

# The Westmount Historian

NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTMOUNT HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 11 NUMBER 1

SEPTEMBER 2010

## VICTORIA AVENUE in Westmount

A listing of the deeds of sale of the property from Hurtubise family ownership in (1873) to William Biltcliffe ownership in (1905)

November 24, 1873

Isaie Hurtubise Sr. sold to Ephrem Hudon

January 17, 1874

Ephrem Hudon Jr. sold to Charles Boyer

September 30, 1874

deed of arrangement between Charles Boyer  
& Ephrem Hudon Jr. was cancelled

October 14, 1874

Ephrem Hudon Jr. sold to Jean B. Renaud

March 2, 1876

Jean B. Renaud sold to Richard Warmington & Campbell Bryson

March 5, 1878

Campbell Bryson became insolvent.

March 27, 1878

John Fulton was appointed assignee of the estate.

February 28, 1879

John Fulton sold to La Compagnie de prêt et Credit Fonciers.

February 28, 1879

La Cie de Pret et Credit Fonciers sold to Richard Warmington

December 29, 1888

Richard Warmington sold property to Samuel Jones

March 22, 1889

Samuel Jones sold to Isabella Nicol, wife of Richard Warmington

November 23, 1892

the last two deeds were cancelled.

July 4, 1893

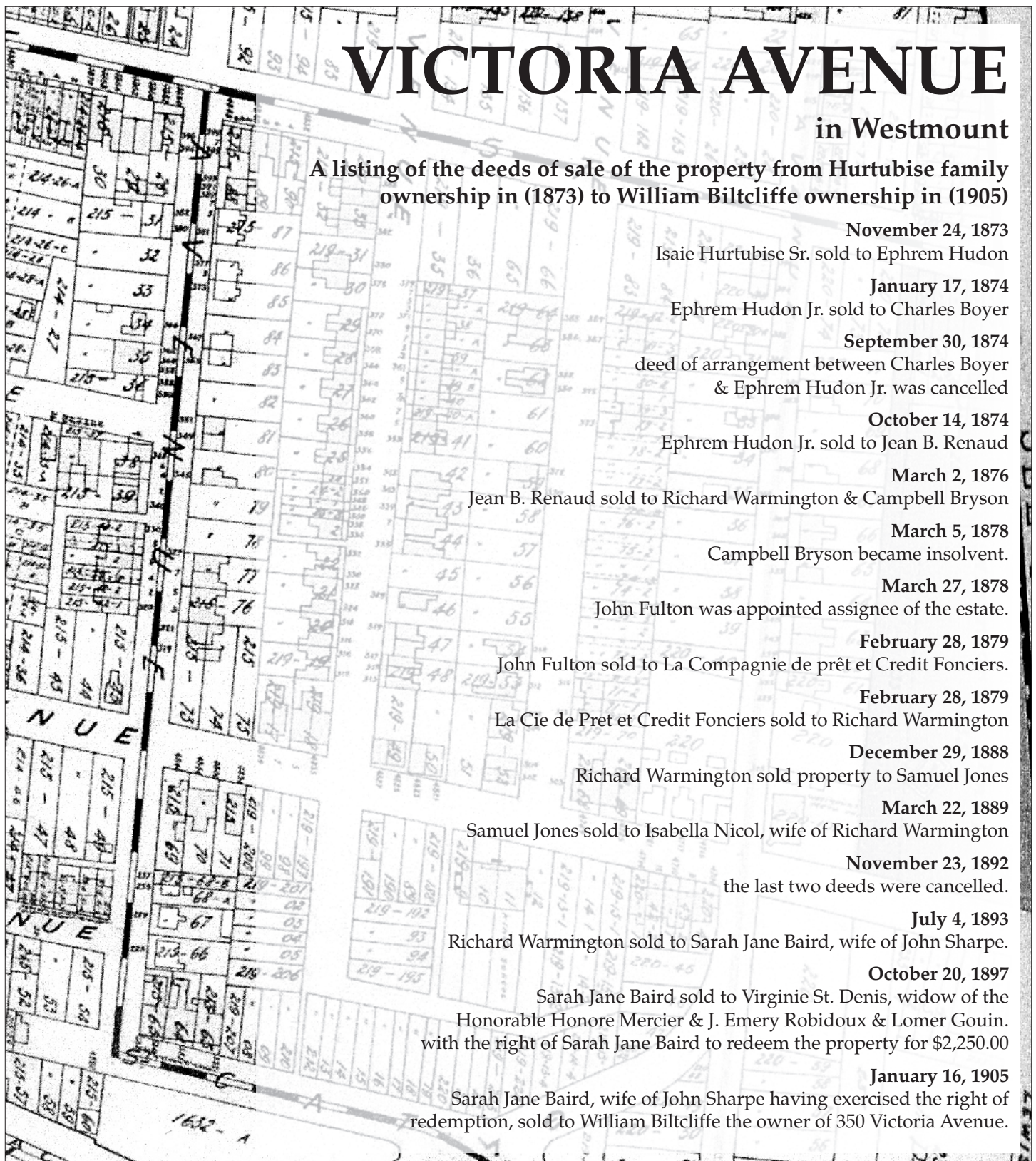
Richard Warmington sold to Sarah Jane Baird, wife of John Sharpe.

October 20, 1897

Sarah Jane Baird sold to Virginie St. Denis, widow of the  
Honorable Honore Mercier & J. Emery Robidoux & Lomer Gouin.  
with the right of Sarah Jane Baird to redeem the property for \$2,250.00

January 16, 1905

Sarah Jane Baird, wife of John Sharpe having exercised the right of  
redemption, sold to William Biltcliffe the owner of 350 Victoria Avenue.



## *The Westmount Historian*

NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTMOUNT  
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

September 2010  
Volume 11 • Number 1

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Victoria Avenue in Westmount was named in the 1890's when the residents of then Côte St. Antoine wanted to honour Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee of 1897. The street was the original route used by the Hurtubise family and other farmers and gardeners to transport their produce from their land on the Côte Road downhill through the Glen to the market in Ville Marie.

Victoria Avenue has developed over the years as a neighbourhood commercial and residential street at the western edge of Westmount just as Greene Avenue did at the eastern side.

