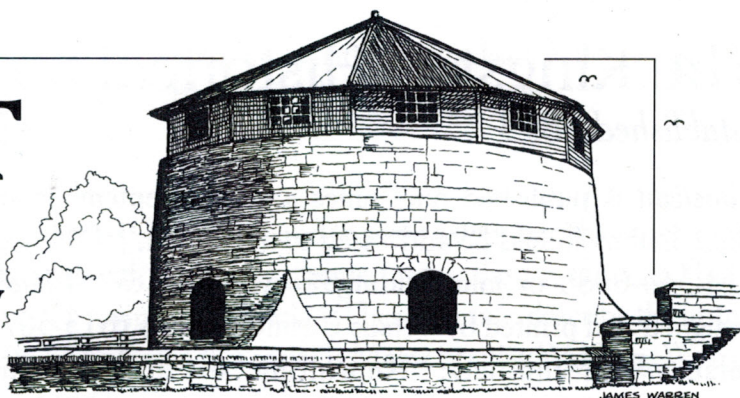


LIMELIGHT

Newsletter of the
Kingston Historical Society

vol 13 no 6 September 2011 ISSN 1488-5565



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

My article published in the May Limelight received some very interesting reactions.

Before pressing on to other matters, I will attempt to briefly clarify my position. To say “we don't usually involve ourselves in heritage architecture preservation” is not to say that we have no interest in in heritage architecture. Indeed, many of our talks feature detailed references to historical residences and commercial buildings. It is one of the things we do. But it is not our sole purpose. If an issue came before KHS Council asking for support in a preservation project, we are bound by our constitution to “be an advocate for the preservation of buildings” and would respond accordingly. My only point is and was that this is only one of a number of facets of KHS life, and is not our primary focus, as it may well be for other local organizations.



The Murney Tower National Historic Site and Museum has been busy throughout the summer months. Thanks to Warren Everett, his committee, and his excellent summer staff of three students for making “the tower” the success story that it is.

Thanks also to past president Alan MacLachlan, along with Peter Radley and their committee for organizing the excellent June 6 ceremony at Cataraqui Cemetery to honour the life and death of Sir John A. Macdonald.

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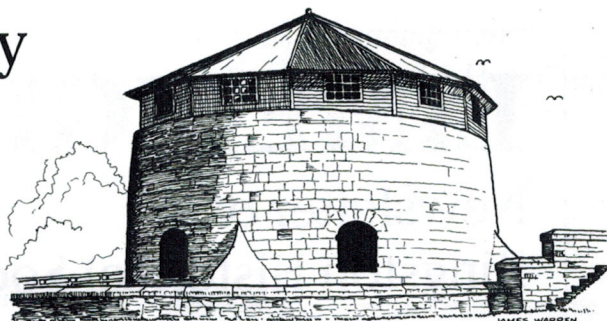
I trust the summer months were pleasant and relaxing, and look forward to seeing you all September 21 for our first fall meeting.

Gordon Sinclair

The Kingston Historical Society

established 1893

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Murney Tower by James Warren

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KHS holds monthly talks or events, usually at 7:30 pm on the third Wednesday of the month, September to May, usually in the Wilson Room of the Kingston Public Library on Johnson Street at Bagot Street. Special annual events include a dinner and talk honouring the birthday of Sir John A. Macdonald in January and a ceremony marking his death in June.

New members are welcome! Membership rates are \$40 individual, \$50 family, \$50 institutional or \$25 student. Memberships include *Historic Kingston*, published annually by The Kingston Historical Society.

Kingston Historical Society

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The Kingston Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Ministry of Culture of the Government of Ontario

Announcements of Historical Interest

The Kingston Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society will meet in the Wilson Room of Kingston Frontenac Public Library, 130 Johnson St., Saturday, September 17, 2011 at 10 a.m. William Boulton presents "150 Years of the Railroad" - the building of the Grand Trunk Railway and its joining with the CNR. Visitors welcome. Further information at www.ogs.on.ca/kingston



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Is KHS Selling Itself Short on its Own History?

by Jennifer McKendry

In volume 11 of *Historic Kingston*, published in 1963, Louis Flynn wrote an article on the early years of the Kingston Historical Society, the formation of which was under discussion in the autumn of 1893. The first meeting was held on 10 November in Council Chambers with 25 persons in attendance. The name "Kingston Historical Society" was chosen and a committee formed to draw up a constitution, which was presented on 24 November. The following January, committees were named to deal with Military History, Ecclesiastical History and Civil History. By March, the meeting participants included six women in the male-dominated organization.

