guest-speaker, Mr. Tom Cruikshank, Editor, Harrowsmith Magazine will present a talk, "Small Town Virtues."

The Prince Edward Historical Society will meet on 17 May, at Bloomfield Town Hall: "A House Not Made With Hands: The Loyal True Blue Orphanage in Picton."

The Bay of Quinte Branch, United Empire Loyalists' Association of Canada, will host its annual "Landing Re-enactment" at Adolphustown UE Loyalist Park on Saturday, 17 June 2000. The celebration will honour the arrival and landing of the Loyalists near Hagerman's Point in June 1784, and mark the "Third Official United Empire Loyalists' Day in Ontario" on Monday, 19 June. — 

RESTORING FAIRFIELD HOUSE

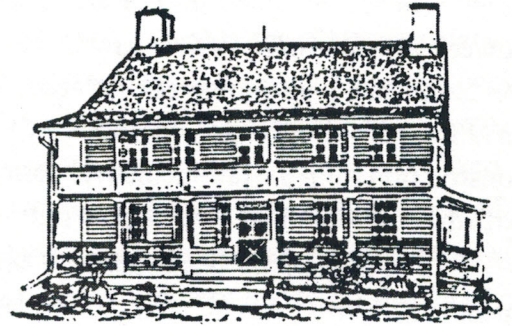
About a year ago, the Fairfield Homestead Heritage Association (FHHA) and Loyalist Township began a partnership to support the preservation of Fairfield House, at Amherstview. The province had transferred the property to the township in the summer of 1998. A survey of the house by Kingston restoration consultant, Andre Scheinman, in November 1998 provided an initial list of projects. FHHA fund-raising in 1999 paid for the restoration of chimney tops to their 19th-century form.

This summer, the newly launched Benjamin Moore Community Restoration Program will be assisting in the repainting of the exterior of Fairfield House. This program has supplemented locally raised funds for the project. It will provide Benjamin Moore with paint and technical advice through Hal Cowie of Kingston Paint and Decorating, 277 Bath Road.

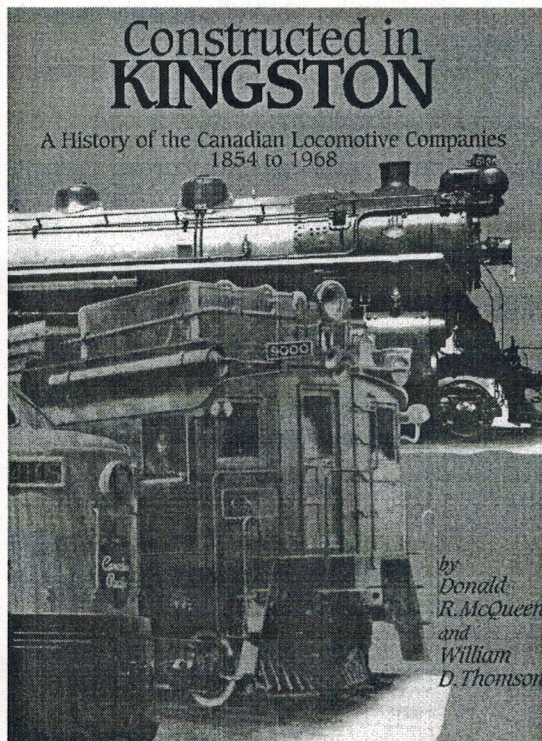
In March, the distress message from the roof came loud and clear when some creature of the park pecked, or gnawed, a two-by-four inch hole through punky shingles on the south roof. The house was last reshingled about 1960, some time after the Fairfields had donated their homestead to the province. Fund-raising for renewing the roof will be advanced on the 14-25 June weekend by two benefit events in the side-yard of Fairfield House.

The FHHA invites everyone to join us for these. On Saturday, 24 June, there will be an auction of donated antiques, collectibles, new merchandise, and services. The event will commence at 11 a.m. An evening supper is being planned for Sunday, 25 June. Information about the supper will be appearing in June in the local media.

If you would like to talk to someone about a donation to the auction or about attending the supper, contact Barb Snyder (389-1907) or Mike and Johnanna MacKinnon (352-7453; e-mail address: msf@adan.kingston.net).



BOOK CORNER




Members of KHS should be very familiar with the most recent addition to the ever-growing library of Kingston history: Donald R. McQueen and William D. Thomson, **Constructed in Kingston: A History of the Canadian Locomotive Companies, 1854-1968**, Kingston: Canadian Railroad Historical Association, 2000. We were provided with an entertaining pre-publication preview at our November 1999 meeting.


Attractively produced and lavishly illustrated, **Constructed in Kingston** details the development of the succession of corporations that once occupied Kingston's contentious Block-D. It is a story that has so many connections with the economic and social history of the city and the nation. As the authors state in their Prologue, "The Canadian Locomotive Company and its predecessors had not only a large physical presence on Ontario Street, but it was an important factor in the financial stability and social fabric of Kingston." Railway enthusiasts and historians alike will be engaged by the lively telling of a story of machines, men, and a particular place.

SPEAKERS' CORNER

On 19 April, the Kingston Historical Society was engaged by a colourful presentation on our own Murney Tower by Mr. Joe Last, Project Archaeologist of Military Sites with Parks Canada. "Five Easy Pieces," the title of Mr. Last's talk, took the audience of about 75 persons through five different ways that the Murney Tower has been used from its construction through to the present. As well, the Society was introduced to a history of tower construction from the pre-mediaeval period to the nineteenth century. As Mr. Last indicated, Kingston is blessed with the best Martello Towers extant outside Europe.

