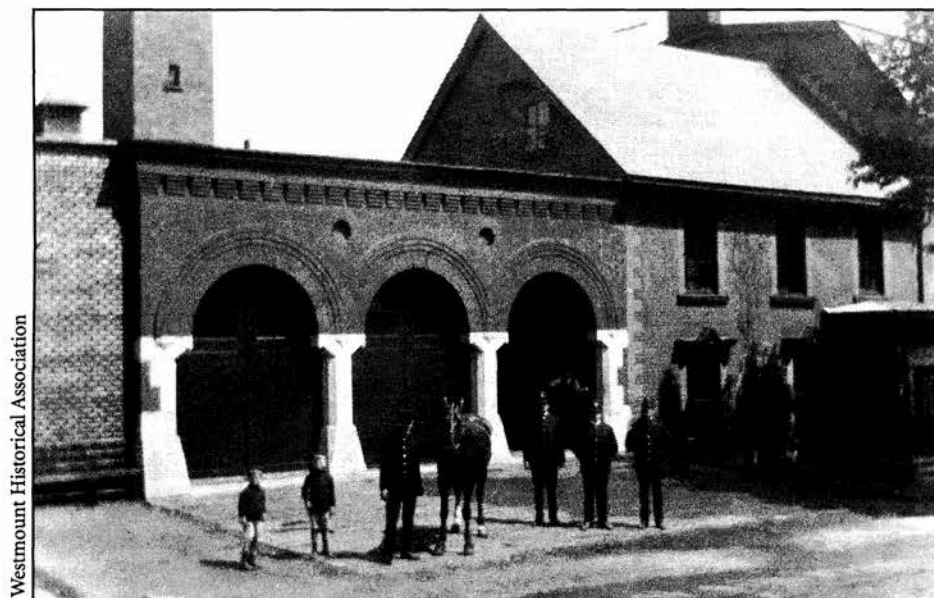


The Westmount Historian

NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTMOUNT HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 2 • NUMBER 1

SEPTEMBER 2001



Westmount Historical Association

Fall/Winter Lecture Series : Fire, Earth, Air and Water

The four elements, Fire, Earth, Air and Water, have all played a role in the development of Westmount. Discussing both general interest information and specific instances, our speakers will expand on these four natural occurrences. Some examples are: Fire destroyed Victoria Hall in 1924. Health-conscious Westmounters used the earthen trails in local parks as part of their fitness programs with the YMCA. Young men, who longed to fly, formed the 401 Squadron and served during the Second World War. Water in the streams flowing down the side of our mountain, necessitated the construction of a sixty-foot-high bridge for the railway over the Glen in 1889.

Thursday, September 20, 2001: Westmount Fire Brigade

Captain Craig Davis, a member of the Westmount Fire Brigade for 26 years, will describe its 110-year history from its formation in 1892.

Thursday, October 18, 2001: 150 Years of the YMCA in Montreal

Claire Rosenberg, a Director with the YMCA, and Janus Zubalik, an historical researcher, will talk about the 150-year history of the YMCA in Montreal and nearly 90 years in Westmount.

Thursday, November 22, 2001: 401 (City of Westmount) Squadron

John Sancton, owner and publisher of the *Westmount Examiner* from 1957 to 1989 and a wartime Intelligence Officer with the 401 Squadron, will tell of his experiences during the second World War.

Thursday, December 13, 2001: Before there was Westmount

David Hammonds, an Engineer who has been researching the history of the CPR in Westmount, will explain his findings about the geology of our mountainside location.

QAHN Conference 2001

The Annual Conference of the Quebec Anglo Heritage Network (QAHN) was held in the Centennial Centre on the Macdonald Campus, Ste. Anne-de-Bellevue, from Friday, June 15 to Sunday, June 17, 2001.

QAHN, of which the Westmount Historical Association is a core member, was set up with the support of the Ministry of Canadian Heritage, to provide an umbrella organization for Quebec English-speaking historical and cultural groups.

This year's conference, following last year's successful format, started on Friday afternoon with a Regional Showcase, which focused on the heritage of the Greater Montreal area with 5 speakers: Conway Jacks on "The Mohawk Tradition of Steelworking"; Richard Lord on "Montreal's Black Community"; Kevin Robinson on "Railways in Southern Quebec"; Alan Hustak on "Montreal's Irish Community"; and Ralph Estey on "History of Macdonald College." These were most interesting and informative presentations. In the evening, the banquet featured Graeme Decarie as guest speaker, inimitable as always.

