



LIMELIGHT

Newsletter of the Kingston Historical Society
Kingston Ontario Canada
Volume 18 No 8 ISSN 1488-5565 December 2016

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Leo Grimshaw



We are now hurtling towards Christmas and the year-end. There are three things which draw our attention over the next few weeks. The first is that it is membership renewal time. If you have not already done so, please return the membership renewal form and your cheque as soon as possible, either by mail or in person at a Society event or through our website at www.kingstonhistoricalsociety.com It is also a good time to recruit new members.

The second coming event is our traditional Christmas social evening and awards ceremony at the Renaissance Centre on Tuesday 6 December. It will be a fine way to start off the holiday activities. There will be a small charge at the door to cover the additional costs.

The third event is our annual Sir John A. Macdonald birthday dinner, held at the RMC Senior Staff Mess on Saturday 14 January 2017. The speaker this year is Dr Bryan Paterson, Mayor of Kingston. It will be a great way to kick off the year commemorating the 150th anniversary of Confederation. Seating is limited so send in your reservation for tickets soon.

Finally, on behalf of the entire KHS Council, I wish everyone a wonderful and happy Christmas and, of course, an historic New Year.

The schedule of speakers beginning in January is still under construction and will be finalized shortly.

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Next Meeting of KHS
Annual Awards Ceremony and Gala
The Renaissance Event Venue Upper Salon
285 Queen St December 6, 2016 6:30 pm
\$10. each cost defrayal requested

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

On **Monday, December 5, 2016**, the Frontenac Heritage Foundation and the Kingston & District UELAC are co-hosting a book launch for **Peter C. Newman** – **"Hostages to Fortune: The United Empire Loyalists and the Making of Canada."** The event is being held on December 5, 2016, 7:30 p.m. at the Renaissance Event Venue, at 285 Queen Street, Kingston. Just in time for holiday shopping Any questions, please call [343-363-1901](tel:343-363-1901).

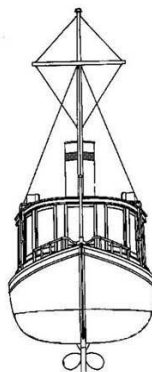
Phoebe Exhibit Opening

December 8, 3-5 pm.

Free Admission

Portsmouth Olympic Harbour

Sailing Room



All Welcome

- Dr. and Mrs. John Brashear, first owners present as special guests.
- Welcome friends and make new ones, meet the Brigantine St. Lawrence II crew and members.
- Historic photo studio, free photos
- Special exhibits with steam engines, whistles, historic boat components, tall ship rigging parts.
- Live music, books, posters and more...
- Refreshments



THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established 1893

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

Please forward submissions to the Editor Betty Andrews. betty.andrews@gmail.com Reprinting of articles from the Limelight 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 .



The Kingston Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture



2016-17 KHS Executive Council

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- Joe Brites
- Ben Holthof
- Alan MacLachlan
- Anne Richardson
- Paul Van Nest
- John Whiteley

KHS MEETINGS take place at 7:30 pm on the third Wednesday of the month, September to May, except in December, when the meeting takes the form of an awards ceremony and gala, and is held at a different time and location. Until further notice, meetings will be at the Seniors Centre, 56 Francis Street.

At regular meetings refreshments are available; a small donation is appreciated. Two annual events are held celebrating Canada's First Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald (1815—1891): a formal dinner on the Saturday closest to January 11th honouring his birth, and a service on June 6th at the Cataraqi Cemetery National Historic Site commemorating his death.

MAILING ADDRESS: Kingston Historical Society
P.O. Box 54, Kingston ON K7L 4V6
kingstonhs@gmail.com www.kingstonhistoricalsociety.com

NEW MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!

Membership includes an invitation to attend monthly meetings; nine issues of *Limelight*, delivered electronically or in hardcopy; and a copy of *Historic Kingston*, the KHS annual journal containing the substance of the papers delivered at the monthly meetings.

Membership also includes free admission to the Murney Tower, Kingston's oldest museum, and a discount at some of our sponsors' places of business.

Sponsors receive monthly advertising in *Limelight* and, it is hoped, the patronage of KHS members.

To discuss becoming a sponsor, please speak to President Lou Grimshaw.

