



Limelight

Newsletter of the Kingston Historical Society

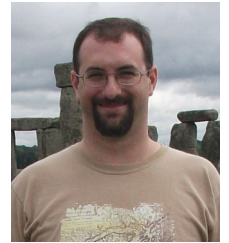
Kingston Ontario Canada

Volume 19 no 3 ISSN 1488-5565 March 2017

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dr. Marcus R. (Marc) Létourneau

It is sincerely an honour to have been elected as your new Kingston Historical Society President. I have very daunting shoes to fill. I believe 2017 will be an important year for the Kingston Historical Society. With the 150th anniversary of Confederation, the Society has an opportunity to engage and educate people about Kingston's remarkable past. There are amazing stories about Kingston people and places that need to be told, and the Society is well placed for this task! Council will be holding a retreat in the near future to develop a new strategic plan for the Society, and I look forward to sharing the results with the membership at a future KHS meeting. There have already been some exciting ideas concerning the revitalization of the Murney Tower Museum NHSC; new publications; a greater engagement with youth and other organizations; and for raising the profile of the Society. I encourage all members to share with any Council member questions, comments, or concerns as we move forward. I want to end my first message by thanking Major Louis (Lou) Grimshaw for all of his hard work as President. I also want to thank all non-returning members of the KHS Council. This Society is dependent upon the dedication of our volunteers, and I cannot thank them enough for their commitment.



KINGSTON REGIONAL HERITAGE FAIR

THURSDAY, MAY 11TH AT QUEEN'S WEST CAMPUS

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO JUDGE GRADE SCHOOL

HISTORY PROJECTS

SIGN UP HERE: [HTTP://WWW.KRHF.CA/REGISTRATION/VOLUNTEERS](http://www.krhf.ca/registration/volunteers)

**OPEN HOUSE FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC HELD FROM
1:30 – 3:00 PM**

VIEW HISTORY PROJECTS AND COMMUNITY HERITAGE BOOTHS

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COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Kingston Branch of the **Ontario Genealogical Society** will meet at the Kingston Seniors Centre, 56 Francis St., on Saturday, March 18 at 10 a.m. Lesley Anderson and Glenn Wright, both from Ottawa, will speak on "Creating Ontario: Immigration to Upper Canada and Canada West, 1791-1867". Visitors welcome. Further details at www.ogs.on.ca/kingston

Do you have questions about maintenance on your heritage house? **The Frontenac Heritage Foundation** will have a panel of experts who can help. You can ask your questions of the experts on Tuesday, March 21, at 7:30 p.m. at 193 Ontario Street, 2nd floor. Call [343-363-1901](tel:343-363-1901) for details.



The next meeting of the Kingston Historical Society

Wednesday, March 15, 2017 7:30pm

Sue Bazely - 'Lost Cemeteries of Kingston'

Seniors Centre 56 Francis Street

Pictured at the February 16 planning meeting for the June 6 Sir John A. Macdonald graveside ceremony: George Muggleton from Bellevue House, Peter Radley, MC for the past ten years, Alan MacLachlan, committee chair, and Don Richardson, the new MC. Photo by Eva Barnes



THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY *Established 1893*

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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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2017-18 KHS Executive Council

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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.



Front: Paul, Betty, Anne, Lou, Don, Joe **Back:** Graeme, Tabitha, Marcus, Alan **Absent:** John, Peter, Peter, Marc, Virginia Photos by Eva Barnes

Speaker's Corner by Lou Grimshaw

Our meeting on Wednesday 15 February was the Annual General Meeting and of necessity most of the meeting was devoted to a review of the business of the Society, reports, financial statements and election of officers.

The meeting was scheduled to include Don Connolly discussing his new painting of the Murney Tower. Unfortunately, adverse weather prevented Don from attending. Nonetheless, Graeme Watson, Director of Murney Tower, unveiled the painting and explained its content and purpose. The painting includes two different views of the Tower, a general exterior view and a detailed "cutaway" view of the interior. It will be used for a number of purposes including an explanation of how the Tower functioned and for publicity purposes through duplication as posters and other promotional material. We will have Don back at a later date to discuss his work .



Graeme Watson, Bill Fittell, and Alan MacLachlan admire Don Connolly's Murney Tower painting.

