AERIAL VIEW OF NEW PATHWAY on THE SUMMIT photo R.Thompson 2016. page 4

GOAD MAP FROM 1890 SHOWING SHERBROOKE ST. ENDING AT GREENE AVE. page 6

DORCHESTER ST. BETWEEN HALLOWELL AND ATWATER AVE. Pinsonneault 1906 map. page 10

STREETS of WESTMOUNT
EDITOR’S VIEW

We are pleased to bring you another WHA Newsletter as the year 2016 ends and 2017 begins. As you read through the articles based on the 2016 fall lectures about three very different streets in Westmount, you will find out how they developed and how they are evolving. A most dramatic and pleasant change is occurring on the northern edge of Summit Circle. A people-friendly winding pathway is being created with a view through trees toward Mt. Royal in Montreal. Westmount has said no to cars on this former roadway and yes to walkers and increased greenspace.

Sherbrooke St. running from east to west continues to be the main thoroughfare of our city. In 30 minutes you can walk from Atwater Avenue in the east, past Queen Elizabeth Park, elegant apartment buildings, the Westmount City Hall and Cenotaph, Westmount Park, the Westmount Public Library, the Flower Conservatory, Victoria Hall and on to Claremont Ave. in the west. The two vital commercial areas at Greene and Victoria Avenues continue to provide daily destinations for residents and others by maintaining long-time businesses, while attracting new ones, including clothing boutiques, novelty stores and restaurants.

Dorchester Blvd. in the southeast sector of our city was widened in 1967 at the request of Montreal to provide a wider continuous route from downtown. Today, the separation between the north side and the south side of Dorchester has come under review by the City of Westmount. Various plans are being put forth by both the City and local residents, but what is needed is a vision.

Enjoy your walk along these three roads.

Doreen Lindsay
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

Fall 2016 has been a busy period for the Westmount Historical Association. Our accomplishments during these months are the result of hard work by all our Board members and by several invaluable new WHA volunteers, such as Carolyn Singman assisting in the Archives and Suzie Goyer doing French translations. The fall lecture series, *Strolling the Streets of Westmount*, was very well attended, showing that Westmounters are interested in the changes occurring to the streets of our city. The Fall heritage walking tour of Sherbrooke Street took place on a rainy October day and will be offered again next year, when we hope the sun will shine. At November’s Remembrance Day ceremony, the WHA placed a wreath at the Cenotaph. There are new additions to the website photo gallery for the Westmount Train Station, Westmount municipal buildings, and carriage houses in our community.

Several important local events have taken place since the last issue of *The Westmount Historian*. On July 25, federal MP Marc Garneau presented the City of Westmount with a heritage plaque from the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. It recognizes the national historic significance of Westmount, with its richness of architectural styles and landscapes.

In December, Council proposed naming the Glen Arch as the first municipally-designated heritage site in Westmount. The WHA and Westmount Municipal Association advocated strongly for the establishment of a Local Heritage Council, empowered to grant heritage status to municipal sites. The WHA unveiled a heritage plaque on the Glen embankment in 2012 (see the WHA website photo gallery). It is now my privilege to sit on the Local Heritage Council as the representative of the WHA. The work continues and other sites will receive protected status because of the Heritage Council’s efforts.

Our December Social was a celebration of Doreen Lindsay’s many accomplishments as Board member and Past President of the WHA. The well-attended evening featured tributes to her and Doreen’s own presentation about her life. It was a festive end to a successful year for the WHA.

CAROLINE BRESLAW

EVENTS IN 2016

WHA WALKING TOUR OF SHERBROOKE ST.