One of the first concerns of the new society was to establish a civic museum in City Hall's Ontario Hall. Despite the concept being initiated by the mayor (who called upon the society to direct the project), it died out due to inaction on the part of city council. The lack of a civic museum is still felt today despite Kingston's numerous specialized museums, including the Society's own Murney Tower museum, established in 1925.

It is also interesting that another immediate concern for the Society in the 1890s was to record and preserve old landmarks. Today the Society still has in its mandate, "to be an advocate for the preservation of buildings and areas of historic interest in the City of Kingston and district."

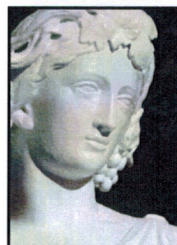
What sparked my interest in looking at the Society's early years was an article in the *British Whig* of 2 February 1877. It was a report on one of the regular meetings of the Literary and Historical Society. They were held in St Paul's church hall and "free to all and everyone is cordially invited." The February meeting filled the room. The newspaper reported that "the meetings of this Society are becoming more interesting each time, and we advise all who wish to spend a pleasant evening to patronize them." In this regard, nothing has changed in 134 years.

I wondered about the "Literary" part of the name but the February presentation had everything to do with history and nothing specifically to do with literature. An essay was read by Miss St Remy on the advisability of establishing direct trade between Canada and the West Indies -- a direction she favoured. Mr R.W. Baker gave a lecture on the Postal System of Canada with emphasis on Ontario and Quebec. His presentation was "very interesting and listened to with marked attention." A humorous reading by Mr R.W. Shannon was also given. The next meeting was announced: it would be a debate "as to whether the assumption of the telegraph by any Government is beneficial to the country."

So, less than 100 years after Kingston began as a small settlement under harsh conditions, a historical society was in full swing -- more than 16 years ahead of the establishment of the Kingston Historical Society. Did the latter come about because the previous one disappeared and a new generation of professional and amateur historians wanted to resurrect it? Did they want to focus more closely on local history? The titles of the first papers read to KHS from 1893 to 1900 inclusive had 21 dealing with the Kingston area and 20 with other geographical areas (with emphasis on French Canada). It would thus seem that Kingston was far from the only subject of interest.

I hope the February 1877 report on the Literary and Historical Society will intrigue someone who is willing to look into its beginnings and demise, its position within a broader development of historical organizations (such as the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, founded in 1824; the Public Archives of Canada, 1872; the Ontario Historical Society, 1888) and whether it has any relationship to our present historical society. If the earlier one evolved into the later one, perhaps we need to reassess how early we actually began.

IRON DUKE
On Wellington
Heritage and Hospitality on Tap



Be a Part of History
Cataraqui Cemetery
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The 118th Sir John A. Macdonald

June



Unlike last year with the rains, we were blessed with radiant sunlight and over 200 people in attendance including students from both the Lime District School Board, many took advantage of the sunny opportunity with the singing of our national anthem led by the choir from Mother Th M.C., Peter Radley, unfolded in traditional fashion with warm welcome Blair Peever. The KHS President Gordon Sinclair introduced Yve

within a weeks' time. His address was titled the decision Symbolizes the End of Sir John. The full text of his address will be found in Following the traditional laying of wreaths of government and organizations affiliated the Fort Henry Guard piper concluding Henry bugler. Following the benediction Save The Queen, the Fort Henry Guard conducted the march Off. Everyone refreshments graciously provided by Belle We gratefully acknowledge the roles pl



Cataraqui staff, the constables, Henry Guard whom ceremony of pageantry and We also thank and Aunt L Restaurant assistance. of this event result of dedication attention to committee Bonner, T Peter Rad Lusk, and M

Graveside Commemoration Ceremony

, 2011

ere able to again hold the commemoration service at the graveside. With
ne District School Board and the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic
meander through the historic Cataraqui Cemetery. The service began
sa Elementary School. The program under the efficient direction of the
and introductions and scripture reading and opening prayer by the Rev.
elletier who would be receiving his doctorate from Queen's University

"Bellevue House over Earnscliffe: How
A. Macdonald as a Symbol of Canada".

r next issue of Historic Kingston.

