



LIMELIGHT

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2001

NEWSLETTER OF THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

On 11 January, ninety seven members and guests attended our inaugural dinner to celebrate Sir John's birthday. The event held in the Senior Staff Mess at the Royal Military College was an unqualified success!

The guest speaker was Dr. Donald Smith of the Department of History at the University of Calgary. Dr. Smith stimulated a good deal of interest, both before and after his presentation, on the Aboriginal Policies of Sir John A. Macdonald. He confided that this was the first time he would be speaking under the watchful eyes of Wolfe, Montcalm, and De Salaberry, whose portraits lined the walls of the mess. Dr. Smith's presentation brought forth a number of lesser-known aspects of the life of our first Prime Minister. His role in the establishment of the Indian Affairs Department and the authoring of the Indian Act were significant milestones in the aboriginal record of Canada. He strove throughout the talk to stress that Sir John, while a product of his time, was enlightened in his approach to the aboriginal issue. He also cautioned that we must remind ourselves to view those times in their historical context and not through the lens of the twenty-first century. My thanks to the organizing committee of Brian Osborne, Jack Pike, and Alan MacLachlan for their tireless efforts in ensuring the success of this memorable evening. Mark your calendars for next year's dinner.

The Society's AGM will be held on 21 February at the Kingston Public Library, Wilson Room. There will not be a speaker for this evening. However, we are going to revive a concept used with some success in the past: a "Members' Night Show and Tell." Members are encouraged to look into their collections and bring out their "stuff." After the formal AGM business has been seen to, we envisage the atmosphere of a fair where members will get the opportunity to view exhibits and talk to the owners. If you wish to make a presentation with slides etc, we recommend they should be about 5-10 minutes in duration. The subject matter need not be

about Kingston, but should be historical in the widest sense. Alan MacLachlan, programme chair, is the coordinator. All interested please contact him at 549-8841 or alantour@kos.net with your subject matter and requirements. (Warren Everett).

OUR NEXT MEETING

The February meeting of KHS will combine the Society's AGM with a "Members' Show and Tell."

Date: Wednesday, 21 February 2001

Place: The Wilson Room, Kingston Public Library

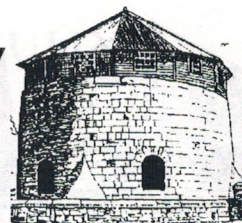
Time: 7.30 p.m.

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Kingston Historical Society

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

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KHS Web Site: www.heritagekingston.org/khs


AND ONE FROM THE EDITORS...

At 2.00 p.m., Sunday 31 December 2000, Kingston's "Millennium Time Capsule" was officially sealed for posterity -- or at least, for Kingstonians in the year 2050. The formal event was part of Kingston's "First Night Celebrations" marking the demise of 2000 and the advent of 2001 A.D. The capsule's final resting place will be within one of the walls of the first floor of City Hall.

What will our fellow citizens of the future find out about us? How will we represent ourselves to them? The list of included items is an interesting insight into our community self-definition: a copy of the **Ice Storm Book**; a complete set of **Tragically Hip** CDs; a Kingston phone directory; a city map; messages from politicians; a list of Millennium events; mementoes from Queen's, R.M.C., and St. Lawrence College; a city flag and coat of arms; a C.F.B. Kingston directory; local theatre publicity. Developed by a volunteer committee of local business persons, politicians, and citizens, this material is intended to honour the new millennium and to represent aspects of life in Kingston at the turn of the century.

Wouldn't it have been satisfying if we could have included a few other items? A vision of Kingston's waterfront that reflects the mutual interests of the general public and private business in appropriate development that makes maximum use of Kingston's lake-side location and unique townscape. Plans for a downtown traffic system that integrates public transit and satellite parking with a traffic-free downtown core. A water, sewage, and waste system that is compatible with economic and ecological needs. A culture of municipal governance that welcomes public discourse and recognizes that its responsibility is to pass on to the Kingstonians of 2050 a living city that they will be as proud of as we are in 2001. And, of course, a plan to ensure that all public services will be much better -- and taxes will be much lower! 

