



Vol. 21 No. 2

Editor: Jim Warren

1 Feb. 1994

### ANNUAL MEETING

Though attendance was light because of frigid temperatures and biting winds, our January meeting was a pleasantly friendly and informal affair, largely thanks to Isobel Trumpour and Peggy Cohoe who put forward the slate of candidates for office in our Society, and Joyce and Jack Grenville, Virginia Martin and Isobel, who provided a delicious spread of squares and cookies with the coffee. We are fortunate in having an unusually good mix of talents and personalities in this year's executive, council and the Murney Tower, each of whom is listed elsewhere with addresses and telephone numbers. Our centennial year was a great success and we must extend our thanks and congratulations to our outgoing President Frank Milledge, who is now a Life Member, and welcome in the new, President Bill Fitsell. Our Annual Meeting was completed with a presentation of historical artifacts by Naneen Yeomans (ceramic and glass mugs), Marjorie Simmons ( a child's chair - her own), Doug Petty (two paintings, possibly of Kingston), Bogart Trumpour (photos of official plaques and their sponsors) and Jim Warren (a kayak model clothed in airship fabric). The meeting ended when the power failed.

### PRESIDENT BILL

Many of us in the Kingston Historical Society know each other as affable faces, co-workers on a committee or just nodding acquaintances. We may not stop to think of the lives those faces represent.

Bill Fitsell was born John Walter Fitsell in Barrie, Ontario. His education was in Lindsay, at the Lindsay Collegiate Institute in a special commercial program. As a lad of nineteen in 1942, he joined the Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve, the war time navy, as Captain's Writer, serving aboard the destroyer HMCS St. Francis and the frigate HMCS Outremont in the North Atlantic, the Arctic Ocean and the English Channel. Veterans of the Battle of the Atlantic say that the threat from submarines was only equalled by the cold sea and icy winds. In Sydney, N.S. on leave, Bill met Barbara Anne Robson. Cape Breton girls are hard to resist, and they were married in 1945. After discharge in 1946, they moved to Lindsay where Bill began a



journalistic career as a reporter, editor or columnist which continues today. In one capacity or another, he has served the Lindsay Daily Post, the Watchman-Warder, the Woodstock Sentinel-Review, the Port Perry star, the Gananoque Report, and the Ontario Churchman. He joined the Kingston Whig-Standard in 1961 as a Gananoque Bureau Chief, then as District Editor, finally in 1978, as People columnist, where he has been best known to most of us. With the decline of the Whig-Standard, his People column continues in Kingston This Weekend.

Bill joined the Kingston Historical Society in 1977, serving as Vice President in the 1990s. His most recent contribution was to lead the Society's exhibition Art 100 last October.

Another of his passions is hockey, and he served as Director and later President of the International Hockey Hall of Fame and Museum, and has been active with the International Ice Hockey Federation Museum, the Carr-Harris Cup and the Historic Hockey Committee. Not content with that, he became founding President of the Society for International Hockey Research and will fight like a bulldog if anyone suggests that hockey was invented in Russia.

Bill has also served on the Buskers' Committee, the Kingston Heritage Tattoo Society and Queen's

University Archives Advisory Committee. He is also a member of the Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 9, the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery Brigade Association and the Kingston Jazz Society. (I wonder what he does in his spare time?)

Bill's publications include 'Hockey's Captains, Colonels & Kings', Boston Mills Press, 1987; and material in the Canadian Encyclopedia 1985, Chronicle of Canada 1990 and the SIHR Journal 1993.

His honours and awards include an Honor Award from the Ontario Minor Hockey Association 1967, the Voluntary Service Award 1990 and the Canada 125 Commemorative Medal 1993.

His finest awards, five daughters, were presented by his wife Barbara and they, in turn, have presented ten grandchildren.

We are honoured and extremely pleased that Bill Fittell will lead our Society into its second century.

## THE COST OF HISTORY

Reports presented at our Annual Meeting, when examined carefully afterward, give each of us an opportunity to see how our Society works and where the money goes. Here are a few highlights.

Our total receipts were \$15,963.60, made up of bequest (2,055.), government grants (1,918.), investment income (5,564.10, membership fees (6,273.68), book sales (106.00) and miscellaneous (46.82).

Our total expenditures were \$12,847.72. Leaving aside minor expenses, (you can get them from the Treasurer if interested) these include Historic Kingston (4,423.57), meetings (1,060.23), newsletters (2,368.340, Murney Tower Museum (2,062.28), vignettes (795.02 after sales), and ART 100 (475.51).