In order to understand the evolution of this street and remind us of how it has developed over the years, the WHA invited some of the older established business people to tell us their stories during our Spring Lecture Series from February to May this year: Virginia McClure an early director of *The Potter's Club* which evolved into the *Visual Arts Center* at 350 Victoria, Graham Fletcher, the owner/manager of Steinberg's and Metro Supermarkets for twenty-four years, Elizabeth Shapiro of ARCHITEM Wolff Shapiro Kuskowski architects who redesigned the Fire Station No.2 into three contemporary condominiums, and Justin Bur, urbanist and authority on early train history.

The results of their talks and the research undertaken by Caroline Breslaw and myself during the preparation for these talks is presented here in this September issue for your pleasure. With this newsletter in hand, I invite you to walk along Victoria Avenue and learn more about its early history.

Also, our archivist, Barbara Covington has contributed an article she received from *Westmount* in Kitchener, Ontario, explaining how our name traveled there.

DOREEN LINDSAY

### WHA Fall 2010 Lecture Series

#### *From HURTUBISE LANE to VICTORIA AVENUE*

Thursday 16 September 2010

**RUTH SHINE and the BEAD EMPORIUM**

**Speaker: Ruth Shine**, Owner/Manager of the *Bead Emporium*

Thursday 21 October 2010

**HURTUBISE FAMILY HOME: ITS PLACE IN OUR COMMUNITY**

**Speaker: Jacques Archambault**, General Manager

The Canadian Heritage of Quebec, owner of the house and land

Thursday 18 November 2010

**DAN DELANEY and the GALERIE DAN DELANEY (ARTLENDERS)**

**Speaker: Dan Delaney** artist and Owner/Manager  
of gallery from 1976 to 1990

Thursday 16 December 2010

**VICTORIA AND SHERBROOKE: 3 BANKS & A LIQUOR STORE**

**Speaker: Caroline Breslaw** WHA researcher and others

These talks take place in the Westmount Public Library 4574 Sherbrooke St. W.  
7 to 9 pm. Series prepared by Doreen Lindsay and Caroline Breslaw.  
Admission free for members, non-members \$5 at door

**514-989-5510 or 514-932-6688**



# VICTORIA AND SOMERVILLE AVENUES AROUND 1910

DOREEN LINDSAY

When William Biltcliffe built his department store on Victoria Avenue at the corner of Somerville in the west end of the new City of Westmount in 1910, he was part of the trend to provide commercial services for the expanding influx of new residents. Before constructing his department store, Mr. Biltcliffe had carried on his grocery business in the house on the southern corner of Somerville at 348 Victoria, which had been built in 1895, the year we took the name Westmount and became a town.

His neighbours on Victoria had varying occupations: between York Street and Sherbrooke St. there lived a shoemaker, steam cooper, machinist, plumber, clerk, barber, painter, gardener, a manager of an engraving company and a president of Hudson Bay Knitting Co. Lovell's Directory described Westmount: "This flourishing town is rapidly increasing in population and is becoming the favorite residential locality of the merchants of Montreal". The first electric streetcar had arrived in 1892 and Sherbrooke Street was put through in 1893.

On the same side of Victoria, south of his department store, people had been living in the six attached two-floor comfortable stone buildings numbered 320 to 330 for thirteen years. Today these one hundred and thirteen year old buildings still remain. They are mostly businesses with some residential units. They had been designed by the architect Gamelin Huot and built in 1897 for Jean-Baptiste Brouillette who rented or sold them, but never lived there.

Across Victoria on the east side, families were living in the row of five charming single-family homes built just a year earlier in 1896. These houses, numbered 321 to 329, also remain today. Numbers 417 and 419 were built in 1900.

Above Sherbrooke St. on the west side were three triplexes numbered 452-56, 458-62, 464-64 built in 1898 by Ludgar Hamelin. They remain today. The house numbered 434A-B was there from 1895, along with numbers 486, 488, 494 and the four single-family houses at 506, 508, 510, 512 built by G.T. Thomas. Numbers 562 and 662-64 were built in 1909, the year before Biltcliffe opened his department store.

By 1910, Somerville Avenue already had thirty-four houses. On the south side, sixteen houses numbered 55 to 99 had been constructed in 1905. On the north side eleven houses numbered 56 to 82 had also been constructed in 1905. There were five houses dating from 1900 at 10-14, 16-20, 84-88, 90, 94, 96-106 and two older houses, number 66 built in 1893 and number 78 built in 1899.

The same year that Biltcliffe's department store opened (1910), there were thirty other buildings erected on Victoria Avenue.

## LEOPOLD HURTUBISE RENOVATED THE FAMILY HOME in 1911

In 1911, the year after Mr. Biltcliffe opened his department store at the corner of Somerville, the desire for improvement and renewal reached Dr. Léopold Hurtubise who had been living in his old (1739) stone family farm home on Côte St. Antoine Road since 1909. He undertook a renovation of the house by putting in a bathroom on the second floor and installing new dormer windows. He built a new gallery along the front and removed the crepi from the stone exterior.

Dr. Leopold Hurtubise was the sixth generation of that pioneering family and the last to live there. He died in 1955 and the family heirs sold the house and land to Colin Molson, his sister Mabel and James Beattie. In 1961 they transferred it to the Canadian Heritage of Quebec which continues to be the owners.



*Hurtubise Family Home 561-563 Côte St. Antoine built in 1739 by Jean Hurtubise. One of the oldest houses on the Island of Montreal. The oldest house in Westmount.*

## EPHREM HUDON JR. – son of JUSTINE-SOLOMÉE HURTUBISE and EPHREM HUDON

After Justine-Solomée, the sister of Antoine-Isaie Hurtubise, married Ephrem Hudon, Antoine-Isaie gave a lot of land to her in 1847 in settlement of family bequests to children. Hudon built a home for them which still stands today at the rear of 513-515 Côte St Antoine.

In 1873 **Ephrem Hudon Junior**, their son, bought the lower part of the family farm from his uncle Antoine-Isaie Hurtubise for \$43,000 and laid out Victoria Ave. from Côte Saint-Antoine Road down to Ste. Catherine St. into 113 lots.

This Hurtubise road was renamed Victoria Ave. when residents, who were then mostly of English or Scottish descent, wanted to honour Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee of 1897. They also named our first park Victoria Jubilee Park, built our Public Library and Victoria Hall Community Centre.