LENNOX & ADDINGTON HERITAGE EXCHANGE

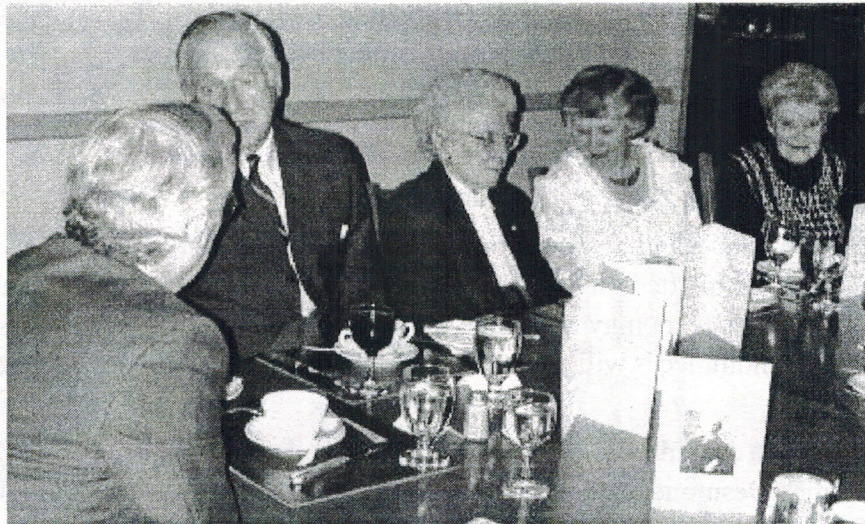
A Heritage Week meeting held in Wilton last February has had continuing effects in fostering communication among about a dozen groups actively involved with local history in Lennox and Addington County. A second group meeting was held in October, followed by a third one on 20 January 2001 in Bath. To the initial idea of increasing public awareness through short newspaper articles has been added the greater ambition to form an active "L&A Heritage Exchange" to carry out information exchange, community liaison, educational programmes, and to coordinate public relations and promotion. A committee is now working to define the project and prepare a formal proposal, appropriate for a grant request. (Submitted by Barbara Snyder). 

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD ANNIVERSARY DINNER



Head-table guests included the Hon. John Gerretsen, M.P.; Mayor Isabel Turner; and Major Kemp Stewart, President of the St Andrews's Society

Close to 100 KHS members and guests enjoyed an excellent dinner at RMC to celebrate Macdonald's birthday on January 11th. The guest speaker for this first annual event was Prof. Don Smith of the University of Calgary. His well received topic was "John A. Macdonald and Aboriginal Canada." (see also www.heritagekingston.org for more pictures)



The Hon. Peter Milliken, M.P., and Warren Everett, President of the Kingston Historical Society

PHOTOGRAPHY by
JENNIFER McKENDRY



NOMINATIONS FOR KHS EXECUTIVE AND COUNCIL, 2001

The election of Society Officers and Council Members for 2001 will take place at the Annual General Meeting on February 21. The Nominating Committee (D. O'Meara, L. Grimshaw, Gordon Smithson, W. Everett) will present the following candidates at the Annual General Meeting:

Executive

President - Warren Everett
Vice-President - Brian Osborne
Executive/General Secretary - Paul Ross
Treasurer - Stuart Renfrew
Past President (ex. officio) - Desmond O'Meara

Council

Carl Bray
Linda Cyr
Jane Errington
E. Grenda
Louis Grimshaw
Alan MacLachlan
Sarah Meharg
Doug Petty
Jack Pike
Barbara Snyder

Any member of the Society in good standing may nominate any other member of the Society in good standing for any office. Incumbents may be nominated for an additional term, and nominations may be submitted for any or all of the positions to be filled. Volunteers may nominate themselves for any office. Submission of a nomination carries the assumption that the nominee is willing to stand for election and serve, so nominators should verify that before submission.

Members wishing to nominate a candidate for any position as a member of the Executive or Council should do so in writing by contacting me (Desmond O'Meara, 106 Yonge St., Kingston, K7M 1E7) or any member of the present Executive and Council, before 8 February 2001.

Please participate in this extremely important activity to ensure the continuing health and efficiency of the Society. (Respectfully submitted, Desmond O'Meara, Chair, Nominating Committee).



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

By mid-January 2001, Kingston Historical Society has 119 members in the individual and family categories.

There have been prompt renewals of 57 individual and 29 family memberships; that's almost 66 percent of the 2000 level for these groups. Check your records and please renew if you have not already done so.

There have also been 3 new memberships --so far --for 2001. Allison Norman, a Queen's student who worked with the Ontario Historical Society last summer, joined in September. The second new individual member is Anne Marie Harbec, Visitor Service Manager for the Kingston Economic Development Corporation. New members under the family membership are Eileen Andrews and Mark Andrews. Welcome all. (Submitted by Barbara Snyder, Membership Secretary).