MEMBERSHIP RATES

- \$50 Individual
- \$60 Institutional
- \$300 Sponsor
- \$60 Family
- \$25 Student

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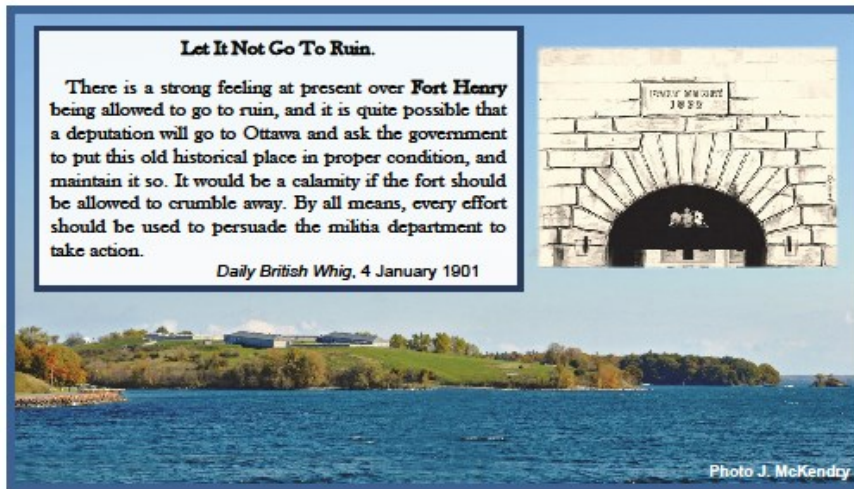
MUSEUMS OF KINGSTON

Fort Henry by Alex McLean

Collections & Library Technician Fort Henry National Historic Site of Canada

Fort Henry National Historic Site of Canada is one of North America's premier military attractions. Designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Fort Henry is an historic site of national significance. Opening Victoria Day weekend each year, interpreters consisting of seventy university and college students make up the Fort Henry Guard which complement the Fort by transforming an otherwise static display into a 'living museum'. In particular, a British garrison circa 1867 is portrayed. The various animation activities done on site help to bring history into focus in a dramatic and entertaining fashion. Visitors can take part in historic activities including Victorian school lessons, marching drill sessions, and live rifle and cannon firings. Visitors can take part in historic activities including Victorian school lessons, marching drill sessions, and live rifle and cannon firings. Complimentary guided tours by an interpreter are offered every day.

STILL STANDING: Looking at Regional Architecture with Jennifer McKendry



At the turn of the 20th century, there was an increasing awareness of Kingston's place in history seen, for example, by the establishment of the Kingston Historical Society in 1893. By then, persons, who had arrived here as adults in the initial flow of Loyalists, were dead, although their memories lived on with their children and grandchildren. Stories were appearing in the newspapers about Kingston's early years. The culmination of this was *The Story of Old Kingston* by Agnes Maule Machar in 1908. One copy was hand-inscribed by the author, "To one of the good men and true - who has a store of the old memories, Christmas 1908," echoing the wording on the dedication page. In the preface, Machar wrote, "We cannot be said really to know our own time, unless we know something of the events that preceded it and helped to determine its character. To a community, the consciousness of its past gives the sense of continuity, which is the principle of its collective life and the nurse of its patriotism." More than 100 years later and on the brink of Canada's 150th birthday, her words still ring true.

Enduring through all this history from the initial fortifications built during the War of 1812 to repel American attackers to its current role to attract American visitors, Fort Henry has been the sentinel guarding the city and mouth of the Rideau Canal. Fort, prison and tourist mecca, its architecture merges functionalism with a strong sense of aestheticism in the tooled stonework and great arches.

Fort Henry, 1841
by Captain George St Vincent Whitmore,
Royal Engineers
(Peter Winkworth Coll., R9266-519
Library & Archives Canada)



Our interactive programs fully immerse visitors into life at the Fort. Learning how to fire an historic Snider Enfield rifle and Armstrong cannon, mixing ingredients in the bakery and attending class at the school room are just a few ways to experience the sights and sounds of the garrison. There's also a chance to get a close-up and hands-on look at a featured artifact from our extensive military collection. The Fort also provides static museum displays, retail stores, dining and the scenery itself. Exhibits featured are the Evolution of British Firearms; Fort Henry Guard; and *Kingston Association of Museums, Art Galleries, and Historic Sites* displays.

Opening new this year will be the *War of 1812 - the First Fort Henry* exhibit developed by past curator Ron Ridley. And that's not all! In July will be the opening of another new exhibit entitled *The Kingston Gunner* which is a joint venture of the Royal Canadian Artillery Museum and Shilo CFB in Manitoba. This exhibit will focus on the Canadian School of Gunnery, *A Battery*, that began at Fort Henry in the late 1800's, and on the lives of prominent Canadian artillerymen garrisoned at the Fort during that time.