Many may be unaware that the Society also has total assets in 1993 of \$61,524.48 including \$3216.82 in the bank and \$48,300 in investments like GIC. This compares favourable with 1992 assets of \$58,408.60.

Our meetings in the Wilson Room of the Public Library, though congenial, are not without cost. We rent the room, sound system, projector, coffee urn and GST for \$117.70 per meeting, \$941.60 a year.

Incidentally, government grants have declined from \$3,659. in 1992 to \$1,918. in 1993.

## MURNEY TOWER MUSEUM

There is now a much closer liaison between our Museum operations and those of the Society. While the accounts of the two entities are separate for grant application purposes, there has been no excuse for the

Society's failure to support the Museum with needed volunteer efforts and fresh ideas. We should be deeply indebted to the dedicated committee who do most of the work. They are: Ken Rutherford, Chairman, Bev Lazier, Treasurer and Frank Milledge, Desmond O'Meara and Peter Gray. Robert Doak was Chief Interpreter and Chris Rossiter and Lynne Bellenger were Interpreters on staff. Bob Doak, ex Fort Henry Guard, whose likeness appears on life-size cutout posters, has been especially imaginative and resourceful, organizing educational tours and outdoor activities including a visit from members of the Brockville Infantry Regiment. In 1993, 7,154 visited our museum, up from 4,760 in 1992. Although government grants were less than half 1992 levels, income was \$12,695 in 1993, up from \$11,072 in 1992. Not only that, the museum was able to pay off \$4,305. in back taxes and offer a small bonus to staff, who worked beyond their contracted hours. Their Open House was poorly attended by Society members. Few volunteers came forward to help the museum with housekeeping and ticket taking duties. Why not make use of the February blahs by jotting down some good ideas for breathing new life into our museum? Why not volunteer now (not just in August) to help in the preparation of displays. Perhaps there is work you can do at home to get ready for May opening. Please help. Call Ken Rutherford at 548-8674. Tell him your talents. Ask him how you can contribute. why not do it now.

## HISTORIC VIGNETTES

The popularity of our fifteen historical vignettes continues. Margaret and Bernard Burdsall are contributing their outstanding organizing ability and their computer to the distribution of the vignettes. When ordering your next set, send your cheque for \$17., payable to our Society, directly to the Burdsalls at 960 Killarney Crescent, Kingston K7M 8C6.

Amazingly, the production costs for the vignettes came in about on budget. Originally set at \$1000., they cost \$1093. but this included the first print run. We thank you for your continued interest.

## WHAT THEN?

For those who, like our Treasurer Desmond O'Meara, have an interest in the cost of things, our newsletter THEN was slightly lower in 1993 than 1992:

1992 (9 issues) each \$308, thus \$2772.

1993 (8 issues) each \$296, thus \$2368.

Depending upon your viewpoint, this indicates either that your editor is an extremely frugal husbandman of the Society's resources or that his mellifluous piffle is a waste of members' time and money and the rascal should be flogged. Whichever, your editor appreciates the useful facts and suggestions that help him to keep THEN alive NOW.

## PASSAGES

We note with deep regret the passing of several members and friends of our Society. Stanley Molson, husband of longtime Life Member Emma Molson, died 16 January 1994. We extend our deepest sympathy to Emma, who has served in most positions in our executive and council over the years. We have just learned of the death of Dr. Walter MacFarlane Smith on 31 August 1993, who, together with his wife Frances, has been a member of our Society. A distinguished professor of chemistry, he joined Queen's in 1945 and became acting head of the Department of Chemistry 1969-1971. We are glad that Frances K. Smith will continue her membership. Our hearts are with her. In Vancouver, Life Member Dr. Thomas Leigh Brock died on 3 January 1994. A graduate of the Royal Military College, he was Historian of the RMC Club of Canada and published a quarterly for the Class of 1934. In 1967, he presented an interesting account of the Naval Dock Yard in Kingston to our Society which appeared in *Historic Kingston* No. 16. As an assistant to the President of ALCAN during the war years, he later wrote: "The town of Kingston in the late 18th and early 19th centuries grew as a bastion of Upper Canada through the stationing here of British soldiers and sailors, and the supply of money from Britain to build fortifications.

The money for the ALCAN plant (from the British Air Ministry) in all probability is the last money Britain will ever spend on installations in Kingston; and it is a fitting finale that the purpose was not to defend Canada but rather to defend Britain." ALCAN's strong-alloy sheet aluminum and extrusions supplied aircraft manufacturers for the Battle of Britain.

