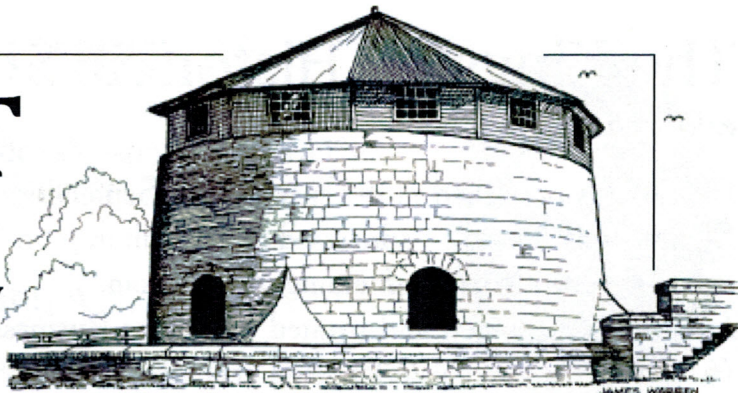


# LIMELIGHT

Newsletter of the  
Kingston Historical Society

vol 14 no 8    December 2012    ISSN 1488-5565



## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Well, our conference is now history. To mount a conference like this given the many challenges faced by the organizing committee is a major accomplishment. To experience a conference as successful as this one was is a miracle of near-colossal proportions.

Thanks is due to many people who worked with vigour and perseverance to see this project through to completion, but, as I said at our November 21 meeting, thanks is also due to the many KHS members who attended, asked provocative questions and offered insightful comments. To the many Council members and others who did first-rate work on the day of the conference itself, I am also indebted.

The conference planning committee will convene one last time to generate a list of what went well, and what might need improvement for another time around, should the Society wish to undertake a project like this at some future time.

Membership renewals keep rolling in. Thank you to all who have renewed to date. As cited elsewhere, our website now allows you to renew your membership on-line. With the addition of each feature like this, our website becomes more and more interactive.

The John A. Macdonald Dinner January 11 at RMC is fast approaching. Tickets will be grabbed up quickly for this premier winter event, so contact Warren Everett and hand him a cheque well before December 21 to ensure you have secured a spot at the dinner.



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Congratulations to KHS member and former president Bill Fittell, who launched his latest book, *Captain James Sutherland: The Grand Old Man of Hockey and the Battle for the Original Hockey Hall of Fame* at Memorial Hall on Monday, November 19.

*Gordon Sinclair*



# The Kingston Historical Society

established 1893

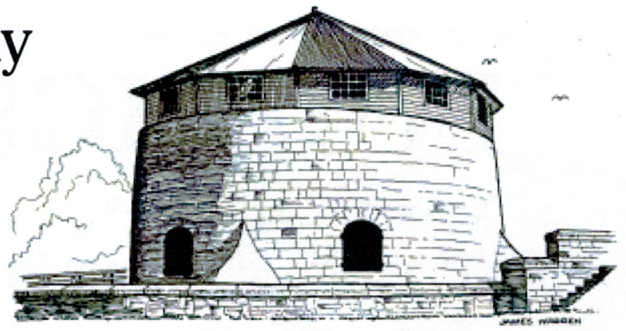
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KHS holds monthly talks or events, usually at 7:30 pm on the third Wednesday of the month, September to May, usually in the Wilson Room of the Kingston Public Library on Johnson Street at Bagot Street. Special annual events include a dinner and talk 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 \$50 individual, \$60 family, \$60 institutional or \$25 student. Memberships include *Historic Kingston*, published annually by The Kingston Historical Society.



Murney Tower by James Warren

## Kingston Historical Society

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## Executive

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Alan MacLachlan, *Past President*  
Peter Gower, *Vice President*  
Don Richardson, *Secretary*  
John Whiteley, *Treasurer*

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Ross McKenzie  
Anne Richardson  
Douglas Petty

Hazel Fotheringham, *Editor, Historic Kingston*  
Warren Everett, *Chair, Murney Tower Committee*  
John Fielding, *Editor, Limelight*



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

**Wednesday, 16 January 2013**

**7:30 PM**

**NEXT  
MONTH'S  
MEETING**

**God Save the King?:**

**The Evolution of Loyalty in the Limestone City, 1819-1841**

**Stephen Smith**

Wilson Room, Kingston Frontenac Public Library, Johnson St. at Bagot  
Refreshments All Welcome



# *Along the Old Road*

By Stewart Renfrew

I remember the Wesleyan Methodist Church built in 1872 at 736 Hillview Road from about thirty years after Don McClement knew it.

