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ITALIANS IN KINGSTON

Phil Quattrocchi welcomes us back to a brisk Fall season on Wednesday 20th September at 7.30 pm in our usual meeting place, the Wilson Room, upstairs at the Central Public Library, 130 Johnson Street. In his lively style, he will tell us about the Italians and their contributions to the life of Kingston, from Henri Tonti, assistant to LaSalle, to those who helped build the railroads and more. Do come and join us in welcoming Autumn. (What happened to summer?)

SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD LIVES

Our annual commemoration of the life of Sir John took place 6 June at his gravesite in Cataraqui Cemetery. Guest speaker Blair Neatby presented an excellent and humorous address, and George Henderson's concluding remarks were worthy of inclusion in Historic Kingston. Much credit must go to Isobel Trumpour and the Macdonald Memorial Fund Committee, who beautified the setting. John Grenville provided a timely quotation from John A. himself:

"If I had influence over the minds of the people of Canada, any power over their intellect, I would leave them this legacy: 'Whatever you do, adhere to the union. We are a great country, and shall become one of the greatest in the universe if we preserve it; we shall sink

into insignificance and adversity if we suffer it to be broken.' God and nature made the two Canadas one- let no factious men be allowed to put them asunder." Good on you, Sir John!

Another testimonial was staged at the Canadian Friendship Festival at Fort Henry on 2 July, when the Empire Life/Sir John A. MacDonald quilt was unveiled by Lieutenant Governor Hal Jackman. Designed by artist Kathy Huse, it was interpreted by members of the Kingston Heirloom Quilters in pictorial applique. The central portrait will eventually be surrounded by provincial and territorial crests, carried out by quilters from across the country. It may be seen currently in Bellevue House which, incidentally has an extremely attractive new display in its interpretive lobby.

KINGSTON HERITAGE FAIR

Sponsored by the Charles R. Bronfmann Foundation and a cast of thousands, the Kingston Heritage Fair held at RMC on 26/27 May was a huge success. More than 1000 students, untold teachers, local history buffs, service clubs and business people did a splendid job of stirring interest in our national history. Simultaneously, fairs were held in Kamloops, B.C., Brandon, Ma., Sherbrooke, Que. and Moncton, N.B. Winning presentations were sent off to the National Heritage Fair in Charlottetown, P.E.I. Intended to be an annual event, much was learned from this one to make future efforts even more effective.

MURNEY TOWER OPEN HOUSE

There was a delightful summer 70th anniversary party of Society members in Murney Tower on 1st August, a cool breeze wafting through the open gun ports to relieve the sweltering sunshine outside. There were delicious sandwiches and cookies, cold drinks and coffee, but best of all was the warm comradeship of fellow members, fresh-eyed and chatty, sharing accounts of their summer adventures. It was quite the best party the Murney Tower Committee and the museum staff could have put together, free of speeches and the tedium of Society business. But now it is Fall once again and we must return to our starched collars and whalebone stays.

KINGSTON LAND REGISTRY OFFICE

On 27 July, the Kingston Land Registry Office celebrated 200 years of land registration in Ontario. Many Society members will be familiar with the old building, built by John Powers in 1876, which stands beside the County Courthouse facing City Park. The dusty ledgers and gleaming computers have helped many of us trace the history of our homes, seeking the author of those curious creaks that ascend the back stairs on dark and stormy nights. The hosts of the celebration were smiling staff members in historical costume, none of them bearing the slightest resemblance to Bob Cratchit.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS

Long-time, hard-working members of the Kingston Historical Society were honoured recipients of 25 Year Volunteer Service Awards presented by the Ministry of Citizenship and the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and

Recreation on 17 May at Memorial Hall in City Hall. We add our warm congratulations to Margaret and William Angus, Allan and Margaret Cohoe, Isobel and Bogart Trumpour and Marjorie Simmons. They continue to provide wise counsel, helpful service and a good sense of humour.

FAREWELLS

We note with sadness the passing of several of our members over the past few months.

Dr. Shirley Spragge will be dearly remembered as the dedicated Senior Archivist at Queen's until 1994 and as archivist at the Anglican Diocese of Ontario until her death 11 August of scleroderma.

Rev. Msgr. J. Gerald Hanley died 29 April after long service as chaplain of Notre Dame congregation and editor of the Canadian (Catholic) Register. He was 87.

Col. Campbell W. 'Cam' Jones was an engineer and sailor who directed the construction of Portsmouth Olympic Harbour after lengthy military service. He died 8 May at 84.