OCT. 16, 2016: Louise Carpentier (in photo) and Caroline Breslaw led a Fall 2016 Walking Tour of Sherbrooke St. on Sunday, Oct. 16, 2016, from Queen Elizabeth Park in the east to Prince Albert Park in the west. Because of rain, the walk will be offered again next year. Photo: R. Thompson

HERITAGE PLAQUE

July 25, 2016: Federal MP Mark Garneau, Minister of Transport, presented the City of Westmount with a heritage plaque from the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. It recognizes the national historic significance of Westmount’s richness of architectural styles and landscapes. Photo: R. Thompson

REMEMBRANCE DAY CEREMONY

Nov. 6, 2016: Jane Martin and Louise Carpentier, both Directors of WHA, laid a wreath at the Westmount Cenotaph. Photo: R. Thompson
A new gravel walking path is being developed by the City of Westmount on the north slope of Summit Woods between #15 Summit Circle Rd. and Oakland Ave. The path is for pedestrians only, no bicyclists or off-leash dogs.

In anticipation of developing the pedestrian pathway, Westmount closed this section of Summit Circle Rd. to traffic in 2009, but the hard paved surface remained in place until this year. The paving, with a concrete base, had been constructed in 1956 over an old dirt road that can be seen on a 1928 map.

The natural woodland at the Summit had been used by residents for skiing and tobogganing long before it was officially purchased by the City of Westmount in 1940 for use as parkland. Westmount bought 46.2 acres from McGill University to use for nature walks, bird watching, wildflower preservation, and dog walking. (See The Westmount Historian Feb. 2005 p.6) At first the area was called Summit Park but more recently the name was changed to Summit Woods to better reflect its natural ecosystem.

The seven-metre wide asphalt roadway was removed during the autumn of 2016 and replaced with a four-metre wide gravel pathway. Light standards, guardrails, and invasive plant species have also been removed. Bollards, some lighted and others having reflective tape, will delineate the path. The plan includes construction of a viewpoint looking toward Mount Royal.

In the spring of 2017, many native trees, shrubs, grasses, and perennials will be planted. There will also be bioswales created to help absorb water run-off and prevent damage to the pathway. Bioswales are systems of gentle slopes, gravel, drains and vegetation.

In 2015 Westmount obtained a grant from the Quebec Ministry of Culture to pay for half the cost of the $3 million project. Westmount is coordinating this work with the City
The Summit is a natural ecosystem within an urban surrounding.

A new position was established recently when the City of Westmount hired Nicolas Mory as superintendent of horticulture and arboriculture in Public Works. After obtaining his degree in agricultural and environmental sciences from McGill University in 2013, Mr. Mory worked in British Columbia, Ontario, Manitoba, and Guatemala before coming to work in Westmount.
LORNE HUSTON

It is hard to imagine our city without it. And yet, there was considerable controversy around the idea of extending Sherbrooke St. through the farms and orchards that lay at the foot of the mountain at the end of the 19th Century.

Before Sherbrooke St.

In 1817, a street was opened up along the ridge of the terrace in Montreal that extends from what is now Aylmer St. to St. Lawrence Blvd. The new roadway was named Sherbrooke St. in honour of the new governor of British North America of the time, John Coape Sherbrooke (1764-1830). The street was gradually extended both to the east and the west until, in 1879, it was connected to Côte-St-Antoine at what we today call Greene Ave. As time went on, two differing views emerged concerning the future of the land below Côte-St-Antoine. Some wanted to conserve the rural, bucolic nature of the area while others wanted to open the town to urban development. Yet no significant real estate development could occur without the extension of public transit. In the pre-automobile era, most jobs in Montreal were too far away for people in Westmount to walk to work and back on a daily basis.

Early development of Sherbrooke St. (1893-1914)

In 1890, some prominent residents founded the Côte-St-Antoine Improvement Committee to promote the development of the area. The idea of extending Sherbrooke St. west from Greene Ave. to Claremont Ave. was carried out in 1893, and a new tramway line was added the following year. This event immediately stimulated housing and commercial development along Greene and Victoria Avenues, which marked the eastern and western limits of the tramway route within Westmount. The local authorities were intent upon making Sherbrooke St. a prestigious, non-commercial thoroughfare, much as it was in Montreal at that time.

