

# Limelight

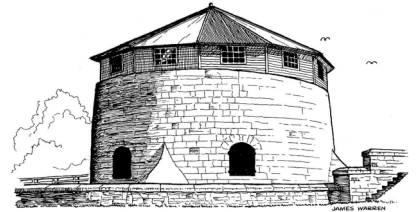
Newsletter of the Kingston Historical Society

Kingston Ontario Canada

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The Kingston Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.



## Kingston Historical Society Meeting Wednesday, October 16

7 pm at Kingsbridge Retirement Community ,  
950 Centennial Drive off Princess Street, and , *also via Zoom*

### *John Buchan: Model Governor General*

**William Galbraith** will draw on his biography of famous Scottish author – perhaps best remembered for his thriller *The Thirty-Nine Steps* – and **Canadian Governor General, John Buchan**, to provide a broad context for Buchan’s lasting impact on Canada and in particular on Kingston, where Buchan’s papers and library were left to Queen’s.



Photo by Craig Pettis

**Alan Maclachlan, a member of the KHS council for 25 years, will retire from council in February of 2025. At various times he has held the positions of Secretary, Program Chair and President, and, for the last several years, has been the Chair of the 6 June Commemoration Service. Thank you, Alan. You will be missed.**



Photo by J. McKendry

It is noted with regret, the death, on August 16, 2024, of Helen(Betty) Grenda, wife of Edward Grenda, who is a long-time member of the Kingston Historical Society.

# THE KINGSTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Established 1893

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

*Please forward submissions to the Editor [betty.andrews@gmail.com](mailto:betty.andrews@gmail.com)*

*Reprinting of articles from the Limelight must be accompanied by an acknowledgment of the Society, the issue and date. Photo credits and by-lines must be retained.*

Featured Sponsor

The Kingston Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the financial support of Kingston Association of Museums, Art Galleries and Historic Sites and the City of Kingston.



*The KHS gratefully acknowledges the support of its sponsors in producing Limelight.*



President: Paul Charbonneau Vice President: Peter Gower Past President: Vincent Durant Treasurer: Peter Ginn Secretary: Don Richardson  
Councillors: Betty Andrews, Editor of Limelight; Warren Everett, Member-at-large; Alan MacLachlan, Sir John A. Macdonald Commemoration Event Chair;  
Duncan McDowall, Programme Chair; Tabitha Renaud, Director of Murney Tower; Paul Van Nest, Membership Chair; Peter Gower, Editor of Historic Kingston, and  
Webmaster

## President's Message

by Paul Charbonneau

*"The end of the summer is not the end of the world. Here's to October..."*  
A.A. Milne

At our meeting on September 18<sup>th</sup>, we listened to Peter Gower regale us regarding the long and wonderful history of the Kingston Historical Society (see article below). Peter's presentation got me reflecting about my personal history and challenged me to ask, "What history did I make this year?" There is still time to add to Chapter 2024 in your own history journal.

I attempt to keep up with the celebration of different days, weeks and months of organizations and such in our world. During my research for October I came across an unusual one; "Banned Books Week". George Bernard Shaw once said: "All censorships exist to prevent anyone from challenging current conceptions and existing institutions. All progress is initiated by challenging current conceptions, and executed by supplanting existing institutions. Consequently, the first condition of progress is the removal of censorship." I leave that with you to muse on.

Thanksgiving, we Canadians celebrate in October, others at different times. No matter when celebrated, it truly is a time to exhibit gratitude for all the blessings, material such as food and water, and physical and mental well-being. Our society has taken a monumental shift in its view of mental health; be there for a friend or colleague and be ready to reach out when they need that shoulder or hug.

*"Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today and creates a vision for tomorrow."*

Melody Beattie



# THE HOWE ISLAND GARDEN BUD STORY

by Jennifer Iluck



Our story begins on a small island located in Lake Ontario, east of Kingston, in Frontenac County. It is part of the world famous Thousand Islands chain.

