

Historically Speaking

The Newsletter of the Cobourg and District

Historical Society

January 2025 — Issue 352

The Story of Our Garden Club

The Cobourg Garden Club was founded in February 1859, over a year before Victoria Hall was opened. At our January meeting, Sarah Holland will review some projects and highlights



of the Club's history, up to this year, its 165th anniversary.

She will explain what gardeners were doing in those early days, who was involved, what they grew, why they grew those particular plants and the great interest shown in attending Cobourg's annual flower shows.

Sarah trained as an auctioneer and appraiser in England before coming to Canada with her husband in the early 1970s. She was the Decorative Arts Specialist for Sotheby's, Canada and traveled across the country to advise both private clients and museums on their collections. Later, she

served as the Executive Director of the Textile Museum of Canada and subsequently as the Executive Director of the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects. After moving to Cobourg, Sarah has served on the boards of Victoria Hall Volunteers, Cobourg Garden Club and Northumberland Learning Connection. She is an active volunteer with the Northumberland unit of the St. John Ambulance therapy dog program and makes weekly visits to Warkworth Penitentiary as part of her duties. She is involved in the intake and mentoring of new St. John Ambulance volunteers, both two and four-legged.

Join us on Tuesday, January 28, 2025, for an informative presentation at Cobourg's Victoria Hall. Doors open at 7:00 pm, and the meeting starts at 7:30 pm. All are welcome. There will be coffee, tea, and the usual cookies, so bring a friend or two! Members attend for free, and guests are \$5.00.

Our Previous Meeting

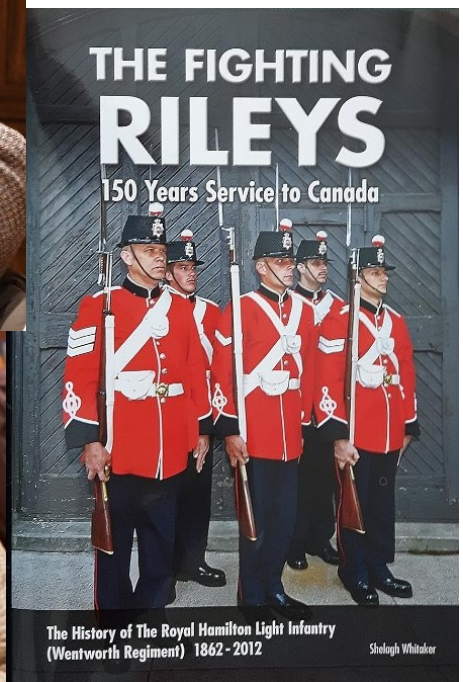
Celebrating Colonel John Weir Foote

Virginia Mclaughlin and Rob Mikel presented details of the life, accomplishments and even dinner table conversations of John Weir Foote to an attentive audience at our November meeting. In addition to the two presenters there was a display of an amazing variety of Foote relevant artifacts including his wartime helmet and jacket, Foot's tiny crystal cups for



administering the Sacrament, Christmas cards specifically for Victoria Cross recipients, books about The Fighting Rileys (his Hamilton Light Infantry unit) and numerous other items.

If you missed the meeting a video is available at https://youtu.be/aXiRv_TNk0w



Future Events of Our 2024/2025 Program

<p><i>The Story of Our Garden Club:</i> The Cobourg and District Horticultural Society was founded in 1859 and has been in operation ever since. The club even continued to hold virtual monthly meetings with speakers during the pandemic. Let's learn more and dream about summer in January by celebrating the club's 160+ years in operation with presenter Sarah Holland.</p>	<p>Tuesday, January 28, 2025</p>
<p><i>Crime and Punishment in Northumberland County: A Historical Perspective.</i> At one time, the county had four correctional centres but only one remains. Presenter John L. Hill, retired criminal lawyer and author, will share anecdotes about his experiences that shed light on their operations.</p>	<p>Tuesday, February 25, 2025</p>
<p><i>What are Rebellion Boxes?</i> to be presented by Darryl Withrow. Rebellion boxes are some of the most prized artifacts in the Sharon Temple's collection. These small wooden boxes were handcrafted by prisoners from the Rebellion of 1837 as they waited in jail for their trials.</p>	<p>Tuesday, March 18, 2025*</p>
<p><i>CDHS Annual General Meeting</i> followed by <i>British Home Children.</i> Marg Graham and Dianne Conway will tell the home children's stories, dreams, nightmares and their contributions to life in Canada.</p>	<p>Tuesday, April 22, 2025</p>
<p>Dinner and presentation by author Gord Pitts. On December 30, 1905, Frank Steunenberg, the former governor of Idaho was murdered by a bomb set at his home. The assassin was a mystery man who was traced to his roots in Brighton, Ontario, and to a string of murders, frauds and cons that would make him the most notorious criminal of his time. Further details of time and place will be available nearer to the meeting date.</p>	<p>Tuesday, May 27, 2025</p>