\*Information obtained from a lecture by Alan M. Stewart on Feb. 20, 2003.

## FIRE STATION No. 2 OPENED IN 1912 AT VICTORIA AND THE BOULEVARD



*The original FIRE STATION No. 2 on Victoria Avenue at the corner of The Boulevard opened in 1912.*

CAROLINE BRESLAW

**F**ire Station No. 2 opened in 1912. Until then, Fire Station No. 1 on Stanton Street had serviced the entire municipality. As the population expanded up the mountain and westward, residents and councillors clamoured for an additional station. Homeowners were concerned about the response to emergency calls, since the horses pulling the equipment had difficulty climbing the steep hills.

In response to this need, Westmount decided to construct Fire Station No. 2 at the southwest corner of The Boulevard and Victoria Avenue. The site provided a gradual ascent to the Summit. It is not clear who designed the building. The plans at Westmount City Hall are signed by a surveyor named Currie. Beaupre and Michaud's 1987 report attributes it, however, to the architectural firm of Hutchison,

Wood & Miller. The structure went three times over the original estimate of \$26,000 to a final cost of \$70,000.

The new fire station on Victoria featured a square Tuscan-style tower at the west corner which was used for drying hoses. There was a round tower for the controller on the northeast corner of the building. Articulated bricks and corners added interest to the sober brick facade. The roof was made of ceramic tiles with copper and there were large overhangs. The southern wall had two large arched openings. The three entrances for the engines were on Victoria Avenue. In our Archives there is a photo of the new building with Westmount's first motorized fire engine, a 1911 Pope Hartford. (see photo)

The main level was two stories high and housed stalls for six horses and parking for vehicles. The equipment comprised one motor chemical hose wagon, one horse ladder



## FIRE STATION NO. 2 TRANSFORMED INTO THREE CONDOMINIUMS

truck, one single reel, with a double and single hose sleigh for winter use. The mezzanine provided a hayloft for storing the feed. Living quarters for the firemen were on the top floor. There were dormitories, the captain's quarters, a mess hall, a communal bathroom, and a lounge. Coal and manure were stored down in the basement.

The fire station was staffed by Sub-Chief Hort and six firemen when it opened. It was like a big family home for the men who lived there around the clock. There were flower boxes in the windows and ivy climbing the southern wall. The six horses used to pull the fire wagons and sleighs were exercised daily.

In 1931 the fire station was altered by Robert and Frank Findlay, Westmount architects who had previously designed an extension to Fire Station No.1. The station was in active use until 1982 when fire department services were consolidated on Stanton Street. Thereafter, it was used for various

**Article by Laureen Sweeney in The Westmount Examiner, Thursday, May 27, 1982. She is reviewing a lecture given to the WHA about the history of our Fire Department.**

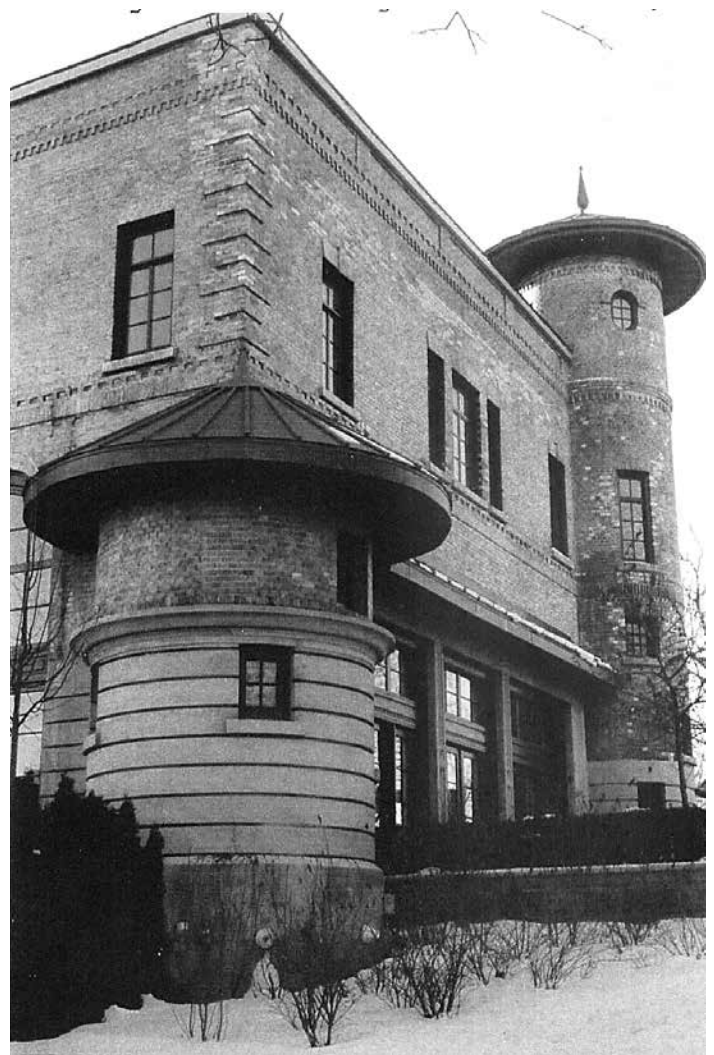
**I**t all began in 1892, according to early records, with one horse, one hose reel and three men who served as both police and firemen to a community of 3,000 citizens.

Today, the Westmount Fire Brigade has 57 professional firefighters, 12 pieces of apparatus and a water network of 345 hydrants deemed necessary to protect the city's 21,000 residents.

She quotes William Timmons, Westmount's deputy fire chief as exclaiming "The changes in firefighting equipment and techniques that have occurred since the early days have been fantastic and almost unbelievable"... "The first record of a fire hydrant and fire plug dates back to 1878, four years after the city's incorporation. The fire service evolved quickly, keeping pace with the expansion of the city..."

No longer does fire protection extend only laterally from house to house on the side of a mountain. It now descends six storeys into the depths of Metro stations and reaches 33 storeys up to the heights of Westmount's tallest highrise.

It was the Westmount fire service which in 1911 acquired what was believed to be the first motorized fire vehicle in Quebec.



*FIRE STATION No. 2 Renovated into three condominiums beginning in 1991 by the architectural firm of Architem.*

*Photo: 2010*

fire department events and storage of vehicles until put up for sale by the City in 1987.

