

THE ARTISTS WHO CREATED THE ART AT  
QUEEN'S PARK



The *InFormer*



# THE ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF FORMER PARLIAMENTARIANS

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This publication was made possible through a generous donation from the Hon. Henry Newton Rowell Jackman, former Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

Bill 65, passed on May 10, 2000 during the 37th Session, founded the Ontario Association of Former Parliamentarians. It was the first bill in Ontario history to be introduced by a Legislative Committee.

# Something More Than Capturing History

“Art is important. We tend to think it is a luxury, but it gives people deep pleasure because beauty is the personification of hope that something grander is at work.”

- Gil Dellinger, painter



I am not an artist. Nor am I an art historian. As a young person I had, at best, a passing interest in art. I visited art museums while travelling, but the experience did not captivate me.

My awakening was in 2009, at age 68. My wife and I took our grandson, Sebastian, age 8, to beautiful Paris, France. We spent a few hours in the Louvre Museum and were ready to call it a day. Sebastian however appeared enraptured by the frescoes on the ceiling, and some of the dramatic oil paintings. I quickly realized that we needed to schedule more visits to art museums, and we did. Our grandson continued to be fascinated by the art we saw, and we became more and more interested.

David Warner (pictured right) with his grandson Sebastian Smith (pictured left) in present day.

As a result, a combination of many kinds of art museums, some with audio guides, the research needed for this publication, and its attendant interviewing of artists, has created for me a richer understanding of the beauty and importance of visual art. Although I started this journey rather late in life, I have come to treasure this path on which I find myself.

Monuments to moments in history and statues are important as reminders about our past. Their presence can sometimes be controversial, sparking a discussion about history or about an individual, giving us an opportunity to evaluate from the position of today's world. This can be a healthy exercise; a learning opportunity. In the case of a Parliament building, the artwork helps us remember the politicians and monarchs who helped shape our country. Yet, these works of art are something more. They reveal character, personality, and attitudes of the artists and the subjects, and provide a bridge to understanding cultures as well as societal changes.

Politics is the art of the possible. Politicians strive to create a better society, a better province and country. It is fitting that the grounds and the interiors of our Parliament buildings be adorned with meaningful works of art.

While the research for this Special Edition was a great learning opportunity for me, there was frustration and disappointment in it as well. For example, there is precious little recorded about many female artists. I can only guess that the treatment of women artists mirrors the lack of information about women in other fields of endeavour, such as writing, medicine and politics.

The goal of this Special Edition of *The InFormer* (published by the Ontario Association of Former Parliamentarians) is to provide information about the artists whose work has enhanced our Legislature. I have not written about every artist on exhibit at the Ontario Legislature, mostly because of a lack of biographical material. The work of those included here illustrates the global nature of art, as these artists have created wonderful works of art on display both here and far and wide.

As you are touring the Ontario Legislature, affectionately known as the “Pink Palace,” enjoy the beauty of the art, and let your mind take you back in time.

“The aim of every artist is to arrest motion, which is life, by artificial means and hold it fixed so that a hundred years later, when a stranger looks at it, it moves again.”  
- William Faulkner

David Warner, Editor of *The InFormer*  
Speaker of the Ontario Legislature, 1990-1995

# The Sculptures and Monuments at Queen's Park

“The ultimate goal of the sculptor is to capture the essence of the figure,  
that person's individual message,  
through the pose that comes from within.”

- Robert G. Breur

Who were those artists who immortalized our politicians and our wars?

All the sculpted tributes to those who have helped shape our nation and our society were created by only five men. Their stories are varied and fascinating. Of the five, the story which appears quintessentially Canadian is that of Walter Allward. He had a modest, humble beginning and no formal artistic training, and yet he created the greatest monument ever accomplished by a Canadian artist, the Vimy Memorial, a monument to peace following World War I. Despite this, there has been no biography written about Allward. He is largely forgotten, but he has left significant, thought provoking statements at Queen's Park and Vimy, France.

The sculptures and monuments at Queen's Park are splendid. Only two of them possess allegorical qualities, both of them sculpted by Walter Allward; North-West Rebellion Monument with the figure of “Peace” on the top and William Lyon Mackenzie (the struggle for democracy in Upper Canada).

The sculptures and monuments, as well as being grand, are cloaked in controversy. There is the artistic debate about Walter Allward's “Struggle for Democracy;” the meaning of the mysterious figure, the reason for the blank book. Allan Mackay, who crafted the “Memorial Wall” continues to spark controversy with on-line satirical art. Currently, there is an emotional and important debate about how to recognize Sir John A. Macdonald's contributions while taking into account his responsibility for creating residential schools, an effort to assimilate our indigenous population. It is beyond the ability of this book, however, to address this debate while focussing on the artist, as opposed to the subject of the artists' work. In the case of Queen's Park, the artwork helps us remember those who helped shape our country. But it also reveals the character, personality, and attitudes of the artists, thereby providing a guide to their work and its importance to our society.

# The Artists Who Created The Magnificent Statues

WALTER SEYMOUR ALLWARD (1876 – 1955)

AN ORDINARY BEGINNING, AN EXCEPTIONAL ENDING



Walter Allward sculpting the Vimy Memorial. Photo by M. O. Hammond from the Archives of Ontario

Walter left school at age 14, not knowing precisely what he would like to do, but thought perhaps being an architect's apprentice would be good. He was taken on by the firm Gibson & Simpson. After a short time, Walter realized he didn't really want to be an architect. The first inspiration towards sculpture was from gazing through the window of a taxidermist's shop. He was fascinated by the stuffed animal heads, imagining carving and moulding figures to represent things. Walter turned to being a clay modeller at the Toronto Brickworks.

This early training, supplemented by modelling classes at the New Technical School, prepared him for his lifelong career, that of monumental sculpture.

At age 19 Walter Allward is granted a commission to create the North-West Rebellion Monument for Queen's Park. The allegorical figure of peace on the top foreshadows an artistic approach which results in what arguably is the most remarkable monument ever created by a Canadian, the Vimy Memorial in France.

In 1897 Walter met Margaret Kennedy, who was from Galt, Ontario. The following year they married and she became both his wife and career long secretary. They lived in a cottage house which had a separate studio, on Walker Avenue in Toronto.

The Vimy Memorial project took Walter Allward 14 years to complete and left him physically and intellectually exhausted. It was a monument to peace. To underscore how extraordinary was this peace memorial, a story in the Canadian media claimed that the Nazis were damaging the Vimy Memorial. Adolph Hitler called a press conference on June 2, 1940, on the Vimy site to issue a statement that not only was the memorial undamaged, SS troops would be stationed there to guard it against any possible damage.

Walter Allward's story is one of a modest, self-taught, talented man who truly followed his belief, "Every true disciple of art weaves out the dream his own heart knows." One measure of this artist, and his total commitment to art, is his comment regarding the impressive Vimy Memorial; "The artist is so small in comparison with what the (Vimy) Memorial stands for. Now that it is erected, the interest has ended as far as I am concerned. It lives only as people look at it."

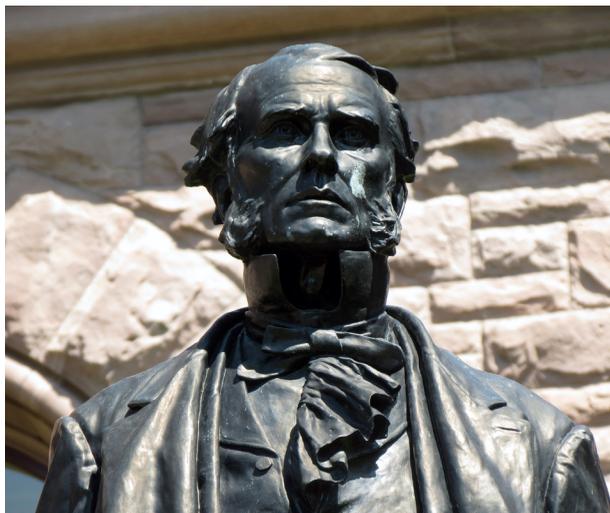
An interesting coincidence is that Walter Allward's first and last monuments are both at Queen's Park. The last one, "William Lyon Mackenzie, the struggle for democracy in Upper Canada" continues to evoke a lively discussion about the interpretation of his work.

Allward's real talent lay in his heroic monuments:

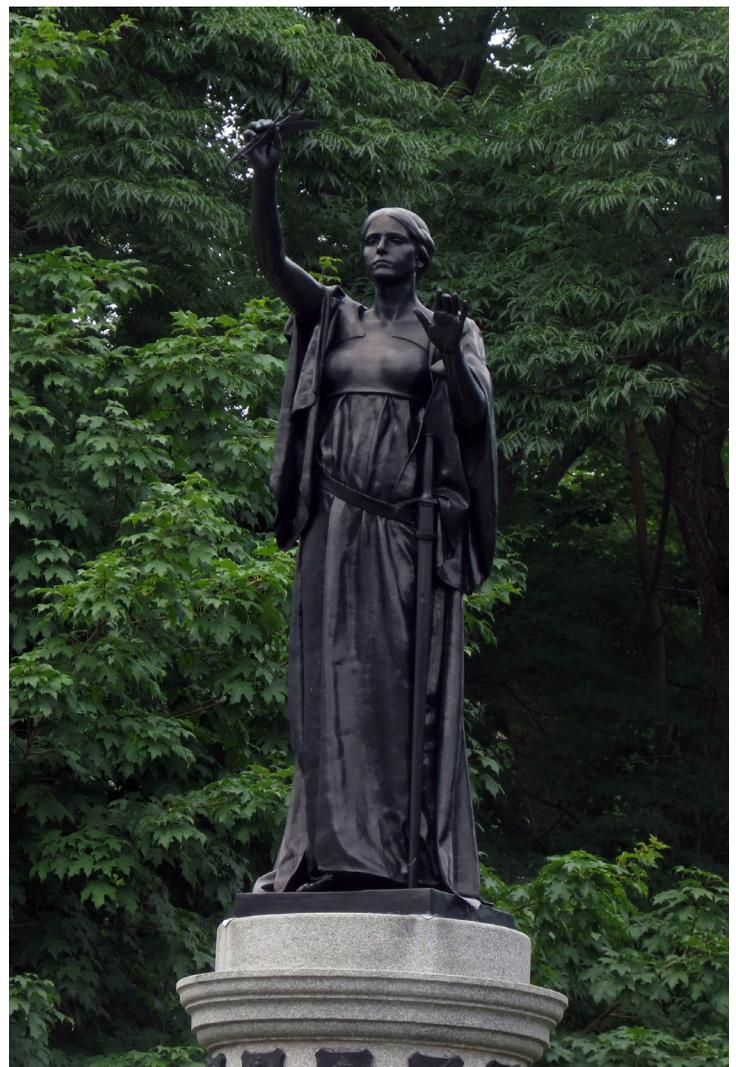
1906	The Boer War Memorial Fountain, Windsor, Ontario
1910	The South African Memorial, Toronto
1917	The Bell Memorial, Brantford, Ontario
1914	Statue of Robert Baldwin and Louis-Hippolyte Lafontaine, Parliament of Canada, Ottawa
1914	Two figures, "Truth" and "Justice," cast in bronze, flank the entrance of the Supreme Court Building in Ottawa
1922	The Stratford Memorial, Stratford, Ontario
1929	The Peterborough Memorial, Peterborough, Ontario
1936	Vimy Memorial - This truly remarkable memorial is the pinnacle of Allward's artistic career. The design came to him in a dream in the 1920's and it took 11 years to complete the dream. The unveiling was by King Edward VIII, in the presence of the French President, Albert Lebrun and 50,000 Canadian and French veterans.
1940	William Lyon Mackenzie (the struggle for democracy in Upper Canada) in Queen's Park, Toronto

Monuments at Queen's Park:

- 1895 North-West Rebellion Monument in Queen's Park, Toronto with the figure of "Peace" on the top
- 1899 Life-sized figure of Dr Oronhyatekha (chief ranger) commissioned by the Independent Order of Foresters, Toronto
- 1903 The Old Soldier, commemorating the War of 1812 in Portland Square, Toronto
- 1903 Statue of General John Graves Simcoe in Queen's Park, Toronto
- 1905 Statue of Sir Oliver Mowat in Queen's Park, Toronto
- 1900 – 1905 Busts of Lord Tennyson, Sir Charles Tupper, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Sir Oliver Mowat and others for the Provincial Museum, Toronto
- 1909 John Sandfield Macdonald in Queen's Park, Toronto



John Sandfield Macdonald's statue



L to R: General John Graves Simcoe and the North-West Rebellion Monument at Queen's Park



Above: A statue of General John Graves Simcoe from Walter Allward



L to R: Statues of William Lyon Mackenzie and Sir Oliver Mowat

## CHARLES BELL BIRCH

(1832 – 1893)

### A SUPERB VICTORIAN SCULPTOR

The sculpted work at Queen's Park:

Statue of George Brown

Member of Canada West Legislature (1851-58)  
Senator (1873-80) and a "Father of  
Confederation"

Founder of "The Globe" newspaper

C.B. Birch's statue of George Brown

C. B. Birch was born in England, received most of his art training in Berlin, then returned to England where he remained until his death in 1893. The statue of George Brown was sculpted in England and sent over in 1884.

Although his work can be found in various places in the U.K., Australia and India, he was not financially successful. As with other artists, Rembrandt comes to mind, he had a serious challenge managing finances. At the time of his death a local paper wrote: "The property of the late Mr C B Birch ARA amounted to no more than £277. These are parlous times for sculptors not in the fashion..."

Birch was a versatile artist who tried various forms of sculpture, and painted portraits and water-colour pictures at times too. However, his style to some extent always reflected his training in Berlin, with what has been described as 'a naturalistic veneer upon a classical foundation.'

If you are visiting London, England, stop by the Temple Bar Memorial, located on the Strand quite near a unique pub, "The Old Bank of England." Atop the monument is Birch's strikingly rampant "griffin" (as it is traditionally known.) It is really a dragon, the symbol of the City of London. The mythical griffin is half-eagle, half-lion, and so has feathery rather than webbed and scaly wings, and a heavy rather than a reptilian body. Dragons feature on the city arms in association with the Cross of St. George, and are featured on boundary markers in the city, presumably in their positive role as guardians of the city's treasure.



# HAMILTON THOMAS CARLTON PLANAGENT MACCARTHY (1846 – 1939)

## AN ACCOMPLISHED RENAISSANCE MAN

The sculpted works at Queen's Park:

Sir James Pliny Whitney 1927

Sir John A. Macdonald 1894



Hamilton MacCarthy was one of the earliest masters of monumental bronze sculpture in Canada. Both his wife and his father were sculptors in England. In 1885, at age 39, MacCarthy moved from London, England to Toronto, Canada, in order to assist with his mother's business interests. His plan was to change careers and take up farming. However, it wasn't long before the plan changed and he was back to sculpting. MacCarthy and his wife, Frances Rebecca (De-whurst), had 12 children, six boys and six girls, six born in England, six in Canada. Frances is described as being an outstanding, gifted woman. A graduate of the Royal Academy of Music, she performed professionally, found time to create a statuette of a famous race horse, and spoke seven languages.

MacCarthy's wide interests included sports, the arts, horticulture, astronomy, writing prose and poetry. He gave Shakespeare recitals, even played Hamlet on a London stage. His personal and professional interests did not interfere with playing games with the children.



L to R: Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir James Pliny Whitney at Queen's Park

Perhaps it was the punctuality for which he was known which made it possible to be a prolific sculptor, engage in a variety of interests, have time for his children and organize a Glee Club as well as literary meetings.

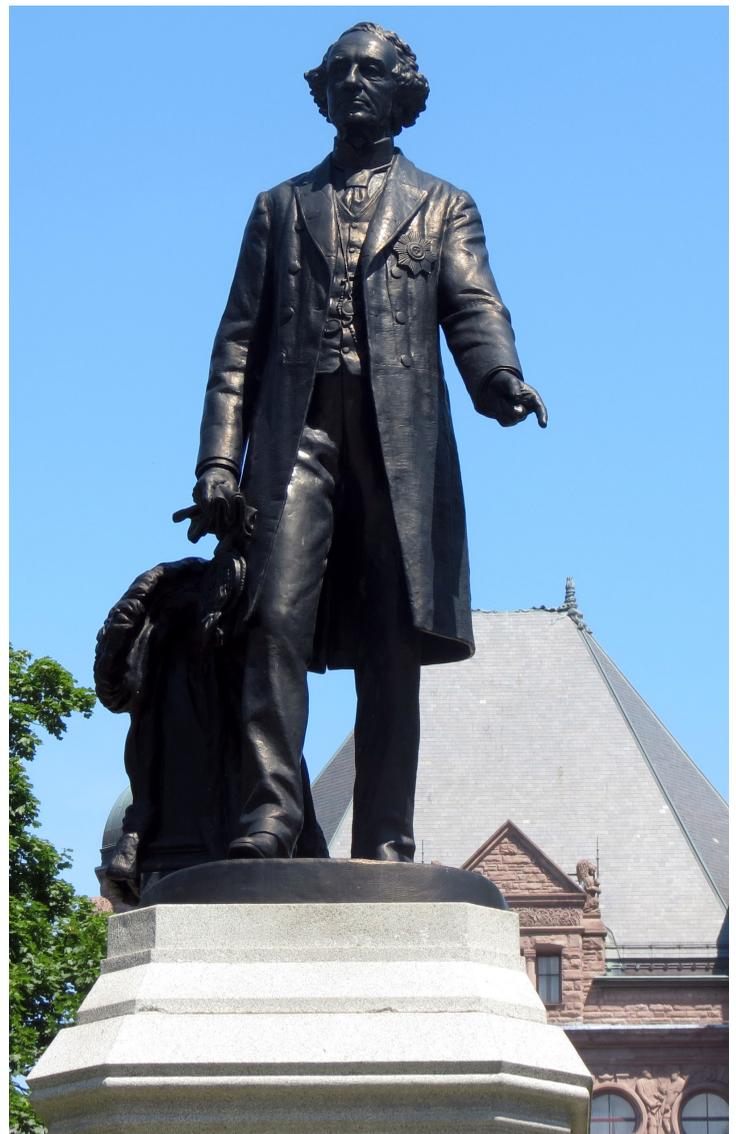
In addition to his two statues at Queen's Park, there are more than twenty of his sculptures and busts on public display in Canada. Just up the road at the Royal Ontario Museum are busts of Tecumseh and General Isaac Brock. At Ryerson University, there is a statue he did of Egerton Ryerson, credited as being the founder of public education in Ontario.

Perhaps his best known sculpture is the statue of Champlain, in Nepean Park, Ottawa. MacCarthy created monuments to battles and wars; to the Boer War – in Ottawa, Quebec City, and Brantford, as well as sculpting historical figures. Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee spawned quite a number of sculpted tributes, including what is now a rare and treasured bronze bust of the Queen, created by MacCarthy in 1897, standing 46 cm. high and weighing nearly 12 kg.

