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Explore the past, present and future

AGNES Learns

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SPEAKERS

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TRANSCRIPT

Charlotte Gagnier: Do you recognize this cityscape? If you guessed that it is a view of the waterfront in Kingston Ontario, you're correct! We're going to be taking a trip to the time this was painted and explore the important landmarks on Kingston's waterfront.

Jane R. Drummond, a local female artist, painted this watercolour in 1912, and titled it *View of Kingston's City Hall*. Drummond places city hall as the focal point of her painting. The focal point is the center, or where your eye is drawn to. This is fitting, because when City Hall was designed, Kingston was the capital of Canada. If you live in Kingston, you may have visited City Hall's Springer Market Square. Did you know it is the oldest market in the province? In the 1900s, it was a place of community gathering, where people in Kingston would come to socialize, buy and sell goods, just like today!

Another building we see to this day is a type of red-roofed tower that can be seen all over Kingston. This is called a Martello Tower and there are four on Kingston's waterfront. This one is named Shoal Tower. Towers like this were built to defend Kingston in the early 1800s and continue to be a symbol of Kingston's military history. At this time some of the tallest buildings in Kingston were churches. Here we see St. George's cathedral and behind City Hall we see St Mary's Cathedral. Both are still standing to this day.

Not everything is the same as it was when Drummond painted this picture. In front of City Hall we can see a train or a locomotive, similar to the engine that sits there today. At the time, the train tracks used to come right up to the water. The area on the right depicts a shipyard, and includes a grain elevator. Drummond also painted several plumes of black smoke. All of these elements are representations of the economy of Kingston at the time, which relied on coal and the construction of ships and trains. Today, these industrial buildings have been replaced with hotels and local businesses.

Drummond's work provides us a glimpse into Kingston's history; how much the waterfront has changed, and how much has been preserved for over a hundred years! If you were to paint a picture of your home, what landmarks would you include?