The drive shed behind burned down in the early 1950's after a fire in the swamp behind it spread to the building. It was some fire too, the fact the township actually went to the expense of calling in a city fire truck to save the church. In those days there was no fire department in the township.

The church building itself is a rather pretty if simple place that still exists as a residence. It had been built with volunteer labour and the bricks were brought in from Napanee. The foundations and basement were of nicely cut limestone the upper parts of red brick set off with yellow brick highlights. There were gothic windows of stained glass and the interior had been painted robins egg blue with dark wood wainscoting around the sides. Three rows of dark stained pews crossed the width of the church. Originally a Methodist institution, they had dispensed with the grand central processional aisle. At the end was a raised dais with the pulpit front and centre, a throne like chair for the minister behind it and the harmonium behind that. On either side of the pulpit were two brass rods hung with plush maroon drapes to protect the modesty of the lady choristers who sat behind them. In front of the pulpit, a nice table known as the communion table stood at floor level, none of this altar frippery for us.

The Sunday school room was in the basement under the church and was entered from the outside by a door on the west side. On entering the basement there was a door directly on one's right that led to a long narrow room behind the furnace. Part of the room was storage for coal the rest was used for general storage and there was a counter and shelves used by the ladies when preparing the potluck suppers that were featured each year. There was no fridge or stove. Often, though, the ladies would open the door to the furnace's firebox and put in dishes to be kept warm until serving.

For running water you ran over to Leonard's pump across the street and got it. If you were "caught short", you were welcome to avail yourself of the facilities at Mrs. Saunder's privy next door.

In those early years, just after the war, the congregation was very small and nearly all the members could trace a UEL ancestry. In those days the congregations in the three churches in the 'Cataragui Circuit' had declined to the level that they could only afford to support a student minister and not a fully ordained clergyman. That was not to last, and by the early nineteen fifties the post war boom was bringing more and more newcomers to the area. My parents and I were among the forerunners of this wave of new people and one Sunday there occurred an incident that my father always pointed to as the turning point that showed the way to the building of the very successful Edith Rankin United Church.

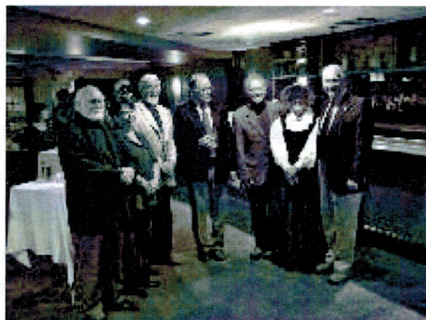
We arrived for church that Sunday as usual, and then as we were about to go in to our seats, Mr. Clark and Mr. Rankin pulled my father aside, 'for a word'. Mother and I thought little of the matter, as Father had become good friends with these men. We took our usual seats near the back of the church as mother was a bit deaf and was easily disturbed by noises from behind. Then father joined us and whispered to mother that there would be an interesting announcement during the service.

It seems that the United Church wanted more structure, or something; I don't remember the whole story. The Collins Bay Church was asked to appoint two elders for their congregation. Elders, if I remember rightly were supposed to be the lay leaders of that particular congregation, something like "Class Leaders" in the Methodist tradition. By rights, one would have expected that they would have chosen two of the old families, most likely the two cousins Mr. Clark and Mr. Rankin. Mr. Rankin, however, had a busy law practice in Kingston and was involved in politics. So, they put their heads together and decided the best choice would be a newcomer. That newcomer was my father. Now father was a very good churchman, but certainly no theologian. When I went to university and began to question the church and wonder about the truth of some of its theology he was thoroughly mystified. On the other hand he was thoroughly committed to this church, and this community. The people there realized that and more importantly they understood the message the old loyalist families were sending. The newcomers were, welcome and so they came. Before long there was an addition to the Sunday school in the basement. Then it was decided there should be a whole new Church. Mr. Rankin gave the valuable waterfront land for the project and the congregation worked hard to raise the money. Pretty soon the little Methodist Chapel had grown into the Edith Rankin Memorial United Church, one, I am told, of the most successful United Churches in the land.