One of MacCarthy's sons, Coeur de Lion, was also a sculptor, who executed many busts of political figures, including the bust of Queen Victoria for the alcove above the Speaker's Chair in the Senate Chamber.



Hamilton MacCarthy's sculpture of Sir James Pliny Whitney



A sculpture of Sir John A. Macdonald from Hamilton MacCarthy

## AN INTERVIEW WITH ALLAN HARDING MACKAY

By David Warner

Monument at Queen's Park:

“There’s too much homogeneity in the main-stream media in terms of coverage... Some of the salvation is that through alternate things like art and the Internet, other voices can be heard.”

I would have enjoyed interviewing Allan Harding Mackay in person at his studio in beautiful Banff, Alberta, but alas had to settle for a phone interview. This contemporary and sometimes controversial artist is from Charlottetown, P. E. I. and has lived in the majority of Canadian provinces. Over the span of his visual arts career, he has accumulated extensive and multifaceted credentials as professional artist, gallery director, curator, and arts administrator.



Ontario Veterans Memorial

Below: Allan Harding Mackay in Somalia



He was Director of the Anna Leonowens Gallery in Halifax, founding Director of the Southern Alberta Art Gallery, Director of the Mendel Art Gallery in Saskatoon, Director of the Power Plant Contemporary Art Gallery at the Harbourfront Centre in Toronto, Project Manager of the Barnes Exhibit at the Art Gallery of Ontario, and Curatorial Consultant with the Kitchener Waterloo Art Gallery.

Canada was the first country to commission artists to tell the story of war through their art. That tradition started in World War I and continues today. Mackay gained his war art experience in Somalia and Afghanistan. I asked him: “Why is painting war important.” “Artists are often objective observers of war and the materials you use to gather source images are easily transferable to a war zone.”

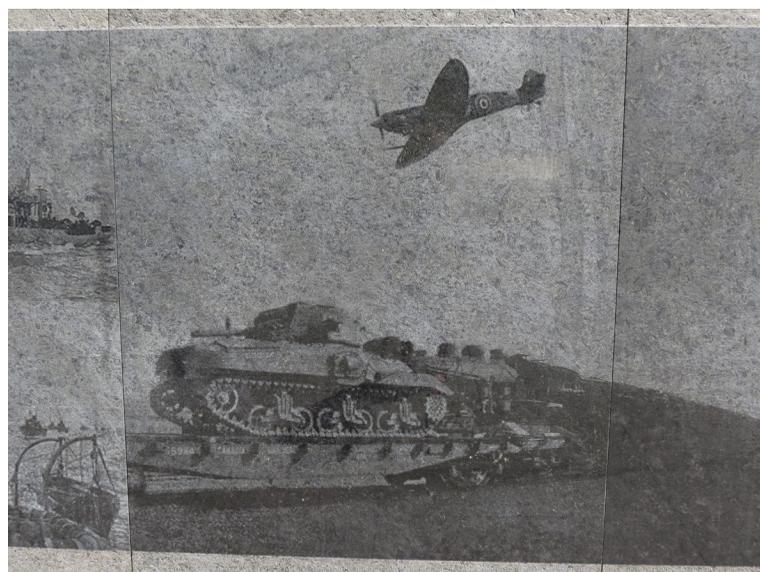
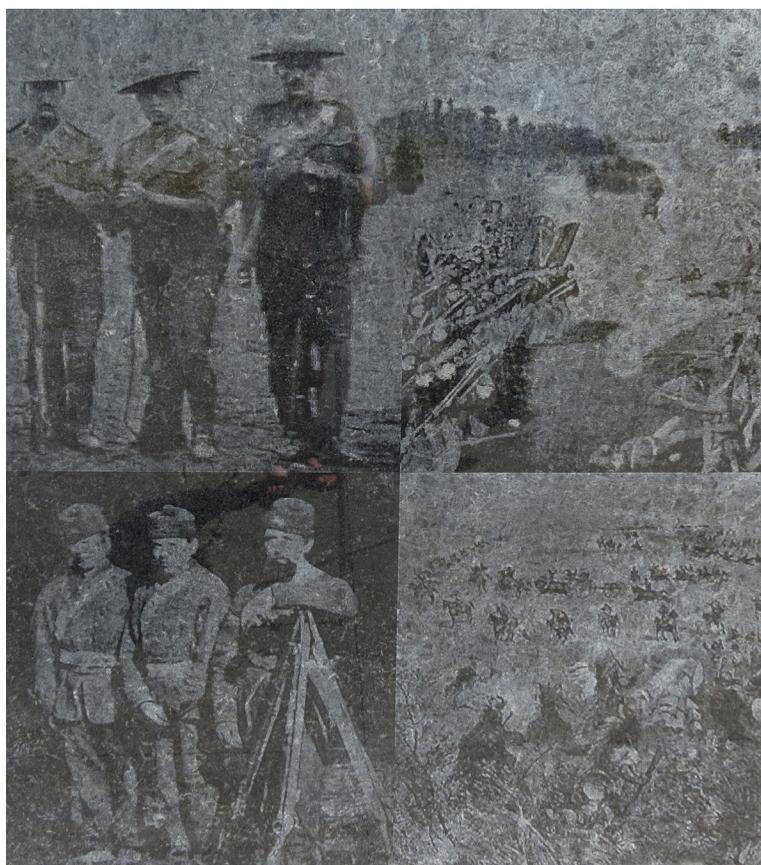
He went on to describe his experience in Somalia in 1993; events which had a profound effect on him. “This was all new to me, being with the military, being in East Africa, and being in a war zone. I was part of a small group of photojournalists and reporters. I used my video and still



camera as sketchpads. Some of those images I still revisit 25 years later. I was in the Canadian peacekeepers camp just after the murder of a Somalian boy and when there was an attempted suicide by the soldier implicated in the killing. Those events, and the subsequent appearance of a political cover-up, had a deep impact on me. It was the reaction of the Canadian government which politicized me.”

In July 2002, Mackay participated in a pilot project of the Canadian Forces Artist Program as a war artist with Operation Apollo in Afghanistan. Later there were allegations of the torture of Afghan detainees at the hands of Canadian troops. It became a political issue with pressure to hold an inquiry. “I became interested in Parliamentary Committee meetings and was very watchful of what was happening. Eventually I came to the conclusion that the democratic process was being manipulated by the government of the day. I have never belonged to a political party and still don’t. I felt compelled to speak out, make a statement in protest as a citizen.”

In 2012 Allan Mackay made the kind of meaningful statement best made by an artist. He took some of his own work, which had been created as a result of his experience in Afghanistan and Somalia to Parliament Hill and proceeded to publicly destroy his art.



Thereafter, he created what he called the Gift of Conscience. It was an artwork in multiples. Part of it portrayed a yellow velvet glove with the word “conscience” embroidered in black text, boxed up, and containing a fragment of the previously destroyed artwork tucked inside. He sent more than 160 of these, all signed, to the Prime Minister, Conservative MPs, the Speaker of the House and the Conservative Leader of the Senate. “The intention was to [tell] others: this is what I’ve observed about our government. You might not agree, but you have to be aware of some of the questionable aspects.” I asked if there was any response to the “Gift of Conscience.” “None. Total silence.”

In 2003, the Government of Ontario commissioned Allan Harding Mackay and the architectural firm of Phillips Farqvaag Smallenberg to design the Ontario Veterans’ Memorial, which was officially unveiled at Queen’s Park on Sunday September 17, 2006.

Today, Allan Harding Mackay is doing landscape painting, but has also drawn on the genre of 19th century political satire, the “Court Painter.” “My online series of images is all about truth to power, focused on current events, with tongue firmly in cheek.”

MARIO RAGGI  
(1821–1907)  
FROM ITALY WITH LOVE

The sculpted work at Queen's Park: Monument of Queen Victoria (1837 to 1901) 1901



The impressive monument of Queen Victoria was commissioned in 1870, but funds were not available to pay for the statue until after the queen's death in 1901, when it was finally installed in Queen's Park. Images of the decorated monument in 1910 and on Empire Day in 1913 demonstrate that it continued to serve as an important site to honour the queen's memory long after Victoria's death.



Mario Raggi also created similar grand monuments of Queen Victoria, in Hong Kong in 1887, and in Kimberly, South Africa in 1906. Raggi was an Italian sculptor who settled in England. He was given some major commissions: memorials to Benjamin Disraeli in Parliament Square in London; and to William Ewart Gladstone in Albert Square in Manchester.

The larger than life statue of Disraeli is located on the west side of the square facing the Houses of Parliament. Raggi shows Disraeli standing in the robes of an Earl. He is bare-headed. There is a scroll or parchment in his right hand, and his right arm is hanging straight down. His left arm is across his chest with some of the robes draped over his arm. Disraeli is looking slightly to his left, towards Parliament.

Raggi was another artist whose talents were obvious at an early age. By age 17 he had won all the prizes available at the Royal Academy in his home town of Carrara, Italy.

# The Art Inside: Portraits, Landscapes, Still Life

“A man paints with his brains and not with his hands.”

- Michelangelo

Queen’s Park houses a wide variety of art; a veritable treasure trove of paintings and sculpture which reflect our history. While the Legislature is where our laws are fashioned, I sometimes think of this exquisitely beautiful “Pink Palace” as a wonderful art museum which is free to all.

The most prominent part of the collection consists of the stately portraits of Lieutenant-Governors, Premiers and Speakers. There is a gradual informality in the portraits over the years. In the case of Premiers, it starts with the portrait of Bill Davis. Premier Davis is seated in a chair, in the Premier’s office, trademark pipe in hand and wearing boots instead of shoes. This was the first of the more relaxed, informal Premier. You will likely glean from the interviews with the five portrait artists in this section that they strive to bring out the personality of the subject. So, the informality of no suit jacket, or a relaxed pose reveals something of a Premier’s personality.

When it comes to “political art,” that is, art which makes a social statement, my favourite is “Foreclosure of the Mortgage” by George Reid. This large canvass oil painting captures part of the history of the Great Depression. Often, at the end of a late night sitting, I would spend some quiet time looking at the painting and thinking about how difficult it must have been for so many people during the 1930’s. I have featured George Reid in this book, not just because he was prolific and generous, but because of the quality of his work and his social statements.

If you are of a certain age and attended elementary school in Ontario, you are familiar with the historical illustrations in textbooks, drawn by C. W. Jefferys. Jefferys sketches of significant moments in Canada’s history brought that history to life for elementary school age children. Queen’s Park is the perfect place to showcase some of his work.

History, beauty, artistic expression and visual impressions. The artists featured here give you all of that, and more!

ALAN CASWELL COLLIER  
(1911–1990)

His portrait at Queen's Park: Hon. Harry Corwin Nixon, Premier of Ontario 1943

“Mr. Collier has reached a new peak of achievement, especially in his paintings. The drawings are in clean-cut lines, explicit and unencumbered with detail. The paintings, on the other hand, are redolent of rich colour, full of the beauty any tourist may see but which only an accomplished artist can bring home with him to share with those who see his work.”

- Colin Sabiston, art critic, 1961

At age 12, Alan Collier knew he wanted to be an artist. At the start of the ‘Great Depression’ he enrolled at the Ontario College of Art where he studied under two of the Group of Seven, J.E.H. MacDonald and Franklin Carmichael. At the height of the Depression, Collier ‘rode the rods’ (a dangerous way of riding for free by hiding under the freight cars) across Canada, working on relief gangs and seeing the country. Wanting to go to New York City to study art, but needing the money to do so, he got a job for 18 months as an underground miner at Omega Gold Mine, Larder Lake, Timiskaming, North-Eastern Ontario.

Collier moved to New York City, returning for a couple of summers to work underground at the Omega Gold Mine. In 1939 he became an advertising artist for a firm in New York City. Then, in the span of 3 years following 1941, he married Ruth Brown of Brantford, Ontario, whom he had met at the Ontario College of Art, returned to Toronto where he was a sheet metal worker for Victory Aircraft, Malton, and joined the Canadian Army to serve overseas until the end of the war. In 1946, he resumed his career as an advertising artist in Toronto but did more painting and less commercial work.

“I have travelled from the east coast of Newfoundland to the west coast of Vancouver Island and to the Yukon in order to paint.”

- Alan Collier



Ruth, Alan and Ian Collier c. 1964 (Queen's University Archives, Ruth Collier Fonds, Writings, "Turpentine & Gasoline 'Moving' Pictures Across Canada")

Beginning in 1956 Collier and his family travelled each summer to some distant place in Canada, camping and sketching. He traveled 9,500 km. across Newfoundland. This extensive travel in Newfoundland, and the beautiful landscape paintings he created, earned him an unofficial title "An Ontario Artist of Newfoundland and Labrador." In 1967 Alan received a commission from the Ontario Government to do a mural on mining in Ontario to be displayed in the Macdonald Block, Toronto.

"Nobody wanted me for the first 30 years of my life,  
then all of a sudden I was in demand."

- *Toronto Star*, April 1963

Alan Collier's career focused on landscape painting and the world of underground mining. This prolific artist produced work which is represented in the permanent collections of the National Gallery of Canada (Ottawa), the Art Gallery of Ontario (Toronto), and numerous other galleries both in Canada and the United States. Beyond the palette, Alan Collier spent a lot of time doing executive work for the Royal College of Art, the Ontario Society of Artists, the Art Institute of Ontario, and the Arts and Letters Club, supporting the activities and welfare of fellow artists. He belonged to the Audubon Society and the US National Parks Association "in the interests of conservation" and to the World Federalists "in the interests of peaceful coexistence."

"The public gallery should be like a Pied Piper, playing an inviting tune while surrounded by its people, pushing some ahead of it, pulling others, but never running ahead of those willing to study and eager to follow."

- Alan Collier

ALBERT CURTIS WILLIAMSON  
THE CANADIAN REMBRANDT

His portrait at Queen's Park:

Hon. Nelson Parliament, Speaker of the  
Ontario Legislature 1920-23

Born in Brampton, Ontario, Albert Williamson, son of a wealthy exporter of cattle, quit school in his teens to follow his dream. He studied oil painting from 1885-87 with W.L. Forster. In 1889 it was off to France and Holland to paint. Although he studied at the Academie Julian from 1889 to 1892, his studies were self-directed.

“No professor really teaches one how to paint.  
They can show him how to handle his tools,  
the rest is a matter of personality.

I sometimes sat in to lectures and used their models though.”

- Albert Williamson

Albert Williamson spent nearly 10 years in France and Holland, which greatly influenced his style. He brought Dutch subject matter and technique to Canada. He was known primarily as a portraitist, being awarded a Silver Medal at the St. Louis Universal Exposition (1904) for a portrait of a Dutch peasant woman. However, he also painted genre scenes, interiors and landscapes, typically in a dark tonal style. In 1906 Albert travelled to Newfoundland to paint rugged landscapes and fishing villages.

There were a number of Canadian artists who espoused European painting styles such as the Hague school and French Impressionism, and they wanted a “home” for their interests. Albert Williamson co-founded the Canadian Art Club to promote artistic excellence in those styles.

He painted the portraits of a number of prominent people, one of whom was Sir Frederick Banting, the man who co-developed insulin and shared Canada's first Nobel Prize.

Albert Williamson was a founding member of the Arts and Letters Club, Toronto and a member of the Royal Canadian Academy.

## ANDREW DICKSON PATTERSON

(1854-1930)

### THE ARTIST WHO WROTE ABOUT THE PRIME MINISTER HE PAINTED

His portrait at Queen's Park:

Hon. Sir George William Ross, Premier of  
Ontario 1899-1905

Andrew Patterson, the only artist Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald agreed to have paint his portrait, wrote a detailed account of how he obtained the commission and how, in 1885, he went about painting the portrait. The story was printed in the June 25th 1927 edition of *Saturday Night*.

The following are excerpts from the story, as written by Andrew Patterson.

“When I was called upon in 1885 to paint the portrait of Sir John Macdonald, I hardly realized, as I do now that I was undertaking to produce an historical document. Forty-one years having since elapsed, the feelings of party spirit attaching to his name have largely disappeared and he lives today in the minds of the people as one of Canada's great nation builders.”

1885 was when the North-West Rebellion came to a close. Parliament sat into July, which was longer than usual. Young Andrew Patterson, just starting his career, and knowing that Sir John A had never agreed to have anyone paint his portrait, did not consider approaching the Prime Minister. However, “Certain friends of mine, who were staunch adherents of Sir John, gave me letters of introduction to him, with the request that he would allow me to paint his portrait.”

Andrew managed to meet Sir John as he came out of the Chamber. The Prime Minister looked at the letters handed to him and replied, “Of course I couldn't give you any sittings in Ottawa now, but if you come down to St. Patrick in August I will give you all you want.”

[Editor's note: the place referred to above is actually Saint-Patrice, a village on the north shore of the St. Lawrence River, near Riviere-du-Loup, Quebec, Sir John A's summer home]

Speaker Sir George Kirkpatrick allowed Andrew Patterson to sit within the bar of the House, where he could see, but couldn't be seen. “This was the beginning of the impressions I began to form of Sir John. I watched his attitude when speaking, as well as the manner of delivery. There were the dual characteristics in Macdonald of seriousness and jauntiness.”

[Editor's note: the bar of the House is the name given to the white line across the width of the Chamber]

Andrew was invited occasionally to join the Prime Minister and his family for Sunday dinner. He describes Sir John as being a “most delightful host.” Andrew also noted “I think it was one of the happiest and noblest traits in his character how he devoted the whole of each Sunday afternoon to his physically delicate and fondly cherished young daughter Mary.”

When August came and the House had risen, Andrew Patterson went to Riviere-du-Loup, booked into an Inn and each day walked 5 miles (8 km.) to Sir John A. Macdonald's house, where “Sir John's study was our painting room; an empty packing box the sitter's 'throne'. On arriving, I would find him at his table with his private secretary, Mr. Joseph Pope. In deference to my requirements he would leave the table for a short time, and taking his seat on the 'throne' my work of laying in the portrait would proceed. For a time he would give me his attention exclusively, and then suddenly perhaps a thought would strike him, and he would turn and say 'Pope, would you take this down' and begin a series of dictations.”

The famous painting of our first Prime Minister shows Sir John A. with his thumb in his trouser pocket, which the artist says “indicates something of the lightness of manner with which he often leavened the heaviness of debate; it was a very usual and characteristic attitude of his in the House.”

In 1888 Andrew Patterson took the canvass to Paris, where Goupil Cie company, originators of the photogravure process made a plate. Over the next couple of years a number of photogravures of the portrait were signed by Sir John A.

1891 - “The last words I ever heard Sir John Macdonald utter were in regard to the photogravures of the portrait. I had sat near him at lunch at the Rideau Club one day, and noticed that he ate very sparingly and was not looking well. Speaking with him in the lobby afterwards, I asked whether we might trouble him for a few more signatures. He said ‘Oh, I thought they were all done - yes, I shall be most happy any time at all.’ He then feebly ambled down the stairs and departed. Two days later he suffered his stroke – the end had come.”