Saturday's programme was structured with workshops in 4 parallel themes - RESEARCH, CONSERVATION, PLANNING and SHOW and TELL. The last named theme included a splendid presentation of "Westmount's History and Architecture" by Aline Gubbay, Past President of the WHA, in addition to illustrated histories of Mount Royal Cemetery and Metis Gardens. RESEARCH featured "Family History Research - little used Resources", "Holdings of the National

continued on page 8

The Westmount Historian

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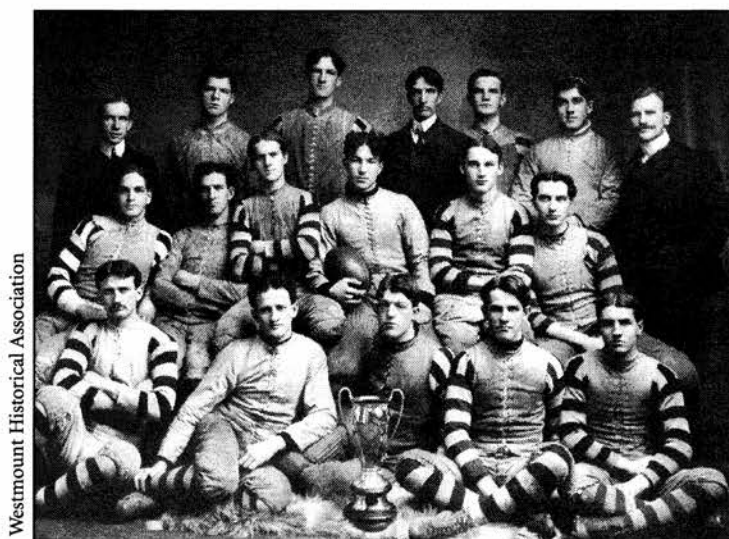
President's Message

To all our members, welcome back to a new fall season with the Westmount Historical Association. Now, more than ever, is the time to preserve our history. To see this in person, visit the milestone on the northwest corner of Côte St. Antoine Road and Forden Avenue and see preservation as it should be, with time taken and meticulous detail. Thank you to Trevor Gillingwater and his colleagues for a job well done and to the City of Westmount for recognizing the need for the preservation. Thank you also to Canadian Heritage of Quebec for the restoration of 168 Côte St. Antoine Road.

This season the Westmount Historical Association will work together with the Westmount Rugby Club to celebrate their 100th Anniversary and with the YMCA to celebrate their 150th anniversary. We look forward to being part of these celebrations, and offer congratulations to both.

Leave Westmount for awhile and come with me to Bowmanville, Ontario, founded by Westmounter Charles Bowman, and a visit to the Bowmanville Museum. The museum occupies a large brick house which was originally the home of David Fisher in 1848. In 1901 the house was sold to John H. H. Jury who died in 1941. His wife lived on in the house until her death in 1960. At that time the property was purchased by Mrs. Sarah Williams whose mother, Sarah Bowman, was a relative of Charles Bowman. Mrs. Williams donated the house and grounds to the town for use as a museum and it has operated as such since its opening in 1961. It is well worth the detour off Highway 401 (exit 431) for a visit, to see what can be done by a small community that believes their history is worthy enough for preservation. With a full time curator and volunteers, time can stand still. Can we in Westmount learn from this? I think so. Should we not be as proud? I think we are, and will be, no matter our status as a municipality. The Westmount Historical Association recently undertook a project to create such a museum and without pointing a finger, this project was put on hold, but I truly believe that this type of project can be successfully completed in our community. We have the means and more important, we have the desire.

FLORA-LEE WAGNER



Westmount Football Team Intermediate Champions, Canadian Rugby Football Union, 1903.

News from the Archives

As part of our efforts to make Westmount's history more accessible, the WHA has initiated a major indexing project involving the *Westmount Examiner* and its predecessor, the *Westmount News*. The first phase of the project, now underway, includes indexing both resources for articles relating to Westmount's architecture and urban development. Barbara Covington, past librarian at the Montreal General Hospital, has devoted considerable time to the Archives over the past year and will provide invaluable help to the indexing project.

