



# Chalk Talk

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PLEASE SHARE **CHALK TALK** WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES!!!

## Letter from the Editor

Dear Educators,

***“You brought the field all standing with your courage and your luck  
But unknown to most, you’re lying there beside old General Brock.  
So you know what it is to scale the Heights and fall just short of fame  
And have not one in ten thousand know your name.” –  
Excerpt from Stan Rogers’ song ‘Macdonnell on the Heights’, 1984***

As readers of *Chalk Talk* may already know, I was raised in the Niagara Region of Southern Ontario, a region dominated by Niagara Falls, one of the natural wonders of the world. But for those of us who grew up in the area it is a treasure trove of Canadian historical landmarks, especially those pertaining to the War of 1812. The drive along the scenic Niagara Parkway from Fort Erie to Fort George in Niagara-on-the-Lake, is dotted with historical markers that trace the events and battles that took place along the Niagara River. There is no monument greater than the one that stands at the highest point of Queenston Heights honouring Sir Isaac Brock, the General who led the troops in October of 1812, dying of a shot through his heart in that battle. As the Stan Rogers’ song (above) reminds us, another man, Lieutenant Colonel John Macdonnell, mounted Brock’s horse and took command, also dying within 24 hours in an unsuccessful charge. Although Macdonnell’s sacrifice was significant, he is rarely mentioned, and has no monument. This War, arguably the most important war of our history, was fought against the Americans on the soil of British North America. The reasons for the United States’ declaration of war are numerous and complex. One thing was clear, the fear of U.S. expansionism into British territory was real.



Brock's Monument

As a grade 7 student, we studied The War of 1812 and ended our school year with a trip to The Heights . From our classroom, we could look out the window across the Niagara River to the American side of the border. My social studies teacher at the time could barely contain a wry smile as she explained that who won the 1812 War is matter disputed by the Americans and that their history textbooks claim it as a victory. If, by winning, they meant that the borders remained unchanged, and that the British captured and burned down Washington and its Capitol, which was still under construction in 1814, well then ... The point is that the seeds of the independent country we now know geographically, politically and culturally as Canada were firmly planted during this time.

In June of 1814, one of the best known women in our history, Laura Secord, living in the village of Queenston, just below The Heights and a few kilometres from Fort George, was preparing to play a critical role in the conflict. As the War of 1812 was entering its third and final year, a boy named John A. Macdonald was born in a Glasgow, Scotland. The emigration of the Macdonald family to Kingston was to have an unexpected nation-building outcome.

Canada -- What a history and what a country -- an sovereign country of First Nations peoples, French and English settlers, and immigrants from every corner of the planet! In 2009, two institutes joined forces to create **The Historica-Dominion Institute (HDI)**, the largest, independent organization dedicated to Canadian history, identity and citizenship. The work of this dynamic organization is to build active and informed citizens through a greater know-



Douglas Coupland's  
'Monument to the War of 1812'  
(2008) Toronto

ledge and appreciation of the history, heritage and stories of Canada by creating and administering resources and programs for Canadian classrooms. For 2011-12, HDI and its partners have outdone themselves in offering interactive resources and student competition programs that celebrate the 197th birthday of Sir John A. Macdonald, mark the Bicentennial of the War of 1812, extend opportunities to explore our many great national parks, and challenge students to give meaning to what it means to be a Canadian citizen. [For more about these programs, check out Website of the Week, below.] To see all of HDI’s wonderful resources and programs, check out -- [www.historica-dominion.ca](http://www.historica-dominion.ca).



This holiday why not treat yourself, family, friends to a gift of Canadian history? And in the New Year, why not bring the excitement into your classroom. CoEd Communications invites you to visit our website at [www.4edu.ca](http://www.4edu.ca) to view the many resources and programs on offer.

Wishing everyone a Happy and Safe Holiday! As always your [Feedback](#) is appreciated.

*Mary Kovack*

Mary Kovack



## Bring history to life and your class could win the **Coollest School Trip** ever!



Want to take your grade eight/Secondary II class somewhere special this year?! Your class can enter to win "Canada's Coolest School Trip" ever: an all-expenses paid trip to Banff and Lake Louise, in the heart of Banff National Park!

All your class needs to do is create a short video (under 3 minutes) recreating a significant moment related to one of Canada's national parks, historic sites or marine conservation areas and enter your video for consideration in the "Canada's Coolest School Trip" Contest. **There's not much time left to enter! Online submissions are due January 8, 2012.** Visit [www.myparkspass.ca](http://www.myparkspass.ca) for further program and contest entry details, teaching tools to support your participation, judging criteria and contest deadlines.

The Coolest School Trip Contest, presented in cooperation with The **My Parks Pass Program**, offered by Parks Canada, Nature Canada and The **Historica-Dominion Institute**, grants all Grade 8/Secondary II students free access for one full year to any of Parks Canada's 42 national parks, 167 national historic sites, and 4 national marine conservation areas. ([www.myparkspass.ca](http://www.myparkspass.ca)).