What of Andrew Patterson, the artist who created the famous painting? The following is from *The Montreal Gazette*, August 30, 1997. “In his last years here he was poor and neglected. At one point he was nearly evicted from his Victoria Street rooms for non-payment of rent.”

## ANTHONY MILES

(1932-1986)

His portrait at Queen's Park: Hon. Frank Stuart Miller, Premier of Ontario 1985-86

Anthony Miles was the welterweight Champion of Yorkshire, England for 3 years, but turned away from professional boxing to be an artist. He focused on landscapes, murals and set designs. Anthony created the original sets for the British television series *Coronation Street*. In order to absorb realism, he worked in a coal mine, a slaughter house and once was feared lost at sea on an Icelandic fishing trawler. He also spent months living in a Glasgow slum so he could take in the atmosphere of extreme poverty.

Anthony Miles moved from England to Montreal in 1964, then five years later to Toronto. Later on he moved to a farm near Markdale, Ontario (a town south of Owen Sound). He created a series of paintings which he called the "Phoenix Series," paintings which focused on ecological and humanitarian causes. A biographer once described this series as a "personal statement of protest against the direction man seems to be taking".

Anthony Miles died the day after completing the portrait of Premier Miller.

## ARCHIBALD GEORGE BARNES

(1887 – 1972)

"I had no opposition whatever when I decided to become a painter. My parents, I guess, thought I was too dumb to do anything else, so they allowed me to follow my natural bent and study art."

His portraits at Queen's Park: Hon. William James Stewart, Speaker of the Ontario Legislature 1944-47  
Hon. Thomas Ashmore Kidd, Speaker of the Ontario Legislature 1930-33

It all started in England, at age 17, when Archibald Barnes' first professional job was to sketch the interior of a Canadian log cabin for a book. He had never seen a log cabin, but somehow he sketched well enough to warrant entry to the Royal Academy School to study art. Barnes enjoyed boxing but, unhappily, a heart condition discovered in 1910 meant leaving school to be confined to bed for 3 years. The heart condition also resulted in his being rejected for service by

the British Army at the start of World War I. By 1917, his heart condition cleared up, and he started doing portraits by commission.

In 1929, Barnes took a trip which turned out to be fortuitous for Canada. He travelled to New Orleans, St. Louis, Chicago and Canada. A year later, the young talented artist returned to Canada settled in Toronto, and married Barbara Taylor, a symphony orchestra violinist.

It didn't take long for Archibald Barnes to establish himself as a superb artist, not portraits alone, but landscapes and still life as well. He created some remarkable landscape pictures of England and of Canada, particularly Lake Superior. In 1935 he was elected to the Ontario Society of Artists on the first ballot, a rare occurrence. He maintained his painting while teaching at the Ontario College of Art.

“Portrait painting is to me the most absorbing phase of art. One's vision is always ahead of one's performance. You never quite satisfy yourself. Thank goodness for that, for it's the impetus that goads you on.”

- Archibald Barnes

## AUSTIN SHAW

His portrait at Queen's Park:

Hon. Sir William Howard Hearst, Premier of Ontario 1914-19

Austin Shaw was born in England. As a young man he joined the Salvation Army, where he painted a portrait of the Salvation Army's founder, General William Booth. Later, he was sent to Canada to work for the organization in Northern Ontario. It was there that he met and married Alice Galt, another member of the Salvation Army.

In Northern Ontario, there were mining executives, some of whom became quite wealthy, who wanted their portraits painted. Shaw took up portrait painting full time, but after a while the commissions were not so plentiful. As a way to minimize the cost of maintaining a studio, he set up temporary studios in leading hotels in various cities. This approach proved to be economically successful.

Austin Shaw left Canada in the early 1920's to settle in Pasadena, California to paint portraits of celebrities.

## INTERVIEW WITH BERNARD POULIN

BY DAVID WARNER

His portrait at Queen's Park:

Hon. Ernest (Ernie) Eves, Premier 2002-2003

“Art is the most potent measure of the heartbeat of a nation, the colour of its imagination and a sign of the intensity of a country’s commitment to the well-being of its citizens.”

- Bernard Poulin

It is 1959, and an exasperated father tells his son that something must be done with all the paintings piling up around the house. So the 14-year-old, a couple of paintings tucked under his arm, heads to a local furniture shop. What happens next sparks an artistic career spanning more than half a century and continuing to this day. The owner of the shop not only wants the paintings young Bernard has, he wants more!



Bernard would have been happy to provide them, but tells the shop owner that he doesn't have the required art supplies. Back to Bernard's house go the shop owner and the young artist where the proprietor tells the parents he will purchase the needed art supplies, and the cost will be put against Bernard's wages.

Bernard Poulin, at age 9 and growing up in Windsor Ontario, knows he wants to be a portrait painter. His mother, Marie-Jeanne Lauzière-Poulin, is from a musical family and understands her son's yearnings. His father, Joseph Aimé Poulin, on the other hand, does not. So, while some emotional support is there, the practical financial support is not. Nonetheless, “when my dad went to Paris on a course for diesel mechanics, he spent all of his spare time visiting the Louvre to

try and understand why I was so passionate about painting.” The painter’s father was a practical man. He knew his eldest son had to learn how to fend for himself while honing his skills in the craft to which he aspired. Bernard learned from him that being hungry, being a “starving artist,” was not an option.

Bernard Poulin had difficulty learning the trade of his dreams. In the sixties there were few art schools available which encouraged the traditional skill set acquisition. And so he got his hands on as many art books as possible and in 1975 bought a ticket to Italy. The galleries and art museums of Florence became his ‘home.’ He fashioned his own personal education program there that included copying the great painters, such as Michelangelo and Caravaggio. In the end, Bernard Poulin’s artistic expression revealed itself in a variety of ways; sculptures, murals and portraits. Three very different types of art, yet each with its own attraction. “There is a sensuality about sculpture. Murals focus on important public matters. A well done portrait reveals personality.”

Poulin sculpts in bronze using the lost wax process (a method whereby molten bronze is poured into a wax matrix embedded in sand). The flowing metal replaces the evaporating wax and once solidified, it has the form of the original wax creation.

As a muralist, he has created several three-dimensional projects using acrylic, black marble, maple and sometimes bronze. These can be found in the lobby of the Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario, the Ottawa Children’s Aid Society and the Solange Karsh Centre for Medical Research.

In addition to being a prolific, acclaimed visual artist, Bernard lectures, writes (11 books), appears on television, is a qualified elementary and secondary school teacher and was once a professor of Special Education at Ottawa University and Laurentian University in Sudbury. He has worked in the fields of special education and in the treatment of children and families dealing with emotional and social maladjustment issues. Between the years 1973 and 1978 he was a member of several psychiatric teams at the Royal Ottawa and Ottawa General Hospitals during which time he co-founded the francophone unit of the MF McHugh Schools, a therapeutic academic service for institutionalized children suffering from emotional difficulties.

In 1966 he founded “Mon Ecole”- the first French school in Ontario for institutionalized children. In 1967 he started the first special education services for French-speaking children of Ontario at the Conseil des écoles séparées in Ottawa. In 2011 the Assemblée parlementaire de la francophonie internationale (the association of the world’s French parliaments) conferred upon Bernard the title of Chevalier (Knight) of the Ordre de la Pléiade in recognition of his international efforts in both the visual arts his contributions to French culture.

There is passion in his voice as he explains the importance of art in our society. Artist, teacher, writer, Bernard Poulin continues to enhance the social fabric of Canada.

C. W. JEFFERYS

(1869 – 1951)

“My real art school was the Ontario countryside, its woods and fields and lake shores. My teachers were the wild flowers, the weeds, the pine tops against the sky.”

- C. W. Jefferys

His illustrations, drawings and paintings at Queen's Park:

The Death of Brock at Queenston Heights  
Alexander Mackenzie at the Pacific Ocean  
The Battle of Lundy's Lane  
Blockhouse and Battery at the Old Fort,  
Toronto, 1812  
The British Army at Dawn Climbing the  
Heights above Wolfe's Cove  
The Brothers La Verendrye in Sight of the  
Mountains  
A Coueur de Bois  
The Founding of Halifax  
Jacques Cartier Erects a Cross at Gaspé, 1534  
The Landing of Wolfe at Louisbourg in 1758  
Laura Secord on her Journey to Warn the British  
Louisbourg, from a Drawing Made on the  
Spot in 1759  
Loyalists Drawing Lots for the Land  
The Loyalist Fleet Leaving Boston, March 17, 1776  
Loyalists on the Way to Canada  
The March of the Rebels upon Toronto in  
December, 1837  
The Meeting of Brock and Tecumseh  
The Pioneer, 1784  
A Pioneer Settler Sowing Grain in his Clearing  
A Seigneurial Mill at Vercheres, on  
the St. Lawrence  
A View of Quebec, in 1760, from the Opposite  
Shore, From the Drawing by Short  
Champlain at Georgian Bay, 1615

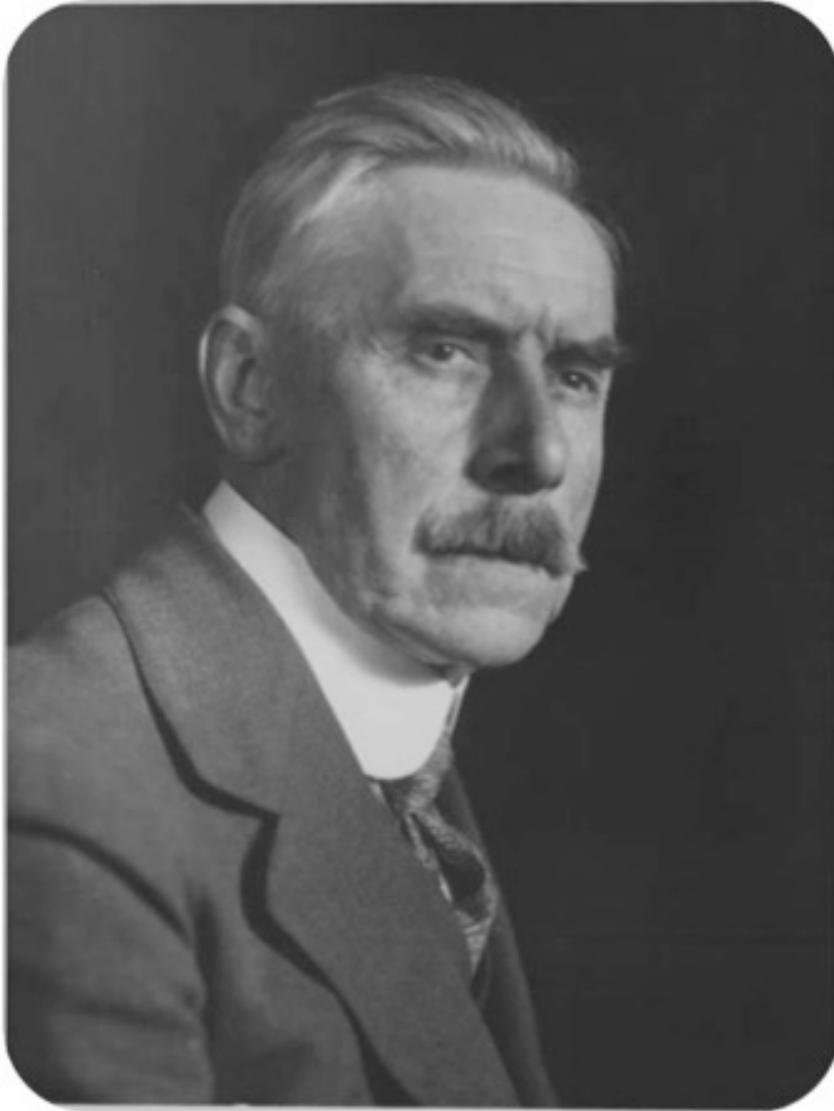


Image of C. W. Jefferys from M. O. Hammond, Archrives of Ontaio

Charles William Jefferys was born in the English town of Rochester, Kent. Six years later his family moved to Philadelphia, U.S.A., then three years later to Hamilton, Ontario and two years after that to Toronto.

As a youngster, Charles used his drawing talents as a profitable enterprise at school. “I was called upon to decorate the blackboard with pictures of the landing of Julius Caesar, the Battle of Queenston Heights or Wolfe at Quebec. My school fellows crowded me with commissions to illustrate their books. I established a fixed scale of prices: an English history was two cents, a Canadian one cent. My masterpiece was an illustrated Algebra, for which, as a subject I detested, and as lying outside my legitimate field, I exacted five cents. It was a solitary tour de force.”

“I did scribble from childhood, but my parents didn’t jump at the conclusion I would be an artist because I liked to draw. In fact, my father, being a builder, wanted me to become an architect, but when I degenerated into an artist he took it philosophically.”

At age 15 Charles William Jefferys, who later became known affectionately as simply “C.W.” attended George Reid’s private evening life-class at the Ontario School of Art and Design, in Toronto. He would go on to be a skilled draughtsman in pencil and pen and ink, a muralist, landscape painter in both oils and watercolour, historical illustrator and writer. His beautiful illustrations of dramatic episodes in Canada’s past; forts, townscapes, old buildings, farm implements, costumes, vehicles and weapons, would earn him high praise.

“No one has done more to unearth and record in permanent form the obscure but fundamentally vital facts of Canadian history than Jefferys.”

- Harold Innis (C.W. Jefferys: Picturing Canada)

At the age of 16, Jefferys started on an ambitious journey to acquire the skills and experiences which later would propel him to be perhaps Canada's greatest chronicler of our country's past. At age 33 he was elected a member of the Ontario Society of Artists. The stops along the way were many and varied, and included, among others, the following: an apprenticeship to The Toronto Lithographic Company for 5 years; "on loan" to the *Globe and Mail* where he learned about newspaper sketching and subsequently worked as a "sketch artist" for various Toronto newspapers; was a staff illustrator, (which he also did for *The World, The Mail and Empire*); did freelance illustrations for the *Toronto Telegram*, and worked for the *New York Herald* as artist-reporter. He traveled widely in Canada and the U. S. in search of work, to accompany others on artistic and newspaper missions, to learn new techniques, sketch historic spots, and attend exhibitions of his work. A detailed chronology of C.W.Jefferys life can be found at [www.cwjefferys.ca/chronology](http://www.cwjefferys.ca/chronology).

In 1894 Charles Jefferys and Jean Adams, a fellow artist, were married and later moved to Newark, New Jersey. They had three children. Jinny (Jeanette) was the oldest child. In 1899, their three-year-old son died from spinal meningitis, and three months later his wife Jean and the second boy died during childbirth. Jefferys returned from New York to Toronto with Jinny. He married Clara West in 1907, and they had another four children (all girls). The youngest was Barbara Jefferys Allen, who would go on to become an acclaimed artist in her own right.

Although Charles Jefferys travelled across Canada and spent time in New York, he loved the lush Don Valley scenery of his home neighbourhood in North York, Toronto. It may be that he was able to meld painting and writing about history because he saw history as part of the landscape on which it left its mark. A crowning achievement of this prolific artist and writer was his 3 volume "The Picture Gallery of Canadian History."

"It is not only the artistic excellence which appeals, but his extraordinary sense and feeling towards our Canadian history."

- Stephen Leacock

"What probably has struck hundreds of thousands of Canadians most forcibly about Mr. Jefferys' work is its realism. He made the history of this land come alive again in the minds of school children and adults alike."

- *St. John New Brunswick Telegraph Journal* 1951

## CLEEVE HORNE

(1912 – 1998)

His portraits at Queen's Park:

Hon. Mitchell Frederick Hepburn, Premier of Ontario 1934-1942

Hon. William Earl Rowe, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario 1963-1968

Hon. Frederick McIntosh Cass, QC, Speaker of the Ontario Legislature 1968-1971

Hon. John Melville Turner, Speaker of the Ontario Legislature 1981-1985

“Knowing that what they say and do is off the record tends to free clients to be themselves, and that's what I need to get a genuine portrait” - Cleeve Horne, 1986,  
*Canadian Business Magazine*

Cleeve Horne was born in Jamaica. A year later the family moved to Canada when a hurricane and an earthquake had ruined their banana plantation. The family settled in Toronto where Horne spent most of his life. While a student at the Ontario College of Art and Design, he met Jean Harris. Both of them were studying sculpture, and they married in 1939. During World War II Cleeve Horne was in the Canadian Army and taught camouflage techniques at the Number One Canadian Camouflage School. He retired in 1946 with the rank of Captain.



Cleeve Horne with McCleary portrait (1948). Image from the Arthur Edward Cleeve Horne Facebook page

Cleeve Horne started out as a sculptor. He created a remarkable sculpture of Alexander Graham Bell, currently situated in front of the Brantford Bell Telephone Building. However, he really wanted to do portrait painting. That decision went against the advice of Emanuel Hahn, under whom he had been studying sculpture. Hahn told him, “A sculptor can never change his hand and become a painter.” Despite that advice, Horne went on to achieve greater recognition for his paintings than his sculptures.

In an interview with *Mayfair* magazine in July 1952, Horne reflected on his work. “The hardest part of all is signing your name to the bottom of the picture when it is completed. Ten years later you may hate it, but there it will be, out of your hands.”

Cleeve Horne was the recipient of many awards, including the Order of Ontario in 1987 and the Order of Canada in 1997. Christopher Hume, art critic for the *Toronto Star*, wrote at the time of the 1987 award, “For those who have made it big, there is only one portrait painter to visit: Cleeve Horne”.

That same year the *Globe and Mail* interviewed Cleeve Horne, who commented on the value of portraiture. “I really do believe that it is important for every generation to have its leaders immortalized on canvass. I really can’t paint someone unless I can capture the essence of what makes them tick. If I fail to find that essence, it wouldn’t be right for me to do that painting anyway, just for the money” (August 24, 1987)

Cleeve and Jean had three sons. Shortly after Cleeve passed away in 1998, his son Bob observed about his dad’s paintings:

“He was one of the few portrait painters that paints what he feels, not what he sees. He puts people’s character in them.”



