

# Limelight

## Newsletter of the Kingston Historical Society

Kingston Ontario Canada

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September 2023



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



### Kingston Historical Society Meeting

20 September 2023

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

### **Anastasia Riehl**

***Box socials and chicken suppers :***

### ***Learning about life and language on Wolfe Island***

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 linguistic patterns that have evolved on Wolfe Island over many years.

The Kingston Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society will hold a virtual meeting on Saturday, September 16 at 10:00 am. Diane Duncan will come to us by Zoom from Alberta to discuss "The 50% - The Women in Your Family Tree." Please join us., all welcome.

See [kingston.ogs.on.ca](http://kingston.ogs.on.ca) for Zoom link.

It is noted with regret, the death of Eleanor Einarson, on 6 April 2023, a life member of the Kingston Historical Society for over 30 years.

# THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*Established 1893*

*LIMELIGHT is published nine times a year, September to May.*

*Please forward submissions to the Editor [betty.andrews@gmail.com](mailto: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 re-*

The Kingston Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of Kingston Association of Museums, Art Galleries and Historic Sites and the City of Kingston.



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

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Alan MacLachlan, Sir John A. Macdonald Commemoration Event Chair; Duncan McDowall, Programme Chair;  
Tabitha Renaud, Director of Murney Tower; Paul Van Nest, Membership Chair; Peter Gower, Editor of Historic Kingston,  
and Webmaster

## President's Message

*by Paul Charbonneau*

By all these lovely tokens  
September days are here,  
With summer's best of weather  
And autumn's best of cheer.  
Helen Hunt Jackson



As we glide into the last few weeks of summer, I hope you all realized your aspirations for summer fun, whether travelling, lounging by the pool or in the backyard oasis, visiting friends and family or exploring new places.

I was saddened to read the news of the L&A Historical Society ceasing operations this summer. In 2022 we heard the sad news of the Pittsburgh Historical Society culminating its work and now the L&A Historical Society, following decades of existence, closes the books on the work they accomplished. The KHS was established in 1893, has been operating for 130 years only due to the strong commitment of you, our members, and many sponsors and supporters; may we continue for many, many more decades.

I have been very fortunate to have travelled extensively and have enjoyed the many languages spoken but had no idea Wolfe Islanders had their own lingo. Be sure to join Anastasia Riehl on September 20<sup>th</sup> and hear more about this linguistic research.

***The L&A Historical Society ceased operations in the summer of 2023.***

The following is excerpted from an article by president Jane Scott, published in the Napanee Beaver 14 July 2023.

The Society leaves a Legacy of restoration of The Allan Macpherson House, an 1826 Pre-Confederation house. In 2014, The Allan Macpherson House & Park along with the Society's historical documents, pictures and artifacts were acquired by the Lennox & Addington County.

The Society, for over a century, nurtured a thriving interest in our heritage and is survived by the numerous local Heritage Groups within L&A County: The Adolphustown-Fredericksburgh Heritage Society; Cloyne District Historical Society, Loyalist and Greater Napanee Township Heritage Committees and the following noted Museums: The Museum and Archives of Lennox & Addington and Macpherson House in Napanee; Cloyne Pioneer Museum and Archives; the Neilson Store Museum on Amherst Island. In Bath, The Bath Museum; Fairfield House and the Fairfield-Gutzeit House; the Babcock Mill in Odessa; United Empire Loyalist Park and Museum, The Old Hay Bay Church and St. Albans Church, Adolphustown.

<https://www.kingstonist.com/news/la-historical-society-closing-after-preserving-local-history-for-over-100-years/>

**Bellevue House...** A new ten-year plan for Bellevue House has been tabled in Parliament. The plan will seek to engage the complexities of Sir John A. Macdonald's legacy and to present that story from multiple viewpoints in order to paint a more complete picture. The interior of Bellevue House remains closed as restorations continue. The house will reopen in the Spring of 2024.

<https://www.kingstonist.com/news/new-plans-for-bellevue-house-tabled-in-parliament/>

**Keewatin...** The Marine Museum of the Great Lakes is preparing to welcome the arrival of the Keewatin by mid October. The Keewatin, built in Glasgow, Scotland was the largest steamship of the Edwardian era in the Great Lakes and one of the last to remain in operation.