The island was renamed on July 16, 1792, from “Isle Cauchois” to “Howe Island”, in honor of William Howe, 5<sup>th</sup> Viscount Howe, a British officer who served under General James Wolfe at the Battle of The Plains of Abraham during the Seven Year War.

The island’s lone small Roman Catholic Church, Saint Philomena’s, and its cemetery are a testimonial to the waves of early settlers and their descendants who still live and own land here.

Howe Island hosts a shared community of farming as well as fulltime residents and seasonal cottagers. There are no public facilities, no shops or restaurants and no public gathering places.

The early access to the island was via boat or by crossing the frozen ice in winter.

Currently (2024) the island is accessed by two ferries, a ten-car ferry at the base of Joyceville Road and a three-car ferry at the island’s eastern tip.

In 1997 the Township of Howe Island ended and it was amalgamated into the Township of Frontenac Islands the following year. Local islanders (proposal Glenys Elliott) were inspired to make donations towards the installation of a sign designed by Faye Muller commemorating the former township of Howe Island’s 107 years’ existence (1871 to 1997). The completed sign was erected in front of the Township Offices on Baseline Road.

A few years later, in 2000, Judy Hyre and Faye Muller decided to form a women’s group in the pursuit of gardening knowledge. There was no email at the time; flyers were placed in the residents’ mail boxes to recruit interested members.

Monthly meetings commenced in members’ homes. Gardening issues were researched and presented by individual members. The positions of Director, Treasurer and Secretary were established. A club name was agreed upon. Minutes were taken and a 50/50 draw was started to fund guest speakers and outings.

The club blossomed and in August of 2000, in collaboration with the township, limestone from an old island farm (Tom Norris’s ) was transported to the base of the new Howe Island Township sign and an informal surrounding garden, designed by Faye Muller, followed. Husbands and township and community members volunteered their time, effort and machinery to complete the project. Watering and weeding rosters were drawn up. The community now had a monument at the entrance to the Township Office.



The Club then turned its sights to the main ferry landing where they were expecting the arrival of the new Frontenac Howe Islander ferry. Proposals were submitted for the development of two new garden beds to beautify the area on either side of the roadway and along the long fence. An automatic watering system was installed by David Higgs. The gardens were designed by member island resident Faye Muller and financed by the Garden Club, the Township and donations. The installation was done by Garden Buds, their spouses and other donated labor. A news article by Margaret Knott appeared in The Heritage paper on November 9, 2004, detailing the club activities at this location and its ongoing fundraising efforts for the works throughout the island.

Numerous other garden landscaping projects were undertaken throughout the island and over the years. These gardens are still maintained by new and current members of this women's club. These hardworking volunteer ladies can be seen performing in garden work parties at various sites throughout the gardening season, in their pink t-shirts with the club logo designed by Faye Muller. The club will reach a quarter century milestone next year in 2025 and, of course, while many members are no longer with us, many new comers are always willing to step in and join this unique and special island club. To be a Howe Island Garden Bud, you must live on the island, and you must participate in team work parties.




**IN PROGRESS**

**FERRY LANDING SPECIAL PROJECT**


**Garden Beds and Shrubs**

**Sponsored by**  
**HOWE ISLAND GARDEN BUDS**  
**GARDEN CLUB**  
**&**  
**TOWNSHIP OF FRONTENAC ISLANDS**  
**&**  
**PRIVATE DONATIONS**



**Installation by Garden Buds**  
**and**  
**Others donated labor**

**Further Donations to this Project**  
**would be greatly Appreciated**

 **call 531-1805**



**In the Rear-view Mirror: The Kingston Historical Society's First 131 Years**

The Society returned from its summer break at its September 18th meeting when Historic Kingston editor **Peter Gower** took members on a nostalgic and instructive walk through the first 131 years of the Society's history. Gower, author of *Kingston in 150 Pictures* and a past president of the Society, structured his talk around three questions: What prompted the creation the KHS founded in 1893? What have been its activities since? What might lie in its future?