L to R: Cleeve Horne working on the Alexander Graham Bell memorial and Horne painting a portrait of Beverley Matthews. Images courtesy of the Arthur Edward Cleeve Horne Facebook page

## EDMUND WYLY GRIER (1862 - 1957)

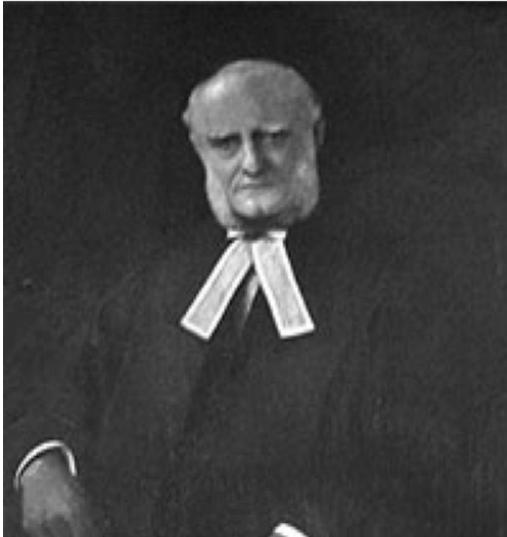
His Portraits at Queen's Park:

Hon. William David Black, Speaker of the Ontario  
Legislature 1927-29

Hon. David Jamieson, Speaker of the Ontario  
Legislature 1915-19

Captain, Hon. Joseph Elijah Thompson, Speaker  
of the Ontario Legislature 1924-26

Hon. Edward Blake, Premier of Ontario 1871-72



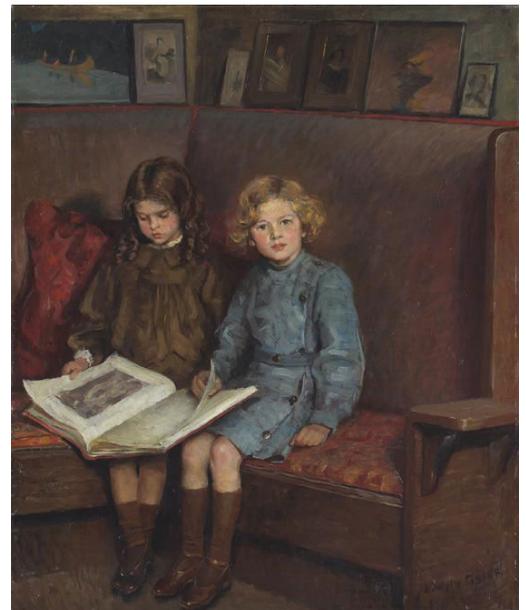
Edmund Wyly Grier was born in 1862 in Melbourne, Australia. Grier emigrated to Canada with his parents in 1876. He died in Toronto in 1957.

Grier studied at Upper Canada College in Toronto, and in Kingston, Ontario. He later studied painting in Europe from 1886 to 1891 at Slade School in London, England under Alphonse Legros, at Scuola Libera in Rome, and at Academie Julien in Paris under Adolphe Bouguereau and Tony Robert-Fleury.

Grier returned to Toronto in 1891, and opened a portrait studio. He painted numerous portraits of politicians, corporate leaders and other notable contemporaries including Sir John A. Macdonald, Sir Oliver Mowat, and Sir Sandford Fleming. Some of his work is part of the permanent collection at the Art Gallery of Ontario.

Grier served with the Royal Canadian Artillery from 1897-1903, and became vice-president of the Canadian Military Institute in 1903. He was an elected member of The Royal Canadian Academy of Arts.

Sir Edmund Wyly Grier was the first Canadian to receive an added note of distinction - a knighthood in recognition of his work as an artist.



A portrait by Edmund Wyly Grier of his children, twins John and Sylvia, from the Art Gallery of Ontario website

## EVAN MACDONALD

(1905-1972)

His portrait at Queen's Park:

Hon. George Alexander Drew, Premier of Ontario 1943-48

“An air of freshness, boldness and high intelligence, reflecting the spirit of the artist who thinks for himself, distinguishes the canvasses of Evan Macdonald.”

- William Colgate, “Canadian Art: Its Origins and Development”



Bill Macdonald in May 2011 and in a 1970 portrait painted by his father, Evan Macdonald. Photo by Martin Schwalbe

Evan Macdonald was born in Guelph, Ontario, and studied at the Ontario College of Art and at the British Royal Academy in England. In 1930 he returned to Canada from England and settled in Toronto. He worked for eight years as a commercial artist and illustrator in Toronto before returning, upon the death of his father, to Guelph to run the family department store, D.E. Macdonald Brothers.

When World War II started Macdonald, age 37, enlisted in the Royal Canadian Engineers and was posted to British Columbia where he designed camouflage and instructed in the Army's

camouflage school. He also did some portrait work and sketches. There is a self-portrait of Macdonald in camouflage, painted in 1943, which is part of the Evan Macdonald Estate. During the course of his career, Macdonald would balance landscape painting and portraiture. After the war, he returned to Guelph to concentrate on painting landscapes and completed approximately 25 commissioned portraits a year.

Over 60 of Macdonald's portraits hang in the Canadian Agricultural Hall of Fame Gallery, which is located at Exhibition Place, Toronto. He completed hundreds of oil sketches, watercolours and drawings while travelling throughout Ontario and the Maritimes. In an article in *Bridle and Golfer*, November 1933, Macdonald's portraits are described as follows: "A fine sense of colour and composition, a right sense of character, a feeling for light and shade, dignified setting to his figures, colour schemes in good taste, poses natural and unassuming; his style is vigorous and direct, expressive and atmospheric."

Two particular quotes from Evan Macdonald capture the essence of this accomplished Canadian artist:

"The fundamental purpose of painting is to create something which the less observant person is unable to appreciate."

"I don't think any painter is worthy of serious consideration until he has acquired first a thorough mastery of his craft."

FREDERICK SPROSTON CHALLENGER  
(1869 – 1959)

"Even when I was a child I wanted to be a painter, but my father had too many children to educate me in art, so I had to make my own way. I taught myself by copying everything that came under my eye, then outside help and prizes made it possible for me to continue in art."

His murals at Queen's Park:

The First Legislature of Upper Canada (1792)  
Etienne Brule at the Mouth of the Humber (1615)  
The Fathers of Confederation (1867)

Frederick Challenger was an infant when he came to Canada from England in 1870. The family returned to England in 1875 in order that Frederick could attend school. Upon the family's return to Toronto in 1883, Frederick got a job as an office boy for a stock broker on King Street, and during his free time he sketched crowds outside the office window. He spent his lunch hours in front of the Notman and Fraser photography studio where Canadian artists regularly exhibited. One day the owners of the studio invited him in to take a closer look at his sketches. They were so impressed with the work that they gave him the entry fee to enrol in evening classes at the Ontario School of Art. George Reid provided the instruction. It was George Reid's influence which led Frederick Challenger to become a muralist.



Photo of Frederick Challener by M.O. Hammond. Courtesy of the Archives of Ontario

Challener and C.W. Jefferys attended Reid's classes at the same time and became good friends. Later they worked together on a number of murals, and their collaboration often resulted in both artists insisting that the other be given credit for the work.

Challener's artistic career started with an apprenticeship at the Toronto Lithography Company. The five year apprenticeship was a springboard to becoming a full-time artist, augmented by learning through travel to England, Italy, Egypt, Palestine and Syria.

Challener settled in Toronto and remained there until 1907, at which time he moved to the "artists community" of Conestogo, a small town in Ontario north of Kitchener/Waterloo. He spent 1913 in Winnipeg, Manitoba before moving back permanently to Toronto. In 1918 and 1919, Challener worked for Canadian War Memorials while teaching at Central Technical School (Toronto) and the Ontario College of Art.

Whether it was murals, landscapes or figures, his work was generally realistic, romantic and often decorative.

Frederick Challener's murals can be found in various places across Canada. A ceiling panel, "Venus and Adonis," is at the Royal Alexandra Theatre in Toronto. The beautiful model who posed for all the women in the painting was Challener's wife, Ethel White.

"His figures are not drawn; they are created. They live and move with sumptuous grace as beings of another world, magnificently."

- *Canadian Magazine* 1930

GEORGE A. REID  
(1860 – 1947)

“No one has spent his time, energy and talent so unselfishly in the cause of Canadian art.”  
- Augustus Bridle, art critic *Toronto Star* 1945

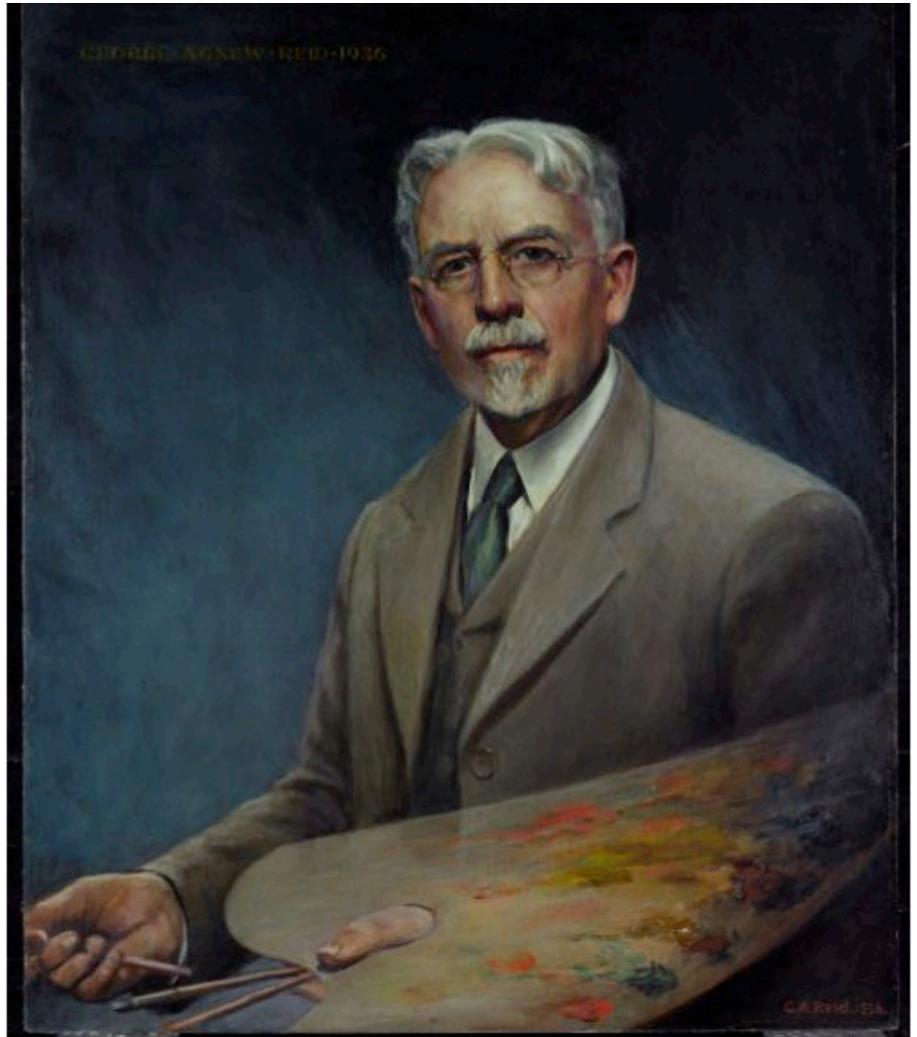
His paintings at Queen’s Park:

There are more than 100!

George Reid, an amazing pioneer in Canadian art, was born in Wingham, Ontario in 1860, and died in Toronto in 1947. During those 87 years he helped found the Ontario College of Art, was President of the Royal Canadian Academy, and created over 900 paintings. In 1944, Reid donated more than 400 paintings to the Government of Ontario, with the stipulation that the art be available for viewing by the public. At the time, he knew he was dying, and hoped that his art would inspire young students to follow in his footsteps.

At the age of 10, Reid knew that he wanted to spend the rest of his life as a painter. He was one of nine children, the family lived in a log shanty, and his father wanted his son George to help clear the land so the family could farm.

Determination paid off, and at age 18 Reid enrolled himself at the Ontario School of Art.



A self portrait of George A. Reid

It was necessary for him to have part-time jobs, and at one point he worked as a machinist. He furthered his art education by attending the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, which also enriched his life, as he met Mary Hester there, a promising artist, and they were married. In the 1890’s the City of Paris, France commissioned 96 artists to portray the history of the city on the walls of the new city hall. George Reid was one of those artists.

He returned home and approached city officials in Toronto with a suggestion to do something similar here. The city's response was that there was "no money for that." So he painted for free, and his murals are still there in Old City Hall.

The story of the murals at Jarvis Collegiate, Toronto's oldest high school, illustrates not only Reid's superb talent, but his patriotism and sensitivity to loss of life as well. During World War I, more than 100 former students of Jarvis Collegiate gave their lives. Reid painted a series of very large murals depicting 40 of Canada's greatest figures, including Cartier, Champlain and Cabot. These murals are on the walls of the auditorium, while on either side of the stage are equally large murals, 'Sacrifice' and 'Patriotism'. He donated his time and talent.

Reid was a prolific artist whose scope was wide and varied; murals in which allegorical, symbolic and realistic figures repose against decorative landscapes. Pastoral settings predominate, but as well there is sympathetic realism, best described as a moving moral tale.

Editor's Note: In 2001, 3 of George Reid's paintings were stolen from the Ontario Legislature, but thankfully all 3 were recovered a short while later.

## GEORGE THEODORE BERTHON

(1806 – 1892)

### A JOURNEY FROM THE ROYAL COURT OF AUSTRIA TO TORONTO HE BROUGHT DIGNITY AND TASTE TO PORTRAITURE

George Theodore Berthon, born 1806 in Vienna, married in 1840, probably in France, to Marie-Zélie Boisseau, who died in 1847 in Toronto. They had one daughter.

In 1850, he married Clare Elizabeth de La Haye in Toronto, and they had six sons and five daughters. De La Haye became the first French Master at Upper Canada College. Berthon died in Toronto in 1892.

#### His Portraits at Queen's Park:

Lieutenant-Colonel Samuel Smith, Administrator of Upper  
Canada 1817-18

Major-General Sir John Colborne, Lieutenant-Governor of Upper  
Canada 1828-36

Hon. Sir Richard William Scott, Speaker of the Ontario  
Legislature 1871

Hon. Peter Russell, President and Administrator of Upper  
Canada 1796-99

Francis Gore, Lieutenant-Governor of Upper  
Canada 1806-11, 1815-17  
Sir George Prevost, Governor in Chief of Canada 1811-15  
General Sir Gordon Drummond, Commander in Chief and  
Administrator of Upper Canada 1812-14 and of Upper and Lower  
Canada 1814-16  
Major-General Sir Frederick Philipse Robinson, Provisional  
Lieutenant Governor of Upper Canada 1815  
Lieutenant-General Sir George Murray, Provisional Lieutenant  
Governor of Upper Canada 1815  
Sir Peregrine Maitland, Lieutenant Governor of Upper  
Canada 1818-28  
Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, President and Administrator of Upper  
Canada 1811-12  
Sir Francis Bond Head, Lieutenant Governor of Upper  
Canada 1836-38  
Rt. Hon. Charles Edward Poulett Thompson, Baron Sydenham of  
Kent and Toronto, Governor General of Canada 1839-41  
Sir Charles Theophilus Metcalfe, first Baron Metcalfe,  
Governor General of Canada 1843-45  
James Bruce Elgin, eighth Earl of Elgin, Governor General of  
Canada 1847-54  
Sir Edmund Walker Head, Governor General of Canada 1854-61

George Theodore Berthon was born at the “royal palace” in Vienna, where his father, René, court painter to Napoleon and a former student of Jacques-Louis David, was executing a commission for the emperor. The Berthon family returned to Paris that year, and René resumed his activity as peintre ordinaire at the French court.

George Berthon is known to have painted the occasional landscape and genre subject, usually at the request of a client, and appears to have supplemented his income by teaching privately now and again. He is also thought to have designed the iron gates in the fence at Osgoode Hall, intended to prevent cattle from straying onto the property. His reputation, however, rests solely on his work as a portraitist. For most of his career, his style was based on such neo-classical precepts as strong draftsmanship, controlled brushwork, and clarity of local colour, combined with an evident commitment to realism.

As Toronto’s foremost exponent of the portrait tradition during the Victorian era, Berthon produced a body of work that serves as an important historical record and as a prime example of the grand-manner style in Canadian portraiture. His long and prolific career reflects the continuing growth and prosperity of Ontario, the rise of Toronto as an influential urban centre – politically,

economically, and culturally – and the significance of public and private patronage in the promotion of the visual arts.

Perhaps his three most famous paintings are of Bishop Strachan, Anglican Bishop of Toronto, Chief Justice John Beverly Robinson and The Three Robinson Sisters, none of which hang at Queen's Park. Berthon continued to paint until just a few days before his death from a bronchial infection, at his Toronto home.

What I find quite remarkable is that George Berthon gave up a successful career in Europe to come to Toronto, which at the time had a population of just 20,000. He was a highly talented artist. Yet, as was noted by the Globe on January 19, 1892, on the occasion of his death, "a name well known to artists, although to the public he was little known."

## INTERVIEW WITH GREGORY FURMANCZYK

BY DAVID WARNER

His portrait at Queen's Park:

Hon. Alvin Curling, Speaker of the Ontario  
Legislature 2003-2005

"At an early age, 5 or 6 years old, I was constantly drawing. I knew I had a gift. That was the beginning of a journey to discover what I could do."

- Gregory Fumanczyk

The journey for Gregory Furmanczyk began in Papineau County, Quebec in 1950. This continuing journey has had stops along the way in Rome, Florence, Ottawa and Toronto, during which time the discovery is a superb talent for both sculpture and portraiture.

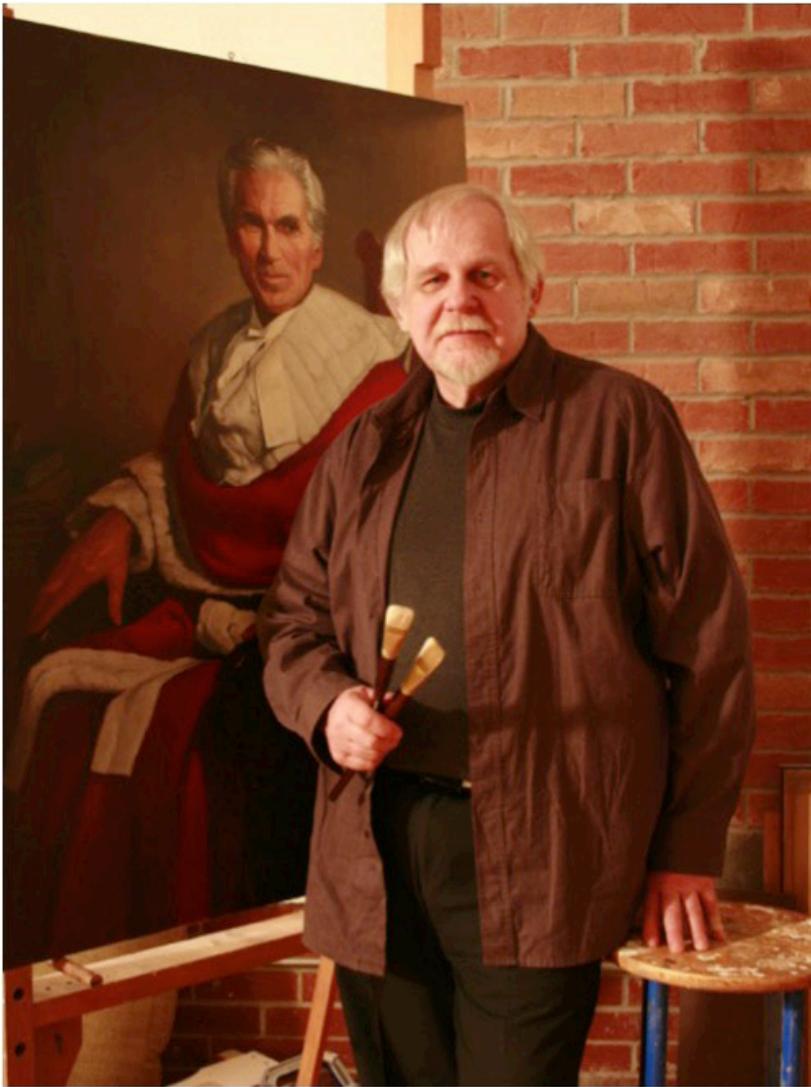
Gregory enrolled in the Ottawa School of Art, then in 1968 came to Toronto to attend the Ontario College of Art and Design. Three years later it was back to Ottawa to focus on portraiture. 1978 found Gregory returning to Toronto for a 4th year at O.C.A. Then, like so many in pursuit of excellence, it was important to spend time at the Uffizi Gallery in Florence, Italy. "This was a wonderful opportunity to examine the paintings of the Renaissance and Baroque Italian Masters. I was particularly interested in the study of under painting, grisaille, and the painting and glazing techniques of the early Flemish and Venetian school."