***Some of our meetings have been rescheduled from the usual fourth Tuesday to accommodate usage of Victoria Hall by the Northumberland Players..**

GOLDEN MEMORIES

By Percy L. Climo

Down by the old mill stream

Jone's Creek, alias Cobourg Brook, alias Factory Creek, all the way from Lake Ontario into its head waters in Hamilton Township hills, has since settlement, been used to provide water power for saw mills, grist mills, flour mills, woolen mills, breweries and distilleries and other industries. From pioneer times and into the 20th century it has been a "work horse" to a needy community. Since the supply of electricity has become abundant, its use has declined and it is now retired to the "pasture field" of its old self.

Elias Jones, Jr., we now know settled on the banks of the Factory Creek in 1796. He came into possession of two township lots, #s 19 and 20, in Concessions "A" and "B". The area for which he received his patents on May 17, 1802 extended from Elgin Street to the lake, between Ontario and Burnham Streets. The whole Factory Creek valley north to Elgin Street was on his lands.

Augustus Jones (no relation), the Provincial land surveyor, in his lake shore traverse survey of 1791, mentions the creek's estuary that it will "receive a bateau"...

Elias Jones, Jr. built his dwelling on the west side of this estuary in a well selected spot. The mouth of the creek made an excellent harbour for even fair sized sail boats. It curved around to the west and made for good shelter behind the

west bank hill. In times of high lake water there was ample depth for a sail boat to enter.

Joseph Keeler, an early settler at Lakeport, kept a sail boat and from time to time made visits to Niagara and Kingston for food supplies and

other needs. This fact is recorded in early surveyor's records. Likewise, Elias Jones, Jr., no doubt, was engaged in bringing in supplies that were made available for others.

Edwin C. Guillet, in his "Cobourg 1792-1948" tells us that Elias Jones, Jr. opened the first store in what is today Cobourg in 1802. Searching through old deeds revealed that Jones never owned land down town, but probably kept his store close to his dwelling and nearby, the mooring of his boat.

The 1847 map of Fleming only marked the location of the more important buildings. The Grand Trunk Railway plan of 1854, and the 1858 map of the town both indicate two buildings close to each other at the site where Jones erected his house. No doubt the second building was his store.

Mrs. James Wells, daughter of Samuel Ash and born in Hamilton Township in 1803, tells us "The first goods sold in Cobourg were bought by Major Jones."

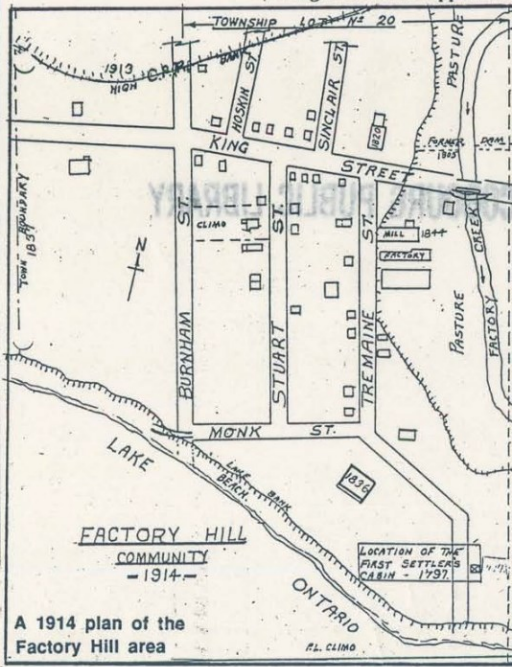
In 1803, Elias Jones, Jr. sold 215 acres of his lot # 20 to John Nugent, of Marysburgh. Jones retained 2 1/2 acres at the south-east angle of the lot, located at the lakefront. He also retained his lot # 19 for

about 20 years. This 2 1/2 acres was located where his house and store were situated. This lot remained in the Jones family for about 50 years. After this first property sale, he continued to own the deeper part of the creek estuary, where he moored his boat and unloaded goods for his store.