For more information visit: [www.myparkspass.ca](http://www.myparkspass.ca)

## Happy Birthday Sir John A!

On January 11, 2012, **Sir John A. Macdonald turns 197!** The Historica-Dominion Institute is challenging classrooms across the country to celebrate the accomplishments of Canada's first prime minister and a Father of Confederation by hosting **Sir John A Day birthday party!** The class who throws the most creative birthday bash will **win a special prize pack**, including an **iPad 2**. With over 200 classrooms currently registered to celebrate, this January 11<sup>th</sup> Canadian teachers have the opportunity to put Sir John A Day on the map! To register, email [SirJohnA@historica-dominion.ca](mailto:SirJohnA@historica-dominion.ca) with the **SIR JOHN A DAY REG ISTRATION** as the subject, and let us know your name, your school, the grade and number of students in your class.

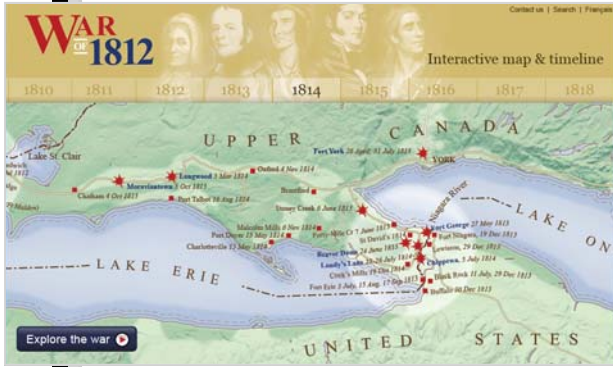


After Sir John A's big day, share with us how your students marked the birthday and achievements of this critical figure in our nation's history. To enter the contest, submit footage of your event with video or photographs to show Canada how your class celebrated Sir John A's 197<sup>th</sup> birthday! The deadline for contest submissions is **February 6, 2012**.

A project of The Historica-Dominion Institute, the Sir John A Day Project is committed to raising awareness about the life and legacy of Sir John A. Macdonald, Father of Confederation and Canada's first prime minister. Despite the fact he is a critical figure in the birth of our country, many Canadians know very little about our first prime minister. By reaching out to teachers and students across the country, the Sir John A Day Project aims to restore Sir John A. Macdonald to the place that he deserves in Canadian history and Canadian consciousness.

Please contact Sir John A Day staff at [SirJohnA@historica-dominion.ca](mailto:SirJohnA@historica-dominion.ca) if you have any questions.

# The War of 1812 Bicentennial



To commemorate the War of 1812 bicentennial, The Historica-Dominion Institute, partnered with **Canadian Geographic**, with the support of **Parks Canada**, to create an [interactive map and timeline](#) of the War of 1812. From Tecumseh to Laura Secord, the Battle of Fort George to the Burning of Washington - the website features over one hundred in depth articles on the battles, places and figures that featured prominently in the War of 1812. The interactive map and timeline highlight hundreds of important moments and locations in the War of 1812, and features images and video content. A learning resource page offers tools for teachers developed by The Institute, Canadian Geographic, and Parks Canada. Check out [www.eighteentwelve.ca](http://www.eighteentwelve.ca)!

## The Canadian Citizenship Challenge: Are you up for the Challenge?

We believe that citizenship is about ALL Canadians.

The Historica-Dominion Institute is challenging students from *sea to sea* to be Great Canadians by studying all the wonderful things that make up Canada and then to put that knowledge to the test. New Canadians have to pass a Citizenship Exam in order to become Canadian citizens and we think that all Great Canadians should be ready to answer questions about their *home and native land*.



CANADIAN  
CITIZENSHIP  
CHALLENGE.ca

Students from grade 7 to 12 (Secondary I-V in Quebec) can enter themselves individually into the Canadian Citizenship Challenge and **teachers**, you get FREE learning tools when register your classrooms to win great prizes such as:

- A "Great Canadian" trip to Ottawa
- A Citizenship Celebration for your School
- Red Canoe label swag
- Canada's History* magazine subscriptions

The Challenge can be entered online at [www.canadiancitizenshipchallenge.ca](http://www.canadiancitizenshipchallenge.ca)

**You have until December 31, 2011** to register your class and help us promote civic pride and education among Canada's youth.

## A&E Classroom 2011 'Lives That Make A Difference' Essay Contest

**DEADLINE: DECEMBER 15, 2011**

**A&E Canadian Classroom's 'LIVES THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE ESSAY CONTEST'** challenges students in grades 5-12 to write an original 300 word essay on the life of a person they believe made the biggest difference on Canadian society in the past year. Students can win cash prizes for themselves and teachers can win cash prizes for their classrooms. Two winners from each grade level — 5th-8th grade and 9th-12th grade — will be selected.

**2 GRAND PRIZES:** 1 prize for each of Grades 5-8 & 9-12

- Student: **\$3,000** Cash Prize
- Department/Classroom of Teacher: **\$1,000** Cash for use in the classroom.

**2 FIRST PLACE PRIZES:** 1 prize for each of Grades 5-8 & 9-12

- Student: **\$2,000** Cash Prize
- Department/Classroom of Teacher: **\$1,000** Cash for use in the classroom.

**NOTE: NEW FOR 2011! Entries may also be submitted online at [www.facebook.com/LivesThatMakeADifference](http://www.facebook.com/LivesThatMakeADifference).**



Educators are encouraged to have students in their civics, social studies, current events, literacy and history classes participate in this year's contest. **NOTE: Deadline is December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Don't Miss Out!** For official contest rules and a consent form, please visit <http://www.livesthatmakeadifference.com/>.

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