LANDSCAPES/INSCAPES: THE TOP OF THE WORLD

Have you ever knocked on the wrong door but it really turned out to be the right door?

In May 1992, I was on my way to paint in Portland Township. I stopped at the local store in Harrowsmith to find out some historical information. They sent me to Wellington Street to find Oakley Watson. Instead, I found Nellie Clarke who invited me in and proceeded to give me a tour of her house. When we got to her attic, I asked her if I could please stay and paint there. It was a wonderful experience and I was also asked to stay for lunch. In the attic, there was an old book on the floor titled **The Top of the World** and that is exactly where I felt I was!



The outcome of all this was that Nellie, who is 92, and I became good friends and are still the very best of friends. I still got to meet Oakley Watson, who also became a dear friend. His great knowledge of local history was invaluable to me! He also arranged for me to hold my Portland Township Art Show in the Harrowsmith Masonic Hall.

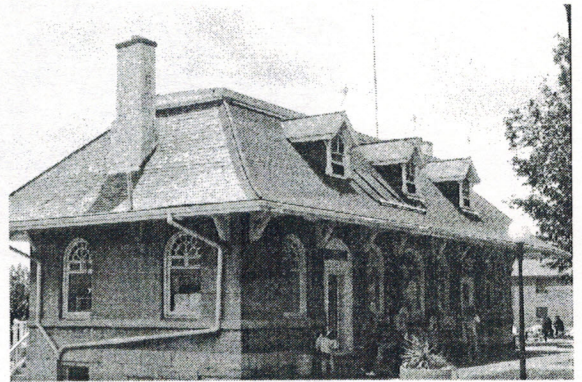
I am very grateful to both of these people! _____



OPEN HOUSE

Students in the Heritage Restoration Program at Queen Elizabeth Collegiate and Vocational Institute (QECVI) have completed Phase 2 of the restoration of the Kingston & Pembroke Railway station. On 29 January 2001, an Open House and Celebration was held at the former Kingston-Pembroke Rail Station, 209 Ontario Street. Students guided tours and presented wood shaping demonstrations "the old fashion way". This fine restoration was made possible through the generosity of over 25 other community partners including the Kingston Economic Development Corporation, the Frontenac Historic Foundation, the Canada Millennium Partnership, the Limestone District School Board, and Inglis & Downey Architects.

The Heritage Restoration Program is part of the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program and the Building Construction Internship Program at QECVI. It explores the different areas of restoration through the means of field trips, research of historic construction, and working with specialized partners. This semester's main project involved restoring parts of the historic K&P railway station which currently houses the KEDCO Tourist Information office. Every phase of this project required a coordinated approach with all "team" members involved in research, decision-making, and replicating historic details.



For more information contact Don Voteary, QECVI Teacher, BCIP Project Manager (546-1714 ext. 231) or Anne Marie Harbec, KEDCO Visitor Services Manager (548-4415 ext. 23).

LETTERBOX

Two of our members have exercised their rights as citizens -- and demonstrated their concern with issues of possible interest to others -- in a letter to City Council:

"The question of building a third high-rise in the Richardson Dock area will, we understand, be considered at the forthcoming Kingston City Council meeting on 23 January. This latest example of piecemeal modification of the Official Plan is particularly disturbing in a number of respects not least because

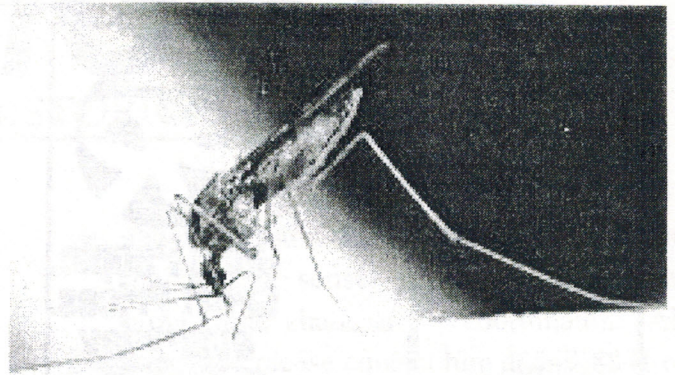
1. The view of Lake Ontario when travelling West along King Street will be significantly reduced and indeed, from some vantage points virtually eliminated.
2. The proposed "park" will be so obscured and hidden behind the three buildings that it requires a great leap of faith to expect meaningful use by the public at large. This might be offset by integration of the area within the boundaries of Lake Ontario Park. As proposed, it will however constitute a significant attraction for potential residents in the high-rise buildings.