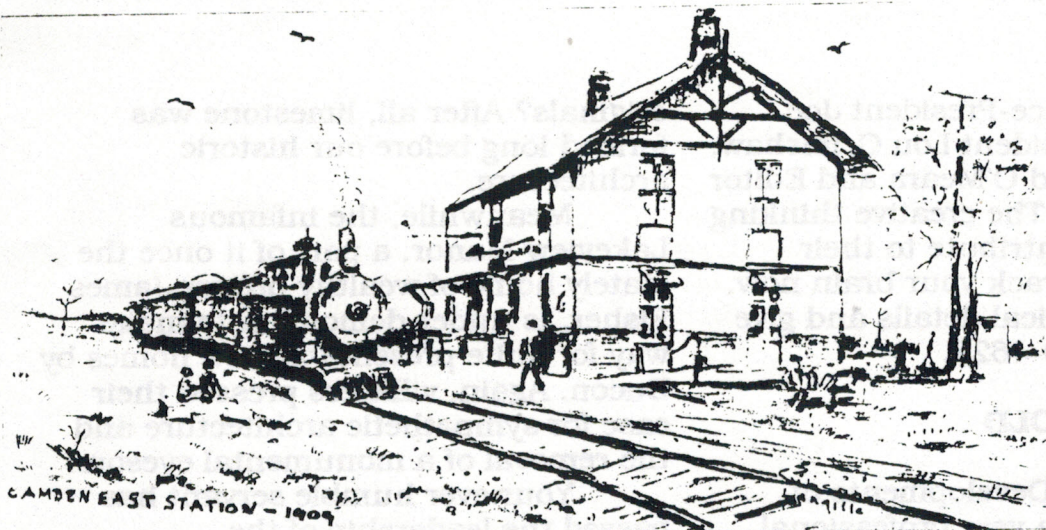
Waldo E.L. Smith, a long-time member of this Society, died 14 August at 95.

Life Member Elinor F. Strange, beloved wife of the late Judge Maxwell W. Strange, died 18 August.

We extend our deepest sympathy to surviving family members and friends of these distinguished Canadians.

RENEWED MEMBER

We extend a warm welcome back to Lt. Col. Edward Hulbert who lives in Amherstview and hope that he enjoys our monthly meetings.



CAMDEN EAST IN PICTURES

Shirley Gibson-Langille announces another exhibition of her watercolours depicting the past and present of Camden East Township. As in the past, her work will open with a roaring party of historical talk, the ghost of Bob Jack, musical groups, demonstrations of old pumps, working mills, grinders and miniature tools. The place is in the Oddfellows' Hall in Yarker, Saturday 30 September, 10 am to 4 pm. The exhibition will continue until Friday 6 October. Shirley has undertaken the pictorial recreation of some sixteen communities before this, a very valuable and attractive contribution to the historical record. A contribution from the sale of her paintings will go toward the installation of 911 service for Camden East. Admission is free and you can get more information from Shirley at (613) 549-8360.

BACK ISSUES: HISTORIC KINGSTON

Margaret and Bernard Burdsall remind us that there are still back copies of Historic Kingston available for only \$5 each plus \$2.50 for postage and handling. Foreign orders are payable in U.S. funds. Bulk orders will receive a refund of excess postage. Not available are numbers 1, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 27.

Please send your order with payment to: Publications, Kingston Historical Society, P.O.Box 54, Kingston, Ontario K7L 4V6.

SESQUICENTENNIAL KINGSTON

The city of Kingston will celebrate its 150th birthday in May 1996. Our esteemed President Bill Fitts has already begun the Society's efforts to ensure it is not forgotten. A special commemorative coin (a toonie) will be issued, showing the City Hall dome on one side, the Murney Tower symbol of our Society on the other. City status and the building of Murney Tower both occurred in 1846. Our museum operation in the tower began seventy years ago. It is also proposed to donate a plaque noting council members of 1846 and 1996 for City Hall and organize a re-enactment of Council's inaugural meeting. The reaction from Mayor Gary Bennett has been positive.

WAYS AND MEANS

Our continually declining revenues demand imaginative action if we are to carry on our mission of preserving the city's historical awareness. A Ways and Means Committee has been formed to examine our financial situation and propose effective fund-raising methods. Under Chairman Frank Milledge, the

members will be Vice-President Joe Boucher, Vice-President Lou Grimshaw, Treasurer Desmond O'Meara and Editor Donald Redmond. The creative thinking of all of us can contribute to their success. Why not rack your brain now, work out the practical details and give Frank a call at 389-4627.

HIGH RISE ON HOLD

In January, Quay Developments of Ottawa presented a very professional case to the Ontario Municipal Board seeking changes to Kingston's Official Plan which would enable them to erect a high rise office complex beside City Hall. Assisting the city in defending its case was an equally spirited and well-documented presentation by the citizens' group Vision Kingston, supported by Bill Fittsell for our Society and many other distinguished citizens.

Seven months later the decision has come down, essentially upholding the city's position and providing encouragement to those of us who work to preserve the historic character and human scale of our downtown area.

This is not to say that we should discourage business development downtown, but rather that it must be compatible with the existing architectural fabric if Kingston is to preserve its unique charm.

OLD STONES OF PORTSMOUTH

At the other end of our city, Portsmouth Villagers successfully prevailed upon the authorities to rebuild the historic gateway to Rockwood Hospital which had been demolished to facilitate the widening of King Street West. The gateway is completed, the quality of the masonry is impressive and who will complain if some of the stones are not the

originals? After all, limestone was formed long before our historic architecture.

Meanwhile, the infamous Lakeview Manor, a part of it once the stately home of wealthy brewer James Fisher, is under demolition to make way for quite presentable new homes by Dacon. Again, villagers pressed their case for sympathetic architecture and the removal of a monumental eyesore.

Your ever humble servant has passed the leadership of the Portsmouth Villagers Association over to Anne Milina, one of our more tireless neighbours. She continues to seek a safer pedestrian crossing at King and Mowat, where Tim Horton Donuts continue to negotiate with the city over their site plan. Stay tuned.