Membership includes an invitation to attend monthly meetings; nine issues of *Limelight*, delivered electronically or in hard-copy; 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 or to the membership chair.*

MEMBERSHIP RATES		\$300 Sponsor	
\$50	Individual	\$60	Family
\$60	Institutional	\$25	Student

STILL STANDING:

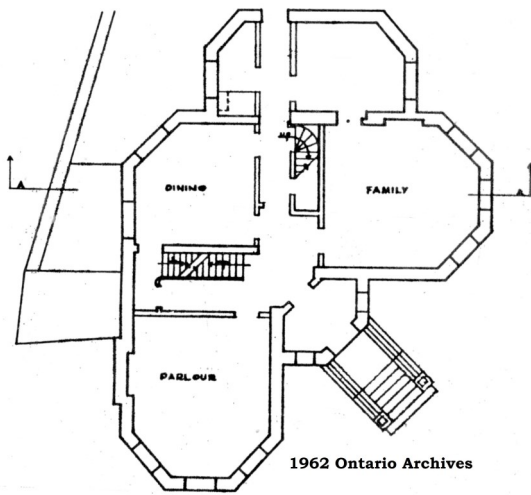
Looking at Regional Architecture with Jennifer McKendry, Architectural Historian

“ROCKWOOD, the seat of Donald McIntosh, Esq., unique in style and unrivalled for its fine view of the bay and surrounding country”

Only five years old at the time of this description in the 1857-1858 city directory, Rockwood is now affectionately known as **McIntosh Castle**, 14 Sydenham Street at West. Its architect John Power, 1816-1882, who had arrived in Canada from Devon, England in 1846, first worked as a contractor – likely to acclimatize to the local building trade. Four years later, he declared himself an architect and thus the McIntosh house, tendered in 1852, is among his earliest independent commissions, happening at the beginning of a long and prolific career. His client was Scottish emigrant Donald McIntosh, 1796-1879, who ran a warehousing and forwarding business, as well as a Commission Agency.

Client and architect came up with a brilliant solution to an awkward plot of land, which was in the shape of a triangle. Two wings sprouted out from a two-storey entrance tower forming a picturesque design for a picturesque site next to the open elevated land on which the Frontenac County Court House would shortly appear in 1855. Not satisfied with the deliberately irregular silhouette of the stone house with its tall skylight or lantern, a later owner added a third storey and crenellations to the entrance tower to reinforce the castle-like appearance. This may have been as late as the early 20th-century under owners Fannie and Stewart Robertson, a broker, who employed the Power firm in 1913 for some alterations. Earlier occupants, such as the family of Joseph Doyle from the late 1850s to the late 1870s (when it was known as Hill Cottage) and the Revd James Brock in the 1880s and '90s, were satisfied with the original Gothic Revival aspects including pointed windows, verge boards, finials and a variegated overall form, vaguely recalling the work of English architect John Nash, especially at Luscombe Castle of 1800 in Devon.

The most important aspect showing Power's knowledge of medieval architecture was the use of irregular coarse stonework. Adding the extra height to the tower can be thought of as a compliment offered to this early example of a Kingston residence in Gothic Revival style.



Many Kingstonians have been curious about the history, settings, and living conditions in historic homes, particularly in the one resembling a small castle. Having resided in McIntosh Castle for ten years (1957-1967), I would like to share a few historical events, experiences, and descriptions of life there during that brief spiritual period.

This 1852 Gothic Revival villa was built in an “L” shaped design with a three-storey tower set between the two wings. At the rear of the east wing is an extension incorporating a kitchen, hidden from West Street by a high stone wall extending to the garage creating an enclosed garden area and a rear entrance.

Entering by the arched front tower door and vestibule, one steps into the central hallway featuring doorways to the main rooms: the living room in the east wing, and the dining room in the west wing, each with a large fireplace and three tall bay windows; the living room overlooking the courthouse and Macdonald Park; the dining room facing Sydenham Street. The main stairway leads to a sunporch at the first landing, and at the second landing, to the bedrooms and bathroom. The tower’s upstairs room served as a nursery. The basement was unfurnished and included several rooms, one with a huge fireplace, and another which was a servant’s room with an exit leading to West Street.

The house had not been modernized when we took possession and we made a few minor changes while retaining its character; mostly decorating, carpeting and installing a kitchen and a two-piece bathroom at the rear doors.