## MEMBERSHIP

We have 233 memberships in the Kingston Historical Society, two more than in 1992, bringing in a total of \$6000.60 in fees from the different categories of membership. These include 6 honorary patrons, 2 honorary members, 61 life members, 102 individuals, 49 families, 4 students and 9 institutional members. Membership Chair Joe Boucher reports a lively response in the payment of fees, largely attributed to his practice of mailing out invoices and self-addressed envelopes. If you have not paid as yet, would you please?

The question has been asked: who is the oldest member of the Kingston Historical Society? We do not mean who is the most aged member; we would not be so impertinent as to ask that. We mean who has been a member for the longest period of time? What year did that person join? As an historical society, we are curiously incurious about the history of our members. If you can answer our question or have another jolly tale to

tell, share it with your old editor Jim Warren at 544-7410. Better still, write it down for him.

Stop press! Graham Thomson has claimed the honour of being our oldest-serving member. Collared on the street by Courtland Strange in 1933, he voluntarily joined our ranks. Col. Strange (1867-1958) was the colourful gentleman who kept our Society alive during the war years. Guarding the Murney Tower Museum single-handed as Acting President 1941 to 1951, he reactivated the membership as President from then until his death in 1958.

## WE GET LETTERS

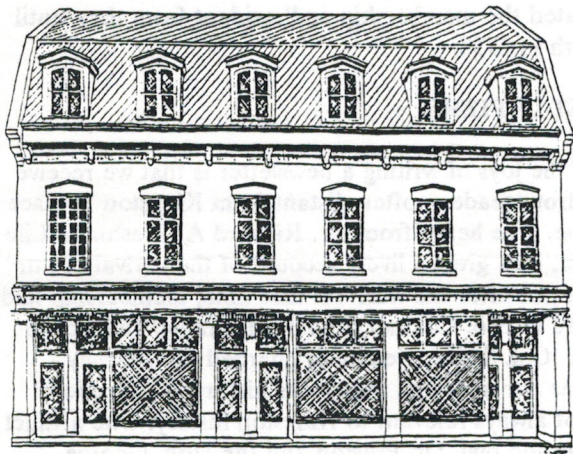
One of the joys of writing a newsletter is that we receive letters from readers, often distant from Kingston in place and time. We heard from Dr. Richard A. Preston, a Life Member, who gives a lively account of the revival of our Society, just after the war. At that time, membership had dwindled to two, Colonel Courtland Strange and Edwin Horsey. Col. Strange jealously guarded the Murney Tower as our museum, though its historical collections were not always relevant to Kingston history. One artifact was a stuffed owl. Dr. Preston and the Hon. George Stanley were appointed to teach history at RMC in 1948. They discussed the plight of the Kingston Historical Society and decided to revive it. The found Col. Strange resistant to such interference. With the help of Brig. D.G. Agnew, Commandant of RMC, they brought Strange on side, and Stanley became Treasurer, later President of the Society while Preston became Secretary, later Vice President. Col. Courtland Strange died in 1958. Membership grew rapidly. Stanley suggested that papers given at meetings be published regularly. Preston suggested adopting the name *Historic Kingston*. The first volume appeared in October 1952, being the transactions for the Society in 1951-1952. (We are soon to see Volume 432.) And what a marvellous resource they are!

We also received a friendly note from member James Worrall, a member of the International Olympic Committee. He was much involved in the location of yachting events in Kingston during the 1976 Olympic Games. He spent his childhood summers here between 1923 and 1926. His father was superintendent of the Dominion Textile Cotton Mill (now called the woollen mill), although the family seat was in Montreal. James Worrall now lives in Don Mills. Dr. Richard Preston is now W.K. Boyd Professor of History Emeritus at Duke University in Durham, South Carolina.

## QUEEN'S HERITAGE DAY

Stewart Renfrew of Queen's Archives tells us that, to celebrate Heritage Week, in February, we are all invited to an Open House in their Archives on Wednesday 23

23 February from 1 to 5 pm. Guided tours of the premises will be provided. Questions will be entertained. And there will be goodies! Stewart notes that in building an information network with other institutions in the region they identified some thirty archival collections which will form a very useful resource to historians. Often such cross-disciplinary sources provide insight which may be missed by the too-focused researcher.



Princess Street, anyone? The book is not available in English. I purchased my copy in the bookstore of the Museum of Civilization in Hull for \$18.95. It is published by Les Publications du Québec, 1279, boul. Charest Ouest, Québec, (Québec) G1N 4K7. The architecture illustrated has a distinctive Quebec flavour, though of the same vintage as downtown Kingston. With the rapid proliferation of citizens' groups determined to discipline City Hall, there is a need for visual guidelines for the planning of our city. It might assist Councillors, staff and developers to do their respective things in a more sensitive and responsible manner. Perhaps a task force from the Kingston Historical Society should undertake such a visual guideline.

