



QUEBEC HOME & SCHOOL

# NEWS

"The Voice of the Parent in Education"

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## SYLVIA ADAMS TELLS MEMBERS... SEEC knowledge

*Editor's Note: The following is the opening remarks given by Sylvia Adams at the QFHSA Fall conference held Oct. 21 at Beaconsfield High School.*

1990 has been declared the International Year of Literacy. Welcome to this Special Plenary Session — "Literacy in the Information Age: Our Children — Their World — Their Future."

Canada is now well into this Information Age. Our panel will focus on the social, economic, educational and cultural implications in redefining today's meaning of literacy.

In June 1989, the Canadian Home & School and Parent-Teacher Federation (CHSPTF) launched a five-part Literacy Project, funded by the Secretary of State.

CHSPTF has a 94-year record of advocacy for children and youth, and as the largest voluntary parent organization in Canada, CHSPTF is deeply concerned about the creation of a literate cultural environment for our children.

The Plenary Session is in two parts: Part I is "The Information Age and the New Technology", during which the panel will focus on a recognition of what constitutes basic literacy today (each panelist will have seven minutes to speak).

Part II, is called "Social Change and the Information Society." This session will consider the major transformations that are taking place in our structures, institutions and life styles (each panelist will have five minutes to speak).

### THE PANELISTS

Following this, there will be a one-hour question period, and I will ask the audience to save their questions until that time period.

As Chairman, I will now take this opportunity to set the stage for our deliberations this morning; to paint a picture of our Canadian society in a broad context, against which we can examine and question the remarks of our panelists.

Illiteracy in Canada has become accepted as a cultural norm; we must turn this around; "Literacy" must become the norm!

We will be talking about culture; let us examine a current dictionary. **Meaning of culture:** a) the integrated pattern of human behaviour that includes thought, speech, action and artifacts and depends upon man's capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations (...the integrated pattern of human behaviour).

An easy example has been the change in smoking behaviour in the last few years: an enormous shift has occurred and smoking is almost becoming unacceptable behaviour in our society — unacceptable in a cultural context.

What do we mean by "literate"? The Webster dictionary's definition of the (adjective) "literate" states: educated, cultured, able to read and write, versed in literature and creative writing.

Well, in 1989 even our dictionary meaning is out of date! What does literacy encompass in this Information Age Society? Broadly speaking: reading, writing, critical thinking and critical thinking's new



Sylvia Adams opened plenary session

basics of analysis, synthesis, evaluation, plus math, science and the enabling technologies.

These include information and communication technologies, biotechnology and advanced industrial materials.

Let us say that we are here to SEEC knowledge today. Our panelists are experts in business, education, science and media spheres, but these individual areas of expertise are all intertwined with the SEEC components: social, educational, economic and cultural aspects.

What is our world today in general terms? We inhabit a global village. We inhabit a country where change itself has become the new constant.

This means that we must adapt in the midst of an action that is actually in progress, and not as in the past when we were able to respond to changes over long periods of time.

### CAUSE AND EFFECT

As an example (given by Cordell), in the early 1900's the car was born, BUT: the first electric gas pump arrived around 1928; road systems evolved over the years; the car became more of a tool of our behaviour; shopping malls were born because people were able to go to them by car; then city cores changed accordingly, because shopping patterns changed, etc., etc.

At that time we were able to respond to cause and effect over many years. Now we must deal with cause and effect at the same time.

Compound this with the following:

- Knowledge is doubling every five years.
- 90 percent of scientific knowledge has occurred over the last 30 years.
- Natural resources used to be Canada's wealth; now, human resources are the wealth of the future.

- Goods used to be the product. Now, knowledge is the product; information is bought and sold.
- 70 percent of Canadians are now in the service industry — a major shift away from resource-based industries of the past.
- Workers are being divided into those who are highly skilled and those who are unskilled; the intermediate range is eliminated; perceived and actual upward mobility is eliminated.
- Jobs are phased out in unskilled areas; the people affected need to be retrained, but many discover that their basic skills are inadequate to allow them to either cope or to be retrained.
- The loss of self-esteem is devastating to the individual who realizes that his skills are no longer required.
- New technologies are changing the very nature of work, the place of work and the importance of work to society.
- Income, not employment, has become a key issue (in the USA, many children are now growing up in households in which parents have never held down a formal job).
- Math and science form the basis that will make it possible for students to pursue further studies in areas that will maximize their ability to function in the new world.

We do know all these factors; now pit these factors against the following:

- There is a 30 percent drop-out rate in the Canadian school system, against 4% in Japan.

- 40 percent of CEGEP students do not complete their DEC, i.e. graduate.
- One out of five Canadians is said to be functionally illiterate (and this is meant in the narrowest sense of the meaning).
- One out of six Canadian children lives in poverty (meaning 1.2 million children; 315,000 in Quebec).
- Canada has no formal national educational goals.
- Individuals may have to be trained for three to four different careers over the course of their working lives.

We are being overrun with data, but what are we constructively doing with this knowledge?

**Example:** San Francisco's earthquake — everyone knew it would happen sometime (so too, with regard to Vancouver). What have the experts, the planners, done with this knowledge base?

e.g. Japan spends \$100 per person for disaster planning; California spends \$19 per person for disaster planning; Canada spends 25 cents per person!

Japan is the most literate nation in the world, but do we learn from them?

Consequently, it would seem that Canada presently accepts illiteracy as a norm, gives little recognition to science and technology, demonstrates little awareness, in practice, that knowledge is a product; seems to foster systems that respond to the lowest common denominator and demonstrates little accommodation vis-à-vis the principle of lifelong education.

I will now ask our panel to help us SEEC enlightenment.

## 'LITERACY IS RELATIVE'

By JON PERCY

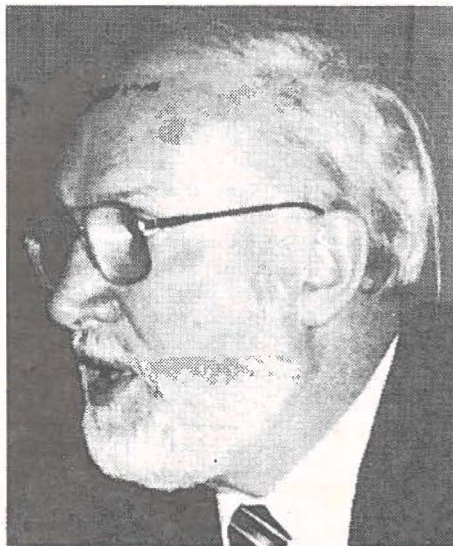
"Literacy is relative; there are no absolute norms. The term means different things to different people."

Dr. Norman Henchey, of the Faculty of Administration and Policy Studies in Education at McGill University, clearly emphasized in his opening remarks at the fall Conference in October that the concept of literacy is more complex than commonly appreciated and that its precise definition is a matter of considerable controversy.

In view of this it was indeed fortunate that QFHSA was able to find four very different, very knowledgeable and very literate panelists to present their views on the topic "Literacy in the Information Age".

In addition to Henchey, the plenary panel included Michel Decary, director general of the Quebec Section of the Canadian Federation of Independent Businesses; Dr. Gordon MacLachlin, dean of the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research at McGill University; and Pierre Belanger of the Center for Youth and Media Studies at the University of Montreal.

Henchey drove home his message in five succinct points liberally laced with humour.



Dr. Norman Henchey

Firstly, he cautioned against adopting "big concepts".

It would be all too easy for the catchword "literacy" to become another educational wave to be ridden; another educational fad that could consume large amounts of money

see 'Information Age' page 20...

# Fun & games with purpose

Giving preschoolers a good start involves developing their abilities and helping them build positive feelings about themselves. Here are ten activities to get you, and them, going in the right direction.

- Help young children make folders for their “best” work, and let them decide for themselves what work the folders should include. Encourage them to show the work in their folders to family and friends.
- Cook with your children. This can teach them valuable lessons in measurement, fractions, timing and coordination. Let even young children help mix ingredients, break eggs and spread peanut butter or icing.
- Hand out pencils and ask your kids to circle all the P’s on a page of the newspaper. Or cut up comic strips and have children arrange the pictures to illustrate a story of their own devising.
- Play card games and board games. Make up you own games.
- Help your preschoolers “write” books. Have them tell a story while you write down the words. Then have the young authors draw and color pictures to decorate their work. Staple the sheets into a book and display it for everyone to see. Or lend a hand to help your youngsters record their stories on tape.
- Give your children giant-size chalk and let them draw pictures and write letters or words on the sidewalk.
- Play rhyme off. Say a simple word like *cat* and ask your preschoolers to come up with a word that rhymes with your original word. Take turns rhyming with one word, then begin coming up with new words to rhyme.
- Dress up and pretend to be other people. Tell or read a story about fire fighters or doctors or superheroes and then see what clothing or other articles your children can find and put on to look like the characters in the story.
- Ask your children to help you empty the dishwasher or dish drainer. Then have them sort the silverware or count the cups.
- Take a walk. Look for objects that start with various letters, or for leaves, bark or other natural objects to collect and study. Listen to the sounds you hear. Count the number of street lights you pass, or the number of station wagons you see, or try to guess the destinations of all the people driving by.

Reprinted from PTA Today

# What to do about TV

A lot of parents don’t know what to do about television.

Millions of American children have been delighted, stimulated and intrigued by shows like Sesame Street, Mister Rogers’ Neighborhood and Captain Kangaroo. But, how much television is too much? And what will be the effects on children of all the violence and commercialism they see every day? Experts advise that parents not leave young children alone in front of the TV while they go to fix dinner, sit down with the paper or talk on the phone. In other words try to avoid using TV as a baby-sitter.

For preschoolers, TV is most use-

ful when seen in small doses — one hour, tops — and shared and discussed with parents. By its very nature, television watching is a passive activity. It invites people to turn off their minds as they turn on the set. For children this is compounded by the fact that they can’t always figure out what is real and what is make-believe. These problems can largely be overcome by watching acceptable TV shows with your children and discussing what you watch. Love your children, talk to them, read to them, practice techniques of good discipline, and limit their TV viewing. Giving young children a good start in life requires that you do all these things.



## Quebec Home & School NEWS

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# Editorial . . .

# Membership is the challenge of 90s

EVERY YEAR about this time the Membership Chairman is asked to write the editorial column or an article for the NEWS extolling the virtues of being a member of the Home and School Association.

In considering what to write in fulfilling my obligation I came to the conclusion that if you receive this newspaper and take the time to read this editorial, you probably do not need encouragement to join your local association. It’s more than likely you have been for a number of years a faithful member. Moreover, you have probably been an active member. I began to wonder why we persist in this practice of preaching to the converted.

I have decided to take a different approach. I am going to appeal to you, our faithful, to take up the greatest challenge facing the Home and School Association — the challenge of making sure we continue to exist through the 1990s and on into the next century.

Faced with a shrinking membership base, we at Quebec Federation have seen our numbers drop from a onetime high of some 32,000+ Family memberships to what now hovers around or under the 5,000 mark.

At this level we constantly find ourselves short of the funds necessary to do the things our members have come to expect from us. We have taken steps to ensure that our minimal overhead is kept in check.

Last year, for example, we moved into a smaller office. We still have only one full-time, paid employee. Unfortunately, the cost of printing, postage, communication, travel, etc., have continued to spiral and therefore the cost of operating the Federation has gone up.

Of course there is more than money at stake; there is the viability and credibility of the organization. Government, both

Provincial and Federal, still calls upon membership’s views on a wide variety of educational and social issues. The fewer the members, the fewer the numbers we reflect, the less impact our representations have on the people in power.

This organization is the only independent, non-legislated group that has been asked by whichever party is in power to speak before the national Assembly Education Committee each time public hearings have been held.

Can we afford to let this organization go? It should be obvious that the answer is NO!

So now comes the challenge. I want each member to make a vow that he or she will bring into Quebec Federation one new Family Member within the year. The world of education in Quebec will not get any easier over the next decade. Only together, as a united team, do we have a chance of convincing the MNAs our children’s education is the most important issue of our society.

The challenge is not one-sided. We, the Board of Directors and the Executive of Quebec Federation, accept the challenge of keeping each current as well as new member by maintaining the high standard of service we have been providing. We also accept to continue to try to expand that service.

The members of the Membership and Membership Development Committees also undertake to make themselves available to any local association, group affiliate, or community group that wants to have someone from the office come speak to them about the Federation.

Together, with our common goal, we can meet the Challenge of the 90s.

**Marcus Tabachnick**  
Vice-President, QFHSA  
Chairman, Membership Committee

# Cegep Entrance Requirements

by Marguerite Dunlop

At a meeting of the Curriculum Council the Admissions Officers of several CEGEP’s discussed the entrance requirements for their institutions.

All the officers agreed that some courses are more important than others in consideration for entrance into CEGEP. Math in particular is being given increasing emphasis.

One of the problems the CEGEP’s face in determining the qualifications of a potential candidate is that more and more examinations are board set rather than province wide. This causes some discrepancies.

Some of the colleges consider overall average with no bonus points for accelerated high school courses, while others take these into consideration.

What the accelerated courses do is help determine which program a student can enter, especially where there is competition for the spots available.

Nor is any weight given to the number of hours given to a particular course, though there is some inconsistency among the school boards in this regard. In actual fact, CEGEP’s are unaware of this factor.

For these reasons, there is a lot of subjectivism in entrance requirements.

At the same time it seems nearly anyone can get into CEGEP provided he/she chooses the “right” program, i.e., the one for which there is not much competition. Once accepted the student can then more easily transfer into the area of choice for the second semester. This, however, leaves fewer openings for the students coming out of

high school.

Another problem deals with the liaison between CEGEP’s, school boards, and teachers. The CEGEP’s claim they are aware of the changes being made in high school curricula but high school teachers often feel this is not so. Sometimes one group thinks the other is infringing upon its territory.

For example, some high school math teachers object to the CEGEP’s offering a make-up course in Functions.

One often gets the idea high school teachers are unaware of what the CEGEP’s expect while CEGEP’s are ignorant of what is going on in the High Schools.

Liaisons between CEGEP’s, school boards and teachers need to be greatly strengthened before we have a truly integrated educational system.

# School daze from A to Z

By SHARON NGUYEN  
Grade 6, Dunrae Gardens

**ALPHABETICAL ORDER:** Seating arrangement assuring that you'll sit among the same group of dummies throughout your academic career.

**BOOK REPORT:** Brief résumé of book jacket copy and first and last paragraphs of contents.

**CLASS DISCUSSION:** Three brains in the first row talking to the teacher while the rest of the class talks about a new movie.

**D:** The good/bad news grade. The good news is that you didn't flunk. The bad news is that you feel that you did.

**ESSAY:** More than you've ever written about less than you've ever known.

**FREE READING PERIOD:** Comic book time!

**GRADUATION:** The absolute final date for turning in overdue book reports.

**HONOUR SYSTEM:** Test from which you are watched like a hawk from the back of the room instead of the front.

**I.Q.:** Number calculated by taking sum of all available knowledge, minus everything you've forgotten or slept through, divided by the number of hours spent watching TV, times square root of shoe size.

**JUST A LITTLE HOMEWORK:** Read ten chapters, complete review exercises, 10 pages (handwritten in ink) single spaced, both sides with no mistakes due at 9:10 a.m. sharp.

**KNOWLEDGE:** Mysterious contents of the mind of the genius.

**LOCKER:** Mini-closet smelling like gym socks.

**MULTIPLE CHOICE:** Three out of four chances to be wrong.

**NUTRITIONAL LUNCH:** Oval, lumpy object on white bread covered with orangish gravy, gray French fries, green jello with something in it, and sour milk.

**ORAL REPORT:** System of public ridicule devised to teach humility.

**PHYS. ED.:** Course which teaches students to stretch the truth, dodge the issue, strain credibility, and to artfully skip classes.

**QUIZ:** The "gotcha" teaching technique.

**REQUIRED READING:** That huge stack of books one starts to read the night before an exam.

**STUDY:** Those rare moments between TV, movies, sports, video games, food.

**TEACHER:** Tireless warrior in the never-ending battle against ignorance, sloppiness, note-passing and spitballs.

**UNSATISFACTORY:** Tactful term for completely worthless and disgusting schoolwork.

**VACATION:** Period of no school but double the work.

**WORRY:** What one should do after not completing homework.

**XAMINATION:** Xasperating Xercise in the Xhausting pursuit of Xcellence.

**YOUTH:** Years in which one tends to party more often.

**ZZZZZ:** What one does in class.

## DAYCARE BRIEF

In a recent brief, the Conseil (Montreal Island School Council) asked the Government of Quebec to increase its capital grants for the creation of day-care services in the schools.

It supports the government's proposal to allow the school boards that wish to do so to offer day-care services all year long.

While the Conseil reaffirms the autonomy of the school boards in the administration of day-care services, the Conseil proposes that the law be amended to allow any board that wishes to do so, to entrust the administration of these services to non-profit organizations.

Moreover, the Conseil would like to see the Government broaden the range of services that school boards can offer to allow them to provide educational day-care centers.

### Smoking and Health

THE CANADIAN Council on Smoking and Health has a new address: 1565 Carling Avenue, Suite 400, Ottawa, Ontario, K1Z 8R1, (Tel. (613) 722-3419)

Anyone who writes this council should take note of the new mailing address.

## Seniors' residences

The Information and Referral Centre of Greater Montreal has just released the 1989 list of "Private residences for seniors".

This list is a valuable source of information for families, professionals and senior citizens. It contains the description of more than 170 residences in three categories for semi-retired and retired persons:

- Apartment houses for autonomous individuals
- Residences offering room and board (meals are included in the rent)
- Private nursing homes for those who are in the process of losing their autonomy

This list is available at the Centre at the cost of \$ 8.00 per copy, or may be ordered by mail by forwarding a cheque or money order payable to the Information and Referral Centre of Greater Montreal Foundation, 881 de Maisonneuve Blvd. East, Montreal, H2L 1Y8.



## President's Message

Helen Koeppe

# Reading gives birth to one-on-one miracle

WHILE READING at bedtime one evening to my young granddaughter, I was struck with the realization of how fortunate I was. I was enjoying something that had been denied my own grandparents. We were separated by an ocean and a world war.

In today's world of instant information, high mobility and scattered families, the chances of being able to read regularly to your own grandchildren must be rare. However, there are ways in which grandparents and others can nurture children and enjoy their companionship while reading to them.

Frontier College of Canada, in its battle against illiteracy, has evolved the concept of READING CIRCLES, which can be set up almost anywhere, held at a regularly scheduled time and be open to neighbourhood children.

Books are accumulated, scrounged from wherever (the sources are limited only by one's imagination). Volunteers are recruited — teenagers, grandparents, anyone with the time and the inclination.

Then a one-on-one miracle starts evolving. A love of reading is transmitted, two-way communication is initiated and a sharing of quality time enriches both participants.

1990 is the International Year of Literacy. Quebec Federation, through its association with the Canadian Home & School and Parent-Teacher Federation, is committed to fostering awareness of the challenge that illiteracy presents in this modern technological age.

In Canada at present one in five adults is functionally illiterate — unable to cope with the day-to-day needs that require the ability to read. The priority of Home & Schoolers during the coming year will be to decrease that 1:5 ratio by encouraging the love of reading in children and reducing the waste of human potential that illiteracy signals.

At our Fall Conference, literacy was the topic of the plenary session which kicked off the QFHSA campaign. Similar undertakings have begun in the other provinces. Pilot projects are already underway in Newfoundland, Manitoba and New Brunswick and we wish the other provinces every success. Quebec delegates received good reports at the mid-term meeting of Home and Schoolers from across Canada in Ottawa in November.

Best wishes for the holiday season.  
H.K.

## QFHSA Board Report

# SOCIAL AFFAIRS CMTE

**SMOKING:** Lung cancer is catching up with breast cancer as the leading cause of death in women in Canada. Since 1970 female lung-cancer cases have tripled.

The Canadian Cancer Society says this is due mainly to the fact that young women are smoking in greater numbers and at younger ages than ever.

Twenty anti-smoking groups in Canada banded together recently to ask the federal government to treat smoking like an epidemic and listed a number of ways in which the epidemic should be attacked.

In the United States another group of anti-smoking organizations has been instrumental in having fifteen bills introduced in Congress to fight smoking in various ways.

It would appear that Home & School locals could check with their school boards to determine whether or not this problem is part of the curricula.

**CHILD ABUSE:** About 90 percent of runaway children (and there are many thousands of these from all economic strata) suffered physical and/or sexual abuse before leaving home.

In Quebec there is an appalling number of children who are victims of child abuse who are put on a backlog list at social service agencies because of the lack of

adequate resources. There have been deaths directly linked to the waiting lists.

Quebec's Bill 142 would allow abused children to testify outside the courtroom, thus eliminating some of the fears of children, and it is hoped that the bill will pass. A petition signed by 850 psychologists, members of the Quebec Corporation of Psychologists, called for faster action on cases of abused children.

An extra \$2 million has been allocated by Quebec for child-protection agencies. However, this amount is clearly insufficient.

The programs for students, teachers and parents of this problem, some are called Child Abuse Prevention, have been quite successful in a number of schools. The program is recommended for all locals.

**DRUG ABUSE:** A video series on K-12 Drug Prevention is available from the National Audio Visual Center, 8700 Edgeworth Drive, Capitol Heights, MD. 20743-3701 U.S.A. In Canada the National Film Board also has films and videos on this subject.

**DAY CARE:** The federal government had promised a \$4 billion dollar national day-care plan. However, with the cutbacks in the federal budget recently announced, Quebec ministers say

that growth in daycare places will slow down.

The association of non-profit daycare centres in Quebec estimates that the daycare plan will be \$20 million short. About 300 daycare centres have held protest marches and shut down their facilities for a day at a time.

In Montreal about 6000 workers, mothers and children took their pleas to the office of Robert Bourassa.

Federal Health and Welfare Minister Perrin Beatty admitted that child care had been sacrificed, but said that some kind of child-care strategy would be revived before the next election.

Why should our Home & School organization be concerned? Adequate daycare is a necessity for a successful career both in school and later on, especially when we know that one in six Canadian kids are born into the poverty cycle.

**AIDS:** A committee has been set up to help form a policy on AIDS for our provincial organization. This should be presented at the September board meeting.

**A NEW BOOK** called *Why Good Parents Have Bad Kids* by E. Kent Hayes (Doubleday, \$22.95) is not only interesting, but gives good advice for parents who are raising kids in these difficult times.



# FOCUS on MEMBERSHIP



## THERE IS A HEAVEN FOR VOLUNTEERS

Many will be shocked to find,  
When the day of judgment nears,  
That there's a special place in Heaven,  
Set aside for volunteers.

Furnished with big recliners,  
Satin couches and footstools,  
Where there's no committee chairman,  
No group leaders, no car pools,  
No eager team that needs a coach,  
No bazaar and no bake sale,

There will be nothing to staple,  
Not one thing to fold or mail;  
But a finger snap will bring  
Cold drinks and gourmet dinners  
And rare treats fit for a king.

You ask, "Who'll serve those privileged few  
And work for all they're worth?"  
Why — all those who reaped the benefits  
And NOT ONCE  
Volunteered on Earth!

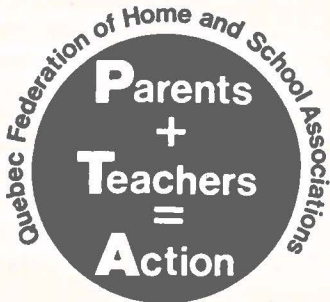
## 1989/1990 GROUP AFFILIATE MEMBERS

### School/Parents' Committees

(as of Dec. 1, 1989)

Asbestos-Danville-Shipton School  
Butler School  
Campbell's Bay and District School  
Cecil Newman School  
Cedar Street School (Beloeil)  
Dr. S.E. McDowell School  
Dorset School  
Franklin School  
Gault Institute  
Hemmingford School  
Herbert Purcell School  
John F. Kennedy School (Laval)  
Jubilee School  
Knowlton Academy  
Lindsay Place High School  
LSB Parents Committee  
Mansonville School  
McLearn School (Pte-aux-Trembles)  
Murdochville Intermediate School  
North Hatley School  
Northview School  
Ormstown School  
Royal Charles School (St. Hubert)  
Royal Vale Alternative  
Ste. Agathe Academy  
St. John School (St-Jean-sur-Richelieu)

St. Joseph School (Low)  
Sherbrooke School  
Souvenir School  
Spring Garden School  
Sunnydale Park School  
Vincent Massey School  
Wagar High School  
Wakefield School  
Westpark School  
Wilder Penfield School  
William Latter School



### Teachers

Aylmer Elementary School  
Edinburgh Elementary School  
Gaspésia Teachers' Association  
Lakeshore Teachers' Association

### School Boards

Eastern Townships School Board  
Ormstown School Board  
Pontiac Protestant School Board  
Protestant Regional School Board of Western Quebec  
Protestant School Board of Gaspé  
Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal  
Protestant School Board of Greater Seven Islands  
Protestant School Board of Northwestern Quebec  
Regional School Board of Gaspesia  
Richelieu Valley School Board  
School Board of Bonaventure  
South Central Protestant School Board  
St. Lawrence Protestant School Board  
St. Maurice Protestant School Board

### Others

Kahnawake Education Council  
Loyola High School  
Voice of English Quebec

## Home & School MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMEN 1989/90

ALLANCROFT  
ANDREW S. JOHNSON  
MEMORIAL  
AYER'S CLIFF  
AYLMER  
BAIE COMEAU  
BEACON HILL  
BEACONSFIELD HIGH

CARLYLE  
CEDAR PARK  
CHELSEA  
CHRISTMAS PARK  
COURTLAND PARK

DORSET  
DUNRAE GARDENS

ÉCOLE PRIMAIRE  
BEACONSFIELD  
ÉCOLE PRIMAIRE  
HARWOOD  
ÉCOLE PRIMAIRE  
POINTE CLAIRE  
EDGEWATER  
EDINBURGH  
ELIZABETH  
BALLANTYNE  
EMMANUEL  
CHRISTIAN  
GREENDALE  
HAMPSTEAD  
HOPETOWN-SHIGAWAKE  
PORT DANIEL  
HOWICK  
HUDSON/MT.  
PLEASANT

(includes high school)  
JOHN RENNIE HIGH  
KEITH  
LACHINE HIGH  
LINDSAY PLACE HIGH

MACDONALD HIGH  
MARY GARDNER  
MEADOWBROOK  
NEW CARLISLE HIGH  
NEW RICHMOND HIGH  
NORTHVIEW  
ROYAL WEST  
ACADEMY  
ROSLYN  
SEIGNIORY  
SOUTH HULL  
SUNNYDALE  
THORNDALE

VALOIS PARK  
WESTMOUNT HIGH  
WESTPARK  
WILLINGDON

WINDERMERE

Jean Touchie  
Gerald Bennett  
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Sheila Glandon  
Barbara Rioux  
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# QFHSA AND NOMADS HIT THE ROAD

## 'It looks like God's golf ball'

Along the great journey into space, Steve Rosenstein, Nomad Scientist, captures the imagination of four and five-year olds as they gaze at the moon.

"When I was a little boy, I was told the moon was made of cheese?" What do you think it looks like? Michael, aged 4, a pre-schooler at Gaspé Elementary answers, "I think it looks like God's golf ball!"

The 1989 Quebec Federation of Home & School Associations Gaspé school tour and mini-conferences focuses on science and reading — two important literacy skills as we blast towards the 21st Century.

The Nomad Scientists, Steve Rosenstein and Harold Spanier, stimulated students from pre-Kindergarten to grade 6 with their lively science demonstrations.

Marion Daigle, animator for Frontier College, promoted the importance of reading among teens with workshops for high school and CEGEP students, highlighted by the entertaining and informative Rock 'n Roll & Reading video.

Evening programs for parents again featured science and reading, but with parents and community leaders recognizing how the home, the school and the community together must be responsible for the literacy skills of our young people, as society today demands a highly literate population.

The Rural Schools Educational Conference featured the Nomad Scientists, and the READ CANADA program was highlighted by John O'Leary of Frontier College, Toronto.

QFHSA is grateful to the Gaspé community for their co-operation, both financially and voluntarily, in promoting these programs.

### WHAT THEY SAID

- Nomad Scientists:**
- "Today, Dad, I met a real scientist" — Shaun Turriff, student, Murdochville School.
  - "I enjoyed particularly the 'hands-on' approach proposed in contrast to textbook science which bores most kids to tears; practical, easily-obtainable material — looking to our immediate environment." — teacher, Wejgwapmag School, Maria Reserve.
  - "Have seen many pictures of the rain forest in magazines, but never heard an explanation before. Very interesting." — parent, New Richmond.

- READ CANADA:**
- Reading Circles — "The idea of the group together sharing a common interest. It's amazing to realize how we can help!" — Jill Syvret, C.E. Pouliot Gaspé Polyvalent.
  - Rock 'n Roll & Reading — "I enjoyed the video. I think that it should open the eyes of teenagers. They often place so much emphasis on rock stars that it will probably have a substantial influence on them when they see that their idols are literate people who enjoy a good book and are moved by it." — student, Gaspé CEGEP.
  - READ CANADA program — "Geared to the interests of students; stresses the importance of reading in life skills/future careers." — student animator, Gaspé Polyvalent.
  - "What I liked most was Marion's presentation. Some of the facts are real eye-openers. The video can be very impressive for children. They look up to these rock stars and often pattern themselves after these people." — parent, New Carlisle High School.

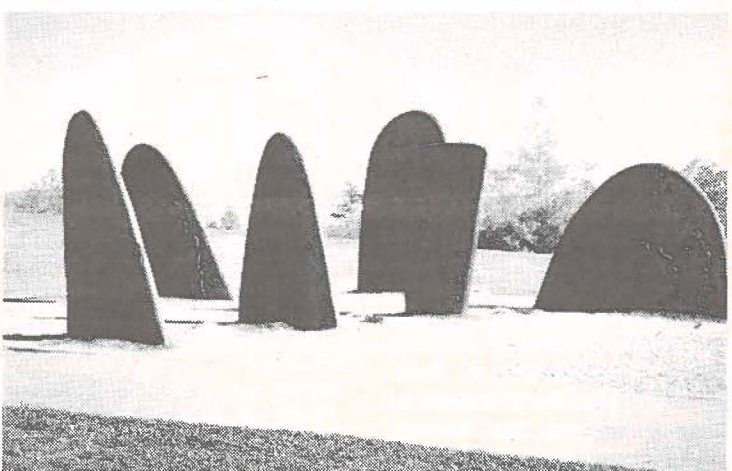
Home and Schoolers, school committees, the Regional School Board of Gaspesia, teachers, the Committee for Anglophone Social Action, SPEC (the Gaspesian newspaper) and the Women's Insti-

tute, were all responsive in making the tour a success.

A special thank you to Frances MacKinnon, QFHSA Vice-President, Gaspé region, for her capable assistance.



From left, above, Julie Hall, Sara Griffiths and Stephen Hall go on a 'Mystery Rock and Mineral Hunt' with Nomad Scientist Steven Rosenstein. Below, Jacques Cartier Museum in town of Gaspé.



## ...Benefits are known

The case for quality, daily physical education was launched by a pioneering study in Vanves, France in the 1950s.

Physicians and teachers there worked together to find a better way of educating children through a proper balance of physical and intellectual activities.

"Experimental" classes did their academic work in the mornings while the afternoons were reserved for physical education, art, music, and supervised study. A full third of the weekly timetable was devoted to physical education.

Results of the study are impressive. It found that those taking one-third time physical education were healthier, less susceptible to stress, matured more quickly, were more independent, played better with others and were less aggressive. They also performed better academically.

Study after study has confirmed the results of this landmark project. Through the medium of movement, physical education provides for personalized learning in the motor (skills), cognitive (understanding), and affective (values and attitudes) domains.

Good motor skills are important in the pursuit of leisure-time physical activities, but there's much carry over, too. Improvement in fine manipulative skills, for example, improves activities such as hand-writing, drawing, drafting, typing, sewing, and playing a musical instrument, to name a few.

On the cognitive side, an eight-year study in Trois-Rivieres, Quebec discovered much the same as the Vanves project some 20 years before. Students in grades 2 to 6 receiving five extra hours of physical activity per week achieved higher marks than regular program students. Teachers involved in the Trois-Rivieres program concluded that a substantial amount of curriculum time can be devoted to physical education without jeopardizing academic learning.

Organizational, planning, and problem-solving abilities are important cognitive skills. So are imaginative and creative thinking. The development of all of these can be clearly fostered through regular, quality physical education.

Values and attitudes improve as well. Schools offering daily programs find that students have better self-esteem and more positive

attitudes towards physical activity, school, and themselves.

The benefits of a daily quality program are profound. And there's something in it for everyone — for students, for teachers, and for school administrators.



An after-school bike ride helps kids burn off energy they stored in the classroom.

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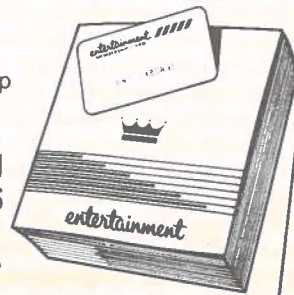
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# MORE FROM AGM '89

# And the winners are...

## The Buzzell Award

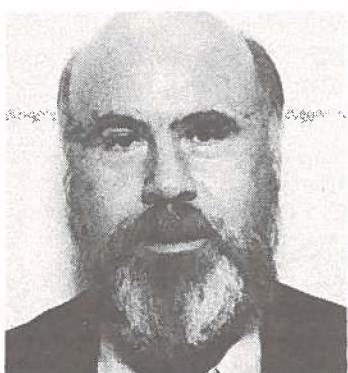
**DR. JON PERCY** from Hudson has been chosen as the 1989 recipient of the Quebec Federation of Home & School Associations' Award for outstanding voluntary service to this provincial organization.

A research scientist for the federal government, Percy is the father of two teenagers and, as a parent, served for many years on the Hudson Home & School Association's executive.

As President of the Lakeshore Regional Council of Home & School Associations since 1985, Percy has fostered the sharing of the communication network between the parents, teachers, administrators and commissioners in the Lakeshore School Board area and beyond.

Moving into the provincial organization - QFHSA - he has served as a vice-president and is currently recording secretary. A gifted and talented writer, he has served on the editorial board of the Home & School NEWS.

His contributions on the program committee for the Annual General Meeting and Fall Leadership Conference have been outstanding - program planning, leading workshops, finding resource



**JON PERCY**

people.

His ability to analyze and organize briefs was recognized in his work with the Rights Committee on the education brief on Bill 40 in 1983.

Percy is especially interested in science and technology as it pertains to education and heads the QFHSA Technology and Education Committee.

The Leslie N. Buzzell Award recognizes outstanding volunteer service to Quebec Federation of Home & School Associations and to the cause of furthering the aims of Home & School and education. By his keen sense of humour, his quiet unassuming and nurturing nature, Jon Percy exemplifies all that is best in volunteerism.

**EACH OF US** treasures a memory of that special teacher who helped to shape the direction of our lives.

For many of those young people so fortunate to have shared a year in her classroom, Pat Lewis will be that memorable influence.

As an educator with the Lakeshore School Board, Pat Lewis has shared with her students at Northview and Beacon Hill Elementary Schools her own philosophy of life and shown them how to become involved and caring citizens.

Her concern for the environment led her students and their families to focus on cleaner air, pollution control and recycling.

In their campaign Beacon Hill School was declared the first "Smoke Free Space" school in Quebec.

For its public awareness campaign on acid rain, her class received an award from the Canadian Minister of the Environment and was pictured in OWL

## The Paterson Award

Magazine.

As a result of her innovative and creative language arts program in the teaching of poetry, Beacon Hill was the first school in Canada to be designated as a Center of Excellence in the Teaching of English by the National Council of Teachers of English.

As a parent, Pat has always given generously of her leadership capabilities, in the presidency of Northview Home & School as well as in many volunteer positions in QFHSA.

She has been honoured with the Leslie N. Buzzell Award for her tireless efforts for Home & School, and she continues as chairman of the provincial Social Affairs/Support Services Committee.

Pat has also played an active role professionally, serving on numerous pedagogical committees as well as being a representative to the Lakeshore Teachers Association for many years.

Someone has said that: *If you*



**PATRICIA LEWIS**

*plan for a decade, plant trees; if you plan for a century, teach the children.*

Pat Lewis has helped to protect our planet's future by showing our children why they should plant the trees.

# SAGE tour brings peace to teenagers

**WHILE MANY** of us wonder aloud: "What can we do for peace? The politicians are the ones who decide..." four Quebec teenagers felt it was their responsibility to talk to their peers about peace, what they can do about it and why they should be concerned about nuclear arms.

Their 1986 journey across Canada in an old, beaten up station wagon is chronicled in a National Filmboard Production titled "Mile Zero - The SAGE Tour."

This film was part of a workshop at the QFHSA annual general meeting in May, along with a discussion period after led by Georgia Carpenter, national coordinator, SAGE tour and Katya Morissette, a member of SAGE, which stands for Students Against Global Extermination.

Carpenter's daughter, Allison, was one of the teens in the SAGE saga, and Carpenter experienced great trepidation about her daughter heading out alone with three other teens to go cross country. She realized she had to let Allison go when she saw her daughter's conviction about the need to talk to other teens about nuclear war and world peace.

The tour produced some interesting insight into how young Canadians feel about nuclear arms. First they felt that there is so much mistrust and hatred in the world that to eliminate nuclear arms people first have to eliminate hatred.

They also feel it became a problem in an earlier generation, but it is their generation that can do something about it.

In some schools, the SAGE four met with hostility. Some of their peers asked, "Don't you think



**Katya Morissette, left, SAGE member, and Georgia Carpenter, SAGE national coordinator.**

you're being a little naive?" Yet the four knew they couldn't bring about disarmament, but they could do something about whatever they believe in.

In the end the tour went to 350 schools, travelled 42,000 km and talked to 100,000 students.

Some schools wouldn't let them in, some students weren't that interested and they missed one school altogether because they went the wrong way.

It was a grueling experience and a worrisome one for their parents, but they felt it was successful

because they spread education and aroused the public to the need for peace.

In the discussion afterwards a few important points were brought out by the participants. One is that at the elementary school level children are afraid of nuclear war, but once they talk about it the fear goes away.

And as H&S members we should not ignore what we can do in the grade schools to promote peace and the elimination of nuclear arms.

## Rights committee

**AT THE 1987 AGM** a resolution was approved calling for the abrogation of Section 59 of the Constitution of Canada before the Meech Lake Accord is approved by parliament and the provinces.

In the summer of 1987 QFHSA prepared a brief in accordance with the resolution and submitted it to the Joint Committee of the House of Commons and the Senate. We requested to be heard, but were not invited.

Subsequently we submitted briefs to the Senate Committee hearings on Meech Lake and to the Ontario Select Committee on the Meech Lake Accord.

We were heard by both, and as the record of those proceedings indicates, QFHSA was the only witness to raise the issue of Section 59.

In the past year we have continued our fight for the abrogation of Section 59 and the immunization of Section 23 from the 'distinct society' clause of the Meech Lake Accord.

In the light of our experience before earlier hearings we revised our brief and submitted it to the Select Committee of New Brunswick. We were heard on February 9 in Fredericton. The Quebec Liberal Party appeared the day before us and we had the clear impression our message was better received.

Unfortunately we apparently do not fit the agenda of the local Montreal media, so we received no local coverage regarding our message.

But as you can confirm from the video of the proceedings, our mes-

sage was understood and digested by the members of the Select Committee.

We are not working in vain.

Finally in closing this report I wish to call attention to two matters. First, all the activities of the Rights Committee are financed from donations to the Rights Fund.

We are indebted to those donors. Not one cent has been drawn from the operating funds of QFHSA since the Rights Fund was established in 1977.

Second, we would not have been able to sustain this array of activities we have without the steadfast and conscientious participation of the members of the Committee; we are indebted to them.

## HI FROM N.Y.

**Greetings** to delegates of the Quebec Federation of Home & School Associations Annual General Meeting from Sheila Cohen, president of the New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers.

I would like to extend warm greetings across our friendly border to the members of the Quebec Federation of Home & School Associations.

Both of our organizations share a mutual goal in working for a better and safer world for children. As we educate ourselves to become better parents, we help to mold the newest citizens of our two nations.

I'm sorry that I will not have the pleasure of meeting all of you, but wish you well as you set policy and attend meetings. Good luck and have a successful convention.

# WHITHER THE PROTESTANT SCHOOL SYSTEM IN QUEBEC?

*When the definitive history of Protestant education in Quebec is written, at least a substantial chapter of it will be devoted to the contributions that have been made by the Quebec Federation of Home & School Associations. Over the decades the Home & School movement in this province has attracted to its ranks an amazing number of intelligent, dedicated and hard-working men and women. Collectively they have functioned as an ameliorating force at both the provincial and local levels.*

*Once more the education community in general and the parents of pupils enrolled in Protestant schools in particular are indebted for another initiative undertaken by the QFHSA. Whither the Protestant School System in Quebec? is a remarkable achievement. Its authors have succeeded in compressing into a scant 27 pages a history of public education in this province. In so doing they remind us all of the roots of the Protestant system, of the proud heritage that we are all too prone to forget, and of the battles that had to be fought and won in order to establish and maintain the type and quality of elementary and secondary education that the Protestant minority desired — and for which it was prepared to make considerable sacrifices.*

*The study is valuable in another way. It takes us right up to the present, to Bills 3 and 40 and 107. It analyzes, with a succinctness that most readers will find refreshing, the dangers to the Protestant system, and to its traditions and*

*heritage, of legislation that would destroy the existing structures and replace them with those based on language. And it would proceed further with the centralizing tendency that would make the Ministry of Education the divine and omniscient temple of learning while reducing school boards to the status of branch offices with virtually no autonomy or decision-making power.*

*I hope that this brief but splendid work will receive a wide distribution, that it will serve to remind all of us concerned with the future of Protestant education that we have a great deal of which to be proud and that we should exercise extreme caution in reacting to any proposal that would have the effect of taking away a system that, with all of its imperfections, has served us well, and replacing it with something very different.*

*The Quebec Association of Protestant School Boards has been most appreciative of the support given to it by the Quebec Federation of Home & School Associations during the past eight years. We are grateful that QFHSA has retained its ability — all too rare in this world — to analyze proposals thoroughly, to present conclusions logically and readably, and to pursue worthy goals with dedication and persistence.*

John A. Simms, President  
Quebec Association of  
Protestant School Boards



language of the United Canada was English. So the proposal premised that English was the common language. But it also sought to promote bilingualism and a certain freedom of choice in language of instruction. There was provision for education in French, and it was suggested that schools in the two languages might be in the same building so that students might mingle and gradually come to understand one another. In the proposal the clergy, the people, and the government each would have a stake in policy-making for the common school system and in its control, but the Legislature would have the final responsibility.

The intention was a national system of common schools for what are now Quebec and Ontario. It was to be directed by a Superintendent, appointed by the government, and run by the local authorities of their respective districts. In this regard the first school opened in a district would be a non-denominational school that was open to all children by right regardless of religion or language — hence 'common' school. Religious education was to be accomplished by the use of a text of biblical extracts.

## LORD SYDENHAM

Despite its support by Lord Sydenham, the proposal raised a chorus of objections in the parliament of the United Canada. The Catholics wanted their own denominational Catholic schools with support in the form of government grants. The Anglican Bishop Strachan wanted Anglican schools. The Presbyterians of Lower Canada were against the use of biblical extracts for religious education. They wanted the Bible to be used as a class book throughout the province for Protestant education.

Such objections did not block the passage into law of the proposal. But the legislators used the tool of responsible govern-

ment that Lord Durham had fashioned for them not to implement his intent of assimilation, but rather to modify the education proposal to preserve an equality of religious rights as regard schooling.

## ARTICLE XI

The Assembly amended the legislation with Article XI granting a right to dissent from the preference of the majority. The minority immediately affected were the Catholics of Lower Canada. Their clergy had asked for two 'Bureaux d'Education' — one for Catholics and the other for Protestants. Such a division would be a denial of a common school system. The compromise of the legislators was to retain the common school system but introduce the principle of dissent to protect freedom of conscience in religious matters. Such dissent was to be a matter of right.

The amendment gave flexibility to the common school system. In areas where there was a Common School Board, the denominational minority of that area had the right to dissent and establish a dissentient denominational school board under the administration of its own School Trustees, and had the assurance such dissenting schools would receive full financial assistance.

The dissent amendment laid the foundation of today's school system. It modified the intent of the original proposal. Under the original approach the common school system took into account linguistic duality by providing for schooling in two languages and dealt with religious diversity by denominational agreement on biblical extracts. In contrast, the legislation that actually emerged in 1841 set up a common public school system that specifically took into account religious duality — Catholic and Protestant. The principles were that common public schools took on the

*continued on page (8)*

Written and researched  
by  
Harry Kuntz and Calvin Potter  
(1989)

*Editor's Note: The following is an abridged version of a new booklet, "Whither The Protestant School System in Quebec?" which is available through QFHSA.*

In the National Assembly on October 25, 1988, the Minister of Education reopened the debate on Bill 107 — a Bill to reform education in Quebec. Purportedly the Bill modernizes and rationalizes the law on public instruction by providing linguistic school boards, and by protecting the religious rights of parents while controlling the scope of church participation in education. For two important groups in Quebec society — the Anglo-Catholics and those Franco-Catholics who are laicist (i.e., supporting non-confessional schools) — the reform addresses historical grievances. For another important group, however, Protestants, the 'reform' (which the Oxford dictionary defines as "removal of abuse") actually constitutes a revolution (Oxford: "complete change; great reversal of conditions"). If it is implemented the Bill could wipe out the existing Protestant public school system across the province, a system that has existed in Quebec in one form or another for 187 years, from 1801.

This paper is a survey of the

history of education in Quebec. The hope is it will help parents to judge whether the Protestant public school system is a last vestige of colonialism that should be casually erased by Bill 107, or whether it is an integral and responsive component of the provincial public system and, in fact, part and parcel of the Protestant community.

## 1841 — 1888

### CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES AND THE CONFESSIONAL SYSTEM

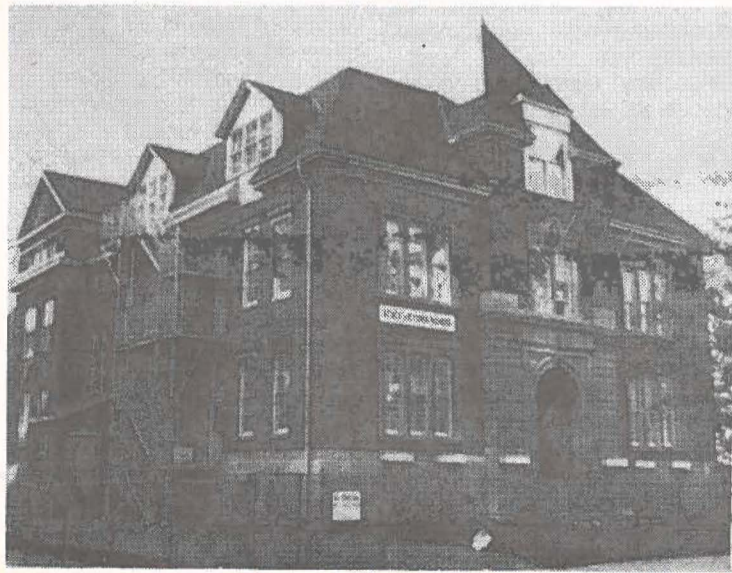
#### The Period 1841 to 1867 — Origins of Right to Dissent and Constitutional Guarantees

The beginning of this period is associated with Lord Durham and his famous Report. That document laid the ground work

for responsible government and the legislative union of Upper and Lower Canada. The long-run intent of Durham was to make Canada truly British. His short-run intent, however, was to break the French control of political structures in Lower Canada so that the economic growth of Upper and Lower Canada could proceed.

In the context of the long-run intent, schools were an instrument of public policy. They were to be the means of assimilation whereby French Canadians could be turned into English Canadians. Thus in the initial proposal for a public educational system, schools were to be part of a common system that transcended language, cultural and religious divisions. This idealized school was to be above and beyond the political arena.

At that time the only official



VICTORIA SCHOOL on de Maisonneuve Blvd. in Montreal.

# WHITHER THE...

colouring of the local religious majority and dissent was to be an exception to accommodate the freedom of conscience of the local minority. By this device of dissent the legislators provided for equality between the majority and minority in school rights regardless of religion.

Status in the public school system, therefore, was (and still is) as follows. The first school in a district was a common school, which all children had a right to attend. In those districts that were French and Catholic, the schools in fact were French and Catholic. In those that were English and Protestant, the schools were English and Protestant. But such schools were nevertheless legally 'common', that is, open to children of all faiths. When, however, a district was mixed, the school of the majority, as the first school, was common. The religious minority of that district had the right to dissent and organize a denominational school. Such schools were subject to the same conditions and regulations as common schools, including eligibility for public grants. But they were only open to children of the denominational faith — denominations being defined as Protestant or Roman Catholic.

Although the legislation set up a system of common schools, such schools were to be subject to local control. The Act made no suggestion about the purposes of education or how they might be achieved; nor indeed, about the language of instruction to be employed. Such matters were to be worked out at the level of the local school board in a democratic way.

To implement the Act of 1841 a provincial-level bureaucracy was set up. A Superintendent of Education was appointed, and two assistants — one for each of the former provinces.

It quickly became evident the Act was impractical and inapplicable. Between Upper and Lower Canada there were different practices and structures of local government. There were, in addition, the contrasting views on education held by the linguistic and religious majorities in each province. In Lower Canada

**THE ACT (of 1841) made no suggestion about the purposes of education or how they might be achieved; nor indeed, about the language of instruction to be employed. Such matters were to be worked out at the level of the local school board in a democratic way...**

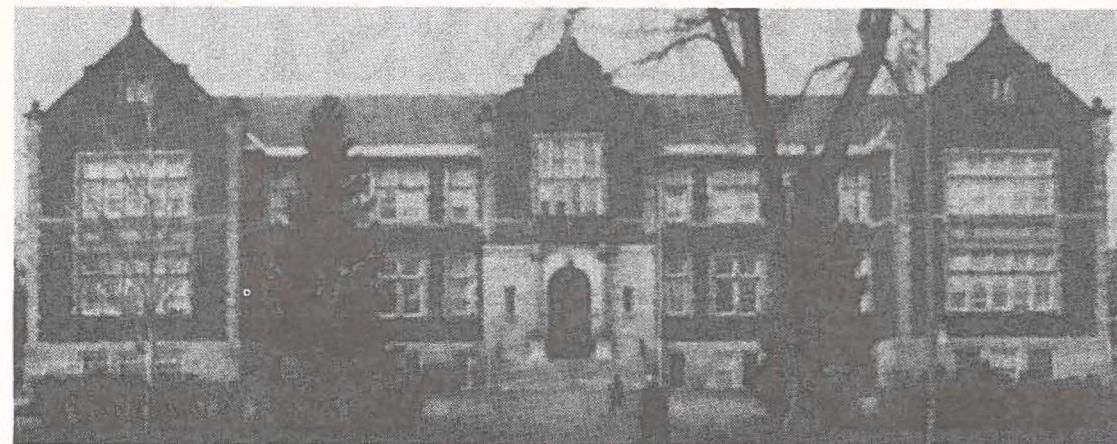
the French Catholic majority wanted Catholic denominational schools wherein the church influence could be felt in all spheres of activity; the British Protestant minority, on the other hand, wanted public non-sectarian schools wherein moral character was to be developed by reading the Bible. In Upper Canada, in contrast, the Protestant majority wanted public national schools, while the Catholic minority wanted separate Catholic schools.

The solution was separate legislation. In 1843 Upper Canada

received its own legislation for education. For Lower Canada, after a failed effort in 1845, in the 1846 the School Act was passed upon which the present educational system in Quebec is built.

## The Act of 1846

The Act of 1846 decentralized responsibility for the provision and financing of educational services. Except in Montreal and Quebec City, it made local school commissioners elected by the resident property holders of each school municipality responsible. The Act of 1841 had made the municipal council the 'bureau d'éducation' of each municipality and, as such, responsible to establish school districts, distribute the government grants, and raise an equal amount by local taxation. Thus the local government and the local school commissioners combined were charged with control over the curriculum — by regulating the course of study and by hiring teachers — and with control over finances — by hiring teachers, setting school fees, and levying school taxes. But local control over the curriculum was not absolute. Although power to regulate the course of study was vested in the local commissioners, the power to select textbooks was conferred

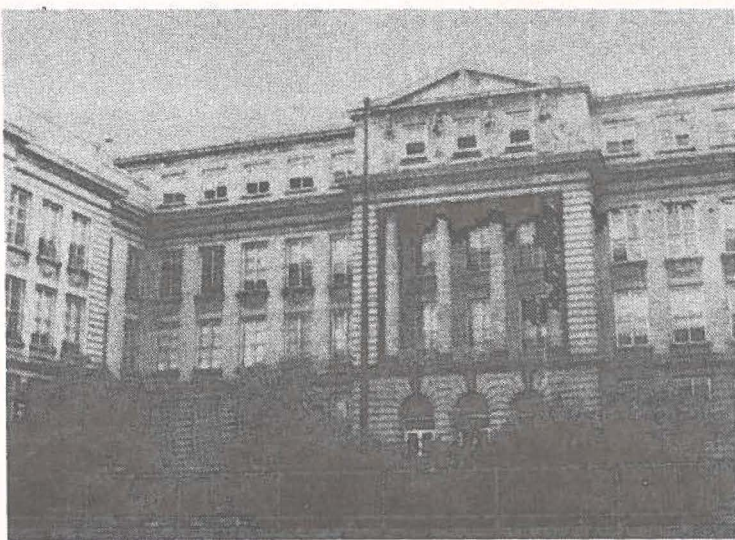


Roslyn School on Roslyn Ave. in Westmount

For the cities of Montreal and Quebec the organization of the school system was different. Each city had two denominational boards (one Catholic and one Protestant), each of which was classified as common. They, therefore, could admit students of a different faith who were not otherwise provided for. Their commissioners, moreover, were not to be elected, but were to be appointed by the city councils. The schools were to be financed by the city corporations, which latter would receive government grants on the basis of population.

