

LIMELIGHT

Newsletter of the Kingston Historical Society
Kingston Ontario Canada

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March 2015



Sir John A.'s 200th Dinner

This event sold out in record time and the photos prove why. There was much pomp and ceremony and honourable citizenry to boot. Look inside for more pictures.

MARCH MEETING

The Railway: An Improvement for Kingston?
by Adrian Halpert

The development of the railway system and its impact on Kingston in the 1840s and '50s.

Wednesday, March 18th, 2015 at 7:30 pm
Kingston-Frontenac Public Library
Wilson Room

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New 2015 KHS Executive Council Announced at Annual General Meeting

Many KHS members came in out of the cold on February 18th to attend the AGM, chaired by President Peter Gower.

Along with reports from the President and the Secretary, annual summaries were presented by eleven contributors. The Treasurer provided an in-depth review of the financial statements for the year ending December 31, 2014.

The President reported on another successful year; from the great weather enjoyed at the June 6th Sir John A. graveside ceremony to the inquiries made of the Society from both near and far. While he was sad to see some Council members leave, he was enthused by new and returning Councillors and looked forward to further plans for renewal.

Plans were underway to kick off another season for the Murney Tower under the direction of Graeme Watson. He was happy to announce that the Murney Tower has been acknowledged to be "the oldest museum in Kingston" by Kingston Area Museums.

The new executive was announced as follows:

Executive

President: Peter Gower
Vice-President: Corinne Harrison
Secretary: Don Richardson
Treasurer: Peter Ginn
Past President: Gordon Sinclair

Councillors

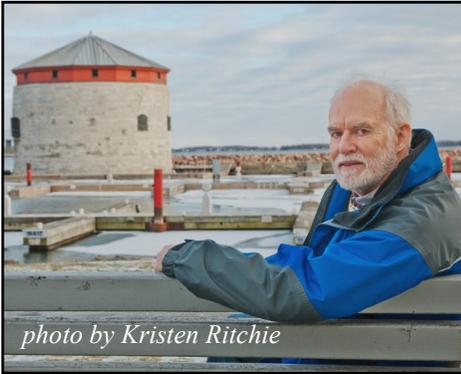
Nancy Day
Anne Richardson
Ben Holthof
Betty Andrews
Paul Van Nest
Joe Brites
Marcus Letourneau

Appointed

Historic Kingston: John Whiteley
Murney Tower: Graeme Watson
Limelight: Corinne Harrison



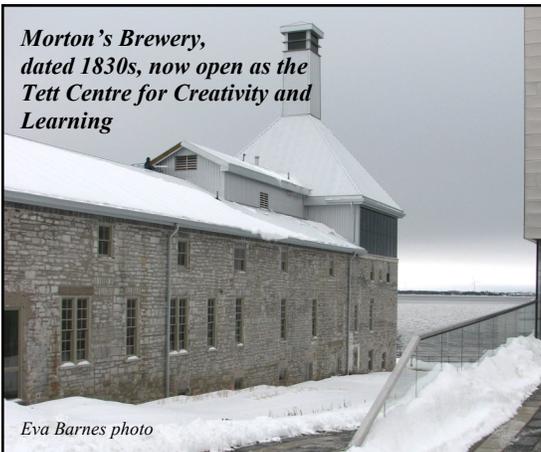
Top Row: Peter Gower, Don Richardson, Gordon Sinclair, Betty Andrews, John Whiteley, Paul Van Nest; Front Row: Graeme Watson, Peter Ginn, Anne Richardson, Corinne Harrison
Photo: Alan MacLachlan



An AGM is always a time for looking backwards and forwards, and a time to say goodbye and hello. This year we saw two long-term and devoted members leave Council, Past Presidents Warren Everett and Alan MacLachlan. While both will continue working on the Dinner and the Graveside ceremony respectively, their sage advice at Council meetings will be sorely missed. Also retiring were Treasurer Randi Levi, Program Chair Ron Ridley, and Limelight Editor and publicity guru Eva Barnes. Their constant keeping your President on course will also now be lacking, though I am sure we will still see them at our monthly meetings.