The initial impulse behind the Society was rooted in a sense that the city had a venerable past, one nurtured by its United Empire Loyalist origins and epitomized by the 1891 death of Sir John A. Its early membership drew heavily on the civic "establishment", mostly men and a few women such as political economist Adam Shortt and writer Agnes Maule Machar, people who recognized the need to both record, celebrate and preserve the city's past. Plaques, published histories and the creation of museums such as The Society's undertaking of the Murney Tower bastion as a focal point in 1922. In pursuit of these activities, the Society's membership peaked at 600 in the Centennial-fueled enthusiasm of the 1960s.

Gower made plain that the Society's evolution has not always been "plain sailing." Of late, for instance, the Society has had to adjust its one-time unbridled adulation of Sir John A. as the nation absorbed the reality of "truth and reconciliation" with our Indigenous peoples. History changes its perspectives just as society shifts in its priorities and acknowledgements. So too, Gower suggested, must the Society.

Looking to the Society's future, Gower ended his superb talk by expressing a hope that the Society might finally take a role in the long-dreamed-of idea of a museum of Kingston's three hundred years. Museums, just like the activities of local historical societies, remind us that objects in our rear-view mirrors are much closer than they appear.

The **Canadian Institute for Historical Education**, [CIHE](https://cihe.ca/), has been under way just since the beginning of 2023 and has already had some notable success in challenging the false narratives – often overly simplistic and unfairly negative – that have been promulgated about some of our builders and heroes. We believe Canada's history – *in all its complexity and colour* – should be celebrated not canceled. <https://cihe.ca/>

**Gordon W Walker CM KC**, Board Chair

Our mailing address is:

Canadian Institute for Historical Education 130-82 Laird Dr East York, ON M4G 3V1 Canada

**A tenet of this group is: You have the right to your own opinion, but not to your own facts**

Dr. Duncan McDowall addressed the CIHE in October 2023. To hear this presentation on Sir John A. Macdonald go to:

<https://cihe.ca/past-events/#> from minute 57 to 1:28.

## **Please Renew Your Membership for 2025 now .**

**New members joining from September through December 2024 will receive credit for the year 2025.**

\$40 for individual membership;  \$50 for family;  \$10 for student;  \$50 for institution; and  \$300 for sponsor.

Donation: Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Charitable receipts given for amounts exceeding \$19.99 with our thanks.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Prov. \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ I would like to receive my Limelight online \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Methods of Payment:**

1. Mail this completed application form and a cheque made out to the 'Kingston Historical Society' to  
*Kingston Historical Society, Box 54, Kingston ON K7L 4V6*
2. Online with Visa or MasterCard or PayPal: <https://www.kingstonhistoricalsociety.ca/> >Membership
3. eTransfer to [treasurer@kingstonhistoricalsociety.ca](mailto:treasurer@kingstonhistoricalsociety.ca)

Paul Van Nest, Membership Chair, KHS, 613-532-1903 (text or phone), [pvannest@cogeco.ca](mailto:pvanne@kogeco.ca)

KHS Membership includes 8 monthly lectures, the annual journal 'Historic Kingston' and 9 issues of the newsletter 'Limelight', some sponsor discounts and some special event discounts.

*'Historic Kingston' purchase price to non-members: \$35.*

## **Ear to the ground**

*Elizabeth Durno* reporting on events of interest to history buffs

The Kingston branch of the **Ontario Genealogical Society** is holding a meeting on October 19th at 10:00 a.m. at the Seniors Centre, 56 Francis Street. Michael Moore will present an overview of the Ontario Name Index and how to use this resource. Go to <https://kingston.ogs.on.ca/> for the Zoom link to the Kingston Genealogical Society for this meeting.

**Murney Tower** in partnership with **Modern Fuel Artist-Run Centre** is calling for artists for an upcoming exhibition featuring artists' visions of the history and relevance of Murney Tower in our community. Information and submission forms are available at [www.modernfuel.org](http://www.modernfuel.org). The upcoming exhibition will be in the spring and summer of 2025. Submission deadline is **Friday, December 6, 2024**.

