

Limelight

Newsletter of the Kingston Historical Society

Kingston Ontario Canada

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Kingston Historical Society 2023 Lecture Series

presented live at 7pm, in the theatre lounge of the
Kingsbridge Retirement Community
at 950 Centennial Drive at Princess Street
and simultaneously offered via Zoom.

Wednesday, January 18: James Reid and Sarah Hedberg will provide an overview of the history of James Reid Funeral Home and its place in Kingston business and society since its founding in 1854.

Monday, February 20: In collaboration with the Frontenac Heritage Foundation, join us to celebrate Kingston's Heritage Month. The event will centre around the book launch and subsequent lecture of **Dr. Robert Banks'** upcoming *Warriors and Warships: Conflict on the Great Lakes and the Legacy of Point Frederick* (Dundurn). Dr. Banks' lecture will focus on the research and writing of the book and his personal perspectives on Kingston heritage. NB: An afternoon event at Memorial Hall in City Hall accompanied by afternoon tea.

Wednesday, March 15: Military historian **Dr. Matthew Barrett** will discuss his ground-breaking use of graphic art – cartooning – to convey historical narrative and analysis. Barrett's pictorial chronicle of events such as the battle for Hill 70 in World War I have been widely featured in the national press.

The Kingston Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.



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now!**

Wednesday, April 19: **John Grenville**, former Curator and Historical Research Officer at Fort Henry and long-time investigator of Kingston's military architecture, will report on his research into the city's iconic Market Battery.

Wednesday, May 17: The point is often made that our world of instantaneous communication through the internet was foreshadowed by the telegraph in the nineteenth century. **Graeme Roy**, a docent and board member of the Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario, will give us an intimate glimpse of how the telegraph connected Canadians in the early years of Confederation. He will reinforce his lecture with a demonstration of telegraphic equipment brought from his extensive collection at the Smiths Falls Museum.

Wednesday, September 18: Despite their proximity to Kingston, Wolfe Islanders have long prided themselves on the distinctiveness of their island culture. Professor **Anastasia Riehl**, a linguist at Queen's, will report on her research into the distinctive linguistic patterns that have evolved on Wolfe Island over many years.

Wednesday, October 18: Kingston textile historian **Joanna Dermenjian** will report on her research on women's domestic and charitable making of cloth and fibers. In particular, she will focus on the effort made by women in Kingston and across Canada during World War II to produce quilts for distribution to soldiers, civilians and hospital in Britain and Europe.

Wednesday, November 15: Kingston has long relied on haunted walks and its role as penitentiary warden of the nation to bolster its tourism. Queen's doctoral candidate **Kaitlyn MacDonald**'s research into what is called "dark tourism" will delve beyond the superficial into the historical construction behind our fascination with the abnormal and suggest ways in which such analysis may be used to enhance both our historical understanding and tourism management.

Next KHS Meeting

Wednesday, January 18, 2023

James Reid and Sarah Hedberg will provide an overview of the history of James Reid Funeral Home and its place in Kingston business and society since its founding in 1854.

THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established 1893

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Please forward submissions to the Editor betty.andrews@gmail.com

Reprinting of articles from the Limelight must be accompanied by an acknowledgment of the Society, the issue and date. Photo credits and by-lines must be retained.

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The KHS gratefully acknowledges the support of its sponsors in producing Limelight.

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and Webmaster

President's Message

by Paul Charbonneau

"The bad news is time flies. The good news is you're the pilot." Michael Altshuler.

As we twilight 2022 and reflect on where the year has gone, I think of how transitional this year has been. We are slowly finding our way out of the post-pandemic struggles of 2020 and 2021 and looking forward to more renewal of life as it has become.

I am certainly looking forward, and hope you are as well, to our 2023 lecture series coordinated by Duncan McDowall; from funeral homes to cartooning to Wolfe Island culture to quilts and ghosts, we will cover many interesting topics and hear from prominent presenters.

Be sure to check out "Merry Murney" which takes place on December 17th; more details are below. Our staff and volunteers at Murney Tower Museum have done yeomen's work to increase the public's awareness of this little gem of Kingston history.



In closing, on behalf of the Kingston Historical Society Council, a very dedicated and passionate group, I wish you a happy, joyful and safe holiday season and a very Happy New Year.