In their places we welcome back to Council Anne Richardson and Betty Andrews, and two new members: Joe Brites, well-known to many of you, and Corinne Harrison, newly returned to her family in the area, who becomes Vice President and Editor of Limelight. I look forward to working with them, and with the returning members of Council, and look forward to following their counsel. If you have ideas or suggestions, please contact any of them, or email the Society at kingstonhs@gmail.com.

We asked a number of general questions at the AGM concerning meetings, and those of you who were unable to be present, or had ideas after you left, should feel free to let us know your thoughts. We are concerned at the cost of meeting in the Wilson Room (close to \$250) and wonder if there is another suitable space with parking, sound, projector, comfortable seating, kitchen facilities, etc.— or at least most of these! We already have some suggestions. And should we continue to meet on a Wednesday, in the evening, or ...? All thoughts are welcome. It would be useful if we could have ideas before the March 12th Council meeting, but this is an ongoing discussion, and late entries will not be disqualified! I look forward to seeing you at the next General Meeting on March 18th.



Morton's Brewery, dated 1830s, now open as the Tett Centre for Creativity and Learning

Eva Barnes photo

THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established in 1893

LIMELIGHT is published 5 times a year in January, March, May, September and November. Please forward submissions to the Editor, Corinne Harrison corinneharrison111@gmail.com or call (613) 546-0909.

Reprinting of articles must be accompanied by an acknowledgement of the Society, the issue and date. All photo credits and by-lines must be retained. The KHS gratefully acknowledges the support of our sponsors in producing LIMELIGHT.

MEETINGS are held usually at 7:30 pm on the third Wednesday of the month, September to May, in the Wilson Room of the Kingston-Frontenac Public Library on Johnson Street at Bagot. Refreshments are served. Annual events include a formal fine-dining experience with a special presentation honouring the birthday of Sir John A. Macdonald, usually on January 11th, and a commemoration marking his death at the Cataraqui Cemetery National Historic Site on June 6th. Canada's First Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, was born in 1815 and passed away in 1891.

NEW MEMBERS are always welcome!

Membership rates are \$50 per individual, \$60 for families, \$60 for institutions and \$25 for students.

Membership includes: an invitation to attend our monthly meetings; receiving *Limelight*, our newsletter; as well as *Historic Kingston*, the annual journal published by the KHS.

MAILING ADDRESS:

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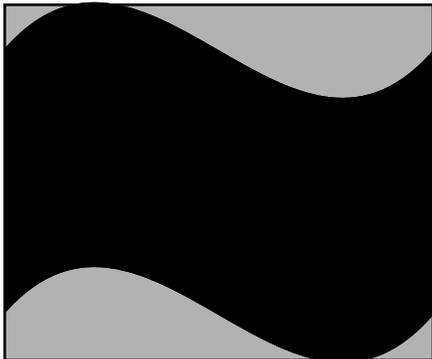
kingstonhs@gmail.com www.kingstonhistoricalsociety.ca

KHS March Meeting, Wednesday the 18th

7:30 pm in the upstairs Wilson Room
Kingston Frontenac Public Library
130 Johnson Street at Bagot

The Railway: An Improvement for Kingston?

Adrian Halpert presents
a talk on the development of the railway system and its impact on
Kingston in the 1840s and '50s



KHS April Meeting, Wednesday the 15th

7:30 pm in the Wilson Room, Kingston Frontenac Public Library

The Result of Rebellion: North American Political Prisoners in Van Diemen's Land

Dr. John Carter tells the story of the 1837-38 Rebellion prisoners
who were transported to Australia.