**Parks Canada...** Parks Canada is seeking public input for the future management of Fort Henry and the Murney Tower. The new draft management plan hopes to address both the conservation challenges of these historic structures and to bring the community together in their future management.

Members of the public are invited to review and comment on the draft plan online at

<https://parks.canada.ca/kingston>

Members of The KHS are invited to join in the celebration of the 50th anniversary of The Kingston Branch of the **Ontario Genealogical Society** October 15 from 2:30 to 4:30 in the Wilson Room of the KFPL Main Branch. RSVP Derrick Bouchard, Kingston Vice Chair [kingston@ogs.on.ca](mailto:kingston@ogs.on.ca)

The story of **John Napier Turner**, Canada's 17th Prime Minister, is well known. From the **Historical Society Ottawa** comes a new HSO pamphlet on his mother, released in June 2023, "Phyllis Turner Ross -- Career Woman and Single Mother". To view pamphlet visit: <https://www.historicalsocietyottawa.ca/publications/bytown-pamphlets/pamphlets-available-for-download/120-phyllis-turner-ross-career-woman-and-single-mother>

What do Chris Hadfield and Rob Baker have in common? They both enjoy playing music for large audiences. They are both members of the Order of Canada. But, most importantly, they both support the Hill 70 Memorial Project and inspiring young Canadians.

The Hill 70 Memorial Project has always been committed to exploring ways of engaging young Canadians in understanding the significance of the Great War and Canada's status as an independent nation. Many sophisticated resources have been developed for young students and the general public.

Recently, events in France have led to a unique opportunity for students to "do history". In the Spring of 2022, the remains of approximately 120 Commonwealth soldiers were discovered in Loos-en-Gohelle, while digging a site for a new hospital. In collaboration with the Upper Canada District School Board, students are engaging in primary document research to develop biographical profiles of the casualties from the Battle of Hill 70. A webcast sponsored by the Globe and Mail will bring together experts and prominent Canadians, including Chris Hadfield and Rob Baker, to talk about their relationship with the Battle of Hill 70 Memorial Project.

Students are interrogating primary evidence including soldier service files, personnel records, the 1911 census, diaries, letters, photos, and newspapers from the period. Students are learning how to read and interpret documents, construct a profile of the soldier, and create digital artefacts of their research to be shared in local, national, and international contexts. During their research, students are discussing ethical issues such as commemoration, memorialization, and the treatment of unidentified remains.

Students are also understanding the multi-discipline nature of "doing history". Forensic identification experts from Canada and Europe are being interviewed by the students to add to their understanding of the identification of remains. Boxes of replicas of remains and artefacts such as long bones and metal material from uniforms are examined by students to learn about such ratios as the mathematical relationship between the length of long bones and height. Using forensic information students are including or excluding their soldier, just as forensic scientists do.

Looking ahead, the Hill 70 Memorial Project will sponsor a challenge coin design competition so that students can use their research results to demonstrate a suitable commemoration. They will also be able to enter a design competition for the annual greeting card sent to supporters of the Hill 70 Memorial Project. The boxes holding the evidence are replicas of ammunition boxes. Students will be asked to create a design which shows what the boxes may have looked like during



Soldiers on Hill 70

the Battle of Hill 70. In all design competitions the students will describe why they chose certain elements and how they determined that those elements were authentic.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission will host examples of the students' work to encourage students in other countries to develop their own databases of soldier profiles.

By the conclusion of the Project with the Upper Canada District School Board, profiles will have been developed for all 1877 casualties of the Battle of Hill 70. They will be available in a searchable database for other Canadians, especially their descendants. Equally importantly, these students will have "done history" as historians do.



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#### INFORMATION PLEASE

From: **Dr. Phillip Papas** <papas@ucc.edu>

Date: Thu, Aug 10, 2023 at 5:32 PM

Subject: Searching for Information about Lieutenant Edward Allen Low Shortt of the CEF

My name is Phillip Papas and I am Senior Professor of History at Union College of Union County, New Jersey. I am currently writing an article focusing on the life and military service of Edward Allen Low Shortt who was the son of William Allaire Shortt and Lucy E. Low Shortt. Edward (or Allen) was born on Staten Island, New York, in 1896 and his parents had a summer residence, Otterburn House, in Kingston, where the family spent much time. Edward's grandfather was Reverend William Shortt. He married Marie Crevolin Clark in Kingston on February 16, 1916, just before he left for England. Edward was MIA in December 1916 and officially declared KIA by the British War Office in July 1919. Do the Kingston Historical Society archives contain any information (correspondence, reminiscences, photos, etc.) related to Edward Allen Low Shortt, his family, and his service in the CEF during the First World War?