Across the hall from the kitchen was a scullery with a small china cabinet, a large sink and drain, and a dumb-waiter connected to the basement’s fireplace where the cooking had been done long ago.

Another interesting room was the upstairs bathroom with its pedestal sink, and a concealed stairway which led to the lookout on the roof. From this vantage point in days gone by one could have a very good view of the hangings which took place behind the Courthouse. The children had to be reminded that they must suppress their “rite of passage” to the lookout if the bathroom was in use.

In 1960, we received a letter from an elderly American couple, the Greens, who had visited the Castle earlier that year. An abridged version of what Mr. Green wrote follows.

“I lived with my uncle and aunt and my uncle’s father in the old castle about 70 years ago. Did you ever get your land surveyed? I am almost sure it went back further on West Street, as the outside men’s and women’s toilets with a carpenter shop between went further back than where the stone fence is.

Reverend James Brock (his uncle) was a Methodist minister, and one of the first missionaries who came to Lower Canada and then settled in Upper Canada. He had the largest private library in Canada at the time and he gave it to Queen’s University when he died. He had a son, Arthur Brock, who was a wholesale jeweller on Brock Street (seems to me near the market). The large room as you enter to the right side was his study and library and he had cupboards with two doors, filled with books from the floor about four feet up. In the small room back of it my uncle kept his safe with watches etc. in it. They used fifty tons of coal in winter, stored back of the side door on West Street; then hardwood burning fireplaces, before they got the furnace (hot air).

On the right side of the castle in the brick house lived Lawyer McIntire. Across Sydenham Street lived Lawyer Britton, who ran for office. Within that row of public brick houses lived the two Folger sisters next to Fred Folger, who was quite a horse-racing man, and his son Fred Jr., my friend; next lived the Franklins who were in the grain business; then the McMahons. Around the corner lived Billy Nichol, a red-haired man who became a lawyer and was on the Supreme Court or something in politics. He would stop and play ball with us on his way from Queen’s College.

He was very nice to us kids. We played in front of his house although the cricket field was katty-corner away. Then the Gunns and Robertsons (a sugar man), the Daileys, and the McIntires. The Courthouse loomed in view and then the city jail with Sydenham School behind on Barrie and Earl.

I got up real early and worked on a milk wagon for \$1.50 per week. Head man chewed tobacco. Mr Grass of Clarified Milk Company got all the milk companies to go together and start putting milk in bottles. They had lovely horses and they started to pull the trucks. I was supposed to drive, but we found out I could run faster than my boss, so he drove and I delivered from the crates to the doorsteps of clients. He got larger money but did less work. Ha! ”

From Leigh Green of Florida

We were often asked if there was any evidence of ghosts, people assuming that most old castles were haunted. Perhaps that could explain certain mysterious events such as our son’s five year obsession with milk trucks and deliveries while living in the Castle, hitching a ride in our delivery man’s Wilmot truck each morning, delivering milk to the neighbours who lived in the three-street triangle of West, Earl, and Sydenham. Mr Wilmot, impressed with our son’s letter to Santa Claus read out on the radio pleading for a milk truck for Christmas, arranged for a toy milk truck, decorated as on of his own company’s to appear mysteriously under our tree Christmas morning. Mr Green’s spirit must have been left in the Castle.



Photo by Jennifer McKendry

“When is a man not a man? When he is a sham.” - James Joyce

Another visitor appeared worth mentioning here – a more interesting story than writing about the unpredictable bats flying down from the

roof via the fireplaces and racing noisily about flitting through the door transoms and eventually disappearing.

The visitor was from Scotland, claiming to be a Lord, and he befriended us even though we, who lived in McIntosh Castle, had no claim to a title. The Lord said he was the owner of Grand Mcnish Spirits Distilleries. He had arrived in Kingston from Montreal to take a position in one of the plants. His Curriculum Vita was so overqualified that a position had to be created for him in a lab of his own.

Society leapt at the chance to include Lord Chris in its fold. RMC held a dinner in his honour. Some VIPs took him to Quebec to hunt Canada geese. He received a BANK LOAN CREDIT from the Scotia bank’s manager (who happened to be Scottish, as well) because of a delay in transfer of funds from Scotland. Chris arranged a welcome party at the P.W.O.R. for his wife, who was expected to arrive from Montreal. We waited all evening but she never arrived. Nor did his funds from Scotland.

