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Editor  
James Warren

### CATARAQUI TO CANONTO

Our November meeting will welcome author Michael Dawber, who will reveal the origin of some of the curious place names of Frontenac County and what they say about our historical development. Michael descended from Loyalists who settled in Northumberland County and stayed there for 200 years; however he was born in Kingston. He received an honours degree in journalism from Carleton and has been busy since then writing feature articles, editing, reporting to CBC radio from the Land O' Lakes and publishing four books, one in collaboration with Bill Fittsell, a Guide to the Old Ontario Strand. The meeting will be on Wednesday 15 November at 7.30 pm in the Wilson Room of the Central Public Library.

### OCTOBER MEETING

Last meeting, educator and writer Peter Hennessy provided a most interesting talk about life in Kingston Penitentiary circa 1858.

Incidentally, our speakers deserve a more bountiful attendance. In September, only 28 showed up; in October, about fifty. Could we not do much better?

### TAX RECEIPTS

As noted previously, while the tax collector offers no breaks for your membership fee since it is considered to

be no more than value received, your contributions to our Society in excess of membership will be honoured with an income tax receipt. Treasurer Desmond O'Meara will be delighted to accept your donations at 546-5439.

### ARTIFACTS TO GO

Lennox & Addington Museum has offered us several artifacts which they feel are more appropriate to our history than theirs. They include two dresses and a uniform from the 1920s, and three souvenir dishes and a cup from the turn of the century. What do we do with them? Our curator will decide.

### ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

You may be unaware that there is an Ontario Historical Society whose newsletter provides news about museums, historical societies and relevant legislation throughout the province. Their circulation is 3000, and they have sent us 20 copies which are offered to those attending our meetings. If you would like to join, the fee is \$20 ; the address 34 Parkview Ave., Willowdale, Ont. M2N 3Y2. Or phone (416) 226-9011. Interesting reading.

### GENEALOGISTS ALERT

Saturday 18 November at 9:45 in the morning at Kingston Public Library is the time and place for Kingston Branch genealogists' annual general meeting and silent auction. All are most welcome to the meeting and afterward for lunch in a local restaurant.



## CONGRATULATIONS TO FITSELLS

Our President Bill Fittsell is twice bless'd. On 12 October 1945 he took as his bride Barbara Robson of Sydney in Cape Breton, a member of the clan Gunn whose motto is Peace or War. Peace must have won, for they celebrate their fiftieth wedding anniversary. And now Bill is an honoured member of the Lindsay & District Hall of Fame for his great contributions to the history of hockey. Our love and congratulations to both.

## WAYS AND MEANS

There were three thoughtful responses to my editorial suggesting far-reaching change to our Society if we are to survive. Jennifer McKendry suggested an amalgamation of the Kingston Historical Society and the Frontenac Historic Foundation into a new Frontenac Historical Society. This would expand our geographical base into the county, provide a greater number of active members to share the work load and eliminate some duplication of functions, saving money. Newsletters and publications could be shared. She felt that having lectures better-illustrated would increase attendance and noted the importance of the social gathering after our lectures which could be extended to a summer garden party. Her experience in organizing a national conference for the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada, while profitable, was a financially risky business. (ED: This might be combined with the Heritage Fair, which will return to Kingston in May 1996)

Margaret Burdsall suggested that savings might be enjoyed by meeting at a less expensive place and reducing meetings and the newsletter to a

bi-monthly affair. Since this would reduce the content of Historic Kingston, articles might be obtained elsewhere. She noted that Historic Kingston must be provided free to members or few would buy it. There is no demand for back copies. She also suggested giving Murney Tower back to Parks Canada, artifacts and all. She questioned the value of retaining our archive and collections at Queen's since the prospect of paying a proper archivist is dim. If they are merely collecting dust, she asks, is it better to sell things off and "ask the last surviving member to turn out the lights when he leaves." Margaret notes the success of Kingston's Heritage Fair and suggests we give some of our assets to provide a yearly prize to outstanding student presentations at the fair, to be judged by a panel of teachers. She reminds us that membership is dwindling, members are aging and there are ever-fewer members willing to take on the arduous task of the Society's business.