The Sir John A. Macdonald Music Book

published by Rideau Street Publications

*Donna Ivey, long time member of the KHS and Sir John A. Macdonald
historian, is producing a special live concert of period music from the
book for your listening pleasure at the end of April. The venue and date
are to be announced.*

**Information: (613) 547-5263 or email wolfeisland@kos.net
Copies of the book are available at Novel Idea book store.**



Lady Agnes Macdonald,



Photo: E. Andrews

A new publication based on **The Journals of Jeffrey Amherst 1757-1763**,
edited and annotated by long-time KHS Member and friend,
Robert (Bob) J. Andrews was released posthumously by
Michigan State University Press in February, 2015.

Volume I: The Daily and Personal Journals
Volume II: A Dictionary of People, Places, and Ships

Bob's wife, and one of our returning Councillors, **Elizabeth (Betty) Andrews** expects
to have these available at the April KHS General Meeting.



Sir John A. 200th Anniversary Dinner

by S. Warren Everett

This January 10th, we celebrated the 200th anniversary of the birth of Sir John A. Macdonald, a Father of Confederation. As we entered the Mess, guests were welcomed by two members of the Fort Henry guard, resplendent in scarlet. The evening began with our usual gathering at the Senior Staff Mess, RMC; however, this year, as a nod to the importance of the event, we were treated to a short presentation of piano music of Sir John's time played by John Hall, Curator of the Canadian Piano Museum in Napanee. It was a very colourful evening as the result of Lady Macdonald and a number of ladies from the Society who were dressed in historical attire. A few men reluctantly agreed to don period wear to support their ladies! A dash of scarlet was included by Ron Ridley who came dressed in an Officer's uniform of the Fort Henry Guard. LCol (Ret'd) Douglas Green piped the head table into the dinner.

As usual, we were treated to an excellent dinner by the staff at the Senior Staff Mess. Our guest of honour was The Honourable Thomas A. Cromwell, Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, who spoke on the topic: Sir John A. Macdonald: The Kingstonian, The Lawyer, and The Leader; a thoroughly appreciated presentation. The evening ended with a piano and voice performance by our own Gordon and Sandra Sinclair which concluded with a resounding rendition of *The Maple Leaf Forever* and *O Canada*. This marked our 15th annual Sir John Dinner. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who guaranteed its success: Eva Barnes-Historical Attire, John Hall and Gordon and Sandra Sinclair-Music, Ron Ridley and Anne and Don Richardson for all their efforts behind the scenes.



MORE PHOTOS



Photo credits: Paul Van Nest, Graham MacDonell, Graeme Watson



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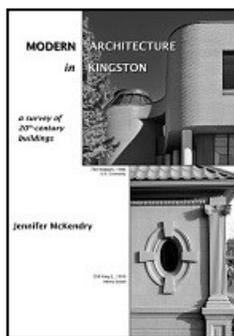


**Visit Kingston's oldest museum
this summer**

If you're a new member, or a new reader, you should know that your membership to the Kingston Historical Society includes admission to the Murney Tower.

If you can't visit, you may wish to donate. Please contact the Director at: murneytower@gmail.com

Kingston Historical Society membership card is required.



**MODERN ARCHITECTURE
IN KINGSTON:
A Survey of 20th Century Buildings**

This is a large body of thorough research, fascinating results with exceptional presentation; looking at buildings we pass often in a whole new light.

Authored by Jennifer McKendry and available at Novel Idea for \$11.

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

calendar

The **Kingston Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society** meets at 10:00 am in the Wilson Room of the Kingston-Frontenac Public Library, 130 Johnson Street. Visitors welcome. Further information at www.ogs.on.ca/kingston

Saturday, March 21st

Shirley-Ann Pyefinch from Ottawa will speak on **"Geneological Information Resources in the National Capital Region"**.

Saturday, April 18th

Janet Connor from Lanark will speak on **"Social Media and Internet Sites for Genealogy—for Beginner to Advanced"**.