13 in all, which included our three levels
ith Sir John. The Lament was played by
h the Last Post and Reveille by the Fort
y Fr. Blair Peever and the singing of God
played "A Salute to Sir John A" as they
journed to the Open Air Chapel for
e House.

d by the staff of Bellevue House, the
Cemetery

R.C.M.P.

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tradition.

Bob Clark

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Barbara

Huber,

Donna

k Bennett



Text by Alan MacLachlan
Photographs by Peter Ginn

THIS MONTH'S MEETING

Wednesday, 21 September 7:30 PM The Constantine Collection of Northern Indigenous Art and its Travels to Kingston

Peter Ginn & Alicia Boutilier

Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Queen's University, University Avenue at Bader Lane

* Note: Free parking is available on all campus outdoor lots after 5:00 pm

Refreshments

All Welcome



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Cathedral Walls

Warren Everett (with thanks to Peter Gower)
Photograph by Alan Wilkinson

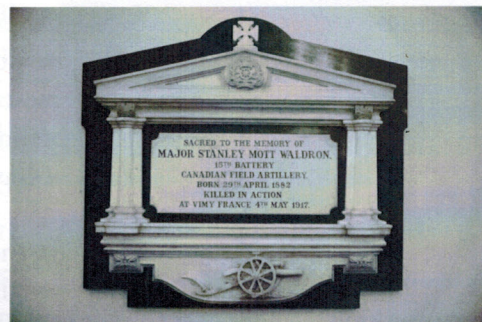
We often hear the phrase "if only these walls could talk". In the case of Cathedrals and to some extent parish churches, the walls do talk. The walls of St. George's Cathedral are ornamented with numerous plaques, the earliest to Charles Poulett Thomson, 1st Baron Sydenham, and first Governor of the United Province of Canada. These plaques describe the history of many of the prominent citizens of Kingston and in turn our city. The first in this series is Major Stanley Waldron. We trust these will prove interesting to the students of Kingston history and add to our collective knowledge.

MAJOR STANLEY MOTT WALDRON

About mid-way along the north wall of the Nave of St. George's Cathedral is a large white marble plaque dedicated to Major Stanley Mott Waldron. The plaque is in the form of a Roman or Greek temple. In the centre of the pediment is a carved General Service Badge of the Canadian Field Artillery worn in WWI. The temple is surmounted with a Maltese Cross and a field gun, typical of those used by Canada in WWI, is found at the bottom.

Stanley Mott Waldron was born on April 29th 1882 and was baptised at St. George's Cathedral on September 14th 1882. He was the youngest of five siblings of Richard and Maria Waldron of Kingston. Richard Waldron was an immigrant from Ireland and Maria (nee Stenson) was from England. The Waldron family lived at 80 Barrie Street. Their home, a fine three storey brick Victorian structure, is still there, but is now used by the Queen's University Medical Faculty. Richard Waldron was a successful merchant who owned and operated a Dry Goods store at the corner of Brock and Wellington Streets, "a purveyor of fine carpets, dry goods and home furnishing". Richard Waldron's store employed 14 "hands" at its peak. The building, originally known as the Wilson Block, was designed by George Browne in 1841. Today the building is occupied by the Bank of Nova Scotia. The family was a strong supporter of the Church of England and rented pew #38 at St George's Cathedral.