He was literally run out of town by the car dealer to whom he owed payment for his cars. He sent the police to chase him down, a fine ending for a royal visit.

Any attempt to garden in the very old soil had been futile, despite encouragement from our friend Mr. Minnaker Senior,



ior, who supplied us with new plants every spring to replace the previous spring’s dead ones. On one of those visits he presented us with a rhododendron plant in full bloom of pink flowers. It was not predicted to survive in Kingston’s limestone soil; there were no further blooms, just green leaves for several years, as expected. However, the plant burst forth in full bloom once, just prior to our departure. It appeared to symbolize the Castle’s spirit of beauty, strength, and sustainability, calling out to us to take this spirit away as a reminder of those years in the Castle.

Why are cows grazing on Queen Street? Last August, the city spruced up the windows of 19 Queen Street near Ontario Street with historic images for the Tragically Hip concert in the nearby K Rock Centre, and they are still there for your enjoyment. The views are enlargements of postcards from the collection of Jennifer McKendry (Photo by Jennifer McKendry).



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Murney Tower

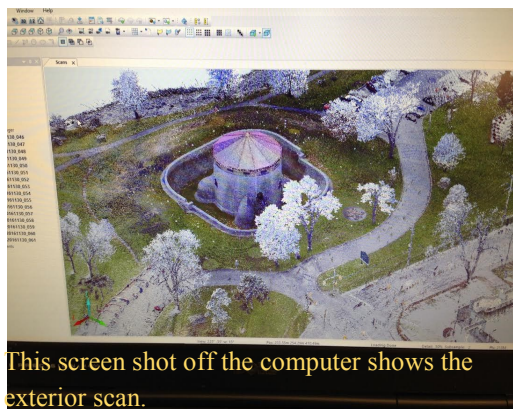
Scan



Scott McKeever of Canyon Logics, a local Kingston firm that has worked for Parks Canada and the City, first scanned the basement and then moved up through the floors. The scan will help Parks Canada assess the structure for preservation work, and will enable KHS to build a 3D model of the Tower to display to visitors.



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The white balls are the reference targets placed throughout the Tower in order to aid in stitching the numerous scans together.



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People Flourishing at the Time of Confederation

Carl Fechter writes in a December 1886 special edition of the *Daily Whig* about MICHAEL FLANAGAN as “He Enters Upon the 44th Year of Service — A Man of Rare Impartiality, Judgement and Industry -One who Can Sink Self a Great Deal and Yet Preserve His Individuality”



I have in my mind's eye one who has patiently, faithfully and satisfactorily served the people for a great many years. I have reference to Mr. Michael Flanagan who has been identified with the corporation since 1843. Forty-three years of the worry in an office, with never-ending toils, are enough to take the freshness out of any man, and yet Mr. Flanagan is so neat in his appearance, so buoyant in his feelings, so sprightly in his action, so bright in his intellect, that only some one like myself, with a very long memory and all the facts before him, would suppose that he is the oldest clerk in the dominion. Such is the fact, however, and the contemplation elicits my profound respect.

Mr. Flanagan was born on Sept 23, 1823, at Elphin, county of Roscommon, Ireland, the son of Laughlin Flanagan and Margaret Murray. His father died while he was young. He was well-educated, and spent five years in the Elphin diocesan classical school from which many men; afterwards very distinguished, graduated, and among them the parent of that famous aesthete Mr. Oscar Wild. In 1841 he emigrated to Canada, and arrived in Kingston about a week after Lord Sydenham, but for whose death, prematurely and as the result of an accident, the seat of government would not have been removed hence. A few weeks later and he entered the office of Charles Stuart — nephew of Sir James Stuart and venerable archdeacon Stuart — barrister-at-law and registrar of the county. At that time the city and county were combined for registration purposes. As a mere machine doing the clerical work of Mr. Stuart, the subject of this sketch was not destined to long remain. He had talents for a higher service, and his industry and taste as a penman, attracted Mr. Francis Manning Hill, another lawyer and one of the foremost public men of his day. He induced Mr. Stuart to transfer Mr. Flanagan's articles to him, and on the 1st June, 1843, a few days before the corner stone of the public buildings was laid, he entered upon the discharge of his newer duties. The municipal offices were then in Baker's building on the market square, known as town hall and occupying the site of the present masonic hall. Mr. Flanagan had but one object in life, apparently, to be as useful as possible, and such was the popularity of his service, as an assistant to Mr. Hill, that when that gentleman resigned the clerkship Mr. Flanagan got it. He proved worthy of the trust reposed in him. Of the members of the council at the time of Mr. Flanagan's appointment, but one is living, Sir John A. Macdonald, to whom Mr. Flanagan remained loyal politically, through good and evil report, until he failed to appreciate, as he had occasion to do, the affection and fealty he had been accorded. Mr. Flanagan, as a politician, gave no offence. He had his views, as fixed as the views of any man could be, and he regulated his as an elector accordingly, but he passed through every fiery ordeal as a public official without disfigurement, without the insinuation even that he acted otherwise than in the fairest and most impartial manner.