Colonel Edward Thornton Taylor

by Warren Everett

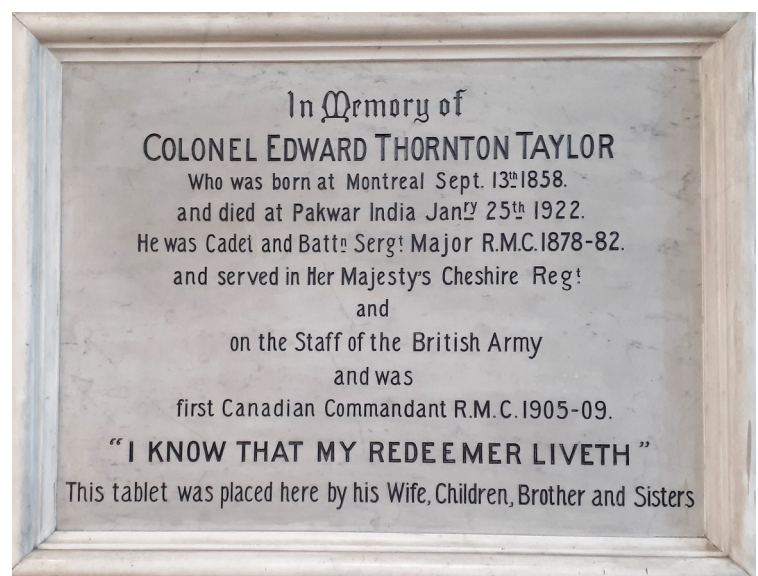
St George's Cathedral has a long association with the Royal Military College of Canada (RMC). Over the years RMC cadets and other military units of the Kingston Garrison have attended services at the cathedral, and cadets still do so annually on Copper Sunday in May and at Remembrance Day in November. Between 1891–1894 the transepts, choir and dome were added to the Cathedral. The transept incorporated two galleries, one dedicated to the Canadian Artillery and one to RMC.

Traditionally, regimental colours are laid up in Cathedrals and churches on changes of the monarch, when on active service, or on disbandment. The RMC gallery contains the King's and Regimental Colours of the College. These colours were presented by HRH Edward, Prince of Wales, on 25 October 1919 and laid up in St George's Cathedral on 20 June 1942 on the occasion of the closing of the College to Cadet training, when the College changed from Cadet training to training Officers for service in World War II. As well as the colours in the RMC gallery, there is a marble tablet on the side wall dedicated to Colonel Edward Thornton Taylor.



Colonel Taylor was born in Montreal in 1858 into one of the elite families of the city. He was the son of Thomas Malligaum Taylor and Mary Taylor. Mary was the daughter of John Redpath, founder of the Redpath Sugar Refinery of Montreal. Taylor graduated from McGill University in 1878 and entered RMC, as cadet # 45.

Edward Thornton Taylor excelled at sports during his time at RMC. He is credited with introducing the game of hockey, as we know it today, to Kingston. Taylor enjoyed great success at RMC. He was the top cadet in his class, being appointed the Battalion Ser-



geant-Major. He was presented with the sword of honour on his graduation in 1882.

In January 1883 he married Alice Madeleine at St George's Cathedral. The service was conducted by the Dean of Ontario.

Following graduation, he was commissioned into the 2nd Battalion of the Cheshire Regiment and proceeded to England. It was not uncommon for RMC graduates to be commissioned into regiments and corps of the Imperial Army. Taylor rose to the rank of LCol during his service with the regiment. He served with the regiment in England, in India and in Burma. It seems India appealed to Colonel Taylor. In his obituary in the Yorkshire Post in 1922 it said:

He was a man of great physical energy, well known in India as a climber and shot. He was never happier than when striding through the Himalayas or tiger shooting.

He was fluent in Hindustani, Persian, and Pashto. He was the quintessential 19th century British Officer of the Raj.

Colonel Taylor served as Commandant of RMC, from 1905 to 1909. He had the distinction as being the first Canadian-born commandant of the college, and the first commandant who was a Royal Military College graduate. Following his time at RMC he returned to staff duties in India. In the Great War, Taylor commanded the Labour Corps in France in 1917.

Colonel Taylor died suddenly at Pakwar, India in 1922, shortly before he was scheduled to return home to England. The plaque in the RMC gallery was donated by his wife, children, brother, and sisters.

Sources: The National Archives, The Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer, Cheshire Observer and Canada's RMC, Preston 1969

**Please
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KHS Membership Renewal for January to December 2023

Individual membership: \$50 Family membership: \$60
Student membership: \$25 Institutional membership: \$60
Sponsor fee \$300.

Any additional donation you may wish to contribute to the Society would be appreciated. Amount: \$_____ (tax-receipt given over \$20.)

Please pay in one of three ways:

Online at: www.kingstonhistoricalsociety.ca > Membership (Pay Pal or Credit Card)

By eTransfer to treasurer@kingstonhistoricalsociety.ca

By cheque to the 'Kingston Historical Society' (Box 54, Kingston ON K7L 4V6)

Questions: Please speak to Membership Chair Paul Van Nest, 613-544-6802 or email pvannest@cogeco.ca

The newsletter **will be sent by email** unless you specify hard copy to Paul Van Nest (contact Info above)

"Rare as a unicorn": Queen's Economist and Kingston Mayor Clifford Curtis (1899-1981)

Although separated by only a few city blocks, Queen's University and Kingston's civic government often seem to inhabit hermetic spheres. It came as a shock to Queen's professor of geography and director of its School of Urban and Regional Studies, David Gordon, to discover that a fellow scholar, economist Clifford Curtis, had once served as Kingston's mayor; it was during the crucial post-World War II transformation of the city. Joined by graduate student and fellow researcher Sara Wehbi, Gordon delivered the November lecture to the Society, bringing to life the extraordinary scholarship and administrative genius of a man who carried his campus wisdom into the corridors of municipal power. Curtis was, Gordon exclaimed, "rare as a unicorn."