# KHS Successfully Stages Its Fi

After some two years of planning, the KHS conference "Sideshow or Main Event: Putting the War of 1812 into Regional Contexts" came off in fine style on the weekend of October 26, 27, and 28.



*The Conference Planning Committee consisting of Brian Osborne, Anne Richardson, Alan MacLachlan, Gordon Sinclair, Edward Grenda, Eva Barnes, and Bob Andrews took time from their many duties for a quick photo opportunity.*

The significance of the name is that, while many would have been of the belief that the European Napoleonic Wars were the "main event" and that events in North America constituted a "sideshow", anyone, whether soldier, sailor, farm folk, or townspeople who actually experienced any part of the war in North America very likely considered it a "main event"

A secondary theme of the conference concerned the impact and legacy of the war on regions within our immediate geographical area, in both short and longer terms.

The conference itself was marked by a number of unique features. The most dramatic was that we had presentations from Canadian, American and Aboriginal perspectives. Secondly, the conference was a kind of hybrid, in that the presenters were all well qualified historians, yet the audience was not a particularly academic group, though curious and knowledgeable. Thirdly, we were able to

distribute a Journal at the end of the Saturday sessions, which had all the proceedings of the daylong conference, bound in a particularly handsome volume.

Conference weekend started with a flourish on Friday night, the 26th, at a well-attended and convivial reception for conference delegates and presenters. Councillor Bill Glover brought greetings from the City of Kingston and spoke briefly on the connection between the

*Brian Osborne and Councillor Glover enjoy a relaxed moment before Bill officially opened the Conference with a welcome from the Mayor and City Council.*



*Ladies and Gentlemen enjoyed the Friday Meet and Greet with lots of delicious refreshments courtesy of the Four Points Sheraton Hotel in downtown Kingston..*





# 1st History Conference

War of 1812 and Confederation.



*Our dinner speaker at the end of a busy day at the conference was **Dianne Graves**, historian and author, who, within the time constraints of a twenty-minute talk, synthesized the themes of the day very nicely*

Our speakers on Saturday the 27th were:

**John Grodzinski** (RMC, Kingston) spoke on the exploits of British General Sir George Prevost while stationed at Kingston during the War.

**Matthew Mac Vittie** (Onondaga Historical Association, Syracuse) outlined the Battle of Oswego in 1814.

**Dennis Connors** (Onondaga Historical Association, Syracuse) took us for a tour through the years of the Onondaga Arsenal.

**Jonathan Moore** (Parks Canada) explained the archaeological challenges in investigating sunken 1812-era warships in Kingston Harbour.

**Jane Errington** (Queen's University, Kingston) talked about

the home front during the war. Life for women and families was detailed.

**Constance Barone** (site manager, Sackets Harbor, NY Battlefield State Historic Site) also discussed life away from the battlefield.

**Alexander Campbell** (Historian and Research Consultant, Eastern Ontario) focussed on long-standing and deep divisions in the Akwesasne community stemming from divided loyalties in the War of 1812.

**Jamie Robertson** (doctoral candidate, McMaster University) described the religious forces at work in Upper Canada during the war.



*Many volunteers played important roles – some even wore 1812 period costumes: **Eva and Jack Barnes**, and **Sarah Terpstra and Peter Gower** were greeters*



Sunday morning (28th) at 10:00 AM found some forty of us on a school bus, touring sites in Kingston and area that were important during the War of 1812-14 and its immediate aftermath. Expert tour guides were Sue Bazely, Jennifer McKendry and Brian Osborne.

Photos by Betty Andrews and Eva Barnes  
Text by Gordon Sinclair and John Fielding



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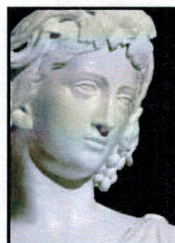
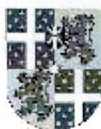
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# 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Sir John A. Macdonald Dinner

Our guest speaker for this year's Sir John A. Macdonald Anniversary Dinner, Friday January 11 2013, will be Ms. Ruth Abernethy, Sculptor. The subject of her talk will be



