



LIMELIGHT

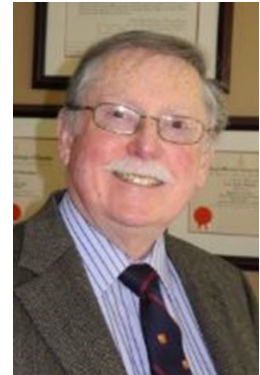
Newsletter of the Kingston Historical Society
Kingston Ontario Canada

Volume 19 No 1 ISSN 1488-5565 January 2017

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Lea Grimshaw

Members will be aware that the speaker planned for our 2017 Sir John A Macdonald Dinner on 14 January was to have been Mayor Bryan Paterson. Unfortunately, the Mayor will be unavailable on that date as he has to travel to China on matters relating to the recently-announced Chinese trade deal involving a manufacturing facility at Kingston. We will hear from Mayor Paterson at another time. In the meantime your Council has been busy finding a replacement speaker at very short notice. I am delighted to announce that **Mr John Gerretsen**, our former MPP, and a KHS member, has graciously agreed to speak after dinner and will discuss Sir John A.'s contributions to Kingston and Canada.



This inaugural event of the 150th anniversary year of Confederation is important and will be a memorable event for the KHS. It will be a great way to kick off the year. Seating is limited so send in your reservation for tickets soon. On behalf of Council I wish everyone a happy

2017. **KHS Meeting Wednesday 18 January 2017 7:30pm Seniors Centre**

Jean Rae Baxter - Governor and Mrs. Simcoe

In this Issue

President's Message, Announcements	1
About Us	2
Still Standing	3
Museums of Kingston	4, 5
Sesquicentennial Section <i>Agnes Maule Machar</i>	6
Speaker's Corner	7
KHS Awards Winners	7,8
Sir John A Macdonald Dinner	8

Sir John A Macdonald Dinner

14 January 2017

Senior Staff Mess of the Royal Military College 6pm

Speaker: John Gerretson

\$70 person, payable to

Kingston Historical Society, C/O Anne Richardson,

750 Amaryllis Street, Kingston, ON K7P 0A9

richanne@hotmail.ca

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Kingston Branch of the Ontario Genealogical Society will meet at the Kingston Seniors Centre, 56 Francis St. on Saturday, January 21 at 10 a.m. Who Knew? - Part 2: members report interesting discoveries in their family history research. Visitors welcome. Further info at www.ogs.on.ca/kingston

On Thursday, January 5, 2017, **The Frontenac Heritage Foundation** will be holding an event about the Outer Station buildings at 810 Montreal Street. Peter Gower will lead the discussion, which will be held at 193 Ontario Street, 2nd floor, starting at 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

From the Editor: It has come to my attention that the credit line to David St. Onge was omitted in his article on Canada's Penitentiary Museum in the September 2016 Limelight. I apologize for my error.

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 .



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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.

If you are interested in the advantages of being a sponsor, please speak to the president.

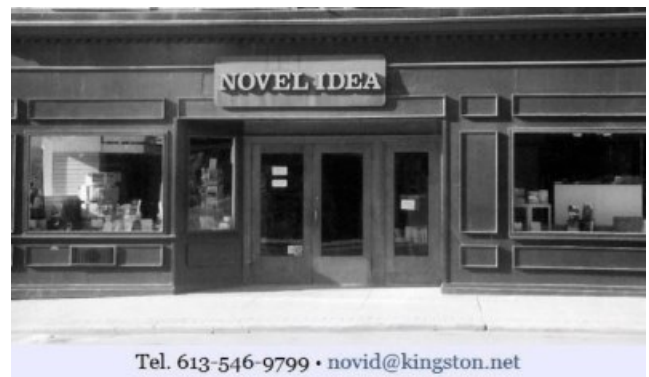
MEMBERSHIP RATES

\$50 Individual \$60 Family

\$60 Institutional \$25 Student \$300 Sponsor

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 Cataraqui Cemetery National Historic Site commemorating his death.



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STILL STANDING: Looking at Regional Architecture with Jennifer McKendry

Do they think we are slaves that they can trample upon us with impunity? A hall in the centre of Pittsburg Township is a necessity.