In 1991 the architectural firm of Architem became involved in the lengthy project of transforming this landmark building. Developers and plans changed several times over the years. Eventually, Architem's plans for the exterior were followed, but the interior design was altered. The building was turned into three deluxe vertical townhouses. (see photo) Each extends from bottom to top with a separate street entrance, a private terrace, and a two car garage. The new roof was done in copper. A third archway was introduced on the south façade to fill the units with light and views of the St. Lawrence River.

## FIRST CPR TRAIN STATION OPENED IN 1898 AT BOTTOM OF ABBOTT AVE.



*First CPR Train Station in Côte St. Antoine (Westmount) opened on south side of tracks in 1898 at bottom of Abbott Avenue 1.66 miles west of Windsor Station.*

DOREEN LINDSAY

**O**ur first CPR Train Station was at the bottom of Abbott Avenue (see photo). The first CPR Train Station was built in 1898 at the bottom of Abbott Avenue on the south side of the tracks. CPR trains had been stopping at this location, 1.66 miles west of Windsor Station, since 1893, to service the district of Côte St Antoine, but there was no station for passengers to embark or disembark. We can thank two men for our first station at Abbott Avenue. The general passenger agent of CPR, Mr. David McNicoll wrote to Thomas Shaughnessy, president of CPR to tell him that "Côte St. Antoine was growing in importance with the same relationship as North Toronto had to Toronto". After we became the Town of Westmount in 1895, the stop was renamed Westmount (see superintendent's circular) and two years later a proper station was built.

Opening on the 1st of December 1907 at the beginning of Victoria Avenue, our Westmount Train Station was designed by Walter S. Painter, CPR's Chief Architect. It was our second Train Station and was located two miles from Windsor Station. (see photo) The one floor brick and cement building sits comfortably on the north side of the tracks on a rise of land at the beginning of Victoria Avenue and provides an architectural treat when viewed looking down one of our oldest streets. Two modifications were made to the building, one in 1914 and a second in 1924 when the east side was expanded. For over 80 years, Westmounters enjoyed easy access to train travel.

The Train Station closed in 1984 after VIA Rail service ended. (see photos) Commuter trains moved to the integrated Vendome subway, bus and train station in NDG in 1985. In 1994, the Westmount Train Station was declared a



## SECOND WESTMOUNT TRAIN STATION OPENED IN 1907 AT VICTORIA AVE.



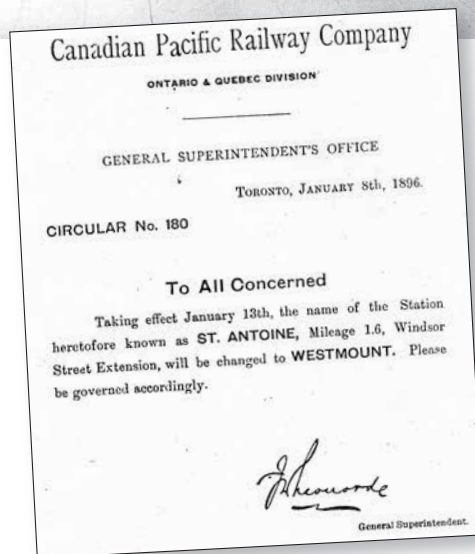
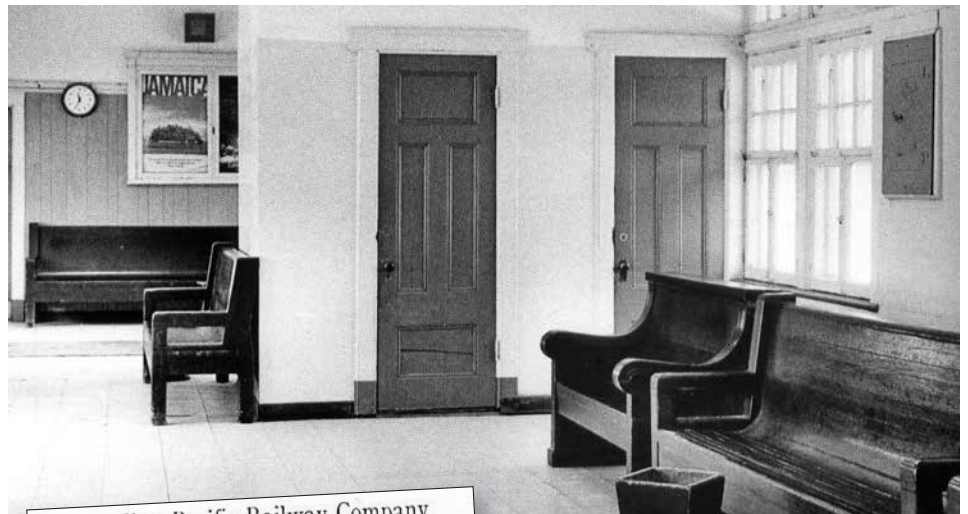
*Interior photos made in 1984 by D. Lindsay after Train Station closed.*



*Second CPR Train Station opened on December 1, 1907 at the beginning of Victoria Avenue, two miles from Windsor Station. Photo shows back of station as it faces tracks. Architect was Walter S. Painter, Chief Architect of CPR.*



heritage railway station by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. In 1998 the City of Westmount Council authorized the acquisition of the land and the building. Then on January 11th 1999 they created a heritage zone (HERbylaw1245) to define occupancies as Heritage Interpretation Centre, Exhibition Centre and Public Park and Square. Today the station remains closed waiting for a renewal project.



◁ Canadian Pacific Railway Superintendent's circular #180 announces the change of name from ST. ANTOINE to WESTMOUNT

## METRO SUPERMARCHE FLETCHER SINCE 1990 – STEINBERG’S 1986-1992



*Victoria Avenue and Sherbrooke Street in 1912 with C.E. Box Grocer at the corner where the Banque Laurentienne is today. The Sherbrooke electric streetcar lines were laid out in 1894 as part of the loop line, one year after Sherbrooke St. was extended.*

DOREEN LINDSAY

**M**r. Graham Fletcher, the current Franchise owner and Manager of the METRO Store at the corner of Victoria Avenue and Sherbrooke Street, has ministered to the distinctive food tastes of Westmounters for twenty-four years. He was the manager of Steinberg’s Supermarket from 1986 to 1992. The store had been situated across Sherbrooke Street on the north side for many years before occupying the present METRO site. Mr. Fletcher continued as the franchise owner/manager of METRO when it took over the Steinberg Supermarket in 1992. Today, the store is officially called the METRO Supermarche-Fletcher.