Integrating the WHA archival collection and the website continues to be one of our top priorities. Plans for this year include developing a French-language version of the site and making a large segment of our photo collection available online. A major benefit of the website has been the increased contact with people from around the world who either have family ties to Westmount or have an interest in Westmount's history. A story recently brought to our attention via e-mail concerns Dorothy Lutton, a graduate of Westmount High School (class of 1916). Miss Lutton achieved distinction as the first woman to sing over the airwaves in Canada, a broadcast transmitted on May 21st, 1920 from a stage on the top floor of the Marconi Building in St. Henri to an audience assembled in the Chateau Laurier in Ottawa.

Lutton continued her singing career after being married in 1922 to Carlyle Duncan, the organist and choirmaster at St. Giles Presbyterian Church in Montreal. As well as appearing on occasion in concert halls around Quebec, Dorothy Duncan was for a time a soprano soloist at the American Presbyterian Church and later at St. James United Church in Montreal. In October 1930, Duncan was one of many accomplished singers to perform the opera 'Cavalleria Rusticana' over the CN radio network. A short while later, she made an appearance at Victoria Hall in Westmount, presenting 'The Songs of Gustav Holst' for the first time in Canada.

Dr. Arthur Zimmerman, a Toronto-based researcher working on the history of the Montreal Marconi radio station XWA/CFCE, has requested that we appeal to readers for information about Duncan's children, Eleanor (b. 1923) and William (b. 1926). Both graduated from Westmount High School in the early 1940s. Their later whereabouts is not known. Anyone who has information concerning Eleanor and William Duncan is invited to contact us at (514) 925-1404.

With amalgamation looming, the Westmount Historical Association has an increasing interest in receiving donations of photographs, papers, or other documents relating to Westmount's history. We gratefully acknowledge recent gifts from Louis Amos, Eve Marshall, Sarah Paltiel, Edward O. Phillips, June Russo, Marilyn Vanderstay, Annette Wolffe, and the *Westmount Examiner*.

Finally, we urge our readers not to miss the exhibition, 'Guido Nincheri: A Florentine Artist in America,' currently being shown at the Musée du Château Dufresne (2929, avenue Jeanne-d'Arc). Nincheri developed a reputation in the 1920s and 30s as one of Canada's greatest religious muralists and stained-glass artists. In Westmount, he was responsible for designing the interior of St. Leo's Church, a building designated a national historic site in 1999. The well-designed exhibit, featuring paintings, sketches, photographs, and stained-glass, was organized by the Hochelega-Maisonnette Historical Society and continues until October 21st.

PHILIP DOMBOWSKY

Vin d'Honneur Ceremony Held at Victoria Hall

Four names were added to the City of Westmount's *Vin d'Honneur* at a ceremony held at Victoria Hall on April 10th, including Bud and Chip Drury, Alphonsine Howlett, and Alice Lighthall.

Charles Mills 'Bud' Drury (1912-1991) was an M.P. for the St. Antoine-Westmount riding for 15 years starting in 1962 and served in the cabinets of Lester Pearson and Pierre Trudeau.

Chipman Hazen Drury (1917-1991), the younger brother of Bud Drury, was acclaimed Mayor of Westmount in January 1963 and held the office for one term. During his time as chief magistrate, Drury helped push forward major building projects such as Alexis Nihon Plaza and Westmount Square.

Alphonsine (Pare) Howlett (1913-1992) achieved distinction as a volunteer, social activist and philanthropist. She was the founder of the Association

continued on page 8



Alice Lighthall (1891-1991)

Next Door to School

ANNETTE G. WOLFF

Our family moved into 442 Argyle Avenue in October, 1923. My parents, Martin and Irene Wolff, had been house hunting since we left Ottawa in July, 1923, and nearly settled into a house on St. Luke Street (de Maisonneuve east of Atwater Avenue). But we needed a spacious house as we were six girls, ranging from Sarah (13 years), Annette 12, Rachel 10, Rosetta 9, Fanny 5 and Esther, 2 years old. We were very soon known as The Wolffs of Argyle.

We found ourselves next door to Argyle School, one of the Protestant School Board of Westmount's public schools, giving classes from Kindergarten to Grade 7. Our next door neighbour was a member of the school commission, Mr. Haldimand.

The house was long and narrow, upstairs with two rooms in front and three in the back, plus a bathroom next to the back room. Father had an extra bathroom built in the front hall about 1939. There was also a balcony off the back bedroom, which we always knew as the pink room.