## What is special about portraiture?

"The artist can connect with the personality of the subject, make the portrait more real than a photograph.

That is why the sitting is so important as a time to connect with the subject. You can create an illusion of depth which the camera can't.

A successful portrait is more than just a facial likeness. It is a work of art that captures an expression characteristic of the subject: The arrangement of the pose, whether standing or sitting, must look natural and contribute to the likeness.



Background colours and textures surrounding the figure can create a dynamic impression—noteworthy or complementary; that helps draw the focus to the subject. Ultimately, a successful portrait captures a look which communicates the essence of the individual.”

About 15 years ago Gregory turned his hand to sculpture, and like his painting there is that classical appearance, the influence of his earlier time in Italy. The Newman Theological College, in 2012 unveiled a sculpture of Christ’s crucifixion sculpted by Gregory Furmanczyk. It is a youthful, loving, redemptive Christ sculpted in a traditional way.

“They wanted something traditional, as opposed to these modern sculptures which are constructed sometimes with features that are more abstract.

They knew from the beginning that they would get a very traditional cross, with concepts that go back to the Renaissance.”

## Why is public art important?

“Art itself is important. It transports you into a spiritual world. Art affects the spiritual side of our being. Having art in outdoor, public spaces beautifies and enriches our lives. Without public art the society loses. When art doesn’t evolve, creativity is dampened.”

There is a long list of important people who have had their portrait done by Gregory Furmanczyk, portraits found in collections throughout Canada, the U.S. and England. Has nearly 50 years of illustrating, painting and sculpting cooled Gregory’s enthusiasm for creating works of art?

“I think it is the most fulfilling thing I can do. Creating art is something that transports me to a spiritual high level and is very rewarding.”

- Gregory Fumanczyk

## INTERVIEW WITH ISTVAN NYIKOS

BY DAVID WARNER

“I have a passion for painting portraits”



Collingwood, Ontario is home to two talented artists, Istvan Nyikos and Robin Sheard Nyikos. Both specialize in portraiture and both enjoy painting landscapes. And both were gracious hosts as I settled in for a delightful afternoon to learn more about the artist who has painted three Premiers and four Speakers at Queen's Park.

Istvan Nyikos' journey began in Hungary, where he was born in 1942. He got through the “Iron Curtain,” escaping the Communist dictatorship while he was still a young man. He lived in Vienna, Austria for two years, and then emigrated to Canada. I thought that perhaps this talented, very successful portrait artist, whose works can be found in Osgoode Hall, numerous hospitals, University of Toronto, and corporate headquarters in central Toronto knew at a young age that he had a special gift. “My parents took me to the three major art museums near where we lived in Budapest when I was about 6 years old. I

loved the paintings, and I kept going back over the years on my own to admire them. Lacking encouragement, I didn't start painting until my late teens and then only for a short time. I left the arts for 10 years due to some major upsets in my life; leaving my home country, people I loved and struggling to build a new life.

Once I was in Canada, I enrolled almost immediately at the U of T to study German literature, philosophy, then art history in my last two years. A year after graduating I took up drawing and painting at the Ontario College of Art (now OCAD). A year later, now a Canadian citizen, I applied for the school's Florentine (Italy) programme. That was another turning point in my life. I started very seriously to improve my drawing and painting skills. As a student I had free access to Florence's famous Uffizi Gallery and spent most of my free time studying its wonderful collection of Italian Renaissance art.

### His Portraits at Queen's Park:

Hon. William Grenville Davis, Premier of Ontario 1971-1985

Hon. Hugh Edighoffer, Speaker of the Ontario  
Legislature 1985-1990

Hon. David Warner, Speaker of the Ontario  
Legislature 1990-1995

Hon. Allan K. McLean, Speaker of the Ontario  
Legislature 1995-1996

Hon. Michael D. Harris, Premier of Ontario 1995-2002

Hon. Dalton McGuinty, Premier of Ontario 2003-2014

Hon. Mike Brown, Speaker of the Ontario Legislature 2005-2007

I returned to Florence, but the famous Florentine master I had already met and had planned to study with, Pietro Annigoni, was not well. Although he had invited me to be his student/assistant, he wasn't able to take me on due to his illness.

I have a brother who lives on one of the Canary Islands. He was managing a five star hotel at the time. I was in Florence, winter coming on, cold and rainy, not knowing what to do there anymore. I called my brother, asking him if painting guests at the hotel would be a possibility. He said yes, they needed a 'house painter' since the old one had left. The island of Gran Canary and the hotel far exceeded my wildest expectations. A few days after setting up, the guests, especially the Germans, practically embraced me as their 'wunderkind.' I painted many portraits. The six months I planned on staying there became six years, although only in the winter. Painting guests in the evening, enjoying the beach in the daytime, or sketching the rugged landscape in the mountains and not having to worry about money for the first time in my life was a great life.

I came home to Toronto the following spring, but not having a family in Canada, I no longer had a home. I reconnected with my art school girlfriend, Robin, who was getting ready to start her own study year in Florence in the fall. We returned to Europe together early that summer. We travelled in Italy and France, and then settled down in Mallorca, Spain for most of the summer. In the fall I accompanied Robin to Florence, then flew back to 'my hotel'. The following spring we got married in Toronto and have been together ever since. Starting in my third season in the Canaries I received many invitations from hotel guests to paint their families in Germany, England and Holland. One of the memorable trips we took was to England. After finishing my paintings, my host lent me his Land Rover. We rented what the English call a 'caravan' and we drove around Scotland for a month painting smallish landscape studies, sort of Group of Seven style.

After our fifth year in Europe we got thoroughly fed up with the 'good life'. At age 40 I realized that a change was needed. I knew I could not spend the rest of my life painting sunburned tourists, and although it had been good practice, I also knew I could do much better artistically.

We rented a studio on Mowat Street in Toronto and an apartment nearby. We returned to Gran Canary for one last season, and in the spring of 1983 we returned home, determined to stay for good.

I asked a lot of people to sit for me for a free portrait, just to stay in practice. One of them was a CEO of a well-known company. He insisted on buying it. Likely he entertained a lot and showed my painting to his guests. Soon the commissions started to come in. I also sent a letter with a couple of 8x10 s of my work to Portraits Inc., a well-known gallery in New York City. Three days later the owner called me to 'get my &!@ down here with a sample'. I did, and a few days later a *Globe and Mail* journalist wondered how John Turner's portrait (former Prime Minister) got into the window of a Park Avenue art gallery. Two weeks later I had three commissions, with countless more to come. According to that nice gallery owner I was their first Canadian artist."

## What is the key to a successful portrait?

"Portrait painting is like doing the tango, it takes two. There needs to be a connection between artist and subject. You should be able to see something of the personality of the subject. Painting the sitter from life is really the only opportunity the artist gets to observe people at length; the nuances in the changes of their facial expressions, their skin colours, as the artist has conversations with them during the sittings. Most important, you have to have a lot of compassion and no [judgement for] judgements about? Preconceived ideas about? Prejudices about? people in general and the person you are painting in particular. If you have a bit of skill to go with that, it helps."

JOHN WYCLIFFE LOWES FORSTER

(31 DECEMBER 1850 – 24 APRIL 1938)

"A certain sympathy and adaptability enables him to interpret adequately the temperament and characteristics of his subject."

- Art critic, 1905

His Portraits at Queen's Park:

Christopher Finlay Fraser, Provincial Secretary and Registrar 1873-74, Commissioner of Public Works, 1874-94

William Lyon Mackenzie, Canada West, first Mayor of Toronto, 1828-35

Hon. Robert Baldwin, 1906, Joint Premier of the Province of Canada, 1842-43, 1848-51

Hon. Thomas Ballantyne, Speaker of the Ontario Legislature, 1891-94

Hon. Jacob Baxter, Speaker of the Ontario  
Legislature, 1887-90

Sir William Mortimer Clark, Lieutenant-Governor of  
Ontario, 1903-08

Hon. Thomas Crawford, Speaker of the Ontario  
Legislature, 1907-11

Hon. Arthur Sturgis Hardy, Premier of Ontario, 1896-99

Hon. William Henry Hoyle, Speaker of the Ontario  
Legislature, 1912-14

Hon. John Sandfield Macdonald, Premier of Ontario, 1867-71

Hon. Joseph Wesley St. John, Speaker of the Ontario  
Legislature, 1905-07

Hon. Charles Clarke, Speaker of the Ontario  
Legislature, 1880-86

Major General James Wolfe, Commander in Chief,  
British Forces, 1759 Quebec

Major-General Sir Isaac Brock, President and Administrator  
of Upper Canada, 1811-12

Colonel John Graves Simcoe, Lieutenant Governor of  
Upper Canada, 1791-96

Rt. Hon. Sir John Alexander Macdonald, Prime Minister  
of Canada, 1867-73, 1878-91

Major-General The Hon. Aeneas Shaw, Member of  
Legislative Council Upper Canada, 1794,  
Adjutant General War of 1812

Hon. Sir William Ralph Meredith, Chief Justice, 1894-23

Sir George William Ross, Premier of Ontario, 1899-1905

Hon. Sir James Pliny Whitney, Premier of Ontario, 1905-14

Hon. Ernest Charles Drury, Premier of Ontario, 1919-23

J.W.L. Forster was the leading Canadian portrait artist of the late 1800's and early 1900's. During his career, he painted numerous portraits of politicians, merchants, war heroes, educators, royalty, governors general prime ministers, and Toronto mayors who served during his lifetime. If you were a prominent public figure at that time, chances are, you wanted to have your picture painted by Forster. As is evident from the foregoing list, Forster painted a wide variety of subjects including also generals, rebels, statesmen, ecclesiastics, and scholars. His success as a portrait painter lay in his ability to interpret the personality of his sitter. Forster saw portraiture as a form of biography.

Forster was born in Ontario in 1850 and attended Brampton Grammar School. There is an interesting anecdote about young John at school. Whenever the teacher looked up suddenly, or



turned from the blackboard, there would be a shuffling of feet, straightening of backs and grinning faces turning solemn. The teacher discovered that John had drawn pictures of his classmates. He was punished, but later the teacher said to John, “You know I must have order in the classroom, but I want you to tell your mother that you must go to Rome.”

At 19 Forster apprenticed with a portrait painter and worked in his Toronto studio for many years. He had his sights set on Paris, and saved for 10 years to make the trip to France. In France he studied art at the Ecole Julian in Paris.

Forster painted over 600 canvasses in his lifetime, and most were highly detailed portraits of accomplished public figures in politics, royalty, and civic life. In 1897, Queen Victoria gave him special permission to sketch her portrait during a service at St. George’s Chapel at Windsor Castle, a high privilege at the time. Forster also

travelled to Japan where the Emperor and Empress allowed him to paint their portraits from a photograph. His work was well known, and he exhibited in Paris, London, the U.S., and Canada.

He painted not only the famous or privileged, but ordinary people as well. One such person was Hester How. Hester How was a Toronto teacher well known for her kindness, intelligence and ability to teach without corporal punishment. In 1879, she convinced the school inspector James L. Hughes to form a special class for delinquent boys who were expelled or identified by society as “unteachable.” Critics argued that a woman was unsuited for such teaching, but her classroom was a success. She also pioneered fresh air camps, nurseries, and what would become Juvenile Court in Toronto. Forster painted her portrait on the eve of How’s retirement. As he was painting, How would share her stories of turning around boys from abusive homes and those who had criminal records. This painting is part of the permanent collection at the Art Gallery of Ontario. There is a wonderful story behind one of Forster’s paintings at Queen’s Park. The Government of Ontario commissioned him to paint Sir Isaac Brock. Forster went to the Channel Islands so that the portrait would be based on the only known likeness of Brock. He borrowed Brock’s uniform from the soldier’s niece, the uniform perforated by musket balls, the one he would have worn when he was killed in the Battle of Queenston Heights, and used it in the portrait.

“He was the Dean of historical portrait painters in Canada”

- *Toronto Star* September 11, 1976

JOHN RUSSELL  
(1879 – 1959)

His portrait at Queen's Park:

Hon. George Stewart Henry, Premier of Ontario 1930-34

“An artist does gain a deeper insight into people than most.  
A sitter invariably trusts an artist – we have no axe to grind.”  
- John Russell

John Russell was born in Hamilton, Ontario. His father was a medical doctor who wanted his son to be a doctor. “When I told my father I was going to be an artist, he took me out and whipped me. But when I was about twenty I managed to wear down the parental opposition.” At age 20, John Russell attended Hamilton Art School, then 3 years later went to New York City, where he joined the Art Students League. In 1906, prior to going to Paris, France, he had an exhibition at the Canadian Art Galleries in Toronto. For 28 years, John Russell had studios in Paris, New York and Toronto.

“An artist must get away from the quest for the Almighty dollar. That is why we go to Paris, where people live under less strain. But the Paris after the war (WW I) was very different from the old Paris. Since the war, [there are] so many refugees from Russia and elsewhere. There is extreme poverty and suffering.”  
- John Russell

John Russell painted a wide variety of subjects, from a formal portrait of Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier to a humorous fantasy “The Spirit of the Island,” nudes and war paintings; which included “Trafalgar Square 1914” and “Hall of Many Mirrors at Versailles Peace Conference 1919.”

Russell painted the “The Vimy Pilgrimage, 1936” and was said to have captured the atmospheric conditions of the day, the memorial, and those attending, the King of England, and the President of France. He painted landscapes of Paris, Brittany, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Spain, North Africa, old Quebec City, various Canadian towns and the Toronto Islands. As well, he did still life, including flower compositions.

In 1927 he exhibited several of his paintings at the prestigious Salon in Paris and one of those paintings, of a reclining nude woman, titled "A Modern Fantasy" won the highest honour. That same year, in Toronto, the Canadian National Exhibition's Art Gallery saw attendance soar, in part due to the showing of Russell's work, an exhibit which included the award winning "A Modern Fantasy."

Russell's wide variety of subjects and ability to master paint textures, surfaces and reflections earned him the following comment from Muriel Miller: "He is an eclectic, unfettered by convention in art." (Famous Canadian Artists, June 14, 1940). Despite his eclecticism, John Russell was no fan of impressionist painting in general and of the Group of Seven, who had been greatly influenced by the impressionist movement, in particular. "It is Lawren Harris and his money that is ruling and ruining art in Canada. Here in Toronto, at the Art Gallery of Toronto the people are being hypnotized. Hardly a home in the city owns a picture by any of these men (Group of Seven) who are most bought by the Art Gallery. People will not desecrate their homes by hanging them."

When he came back to Canada in 1932 and subsequently opened a cooperative school of art in Toronto and Hamilton, John Russell declared "I am decidedly European now, but I never forget Canada. I don't think any man does really, the country where he was born. And, this country has sufficient traditions and marvellous beauty of landscape on which the individual stamp of Canadian character could be placed by creative genius properly developed."

"It is so difficult to describe Mr. Russell's art,  
it is so versatile and yet so personal, art that is unhampered  
by tradition, courageous in conception,  
original in attack, certain in execution and withal subtle and beautiful."  
- Newton MacTavish, "The Art of John Russell"  
*Canadian Magazine* April, 1911

## JOSEPH ERNEST SAMPSON

(1887 – 1946)

### AN INNOVATIVE, TALENTED ARTIST WHO IS OVERLOOKED

His portraits at Queen's Park:

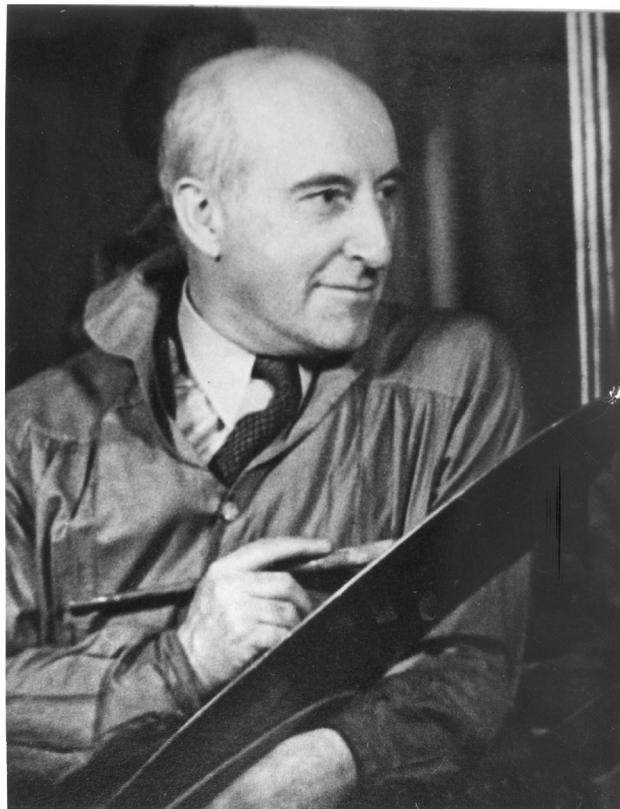


Image of Joseph Sampson by Charles Aylett from The Arts & Letters Club of Toronto

Hon. Norman Otto Hipel, Speaker of the Ontario Legislature (1935-38)

Hon. James Howard Clark, Speaker of the Ontario Legislature (1939-43)

Joseph Sampson was born in Liverpool, England, and at age 22 came to Toronto. After a short while, he travelled back across the Atlantic to France, in order to study art. When he returned to Toronto in 1913, he was hired on at Stone Ltd. (later to become Rolph, Clark, Stone) as Art Director. In a short while he became a pioneer of silkscreen printing in Canada.

