

CANADA 150 CELEBRATORY GRANT APPLICATION

Hanna Park – Admiral Kingsmill Flagpole

The Portland Beautification Sub-committee, in concert with the Portland Historical Society (PHS), wish to *commemorate* Canada's 150th by installing an inspiring flagpole in Hanna Park overlooking the Big Rideau Lake so that a visit to the park becomes "An Experience to Remember" and a "Portal to the Future". Throughout this special year of celebration Portland is focused on showcasing our most valuable asset- the beautiful, bountiful and exciting Big Rideau Lake - with a series of activities that will inform and enthrall our visitors. The goal is to entice them to return again and again to explore the beauty and the history of the area and to enjoy the outdoor activities on and around the lake such as skiing, fishing, sailing, canoeing, hiking, photography, painting and family outdoor events. It's all here on Big Rideau!

Our small village is fortunate to be located on the Big Rideau, attracting thousands of boaters and tourists each year. Our aim is to tell the story of the Big Rideau with photos and stories of "then and now", through highlights of history of the lake and especially to showcase the lake and its islands with an identification map which is linked to the PHS website. The Rideau Canal system is an integral part of Canada's history and every opportunity should be taken to educate and promote this waterway especially to our international visitors. The story of Admiral Kingsmill is one of many historical Canadian characters who have discovered Big Rideau Lake and returned to make it home.



Admiral Sir Charles E. Kingsmill (July 7, 1855 - July 15, 1935), often referred to as the "father of the Canadian Navy" was hooked by the beauty of the Big Rideau and established a home on Grindstone Island. He now resides permanently in a local cemetery. Kingsmill was the first Director of the Canadian Naval Service (which later became the Royal Canadian Navy).

Charles Edmund Kingsmill was born at Guelph, Ontario in 1855. In 1870 he joined the Royal Navy as a midshipman. He was promoted Sub-Lieutenant in 1875, Lieutenant in 1877, Commander in 1891, and Captain in 1898. During his career in the Royal Navy, he commanded HM Ships Goldfinch (1890-91), Blenheim (1895-95), Archer (1895-98), Gibraltar (1900), Mildura (1900-03), Resolution, Majestic (1905-06), and Dominion (1907).

At the behest of then Prime Minister Wilfred Laurier in 1908, Kingsmill retired from the Royal Navy and returned to Canada to accept the post of director of the Marine Service in the Department of Marine and Fisheries under then Minister of Marine and Fisheries Louis P. Brodeur. The appointment predetermined his eventual appointment as Rear-Admiral RCN and director of the Naval Service of Canada upon the formation of the RCN on May 4, 1910. He served in that position for 11 years and guided Canada's nascent Navy through its first decade. He was made Vice-Admiral on 17 May 1913 and a full Admiral in 1917.

Portland Canada 150 Kingsmill Flagpole in Hanna Park

He was appointed honorary aide-de-camp to His Excellency the Governor-General in 1909. He was made a Knight Bachelor in 1918. He was awarded for outstanding services as the Director of Naval Services of Canada 1910 - 1921.

He retired on Dec. 31, 1921 and died at his summer home on Grindstone Island, near Portland, Ontario in July 1935. As a tribute to Kingsmill in the context of Big Rideau Lakes' historical significance in the early development of Canada as a nation, The Portland Historical Society, in a collaborative effort with the Beautification Committee, proposes to install a proper nautical flag staff in Hanna Park near the waterfront overlooking the lake.

The view of Rideau Lake from Hanna Park is one of the most popular views of the Lake. "Watercolour sunsets" are often spectacular. We feel it is very important both as the Village of Portland and as part of the Township of Rideau Lakes that we must take every opportunity to promote our lake, its history and its importance. A striking flagpole like the one shown here would be a visual asset to the park, drawing visitors to the park from the waterway and from the street.



The PHS has already purchased the 25 ft. mast and it is on hand. If our application is approved, the funds would be used for the fabrication of the mounting a base and the hardware for installation. We will seek additional funding from community members and sponsorships for a future weather cam and wireless meteorological package that will integrate with our community website (www.portland.com) to provide current information and promotional services to visitors. Any additional costs would be covered by Portland Historical Society fundraising events.

The plan is to collaborate with the township to complete the preliminary and detailed including design drawings for approval, a satisfactory site for installation and conduct the installation as it would be a lasting capital asset belonging to Township of Rideau Lakes. The existing mast is an extruded structural aluminum sailing mast. The profile of the extrusion provides for separate columns for halyards and for electrical wiring. The masthead fitting is a robust cast aluminum fitting suitable for mounting future additional equipment such as a weather camera and windspeed/direction sensors.

The planned schedule would have the base and the spar ready for installation in June, with the possibility of commissioning the new flagpole in a ceremonial event including a sailpast and a formal commissioning service with participating sea cadets in the region.

The relationship between PHS, The Beautification Committee and the Community Hall Board is a great example of using shared resources, skills, and experience to accomplish goals that would be much more difficult without the cooperation of a broad cross section of the community. We all get ahead when we pull together!

With the recent loss of our leader, friend and committee member Doug Good (he was a valued member of PHS and the Beautification Committee), we would also include a memorial plaque in honour of his exceptional efforts in our community. His legacy of leadership, generosity and commitment would then become an exciting commemoration of Canada's 150, the Rideau Lake and Doug's volunteer efforts challenge us to continue his efforts and dreams in a way that would make him proud!