Older Westmount residents will remember the Steinberg’s store on the north side of Sherbrooke Street from 1939 to 1952. It was replaced by Pascal’s Hardware, then Hogg Hardware (1992-2010) see article in *The Westmount Historian* Vol. 8 No. 2 Feb. 2008. Since August 3 this year, this space has been occupied by the SAQ.

### Renovations

The Metro store was renovated in 1998 when their new bakery was introduced which included Première Moison breads. (see photo) A second renovation took place in 2002 with a grand opening on Sunday 17 March. (see photo) During the 2002 METRO renovation two businesses occupying space moved out and the Clini Plus Pharmacy moved in. Miss Westmount restaurant closed and Electrolux vacuum cleaners and air purifiers moved down the street to 353 Victoria.

### Products change over the years


Many products have changed over the years. Bottled water used to be a novelty but today Metro sells 120 different kinds. There was no beer or wine, but today alcoholic beverages take up an entire section of the store. In the past there were no such things as garbage bags; the store stocked metal garbage cans. Within the meat department, they used to offer only a few coldcuts, today there is an entire counter.



Venez voir le nouveau  
Come and see the new

# METRO Westmount

**Nouvelle  
boulangerie  
New bakery**



Choix inouï de pâtisseries et gâteaux de fantaisie  
Mosaïque de pains français, italiens, juifs ou libanais.  
Frais du jour, toujours savoureux et de bon goût.  
Aussi disponibles, pains Première Moisson.

Notre propriétaire / Owner: Graham Fletcher

Halima Gulyez

An incredible choice of pastries and spectacular cakes. A mosaic of breads: French, Italian, German, Lebanese... always fresh daily, tasteful and tasty! Première Moisson breads also available.

Ouvert 7 jours 7 soirs, 7 h à 23 h. / Open 7 days 7 evenings, 7 am to 11 pm

**METRO**  
PROFESSION:ÉPICIER  
Grocers by profession

Intersection Sherbrooke et Victoria / Corner Sherbrooke and Victoria

Poster for the official opening November 2 to 8, 1998 after first renovation.

The few cloth baby diapers of earlier days has developed into many different kinds of disposable diapers. One kind of rice has expanded into many. The same has happened with the selection of pasta. Corn Flakes and Rice Crispies have expanded into a huge variety of other cereals.

Today's Metro of 21,000 square feet wraps around the Banque Laurentienne on the corner and has entrances on both Victoria Avenue and Sherbrooke Street.

Mr. Graham Fletcher, arrived in Westmount in the summer of 1986 as the manager of Steinberg's and took over the Steinberg's Franchise in 1990. In 1992 the franchise became a Metro Franchise. Photo shows Mr. Fletcher the evening of April 15, 2010 when he presented an illustrated talk to the WHA.

# Les rénovations sont terminées The renovations are complete

Dégustations et musiciens en magasin  
Tastings and live music in store



Graham Fletcher  
Propriétaire franchisé  
Franchised owner

**METRO**  
PROFESSION:ÉPICIER  
Grocers by profession  
Supermarché Fletcher  
4840, rue Sherbrooke Ouest (angle Victoria)  
Westmount

**Invitation officielle au  
Supermarché Fletcher  
le dimanche 17 mars  
dès 8 h.**

Join us for the official  
opening of Supermarché  
Fletcher, Sunday, March 17,  
at 8:00 a.m.

Poster for the grand opening on Sunday, 17 March 2002 of the Supermarché Fletcher after the second renovation.



## BILTCLIFFE DEPARTMENT STORE OPENED AT 350 VICTORIA AVE. IN 1910



*The Original Biltcliffe Department Store opened in 1910 at 350 Victoria Avenue corner Somerville Avenue.*

CAROLINE BRESLAW

When William Biltcliffe purchased the property at 350 Victoria at the corner of Somerville, he intended to build an apartment house on the site. After Westmount passed a bylaw prohibiting this, Biltcliffe decided to expand the grocery business he owned at 348 Victoria. The firm of architects used was MacDuff & Lemieux. The 3-story building was modern in style, featuring a steel structure and large window openings. (see photo)

When Biltcliffe's Department Store opened in 1910, it was known as "The Victoria Block". (see photo) The main floor housed groceries and hardware goods. The basement held kitchenware and crockery. The second floor was used for storage and the top floor was rented by the Westmount Badminton Club. Seven men were employed as staff. Biltcliffe's continued to operate until 1926. There is no listing in Lovell's Directory for the address in 1927 and 1928.

### WESTMOUNT MOVING AND WAREHOUSING

From 1929 until 1964, 350 Victoria was the headquarters of Westmount Moving and Warehousing which became the sole occupant after 1953. After World War II the moving company was bought by Philip Martin of Kensington Avenue who later became a founder and first president of North American Van Lines Canada. The business offices were on the ground floor with warehouse facilities on two upper floors, in the basement, and in the rear extension of

the west side of the building. There was a large freight elevator for accessing these areas. In 1965 North American Van Lines moved its headquarters out of Westmount to Côte de Liesse Road.

In 1971 THE POTTERS CLUB was renamed THE VISUAL ARTS CENTRE. This became the third home of THE POTTERS CLUB but under their new name.



*Advertisement in THE WESTMOUNT NEWS Friday, December 2, 1910 for "THE VICTORIA BLOCK" Department Store 350 Victoria Avenue. W.M. Biltcliffe Prop.*

### THE POTTERS CLUB DEVELOPED INTO THE VISUAL ARTS CENTRE

The Visual Arts Centre developed from The Potters' Club, founded by Westmounter Eileen Reid in 1946 to provide a space and equipment for potters. The original eight members set up studios at 433 Lansdowne Avenue for four years, followed by eight years at 320 Elm Avenue.

By 1958 there were about 35 members, many recently arrived from Europe. The expanding club moved to 346 Victoria Avenue, a small space. (see photo) Classes were given by some members, a gallery and sales space were opened, and materials were sold.

