

St. George's Cathedral, Kingston Ontario Stuart Room

The room is named after John Stuart (1740-1811) and the Stuart family. John was the founding Rector of the Anglican Church in Kingston and most of Upper Canada.

Stuart family portraits were donated to the Cathedral in the summer of 2015 with the obligation to the family to properly display the portraits. Okill Stuart, then in his 90's, with the help of his son brought the portraits from their home in Montreal to gift them to the Cathedral.

The Projects' Group of St. George's were aware of the portraits and that the Stuart Room required renovations, and stepped up and offered to cover the cost of the renovation. Michael Gemmel, an art and heritage expert, who had been the artist who painted the walls of the Stuart room in the past was again requisitioned to renovate the room. Michael discussed his ideas in the summer of 2016 on how the room should be renovated including the installation of the new Stuart family portraits. The process involved refinishing the complete ceiling to cover all the damaged areas from the roofing problems over the years; replacing the fluorescent light fixtures with period lighting; repairing all walls; repainting the entire room after all the electrical conduit was removed; hanging all the Stuart family portraits, complete with plaques explaining the individual's history; reorganizing the historic items in the room.

The renovation was started in early 2017 with the electrical work. The ceiling work and painting was completed in April and May. The portrait history plaques have been installed. The last step will be to ensure that all items in the room are representative of the Georgian period (1714-1830) to the best of our ability and resources.

Not part of the renovation but very important to the room is a case containing artifacts pertaining to John Stuart, and a second case also containing artifacts related to the Cathedral's history. As well, there is a pre-1801 Union flag, presented to the Cathedral by the United Empire Loyalists Association in 2006.

In 1710 four chiefs--three Mohawk and one Mahican--went to England on a diplomatic mission and asked Queen Anne for a military alliance and the establishment of an Anglican presence. The Crown paid for a stone chapel built in 1711 at Fort Hunter in the Mohawk Valley and Queen Anne personally paid for a Bible, Prayer Book, organ, and Communion Service. When the Mohawk left during the American Revolution, the chapel was used as a bar and stable. Eventually it deteriorated. Several stones

were retrieved from it and brought to Canada. One of these stones is in the Stuart Room, in a wooden box made by parishioner Larry Norman. Along with the Queen Anne Communion service, two other stones are in the Anglican churches at Tyendinaga. Many of the stones from the Fort Hunter Chapel were used to line the first Erie Canal.

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With thanks to John Duerkop (Assistant Cathedral Archivist), The Reverend Brad Smith, Ken Whatley (Dean's Warden).