The Daily Whig Special Number— December 1886

In December 1886, *The Daily Whig* produced a two section, eight page Special Feature. The paper was largely the work of Carl Fechter, a 'nom de plume', possibly of Kingston poet Charles Sangster. Through the efforts of Peter Ginn, the articles on the history of Kingston produced by Carl Fechter in 1886 have been made available to Limelight readers today. Portions of some articles are left out to shorten and adapt them to the space available.

A Fortified Town... by Carl Fechter

Kingston has been a pre-eminently military city. It has been such ever since de Frontenac, in 1673, established Fort Cataraqui. It is recorded that the captains of the Five Nations indians received him kindly and acted as his guides "conducting him into a bay about a cannon's shot from the entrance (to Cataraqui bay) which forms one of the most beautiful and agreeable harbors in the world, capable of holding one hundred of the largest ships, with sufficient water at the mouth and in the harbor with a mud bottom, and so sheltered from every wind that a cable is scarcely necessary for mooring." It is also recorded that on the 16th July, 1673, the fort was commenced; on the 19th it was finished; and de Frontenac left on the 27th for Montreal, having laid the foundation of the future city of Kingston. The fort was blown up...but rebuilt in 1695...The exact location of de Frontenac's fortification is not known...it is thought to have been situated not far from Tete du Pont barracks.

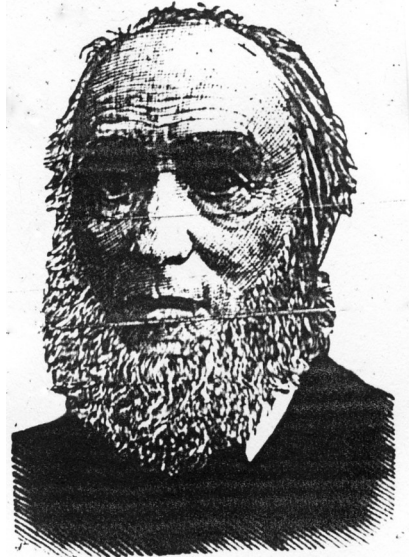
Old Fort Henry was in use before the rebellion of 1838, occupied by the regular troops, and one venerable citizen saw the 32nd regiment embark from it per str. Traveller for Toronto. The militia also occupied it and the Kingston artillery under command of Capt. Jackson. Military Works in the City

The first barracks in the city was placed on a strip of ordnance land bounded on three sides by Barrack and Wellington streets, and Place d'Armes. It was enclosed by the regulation picket fence. It was a long one-story building, possessing few of the comforts and none of the attractiveness of modern military erections. The main guard was where the residence of P. Devlin now stands. Subsequently ... a portion of it was purchased by Mr James Meagher (father of Mr. J. Meagher of the post office inspector's department) and the balance by a Mr. Chambers, formerly an engineer officer. The latter erected the stone building now owned by the Kingston and Pembroke railway company and used for office purposes. The late Col. Cameron, then sergeant of the 79th, kept store in the structure when it was only one story high...The first buildings on the site of Tete du Pont barracks were of frame, and came far out upon the present parade ground.

The officers' mess was in a building situated as the building now used for similar purposes is. The stores were kept in structures located where the stables are at present. The commissariat ran at right angles with the barracks, south side, and had at one end a large vault about 15x20 ft "Into this vault" said an elderly gentleman, discussing the subject with me some time ago... "I once looked, and it was well nigh filled with boxes, a couple of feet long, a foot across and a foot high. All these contained silver. The Union, the first steamer that passed through the Rideau canal, landed at the barracks about two hundred boxes of coin (Mexican), and it was accompanied from the east by a strong guard. There were tons of silver in the vault at the time I saw it. With silver the troops were paid exclusively. A few dollars in it made a man's pockets feel heavy, and I don't wonder that the sailors and marines felt like throwing it away. There was no encouragement to horde the money, and as a matter of fact very few of them did horde it. It was spent quickly, often frivolously. I have seen a marine ... sit in the market square and possessed of the idea that he had struck a new kind of fruit, eat a number of onions for each of which he paid a dollar." ...