In 1962 a larger building at 326 Victoria (see photo) was bought by Eileen Reid and her husband, along with some other members. A course in design was offered for the first time and the first director, Liliane Webb, was hired. In 1971 the Potters' Club was renamed The Visual Arts Centre and was incorporated. The Biltcliffe Building at 350 Victoria Avenue was renovated in 1972 for \$100,000 plus the exchange of the 3-story building at 326 Victoria.

After a massive fundraising campaign, the large warehouse space, with its wood floors and huge windows, was



## THE VISUAL ARTS CENTRE OPENED AT 350 VICTORIA AVE. IN 1974



*The Visual Arts Centre moved into the renovated Biltcliffe building in 1974. This became their third home on Victoria Avenue.*

transformed by architect Stephen Bleyer into six spacious studios, first floor offices, and a ground floor gallery. The Centre opened in April 1974.

The building was renovated a second time in 2004 with assistance from

Canadian Heritage. (see photo) A garage was converted to a studio, wheelchair access was made available to front door and bathroom and an exhaust system was put in studios. The ground floor now houses the McClure



△Virginia McClure, Westmount resident, artist and strong supporter of VAC

◁Eileen Reid, Westmount resident who founded the Potters Club in 1946



*346 Victoria Avenue, first home of THE POTTERS CLUB on Victoria Avenue. They opened an exhibition and work space on Monday, March 10, 1958.*

Gallery, named after Virginia McClure, the Westmount potter and painter who has been an important participant in the growth of The Visual Arts Centre. This space hosts monthly exhibitions of local and international contemporary artists, as well as regular shows of students' work. The Visual Arts Centre now offers classes to almost 4,000 students, mainly in fine arts. It also runs a popular summer camp for children. The current Executive Director of The Visual Arts Centre is Victoria LeBlanc.



*326 Victoria Avenue, second home of THE POTTERS CLUB on Victoria Avenue. They moved in September, 1962.*





## Westmount Character Area Information

*Available to residents.*

*Black buildings are Category 1 (exceptional to important)*

*Grey buildings are Category 11 (significant)*

### THE ROYAL BANK

on north-east corner of  
Victoria and Sherbrooke

### METRO

Store on south east corner of  
Victoria and Sherbrooke St.

### THE VISUAL ARTS CENTRE

building at 350 Victoria Ave.

The Architectural Ensemble of six  
two-floor row housing, #320 to 330 on west side

The Architectural Ensemble of cottages,  
#321 to 329 on east side

### THE CPR TRAIN STATION

on Saint Catherine Street at base of Victoria.

### Character Area #20

Shows each building on both sides of Victoria Avenue and Sherbrooke Street within this Character Area #20. All are retail, office and multi-family dwelling buildings which are almost always attached. All roofs are flat and almost all have straight or slightly shaped parapets. Street facades are almost all either brick (50%) or stone (40%) All buildings are parallel to the street. In the older buildings the windows are always vertical and are generally double-hung





*WHA BOARD OF DIRECTORS re-elected for 2010-2011*

*(l-r): Anne Barkman, Caroline Breslaw, Ruth Allan-Rigby, Jane Martin, David Freeman, Joan Clark, Betty le Maistre (not a director), Barbara Covington.*

*Absent: Doreen Lindsay (photographer) and Margarita Schultz.*

## AGM 20 MAY 2010

Following our custom of holding the Westmount Historical Association's Annual General Meeting (AGM) in the Westmount Public Library just before the start of the last lecture in May, we assembled together in the Westmount Room at 6 pm. Doreen Lindsay read her president's report of lectures, tours and other activities undertaken in the past year. David Freeman's treasurer's report showed that we had expenses of \$4010.79 and income of \$4076.26 leaving a balance of \$65.47. Anne Barkman reported 136 members, an increase of 12 members over 2009-2010. She suggested that someone should be hired to update our Web Site. Barbara Covington reported on the 25 requests for information generated by the on line website, the 17 office visits and 16 book donations that she had recieved in the Archives. She also reported on the Archival Conference she attended in Ottawa in December 2009.

The present Board of Directors was re-elected for the upcoming year 2010-2011:

President – Doreen Lindsay

Vice-President – Caroline Breslaw

Treasurer – David Freeman

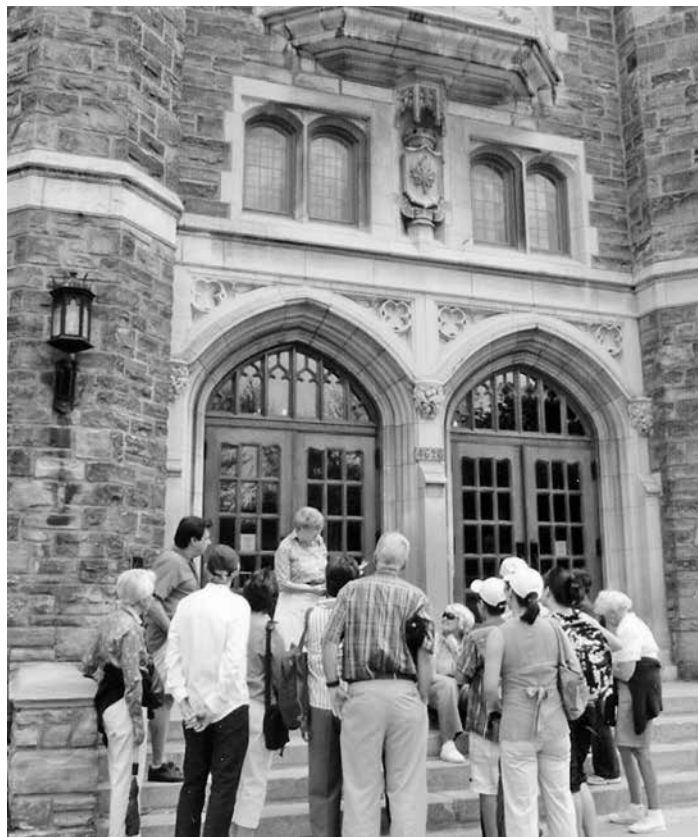
Recording Secretary – Margarita Schultz

Membership and Website – Anne Barkman

Member at large – Joan Clark

Member at large – Jane Martin

Archivist – Barbara Covington announced her retirement



## JANE'S WALK IN WESTMOUNT

**SUNDAY 2 MAY 2010 AT 2 PM**

Ruth Allan-Rigby, a Director of WHA, assisted by Doreen Lindsay, President, led a walk from the Cultural and Recreational Centre of Westmount located in Westmount Park, east along Sherbrooke Street to the Administrative Centre of Westmount at City Hall then along the historical Côte St. Antoine Road. They explained that the Library was opened in 1899 to honour Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee of 1897, and Victoria Hall was built in the same year in response to citizen's requests for a Cultural Centre. When the popular annual flower exhibitions grew in importance in the community, Westmount built a Flower Conservatory in 1927. The Art Gallery was built in response to the great number of local artists who expressed a desire to have their own exhibition space within their own community. It also serves as an indoor link between the Public Library and Victoria Hall.