He worked with Charles Matthews, as well as two of the Group of Seven, A.J. Casson and A.Y. Jackson. They developed a program which transformed works by Canadian artists into high-quality silkscreen prints and distributed them across Canada. The initial goal of the Sampson-Matthews print program was to create sponsored reproductions of Canadian paintings for display at armed forces bases and administrative offices around the world.

They were to serve as a reminder of what Canada was fighting for during the Second World War. The first series of wartime prints was printed in 1942, and was approved for distribution by the Department of National Defence in 1943.

These wartime prints were so popular that they were also featured in art exhibitions, public schools, libraries, dentists' offices, banks, corporate offices, and in embassies and consulates across Canada and internationally. In total, there were 36 wartime prints by renowned Canadian artists. The prints are credited with enhancing public knowledge of Canadian art and Canadian national identity throughout the 1940s to 1960s, and they continue to be valued as works of art in their own right to this day.

Joseph Sampson was quite versatile, painting portraits, figures and landscapes, and working in both oil and watercolour. Original paintings reproduced in the Sampson-Matthews print program can be found in public collections at the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, the Montreal Museum of Fine Art, the Art Gallery of Ontario, and the National Gallery of Canada.

## KENNETH FORBES

(1892 – 1980)

“Portrait work is the study of humanity – to me it is the most absorbing phase of art,”  
- Kenneth Forbes

His portraits at Queen’s Park:

Sir John George Lampton, Governor General of British North America 1838

Hon. George Howard Ferguson, Premier of Ontario 1923-30

Hon. Thomas Laird Kennedy, Prime Minister of Ontario 1948-49

Hon Leslie Miscampbell Frost, Premier of Ontario 1949-61

Hon. Alfred Wallace Downer, Speaker of the Ontario Legislature 1955-59

Hon. William Murdock, Speaker of the Ontario Legislature 1960-63

Hon. Donald Hugo Morrow, Speaker of the Ontario Legislature 1963-67

The phrase “like father, like son” needs to be changed for the Forbes family, to “like father, like son, like wife, like daughter.” The father, John Colin Forbes (1846-1925) is considered one of Canada’s leading portrait painters. The son, Kenneth Keith Forbes began drawing at age 4, when he drew a perfect bull using a pencil. In the years that followed, he got his formal training, established himself as a talented portrait artist, and in 1967 was awarded the Order of Canada “for his contributions to the arts as a landscape and portrait painter.” His wife, Jean Forbes, was also an excellent painter. Her work was mostly of landscapes, horses and still life. Kenneth and Jean’s only daughter, June Forbes McCormack was a talented portrait artist, who unfortunately died of cancer at age 39.

Two of her paintings are at Queen’s Park:

Louis Joseph Montcalm, Commander-in-Chief, French Forces in Canada, 1756-59

Hon. Sir Louis Hippolyte LaFontaine, Premier of the Province of Canada 1842-43, 1848-51

“Like father, like daughter.” Kenneth Forbes enlisted in the Canadian Army in World War I, was a machine gunner, was wounded twice, survived a gas attack, and then became a commissioned war artist, painting the reality of war. June Forbes served with the Women’s Division of the R.C.A.F. as a sergeant during the Second World War.

Kenneth Forbes, while he exhibited artistic talent at age 4, really wanted to join the circus. In fact, on one occasion, 6 year old Kenneth was found in a circus yard, having run away from home. He had been gone 3 days before being located.

Later he combined his formal training with amateur boxing, and became light-and middle-weight champion of the University of London while attending the Slade School of Fine Art. When in the Army, he became boxing champion of the British Army's 111th Brigade.

Kenneth Forbes didn't mince words when describing his feelings about abstract art as is evident from a quotation reported in a 1959 story in the *Toronto Telegram*: "The current trend to modern abstracts is part of a giant hoax originating in France. The French have an excess of low-grade painters so the government builds them up with publicity and hangs their works in the Louvre." The story related how he led a small group of artists away from the Ontario Society of Artists to form a new group, the Ontario Institute of Painters. He felt that his traditional artistic values were threatened by abstraction.

When Kenneth Forbes passed away, he left behind one of his most treasured paintings, "The Catch," treasured because it was of June, his only daughter, age 16 when she posed for the painting. In 2001, that painting was stolen from the family's Toronto apartment which June's son, Tim McCormack, was selling at the time. The value of the painting to Kenneth was infinitely more than its market value of \$5,000 to \$10,000. Tim is quoted as saying at the time: "His paintings of his family were the most important paintings to him." A lasting memory of Tim's mother, a mother who died when Tim was age 2, had been stolen.

Kenneth Forbes was a highly talented, remarkable man. So too were his wife and daughter. Very much a traditionalist in his approach to painting, he also had strong views about being an artist.

"To become an artist you must start by the age of 10.  
After 14 would be too late. The craft is so difficult to master."  
- Kenneth Forbes

## KENNETH SALTMARCHE

(1920 – 2003)

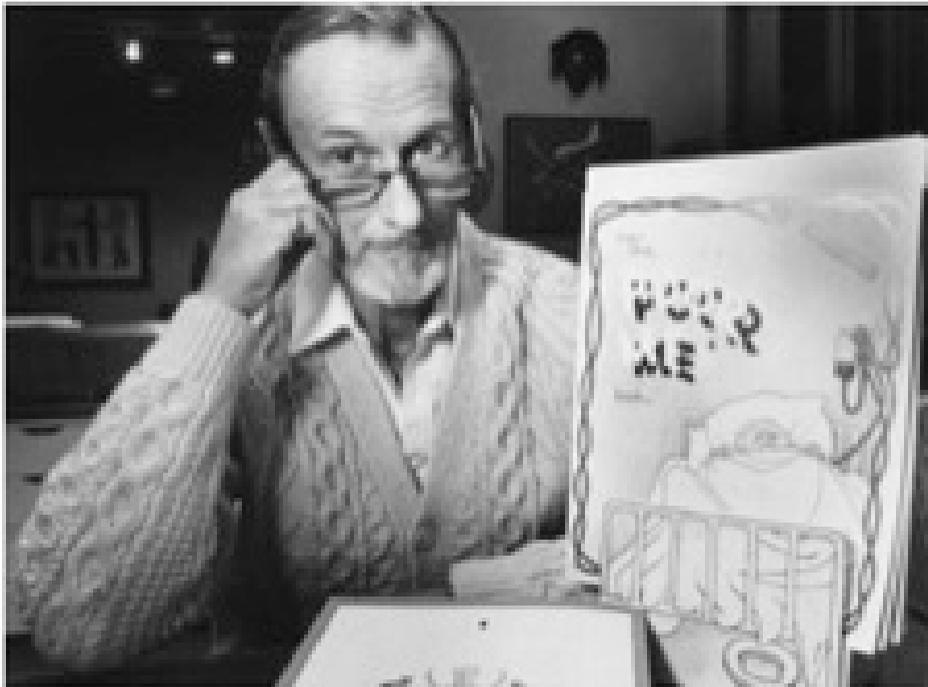
“... seeing that show (exhibition of Group of Seven reproductions) was the pivotal point in his passion for art,”

- Noel Saltmarche

His portraits at Queen's Park:

Hon. James de Congalton Hepburn, Speaker of the Ontario Legislature 1947-48

Hon. Rev. Myrddyn Davies, Speaker of the Ontario Legislature 1949-55



Kenneth Saltmarche was 4-years-old when he arrived with his family in Canada from Cardiff, Wales and settled in Vienna, Ontario. It was in Vienna's one room schoolhouse that Kenneth was able to see the travelling exhibition of a Group of Seven reproductions. And thus began his pursuit of life as an artist. During the Depression Years of the 1930's, Saltmarche worked lots of part-time jobs while attending night school in Windsor and in Detroit.

Kenneth Saltmarche, ca. 1970s; courtesy of The Windsor Star. Image from the Windsor Public Library website

When World War II started, he was not found fit to serve in the Armed Forces, because he was underweight and suffered from respiratory problems. He was, however, accepted as a student at the Ontario College of Art, and in 1945 graduated with honours. The next step was studying in New York City under the direction of American artist Julian Levi.

“An accomplished artist, Saltmarche ultimately made his greatest mark as an arts administrator and is being remembered as one of the last of a dying generation of artists-turned-gallery directors who revitalized the art scene across the country.”

- Bill Gladstone, genealogist 2011

On returning to Windsor, Kenneth got the position of full-time curator of the Library Board and Art Association. As curator, Kenneth focused on acquiring historical and contemporary Canadian work, especially the Group of Seven paintings. He also began writing as an art critic for the Windsor Star.

Along with his wife Judy (whom he married in 1948), Saltmarche found creative ways to connect the gallery to the community. It was hands across the border, as well, as he developed a great working relationship with the Detroit Institute of Art.

During much of the time between 1945 and 1970, Saltmarche was able to juggle his duties at the Gallery with travelling and painting. Italy, Sardinia, Spain, Mexico, the United States and Canada all provided locales for his seascapes and landscapes.

In reference to Saltmarche's paintings from Florida and the Bahamas, James Elliot, wrote in the Windsor Star – in 1981, "It is to his credit, and enormously refreshing, that the artist's view is clear and uncluttered."

Kenneth Saltmarche was a Member of the Order of Canada and held an honorary law degree from the University of Windsor. He was the founding president of the Ontario Association of Art Galleries, and a founding member and past president of the Canadian Art Museum Directors Organization.

## INTERVIEW WITH LINDA KOOLURIS DOBBS

BY DAVID WARNER

"The portraits of Kooluris Dobbs are a dramatic piece of theatre caught on canvass"  
- Joan Murray, *Chimo Magazine* 1985

Portrait at Queen's Park:

Hon. David R. Peterson, Premier of Ontario 1985-90

Linda is originally from New Jersey. Her mother was considered the leading exponent of her generation of the dance of Isadora Duncan and various members of her extended family were in the arts. In her childhood, her summer days were spent at the School of Creative Arts on Martha's Vineyard. Then, within a span of five years, she graduated in 1968 with honours from Pine Manor College (where she also received an Honorary Doctorate in Visual Arts from in 2016), studied at the Sorbonne in Paris (1968-'69), received a BFA degree from The School of Visual Arts in New York City (1969-'72), and moved to Montreal (1973) to create illustrations for magazines and a newspaper. By 1978, she was living in Toronto.

Nine years of this hectic pace constantly meeting magazine and newspaper deadlines was enough. She changed direction and pursued portraiture and fine art while teaching graphic



Images of Linda Kooluris Dobbs from Edwin Luk, SVPhotography

design, colour, illustration and commercial art. A distinctive feature of her portraits over fifty years is that they are painted in acrylic. She has contributed to and her work has been featured in many Canadian and American publications. Her landscapes, still-lives, portraits and photographs are found in corporate and private collections worldwide. Understandably, going from the sketching to the finished product takes a great deal of time. Linda explains what it is like for her when she is nearing completion of the painting. “When I come to the end, I’m like a racehorse going to the finish line. It becomes a compulsion and I work until it’s finished.” I asked her about the importance of public portraiture. “The portrait should reflect something about the times. You can read inside the person, by clothing, items in the picture associated with the subject. It can be intuitive; a story to be told.”

I was also curious about her current attraction to “Matisse-inspired still life.” “Matisse’s work is playful, rich, colourful and direct. I am now more interested in having fewer elements in my painting.”

Linda’s studio is in her apartment. As she showed me various canvasses, current projects she is working on, I couldn’t help but think of how fortunate those students at Ryerson University were to have Linda Kooluris Dobbs as an instructor. In her private watercolour class, she confided that she has some exceptionally talented students, adding “You can be taught to be good, but to be great is something you are born with.”

Hal Jackman, former Lieutenant Governor, who had his portrait painted in 1997 by Linda Kooluris Dobbs observed, “Artists have a greater impact on history than the Governors, who are just the subject.”

Linda very graciously explains that the wide variety of art work on the walls of her apartment is a collection of memories; memories associated with her successful career as an artist and her life with Kildare Dobbs, essayist, poet and travel writer who passed away in 2013. It was a magical moment says Linda when the two of them met, dated for two weeks before he proposed and she accepted. They were married for 33 years, the bond so strong and meaningful that when Kildare became seriously ill Linda did not paint for five years. What sustained her during that period was being invited to be an official photographer of the Canada Salsa and Bachata Congress. Eight years later, she continues to capture these world talents of Latin Dance. Two years after Kildare passed away she was approached by Stephen Coxford, who served as Chair of the Board of



Governors, Western University, 2012-13, to paint his official portrait. That and some watercolours was the beginning of the road back to once again creating beautiful art.

This talented portrait artist, painted former Premier David Peterson (1985-1990) in 1998. It hangs in Queen's Park. When painting portraits, she tries to capture a "magical moment"; connecting with the person's background, the things which matter to the subject. In an interview with Western News (Western University) Linda Kooluris Dobbs provided insight about her approach to portraiture. "I start with the face, with the eyes, so I can immediately connect with the spirit of the person. I have to do it that way," said the Toronto-based portrait artist. "Once in my lifetime I didn't follow that rule and I never felt connected to my subject. The eyes engage with me. Before I even do a photoshoot, I need to know a lot about the person, a lot about how they feel they should be remembered in history, what objects represent them," Dobbs explained. "You have to be a little in love with your subject to make it really happen. I am not talking about romance – it is something else that takes over. You embrace this person."

In our interview she went on to explain why she starts with photographing the subject. "What the camera is doing for me is sketching. The camera captures a moment in time; it is my sketchpad." She hopes that the painted image will reflect even more.

"Every painting I do, I hope to do something I haven't done before"

## LOUIS-PHILIPPE HEBERT

(1850 – 1917)

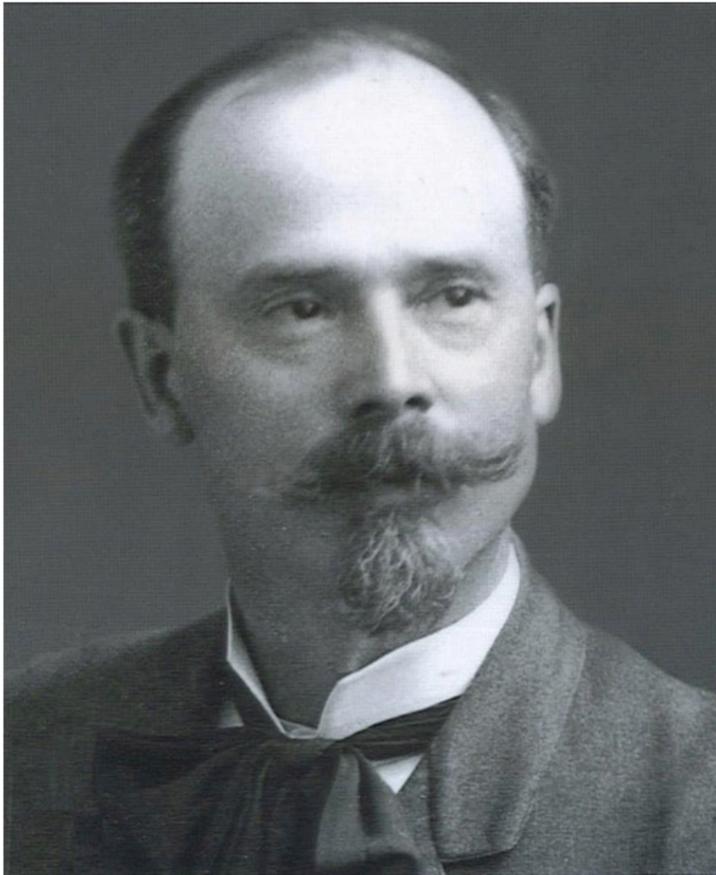
“The first Canadian sculptor of commemorative statues.”

- *La Presse*, June 14, 1917

His work at Queen’s Park

Bronze plated statuette of The Rt. Hon. Sir John A. Macdonald,  
Prime Minister of Canada, 1867–1873, 1878-1891

Bronze plated plaster bust of Sir George Etienne Carter, Joint  
Prime Minister of the Province of Canada 1857-1862



Louis-Philippe Hébert was born in Sainte-Sophie-d’Halifax, a small town east of Montreal on the south shore of the St. Lawrence River. He was the 3rd of 13 children. As a young child he had a passion for carving, from his imagination, wooden horses and people.

Between the ages of 6 and 13 he attended school off and on, and then he worked in turn at an uncle’s general store, on the family farm, and for the Grand Trunk Railway. In late September 1869 he left home and country and went to Rome with the fifth detachment of Papal Zouaves.

Between February 1868 and September 1870, 7 contingents totalling 507 Canadians enrolled in the papal army (whose soldiers were known as Papal Zouaves) to help defend Rome from the Italian troops who wanted to bring about Italian unification.

The last contingent of 114 recruits left too late and had to turn back. Rome had surrendered on September 20.

Hébert had time to visit museums and churches while in Rome. Seeing the beautiful works of art had quite an impact on the 19 year old.

“Though the sight of all these marvels rekindled my longing for beauty [and] whetted my desire to become a sculptor, it often discouraged me. All these beautiful works seemed to me like challenges flung at my feebleness.”

Hébert returned to Montreal and in 1873, Napoleon Bourassa, one of the most versatile and prominent Montreal artists of his time, noticed a small bust Hébert had done, and decided to take him on as an apprentice. Hébert spent six years with Bourassa, devoting the first few mainly to learning to draw and model in the master's studio on Rue Sainte-Julie and at the school sponsored by the Council of Arts and Manufactures of the Province of Quebec. His skills and reputation grew, and in 1880 he received his first commission to sculpt a commemorative monument in bronze. His memorial to Charles-Michel d'Irumberry de Salaberry was unveiled in Châteauguay on 7 June 1881. In describing the ceremony, the Montreal newspaper *La Minerve* noted:

“This is the first time a statue representing someone of purely Canadian fame is being erected in a public place, and all with the aid of a nationally subscribed fund.” (Editors Note: Today, it would be the Department of Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism.)

Hebert was commissioned to create 10 bronze statues for the new National Assembly in Quebec City. One of the statues is the piece for the entrance, a group of Indigenous people known as *Famille d'Abénaquis* or *Halte dans la forêt*.

Comments by newspapers and Hebert's biographer, Bruno Hébert, at the time of his death, reveal the greatness of Louis-Philippe Hebert. “Philippe Hébert was the great illustrator of our history,” observed *Le Devoir* on 14 June 1917.

“His work is a heroic and timeless commentary on it.” On the same day *La Presse* declared, “His monuments live on after him and will recall to future generations the memory of this honest citizen and artist of whom we have the right to be proud.” Bruno Hébert wrote: He imported into Canada an art until then reserved for the Old World. In this sense, he created . . . something new and also ushered in an important stage in the history of art in Canada. Canadian sculpture is indebted to Hébert, who brought it into the modern era.

He blazed the trail for a new generation who would abandon wood for bronze, just as they would desert the churches for public squares and museums.