MEMORIAL



BURDSALL

Anne Margaret (nee FERGUSON) BURDSALL, UEL

On December 13, 2014, wife of the late Bernard Burdsall, missed by her loving family. Margaret was the daughter of the late Andrew Clark Ferguson and Etta Lyle Secord. She graduated from the Macdonald Institute, Guelph and received her B.H.Sc. from the University of Toronto in 1942. Margaret met and married her dashing RAF airman and followed him to England where he served in WWII. They returned to Canada in 1948. Margaret was a Life Member of St. Margaret's (Crossroads) United Church UCW, and a Life Member of the **Kingston Historical Society**. She

also served for over 25 years on the Thyroid Foundation of Canada. Family and friends celebrated her life on December 22, 2014 at Robert J. Reid and Sons Funeral Home.



Photos: open source

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

general historical interest

HERITAGE GRANT PROGRAM

Attention owners of heritage properties!

If you are an owner of a property in the City of Kingston which is designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, you may be eligible for the City's heritage property grant program.

Applications for the 2015 Heritage Property Grant Program, in association with a heritage permit application for eligible work, will be accepted starting on March 2, 2015.

Information on eligibility for this program is available at www.CityofKingston.ca/heritage, or you can contact Heritage staff at 613-546-4291 ext. 3180 or email heritage@cityofkingston.ca

SPEAKER'S CORNER



Wednesday, January 21st, 2015

Professor Bernard Kavanagh

“The Latin Inscriptions of Kingston”

We often find inscriptions on the cornerstones of many of Kingston's older buildings and institutions, texts that tell us when the structure was built, by whom it was dedicated and other important information. While these inscriptions are usually in English, a large number of them are written in Latin. Some of these texts are relatively straightforward, others quite complicated, but all help to provide a better picture of Kingston's colourful, storied past.

KINGSTON AS THE QUEBEC OF ONTARIO

by Jennifer McKendry



In 1906, Dr Harper reported in the November 17th issue of the *Quebec Saturday Budget* on a trip he made to Kingston — which he embraced with enthusiasm. He was pleased to note that a good and much needed history of the city was forthcoming by “the poetess Miss Agnes Machar” (and, indeed such a book was published in 1908). He sat on “the grassy slope above the old tower-outpost of Fort Henry” while admiring the “quite absorbing” panorama of the city and lamented Fort Henry's fall into decline. The following is an excerpt from his long article, “A Visit to Kingston.”

“God made the country, man made the town;
Their blend is to us a commonwealth's renown.

Kingston is the Quebec of Ontario; though, in presence of such a statement, it is not easy to make out why less attention has been given to the place by the tourist and sight-seer, as one of our Canadian show places, worth analyzing, than is given to the Ancient Capital. In fact, the one is almost as legitimately entitled to the appellation of “ancient capital” as the other.

The one stands at the outlet of the St. Lawrence from the Great Lakes, while the other stands where that river virtually ends and its broadening estuary begins.

The story of Kingston's selection as an entrepot for the exchange of commodities with the aborigines, is all but as romantic as is the founding of the city of Champlain; while the environment, as a grouping of the picturesque around the mouth of the Cataraqui in presence of Wolfe Island, is as varied and attractive, if not on so majestic a scale, as is the encircling of the highlands around the mouth of the St. Lawrence itself, in the presence of the Island of Orleans.

Has there been no one to noise abroad the romantic setting of Kingston or to exploit the story of its rise and progress? Quebec has had a plethora of books written about its historic and picturesque marvels. Outsiders and insiders have busied themselves in describing the place—from Charles Lever to Sir James Lemoine. But who has written a full book on Kingston? In two of the early handbooks of Canada, it is not even mentioned, while in *Picturesque Canada* the details of its surpassing attractions are given, for the most part, in general terms and in language that might apply to any place that is far from being unique in its environment and quaintness of interest.

Kingston is unique among the cities of Ontario as is Quebec among the cities of Canada. It surely therefore merits special treatment to bring it out in proper relief among its neighbours. That treatment cannot be given to it in a short cursorily written article such as this. But fuller treatment, I am told, is in store for it, from the pen of its gifted daughter, Miss Agnes Machar.“



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