This was the first walk based on the influential ideas put forth by Jane Jacob of what constitutes a "lively, diverse and intense" community and will be continued next year. The emphasis was on how Westmount developed over the years in response to citizen's desires.

## WESTMOUNT NAME TRAVELS TO ONTARIO IN 1911

**The following article describes a Westmount connection to Kitchener, Ontario.**

**Susan Mavor, Head, Special Collections at the University of Waterloo, Ontario and an intrepid historical researcher has discovered this unusual link. It seems that the Kitchener neighbourhood called “Westmount” reflects many of the attributes of our City of Westmount, taken there by Talmon Henry Rieder, a former resident (1911) of Belmont Avenue. Read on...**

### **Building on Belmont: An Ontario family moves to Westmount... and takes Westmount back to Ontario!**

SUSAN MAVOR  
HEAD, SPECIAL COLLECTIONS  
UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO LIBRARY

**T**he discovery of letters written by T.H. Rieder, the founder of “Westmount” in Kitchener, Ontario has revealed insights into building a house on Belmont Avenue and settling a family in “Westmount” Quebec in 1911. The Rieder family’s re-location from Berlin, Ontario (re-named Kitchener) was occasioned by Rieder’s appointment as Vice-President of Montreal’s Canadian Consolidated Rubber. Talmon Henry Rieder began his career in the Canadian rubber industry in 1899 in Berlin and by 1906 six small rubber companies were amalgamated under Montreal’s Canadian Consolidated Rubber owned by Lord Beaverbrook.

After his 1908 appointment, Rieder stayed in Montreal’s Place Viger Hotel when not commuting to Berlin. By 1911 he had become increasingly busy and lonely for his wife Martha and their young family. The often daily letters document every detail of the new house and reveal that Rieder’s many handwritten missives are almost the turn of the century “Blackberry equivalent”!

February 1911 opens with Rieder writing “Well tomorrow is another Sunday when I will miss home” and he describes the life of his employees, commenting that, while other men spend Saturdays about their houses, he noted wistfully that “my house is in the office”. His increased work also adds to his woes as his company had been growing ... “our office must have added 25 persons during the last month”.

Physically too the strain of being apart is telling – he has

neuralgia and confesses that “I certainly have had the blues today. I must be homesick.” The combination of his loneliness and missing his family ensure that the news in his April 27 letter comes as no surprise. After confiding in his wife Martha that he felt so lonely this week, he writes that he has decided to look for a house.

A few weeks later Rieder found a house in the northeast corner of Westmount, on Belmont Avenue, an area according to Aline Gubbay, a local historian, built up from about 1910



*Talmon Henry Rieder,  
Vice-President of Montreal’s  
Consolidated Rubber*

onwards, first with large semi-detached houses. The house at 614 Belmont Avenue was in fact a semi-detached one and thirteen new houses appeared on that block at that time. In May of 1911 he happily writes to Martha. I looked up the nearest Methodist church to our proposed Westmount home. It is about 8 minutes walk... The church is nice [and] peculiarly shaped and located. It is in one corner of the block comprising Westmount Park.

The many letters which follow are replete with details, often with diagrams, about the progress of the construction. In July he tells Martha that in a month he could live in the house. In his next several letters he writes that the exterior is painted in ivory white and green and looks very fine; the hardwood flooring is being laid, kitchen & pantry cupboards are in and the mantles are ready to go in. The following week he checks with Martha to confirm that the reception [room] will be enameled white, dining will be early English and living will be weathered oak.

He tells of being at “Muir’s” and select[ing] buff brick for the den mantle and a polished mahogany mantle for the drawing room. The wallpaper recommended by Mr. Holland is buff or light green grass cloth with bronze paper for the upper third of this wall. He includes a diagram of the mantel saying that that Mr. Holland will send wallpaper samples to Martha. He concludes saying “We will surely have a fine house here” and, ever practical, Rieder includes a diagram of where he has decided that the garage will be and, he added with emphasis, where you





*Rieder family home at 614 Belmont Avenue, Westmount.  
October 1911-1913. Photo: Susan Mavor*



*Rieder family home at 610 Belmont Avenue, Westmount.  
1914 +1917-1922. Photo: Susan Mavor*

could put your clothes reel.

In October 1911 the family – Martha, their daughter Margaret (Marnie) now aged 5, son Edward who celebrated his 3rd birthday and 6 month-old baby Helen – moved to their new Westmount house. Interestingly the three children – Marnie, Edward and Helen lived in Kitchener's "Westmount" as adults.

Of particular interest is that in 1911 Rieder purchased land on Berlin's west side, had the land surveyed and later registered as a subdivision named "Westmount". Not only did he take the name of his Montreal neighborhood back to Ontario but also his street name, Belmont, as well as others including Westmount, Claremont and Argyle. Another interesting coincidence in the "two Westmounts" is that both were influenced by landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted. Rieder contacted that firm in 1912 about his "fine piece of property in Berlin" but was not able to proceed. Similarly, according to Aline Gubbay, Olmsted's services were offered to Westmount and not carried out but, as is mirrored in Kitchener's Westmount, "the power of his ideas remained". By January 1914 the family moved to 610 Belmont then rented the house while they went to live in Berlin-Kitchener during 1915-17. In the fall of 1917 they moved back to 610 Belmont.

Sadly, the Rieders sojourn in Westmount ended in April 1922 when Rieder died of pneumonia and the house was sold. His death stunned the business community and the Globe headline read *A National Loss – Canada loses Master Mind*. However, for those of us living in Kitchener's Westmount, his greatest achievement was in taking the idea of his Quebec "Westmount" back to Ontario. Our neighborhood nears its century mark and residents enjoy its unique character, reflecting as it does Quebec's "Westmount".