**Published in Doppler:** An opinion on the Bellevue House renewal by Greg Piasetzki, *an intellectual property lawyer with an interest in Canadian history. He lives in Toronto and is a citizen of the Métis Nation of Ontario. A longer version of this story originally appeared at [C2CJournal.ca](http://C2CJournal.ca).*

<https://doppleronline.ca/huntsville/cancelling-sir-john-a-macdonald/>

# IN CELEBRATION OF 100 YEARS OF DOUGLAS LIBRARY



## Douglas Library: an Essay in Gothic Revival

Dr. Jennifer McKendry, architectural historian

October 17, 2024, 1pm

93 University Avenue  
Kingston, ON

Douglas Library  
1923 Reading Room

RSVP using the QR code:



Light refreshments  
will be available.

**Douglas Library** is the oldest library on the Queen's University campus. Exactly 100 years to the day that it originally opened, Queen's will celebrate the Douglas Library's centenary (1924-2024). Queen's University Library invites you to a talk by architectural historian **Dr. Jennifer McKendry**,

Douglas Library: An Essay in Gothic Revival

October 17, 2024, 1:00pm

1923 Reading Room Douglas Library

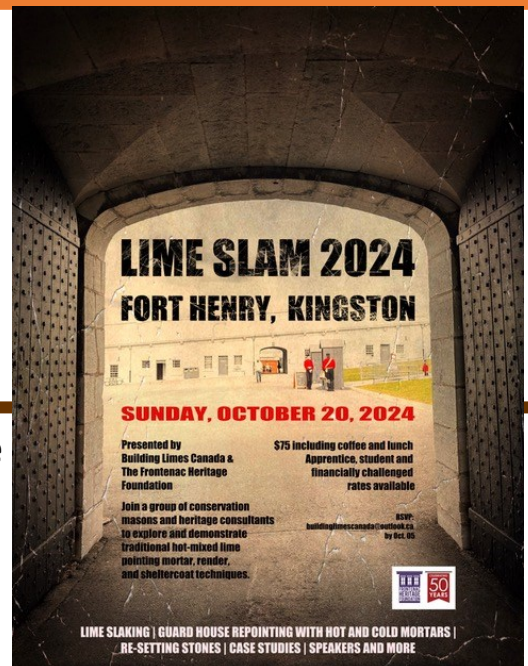
**Sunday, October 20, 2024, the Frontenac Heritage Foundation** is sponsoring another **LIME SLAM** to be held on the grounds of Fort Henry – the Guard House at the former Garrison Hospital.

**Building Limes Canada and the Frontenac Heritage Foundation invite you to join a group of conservation masons and heritage consultants to explore and demonstrate traditional hot-mixed lime pointing mortar, render and sheltercast techniques.**

**RSVP email:** [buildinglimescanada@outlook.ca](mailto:buildinglimescanada@outlook.ca)

**\$75. fee**

**Saturday November 2, the Frontenac Heritage Foundation** is sponsoring an Open House at **Ham House in Bath, Ontario**. Ron Tasker and his family have been working on this huge project. Starting at 2 p.m. you can tour the Ham House and hear from Ron about their progress. Refreshments will be provided by the FHF. Please RSVP email [contact@frontenacheritage.ca](mailto:contact@frontenacheritage.ca)



**Murney Tower**  
**Operated by the Kingston Historical Society** [www.murneytower.com](http://www.murneytower.com)



Murney Tower Summer Activities 2024

There were approximately 10,000 visitors from across Canada and around the world, six field trips organized, six special tours offered, two special events hosted, and four community activities participated in.

On August 3, the 2024 edition of Murney Fest was held to celebrate the Tower's 99th birthday, hosting 12 community booths and local vendors at Macdonald Park to offer a day filled with fun, dance, history and arts.

On August 22, local museums set up booths at Market Square. Hundreds of children gathered for a screening of Night At The Museum; they participated in history-based tasks before the movie.



***Murney Tower Centennial Fund-raising  
Event  
September 7 performance by Toronto  
folksinger Julie Arsenault***