John Nugent had married Eleanor Carson, daughter of William Carson, a British soldier, in July of 1800 at Marysburgh. Also in December of 1803, Nugent sold out his holdings to his father-in-law. At the same time William Carson took out a mortgage on the property from two Kingston merchants in the amount of 547 pounds, 4 shillings 2 pence.

Some 200 feet upstream from King Street there was built a dam behind which was a mill pond. This pond supplied water power to the first industry to locate on the creek which was a sawmill. John Nugent and his father-in law probably built this mill in 1803-1804 using the mortgage money Carson had obtained from Kingston merchants. Later stories will tell about this and other industries on the Factory Creek.

PERCY CLIMO IS A COLBORNE HISTORIAN.



Percy Lloyd Climo (1906-1991) was born in Cobourg, ON to Elizabeth and Henry Climo, 17 October 1906. The youngest of four boys, Climo left Cobourg in 1927 to attend Queen's University, completing a degree in Engineering in 1931. In 1935, he married Ada Lenore Harper, with whom they had three children: Reginald, Linda, and Doris. In 1973, he and Ada were divorced and a few months later Climo married Elizabeth Morgan Leith. The pair moved back to the Cobourg area, where Climo proceeded to conduct detailed research on local historical events and politics and wrote three books on the history of Cobourg. He died in 1991 at the age of 84.

Sentinel-Star Reminences

Judith Blakeston

The recent talk on the history of Cobourg's newspapers reminded me of Foster Russell's contribution to the teenagers of the 50's and 60's in giving them the opportunity to see the workings of a small town newspaper first hand . Seventy years have certainly dimmed the details of my week along with eleven other students from CDCI (as it was then) at the Cobourg Sentinel Star. Every year a dozen were selected by the school to spend a week learning about the nitty gritty of publishing a local paper: we attended town meetings and sports events and wrote our "copy", mindful of deadlines; we learned how Linotype was set; we got up early on the day "our" paper came out, no doubt feeling like proud parents.

I have a picture of our "staff", but ,alas, no copy of that issue of the paper. I do have



memories of the smell of ink, of the clutter and clank of the presses, of the misty morning on Division Street the day the paper came out, and of the feeling of nervousness and self importance that only a sixteen year old can feel when tasked with an adult responsibility and no one to blame but yourself if you don't measure up!

The fact that we had a week away from the classroom was no doubt

appealing, but the chance to be part of the world of journalism and a part of the essential link of communication in our town were, in retrospect, what mattered. In the 50's , communication about town happenings was through the Sentinel Star, through mimeographed church bulletins, company bulletins, school newsletters and yearbooks- a far cry from the Facebook overload available to us now. Kudos to Foster Russell for making that wealthy experience possible and encouraging many of us, I am sure, to understand and celebrate the power and responsibility of the press.

Judith taught at the Cobourg District Collegiate Institute during 1959-1960 and at the new high school in 1960 -1961. Although she has not lived in Cobourg for over 60 years Judith is now a CDHS member living in Duncan, BC.

Tariffs: Then and Now

The possibility of the United States establishing tariffs on imported goods has recently been a constant topic of debate. A hundred years ago Canada's tariffs on imported goods was a hotly debated topic. Tariffs were the subject of the Canada Tariff Commission (established in 1896 but providing a number of reports until 1920), newspaper debate and even entire books by lobby groups including the very influential Canadian Manufacturers' Association. Arthur Meighen's selection as our ninth Prime Minister in 1920 was widely attributed to his support for tariffs.

Understanding government finances of the time explains why tariffs were so important prior to the upending of everything with the imposition of an income tax in 1917.

In 1900, according to Professor Livio Di Matteo, approximately 75% of Canada's government revenue came from duties and tariffs on imported goods such as machinery, textiles, and other manufactured products. Tariffs both raised revenue and protected Canadian industries from foreign competition. Excise taxes on domestically produced alcohol, tobacco and sugar accounted for 15% to 20% of government revenue. The remaining revenue came from sources such as the post office.

As might be expected, the tariff debate was largely split between those who thought that they would benefit from high and low tariffs. At the turn of the century Canada's population was about 9,000,000. Of these 2,500,000 were supported by farming and 700,000 by manufacturing jobs. Farmer realized that lower prices on imported farm products from the US would be disastrous to their livelihoods. The editorial to the right from *The News* of Red Deer, Alberta and printed on September 6, 1911 explains the concerns of farmers. The widely repeated quotation below summarizes the interests of factory workers.

Not A New Market But A New Rival For Canadian Farmers.