Any information that you could provide would be greatly appreciated.

FYI

<https://www.thewhig.com/news/dry-stone-wall-on-east-side-of-wabaan-crossing-being-rebuilt>

Bill Patterson (Brigadier-General William J. Patterson, OMM, CD, MA, FAPT Retired) commented in a letter to the editor on the article, "Dry Stone Wall on East Side of Waaban Crossing Being Rebuilt", by Ian Macalpine, published in the 22 June 2023 Whig Standard, noting that a date given in the article is wrong. It says:

"There is no record of when the wall was originally built, Scott had said earlier, but the farmhouse that makes up a portion of the library was built in 1863, and he assumes the wall was built not long after."

Great-grandparents of Bill Patterson, John Canniff Ruttan, UE, and Sarah Baillie, UE, built the house, and Bill offers proof that it was built in 1866. He writes:

...a letter, dated June 17, 1866 written by my grandmother's \*sister, Anna Marks Ruttan, in which she says "This week we expect to get the last coat of plaster on the new house, so that there is fair prospects of getting in before long."

\*Grace Ann, daughter of John and Sarah, married Daniel McLean, was the mother of Ida, who was the mother of Bill Patterson.



## **KHS Initiates a New Legacy Project:**

### **The Kingston Historical Society History Award: 2023**

**By Paul Van Nest**

Last fall, in considering what 'capital' venture we might undertake with monies we have 'in the bank', Council came up with the idea of an award for a high school student who has excelled in history (in its broadest definition). Paul Van Nest volunteered to undertake the leg work to develop a proposal and presented it at the October 2022 Council meeting. After contacting the Limestone School Board and working with Corinna Dupuis, Head of Student Services at Loyalist Secondary School, it became clear that we could much more easily implement an award for each secondary school in Kingston rather than selecting one award from all the area schools, and that the award could not nor should not be based solely on marks. Schools have been shifting away from the significance of a grade as a measure of success. In doing so, they are also shifting away from competition and more towards teamwork. We felt strongly that senior history teachers were to have a significant input in the selection process. Peter Ginn, treasurer, felt that we could commit \$1500 a year towards this legacy project. There being 9 secondary schools in Kingston we determined, again in consultation with the schools, that a \$150 subject award was appropriate and would be well received by a graduating student. No such award existed in any of these schools, and so Council committed to making this an annual award on behalf of the Society.

In the midst of making these decisions, Corinna, Don Richardson and Paul then began the hard work of recommending the criteria. After many iterations and consultations with history teachers and heads of student services, the following wording was accepted:

*This award is presented to a graduating student in each of the nine City of Kingston Secondary Schools who has shown an aptitude and passion for history in any of its many forms. As performance in Grade 12-level Canadian and/or world history course(s) will be a factor, the student's teachers will have input into the selection of the successful recipient. The criteria may also include the candidate's intention of pursuing further education in the humanities and/or social sciences. By history, we include its many forms, such as archaeology, anthropology, cultural heritage, social history, museums, etc.*

The invitation was sent out to all nine schools in February: **Limestone Board:** Bayridge, Frontenac, LaSalle, Loyalist and Kingston Secondary; **Algonquin and Lakeshore Separate Board:** Holy Cross and Regiopolis; and **the two Francophone schools:** École Secondaire Catholique Marie-Rivier and École Secondaire Publique Mille-Îles.

The first nominations began to arrive in May and, by early June, we had nominees from all 9 schools.

Another aspect of the process was to find members of the society to make the presentations at each school's graduation ceremony. We succeeded in recruiting representatives for each graduation ceremony: Pres. Paul Charbonneau\*, Jean Rae Baxter\*, Duncan McDowall\*, Michael Murphy\* (and our Francophone representative), and Paul Van Nest. (\*two schools) We were warmly welcomed at all schools and made our presentations on stage.

