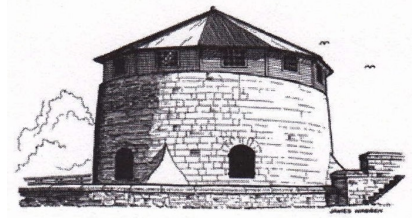


# President's Letter

## Kingston Historical Society

April 2015



### Dear Member,

There has been justifiable concern from members about the decision to cut back the number of issues of "Limelight". Council hopes to rectify that soon. But in the meantime, in an effort to keep in touch, and to keep you informed of the many activities in Kingston, I am sending this letter to those of you for whom we have emails. It will also be available in printed form at the April meeting.

Peter Gower, President

### Upcoming events

**April 15th: Kingston Historical Society, Dr. John Carter, "The Result of Rebellion: North American Political Prisoners in Van Diemen's Land". The story of the 1837-38 Rebellion prisoners transported to Australia. Wilson Room, Central Library, 7.30 p.m.**

April 25th or 26th Sir John A Macdonald Commemorative Concert. Details from Donna Ivey, 613 547 5263

**May 20th: Kingston Historical Society: Nigel Day and Graeme Watson, "Historical Surveying and Aerial Photographs of Kingston and Area"**

May 23rd Hastings County HS tour: In search of Sir John A. Details at [www.hastingshistory.ca](http://www.hastingshistory.ca) or from Mary-Lynne Morgan at 613 961 7091

**June 6th KHS Graveside ceremony commemorating Sir John A Macdonald's death. Speaker will be Bob Rae.**

July 1st Unveiling of the Sir John A statue in Picton, sculpted by Ruth Abernethy, who spoke at our dinner in 2013.

### March 18th Meeting

Adrian Halpert spoke on how the railway came to Kingston. At first this new project was seen as an improvement which would help Kingston's staggering economy and a number of prominent citizens were individually and as a group working to bring the railway here. But reality prevailed. The railway was not built from Collins Bay along the waterfront and through the downtown, either because of the difficult land conditions, or because land speculation made it uneconomical. Instead the line went inland and Kingston Junction was built several miles north of downtown - and the city boundaries were extended so that the Grand Trunk could claim to 'serve Kingston'. Various other schemes failed including the Wolfe Island Canal and the train ferry to Cape Vincent, both of which were to open up the lucrative American market. Instead, Kingstonians who wished to travel or to move goods had to use the branch line to start their travels. Or, as many did, stayed with on the water with the old dependable shipping companies. Yet again, Kingston's hopes for becoming a commercial metropolis faltered.

### Victory!

Congratulations to Bill Fitzell for his victory in the Great Canadian Flag Debate. You will remember that on February 20<sup>th</sup>, Bill and Bob Harper, Chair of the Brockville '50 Years of our Flag' committee, debated which city had bragging rights as the originating city for our flag. MP Ted Hsu had not appreciated driving past the Brockville sign claiming 'Birthplace of the Canadian Flag'. The debate was inconclusive, with both cities feeling that they had proved their point. But now we know that Bill was the outright winner: Brockville has taken down its sign! Perhaps it is time to follow up on an idea that emerged during the debate: that

Highways 401 and 416 should become 'Gateways to the Cities who envisioned the Canadian flag' - or perhaps 'The Matheson-Stanley Freeway'. Just a thought!

We say goodbye and thank you to one of our long term sponsors. Larry Brennan has retired from Royal Lepage and we thank him and his business for supporting us over the years. Larry will continue to support the Society as a member. Good luck, Larry, and enjoy your retirement. If **you** are interested in becoming a sponsor, please contact the Society: we will be more than pleased to work with you.

Congratulations are also in order to your new Vice President, Corinne Harrison, for so ably taking over **Limelight**. Members have been most pleased with it, and we are sure that she will be well supported by you as you contribute long or short

articles of interest (though the long ones may be edited somewhat).

Council also decided to take a serious look at the future of the Society, under the leadership of Marcus Letourneau, Anne Richardson and Corinne Harrison. So, if you have ideas on where the Society should be going, and how we can improve ourselves, please have them ready for when you are asked later in the year.

## Murney Tower

The Tower will be opened this year on May 21st by Mayor Patterson. This is the 90th year we have operated the Tower. As a member, you have free admission, and we hope you will take all of your visitors to see the changes that Graeme Watson and his committee have made.

## Sponsors

Please support the Society's sponsors:

**Cataraqui Cemetery**

**Pan Chancho**

**Novel Idea**

**Marc. F Raymond, Opticians**

**Cooke's Fine Foods and Coffee**

**James Reid Funeral Home**

And if you want to become a sponsor, please contact us.

I look forward to seeing you on the 15th. Peter Gower.