While the present fine barracks was under construction...various buildings about the city were in requisition by the military. The officers of the line regiments had a mess room on property now owned by the Montreal Transportation company on Ontario street and opposite the Scott hotel. The artillery officers had for mess and other purposes the stone building on Wellington street occupied by Emanuel Gallagher...The commissariat was an important department. For awhile the buildings used in connection therewith were located where the riding school now is...Where the hay scales stand there were quarters for the engineer officers...On Barrack street back of the gas company's yard...was a wood and brick building...one end of which was used by the commissariat staff, and the other... by officers of the rifle brigade...on Sydenham street, opposite the Sydenham street church, there was a line regiment barrack...the mud battery which was located on the site of the marine railway...the block houses that...were required for lookout services...the first was at the foot of West street...the second where Mr McRossie now lives; the third on the site of Rev. Mr. Brock's residence; the fourth on Princess street, in the vicinity of Cannon's tailor shop, and the fifth, on the brow of the quarry off Bay street...On the Revel property...there was a block house...that at Kingston Mills remains, and that on Snake Island was burned by fishermen, whether accidentally or otherwise will never be known. It is understood, however, that they had it on their list, and that it never has been missed.

AN EMINENT OFFICIAL ...a representative government official,**Jeremiah Meagher** is now living quietly, and performing his duties to the state as unostentatiously as possible, but "Jerry." as I have known him, has been a man of marked activity. He is undoubtedly possessed of great will-power, of strong determination, of a disposition that will brook no insult be the consequences what they may. He is not the Celtic blood so general with the clan Meagher; from his mother he inherited the impetuosity of the Portugese which she was. He was born in the city of Oporto, Portugal, on the 14th of Feb., 1813, St. Valentine's day. His father was a member of the 9th regiment, which had been moved about a great deal, and in the continental war took part subsequently in the engagements at Vittoria, Bayonne and Toulouse. It had passed through Spain, en route to France, was part of the division under the command of Gen. Crawford, and of the brigade under command of the Duke of Wellington. From Bordeaux... the regiment shipped to Canada, reaching Kingston in August, 1814. Soon afterwards Mr. Meagher's father's release was purchased by his father for the third time, from the army, and the family became a fixture here. Mr. Meagher, senior, became, after leaving the service, a book-keeper for Mr. Powell, (grandfather of J. W. Powell), tinsmith and hardware merchant; then he started a similar business on his own account on the corner of Barrack and Wellington streets ... In 1819 he built the store on Brock street ... and did business in it for three years. Then he retired. In the meantime his family care developed to that of four sons -- Jeremiah, James, John, and Thomas ...When Jeremiah Meagher had arrived at man's estate his father resumed business and took him into his store... James..devoted his attention to medicine...John went into the drug business, to which he served long years...in Montreal. Thomas entered the law office of Mr. Armstrong, and... finished his studies with Sir John Macdonald...(He became) a customs officer... "Jerry," after leaving his father, entered the drug store of Mr. Baker ...and when his brother John removed from Montreal, went into partnership with him and opened a drug store on Brock street. A year later Jerry entered the business house of Arthur Foster and remained with him until the great fire of 1840, then took the management of business of James Fraser, his brother-in-law and the father of Capt. Samuel Fraser. In 1843 he became financier for James Morton distiller, and in that position remained until 1860... Meagher opened a small distillery... (in Napanee but it -ed.) did not pay...Sir John Macdonald, whose friend he had been all through life, offered ...and he accepted, a place in the inspector's department of the Kingston post office, the duties of which he had most satisfactorily filled for twenty three years. Mr. Meagher was twice married. By his first wife he had two sons and three daughters, and of these two daughters survive. By his second wife he had three sons and three daughters, and two sons and two daughters are living... In religion Mr. Meagher is a catholic and in politics a conservative... I have (known) many a tory but none so firm, so unyielding, as Jeremiah Meagher, and I don't see how he can be otherwise. and remain, as from their school boy days, a firm friend of Sir John Macdonald... he was prepared to fight for his side as I had occasion to conclude after seeing the stampede he made among the grits at nomination in front of the police court in 1872. That was the time that Mr. Carruthers and Sir John Macdonald had some alarm talk and when Sir John Macdonald is said to have struck at his opponent...but in the days of open voting, bribing and fighting an election meant a stir in the community...Jerry also became a member of it (council) in 1859, the same year in which the citizens, convinced that the management of municipal affairs was too loose to be beneficial, rose in their might and defeated twenty-one of the twenty-eight members of the corporation. Mr. Meagher took a leading part in the reconstruction of the municipal system by the council ... to prohibit the public abuses that existed before his time... I doubt if there is any one in the city...who can look further into the past; and speak with as great accuracy. To be 73 years of age he is very active, and I hope he may long remain so. --