## Face to Face With Sir John A

The dinner will take place at the Cadet's Mess at the Royal Military College. Please gather in the Mess any time after 6:00PM to meet our guest. The dinner will commence at 7:00PM. The cost for the dinner will be \$60.00 for Society members and \$75.00 for guests of members. Please fill out the tear off portion below and send it along with your payment no later than **December 21, 2012**. to:

### Sir John A Macdonald Dinner.

c/o W. Everett, 253 Willingdon Ave, Kingston, ON K7L 4J2

Ruth Abernethy, a well known Canadian Sculptor whose refined method of mapping and carving figures led to the commissioning of Glenn Gould at CBC, Toronto in 1999, the first of numerous distinctive public portraits including Mackenzie King, John Hirsch and Arnold Palmer. A bronze portrait of Al Waxman was acquired for the National Portrait Collection, in 2003 and her recent figure portrait of Oscar Peterson was unveiled by Queen Elizabeth II in 2010.

Ruth's sculptures were juried into exhibitions in Ireland and the United States, shortlisted in Chandler, Arizona in 2001. She was awarded a Canadian Consulate bursary as the first Canadian artist to exhibit with Sculpture-by-the-Sea in Sydney, Australia in 2004. She was invited for a return to the Casuarina Sculpture Walk in Australia in 2006. The only Canadian short-listed artist in the Beijing Olympic Sculpture contest, Ruth was also awarded an Award of Excellence. Her sculptures have been placed municipally, regionally and nationally and she's been awarded numerous private commissions. Her current portrait commission is one of Sir John A for the City of Picton, Ontario.

Please note that this year, due to renovations at the Senior Staff Mess, the dinner has been moved to the Cadet's Mess. This mess is located across the sports field, directly opposite from the Senior Staff Mess. Parking will be on the west side of the parade square. A Commissionaire will be available to assist in parking and directions to the mess



### Sir John A. Macdonald Anniversary Dinner, Friday January 11, 2013

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone & email: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Members \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Non-Members \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Vegetarian meals Required: \_\_\_\_\_

Food Allergies: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please ensure you include the names of all those attending the dinner.*



## Speakers' Corner

When Coal was King; The Nineteenth Century Kingston Water Works  
Presented by Henk Wevers

As submitted to Alicia Boutilier by the speaker  
Photos by Peter Ginn

In the latter part of 1890, the Osborne-Killey Mfg. Co. from Hamilton finished the installation of a steam driven municipal water pump at the Kingston Water Works Co., located on Ontario Street at West Street. Soon the steam engine and the water pump would be tested on its performance. The efficiency in pumping potable water to the cistern located at the junction of Barrie and Colbourne, 70-feet above the lake level, was an important requirement in the contract between the company from Hamilton and the City of Kingston.

Henk Wevers took the correspondence between the company and the City as the starting point for a presentation on the prominence of coal in providing energy for pumping clean water to Kingston citizens. The importance of the provision of potable water was reflected in the magnificent Romanesque pump house that the City built, minutes from City Hall.

Massive amounts of coal fed the energy needs of our institutions, expanding industries and homes, after wood energy had peaked and became more and more outdated in the early 1800s. While some coal was shipped from Britain and the Cape Breton coal mines, the overwhelming amount of coal came from the Pennsylvania anthracite and bituminous coal fields when the railroads reached the south shore of Lake Ontario in the late 1800s.

Anthracite was mined in the Lehigh Valley as early the 1790s and shipped to market in primitive boats that were floated and towed along slack waterways and local rivers to Philadelphia, where the boats were broken up and used as firewood. In the early 1800s a canal between Mauch Chunk, now the city of Jim Thorpe, to Easton on the Delaware River, facilitated larger amounts of coal shipped to market. The presentation showed the development of canals and above all railways towards Oswego and Rochester serving predominantly the coal trade across Lake Ontario to Canada.



The interesting power point slide presentation featured several historic aerial photos of Kingston, historic sketches and photos of the Pennsylvania canal traffic, both passenger and goods, and a map that was especially created to show the development of the Lehigh Valley RR and the Delaware-Lackawanna-Western RR between the coal fields and the two coal export harbours, Rochester and Oswego, on the south shore of Lake Ontario.

A lively discussion and the presentation of several eyewitness accounts of the coal era in Kingston concluded the evening. Peter Gower thanked the speaker and presented a pin on behalf of the Society.