Letter-to-the-editor, *British Whig*, 17 February 1886

Despite the bitterness about building a township hall (now a school museum) in Barriefield Village -- almost as far south in Pittsburg Township as the officials could place it -- a lot on the corner of Regent and Drummond Streets was purchased in 1886. In the spring, architect William Newlands Jr (1853-1926) placed tenders calls for building contractors. This resulted in 17 tenders, with the successful bidders being Donaldson for carpentry, Robinson for painting and (guess what?) Newlands for masonry. This was likely Uncle Isaac Newlands and Cousin Alexander Newlands, both stonemasons. Robert Free may also have worked as a stonemason on the project. The stone was taken from the government quarries in the north part of Point Henry or east of the village.

The hall was built with the coarsely textured stone popular in the late 19th century. The entrance is in a gable wall, which allows maximum interior space in the main gathering area. Surviving architectural drawings in the Queen's University Archives suggest that an enclosed porch, iron fringe along the roof's ridge-pole and a bell-cote were contemplated but only the latter (now missing) is known to have been built. The end result is a simple, blunt building, mainly distinguished by its round-arch windows. The roof is large and steep pitched. The only ornamental aspect is the date-stone rondel with its four keystones in the upper gable.

The grand opening was held in January 1887 with a concert of singing (one of the songs, "A Jolly Good Laugh," got one), as well as organ, banjo and guitar playing. Dancing began at 10PM followed by a refreshing supper at the inn of Myles Byrnes, 223-225 Main Street. It was not until 2:30AM that the party was over.

Due to its location, it was not a symbol of unity in the township; nonetheless, the building remained its administration hall for the next 85 years. Later it functioned as a library and today it is a school museum.



Side elevation by William Newlands, 1886, Queen's University Archives

Side elevation



Town Hall Regent St Barriefield credit J. McKendry 6 Dec 2016

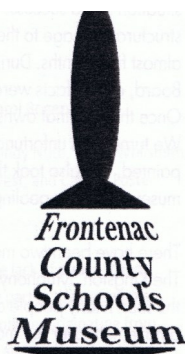
MUSEUMS OF KINGSTON

Frontenac County Schools Museum –Barriefield

by Gord Sly

The Frontenac County Schools Museum was established and has operated almost continuously for more than thirty-five years. This gem of a museum has been located in Barriefield Village for the last ten years, in the old Township Hall/Library on the corner of Regent and Drummond streets. Those who have visited the museum are well aware of its treasure trove of artifacts, antique school furniture, historical documents, books, photographs and so on, going back more than 200 years. As one enters the museum, a colourful variety of these resources are beautifully organized on display and rotated periodically.

A popular feature at the museum is the reconstructed classroom of 1890 - 1910. It was assembled with furniture and artifacts from many of the one-room schools that dotted the Kingston area in the past. The room immediately sets a mood of intrigue, curiosity and, for many older visitors, nostalgia, as they walk through perusing the exhibits, documents and books. One is greeted with the teacher's desk on a platform, the rows of single and double student desks, the woodstove, the slates on which students did their work, the wash basin, the pail of drinking water complete with dipper from which the students as well as and much more. The classroom can't help but stimulate keen interest, nostalgia and sentimentality. The extensive archives of the museum offer great research opportunities to members of the public who are so inclined. A number of educational programs are offered at the museum. Classes from local schools are invited to 'go to school' in the 1890s for half a day. An appropriately costumed schoolmarm or teaching master teaches lessons of the period while students sit in quaint old desks complete with inkwells. They will write on slates or use straight pens and ink on paper. Students also have an opportunity to examine displays in the gallery.



This year, students from three different schools are being chosen to participate in 'Beyond the Classroom' program for a whole week. This project is a non-profit program that was established by the Kingston Association of Museums (KAM) with some funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. The goal of this program is to invite applications from teachers to take their students out of their classrooms into community museums, art galleries and other cultural sites in the community for an entire week of 'hands on' educational enrichment. Curriculum and inquiry-based, the program encourages critical thinking and problem-solving skills using various themes and subjects. Special programs are also offered at particular times each year, such as the school fair in the fall and the Christmas Concert in December. The Gallery displays are rotated for special themes, such as Remembrance Day, Christmas, Mad Hatter's Tea, Anne of Green Gables and so on. This lovely museum is staffed by dedicated volunteers, most of whom are retired educators. For more information, please visit our website: www.fcsmuseum.com

Contact us at: fcschoolsmuseum@gmail.com or by phone: 613-544-9113

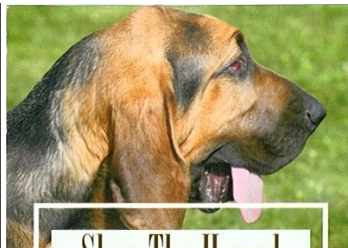


Frontenac County Schools Museum interior - Photos from the collection of Frontenac County Schools Museum