Two wrote letters of appreciation in which they both shared their aspirations for further studies and careers in history, which was very nice. Samantha Pringle, Holy Cross, wrote of the development of her love of history beginning in elementary school, then grade 10 Canadian history (from 1900 to the present) and grade 12 world history. After taking another year at high school where she intends to peer tutor in history, she's aiming for Ottawa University in history and the faculty of education to become a history teacher. "Please pass my thanks on to your colleagues at the Society and let them know that they are doing great work in our community," she wrote. We hope the other, Eli White from LCVI, will make a brief presentation at one of our fall meetings, so that you will meet him and he will meet us. There are 7 other stories that we could tell. And all schools and their teachers are ready for next year's awards. We've made a mark on the lives of 9 young people; many more will follow thanks to this legacy project.

**BOOK LAUNCH**  
JUNE 24  
Adolphustown,  
Greater Napanee

# Battle on the Ice

The Seventh in the Forging A Nation Series by  
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From Navy Island to Pelee Island, *Battle on the Ice*, is a thrilling tale populated by some of Canada's most important 19th-century figures.  
— Nathan Tidridge MSM FRGS, Institute for the Study of the Crown in Canada

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## Recent publications by Members

The summer edition of Queen's Quarterly carries an essay by KHS member **Dr. Duncan McDowall**, *Sir John A. Swings on the Pendulum of History*, an attempt to rehabilitate and rebalance Macdonald's place in our national history.

<https://www.queensu.ca/quarterly/sir-john-swings-pendulum-history>

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF BERMUDA PRESS

JOHN LYMAN'S  
The Old Bermudas  
A Study of Bermuda's Vernacular Architecture

The Board of Trustees and Staff of the National Museum of Bermuda invite you to the launch of

**JOHN LYMAN'S  
The Old Bermudas  
A Study of Bermuda's  
Vernacular Architecture**

Edited by  
Linda Aboud, Duncan McDowall  
& Edward Harris

Tuesday, May 30, 2023  
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Commissioner's House  
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Special book launch price / Refreshments / Meet the editors  
PARKING ON UPPER GROUNDS

## KINGSTON AUTHOR AND QUEEN'S GRAD DAVID MORE LAUNCHED HIS SEVENTH BOOK, JUNE 26 2023

**PIERRE'S SONG: A HISTORY OF THE BEAUPRES OF KINGSTON.**

Dr. Duncan McDowall was an editor of John Lyman's Old Bermudas. The book was launched in Bermuda 30 May 2023. It is available for purchase online from the bookshop at the National Museum of Bermuda website.



# The Celebration of the Life of Sir John A. Macdonald 6 June 2023

## by Alan MacLachlan



Don Richardson



Craig Boals



Alan MacLachlan



Dr. Duncan McDowall

The Kingston Historical Society once again gathered at Sir

John's graveside at the Cataraqui cemetery to celebrate the achievements of his long political career and to reflect on his place in Canada's heritage. As in the past, we were blessed in having Don Richardson as our MC. A warm welcome from Craig Boals, the manager of the Cataraqui Cemetery, followed and a religious reading and prayer were given by Eva Barnes. Alan MacLachlan welcomed everyone on behalf of the KHS and the Commemoration Service Committee. He then introduced the guest speaker, Dr. Duncan McDowall of Queen's University, who gave an engaging talk on Macdonald with a title in the form of a question; "Sir John A.: A Super Hero?"

Betty Andrews laid a commemorative wreath on behalf of the Society. This was followed by the playing of the Lament by piper Douglas Green. Warren Everett invited those assembled to toast Sir John. The service ended with closing remarks from the MC.

For a video of the service go to

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yqoMypEv71s>

or visit the KHS website. We are indebted to Craig Pettis for producing the superb video.



Piper Doug Green





Brian Porter, Eva Barnes,  
Douglas Green

All Photos  
by Jack  
Barnes



## Speaker's Corner

## Telegraphing History

by Dr. Duncan McDowall

Canadians in the early twenty-first century have grown habituated to clicking on their smart devices for instant access to information, social congregation and entertainment. In the late nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century, it was the expert click of the railway telegrapher that served as Canadians' entrée to the world of information beyond their doorstep. At its May lecture KHS members were taken back into a world where the telegraph key dominated our world of relatively fast and reliable news, news that not only made our burgeoning national railway networks run efficiently, but also brought news of life and death, commerce and world events into every Canadian community.