CARL FECHTER

Speaker's Corner

by Lou Grimshaw



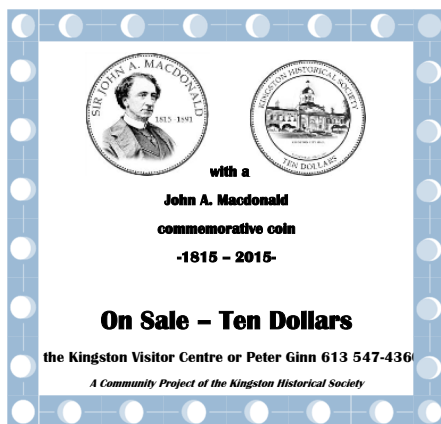
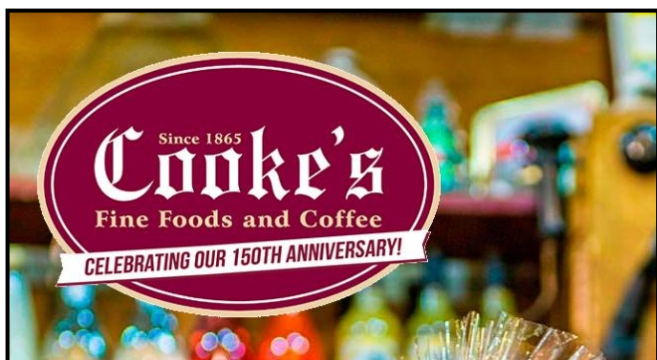
Presenter Tom Sylvester with Suzanne Pritchard and President Lou Grimshaw. Photo by Floyd Patterson.

The General Meeting of the KHS on 16 November was again well-attended. Our speaker was Thomas Sylvester of Amherst Island who addressed the interesting topic of his views on Kingston's oldest house.

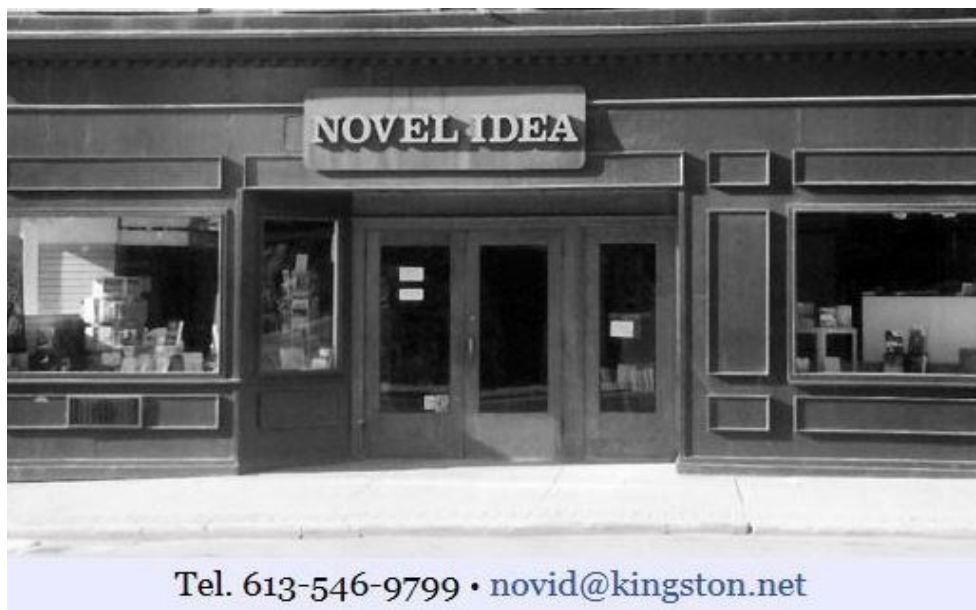
After scientific work on arctic plant ecology, Tom settled on Amherst Island and plunged into researching local history as well as working on older houses in the Kingston area. He focussed on the pre-Confederation period when all the communities were linked by water.

He described the construction details of timber framed houses of the period and then traced the history of the Loyalist McMullin family from New York City through the American Revolution to Nova Scotia and ultimately to Amherst Island. Following Jay's Treaty under which the British evacuated all the military posts on the US side of the border including the fort at Oswego, seeing a business opportunity, Neil McMullin erected the first framed house in what became the town of Oswego in 1796. That house was made in the Kingston area from timber cut and dressed here and shipped as a "kit" to Oswego where it was assembled. It was subsequently moved within the town two or three times and still exists although now adjoining a later structure. Thus "Kingston's oldest house" is found in Oswego, NY!