Downstairs, the front door was a glass one, with a porch. The doors to the hall had stained glass windows. In fact, in each of these windows was a round one with a stained glass cow's head! Apparently the previous owners were butchers; this was soon changed.

We had a large living room with double doors to the dining room behind. Off this was a widening in the hall with china cupboards, and this area became the study, with a large table and a light hanging low over it. The family telephone was here, too. In one corner was a washbasin, and under the stairs was the cloak cupboard. Then the kitchen, and off it a small maid's room, then the cold larder and the stairs to the cellar.

Ours was the south end house of a row of seven stone-front houses at the bottom of the hill, built at least fifty years before (the city valuation roll indicates they were built in 1896, a mere 27 years before — ed).

My father was an engineer who was aware of the needs in the house. First he had all electric wires renewed, and the old stair carpet replaced by lovely oak risers. There had been carpeting surrounded with wood throughout the house. This was all changed to hardwood floors.

My parents had the big upstairs front room, facing Argyle, and next to it the smaller one which was the den: lots of books, a desk and chairs. Then came the yellow room with three children, then the blue room with baby, which also served as the visitor's room, and the pink room.

This was a house always full of activity. The children went to school — Sarah to high school and then McGill, and the next three to Argyle and then high school. The first year I was

in Grade 7 and often waited for the bell to ring before I ran to school — next door!

We used the garden for a playground and grew a limited number of vegetables there. The squirrels ate bulbs whenever they were planted. There were also two very overgrown apple trees. The fruit made good apple sauce.

My parents were very active. My mother was a writer, poet, and contributor to a United Kingdom weekly. My father was active in engineering events. Through these contacts many interesting people came to the house, for example well-known authors such as B.K. Sandwell, Howard Angus Kennedy, Dr. Lighthall, Helen Murphy, Miss Barry, Dr. Cecil Roth, etc. The parents were great entertainers and various assortments of people spent evenings in our home.

We girls had many friends and parties. We joined Girl Guides and I.O.D.E., and meetings for these groups were usually held round the dining room table. The stamp collectors of the family also met at the table. The Hillel organization, which is the Jewish centre for students at most universities, was started at our home and their first leader stayed at 442 Argyle. Again, they met at the dining room table.

In depression years when there was no engineering work, Daddy, who was never idle, got a fret-saw and made jigsaw puzzles. We all helped find suitable pictures and put pieces in boxes.

During World War II, the household opened itself to service men and foreign diplomats, all very interesting people. This included a number of rabbis who were chaplains in the forces in transit. There were also refugees, among whom were several Yugoslavians with extraordinary experiences, and the lovely Lotta Hitchmanova from Czechoslovakia, who had rescued many children in Europe. She lived with us for a few months before going on to Ottawa. We also entertained Moroccans and several prominent families fleeing from Holland and Germany.

Argyle Avenue could be quite slippery in winter, and on one occasion, Mother opened the door on a mid-winter morning to a man who told her he was a taxi driver who had a passenger on Thornhill Avenue, just up the hill. The road was so icy he was afraid of an accident. Could he, he asked, bring the lady passenger down on a rug and leave her with Mother while he brought the car down? Of course! So he soon returned, pulling a blanket with the lady on it. Mother even gave them a cup of tea!

Every so often a car came up our front steps, turning in to avoid the girls playing outside the school. Our lovely lilac bushes were regularly damaged or broken by "invading" cars.

Two Houses on Metcalfe

MARILYNN VANDERSTAY

177 METCALFE AVENUE

The 177 Metcalfe House is considered by many to be the most unique example of "gingerbread architecture" in Westmount. Although it was demolished by Reader's Digest in 1976 to facilitate an extension of their building, the house survives in miniature size at the Westmount Children's Library.

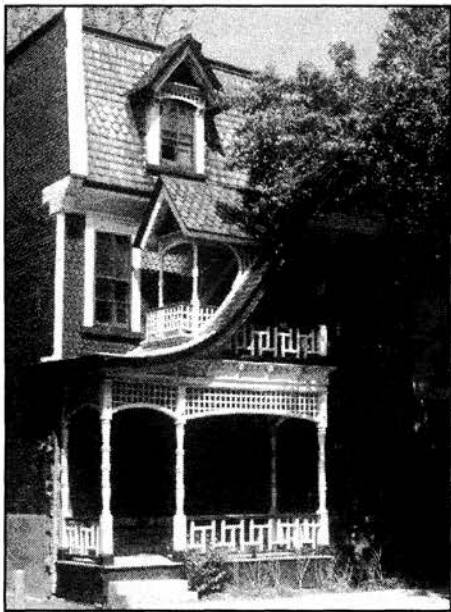
The original house was built in 1896 during the time when the Japanese Victorian style of architecture was popular in Westmount and Montreal. It was featured in the book *A Feast of Gingerbread*, written by librarian Beth Hatton and architect Warwick Hatton.