Stewart Webster took a different tack. He said "I'm eighty and don't get around much anymore. But I care. In a society such as ours, personal acquaintance, the visible presence, regularly renewed, is important. An annual conference would not be so effective. If monthly meetings continue, the monthly letter is valuable. For example, it tells the 72% of members who are absent what happened, what we missed. This keeps people in the society. Anyhow I love THEN. Keep up the invaluable work."

We deeply appreciate these comments and suggestions. New activities on the horizon may open up opportunities to resuscitate our beloved Society and bring others together with us. We'll keep you posted.



## MINUTES OF THE SOCIETY

In the March 1994 issue of this newsletter, your editor suggested that minutes of monthly meetings were unnecessary, describing them as "a soporific exercise, akin to three hours of Gregorian chants. How many prospective new members do we drive away because of this tedious practice?" No one listened, of course.

How ironic, then, that your editor has been prevailed upon to incorporate the minutes in our newsletter. Bludgeoned but unbowed, the pitiful fellow has even agreed to act as recording secretary at our meetings (since he did the job unofficially anyway). For the October meeting, Marjorie Simmons kindly volunteered as recording secretary. Her notes and mine are combined in the following. Hereinafter, the responsibility will be mine alone, but be warned! They will be the most succinct minutes you ever read in your life.

## MINUTES OF KHS 18 OCT. 1995

Place: Wilson Room of Central Public Library at 7.30 pm.

Chair: Pres. Bill Fittsell noted that henceforth minutes will appear in newsletter, making the reading of the minutes unnecessary in future. (ED: progress!) However he read highlights of September 17 minutes. Motion for adoption by F.McConnell, seconded by E.Fudge.

Correspondence: 1. Offer from L&A Museum and Archives offering deaccessioned artifacts to KHS. Matter referred to our Curator. 2. Ontario Historical Society offers twenty copies of their bulletin; hopes our members will join them.

Sesquicentennial \$2 Coin created by KHS to honour Kingston's 150th

year of incorporation to be ready 13 Dec. at our Christmas meeting.

Nomination Committee: members who are asked to serve on selection committee for new officers are urged to accept graciously.

Murney Tower Museum; D.Petty reported intention to hold a members' party in May to launch opening for 1996 season.

Membership: J.Boucher reported no new members; urged members to recruit assiduously.

Publications: M.Burdsall reported new policy requesting payment in advance for book orders.

Comments from Floor: P.Quattrocchi would like to display historic pictures on Block D reminding visitors of wartime activity on waterfront. S.Gibson-Longille reported that \$1,227.85 was raised at her art show and historical presentation in Yarker to support 911 emergency service in Camden East Township. M.Simmons sought help in identifying old limestone building on the northerly extension of Wellington Street. K.Rutherford reported that Murney Tower was in the black for 1995, but may not receive a provincial grant in 1996. Budget now in preparation. W.Fittsell said that some profits from commemorative coin may be apportioned to museum account. I.Trumpour commended D.Petty for displaying surplus artifacts in Queen's Archives. Interested viewers should make appointment with D.Petty.

Ways and Means: D.O'Meara expressed concern about our financial situation; plans to examine cost structure, fund-raising projects and efforts to attract more members.

Special Project: J.Warren outlined proposal to collaborate with other historical societies in obtaining empty Artillery Barracks buildings as a shared meeting place, museum and



revenue-producing activity centre.

Plaque: J.Grenville to be approached to price a plaque in City Hall Memorial Hall, noting that Sir John A. Macdonald was laid in state there after his death in Ottawa, 1891.

Program: L.Grimshaw introduced the speaker Peter Hennessy, who spoke on the subject of Life in Kingston Penitentiary 1858.

After adjournment, members enjoyed coffee and cookies, courtesy of Ken Rutherford.

### CANADIANS AWAKE!

*Our deep concern over the referendum should make us all resolve to work more heartily together.*

*Never mind the efforts of charismatic charlatans to destroy our country by pandering to fanatical bigots who resent the 'English'. We are, in fact, Canadians of many different tongues and cultural backgrounds, far removed from the events of 1759.*

*The problem for Canada is the decency of our democratic system, which cannot always deal promptly with the demands of those who seek to divide us. Fifty years removed from war, and grown too complacent by decades of easy living, we Canadians have been too insular, too slow in adapting to changing times. The icy threat of separation may have served to breathe a new spirit into all of us.*

*James Warren.*

### SPACE FOR YOUR COMMENTS:

