

## A SCHOOL IS PLANNED

The following is an extract from the Minutes of the Board, May 19, 1887:

"Section 14, Article 4, of the By-Laws having been suspended, Mr. Kent, seconded by Mr. Somers moved that the school-house to be erected on Spadina Crescent, St. Patrick's Ward, be named Lansdowne School in honour of His Excellency the Governor General, which was carried."

The circumstances which prompted this action by the Board in 1887 was the visit of the Marquis of Lansdowne and Lady Lansdowne to Toronto, beginning May 4, 1887, and extending to May 26, 1887.

From the enthusiasm aroused by this visit, and the interest which Lord Lansdowne took in education, Lansdowne School got its name. At that time it was customary for schools to take the names of distinguished persons. Lord Lansdowne was Governor General of Canada from 1883 to 1888.

## THE ORIGINAL BUILDING ON SPADINA CRESCENT

Lansdowne School opened in March, 1888. It was intensely crowded with 945 students in twelve rooms.

The first unit was erected in 1887. Additions were built in 1889 and 1909. In its final form the school consisted of 20 standard classrooms, 1 senior kindergarten, 1 junior kindergarten, 1 guidance room, plus ancillary accommodation. This building consisted of three storeys and basement. It was partially destroyed by fire in 1913 and reconstructed in 1914.

"Your Committee reports that Lansdowne School was destroyed by fire on the afternoon of Tuesday the 24th inst. The new part of the building now approaching completion and containing six class rooms is not much damaged."

From the 1914 Toronto Board of Education Minutes, Appendix, page 171.

## THE ROBERT STREET SITE

In 1960 the Board acquired property on Robert Street for a new senior school. Building operations commenced February, 1960, the cornerstone was laid November 16, 1960, and the building was officially opened on December 6, 1961.

Upon completion of the new school in 1961, the original building on Spadina Crescent was demolished.

## The Robert Street Site con't...

The new Lansdowne Senior Public School was designed by the Board's own architectural and engineering staff under the supervision of Mr. R. Harvey Self, B.A.Sc., P. Enc., Comptroller of Buildings and Plant and will, we believe, be one of the most modern elementary schools in Canada. The building consists of:

- 2 Senior Kindergartens
  - 1 Lunchroom
  - 1 Industrial Arts
  - 1 Art Room
  - 1 Speech and Drama
  - 1 Home Economics
  - 1 Science
  - 1 Music
  - 4 Standard Senior Classrooms
  - 13 Standard Junior Classrooms
  - 1 Double Gymnasium
- Administrative Suite, Dental and Medical rooms and Ancillary Rooms.  
Parking for 24 cars is provided under a portion of the school.

The round building effect was not the result of a desire to be different, but rather to produce a most economical and functional building both from the standpoint of the building itself as well as consideration of land usage. Because of the shape of the building, a saving of approximately 7,000 sq. ft. of actual floor area was realized.

In the book Toronto, magnificent city (Mika, 1967) the school is described as, "a striking example of contemporary school architecture. Being not only functional but also attractive, the building helps to enhance its surroundings and is a far cry from its outmoded predecessor which was torn down in 1961 after serving for three quarters of a century. A huge boulder sitting on the grounds was found during excavatng for the new school and a plaque tells that it might have been carried there from Caribou Lake by a glacier about twelve thousand years ago."

However, it was not until 1967 that the school name became officially "Lord Lansdowne". By that time it was the Board's practice to give schools names indicative of their location. Confusion has existed for some time among Lansdowne Public School and other schools on or near Lansdowne Avenue. But since the historical name had been in effect for 73 years the Board decided to clarify the association with the school's namesake by adding the "Lord".

## STAFF OF LANSDOWNE SCHOOL

Little information has been collected to date on the staff of Lansdowne School. Principal Percy G. Might was at the front as Lieutenant Might during the First World War. It encouraged "everyone connected with the school to tuck in and make Lansdowne school one of the first, if not the first, school in the city for patriotic work."

Staff of Lansdowne School con't...

Principal Scholfield guided the school through those war years.

Another well-known Principal was A.P. McNab whose term was from 1945 through 1959.

Principal Magdolna Szabo made news in the 1970s especially when the Board considered closing Lord Lansdowne and she led 800 angry parents to a Board meeting.

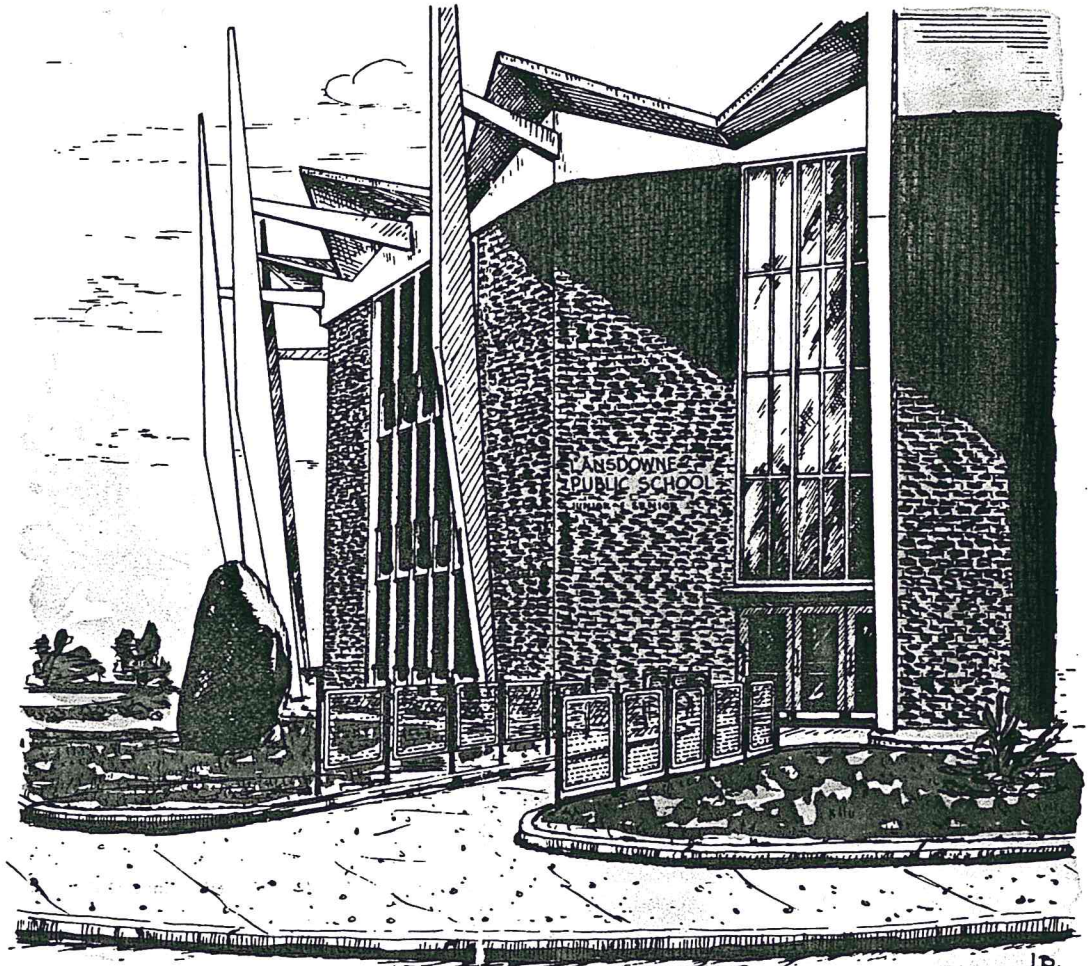
Recently alumni Joe Rosenblatt has immortalized some memorable teachers in his childhood reminiscences, "Escape from the Glue Factory" (Exile, 1985): Mr. Chick a military-minded history teacher, Miss Plover administering the strap, Colonel Scott a literature teacher who most admired Rudyard Kipling.

A complete school history for Lord Lansdowne Public School still waits to be written. These centennial events may yet inspire a staff member, a class of students, a parent or alumni to take up the task of research involved. It is a challenge and an opportunity for someone; the Records, Archives and Museum staff stands ready to assist.

Gail Gregory  
Curator  
Records, Archives and Museum

GG/sls  
February 5, 1988

TBE - SCHOOLS - ELEMENTARY - LORD LANSLOWNE



Lansdowne Public School on Robert Street is a striking example of contemporary school architecture. Being not only functional but also attractive, the building helps to enhance its surroundings and is a far cry from its outmoded predecessor which was torn down in 1961 after serving for three quarters of a century. A huge boulder sitting on the grounds was found during excavating for the new school and a plaque tells that it might have been carried there from Caribou Lake by a glacier about twelve thousand years ago.

42

From "Toronto, Magnificent City. Belleme's Mica Series  
Series 19, 1967

OVER =>

The original Lansdowne Public School located on Spadina Crescent consists of 20 standard classrooms, 1 senior kindergarten, 1 junior kindergarten, 1 guidance room, plus ancillary accommodation. This building is three storeys and basement and was constructed in three units. The first unit was erected in 1887 and was added to in 1889. The building was partially destroyed by fire in 1913 and was reconstructed in 1914.

The new Lansdowne Senior Public School was designed by the Board's own architectural and engineering staff under the supervision of Mr. R. Harvey Self, B.A.Sc., P. Enc., Comptroller of Buildings and Plans and will, we believe, be one of the most modern elementary schools in Canada. The building consists of:-

- 2 Senior kindergartens
  - 1 Lunchroom
  - 1 Industrial Arts
  - 1 Art Room
  - 1 Speech and Drama
  - 1 Home Economics
  - 1 Science
  - 1 Music
  - 4 Standard Senior Classrooms
  - 13 Standard Junior Classrooms
  - 1 Double Gymnasium
  - Administrative Suite, Dental and Medical rooms and Ancillary Rooms.
- Parking for 24 cars is provided under a portion of the school.

The round building affect was not the result of a desire to be different, but rather to produce a most economical and functional building both from the standpoint of the building itself as well as consideration of land usage. Because of the shape of the building, a saving of approximately 7,000 sq.ft. of actual floor area was realized.

Pertinent Cost Factors:

General Contract to Bennett Pratt Ltd.		\$1,293,532.08
Contingency 3%	\$38,805.99	
Architectural & Engineering Fees 6%	77,611.93	
Academic Equipment	89,500.00	
Draperies	12,000.00	\$217,917.92
Total Cost	-----	<u>\$1,511,450.00</u>

## HISTORICAL COLLECTION - VERTICAL FILE

T.B.E. - Schools - Elementary -  
 Lond. Lansdowne P.S.