With news of its demolition, an anonymous Westmount artisan was so moved that

she started reconstructing the house in miniature form to preserve its history and architecture. Those who had lived in the home, known then as "The 177 Metcalfe House," attested to the authenticity of its recreation.

The dollhouse was furnished with miniature furniture that would have been the style in the 1890s. Carpets and wallpaper that the artisan had collected for 20 years were meticulously installed. The artist painstakingly reproduced the rooms as they would have originally been designed. The result is a history lesson in the lifestyle of the late 19th century.

In 1989 the anonymous artisan donated the model to the Westmount Library. Chief Librarian Rosemary Lydon had the house installed in her office. During the library renovations in the early 90's, the house was inadvertently put aside and was discovered in the City yards in 1995. Children's Librarian Wendy Wayling took on the project of having it restored. Miniature enthusiasts Marie Mackay and Linda McTier were recruited to refurbish the house, and last year the miniature replica was returned to the children's library where it sits on



177 Metcalfe Avenue

Westmount Historical Association

permanent display under a protective dome.

This year the artisans are completing the landscaping of the house with lawns and trees.

259 METCALFE AVENUE

The "House with the Ramp" at 259 Metcalfe is the site of one of Westmount's most remarkable tales of love and courage. In the summer of 1955, on his 35th birthday, Neil Compton, chair of the English Department at Sir George Williams University, was the last person in Montreal to fall victim to polio. After six months in an iron lung, Neil was able to go home. A year later after struggling in a three story walk-up, Neil and his wife and three children under six were able to move into the house with the help of some generous friends.

Recuperation was long. The floor in the back room was reinforced to hold the rocking bed with a respirator that Neil slept in. The always-innovative Neil, however, learned to breathe without a respirator using the unique glosso-pharyngeal breathing technique. While awake, Neil was now free of a respirator and was able to return to his position at Sir George.

In 1960 his wife left and the Compton family lived in fear of having to put the children into foster care. A serendipitous visit from the 23-year-old daughter of a family friend changed everything. Gabriel McCulloch was passing through Montreal en route home to England after teaching in the United States for a year. Although she had no experience with cooking, she agreed to stay on to manage the household.

A year later she obtained a position teaching classics at Sir George. Neil and Gabriel married in 1962 and over the next few years The Comptons became a larger family with the birth of two daughters.

For Gabriel and Neil those were wonderful years. Every year they would throw open the French sliding doors in the living room/dining room to host spectacular parties for the entire English department. Guests — as many as 75 in an evening — included Irving Layton and Quebec author John Glassco. Later Neil and Gabriel would discuss the parties while Neil rocked in his bed off the kitchen and Gabriel cleaned up. In 1971 Neil had an accident in his wheelchair that led to his untimely death in 1972. The unshakeable Gabriel carried on and when her daughters were old enough she sent them to the arts school that was then called FACES (now known simply as FACE).

continued on page 8

Vignettes of Westmount Schools

Spring Lecture Series 2001

Our four Spring lectures brought together information about schools founded from 1885 in the village of Côte St. Antoine to as recently as 1930. What characterizes these schools is a humble and modest beginning by dedicated people, a strong determination by their founders and commitment to excellence which is common to all. At the heart of their development is the welfare and development of the students. Through successive strong leaders, these schools have evolved with the changing times, while maintaining their individual characteristics.

THE STUDY

Eve Marshall & Barbara Whitley • March 29, 2001

The Study was founded in 1915 by Margaret Gascoigne who came from England to fulfill her dream of having her own school "where girls would be happy and learn things that really matter". She began by teaching six pupils in her apartment at 144 Drummond Street, moved to Durocher street and then, in 1917, to a house on Sherbrooke Street at the corner of Côte des Neiges Road. There were 56 girls. Miss Gascoigne taught Latin, Literature and Geography. Madame Gaudion taught French. Ethel Seath taught the girls art for 45 years.