To set the tone, the city purchased sixteen acres of wooded and ravine-filled land south of Sherbrooke St. for use as a public park. Land was reserved for a Westmount Public Library, and a Community Hall (Victoria Hall), both built in 1899. This initiative had the desired effect and first-rate family dwellings were soon constructed all along the street. The Congrégation de Notre-Dame built its Mother House at the corner of Atwater in 1908 and the first Reform synagogue in Canada (Temple Emanu-El) was built near Elm Ave. in 1911. About the same time, a YMCA clubhouse was built across the street from the Library. The struggle to prevent commercial development on the street was ongoing.

THE RISE OF SHERBROOKE STREET in WESTMOUNT

With its striking monumental architecture, stately apartment buildings and little neighbourhood shops, Sherbrooke Street stands as the main East-West thoroughfare in Westmount.
In 1914, just before the First World War, the row housing that had been built on Sherbrooke St. near Victoria Avenue (Drouin Terrace) was converted into small shops to accommodate the needs of residents situated nearby. Also, the first big apartment on Sherbrooke St. West, “The Westmount”, was built at the corner of Greene Ave.

The 1920s

The First World War brought a temporary halt to further development of Sherbrooke St., but by the early 1920s a new wave of construction was underway. Again, it was a decision by Westmount Council that launched the new phase. The municipal offices, which had been located in a multipurpose town hall, fire station, and police station building on Stanton St., were relocated to a triangular piece of land bordering on Sherbrooke St. and Côte St. Antoine Rd. A prestigious city hall was erected in 1922 facing eastward onto the green space that came to be known as Garden Point. Shortly thereafter, an impressive cenotaph, commemorating those fallen in the war, was erected on Garden Point in view of the new City Hall. These municipal projects were followed by the construction of a number of religious buildings along the street. The Shaar Hashomayim synagogue was built on Côte-St-Antoine Rd. in 1922, adjacent to Sherbrooke St., soon to be followed by new Protestant and Catholic churches fronting on Sherbrooke. When Victoria Hall burned down in 1924 it was immediately rebuilt the following year. Two years later a Flower Conservatory was constructed between the Library and the new Victoria Hall to form a striking group of cultural buildings.

After 1930

By 1930, there was very little property left to be developed along Sherbrooke St. To those who favoured preservation of the street’s built heritage, the challenge was how to maintain this heritage while at the same time keeping the street alive and relevant. One of the first major changes occurred when Temple Emanu-El burned down in 1957. Sign of the times, the immediate reaction was no longer to rebuild in a style which evoked much earlier architectural styles, as had been the case when Victoria Hall had burned down a generation earlier. The new synagogue was immediately rebuilt in a resolutely modern style, evincing a preference that has its proponents right up to the present day.

The 1960s saw a number of contemporary office buildings erected on Sherbrooke St. near Wood and Elm Avenues. A few apartment buildings were built in the 1970s and some of the storefronts around Victoria have either disappeared or

Sir John Coape Sherbrooke (1764-1830) was the Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia during the War of 1812, and then was appointed Governor General of British North America in 1816 because of his talent as a mediator. Ill health forced him to resign after two years and he retired to Nottinghamshire in England where he died in 1830. Portrait from the Library and Archives Canada Fonds (Mikan 104985)
been redone over the years. However, to a large degree the arguments for heritage conservation have remained strong and have been reinforced by local municipal bylaws aimed at preserving the character and continuity of the Sherbrooke streetscape.

Based on a lecture to the WHA by Lorne Huston on September 15, 2016.
Westmount Park 1898 was created in celebration of Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee of 1897.


Westmount Public Library 1899 (left) and adjacent Conservatory 1927 (right) 4574 Sherbrooke St. W. Classified exceptional. Architect: Robert Findlay. First municipal public library in Quebec, built in Richardsonian Romanesque style.

Flower Conservatory manufactured by the company Lord and Burnham. Closed for renovation.

Drouin Terrace 1899. Architect: Théo Daoust with the contractor Octave Drouin. A series of six connected houses from 4868 to 4896 Sherbrooke St. W. between Prince Albert and Claremont Avenues. In 1914, they were successfully transformed into shops serving nearby residents.
Dorchester Street became the first eastern gateway to Westmount when it was extended west of Atwater in 1873. It was named after Lord Dorchester (Sir Guy Carleton), the Governor of Quebec after the British Conquest. Originally a stone bridge crossed over a ravine and stream at Atwater Avenue.