Curtis arrived at Queen's in 1927 with a University of Chicago PhD in political economy, a disciple then based on the premise that economics and politics were inseparably intertwined. In the 1930s, Curtis honed his research skills, investigating the mechanics of new-born central banking in Canada, retail competition and municipal finance. Increasingly, he was pulled towards the way Canadian municipalities operated and planned their futures. Elected as a Kingston alderman in 1936, Curtis became a "policy nerd," bringing logic to Kingston's maze of outdated by-laws and overseeing the birth of its planning commission. In short, he acted as the handmaiden of Kingston's emergence as a modern city.

When war came in 1939, like many other Queen's academics, he lent his talents to Ottawa's burgeoning war effort, principally focusing on the nation's planning for an enhanced peace-time housing stock and managed community development. The 1944 "Curtis Report" became a blueprint for Canada's post-war dedication to managed "reconstruction" and prosperity. Back in Kingston, he continued to serve as alderman before assuming the mayor's office in 1948. On his watch, Kingston tripled its population by annexing swaths of adjacent townships. Sewage treatment was modernized. The Memorial Centre was constructed as a prototype city mega project. In doing this, Curtis became a leading prophet of community planning in Canada. He served as president of the Ontario Municipal Association.

Leaving the mayoralty in 1952, Curtis returned to an active academic life, publishing texts on community planning, advising foreign governments, serving on the board of the Canadian National Railway and guiding Queen's post-war growth spurt. He always combined a knack for long-range vision with a mastery of hands-on implementation. Gordon argued that Curtis left an "unusual" local legacy in such tangible developments as the Polson and Calvin Park subdivisions and a national one in the interventionist mandate of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the Community Planning Association of Canada.

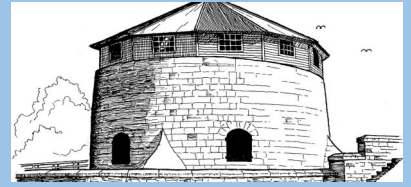
See the Gordon/Wehbi talk with its fine illustrations on YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4s0-VpPKfg>

HOMESTEAD

Murney Tower Operated by the Kingston Historical Society

www.murneytower.com



Murney Tower Museum Update

By Simge Erdogan O'Connor

This year Kingstonians were invited to come and celebrate the spooky season at Murney Tower in a special Halloween-themed event entitled “Spooky Murney” with games, tricks, and history – under the moon! On the evening of October 29, the tower opened its doors to families, kids, and adult groups who donned costumes and ventured inside the tower to discover its secrets and mysteries. Spiderwebs, skeletons, and ghosts could be found all over the tower, and eerie music filled the air. There was a Halloween-themed treasure hunt in which 100 guests solved the Murney puzzle, and won a full-sized chocolate bar and a beautiful Murney Tower postcard. “Spooky Murney” may well become an annual Halloween tradition.

The museum will continue hosting special events in the fall and winter seasons. We invite the members of the Kingston Historical Society to our next event, **“Merry Murney,”** which will take place December 17th and bring family and adult groups to the tower for holiday music, crafts, tours, and games.



It's that time of year, our holiday bash is here!

Would you like to celebrate the holiday season at a Kingston landmark? You are invited to attend “Merry Murney”, our special holiday event which will bring family and adult groups together to share and spread the holiday cheer. The event includes a holiday-themed art and craft station, a tree decorating activity and a holiday-themed treasure hunt. The tower will be decorated for this special event and holiday songs will fill the air. The participants can select one or multiple time slots.

Schedule: 12:00 PM-1:30 PM: Holiday Crafts and Tree Decoration

2:00 PM-3:30 PM: Holiday Crafts and Tree Decoration

4:00 PM-5:30 PM: Holiday Treasure Hunt



The Kingston Historical Society Award

is given to individuals, groups and institutions in recognition of their contributions to the preservation, understanding and interpretation of local Kingston history. Kingston Historical Society members are asked to nominate those that they believe meet these requirements. Please send nominations by letter to Chairperson, KHS Awards Committee, Box 54, Kingston, Ontario, K7L 4V8, or by email to Paul Charbonneau at Bearsden1017@hotmail.com and include contact information for your nominee and the reasons for your nomination. The deadline for nominations is December 15, 2022. The awards will be presented at the KHS/FHF event on February 20, 2023, which will be held at the Memorial Hall in City Hall.

