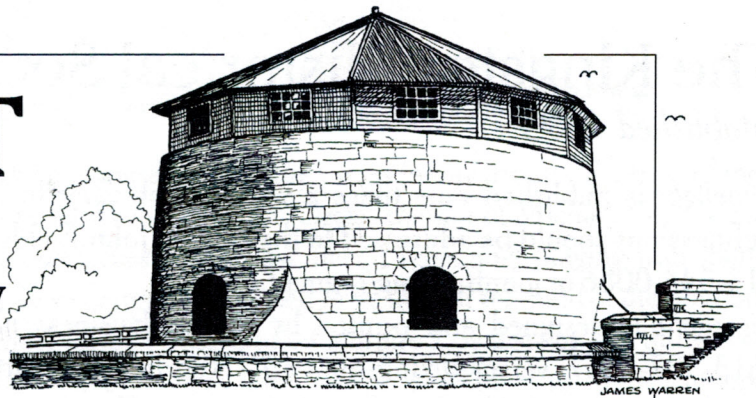


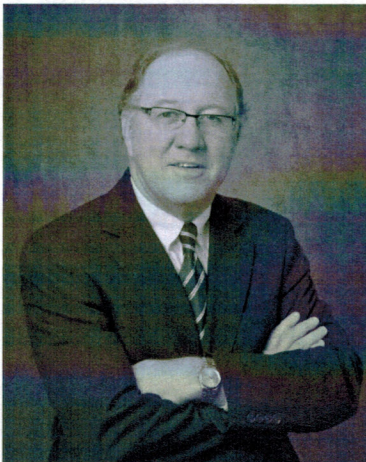
LIMELIGHT

Newsletter of the
Kingston Historical Society

vol 14 no 3 March 2012 ISSN 1488-5565



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Thank you all for a very good AGM, complete with entertaining and enlightening anecdotes following. What a wealth of knowledge we have within our midst!

I'm going to repeat here much of what I said in my comments at the AGM here.

We have received word that there will be renovations on the elevator at the library beginning this Spring. While the planned refurbishment won't affect our March meeting, it could affect our April meeting and will certainly affect our May meeting. Before we make any decision about an alternative venue, we'd like to know how many people this will affect. If you might be affected or you know someone who would be, please let me, or anyone on Council, know.

Many exciting changes have happened with our website. I encourage all of you to have a look. Thanks to Councillor Jeremy Heil, the website is completely re-vamped. Exciting developments include being able to register for our October conference online, and, down the road, pay your membership fees online.

The committee working on our October 1812 conference is well on its way to producing a first-rate day of presentations. Registration brochures will be available at KHS meetings because we think that this is a conference that will be of interest to all of you. You can register by mail or by the 1812 conference page on our KHS website.

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Watch for developments in the Illumination of the statue of Sir John A. Macdonald in City Park. This is a partnership between KHS and the city of Kingston and it should bear fruit this spring.

Gordon Sinclair

The Kingston Historical Society

established 1893

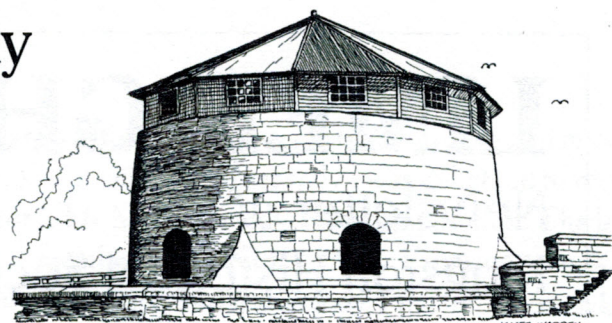
Limelight is published nine times a year - September to May. Submissions should be addressed to the Editor, John Fielding at 613-544-0086 or johnffielding@gmail.com.

Limelight is designed and printed by Versus Business Forms (613-507-7667 versus@kingston.net). Reprinting of articles

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KHS holds monthly talks or events, usually at 7:30 pm on the third Wednesday of the month, September to May, usually in the Wilson Room of the Kingston Public Library on Johnson Street at Bagot Street. Special annual events include a dinner and talk honouring the birthday of Sir John A. Macdonald in January and a ceremony marking his death in June.

New members are welcome! Membership rates are \$40 individual, \$50 family, \$50 institutional or \$25 student. Memberships include *Historic Kingston*, published annually by The Kingston Historical Society.