MILDRED PEEL  
(1856 – 1920)

AN ACCOMPLISHED ARTIST, TEACHER, AND A LEADING FIGURE IN  
THE LOCAL ARTS COMMUNITY

Portraits at Queen's Park:

Hon. Francis Eugene Alfred Ewanturel, Speaker of the Ontario  
Legislature, 1897-1902

Hon. William Douglas Balfour, Speaker of the Ontario  
Legislature, 1895-96

Hon. Rupert Mearse Wells, Speaker of the Ontario  
Legislature, 1874-79

Hon. James George Currie, Speaker of the Ontario  
Legislature, 1871-73

Laura Secord, Loyalist, heroine of the War of 1812

Hon. Sir Matthew Crooks Cameron, Chief Justice of the  
Court of Common Pleas, 1884

Busts at Queen's Park:

Laura Secord, Loyalist, heroine of the War of 1812  
Provost Thomas Clark Street Macklem, Provost and  
Vice-Chancellor, University of Trinity College, 1900-21  
Father John Teefy, Superior of St. Michael's College,  
U of T, 1880-1903

Archbishop John Joseph Lynch, First RC Archbishop of  
Toronto, 1870

John R. Peel, an accomplished artist, father of Mildred and Paul, provided his children with their first instruction in the arts and was involved in several initiatives to “stimulate a passion for arts in the community” including co-founding the Western School of Art and Design and organizing the first Art Loan exhibition in London, Ontario. He was a stone carver and drawing instructor, and Mildred did some sculpture for him.

The Peel children studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and in France. Paul, the younger of the siblings, became a famous landscape and portrait artist. Mildred was a model for her brother's oil paintings when they spent the summers of 1884 and 85 in Pont-Aven, Brittany. Paul Peel became one of two Canadians to win a Paris Salon medal. Mildred was one of the first women in Canada to complete publicly commissioned sculptures.

## A Mystery and Mischief

At Queen's Park there are two paintings which are the subject of a mystery; a painting of Laura Secord, heroine of the War of 1812, and an X-ray of the portrait of Laura Secord which reveals an underpainting of a portrait of Premier George Ross. Who painted the portrait of Premier Ross? Was it Mildred Peel or W.A. Sherwood? Sometime in 1904 or 1905 Premier Ross had his portrait painted. However, he didn't like the painting, and Cabinet refused to pay for it. Mildred Peel acquired the portrait, added a bonnet, lace cuffs, the illusion of a dress and went back to the government to see if they might be interested in purchasing a portrait of the famous Laura Secord! They bought it. Years later, Premier Mitch Hepburn, acting on suspicions which were swirling around, had an x-ray taken of the painting. The suspicions were substantiated. Sure enough, behind Laura Secord was George Ross. Adding to the intrigue is the fact that Mildred Peel knew Premier Ross quite well at the time. Also, two other commissioned portraits of Ross were already in the provincial collection by 1904 (by A.D. Patterson & Forster), and it is possible that Cabinet could simply have refused another portrait on grounds other than those of artistic merit.

Two years after George Ross lost the election of 1905 he and Mildred were married. The identity of the artist of the George Ross painting remains a mystery!

Mildred Peel, accomplished sculptor and portrait painter, died in California while visiting her sister.

### INTERVIEW WITH PHIL RICHARDS

BY DAVID WARNER

“By age 12 I knew that I wanted to devote my life to painting.”

His portraits at Queen's Park:

Hon. Robert K. Rae, Premier of Ontario 1990-1995  
Hon. Gary Carr, Speaker of the Ontario  
Legislature 1999-2003

Phil Richards started drawing at age three and hasn't stopped. He is part of a line of painters, following his Welsh father and grandfather, and will be succeeded by one of his three sons, and possibly his granddaughter. He proudly showed me a few samples of the artistic endeavours of the four-year old.

Richards has many interesting connections to Scarborough, Ontario. Along Kingston Road, there are a series of outdoor heritage murals, which depict the early days of this Toronto suburb. The mural, “In the Way of Progress,” situated near Kingston Road and St. Clair Avenue, was created as part of Scarborough's bicentennial celebrations in 1996. Richards, his wife Jennifer, who is also an artist, and son Jamie are the muralists.

The scene, depicting the intersection in 1922, has R.H. King Collegiate (originally Scarborough  
2018



High School) in the background, and as he lived nearby, that was the school he attended, and in grade nine, he met Jennifer. “I have lived most, but not my entire life in Scarborough. As an infant, I lived for a year in a train station in Melancthon, a small village not far from Orangeville, that now no longer exists. My grandmother was the stationmaster at the Melancthon train station, and had brought up her five daughters at that location.

My mother, brother and I stayed there while my dad was finishing our new home in Scarborough.” A deep love of painting, and the inner desire to follow his dream, led Richards to decline a full scholarship to the University of Toronto so he could attend the Ontario College of Art (now OCAD University). That decision has resulted in nearly 50 years of his beautiful art being exhibited commercially in Canada, the U.S. and Europe.

Sitting in the kitchen of the Richards home, which houses the family studio, I was curious about what drives Phil Richards, why he keeps painting. “As students at O.C.A., we often discussed why we aimed to become artists. We decided that one should only become a painter if you felt that there was no other choice, that nothing else would satisfy the creative drive. Painting is a kind of pure pleasure. Yes, it is a solitary occupation, and you have to be self-motivated, but it is what I wanted to do and continue doing.”

I asked if there was a connection between pain and creativity. He replied, “Unfortunately, I have found that the pain of struggling to survive as an artist does elevate your art. And, as you get older, there is the added stress of dealing with the ageing body at the time when, ironically, the work itself is improving through experience. In addition, the financially precarious art world and market is a constant issue in an artist’s life.”

## Phil Richards has an audience with Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II

To celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II in 2012, the Canadian government commissioned a state portrait of the constitutional monarch. From a short list of accomplished portrait artists who had been invited to submit a proposal for the commission, Her Majesty chose Phil Richards to paint her portrait.

In a CBC interview with Peter Mansbridge (One On One – October 13, 2012), Mansbridge seems startled by Richard's comment that he and the Queen have something in common, in terms of attitude. He went on to explain that he, like the Queen, has been steadfastly devoted to his work, seems born to do what he does, and enjoys his vocation. Both the 22 minute CBC interview, and the 41-minute National Film Board production, "The Portrait," which documents the painting process, provide excellent insight into how this talented artist creates and why.

I asked him what was special about portraiture. "Looking at the faces of others is how we connect with and understand the world outside of ourselves. The face is probably the most important single image in most of our lives, and as such, will always have an important role in any imagery that we produce."

Although portraiture is now a large part of Richards' output, he also paints genre paintings (scenes with figures), as well as landscapes and still lifes. The photo accompanying this article is of a mixed media genre painting featuring his wife, Jennifer, and two of their sons, Jamie and Mark. This large painting (78" by 90") is done in acrylic paints on canvas with additional three-dimensional elements in wood and plaster. It is one of many of a large number of non-commissioned, or gallery works, that make up Richards' complete body of work.

If you visited Dundas Enclosure of Toronto's Eaton Centre shopping mall between 1986 and 2003, perhaps you gazed up at the large Chinese, Japanese, Balinese and Maori kites, along with figure paintings suspended from the ceiling. This dramatic piece of public art, entitled "Grand Illusion," was created by Phil Richards. In 2003, the Eaton Centre underwent a major renovation and the multi-part 3D work needed a new home. Phil donated Grand Illusion to the MacLaren Art Centre in Barrie, Ontario, which in turn, had it installed in the Barrie Public Library.

One of Richards' concerns is that is becoming more difficult for today's young artists to make a living in their chosen field. "I think that the popularity of drawing and painting has declined over the last half century, and the art collecting market has seen a similar decline. Without collectors to buy the artist's work, there is no consistent means of supporting full-time artists. This is quite worrisome, especially for future generations."

Richards is an accomplished visual artist. Although he has had the great honour of painting Her Majesty the Queen, his humility is obvious. He continues to explore the world of art, trying to find new horizons. In devoting his life to painting, he is creating a more beautiful world.

## ROBERT HARRIS

(1849 – 1919)

“THE FATHERS OF CONFEDERATION,” A REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENT!

His Portraits at Queen’s Park

The Right Hon. Sir John Alexander Macdonald,  
Prime Minister of Canada 1867-73, 1878-91  
Sir Oliver Mowat, Premier, Lieutenant  
Governor of Ontario 1872-1903



A self portrait by Robert Harris

The story of the iconic painting of “The Fathers of Confederation” is a story of talent, tragedy and betrayal. In 1883 Robert Harris was commissioned by the Government of Canada to paint a group picture of the men who had helped create the new Dominion, based on attendance at the 1864 Charlottetown Conference. Harris spent a lot of time doing the preparatory sketches, and just when he reached the point where he could start the final stage of painting, the Government of Canada changed its mind and wanted to base the painting on the Quebec Conference, which was held later the same year. This decision not only meant adding 12 more figures, but it meant that he had to do a lot more research, because the Quebec Legislature had burned down, and the documentation needed was in that building. Harris travelled the country collecting the needed information. At the end, he was paid \$4,000. His expenses, however, were \$3,000.

Upon completion of the painting, Robert Harris married Elizabeth Putnam, daughter of his landlady, and the two of them headed off to Europe on their honeymoon. They returned home to learn that his work had not been copyrighted, as promised. Photographers and copyists had been allowed to reproduce his masterpiece. Robert Harris expressed publicly, “I felt robbed of everything.”

Then, tragically, there was a fire in 1916 at the Parliament Buildings and the great painting was destroyed. What is left is the original charcoal sketch, which is at the National Gallery in Ottawa. The Government asked Harris to paint another one. The request was rather tactless, given how poorly Robert Harris had been treated. He turned down the opportunity. It is doubtful that he could have done the work anyway as he was in poor health.

In 1917 the Ontario Government commissioned Frederick Challenger to paint “The Fathers of Confederation” based on Robert Harris’ original charcoal sketch. Challenger likely was selected because 3 years earlier he had painted a copy of the now famous painting.

Robert Harris was born in Wales and was one of seven children. When he was age 7, the family moved to Charlottetown, P. E. I., which became a home for the heart, despite his later travels throughout Canada, Europe and the United States..

Natural talent and skills, honed by studying in Belgium, Holland, Rome, Florence, Vienna and Spain, molded him into an artist who not only excelled at portraiture, but also at landscape. He was never without his sketchbook. Those sketchbooks, which are on exhibit at the Robert Harris Gallery, Confederation Centre for the Arts, Charlottetown, reveal his speciality, human beings and their character; not just people, but their pets, farmsteads, seashores, hay fields and streetscapes. He painted in watercolours and oil; painted figures and landscapes; expressed the allegorical and historical.

The irony of the unhappy experience connected with painting the “Fathers of Confederation” was that Robert Harris saw portraiture as a way to make a living.

## INTERVIEW WITH RON KINGSWOOD

BY DAVID WARNER

“I paint because of the sheer desire of the next painting.  
It will be the best one I ever did.”

His portrait at Queen’s Park: Hon. Steve Peters, Speaker of the Ontario Legislature 2007-2011

As a young boy growing up in rural Southwestern Ontario, Ron Kingswood was fascinated with the beauty of wild animals. He accompanied his dad on hunting forays for rabbits and pheasants, got to examine them closely, and appreciated their beauty. The woodland experiences led him to enrol at H. B. Beal Secondary School in London, Ontario, a school with a century long history of producing talented artists. “While I learned valuable skills, what I appreciated most was learning art history,” he explained. “I became absorbed with the history of art and so, armed with this knowledge, I found it necessary to apply this to my nature painting.”

Ron Kingswood established himself as a prominent painter of wild places and the animals that inhabit them, earning the praise of the late American mammal painter Bob Kuhn and the famous Canadian artist Robert Bateman. So, how does a prominent painter of wild life end up doing the portrait of the Speaker of the Ontario Legislature? Well, it is said that timing is everything.

In 2003, Ron Kingswood set commercial success aside and embarked on a very different path. He explained that he was tired of contributing to a genre that he found formulaic, unimaginative and derivative. “Before I can interpret nature with fresh eyes, I need to deconstruct my old ways of thinking about colour, design, composition and purpose.” The year 2005 found him producing art in a different style and receiving enthusiastic praise for it. Art historian Susan Simpson Gallagher, former curator at the National Museum of Wildlife Art is quoted as saying: “His compositions aren’t intended to provide a tidy, self-contained narrative. That’s the joy of being an artist – demanding that viewers use their own imaginations on the most basic level. The irony is that Ron is one of the most sophisticated painters I’ve ever come across. There is a level of intelligence in his work which is mind-boggling.”

Kingswood had returned to animal painting. He lived not too far from the town of St. Thomas and grew up with Steve Peters. I thought it would be a challenge for someone who specializes in wildlife painting to turn to portraiture, and I asked him about it.

“The challenge wasn’t in the drawing. It was with the architecture and design of the painting, accommodating the various items, thirteen in all, that Peters desired to have in the portrait. I enjoyed doing it,” Kingswood declared.



Image of Ron Kingswood. Photo by Linda Kingswood

## Why is public art important?

“Public art is very important. It is how we showcase our culture. Having cities devote a certain portion of a commercial development to public art helps a city define its culture as well as beautify the city.”

Ron Kingswood’s new approach has garnered praise from many in the art world. Jonathan Cooper, of the Jonathan Cooper Gallery in London, England described it as follows: “Ron has an individual contemporary vision. I see what he does as the natural progression of the greats that have come before him, the artists that stir the soul and make you want to know more.” Ron Kingswood’s work can also be found in the following galleries: Gerald Peters Gallery, Santa Fe, New Mexico; Paderewski Fine Art, Beaver Creek, Colorado and Charleston, South Carolina; Salamon & C Art Gallery, Milan, Italy; Simpson Gallagher, Cody, Wyoming; and the Trailside Galleries, Jackson Hole and Scottsdale, Arizona.

This remarkable Canadian artist has fashioned and re-fashioned his innate artistic talents, discovering how he can represent the natural world, searching for deeper meaning and not giving in to fear or apprehension.

“The survival of a voice is a determination, only by those ready to unearth oneself.”

- Ron Kingswood

THÉOPHILE HAMEL  
(BAPTIZED AS FRANCOIS XAVIER)  
(1817 - 1870)

His portraits at Queen's Park:

The Rev. Dr. Adolphus Egerton Ryerson, Chief Superintendent of Education, Canada West/Ontario 1844-76  
John George Hodgins, Deputy Superintendent of Education, Canada West/Ontario 1855-89

“Théophile Hamel succeeded in finding a style which suited his temperament and the aspirations of Canadian society in the 1850s.”  
- Raymond Vezina, Dictionary of Canadian Biography

Théophile Hamel, self-portrait c. 1837



Théophile Hamel was born near Quebec City. At the age of 16 he became an apprentice to Quebec's most prominent artist, Antoine Plamondon. It was a 6 year contract arranged between Hamel's father and the artist. Plamondon agreed to teach young Théophile everything about the art of painting, but Théophile must agree to “not frequent taverns, gambling dens, or other houses of doubtful repute.” He did.

Thereafter, Hamel began his career with encouragement from three leading social groups interested in art: the clergy, politicians, and businessmen. He travelled to Belgium, France and Italy, spending most of his time in Italy, particularly Rome and Venice.

Apparently, after a year and a half in Italy he was experiencing financial difficulties, prompting a Canadian priest in Rome to petition the Canadian government to assist him. While it is unclear as to whether the Canadian government helped Théophile, he did remain in Italy for some time. Despite his earlier financial difficulties, Hamel had sufficiently honed his skills that he was able to set up a studio upon returning to Quebec, and after a few years was living quite comfortably from his work as an artist.

In addition to prosperity, Théophile Hamel had won the respect of the elite. His work merits careful scrutiny for the close relation between its themes and the social groups from which his commissions came. He was appointed official portrait painter by the Quebec Government in June 1853, and entrusted with the task of painting the portraits of the Speakers of the assemblies and legislative councils who had served since 1791. This honour was equivalent to recognizing him as the best painter of his day.

Hamel also painted for the Government a series of historical portraits, one of which is of particular note, that of Jacques Cartier. He made a copy based on a copy of a François Riss original and preserved at Saint-Malo. Hamel's copy was reproduced on dollar bills and stamps, and in textbooks.

Three elements constantly recur in Théophile Hamel's painting. First, dignity: within the limited range of feelings in his many portraits, the considerable nobility that characterizes his art is always present. Second, realism: contemporary critics never ceased to praise the likeness between his portraits and the models, his most enduring merit. Finally, the very restraint of the technique, which gives most of his works a solidity accentuated by the contrast of dark and warm tones.

## THOMAS MOWER MARTIN (1838-1934)

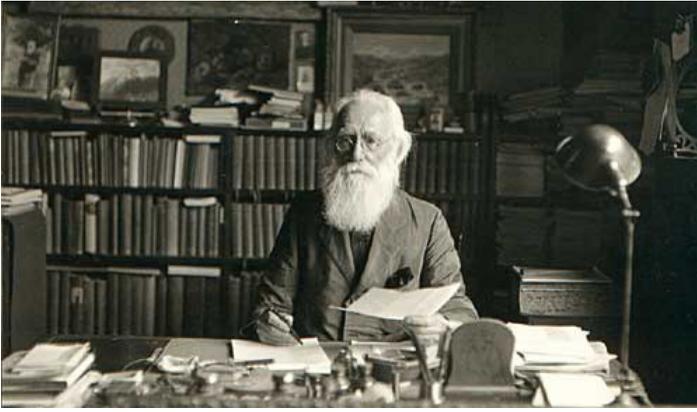
His portrait at Queen's Park:

Thomas Jeffray Robertson, first Headmaster  
Toronto Normal School, 1847-66

“The best artists of today are using the same methods as Rembrandt and Van Dyke did, and that is, to put your colours on your palette and then paint what you see.”

- Thomas Martin

Thomas Martin, born in England, was orphaned at age 15. At age 24, a self-taught artist and married to Emma Nichols, he responded to the Canadian government's offer of 107 acres of free land, if he would farm the land. So, in 1862 Thomas Martin and his wife Emma built a small house in Muskoka, Ontario and attempted to farm, what he subsequently described as “100 acres of rock and 7 acres of swamp.”



A year later, finding it impossible to farm, the Martin family moved south to York Mills, which at that time was a small settlement north of Toronto, near Yonge St. and York Mills Road. He commuted by stagecoach to his drafting job in Toronto. A short time thereafter, he bought a house, which included a large studio, on Crescent Road, an area near Yorkville and became a full time artist.

In 1874, the Martins purchased 76 acres in the valley on the east side of Yonge Street as an investment. Thomas Martin's favourite landscape subjects to paint included the Don River, back roads, fruits, flowers and wildlife. Early in his career he was able to persuade a New York art dealer to exhibit his painting of a hunting dog carrying a bird in its mouth. This resulted in a commission to do 6 paintings of game. For one of these paintings he "rented" a deer from the local butcher for \$1.00 per day to "model" for a hunting scene.