## ORIGIN OF THE NAME WESTMOUNT

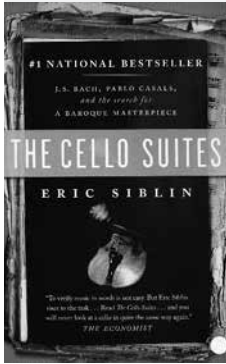
The name Westmount was selected in 1895 when we became the Town of Westmount. It was originally the name of the home of William Murray a prominent and very active member of the community and a large landowner, as well as head of the Beaver Steamship Lines. He had purchased the Leduc farmland and built a large house on a flat area of land on the sloping hillside above the Côte Road. From there he had a clear view down over the St. Lawrence River where his ships were. (Today tennis courts stand on the site) In the British tradition, he named his house, calling it WEST MOUNT because of its location. As a descriptive name for the town, it indicated that we were situated on the west side of a mountain. The name also was chosen to reflect the English and Scottish background of the majority of residents at the time.



*WEST MOUNT the home of William Murray above  
Côte St. Antoine Road where tennis courts are today.  
Demolished in 1920s and land became Murray Park.*

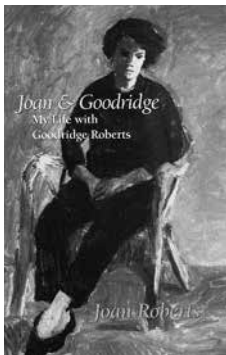
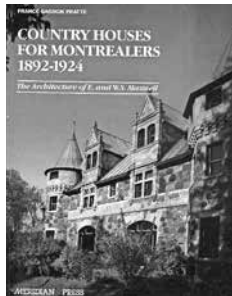
## NEW ACQUISITIONS

### BOOKS



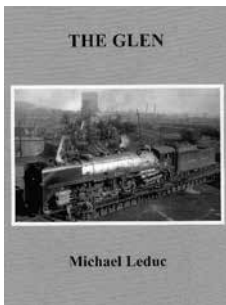
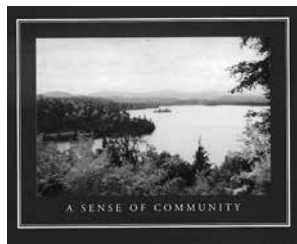
- ◀ **THE CELLO SUITES:**  
J.S. BACH, PABLO CASALS AND  
THE SEARCH FOR A BAROQUE  
MASTERPIECE, by Eric Siblín.  
Toronto: House of Anansi Press Inc.,  
2009. *Donated by Doreen Lindsay*

**COUNTRY HOUSES FOR  
MONTREALERS 1892-1924:**  
THE ARCHITECTURE OF E.  
and W.S. MAXWELL, by France  
Gagnon Pratte. Montréal:  
Meridian Press, 1987.  
*Donated by Caroline Breslaw.*



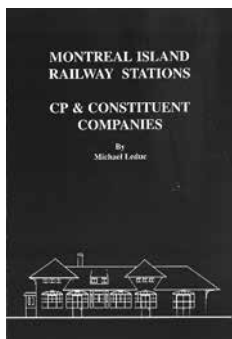
- ◀ **JOAN AND GOODRIDGE:**  
**MY LIFE WITH GOODRIDGE  
ROBERTS**, by Joan Roberts.  
Montreal: Véhicule Press, 2009.  
*Donated by Doreen Lindsay*

**A SENSE OF COMMUNITY,** ▶  
by Diane Pollock and Margaret  
Moffat. Ste. Agathe North, QC:  
DiMar Publishing, 2001.  
*Donated by Martha McKenna*



- ◀ **THE GLEN**, by Michael Leduc.  
Dollard des Ormeaux, QC:  
Michael D. Leduc Enr., 2005

**MONTREAL ISLAND  
RAILWAY STATIONS CP AND  
CONSTITUENT COMPANIES,** ▶  
by Michael Leduc. Dollard des  
Ormeaux, Michael D. Leduc Enr., 1996

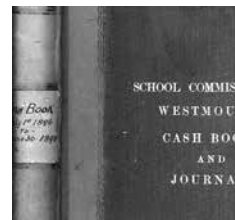


**MONTREAL RAILWAY  
TERMINALS**, by Michael Leduc.  
Dollard des Ormeaux, QC:  
Michael D. Leduc Enr., 2008.

If you ever wanted to study the history of Montreal Railways these three little books are the answer to a researcher's prayer. The development and evolution of the Montreal railway systems played such an integral part in Montreal's climb to importance and influence during the late 19th century and early 20th century that no study of the history of Montreal can be without it. Magical names like Shaughnessy, Van Horne and Stephenson invoke an era of great risk takers, who sometimes ended up very rich men with great influence on their contemporaries and the rest of Canada.



### DONATIONS



- ◀ **School Commissioners  
Westmount Cash Book and  
Journal**, July 1st 1896 to  
June 30th 1898.

**Strathcona Avenue Poster,** ▶  
CD and Colour Laser Printouts.  
*Donated by Michael Vachon*



- ◀ **Should Westmount Become a  
Heritage Character District?**

Using Ontario's Standards to Evaluate a  
Québec Municipality's Heritage-Protection  
Bylaws, Master's Report, by Robert Tyler Wood, M.PL. Candidate  
2009, Queen's University, School of Urban and Regional  
Planning. *Donated by the author*

**A collection of miscellaneous newspaper articles, 1971-1972,**  
concerning the building of the Greene Avenue ramp for the Trans  
Canada Highway construction, resulting in the demolition of  
houses in Lower Westmount on Selby Street and related articles  
on air pollution in general.

*Donated by Valery Le Maitre, Vancouver, BC*

**Queen Elizabeth Hospital Closing** – a collection of  
miscellaneous newspaper articles and pertinent correspondence  
related to the closing of the hospital. QEH Volunteer brochure,  
entitled "Volunteers in Action" and photographs of the QEH  
volunteers. QEH in-house newsletter entitled "QEH Contact  
HRE" various dates. *Donated by Susan McGuire*

Barbara Covington, WHA Archivist, June 2010