### BROCKVILLE BECKONS

When the winter weather moderates sufficiently for you to extend your travels beyond Mac's Milk, examine the fascinating array of museums in Brockville. They can arrange tours at modest price throughout the year. Ask them to send you a brochure: Brockville Museum (613) 342-4397, 5 Henry St., Brockville K6V 6M4. Fulford Place (Edwardian mansion) (613) 498-3003, 287 King St. East, Brockville K6V 1E1. Homewood Museum (doctor's house) (613) 348-3560, Highway 2, Maitland, Ont. K0E 1P0, Brockville Railway Tunnel (stretching a mile under the city!) (613) 342-4397. Armagh Sifton Price Park, Water St., Brockville.

### EDITOR'S NOTE

We find back copies of Historic Kingston an invaluable reference in checking out facts and human interest for our newsletter. My collection is missing Volumes 11 and 12. If you have either of these to spare or are doing a general clean-out, would you give me a call? I am Jim Warren at 544-7410.

### FAÇADES et DEVANTURES

The Quebec provincial government has published a most interesting and useful guideline to the restoration of historical storefronts. Called Façades et Devantures, Guide de Rénovation des Bâtiments Commerciaux, it examines the subject from the viewpoint of both historical integrity and the need to sell merchandise. Novel approach, what? Better still, it does its job with delightful line drawings like the ones we show here, pointing out features that are guaranteed to reduce a proud, old dowager to a garish woman of the street.



# Kingston Historical Society *Since 1893*

Box 54, Kingston, Ontario, Canada K7L 4V6

## EXECUTIVE OFFICERS FOR 1994

Past President	Frank Milledge 204 Glen Castle Road	389-4627 K7M 4N6
President	Bill Fittell 79-115 Wright Cres.	549-8354 K7L 4T8
Vice Pres. Membership and Publications	Joe Boucher 356 Glengarry Road	548-8181 K7M 3K2
Vice Pres. (Programs)	Lou Grimshaw 27 Fay St., R.R. #1, Kingston	549-2500 K7L 4V1
Vice Pres. (Museum)	Ken Rutherford Box 154, Cartwright Pt.	548-8674 K7K 5E2
Secretary	Barbara Bonner 1398 Montreal St.	542-9600 K7K 3L6
Treasurer	Desmond O'Meara 106 Yonge St.	546-5439 K7M 1E7
Historic Kingston Editor	Don Redmond 9 St. Catherine St.	546-7728 K7K 3R9
Newsletter Editor	Jim Warren 17 Richard St.	544-7410 K7M 2J3
Distribution of Historic Kingston and Vignettes	Margaret & Bernard Burdsall 960 Killarney Crescent	531-8948 K7M 8C6

## COUNCIL

George Henderson	Queen's Archives, K7L 3N6	545-2378
Marjorie Simmons	280 Regent Street, K7L 4K6	542-9847
Jack Pike	150 Macdonnell Street, K7L 4B8	546-9187
Mary Patterson	300 Chelsea Road, K7M 3Z4	389-3276
Sharon Rudy	Apt. 3, 85 Queen Street, K7K 1A5	546-1128
Doug Petty	248 Willingdon Avenue, K7L 4J1	546-0422
Ken Buckingham	14 Machar Place, K7M 1L6	542-6197

## MURNEY TOWER MUSEUM

Chair	Ken Rutherford Box 154, Cartwright Pt.	548-8674 K7K 5E2
Treasurer	Bev Lazier 239 Albert St.	542-7012 K7L 3V4

## 1994 PROGRAMS

All programs are held on the third Wednesday of the month, unless noted otherwise.

- 16 FEBRUARY Dr. Wally Breck  
The NWMP in Kingston
- 16 MARCH Mr. John Grenville  
The Penny Bridge: a joint meeting with the Pittsburgh Township  
Historical Society
- 20 APRIL Ms. Colleen Rock  
Water Works in Kingston
- 18 MAY Dr. Ken Rutherford  
Kingston Lead Smelter and Historic Ramifications

6 JUNE, MONDAY

Executive of KHS hosts Memorial Service for Sir John A. Macdonald

**No meetings in June, July, and August.**

21 SEPTEMBER

19 OCTOBER

16 NOVEMBER

?? DECEMBER

To Be Announced

Dr. Jack Pike, The Leinster Silver  
Our special Christmas gala at RMC Senior Staff Mess