Furthermore, it appears to us fallacious to suggest that this type of up-scale investment can ease the local shortage of rental space for the bulk of those seeking accommodation.

However, to us of even greater concern than these shortcomings of this specific project, is the fact that this is one more example of a piecemeal approach toward development in our city. By contrast, we do endorse the Council motion put forward in October by Councillors Foster and Stoparczyk. This motion called for development of an overall plan covering our entire waterfront. This having been done, then and only then, if it is compatible with the plan should this, or any other, project proceed". (Thanks to Desmond O'Meara and Margaret Moore O'Meara for sharing this with us.)

FOCUS ON THE RIDEAU: FEVER AND AGUE

"In the summer of 1828 the sickness in Upper Canada raged like a plague; all along the banks of the lakes, nothing but languid fevers; and at the Rideau Canal few could work with fever and ague; at Jones Falls and Kingston Mills, no one was able to carry a draught of water to a friend; doctors and all were laid down together." So observed by John MacTaggart in 1829. MacTaggart was Colonel John By's Clerk of Works from 1826 to 1828. The sickness he was describing was malaria.



It was once assumed that malaria was brought to the Rideau by soldiers who had been stationed in malaria-prone tropical areas such as the Caribbean or India. We now know that this is not the case. Along the Rideau, it was a temperate form of malaria, **Plasmodium Vivax**, which was the culprit. Malaria was not unique to the building of the Rideau Canal. It was present both before and after that time throughout most of North America.

Malaria is a parasite that progresses through several stages during its life-cycle. In eastern North America it uses a particular type of mosquito, **Anopheles quadrimaculatus**, which will bite more than once, to spread itself from human to human. The basic life-cycle is for the parasite to incubate in the liver and then spread to the bloodstream, inhabiting red blood cells. Once it has multiplied sufficiently, it breaks out of the red blood cells, producing the classic symptoms of fever and chills in the victim. It is at this time that it can be picked up by a mosquito drawing blood. It reproduces again in the mosquito, sending **sporozoites** into the saliva glands. When the mosquito next bites, the **sporozoites** go into that human and head to the liver, ready to start another cycle.

The trick with this temperate form of malaria is that it has a very long incubation time in the liver: nine months or more. This allows the parasite to overwinter inside a nice warm human. The next year, it heads out from the liver, goes into the red blood cells, and then bursts out into the bloodstream, ready to be picked up by an **Anopheles** mosquito and be transmitted to more humans.

Groupings of people, such as in the canal construction camps, certainly helped the spread of the disease, allowing mosquitoes to easily transmit malaria from one worker to another. Also, construction areas provided lots of clean water as egg-laying areas for the mosquito. No one escaped. Everyone from the highest-ranking officer to the wives and children of immigrant labourers suffered from it. There are no definitive records of how many died due of malaria during the building of the Rideau Canal, but one educated guess (R. W. Passfield) puts the figure at over 500 men -- excluding women and children!

In the 1820s and 1830s the only known cure, or at least a medicine that could mitigate some of the symptoms, was Quinine. Quinine bark had been used since the late 1600s to treat malaria, but it was the isolation of **quinoline alkaloid** in 1820, named Quinine, that provided a highly potent antimalarial drug. At the time of the building of the Rideau Canal in 1827-32, it was still quite rare and very expensive; very few could afford to use it. Colonel By's resorted to clearing large swaths of land around the lock-stations, to improve air circulation, since -- as the name implies -- it was believed that malaria was caused by bad air.

Long after the building of the Rideau, it was recognized that mosquitoes were the real cause. Efforts were made to avoid mosquito bites and large-scale mosquito eradication programs were launched. Still, it wasn't until about 1900 that malaria was essentially eradicated from Ontario. It still exists today in North America, but it is quite rare with only a few hundred cases being reported each year -- and, fortunately, none within living memory on the Rideau! (Prepared by Ken Watson, more information can be found in his recent book, **A History of the Rideau Lockstations**. Information about this book can be found at: www.rideau-info.com/friends/book-lockhistory.htm)



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