Murney Tower by James Warren

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The Kingston Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Ministry of Culture of the Government of Ontario

Announcement of Historical Interest

Kingston Branch, United Empire Loyalist Association of Canada meets at St. Paul's church hall, corner Queen and Montreal Streets on Saturday, March 24, 2012. Come at 11:30 am for 12:00 noon sandwich and cookie lunch -- \$3.50 for those not bringing contributions. Time before the meeting to browse the library as well.

Those unable to join us for lunch should arrive around 1:00 pm for the meeting proper. Guest speaker will be Dr. W. Bruce Antliff, retired Royal Military College professor, and author of *Loyalist settlements, 1783-1789: new evidence of Canadian Loyalist claims* (1985). Dr. Antliff will speak on "The Loyalist Claims Commissions", also known as the Commission for Claims and Losses -- the source of much documentation on our Loyalist ancestors.

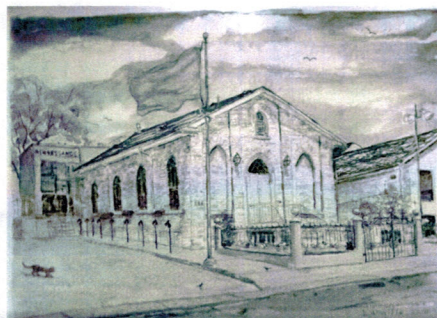
The Catholic Apostolic Church

By Shirley Gibson-Langille

Over the past years, I have painted all the churches in our surrounding townships and this year I have been busy painting churches in Kingston itself. I thought I had already rendered all of the oldest ones, but an article in the May 2010 issue of KHS's Limelight by Carl Fechter drew my attention to the Catholic Apostolic Church on 285 Queen Street.

Built of stone in 1837, it is an example of the Gothic Revival style and is one of the oldest surviving churches in Kingston. Its congregation was first organized by Rev. A. H. Burwell, an Anglican clergyman who died in 1849. He was succeeded by Reverends Roberts, Cuthbert, Sterling, and Elwell, the last of whom held the office of chief pastor for twenty years. Two of the ministers that followed them were clergymen of the Anglican Communion and another of the Episcopal church of the United States. Surprisingly, neither of Kingston's Anglican or Roman Catholic Archives had any information on this church.

Much later, it was occupied by the Kingston Pentecostal Tabernacle who sold it to the Scottish Rite Association in 1958 and, after extensive renovations, it became their Lodge and Chapter for 47 years. In the face of declining membership and escalating operating costs, the Association looked for a more affordable location and sold the Queen Street building in 2007. Again, the structure has experienced considerable structural change to adapt it to its new function as the Renaissance Event Venue which hosts so many community events in its elegant interior.



Appropriately, in November 2009, the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite in the Valley of Kingston came back to the Renaissance Event Venue to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the "Rose of Sharon Chapter of Rose Croix No. 9" and also the 128th anniversary of the "Kingston Lodge of Perfection No. 7" in a place that had been their home for 47 years.

Thank you, Carl Fechter, for directing me to this wonderful piece of Kingston's ecclesiastical architecture, which I painted on June 2nd, and for prompting me to share some of its history with you.

"Soul Havens" Exhibition

Shirley Gibson-Langille invites you to her exhibition of over 100 paintings of Churches in Kingston and fifteen surrounding townships. "Soul Havens" opens on Sunday, April 1st 2012 from 1pm-5pm in the Wilson Room of the Kingston Frontenac Public Library, 130 Johnson Street, and my friend and colleague, Brian Osborne will cut the ribbon. The exhibition will continue to Friday 27th April 2012. The theme is a visual record of what has been happening to churches of all denominations since the earliest, Adolphustown's Hay Bay Church, 1792. Some churches are still vibrant, others lay vacant before becoming converted into other uses, and others were destroyed as I demonstrate in my painting of the 1856 fire at the White Church in Morven. Come and enjoy great entertainment provided by the "Sound of Storms" and watch out for the ghosts that always haunt my shows. There will be refreshments. A percentage of sales go to University Hospitals Kingston Foundation.

Shirley Gibson-Langille 613 549-8360

Website: <http://shirleygibsonlangille.homestead.com>

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The Kingston Historical Society Annual General Meeting



Your Society Council for 2012 from left
Everett, Don Richardson, Peter Gow
Boutilier, Anne Richardson, Back
Maclachlan. (Eva Barnes and John W

After the business part of the meeting w
three men and one women.