The area was rural, with orchards and farmland. Two large estates occupied the land south of Dorchester. The property William Hallowell acquired in 1806 was later bought by Dr. Selby, then by Canada Postmaster-General Thomas Stayner, and finally by the French Methodist Institute. The second estate was owned by Judge Badgley and in 1853 by the Hon. George Moffatt, whose residence was Weredale Lodge. In 1846, Captain Philip Durnford built a home called Green Hythe on the north side of the street. A tollbooth stood at the corner of Dorchester and Atwater Avenue.

From the 1880s, with the arrival of public transportation in the eastern sector, the first urban development in Westmount took place along Dorchester and its surrounding streets. The two estates were sold and subdivided. Houses were constructed on most of the land, some of which was expropriated for the railway and the construction of new streets. The street names reflected the area’s early landowners and the close ties to Britain.

**Dorchester was a prestigious address.**

The street’s narrow lots gave it an urban character. In 1888, The Towers, Westmount’s first terraced housing (row housing designed as a unit and built by a single developer), was built from 4130 to 4140 Dorchester. The residences on the street were noted for their Victorian whimsy and rich architectural details. In the 1890s, the street’s first church, St. Stephen’s Anglican Church, appeared at the corner of Atwater.

Greene Avenue was named Dorchester until 1884. The first development between Greene and Hallowell took place in the 1890s, when Columbia, Clandeboye, and Bruce
Avenues were created from the former Hallowell property. The most important private sporting club in Montreal, the MAAA (Montreal Amateur Athletic Association), established itself in 1887 at the western end of Dorchester. By 1893, it could be reached by the new streetcar loopline. Calvary Church, since demolished, was built at the northwest corner of Greene in 1912.

In **1962, 135 buildings were expropriated by Westmount.** Gradually the area went out of fashion, with many homes becoming rooming houses. In 1962, 135 buildings were expropriated by Westmount to widen Dorchester. They were demolished between 1966 and 1967, and a green median was installed. Most of the north side was made into parking lots, but a proposed highrise development never came about in the face of concerted citizen opposition. The Royal Bank Data Building and the RCMP Regional Headquarters building were constructed in the 1970s.

Dorchester Boulevard kept its name in Westmount, after being renamed Blvd. René Lévesque in the City of Montreal in 1987. The zone remains rich in terms of architectural diversity and detail. Discussions are now taking place about the redevelopment of this important street.

Based on a lecture to the WHA by Caroline Breslaw and Theodora Samiotis on October 20, 2016.
“The Towers” was Westmount’s first terraced housing. Classified important. It was constructed in 1888 at 4130 to 4140 Dorchester St. W. by developer Ed. Evans. These six three-story greystones were built in the Second Empire style with stepped façades and mansard roofs. Photo: Aline Gubbay

4274 Dorchester Boulevard 1895 townhouse. Home of Theodora Samiotis and Michael McAdoo who were awarded the 2006 Montreal Architectural Heritage Award for residential restoration.

4064 Dorchester Boulevard, 1892-95. Classified important. Named Thynwald, the entrance has a double arch and an oriel window with pediment supported by columns. Neo-Roman treatment of ground floor with setback windows.

4100 Dorchester Boulevard 1891. Classified important. Designed by Robert Findlay, Westmount architect, for Thomas B. Macauley, a director of the Sun Life Company. It is a Queen Anne-style house at the southwest corner of Dorchester and Clandeboye.
LEONARD NORMAN COHEN singer, songwriter, poet, novelist.

Born in Westmount, Sept. 21, 1934. Died in Los Angeles, California Nov. 7, 2016. Beloved Montrealer and Westmounter Leonard Cohen passed away on November 7, 2016. Leonard Cohen grew up on Belmont Avenue, played in Murray Hill Park, attended Roslyn and Westmount High Schools, and had a strong family tie to Shaar Hashomayim. He is buried in the family plot of the Shaar Hashomayim Cemetery. Cohen’s final album, You Want it Darker, included the Shaar Hashomayim Synagogue Choir with Cantor Gideon Zelermyer. Dusty Solomon Vineberg and Trina Vineberg Solomon, members of the WHA, are relatives who live in Westmount.