The Study, 3233 The Boulevard

In 1921 the school moved again, with teachers and students carrying things up the hill to The Ewing House, at the corner of Côte des Neiges Road and Seaforth Avenue. Finally, in 1960 The Study moved into its present location at 3233 The

Boulevard in Westmount. Today there are 400 students from Kindergarten to Grade Eleven who enjoy small classes within a caring atmosphere.

The Study has developed under the guidance of dedicated and loyal Headmistresses. After Miss Gascoigne died in 1934, Miss Harvey who had been teaching at The Study continued as Head for 19 years, 1934-1953. Katherine Lamont who wrote a chronicle of The Study was Head for 17 years, 1953-1970.

During the 13 years (1970-1983) Jean Scott was Head, she oversaw the construction of the Middle School. Eve Marshall was Head from 1983 to 1997, when many more innovations occurred: the bilingual French-English programme was introduced as were new uniforms and computers. An Arts and Science Pavilion and a new gymnasium were constructed. Mary Hébert was appointed Head in 1997 and is guiding The Study into the new millennium.

DOREEN LINDSAY

KING'S, QUEEN'S AND ROSLYN

Molly Fripp • April 19, 2001

The development of Protestant public schooling in Westmount and the establishment of the Board of Westmount School Commissioners reflected the rapidly growing population of the town and the high values that parents placed on education. In 1873, the first public school opened on the corner of Côte St. Antoine Road and Clark Avenue. It changed location twice to take on more students and was named Côte St. Antoine Academy. Finally, in 1895, a new Côte St. Antoine Academy, accommodating 200 pupils, opened at the corner of Argyle and Côte St. Antoine.

In 1896, in the south section of the city, King's School, first known as Glen School, opened on Western Avenue between Lansdowne and Victoria with Mr. Harland as principal. In 1899 Queen's School, headed by Agnes James, opened on Olivier Avenue. The northwest corner of the city was serviced by Roslyn Avenue School from 1908, the year Westmount was incorporated as a city. At that time, Roslyn was "the most modernly equipped school in the Dominion". The first principal was Miss F. W. A. Young. Two years later Mr. T. I. Pollock replaced her. Specialized teachers from the newly-formed

continued on next page

Westmount School Commission taught their subjects at several schools. Roslyn evolved with the changing times. A French immersion program was introduced to kindergarten classes in 1968, then into Grade I, while Scott Kneeland was the principal. The older grades operated in English but the time devoted to French instruction doubled. The book *Roslyn: The Story of a Canadian School* written by three parents: Molly Fripp, Ann Elbourne, and Maryla Waters, and a video production developed out of the History Festival of 1977. Roslyn has always had a high degree of parental involvement.

ELIZABETH HENRIK

ST. GEORGE'S SCHOOL Gilbert Plaw • May 17, 2001

St. George's School was founded in 1930 by a group of parents who supported the principles of progressive education. "Learning by doing," combined with an integrated project approach, were central to its learning experience. It was formed as a corporation owned by the parents. Public reaction to the young school was extremely negative.

The first school, with 22 pupils from pre-school to Grade 2, was located on the top floor of a rented house at the corner of Clarke and Cedar Avenues in Westmount. In 1935, under Principal Agnes Matthews (1935-63), St. George's moved to an old mansion at 3100 The Boulevard, the site of the present high school. It also acquired and converted two neighbouring houses. In 1943 the Junior High was added. A new building was constructed on the front gardens in 1957 and the three old houses were demolished. The school was extended to Grade 11.

Under Principal Robert Leicester (1966-1975), in 1970, St. George's purchased the St. George's Snowshoe Club at 3685 The Boulevard in Westmount (the shared name was coincidental). With an extension added, this became the elementary school and an enlarged 3100 The Boulevard remained the high school.

The high school was expanded in 1989 under Bahadur Bhatla, three time principal. In 1999 a large extension and renovation was carried out in the lower school under Beatrice Lewis, who had taken over as Director of the Elementary School in 1989.

Under the leadership of James Officer since 1993, St. George's School now has a combined enrolment of more than 550 students. It continues the commitment to progressive, child-centered education.

CAROLINE BRESLAW



Westmount Academy, ca. 1910

Westmount Historical Association

WESTMOUNT HIGH SCHOOL Richard Lord • June 14, 2001

Westmount High School had its origins in Côte St. Antoine Academy which was built in 1885 at the corner of Stanton Street and Côte St. Antoine Road, originally called Stanton Street School. It was a building on land adjoining the original farmer's house that had been used for school, town council meetings and Church school classes.