Frank D
the game



Jack Pike talked about two amusing tales involving RMC cadets marching
cold and stormy winter weather.



Jim P
transla
Down

Jennifer McKendry spoke about an assault case in Kingston in the 1880s and an
ensuing rather spectacular escape from the City Hall gaol.

15 February 2012

right beginning with the front row: Warren
Gordon Sinclair, Ross Mackenzie, Alicia
w: Douglas Petty, Peter Ginn, Alan
ely are absent)

vere regaled with stories about Kingston by

n gave us an interesting and not well-known account of the early history of
golf in Kingston.

to church in



hard read to us an account of early French explorers approaching Cataraqui (present-day Kingston) that he
from the French some years ago. He also recommended to us a children's book, *The King's Loon* by Mary Alice
nspired by this account and based on that period of our history.

THIS MONTH'S MEETING

Wednesday, 21 March 2012 7:30 PM

**British Home Children in Canada:
A Personal, Communal, and National Story
John Fielding**

Wilson Room, Kingston Frontenac Public Library, Johnson St. at Bagot
Refreshments All Welcome

Remembering John Kinnear d'Esterre 1925 – 2012



John was a practical philosopher. He believed with a passion that “things get done by doing”. There are many precepts a person can follow but this is one of the best. He was a ‘can do’ the ‘glass is half full’ kind of man. He was irksome to those who muttered, “You can’t do that”. Yet, those he swept up in his never ending drive to get it accomplished looked back and said that was a good job, we got something done. There was shared pride. Only his wife, Meg could slow him down, but just, and that was not for long. His dedication to finishing the job was constant, almost to the moment before he died, late in the morning on February 8th, 2012. Thankfully, many of his family were with him at the Kingston General Hospital in Kingston, Ontario.

Imagine this. It is 2008 and the 210 foot museum ship called the Alexander Henry, the largest artefact in the Marine Museum of the Great Lakes collection is at rest.

She sits in the Kingston Drydock but her paintwork is peeling, leaving a bad impression all around. The Board has just received a quote of \$350,000.00 to repaint the ship and they are in shock. Naturally a debate follows, interminable, until John says, “while you guys are talking I will be painting”. He raised the money, ordered the special paint, borrowed a barge from a contractor friend, Doornekamp and found volunteers aplenty. So there they were, solid working guys, retired executives, lady consultants, academics all bending to John’s direction. The job got finished and it was returned to its pride of place at the Museum, as one Kingston’s most favourite photographic subjects. It reclaims its position as an enduring symbol at the Museum, a testament to John’s hard work and perseverance.

John was one of those people who can be considered a founder of the Marine Museum. One day in the early 1980s we had to tour two very refined Museum Assistance Programme (MAP) bureaucrats from Ottawa. Barry Lord, (now a big time consultant) and his now retired assistant George Zielinski who had to make a fateful recommendation. Will the museum get the money or not? So John, in the destitute, run-down Kingston Shipyard industrial buildings took his shovel and cleared a path through the bird droppings. Were they wearing Gucci shoes? Probably not, but we imagined all civil servants did. They were taken sailing, in sloppy weather – yes one of them got seasick. Not a good sign. But John did not stop there. Garden Island, across Kingston Harbour is a haven for the literati, academics and generally very interesting people. Among them was Arnold Edinborough, a prominent writer for the Financial Post among others. He wrote a column at the urging of John in full support of this daring urban regeneration project, among the first on an industrialized Kingston waterfront, just a few weeks before the Trustees of the Museum Assistance Programme met. So there was John, a lobbyist on behalf of the museum.

The MAP board voted yes! - \$300,000.00 a good start that eventually leveraged even more financial support. John was always there over the succeeding thirty-two years; saying the right thing, interceding at just the right moment and never stopping. Only a few days before the end, John was at the Marine Museum, no doubt, exhibiting his usual courtesy and encouragement.

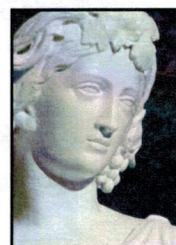
John was a boat builder in aluminum and steel, a natural born teacher, a morale builder, honored by the Kingston Historical Society and many others, and an inspiration to all who knew him.