Graeme Roy

Our guide to the world of telegraphy was **Graeme Roy** of Alexandria, Ontario, resident telegrapher of the Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario in Smiths Falls. Born into a family in which his grandfather, and uncles and his father had all found careers in railway service, Roy senior served as a telegrapher on the CNR mainline at Cardinal, Ontario. To illustrate the pivotal role of the man who could make the wires sing, Roy morphed into period costume, pulling on an operator's sleeve protectors, visor, pocket watch

and crisp uniform of white shirt and tie. Around him Roy used an array of telegraph equipment to illustrate the hectic, daily life of the man at the telegrapher's desk. Each telegrapher, for instance, had his own personal telegraph key – or “bug” as they were nicknamed. There was great professional pride in what they did. A veteran telegrapher could be identified down the line by the cadence of his tapping out messages. Their lives were governed by a strict set of rules and underlined by a constant awareness that the safety of train crews and the wellbeing of citizens connected by telegrams were always paramount. Roy supplied a broader sense of history as well: by the late 1960s the day of the telegraph was rapidly coming to an end as new technologies conquered the world of communication. Roy's own father drew him aside and urged him to seek new career prospects. Graeme consequently became a teacher and has now returned to railroading as a volunteer at the Smiths Falls Museum, where he mans his own telegraph office and thereby invites visitors into a world of Morse code. KHS members are urged to visit the Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario ([www.rmeo.com](http://www.rmeo.com)). Roy recommended Robert Burnet's 1996 *Canadian Railway Telegraph History* as the indispensable source on telegraphing history.

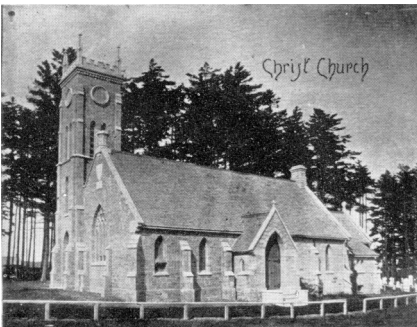
***Still Standing***  
***Looking at Regional Architecture with Dr. Jennifer McKendry***  
***Christ Church, Cataraqui***

“Tenders will be accepted by the undersigned till noon of the 21st instant for the Mason and Carpenter work of a Church to be erected at Waterloo. ...Plans and Specifications may be seen at my office. John Power, architect. Kingston, 12th June, 1869.”

The stone church that resulted was opened on the 16th of October the following year.

We now know Waterloo as Cataraqui Village and the church as Christ Church (Anglican) fronting Sydenham Road and surrounded on three sides by Cataraqui Cemetery (one portion of which was originally reserved for Anglicans).

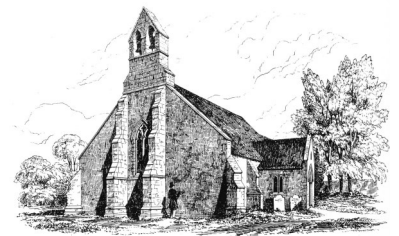
Power’s 1869 design is the heart of today’s building, which was lengthened 20 feet and had the addition of a handsome tower in 1877, thanks to the participation of his son Joseph.



Power & Son add the tower in 1877, illustrated in 1913



John Power’s 1870 design



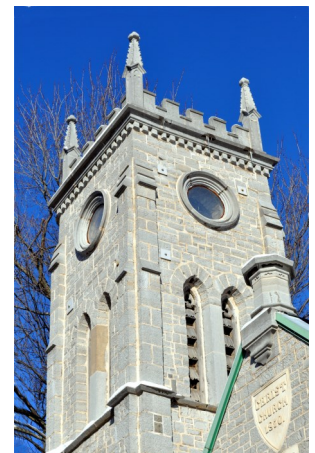
St Michael’s in England c1230, illustrated in 1848

Architecturally, an important aspect is the firm’s understanding of the evolution of churches from models based on symmetry reinforced by centred towers and entrances to models advocating asymmetry with off-centre towers and entrances. The prototype was a Gothic church, St Michael’s, c1230. It was illustrated in 1848 and rings particularly true for the 1870 version of Christ Church with its belfry over the gable front and an entrance porch on a side wall.