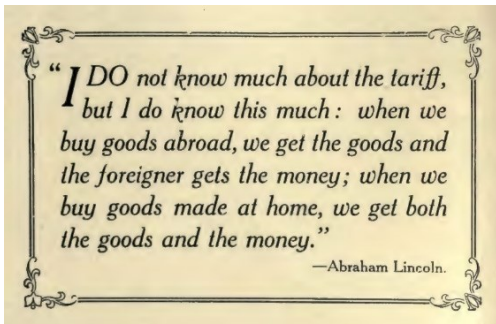
Canada exported in the fiscal year 1109-10 agricultural products valued at \$144,559,000. Of this amount \$53,926,000 was for animals and their products, and \$90,433,000 for field products.

The United States exported during the last fiscal year meat and dairy products valued at \$150,000,000, an increase of \$19,000,000 over 1910, food animals, which, by the way, were exported largely to Canada, \$13,000,000, flour, \$50,000,000. There was a slight decline in wheat exports, due to unfavorable crop conditions, but there was an increase in corn exports amounting to \$10,000,000.

From these figures Canadians may obtain an accurate conception of the "larger market" which is being painted in such vivid colors by advocates of reciprocity. The United States is a heavy exporter of everything the Canadian farmer has to export. With the development of intensive farming on the other side of the line the output of agricultural products is certain to increase at a rapid rate.

Where are these enormous quantities of farm products to find a market? Will they not choose the most accessible one, which, under reciprocity, would be the Dominion of Canada?

The figures above quoted furnish an answer to another argument advanced by advocates of reciprocity, namely, that the British market will soon be unable to consume Canada's wheat output and that when that time comes we shall have need of the United States market. The United States last year exported flour valued at \$50,000,000. It is quite obvious that a country which is sending abroad that quantity of flour will not be importing wheat for its own consumption for many years to come.



Those opposed to tariffs made largely specious arguments that tariffs were unfair to the poor and to those not working in farming or industry. They argued that tariffs should be replaced by taxation. To understand the possible impact on the poor, one needs to look more closely at how tariffs are calculated. Tariffs may be based on a fixed charge per unit. For example, a tariff of

\$0.25 per imported shirt. The argument was that the poor often purchase lower quality shirts and thus the unit tariff is a larger percentage of the value than for the better shirts purchased by the wealthy. However, almost all tariffs were *ad valorem* tariffs. That is, the amount of the tariff is based on the value of the goods rather than the quantity so rich and poor purchasers are impacted equally.

Regardless of the merits of tariffs versus income taxes, income taxes won in Canada. By 1921 duties and tariffs provided approximately 40% of government revenue (down from 75% a few years earlier) and income tax provided between 30% and 35% of revenue (up from 0% before 1917). The remaining revenue came from excise taxes on "sin" products – alcohol, tobacco and sugar – and charges for various permits and licences.

Meanwhile, the United States applied large tariffs to imports from Canada and the rest of the world. The Fordney-McCumber Tariff Act of 1922 raised tariffs on a wide range of imported goods to protect domestic manufacturers. The tariffs included large charges for imported wheat, a 45% tariff on automobiles, 50% tariff on iron, steel and timber. Overall, the tariffs amounted to about 38.5% of the value of goods imported from Canada. The US passed the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act in 1930 which further increased some protective tariffs.

The impact of protective tariffs on Canadian manufacturing were finally solved January 1, 1994 with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Or was it?

For further information on the importance of early Canadian tariffs see [A Federal Fiscal History: Canada, 1867–2017](#)

The material on the following pages is from a 1920 publication by the Canadian Manufacturers' Association. All 104 pages of the original document are available at <https://ia804708.us.archive.org/22/items/tariffwhycanadan00canauoft/tariffwhycanadan00canauoft.pdf>

er, wealthier, and more firmly established industrial system. It has immense reservoirs of capital which can be applied to enterprises. If a new process is wanted, they can afford to experiment, and if necessary, spend large sums of money in tests until they get what they need. Then they can build huge plants, advertise their products, and endure until a market has been created.

The transportation systems of the United States are on the whole, more firmly established than those of Canada. Individual comparisons between certain railroads will perhaps, be to our advantage, but on the whole, their transportation system is the older and is better connected with their industrial fabric.

The United States customs regulations also operate to the disadvantage of Canadian exporters, who are embarrassed by the lack of facilities in the United States for the transaction of customs business. On the other hand, in Canada we have customs ports of entries in interior towns and the road is made easy for the American manufacturer to sell and distribute his goods in Canada.