The incorporation of Kingston as a city occurred in 1846, and Mr. Flanagan, previously (on the 14th of April, 1845) made clerk, was confirmed in the position in accordance with the provisions of Baldwin's new municipal act. He now entered upon a busy career, one characterized by a multiplication of duties which, to another, would be simply appalling. The law from time to time imposed upon him, in addition to the correspondence, statistical work etc., of municipal clerk, the clerkship of the recorder's court (up to the time it was abolished), the clerkship of the police court, the court of revision, the voters lists' court, and the special court for the selection of grand and petit jurors. Of course he has had assistants, but he never yet felt the pleasure of retiring at the end of the day without an anxiety of some kind. He has served under all the mayors which Kingston ever had, save one, the late Mr. Cassidy. Those who presided over the council before 1843 were elected subsequently, with the one exception, and hence the claim which Mr. Flanagan makes with a pardon -

-able pride. In the election of these mayors he assisted, either as the general returning officer when the people elected them, or as chairman of the council when from among themselves the aldermen chose their leader. On some of these occasions his situation was one of extreme delicacy, but he handled himself like a diplomat and overcame touchy points with success that must have even astonished himself. As an elector he was influenced by an invariable rule — to support the old members — and by the same rule he decided the ties between ward candidates a number of times.



In 1867 the confederation of the provinces was carried into effect, and a great jubilee was inaugurated here. Mr. Flanagan was appointed the secretary of the celebrating committee, and a great deal of onerous duty imposed upon him. He laboured away without murmuring and did so well that the committee desired to compensate him. He declined to accept payment for his service, but it was determined to reward him in some way, and hence the gift to him of a beautiful gold watch and chain which he wears. Its inscription is to the effect that the presentation was made by the mayor, the police magistrate, a number of ex-mayors and others as a testimonial of regard and esteem for the wearer's faithful services "rendered beyond his official duties." Nor was this the only evidence of the favour with which Mr. Flanagan was treated in other days. In 1871 his portrait,

painted by that excellent artist, Mr. Sawyer, at the call and expense of the citizens generally, was presented to him at the British American hotel. He gratefully accepted it, to be sure, and handed it over to the chairman of the city property committee, and by the latter it was hung over the entrance in city hall. It faces the portraits of the many mayors whom Mr. Flanagan served so faithfully. He is one of the few whose pictures (outside of those of the mayors, preserved in oil) have been added to the city's splendid art collection. The others are the late James O'Reilly, A.J. Macdonnell, J.A. Macdonald and Judge Hagerman. ...

Mr. Flanagan has not had time to indulge his tastes outside of his office, but he has been a great floriculturist, and has year after year taken many prizes upon the magnificent floral displays he has been able to make. He was for years a member of the horticultural society, was a director of it repeatedly, and filled the office of president. In 1857 he was appointed a coroner, but I am unaware that he ever acted. The appointment cost the government nothing, but it was calculated to tickle the recipient, which it did not do. The patent was the most valuable part of this business, and I suppose he will hand it down to his children as a curious relic of the past.

The city clerk was married in 1846 to Mary Sarah, second daughter of Dr. Boyd, of the royal navy. ...eleven children...In religion Mr. Flanagan has been a devoted Catholic; in politics he is a retired conservative; in general he is a public man of fine address. No man has such knowledge of municipal matters, and withal he is attentive and courteous ... ideal of a public official. As a citizen he is a model and of his virtues. I would be glad to see many imitators. That he may long continue to fill his office with that dignity and satisfaction so characteristic of him is the wish most cordially expressed by -- Carl Fechter

Michael Flanagan's death was reported in the Daily British Whig of June 24, 1897. - ed.