## The Ultramontane Movement

The political demise of the



The High School of Montreal, now F.A.C.E.

on the Board of Examiners, a government appointed body. Under the Act of 1846 the two powers were independent of each other. And the Act stipulated it was the duty of school commissioners to ensure only books that had been approved and recommended by the Board of Examiners were used in the schools under their jurisdiction.

The Act continued the principle of dissent inscribed in the Act of 1841. This principle in modern parlance was an 'opting out' clause with full compensation. It is as modern as the Meech Lake Accord, which has a similar provision for opting-out.

The Act also modified the bureaucracy. A Department of Public Instruction was established at the provincial level and assigned supervisory powers over education. It was headed by a Superintendent. His duties were administrative:

- the distribution of government grants to schools
- school visits, and
- advising the government on educational matters.

laicists after the defeat of the Rebellion left a political vacuum. They had been the source of the ideas which had motivated the legislation for Assembly Schools:

- the supremacy of the state in education,
- local lay responsibility for education (syndics and commissioners), and
- secular common schools open to all.

Now that the laicists were defeated, reaction against these ideas set in in the form of the Ultramontane Movement.

The Ultramontane Movement rejected the liberal component of the ideas of the 'Patriotes', but retained their nationalism. It aggressively asserted the supremacy of the church over the state, and the right of the church to intervene in temporal affairs.

Thus, despite the intention to set up a democratic public educational system that was secular in nature although not irreligious, and one where the schools of the

district were controlled by the local citizenry regarding what was taught and by whom, in reality, as things evolved, the system as we shall see became more religious in character and in control and correspondingly less democratic.

As experience with the Act of 1846 accumulated, it became evident that decentralization and the principle of local control had their deficiencies. There was, for example, a significant problem regarding the adequacy and uniformity of educational standards in the public system. As a consequence there were modifications to the system to improve performance. By 1854 the Anglican Church was disestablished. A Council of Public Instruction for Lower Canada was established (1856), and the power to select textbooks was vested in it. Also an inspectorate was set up under the jurisdiction of the Superintendent of Education, and greater central control was imposed to raise the quality of education. But school commissioners retained the power to regulate the course of study (in Ontario this power was severely restricted in the 1850's by law).

## The Council of Public Instruction

The Council of Public Instruction was created by the Act of 1856 and first met in 1859. It consisted of eleven to fifteen appointed members, including the Superintendent of Education. The power of the Council included making regulations for the organization, governance and discipline of Common Schools, and the selection of books for schools under the control of School Trustees, "due regard being had in such selection to Schools wherein tuition is given in French and those the matters of curriculum, language of instruction, and religious conscience. wherein tuition is given in English." This last power, however, did not extend to selection of books relating to religion or morals, which power was reserved to the priest or clergyman.

It is important to note that although the Council had power to make regulations and had responsibility for a school inspectorate, its powers did not override those of local school boards in the matters of course of study, language of instruction, and of religious conscience. Authority was centralized regarding 'common' schools to provide schooling standards on a broad national basis, but freedom of choice was preserved in

As the 1860's progressed, the Anglo-Protestant community became more united in face of the challenge of Confederation. What focused the Anglo-Protestant community was the realization it had the prospect of being separated from the linguistic majority in Ontario. It would thereby become a permanent linguistic and religious minority in Quebec. The community was

**THE POLITICAL demise of the laicists after the defeat of the Rebellion left a political vacuum. They had been the source of the ideas which had motivated the legislation for Assembly Schools...**

already conscious of the impact of declining enrollment upon the Protestant schools in the Eastern Townships and Chateauguay Valley due to the extension of the parish system of the seigneuries. It was also confronted by the growing Ultramontane Movement of that segment of the Catholic Church that had forged a religious nationalism based on the three pillars of language, religion and agriculture.

At the London Conference in late 1866 and early 1867 on the Confederation Agreement, A. T. Galt (who had resigned from the Cabinet over an aborted Bill in 1866 that would have given Protestants in Quebec educational autonomy and who was present as a financial expert) pressed his colleagues to include more specific protection for Quebec Protestants. He was successful in obtaining changes to what was to become article 93 of the British North America Act, the only major amendment to the Confederation Agreement that was accepted in London. This is the Article that 120 years later, Judge Bertha Wilson in the Ontario Separate Schools Funding Case judgement of June 1987, referred to as the fundamental compromise of Confederation in relation to denominational schools.

What was the fundamental compromise of Confederation? It was the entrenchment in the Constitution (Article 93) of the rights and privileges which the Protestant and Catholic minorities in both Canadas (Upper and Lower) possessed in law (for Quebecers, the accumulated legislation from 1843 to 1861, as reflected in the Consolidated Statutes of Lower Canada, 1861), as to their denominational schools at the time of Confederation. Essentially, it was the right

*continued on page (9)*

# PROTESTANT...

of the minority in a municipality to dissent from the preference of the local majority; to set up its own school, and manage and control what that school teaches and who teaches in it.

## The Period 1867 to 1888 — The Transition to a Fully Confessional System

Quebec was the first province of Canada to have a Minister of Education. The office was held successively by three provincial Premiers beginning in 1867 and then the practice lapsed. In 1869, in what some have seen as an effort to implement the aborted bill of 1866, the Council of Public Instruction was enlarged to 21 members, 14 Catholic and 7 Protestant. On a vote the two religious groups could ask to be constituted as two separate committees or councils. The Protestant desire for more autonomy was thereby accommodated. But it was post-Confederation and therefore not constitutionally guaranteed.

In 1875 the confessionality of the educational structures was made paramount. The office of Minister of Education was abolished and the powers of the office devolved upon the Council. The Council itself now consisted of two committees. The Catholic Committee was composed of all Roman Catholic Bishops (7) ex-officio and an equal number of lay members. The Protestant Committee, the members of which were appointed by the government after consultation with denominational groups, was equal in number to the Catholic lay members. Both committees were permitted to act apart from Council and had exclusive authority over education as it pertained to their schools and the record shows that even before Confederation the Protestant Committee selected books for Protestant schools and the Catholic Committee selected different books for Catholic schools.

By 1888 the confessionality of the educational structures was complete. School boards by then were required to take the necessary measures to have the courses of study adopted by the respective confessional committees followed in each school. The right of parish clergy to visit schools was restricted to Protestant and Roman Catholic clergy. The two school systems were by then seen as separate, and this separation was based on religious differences. In that year, 1888, the Council rejected attempts by the Protestant Committee to define themselves as

consisting of all non-Roman Catholics. The Council's position was later affirmed by judgement of the courts.

## 1888-1960 DENOMINATIONAL AUTONOMY AND SOCIAL CHANGES

From 1908 until it celebrated

Quebec, the so-called Quiet Revolution. Jean Lesage's Liberals were elected in June 1960 with the slogan "C'est le temps que ça change" and the advocacy of democratization and modernization of the state. Many recognized the need for state intervention in the economic, social and cultural spheres; and education, as in the early days of the

was to report by December 31, 1962. The Commission's mandate was extended several times and the last two volumes of the report appeared in March 1966. In part some of its work was overtaken by events which took place before it could report. Nevertheless, the reforms advocated by the Parent Commission have been seen by successive would-be reformers as the basis for a modern educational system.

Two of the four major issues which confronted the Commis-

private sectors. He was to head a Ministry which fused the Department of Public Instruction and the Ministry of Youth and gathered to itself the many educational services offered by other government ministries. This Ministry would be the operational arm of the government to administer a unified system of education for the province.

Alongside the Ministry there would be an appointed Superior Council of Education, an advisory body, which was to function as a unified organization. Under the Council there were to be two confessional committees to make regulations, which required ratification by Cabinet, for moral and religious education, to ensure the religious character of the schools and to make suggestions to the Council on problems that might arise in the teaching of some subjects. Since these committees had been supreme in their domain for 90 years, the proposed reorganization involved a drastic redistribution of power in education.

Three commissions responsible for assisting the Council in formulating opinions on elementary and secondary education, post-secondary education, and technical education would complete the structure.