Stanley completed his early education at Kingston Collegiate. In September of 1899 he enrolled at the Royal Military College of Canada as cadet #514. He graduated in 1903 with a diploma in engineering and became a civil engineer working in various capacities: at the Niagara Power Plant, for the Temiska Railway and as a Hydraulic Engineer in Northern Ontario and Western Canada. While in Western Canada he met and later married Isobel Marion Bell of Fort Rouge, Manitoba. The marriage took place on 11 December, 1916 in England, while he was on leave from the front. Stanley Mott Waldron answered the call to the colours on 12 February, 1915 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. He served in various capacities with the 5th Brigade, Canadian Field Artillery, arriving in France in January, 1916. He was promoted to Major and assumed command of the 14th Battery on 21st May 1916 and the 15th Battery in March of 1917. During the assault on Vimy Ridge on the 4th May 1917, a 5.9 inch shell crashed through the officers' dugout and killed Major Waldron. He is buried in La Targette British cemetery, Neuville-St Vaast, Pas-de-Calais, in grave I E 18.



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Speakers' Corner

"The Many Lives of James Douglas (of Douglas Library Fame)"
Presented by Herb Helmstaedt,
geologist and professor emeritus, Queen's University

with Dorothy Farr
and photos by Peter Ginn

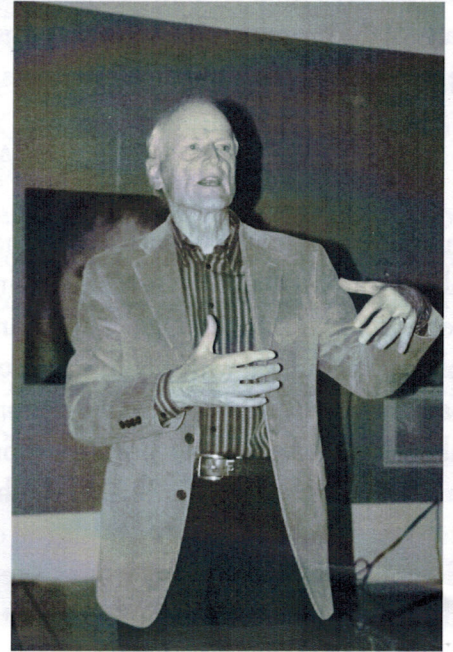
Although he was Chancellor from 1915 to 1918 and donated the funds which assured the survival of Queen's University through three lean years of World War I, few people at Queen's are aware that James Douglas walked the tough streets of Tombstone, Arizona, in 1881, the same year when Wyatt Earp, his brothers and Doc Holliday fought the Clantons and McLaurys at the "(in)famous" O.K. Corral. But this was only one waypoint in the interesting life of a man who was born in Quebec City in 1837, graduated with a BA from Queen's University in 1858, and almost became a Presbyterian minister and medical doctor before lecturing in chemistry and experimenting with the extraction of copper from a mine owned by his father in the Eastern Townships of Quebec. The latter experience laid the foundation for a career in copper mining and metallurgy that eventually saw him becoming the president of Phelps Dodge Corporation, one of the most important copper mines in Arizona and New Mexico. Douglas also became president of the El Paso and Southwestern Railroad which was build to satisfy the transportation needs of the Phelps Dodge copper empire.

In spite of his success as an industrialist and his receiving many honours, Douglas remained a modest man who, once wealthy, became one of the more important philanthropists of the early 20th century. The main beneficiaries of his generosity were hospitals and libraries in Arizona, New York and Quebec, but also universities, such as McGill and Queen's. An early association with the Quebec Literary and Historical Society instilled in him a deep love in the study of history which he pursued for the rest of his life and which, among others, resulted in two important books on North

American colonial history, entitled "Old France in the New World" (1905) and "New France and New England" (1913).

Dr. Helmstaedt presented a spirited account of the adventurous and surprising life of James Douglas to an attentive crowd at the May meeting of the Kingston Historical Society. Audience discussion at the end of the talk revealed several of James Douglas' philanthropic activities that benefited Kingston institutions, including Queen's Engineering Department, the Royal Military College and Kingston General Hospital, as well as some audience connections to the sites of Douglas' Arizona mining successes.

Society member Ed Grenda thanked Dr. Helmstaedt on behalf of the Kingston Historical Society for his exhilarating talk and presented him with the Society's pewter pin.



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