Our speaker for Wednesday, 17 May, will be Mr. Mark Thompson of Sydenham, Ontario. Mr. Thompson spent almost two years cleaning, refurbishing and restoring the stained glass windows of St. Mary's Cathedral. His talk will centre on the history of the windows and the techniques in making and restoring these local historic art treasures. 


ARCHAEOLOGY VISIT

On Wednesday, 21 June, at 7:00 p.m., the members of The Kingston Historical Society will be treated to a personal tour of the Cataraqui Archaeological Research Centre. The Centre is located at 370 King St. West (beside the Domino Theatre). The tour will include the Exhibits and Displays, Archives, Laboratory and other aspects of the Centre. This will be our opportunity to have a clearer understanding of what one of our sister organizations is doing in helping to preserve our local history, heritage, and culture. For more information, please contact Alan MacLachlan (549-8841). 


MILLENNIUM PROJECT

The Millennium Committee in Kingston is a joint committee of the City of Kingston and the Community Foundation of Greater Kingston. The function of the committee is, first, to promote the celebration of the millennium change through the giving of gifts to the community and, second, to maintain a registry of Millennium Gifts. The concept of Millennium Gift Giving was developed by Peter Aykroyd. He drew on his experience as a member of Canada's Centennial Commission in the 1960's and identified the giving of gifts as a fundamental part of our need to be involved in transitions and other events of significance in our lives.

The Millennium Committee is encouraging all members of the community, individuals, small organizations, or major institutions, to undertake a project that will be of lasting benefit to the community. Each project will be recorded in a local Millennium Registry, a volume made up of permanent materials that will be displayed in a prominent location in City Hall so that generations to come will be able to look at the list of the accomplishments of those who were alive as the millennium changed.

Already, many dozens of projects have been identified or completed. They cover almost all sectors of Kingston society and relate to the arts, education, environment, heritage, crafts, and many more. The Millennium Committee would be happy to hear from anyone with news of other projects. We may be reached at 384-1770 Ext. 275. (Submitted by David Baird) 

MEMBERSHIPS


Please check your recent mail from the KHS. Letters have been mailed to encourage renewals for 2000. The mailing list for 2000 will include only those members who have renewed by 31 May 2000. If you received a renewal reminder, please do renew. We need you! 

HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPH DISPLAY

In association with a number of other special events being presented as part of the celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the Cataraqui Cemetery, a photographic display of a local historic interest will be on view at the Cataraqui Cemetery Company's office, 927 Purdy Mills Road, Kingston, 12 noon to 4:00 p.m., during the week of 9-15 July 2000.

The photographic display "A Collection of Historical Views From Kingston's Past" by Gordon D. Smithson, will highlight a number of old photographs that have been acquired recently, especially for this memorable occasion. This display of photographic views will be accompanied by captions and historical notations that will highlight the following:


- The Palace School on Concession Street.
- Areas of Princess Street from the old traffic circle, as well as other locations proceeding east to the waterfront.
- The waterfront between the Wolfe Island Ferry Terminal to Brock Street, with emphasis on the former Montreal Transportation Grain Elevator, Donoghue Grain and Tweed Milling, Peters Seeds Mill, the James Richardson Grain Elevator (present site Holiday Inn), the Kingston and Pembroke Railway (Confederation Park).
- The Davis Tannery before demolition.
- The Royal Engineer's residence on North Street below Rideau Street.
- Three mystery pictures.
- Anglin Bay - Views of some of the vessels that have anchored there.

This collection of photographic views represents perhaps the largest single exhibition of unpublished photographic material that has recently been gathered for exhibition for history enthusiasts and those who wish to learn more of Kingston's past heritage. (Prepared by Gordon D. Smithson, co-chair 150th Anniversary, Cataraqui Cemetery Company Committee; 634-0362). 

REMEMBERING THE IRISH

Everyone is welcome to attend the unveiling of a memorial drinking-water fountain dedicated to an estimated one thousand labourers (mostly Irish) who died building the Rideau Canal. A brief interdenominational service will be held at the monument beside the Tourist Information Centre (across from City Hall) on Saturday, 27 May, at noon. The monument is donated to the citizens of Kingston by the Kingston Irish Folk Club, Tir nan Og Irish Pub, the Kingston Brewing Company, and the Ontario Public Service Employees Union.

The unveiling of this monument is part of a Celtic cultural festival being held 26-28 May with the proceeds going towards erecting a Celtic Cross monument in Skeleton Park. There are a variety of workshops for beginner to advanced levels. Introductory workshops include guitar, tin whistle, bodhran drum, harp, fiddle, banjo, bones, Uilleann pipes, sean nos singing, genealogy using computers, Celtic art, Irish step and Céili dancing (partner not required). There will also be talks on topics of local interest (e.g. the Rideau Canal, Irish potato famine, and Mickey O'Rourke VC).

Cost for the weekend including attendance at an unlimited number of workshops, breakfast on Sunday, plus Ceili/Traditional Music Social on Friday and Saturday nights is \$30. All events are at Tir nan Og Irish Pub (beside City Hall). For more information on either of these projects contact Tony O'Laughlin (389 0754). 

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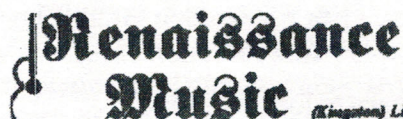
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