Tom's enthusiasm for his research and fascinating story was palpable and generated many further questions and discussion.



Stocking Stuffer



Sir John A. Macdonald Anniversary Dinner 2017



Our guest speaker for this year's Sir John A. Macdonald Anniversary Dinner, set for **Saturday, January 14th, 2017**, will be our Mayor, Mr. Bryan Paterson. He will be addressing the early years of Sir John A. "Sir John A. as an alderman and local politician before he became Prime Minister".

The dinner will take place at the Senior Staff Mess of the Royal Military College. Please gather in the Mess at 6:00 pm to meet Mayor Paterson. The dinner will commence at 7:00 pm. The cost of the dinner will be \$70 per person. Seating will be limited to 100 members and guests.

All reservations must be received no later than Monday, December 19th.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Anne Richardson at richanne@hotmail.ca

Please fill out the form noted below and send it with your payment made out to the: Kingston Historical Society, C/O Anne Richardson, 750 Amaryllis Street, Kingston, ON K7P 0A9.

Dinner Menu: Pretzel Buns & Butter; Arugula Salad w/Dried Cranberries, Pumpkin Seeds, Shaved Fennel & Lemon Poppy Seed Dressing; Carrot/Ginger Bisque with Herbed Crème Fraiche; Pork Tenderloin served with a Maple/Bacon Sauce; Roasted Potato Fingerlings and Garlic Green Beans. Coffee, Tea and Dessert will be served in the Mess Lounge before the speaker.

Vegetarian option: Stuffed Portobello Mushroom with Feta and Roasted Vegetables.

Sir John A. Macdonald Anniversary Dinner 2017

NAME(S) _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

EMAIL ADDRESS _____

NUMBER OF PEOPLE ATTENDING _____ VEGETARIAN MEAL(S) _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____

PLEASE LIST ANY FOOD ALLERGIES//DIETARY RESTRICTIONS _____

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

Please Renew Your Membership Now

KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL Membership dues are as follows (please check one) - \$50 for an individual membership - \$60 for a family membership - \$60 for an institutional membership - \$25 for a student membership - \$300 for a sponsor. Please speak to Pres. Lou Grimshaw directly 613-549-2500

Additional donation: The Society would sincerely appreciate any additional donation you may wish to contribute to the Society. Amount: \$---- _____

Send this completed application form, along with a cheque made out to the 'Kingston Historical Society': Kingston Historical Society, Box 54, Kingston ON K7L 4V6

You can also register on-line from our webpage: www.kingstonhistoricalsociety.com > Membership

Membership includes the annual journal 'Historic Kingston' and 9 issues of the newsletter 'Limelight' as well as a discounted fee to selected special events. Some sponsors also offer discounts.

Name: _____

Street: _____ Apt. _____

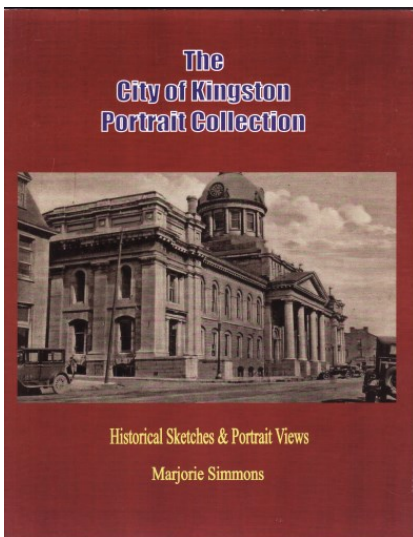
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Book Sale!



The City of Kingston Portrait Collection by Marjorie Simmons. Published by the Kingston Historical Society, 2006, Paperback, 160 pages.

This publication provides a local history about a unique Canadian art collection which includes framed oil portraits of 65 former Mayors and other officials of the City of Kingston. The book includes photographic portrait-views and historical sketches of the portrait subjects.

Sale price until December 31, 2016: **\$10.00**. Regular price \$30.00. There is no shipping charge (\$8.00) if the book is picked up at the October 2016, November 2016, or January 2017 meetings of the Society. Orders can be sent by mail to

the Kingston Historical Society, P.O. Box 54, Kingston ON K7L 4V6 or [e-mail: kingstonhs@gmail.com](mailto:kingstonhs@gmail.com).