The United States has also greater labor reserves than there are in Canada. That country has been advertised throughout Europe as the land of liberty and opportunity; and immigrants have flocked there in millions, thus assuring their manufacturers of a stable and satisfactory volume of labor.

Probably the greatest advantage the United States has possessed over Canada is large scale production. The United States manufacturers are making goods for a protected home market of 108,000,000. Canadian manufacturers are making goods for a home market of about 9,000,000.

The United States manufacturers serve the highly concentrated market which results from a huge population. Although the area of Canada is slightly greater than the area

of the United States, including Alaska, the population of the United States is over twelve times as great as that of Canada. The result is that the United States manufacturer has his market at his door and saves money on transportation costs. Were it not for the Canadian tariff, United States manufacturers, secure in their own home market, could control ours, flood Canada with surplus goods until Canadian manufacturers were eliminated and then fix what prices they wished.

All these advantages in favor of the United States manufacturers make a handicap which is seriously felt by Canadian manufacturers, even with the aid of the protection which they now receive.

Briefly, we cannot manufacture extensively in Canada at the present age and stage of our industries, unless these industries are given protection against the industries of the United States. We have two choices. We can abolish our tariff and allow the United States to manufacture for us, while we produce raw materials for them, or we can persevere in our determination that Canada shall continue to develop as a manufacturing country as well as an agricultural country.

Most of the advantages possessed by the manufacturers of the United States over Canadian manufacturers are temporary and in time will disappear. There are people who say we cannot fight geography, overlooking the fact that geography has very little to do with nationality. To secure proof of this statement one has only to consider the various countries of South America, mostly of Spanish origin and contiguous in territory, yet separate in nationality; or Europe, where various races are split up into numerous countries, bound together as units by the principle of nationality.

In Europe, there is a well-known phrase "peaceful penetration." Translated, this means the domina-

tion of a small country by a big country. The small country, it is true, often keeps the forms of national independence after freedom has departed, and remains bound in fetters of financial and commercial subservience.

The ablest men in the United States have been under no delusion as to the ultimate results of free trade between the United States and Canada. During the reciprocity campaign of 1911, Ex-President Taft and the late Ex-President Roosevelt were agreed that reciprocity would be a good thing for the United States. They wrote confidential letters to each other on the subject; then came the quarrel over the nomination for the Presidency, and the correspondence was published by Ex-President Taft, on the 25th of April, 1912, at Boston, Mass.

In a letter from Ex-President Taft, to the late Ex-President Roosevelt, the following extract occurs:—

“The amount of Canadian products we would take would produce a current of business between Western Canada and the United States that would make Canada only an adjunct of the United States. It would

transfer all their important business to Chicago and New York, with their bank credits and everything else, and it would increase greatly the demand of Canada for our manufactures. I see this is the argument made against reciprocity in Canada, and I think it is a good one.”

In his reply, the late Ex-President Roosevelt stated:—

“It seems to me what you purpose to do with Canada is admirable from every standpoint. I firmly believe in free trade with Canada for both economic and political reasons.”

Those who do not believe Canadians when they point out the dangers that free trade or a lowering of the tariff would bring to Canada, will, perhaps, believe such men as Ex-President Taft and the late Ex-President Roosevelt.

The above references to the United States are made in a friendly spirit. A certain amount of trade between the two countries is necessary and most desirable. But the people of the United States will appreciate the natural desire of Canadians to promote their own national development, while maintaining with the United States the most cordial relations.

Make Waves Sculpture to be Twinned



Above image was created by Linda MacKenzie-Nicholas and is reproduced here by permission

During the Second World War's Battle of the Atlantic, Cobourg's Fern Blodgett Sunde risked much as the first woman to work as a radio operator deep sea, serving aboard a Norwegian merchant ship Mosdale.