Maurice D Smith

Curator Emeritus and a Past President of the KHS

*In the photo above, President Maurice Smith presents John d'Esterre with the Kingston Historical Society Award in 2004.
Photo provided by Jennifer McKendry.*

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Along the Old Road

By Stewart Renfrew

Next place past Mona Drive is 770 Hillview Road, a fine brick farmhouse built by the Grass family around the turn of the 19th/20th centuries. The story has it that the original farm house established by John Grass, the son of Michael Grass who led the Loyalist settlers to Kingston, was located where Centre and Cross streets now meet. I remember playing with some children who lived near there and they told me the old shed that we were in was supposed to be the last remnant of the original Grass farm buildings. At that time I knew nothing about Michael Grass or the United Empire Loyalists or any thing else about local history. Neither did my little friends I expect, but since they were important to our elders we were suitably impressed.

The 'new' farmhouse is of red brick and is build in the style of its period. It is an imposing building and has a new addition of a sunroom and porch along the front. There was, I remember, a lovely outdoor dolls house in front near the road build for the daughter of the family who lived there. By the time I got to know the place the Grasses were long gone and the Ellerbecks lived there. This did not sever the place's ties with its Loyalist roots though as the Ellerbecks are a well established Loyalist family also. Old Mr. Ellerbeck or 'Pappy Ellerbeck' as some of the locals called him, bought the place but he was not really interested in farming. Instead he would rather spend his time around the mines north of Kingston where, presumably, he made his money. His son Bill, on the other hand, was a great farmer and soon had made the place so profitable that if you check the local land registry rolls he was taking mortgages on many local properties. As befits a well established farmer in a small place at that time he eventually captured the heart of the local school teacher and married her. She went on to become an established figure in the community and eventually a member of the School Board.

Next stop on the road must be 736 Hillview Road. This little unassuming frame house has a very interesting history that tells much about the way people lived in small communities in the 19th Century. The land here belonged to the Grass family of course, but on November 7, 1874 one acre was sold to Peter W. Day and other trustees of the Good Templers Church. In 1878, The Good Templers Hall shows up on 'Historic Atlas of Frontenac, Lennox and Addington Counties.'

In the 19th century fraternal societies were all the rage. They provided members with fellowship, mutual aid, self-improvement, and shared values. Most were based on the ideas of the Free Masons and used similar ritual and regalia. Usually they offered co-operative insurance as well.

The idea of mutual aid and co-operative insurance had a very strong attraction in the 19th Century when there was no such thing as government sponsored unemployment insurance or health care. The Templers did not emphasize insurance but did admit both men and women and did not discriminate among races. They were most focused on temperance, something that would have found some support in the Collins Bay area. In fact Mr. McGuin closed the distillery he founded in the village not long after he started it because of local sentiment, but then that is another story.

The Good Templers Church, (I suspect it was called that for tax reasons), did not last. The little frame building went to the Anglican Church and later when that venture failed to the Presbyterians. Finally in the 1920's the Presbyterians merged with the Methodists next door and their building was converted into a house.



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Letter to The Editor

As an editor of a newsletter I don't get a lot of "letters to the editor" – I mean actual hand written letters on paper delivered by Canada Post. Now don't feel sorry for me because I do receive lots and lots of emails. But recently I was delighted to receive from our esteemed president Gordon Sinclair a "letter to (me) the editor". He had collected it from our post box. The letter was written by Mrs. Katherine Ferguson who lives in Ottawa and is a member of the KHS. Mrs. Ferguson who is 93, apologized for her hand written letter and not keeping up with the latest communications technology. First off, who can keep up with all the crazy changes in technology and secondly, I am grateful to receive your letter as it is – thank you.

Mrs. Ferguson attended the November meeting and heard Mark Trumpour's presentation *From Kingston to Cairo ... and Beyond: Adventures in Egypt* but when he said he could not account for a collection of Egyptian artefacts in the Agnes Etherington Art Centre she began to think of a likely source. In her letter Mrs. Ferguson writes that, "Professor George D. Ferguson BA LL D who was a professor at Queen's for a great many years (1860 – 1926) and who along with his wife, Mary Macdonald had an interesting collection of Egyptian artefacts which she brought back from their trip to Egypt in 1859. The account of their trip is on page 52 of Historic Kingston for 1965-66." Professor Ferguson's diaries are in the Queen's Archives.

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