In 1872, Thomas Martin, became the founding member of the Ontario Society of Artists, and when the Society opened an art school in 1877, he was its first Director. His art reflected reality rather than the formalized traditions of European landscape painters.

"You can't improve on nature, but you can study her well,  
you can interpret her with sympathy – but don't try to improve her."  
- Thomas Martin

The 1880's was the era of railways in Canada. William Van Horne, owner of the Canadian Pacific Railway, hired artists to paint scenes on his newly opened railway. The artists were given free passage in return for their art, which would be used to promote the railway, and its hotels. Thomas Martin quit his position as Director of the art school to be one of those artists.

Through his painting, writing, and as founder of The Royal Canadian Academy (1880), Thomas Martin became known as "The Dean of Canadian Artists." He remained in good health to age 96, continuing to paint. At age 95 he did his last painting "The Last Portage," which shows a party of Indigenous people in Northern Ontario perilously close to a pack of wolves in the bush during the first snowfall of the season.

Thomas Martin wrote two books, "Artists' Letters From The Rockies" and "Canada From An Artist's View," published a book entitled "Canada," which included 77 of his paintings, and published articles on philosophy and religion. His philosophy on life was that friendliness is the secret to happiness.

"That is what we are here for, to enjoy each other and  
do what we can for each other."  
- Thomas Martin

# The Chamber

The decoration of the Chamber was under the direction of William H. Elliott & Son, Decorative Contractors. They hired Gustav Hahn to create the murals on the ceiling and walls, and an unknown number of carvers to create the beautiful carvings and designs in wood and plaster.

The principal carver was William McCormack, a Scottish master carver whose work can be found in several prominent buildings in Toronto, including University College and Trinity College Chapel, both at the University of Toronto. Among the exquisite carvings in the Chamber is a magnificent panel containing the Royal Arms of William McCormack and signed by him in the bottom right-hand corner. Two other carvings of note are one to the Opposition side of the House, the other to the Government side, whose messages are meaningful.

Traditionally, the Government sits to the Speaker's right and the Opposition to the Speaker's left. Carvings to the Speaker's right, are: "Sapere Aude" - Dare to be wise, and "Docendo Discimus" - By teaching we learn. Fittingly, these words appear above an owl.

A carving to the Speaker's left, is the inscription "Gubernatio bona fructum parit" - Good Government Bears Fruit. It was one of the two inscriptions carved into blank spaces in the Chamber on occasion of the Millennial in 2000. Curiously, the bird appears to be a pelican. It could have been added as a whimsical creature or perhaps a type of gargoyle or gryphon.



GUSTAV HAHN  
(1866 – 1962)

His work at Queen's Park:

The murals on the ceiling and walls of the  
Legislative Chamber

“Hahn became a major force in Canada and helped win the acceptance of  
decorative art as an important art form”

- Donald Jones, Historical Toronto, *Toronto Star*, August 21, 1976

Sometimes timing is everything! Gustav Hahn, an experienced European artist who had trained in Stuttgart, Munich and Italy, arrived from his native Germany in 1888 just in time to apply for the position of principal designer for the well-established William H. Elliott & Son, Decorative Contractors. A 27 year old Gustav then created the elegant, allegorical mural in an art nouveau style on the ceiling and north wall of the Legislature's Chamber.

This magnificent artwork was covered over in 1912 because the Members complained that the acoustics were so bad, they couldn't hear. During the refurbishment of the Chamber in 1994 the artwork was discovered and restoration was undertaken. As of 2018 the restoration is not complete.



Photograph of Gustav Hahn from  
Edmond Dyonnet Collection, Na-  
tional Gallery of Canada Archives

This was not Gustav's only claim to fame. Over the decades of working in Toronto, Gustav Hahn created murals for Toronto City Hall, Shea's Theatre, the Grand Opera House, the Lockwood Clinic of Toronto General Hospital and a select few residences of Toronto's elite. He decorated the one story Art Nouveau panelled ballroom of the Matthews house at 89 St. George Street, now the Newman Centre at the University of Toronto. Gustav also painted the exquisite Art Nouveau ceiling in the elegant Georgian Great Hall of Flavelle House, now part of the University of Toronto Law School.

His most exceptional work, however was in decorating various churches in Toronto; Central Methodist Church, St. James Cathedral, Calvin Presbyterian, St. Paul's Methodist Church and St. John the Evangelist in Montreal. Unfortunately, a fire in 1995 destroyed the entire church and with it, Gustav's masterpiece.



The inscription Gubernatio bona fructum parit is “Good Government Bears Fruit,” and was one of the two inscriptions carved into blank spaces in the Chamber on occasion of the Millennium in 2000.



The inscription Sapere Aude means “Dare To Be Wise,” while Docendo Discimus means “By Teaching We Learn.”

Gustav Hahn also taught at the Ontario College of Art, which enhanced his influence in the world of art. Although he was asked to leave that teaching post during World War I because of anti-German feelings, but was asked to return in 1930. He headed the new department of Decorative Art and Applied Design and continued to teach to the age of 80. While teaching at O.C.A. and working on commissions, he also taught at the Royal Ontario Museum and Toronto’s Central Technical School. It appears that by the time World War II started Gustav was accepted as a Canadian and any anti-German sentiment did not affect his employment.

Gustav Hahn was a proponent of the “Arts and Crafts movement,” an approach inspired by William Morris who opposed the machine-made aesthetic of the Industrial Revolution. Its followers promoted the concept that the minor arts, like stained glass, pottery, weaving and furniture-making were no less important than sculpture or easel painting.

“Without a doubt, Gustav’s greatest masterpiece was his magnificent ceiling of St. Paul’s Methodist Church on Avenue Road [Toronto] painted in 1890. He covered the entire ceiling with angels, lilies and vines in his graceful Art Nouveau style.”

- norbridgeantiques.blogspot.ca 2012

An illustration of that approach may be found in the mural on the north wall of the Legislative Chamber; the lush, leafy decorations around the central figure look similar to wallpaper fabric design by William Morris.

Gustav Hahn also made his own furniture, the designs ranging from the Gothic to the Arts and Crafts style. Somehow he found time to pursue a hobby: that of being an amateur astronomer.

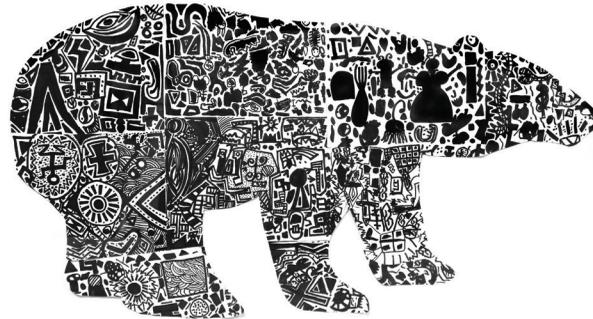
Hahn's commitment to the arts was reflected by his membership in six professional organizations; the Royal Canadian Academy, the Society of Painter-etchers and Engravers, Canadian Society of Applied Art, Toronto Arts and Crafts Society, Arts and Letters Club, and the Ontario Society of Artists. For more than half a century Gustav Hahn was completely devoted to the Fine and Decorative Arts in Canada.



# The Gathering Place

The Legislative Building, which sits on the traditional territory of the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation, was once home to the Huron and the Haudenosaunee. In the 1800s, this same parcel of land became a gathering place for social activities for the non-Indigenous population. Later, the Ontario Legislative Building was officially opened on the land in 1893.

To recognize this history, in 2016, the Speaker of the Legislature Dave Levac opened two large committee rooms as gallery space, creating the Gathering Place. Dedicated to highlighting art from Indigenous artists' and with no permanent collection, the gallery is meant to be a living, breathing entity. According to the Assembly's Exhibits and Programs Coordinator Haley Shanoff, curator for the space, the two rooms act as a spotlight for Indigenous artists' unique perspectives. "Parliament is supposed to be for the people of Ontario, and to represent the people of Ontario, so bringing in more voices is really important," said Shanoff in an interview with the *InFormer*. Below are a couple of works from the Gathering Place gallery and an interview with one of the artists, Philip Cote. The art in the Gathering Place and in the hallway outside the Gathering Place highlight the different voices these artists bring to the building.



Awareness by Billy Pottle (top left), Nanuq by students at the Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre (top right), Untitled by James Simon (bottom left) and panels from Kiiinwi by Philip Cote and Tracey Anthony (bottom right).



## INTERVIEW WITH PHILIP COTE

BY DAVID WARNER

His work at Queen's Park:

Kiinwi Dabaadjmowin (means "Our Gifted Children"). The original mural was painted on the walls of the library at Lloyd S. King Elementary School, in the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nations Community. The mural at Queen's Park is on loan from the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nations.



“It’s my duty as an Indigenous artist to pass on knowledge to the next generation and bring our stories to the forefront, to take a look at our shared history.

We have a history right now that’s one-sided.”

- Philip Cote

Philip Cote, a talented artist, is of the Moose Deer Point First Nation. He is soft-spoken as he explains the connection between art and the history of Indigenous people. He explains how colonization intruded on the oral tradition of passing the stories from one generation to another, how Canada embarked on a path of cultural genocide, and spiritual stories and the sense of identity were lost.

Cote explains the fundamental importance of art, especially murals. “Murals tell a story, something which is vital for our young people as they try to identify who they are. The murals can be a link and an interpreter between the past and the future.”

Philip Cote, who is affiliated with Shawnee, Lakota, Potawatomi, Ojibway and Algonquin First Nations, has an impressive art background. He has Bachelor and Masters degrees in art from O.C.A.D. (formerly the Ontario College of Art and Design, now OCAD University) and was an artist in residence at the McMichael Gallery.

I asked him what inspired him to be an artist. “When I was a child I was impressed with Morrisseau’s paintings. I started drawing black lines around my work at school, which didn’t please the teacher.”

Editor’s note: Norval Morriseau, CM, also known as Copper Thunderbird, was an Aboriginal Canadian artist, known as the “Picasso of the North”, whose style was characterized by thick black lines and bright colours.

As with so many artists, Cote knew at an early age that he had a special talent for art. By the time he had graduated from O.C.A.D. he had taken what he best liked about Morrisseau’s work; “art which revealed both simplicity and complexity” and applied that approach to storytelling in different art forms. His paintings, sculptures in soapstone, wood, and marble, and of course his cherished format, the mural, have facilitated storytelling by connecting cave paintings and birch bark pictographs with today’s realities. It has been and remains an effort to reclaim, for today’s youth and even some adults, a lost spirituality, an understanding about creation and the history of Indigenous people which was lost because of colonialism.

The Pan American Games were held in Toronto in 2015. Philip Cote was commissioned to paint 10 murals along the Pan Am Path, a path designed to link walking and cycling paths across the city. It was an amazing adventure for Philip. “The whole idea of this mural is a small seed that’s going to get planted and it’s going to go somewhere. It’s the creation story of the Anishinaabe people, so we’re talking about a different way of looking at the world.”

The murals, which adorn the Old Mill subway bridge, attracted the attention of Jeff Purdy, a cyclist who was deeply impressed by the art. As a consequence, Jeff organized a speakers series at Centennial College as part of a course in First People’s history.

The dramatic mural in the 2nd floor west wing hallway of Queen's Park was a collaborative effort between Philip Cote and Tracey Anthony. Artists normally work alone, so I asked Philip about his experience working with another artist. "Art is problem solving. You take a chance when you work with someone else. We each followed our own vision and the result was satisfying to both of us."

Philip Cote is a Sun Dancer. Since Sun Dancers often speak of having a vision because of the dancing, I wanted to know if there was a connection between sun dancing and his art.

Editor's note: Sun dancing is a Lakota ceremony performed in honour of the Great Mystery, during which participants prove bravery by overcoming pain.

"Through my dancing I felt a blood memory, sensed the presence of my ancestors. My family connection is to Tecumseh. The visionary presence of ancestry and history creates visionary art."

The Gathering Place, two rooms on the 2nd floor of Queen's Park, which were the dining rooms in 1892, were turned into an Indigenous Art Museum in 2016 by Speaker Dave Levac. I asked Philip Cote about the importance of having Indigenous art at Queen's Park. "Art is a visual language. It is the voice of the land, the knowledge of memory. Having our art at the place where laws are made is a reminder that Indigenous people need to be recognized."

Philip Cote, a Sundancer, Pipe Carrier and Sweat Ceremony leader, teacher, public speaker and storyteller is an amazing artist who is using his considerable talents to transform stereotypes into understanding, and cultural misunderstanding into respect, and he is doing so in dramatic fashion.

"We're at a time of the 8th fire; a healing that's supposed  
to take place when two ways of looking at the universe come together  
so we can make a new people with Western and Indigenous  
ways of looking at the world."

- Philip Cote

# What is Art?

Two visual artists offer their view on the perplexing topic.

LINDA KOOLURIS DOBBS

## What is Art?

For me, art is a universal language in its highest form. Emotions and skill of technique contribute to the message getting across. So many people are exploring different disciplines and much becomes therapy, but for those of us who have made it one's life work, there is a difference. That difference may not be discernible to the average ear or eye, but it matters. If the work is meant to last and have value to generations to come, it has to be made of many layers. Those layers can be peeled back to read its meaning, its messages. For me personally, producing something of beauty that makes one feel better about life or that evokes thought is what drives me.

## What is Not Art?

I am afraid I am in the minority, but I feel so much that so many are producing is more the result of "playing" at art not producing something that will last. One can be self-taught or schooled in specific and serious disciplines, both equally valid roots of creativity. What I object to is what the art clergy (my late husband Kildare Dobbs's label) often dictate to us is of value. It often seems like the emperor's new clothes. I first came across this when I was going to the School of Visual Arts and working part time at Reese Palley Gallery at 99 Prince Street in Soho in New York when Conceptual Art was coming in. I sat at the front desk surrounded by television screens with repetitive images wafting into one's consciousness. I also remember at Visual Arts having to be subjected to a John Cage "concert" of tape running from a tape recorder over the backs of chairs. That is about marketing and advertising, wanting to make one's name stand out. Neither instances I found uplifting.

BERNARD POULIN

Artwork is a product, a made thing which can be bought and sold. Art is not and cannot be. For art is that rare sensuous enigma whose questioning mystery emerges, sometimes, from excellence and always from the greatest of artworks. Its goal, once the creator finally takes two steps back and no longer speaks of and for it, is to wondrously reach out, to touch and to move and to elevate us. For once art reveals itself, it has the power to both stop the structured order of civilization from becoming oppressive and the destructive control of oppression from becoming depressive.

# Resources and Acknowledgements

This wonderful journey into the world of the artist ended up on these pages because of a number of people who were very generous with their time and talents.

Helen Breslauer provided both astute editing and superb proofreading. Lauren Malyk, a former Intern of *The InFormer*, volunteered to do the painstaking work of layout.

Valuable source information and suggestions regarding where to search, were provided by several people: David Bogart, Communications Officer for Parliamentary Protocol and Public Relations, Legislative Assembly of Ontario; Larry Pfaff, Librarian, Art Gallery of Ontario; Exhibits and Programs Coordinator Haley Shanoff; and Lani Wilson, Curator, Government of Ontario Art Collection, Archives of Ontario.

Photography, with the exception of photos of the artists, was done by my grandson, Sebastian Smith.

Ashok Jain of Print City supplied valuable advice on how we could achieve an excellent and economical publication.

Various newspapers were a great source of anecdotes and quotations by artists and about artists. The very best resource was the interviews with the artists. This unique opportunity revealed just how sensitive and perceptive artists are. Their work unveils personality, provides vision, makes social statements. The artistic creations can be pleasing, can be provocative, can provide relaxation or excite, and are always thought-provoking. Regardless of one's reaction, these amazing people make our world better informed and more beautiful.

The following books were particularly helpful as sources of information for this project:

Dictionary of Canadian Biography - [www.biographi.ca](http://www.biographi.ca)

Dictionary of Canadian Artists - [www.shopngc.ca](http://www.shopngc.ca)

From Front Street to Queen's Park – by Eric Arthur McClelland and Stewart Limited 1979

The Ontario Collection – by Fern Bayer published for The Ontario Heritage Foundation by Fitzhenry & Whiteside 1984

The organizations listed below were eager to assist and provided valuable information:

Canadian Women Artists History Initiative, Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec;

Library and Archives Canada – Ottawa;

National Gallery of Canada – Ottawa;

Newfoundland and Labrador Studies, Memorial University, St. John's Newfoundland

Women's Art Association of Canada – Toronto.

“Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life.”

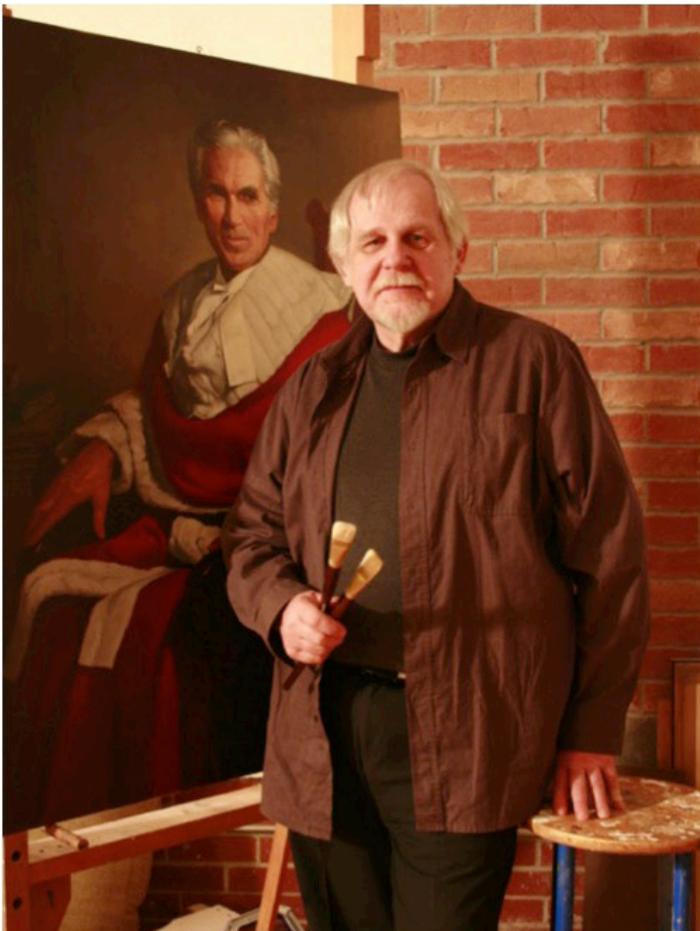
- Pablo Picasso



Phil Richards



Allan Harding Mackay



Gregory Furmanczyk



Linda Kooluris Dobbs



Istvan Nyikos



Ron Kingswood



Bernard Poulin



Philip Cote