Her efforts weren't lost on the people of Cobourg. Four years ago, Sudbury-based



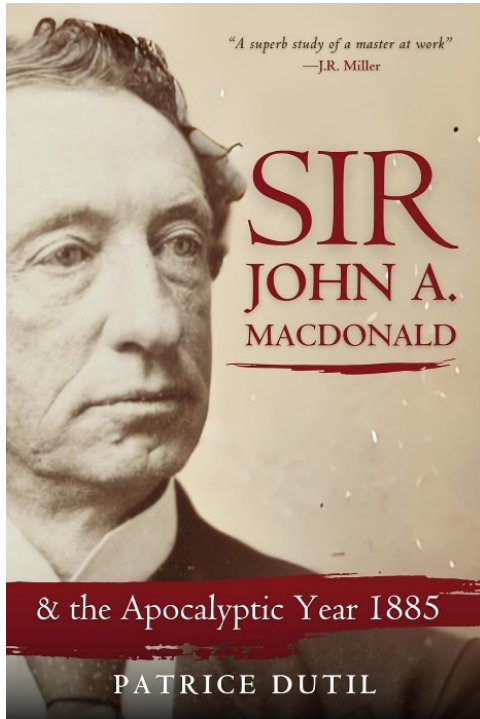
sculptor Tyler Fauvelle was commissioned to create a sculpture, dubbed "Make Waves," to commemorate her efforts. It was installed in Victoria Park on Cobourg's waterfront.

Now a group of Norwegian historians plan to echo that recognition. A citizen's committee in Farsund have commissioned a life-sized monument commemorating the Second World War trailblazer for installation in Norway next year. It will overlook the inner harbour in

Farsund and will be unveiled on May 8, 2025 — the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the Battle of the Atlantic.

Sir John A. Macdonald & the Apocalyptic Year 1885

1885 was a watershed year in the history of Canada with many parallels to current times.



- There was a smallpox epidemic in Montréal and thousands of Quebec residents, mostly children, died. Riots erupted in opposition to vaccinations.
- The Prime Minister celebrated his 70th birthday.
- The CPR transcontinental railroad was completed.
- Canada refused Britain's request for support for their forces in the Sudan.
- An armed insurrection resulted in the murder of several North-West Mounted Police officers but was decisively ended with the Battle of Batoche and the hanging of Louis Riel.
- Macdonald attempted to give women the right to vote.

These events and many more are entertainingly and authoritatively explored by Professor Patrice Dutil of

Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson University).

From the book's dust jacket:

The issues cascaded relentlessly: threats to the sovereignty of Canada from London and Washington; armed resistance in the North-West; the spectre of starvation among Indigenous peoples; financial crises that endangered the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR); protests over Chinese immigration to British Columbia; nationalist dissent in Quebec; a smallpox epidemic that would claim over 5,000 victims in Montreal; and fierce opposition to Macdonald's drive to expand the right to vote. It was a year like no other in Canadian history.

In this fascinating and authoritative study of a skilled politician at the peak of his powers, political historian Patrice Dutil shows how Macdonald navigated persistent threats to public order, anchored the stability of his government, and ensured the future of his still fragile nation.

What emerges is a compelling portrait of a man who was the most enlightened and constructive public figure of early Canadian history.

Available online: <https://www.amazon.ca/Sir-John-Macdonald-Apocalyptic/dp/1998365514/>

Member Matters

New Member

Please join me in welcoming our newest CDHS member: Jane Farquharson.

November Meeting Video

If you missed our November meeting you can watch the video at:

https://youtu.be/aXiRv_TNk0w

Announcements

Hastings County Historical Society

Gary Nicoll will present the pivotal role played by mining in the development of Hastings County on January 21, 2025 at Maranatha Church Auditorium, 100 College Street West, Belleville at 7pm. Visitors are welcome!

Trevor Parsons will present the early history of Belleville's Albert College (known as Albert University) on February 18, 2025 at Maranatha Church Auditorium, 100 College Street West, Belleville at 7pm. Visitors are welcome!

Kingston Historical Society

Dr. Duncan McDowall will present "HMCS Thiepval: Kingston's Little Ship That Could." A tale of a World War I warship built on Kingston shores that found fame and eventual misadventure on the high seas, January 15, 2025 at the lounge at the Kingsbridge Retirement Community, 950 Centennial off Princess, at 7:00pm with simultaneous Zoom. For a Zoom link to the meetings email kingstonhs@gmail.com.

Paikin on King

The longest-serving Prime Minister in the history of the British Empire and Commonwealth is Canada's very own William Lyon Mackenzie King. Steve Paikin on *The Agenda*, invited experts to dive into King's legacy. Historians Dr. Christopher Dummitt and others discuss King in detail. View the entire show at <https://www.tvO.org/video/mackenzie-king-at-150>

Lakeshore Genealogical Society

The February LGS meeting, *Celebrating Black History*, will be an accumulation of some early black history in our region that will be presented by LGS members. If you have a story to share about our early black settlers, please notify LGSregister@gmail.com by January 30th, 2025.

This meeting is a Zoom only event on Wednesday, February 12, 2025 at 7:30 PM. Email LGSregister@gmail.com to register.

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