FIRST DESIGNATED HERITAGE SITE

Dec. 5, 2016: The Glen Arch with its embankments is the first designated heritage site to be proposed by the City of Westmount under Quebec’s 2012 Culture Heritage Act. A Westmount Local Heritage Council was formed in 2014 to advise the city council. It is chaired by architect Julia Gersovitz. The WHA is represented on the council by President Caroline Breslaw.

Photo: Doreen Lindsay

The WHA recognizes all the members who have made personal donations that support our yearly lectures, newsletters, and other activities. The support of members is greatly appreciated.

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The WHA POSTERS for this series of talks on *Strolling the Streets of Westmount* were designed by Fern Breslaw, a Westmounter who is now a creative director with J. Walter Thompson in New York. She also designed the posters for the Fall 2016 WHA lectures series.

The WHA Lecture Committee consisting of Caroline Breslaw, Louise Carpentier, and Lorne Huston selected knowledgeable speakers as they developed the 2016 series of *Strolling the Streets in Westmount*.

Lorne Huston, WHA director, researcher. Speaker on September 15, 2016. The Rise of Sherbrooke Street in Westmount

Caroline Breslaw WHA president and Theodora Samiotis, Westmount City Councillor for Ward 8. Speakers on October 20, 2016. The Changing Face of Dorchester

Nicolas Mory, Superintendent of Horticulture and Arboriculture for Westmount Public Works, and Westmount City Councillor Cynthia Lulham, Commissioner of Parks and Sustainability. Speakers on November 17, 2016. From Road to Path: the Greening of Summit Circle

WHA members attending December Social Honouring Doreen Lindsay on December 15, 2016.
HONOURING DOREEN LINDSAY AT SOCIAL, DEC. 15

Representatives of the City of Westmount, Canadian Heritage of Quebec (CHQ), the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN) and the Royal Montreal Regiment (RMR) came to talk about their personal and professional relationship with Doreen and thank her for her contributions over the past years as president of the WHA.

Before the speeches, approximately 45 WHA members joined by Doreen’s family enjoyed holiday refreshments of tea, coffee, sparkling juice, shortbread cookies, and fruitcake.

Introduction by Caroline Breslaw, President of Westmount Historical Association

Rod MacLeod, editor of Quebec Heritage News, the magazine of the Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN)

Jacques Archambault, Director General of Canadian Heritage of Quebec (CHQ)

Doreen Lindsay, Rod MacLeod, Cynthia Lulham, City Councillor and Commissioner of Sustainability and Parks, Colin Robinson, Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel (ret’d) RMR.

Members of Westmount Historical Association (WHA) and Doreen’s family in the Gallery at Victoria Hall, the scene of the December Social.
NEW ACQUISITIONS

Small photograph, ca. 1955, of young David Singman on the cannon in Westmount Park. Donated by his sister Carolyn Singman

18 small photographs, ca. 1960s, taken in or outside 555 Victoria Ave., Westmount (the “Well House”). Also a story from the Montreal Star, Dec. 24, 1963, “Yule in a Fairy-tale House in Westmount”, discussing the same residence and its owner at that time, Mrs. Monica Grahame. Donated by her granddaughter Cynthia Grahame


The WHA is proud of its growing archival collection, which is rich in photographs of our evolving citiescape, and also contains a range of documents, maps, and memorabilia relevant to the community’s long history. We sincerely thank all those who have donated original items to the archives, or published materials for our reference shelves.

To our readers: please contact us if items of local interest come to light as you downsize, or clear out attics or drawers. In particular, we seek good quality photographs that show identifiable aspects of life in Westmount over the years, but many other types of memorabilia are also welcomed.

JANE MARTIN, WHA ARCHIVIST