The prototype and revival buildings were pleasing to the eye. Power had only to look to the work of William Coverdale in 1850 at St John’s Church (Anglican) in Portsmouth to find a local example.

Adding a tall bell tower acted like an exclamation mark for travellers along Sydenham Road or visitors to Cataraqui Cemetery. One could then take the time to dwell on the pointed arches, chancel, buttresses, finials and textured stonework.

St John’s 1850, Church St, Portsmouth, photo by Jennifer McKendry



Christ Church tower, photo by Jennifer McKendry

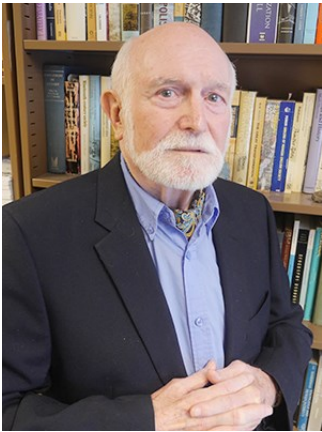
Christ Church, Cataraqui was closed as a place of worship early in 2023.



## Dr. Brian Osborne Awarded Order of Canada.

It is never too late to congratulate our members for their achievements. On November 22, 2019, Rideau Hall announced that Dr. Brian Osborne, a Past President of the Society and our historian extraordinaire, had been awarded the Order of Canada. The citation read:

*Lending a geographic lens to history, Brian Osborne has shed a brighter light on Canadian identity and sense of place. Professor emeritus at Queen's University, he is renowned for promoting heritage in both academia and his community, and has held leadership positions with such organizations as the Royal Canadian Geographical Society and the Ontario Historical Society. Beyond his service as a consultant for numerous national institutions, he contributed to the Rideau Canal's UNESCO World Heritage Site designation.*



Covid interrupted the investiture ceremonies, but finally, on April 13, 2022, Brian was quietly invested into the Order. We apologize for being so slow with our congratulations, but they are heartfelt, and come from each and every member. Well deserved, Brian!

By Peter Gower

## Hugh Segal 1951- 2023

by Peter Gower

Kingston and Canada lost a marvelous friend with the death in August of Hugh Segal. While never a member of the Society, he was always there to give us advice, and after making Kingston his permanent base, he spoke to the Society at three events. He spoke on **What Can Non-Partisans and Partisans Learn From Sir John A. Macdonald's Career** at the 2003 Sir John A. Macdonald Birthday dinner. Twice he spoke at the June 6th commemoration: in 2017 **Reflecting on 100 years of Confederation** and in 2021, in our hybrid Covid gathering, he gave a **Commemoration of Sir John A. Macdonald's death**. All three can be found in *Historic Kingston*. He was always available to give helpful advice to individuals and groups who were trying to help the disadvantaged in our society. He will be greatly missed, especially as the go-to person in times of difficulty.

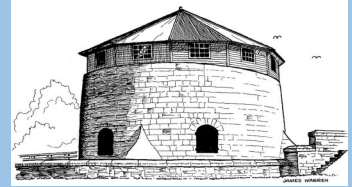




# Murney Tower

## Operated by the Kingston Historical Society

[www.murneytower.com](http://www.murneytower.com)



The Murney Tower opens for the season May 19, 2023



SIMGE ERDOGAN-  
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[www.murneytower.com](http://www.murneytower.com)



Orillia Cadets visit the Murney Tower in June.



## Heritage Fair Winners

On June 3rd, we had the pleasure of welcoming this year's Heritage Fair winners from Ottawa and Kingston. The winners had a special day at the museum, exploring its unique structure and gaining insights into museum collections and handling artifacts – just like a curator! Their visit consisted of two parts. First, our museum assistants, Luke and Cassandra, provided English and French tours to the visitors. In the second part, the group joined Manager/Curator Simge on the Gun Platform, where they had the chance to discuss curatorial work and look closely at some of the artifacts. We had a wonderful time meeting with future historians and curators and sharing the history of our site with them.

*Welcome, new members*

Ann Stevens

# HOMESTEAD