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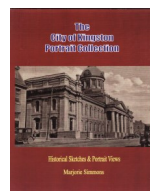
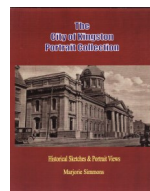
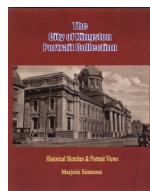
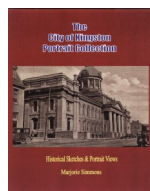
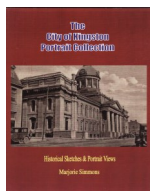


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The City of Kingston Portrait Collection by Marjorie Simmons. Published by the Kingston Historical Society, 2006, Paperback, 160 pages. Sale price **\$10.00**.

A copy may be picked up at a Historical Society meeting to save you shipping costs.



People Flourishing in Kingston
Around the
Time of Confederation
Agnes Maule Machar (1837-1927)

By Brian S. Osborne



A plaque beside the grave of **Agnes Maule Machar** would be a fitting acknowledgement of her contributions to Kingston and to Canada.



At a meeting of the Kingston Historical Society on 19 April 1904, a motion was passed unanimously, “To consider the advisability of publishing a History of Kingston.” At a meeting of a committee charged to pursue this task, someone - already at work on such a project - offered to compile the desired history, an offer that was accepted as “no one member had sufficient leisure to undertake the work.” Four years later, *The Story of Old Kingston* was registered with the Department of Agriculture and dedicated to the memory of “The Good Men and True who Built Up Old Kingston.” Ironically, it was written by “the gifted authoress,” Agnes Maule Machar. And that’s not all. Apart from this significant contribution, in 1911, Agnes Machar serves KHS yet again by taking on the role of Vice-President at a time when the Society had nearly faltered.

Agnes Maule Machar was one of three children born to the Rev. John Machar and Mrs. J. M. Machar of St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church at Kingston. Her strong social conscience was nurtured by an upbringing in a household where learning, intelligent discourse, and Christian charity were a lived practice.

Agnes Machar’s connections with St. Andrew’s Church and Queen’s University ensured a constant interaction with professors, politicians, poets, novelists, political theorists, and religious leaders. During her time, Kingston was a centre of progressive thought and the social circle centred on the St. Andrew’s manse was a rich one: John A. Macdonald used her father’s library, Oliver Mowat and Richard Cartwright were visitors, and she hosted such worthies as Canadian poet, Pauline Johnston, and famed British evolutionist Alfred Russell Wallace. And then there was George Munroe Grant with whom she shared many common interests and affinities of outlook.

Agnes Maule Machar may have been a prominent social activist at the local level, but she was also a multi-faceted woman. An accomplished artist, she painted portraits of her mother and father and submitted her work to the Upper Canadian Provincial Exhibition where, between 1859 and 1868, she won several prizes for pencil drawings, oil and water colour landscapes, and animal paintings. Furthermore, writing under *the nom de plume*, “Fidelis,” she penned poetry, novels, histories, biographies, children’s stories and made her mark in the realm of Canadian arts and letters. In 1887, one of her poems was awarded the prize for the best composition honouring Queen Victoria’s Jubilee; in 1893, she was the only woman among thirteen Canadian authors said to have attained international recognition; and, in 1903, she was elected Vice-President of the Canadian Society of Authors. Agnes Machar was an ardent literary nationalist and her considerable literary productivity ensured her a platform to promote her vision of Canadian society and polity.

A tireless advocate of causes that transcended ethereal Christianity, several major themes emerge in Agnes Machar’s life-work: social justice; the power of nature; and British imperialism and Canadian patriotism. She emerges as one of the prominent women in Kingston’s history and, indeed, one of Canada’s leading intellectuals and social critics in late-C19 and early-C20 Canada. This is why – during the 150th birthday of Canada – she deserves to be remembered by members of KHS, Kingstonians, and Canadians alike.

Awards Night

by Lou Grimshaw

The December meeting was our Awards Night and annual Christmas party held at the Renaissance Centre on Tuesday 6 December. The event was well-attended and Joe Brites, Chair of the Awards Committee, did a tremendous job of presenting the KHS Awards. This year's recipients were Ms. Joanne Stanbridge and Dr. Duncan McDowall.