In 1895 a larger school called Westmount Academy, later Argyle School, was built as an all-grade school for 681 pupils. By 1934 this building had to be demolished because of unstable foundation problems. A new building was constructed on the site one year later. By 1940 it became the Senior High School for grades 10, 11 and 12. Grade 12 was dropped in 1951.

Meanwhile, in 1914, a "new" Westmount High School was opened on Academy Road for grades seven to eleven, graduating its first students in 1915. In 1940 the school was split into Junior and Senior High Schools: Argyle School was transformed into the Senior High School and the Academy Road building housed only grades 7, 8 and 9 under the name Westmount Intermediate School, which changed its name to Westmount Junior High School in 1943.

In 1961, the Junior and Senior High Schools were recombined in a new, modern building housing 1,282 students on part of the Montreal Amateur Athletic sports grounds on St. Catherine Street. It included Gymnasium, Biology, Chemistry and Physics Labs as well as specialized Art and Music rooms and French language labs. The former Westmount High School building on Côte St. Antoine Road was sold to Selwyn House, while the Junior High School on Academy Road became Westmount Park Elementary School.

DOREEN LINDSAY

QAHN Conference

continued from page 3

Archives of Canada" and "Droulers Archaeological Site in St. Anicet." CONSERVATION subjects were "Montreal, Old Painted Outdoor Advertising Signs," "Preserving Paper Artifacts" and "Tourism and Textile Conservation." PLANNING covered "Art Crimes," "Web Connections, Connecting with Past and Future," and "Canadian Heritage of Quebec Properties."

Concurrent with the workshops on Saturday, conservators from the Musée de Québec were on hand, under the title "Patrimoine à domicile," to examine and evaluate heirlooms and treasures (open to the public). The experts were reported to be very pleased with what was presented.

There was plenty of apace for displays and sales by historical and cultural groups.

Saturday concluded with a barbecue followed by music. Sunday morning was devoted to inter-sectoral meetings of delegates and QAHN's Annual General Meeting. Dick Evans was re-elected President, with Rod McLeod as Vice-President, Betty LeMaistre as Secretary and David Freeman as Treasurer.

The QAHN office is located at 257 Queen Street, Suite 420, Lennoxville,

(Quebec) J1M 1R9. At the heart of the operation is Valerie Bridger, Communications Co-Ordinator, tel: (819) 564-9595 or toll-free (in Quebec) (877) 964-0409.

DAVID FREEMAN

Vin d'Honneur

continued from page 3

of English Catholic Parents, co-founder of the Priory School, and for several years, an administrator at the Montreal Neurological Institute.

Alice Lighthall (1891-1991), daughter of former Westmount mayor W. D. Lighthall, was active in a number of organizations in Montreal, including the Canadian Guild of Crafts, the Antiquarian and Numismatic Society of Montreal, the Women's Art Society and the Canadian Authors' Association. In 1944, Lighthall helped establish the Westmount Historical Association and in 1956, she played a major role in saving one of the most important heritage houses in Westmount, the Hurtubise House on Cote St. Antoine Road. In recognition of her literary and scholarly achievements, Lighthall was awarded the first posthumous honorary degree ever given by McGill University, an M.A., in 1991.

The *Vin d'Honneur* was established by Mayor May Cutler in 1990 as a way

of acknowledging the accomplishments of outstanding Westmount residents. Names are added to the *Vin d'Honneur* every second year.

Metcalf Houses

continued from page 5

In another serendipitous meeting, Gabriel met co-founder and principal Philip Bagniet. In 1977 the two were married and soon increased the family by two more children. Around that time Gabriel Bagniet was featured in an article, "The Shading of Motherhood," about mothers having babies after 40.

The Bagniet family, with all four children remaining at home, continued to live in the house with the ramp, housing various grandparents through the years. Now semi-empty nesters, Gabriel continues to teach at Concordia while Philip does contract work for private schools.

The house remains virtually the same as it did 45 years ago, though the sliding doors no longer slide. Neil's extensive library is shelved as it was. The couple continues to host wonderful parties. Grandchildren play where their parents once did.

The only change involves the ramp, which was finally taken down in 1982.

MARILYN VANDERSTAY