The program line-up for 2017 is taking shape and will include an interesting and wide variety of topics. Our speaker on Wednesday 18 January 2017 will be Jean Rae Baxter on Governor and Mrs. Simcoe. Some of her books will also be available for sale at the meeting.

Wednesday 15 February is our Annual General Meeting. At the conclusion of business, Mr Don Connelly will introduce his painting of Murney Tower.

The remainder of the program will be published in due course.



President Lou Grimshaw

Photos by Peter Ginn



Joanne Stanbridge



Awards Committee Chair Joe Brites with Duncan McDowall



Some KHS members at the Awards Ceremony

Recipients of the Kingston Historical Society Award over the Years

- 1993 **Dr. W. Breck**: historian; **Shirley Gibson-Langille**: artist; **Dr. George F. G. Stanley**: historian
- 1994 **Dr. William Angus**: historian; **Frederick A. McConnell**: curator, historical animator;
Dr. Richard A. Preston: historian, museologist
- 1995 **Dr. Margaret S. Angus**: historian, author, government advisor
- 1996 **Canadian Forces Communications and Electronics Museum**; **Margaret Cohoe**: historian, teacher
- 1997 **A.G. (Joe) Boucher**: past president (posthumous); **Isobel and Bogart Trumpour**: past-presidents
- 1998 **B-Gen William Patterson**: author, historic site historian; **Donald Redmond**: editor, Historic Kingston, librarian; **Carol White**: teacher, consultant history curricula; **Gary Schult**: teacher, Heritage Fair organizer
- 1999 **J. William Fittell**: journalist, sports historian; **Gordon D. Smithson**: founding president, Pittsburgh Historical Society
- 2000 **Cataraqui Cemetery Company**: 150th anniversary of founding; **Marjorie Simmons**: historian, genealogist
- 2001 **George F. Henderson**: archivist, long-time chair Macdonald grave site ceremony
Maurice D. Smith: historian, museologist

Recipients of the Kingston Historical Society Award over the Years

- 2002 **Cataraqui Archaeological Research Foundation:** 25th anniversary of founding;
Jennifer McKendry: architectural historian, author
- 2003 **Downtown Kingston Business Improvement Area:** advocate of building preservation;
Ingbert J. Huber: retired master stone-cutter; **Helmut L. Graf,** retired master mason
- 2004 **John K. D'Esterre:** preserver of marine lore, ship builder; **George W. Vosper:** public official, preservation activist, museum benefactor
- 2005 **Kevin E. Reed:** teacher, driving force behind KCVI War Memorial
Robert C. Cardwell: active in local historical and heritage groups and event
- 2006 **The Kingston Whig Standard:** for special Canada Day supplement The People Who Built Kingston;
Ann Lukits: major role in that production **Patricia Fleming:** author, preserver of local social history
- 2007 **Kim Donovan:** builder, preservationist; **John (Jack) Gibson Pike:** teacher, museologist
Brian Stuart Osborne: community builder, historical geographer; author, past-president
- 2008 **Ken Watson:** author, historic site historian., society web master; **Henk Wevers:** ship builder, museum benefactor; **Peter Gower:** author, historian
- 2009 **Beatrice Corbett:** author, Navy Park developer; **Arthur Britton Smith:** author, Benefactor
- 2010 **Captain Brian Johnson:** author; **Donna Ivey:** author ; **Norma Kelly:** author
- 2011 **Robert J. Andrews:** author, educator; **Edward R. Grenda:** Past President, researcher
- 2012 **Dr. James Low:** founder, Museum of Health Care at Kingston
Queen's University Archives: for the preservation and management of historical materials
- 2013 **Canada's Penitentiary Museum:** interpreting the history of Canadian penal system
The Royal Military College of Canada Museum: preservation and interpretation of local history
- 2014 **John Fielding:** for his major contribution in improving the teaching of history, 10 years editor of Limelight
- 2015 **Oscar Malan:** Owner of Novel Idea Bookstore; **Doug and Marianne Thompson,** lead roles in the preservation of the St Paul's Anglican Church Lower Burial Ground.
- 2016 **Dr. Duncan Mc Dowall,** historian; **Joanne Stanbridge,** Writer, Illustrator, Librarian, Kingston Public Library

Sir John A Macdonald Birthday Dinner

14 January 2017 Senior Staff Mess of the Royal Military College 6pm

Speaker: John Gerretson

\$70 person, payable to

Kingston Historical Society, C/O Anne Richardson, 750 Amaryllis Street, Kingston, ON K7P 0A9 richanne@hotmail.ca