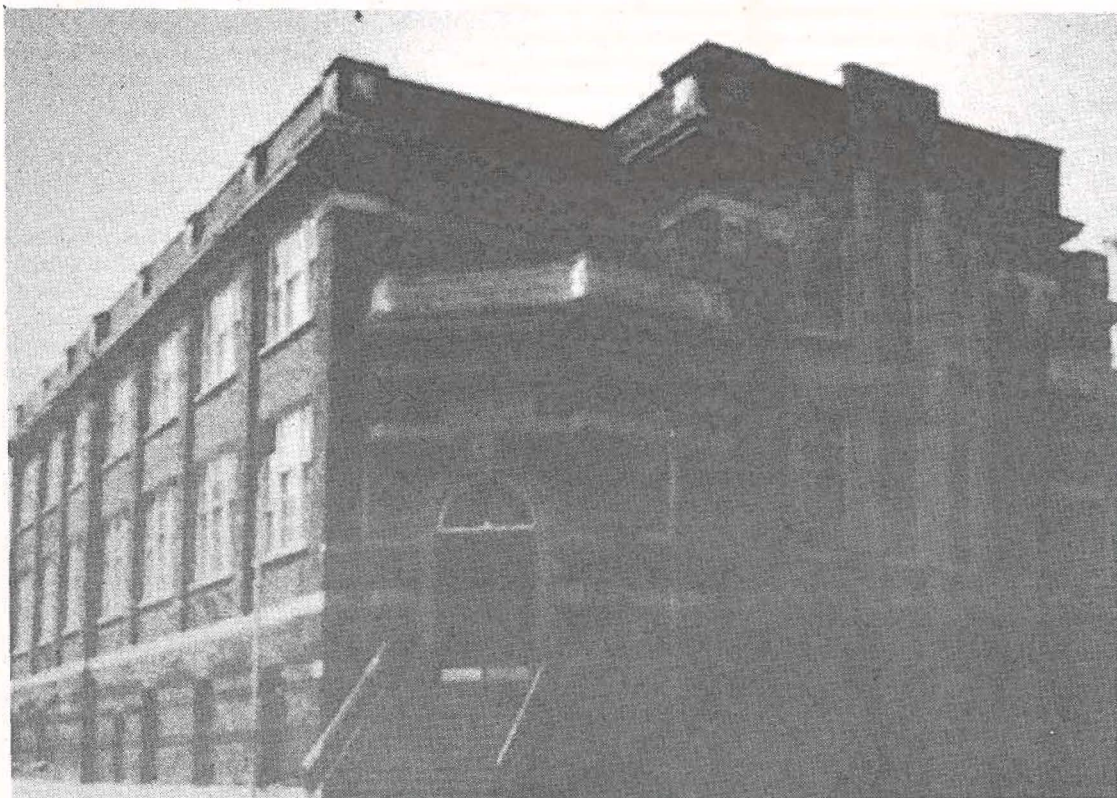
The government's initial legislation in 1964, which followed the recommendations of the Parent Report, encountered a familiar obstacle — ecclesiastical opposition. The legislation was unacceptable to the Roman Catholic hierarchy. The government had to accept amendments, which extended the powers of the confessional committees and made provision for two associate deputy ministers, the one for Catholics and the other for Protestants, in order to reach an accord with the Catholic church. In the end the confessional nature of the system was retained, but it was essentially a facade as the Church and State relation within it had been substantially redressed in favour of the State.

The regulatory powers of the two confessional committees nevertheless were broader than those envisaged by the Parent Commission. The latter was to recommend in March 1966 that the provision allowing for the recognition of schools as Catholic or Protestant be repealed. Successive governments, however, have felt bound by the agreement reached in 1964.

## Improved Efficiency in the Roman Catholic Sector

After the passage of the amended legislation, although authority was centralized, the delivery of teaching services was still highly decentralized. In the Catholic sector, many small autonomous school commissions existed operating as few as one or two schools. In the Protestant sector, such fragmentation had been tackled earlier by means of the nine regional boards that had been established. To reduce the fragmentation, the Minister proceeded with Operation 55. This had as its objective to establish 55 Roman Catholic regional school boards in addition to the 9 Protestant regional school boards already in place. To complete the consolidation, an amendment to the Education Act in 1965 allowed local school boards to delegate

*continued on page (10)*



*The Alfred Joyce High School on Durocher Ave. in Montreal.*

its centennial in 1960 the Council of Public Instruction did not meet. The confessional committees possessed full authority over the system. During this long period of denominational autonomy, there were several developments that are noteworthy. On the Protestant side, they related to improvement in the democratic nature of public education, and the deterioration of rural schools, particularly in the Eastern Townships. On the Catholic side, they related to the church/state relation, and to improvement in the democratic rights of English-Catholics. (For a discussion of these developments, readers are referred to the unabridged version of this article.)

## 1960 TO DATE STATE PREDOMINANCE, SCHOOL REORGANIZATION, AND THE PROTESTANT SYSTEM

### THE QUIET REVOLUTION AND EDUCATIONAL REFORM

The early 1960s were a period of rapid change and reform in

Assembly schools, was seen as one of the levers for the betterment of society. Henceforth, the public agenda of all political parties included attempts to find a basis for a public system of education under the supervision and control of the State that accommodated the realities of religion, language, and the Constitution. The re-election of the Liberals in November 1962 on the issue of nationalization of Hydro under the slogan "Maîtres chez nous" was a turning point. It reawakened the dormant spirit of nationalism that had surfaced before at the time of the 'Patriotes' and of the Ultramontane Movement.

Nationalism could be used to support 'provincialist' goals or to support educational reform. It could, for example, either be used as a counterpoise to the alleged centralist tendencies in Ottawa and against what was seen as English economic hegemony in the province, or it could be used: (1) to support the supplanting of 'denominational autonomy' by the reassertion of the predominance of the State, (2) to support improvement of the accessibility of schools and the quality of their services, and (3) to support an increase of democracy in both the Protestant and Catholic systems by broadening participation in their decision-making. The Government's choice initially was educational reform.

### Parent Commission (1962-66)

The Government set up a number of study commissions to report on various aspects of education. One of these commissions was headed by Msgr. Alphonse-Marie Parent, Vice-Rector of Laval University, and

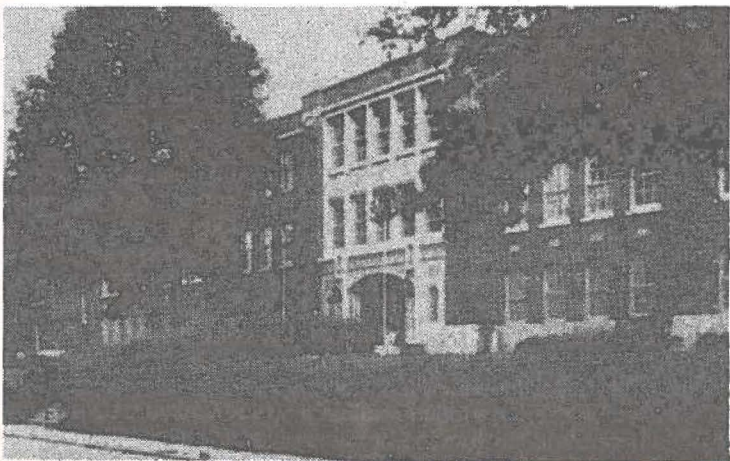
sion had haunted educational reform in the Province since the days of Chief Justice Smith's committee in the 1780's, namely: how to organize a state system of schools, and what is the role of religion therein? Regarding the first, the dilemma is the nature of organization necessary to attain provincial educational objectives. Do they require a strong central authority or can the same ends be achieved by regional units with a certain autonomy? The second major issue — the role of religion — has two facets: the contest between State and Church for control, and the nature of religion's influence — is it a matter of inculcating a set of religious and moral values in individuals, or is it a matter of permeating an environment with an aura of religious beliefs? The other two major issues were of more recent vintage:

- 1) the growing diversity of the school's clientele, particularly in the Montreal area, and
- 2) the protection of the French language.

In this last regard, the Parent Commission noted the preference of New Canadians for English-language schools and recommended that French-language institutions adopt a more effective policy of welcoming those New Canadians who desire a French education.

### Changes in Provincial-level Structures

The first volume of the Parent Report, which was published in April 1963, studied provincial-level educational structures. It recommended that a Minister of Education be appointed to promote and coordinate education at all levels in the public and



*Iona School on Iona Ave. in Montreal.*

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their powers to the regional school board.

## Consolidation Side-Effects on the Protestant Sector

While the direct effect of consolidation of Roman Catholic school boards was improved operating efficiency, it had a very significant side-effect on the operations of many off-island English schools and upon what historically had been the curriculum subjects of Protestant schools. The consolidation by Operation 55 established regional patterns conforming to the French Catholic distribution. However, the distribution of the English Catholic school population did not conform to those patterns. It was soon apparent that frequently English Catholic children were too sparsely distributed to allow for the establishment of full elementary and secondary schools with the necessary facilities. An obvious solution, particularly at the peak of the Ecumenical Movement, was denominational co-operation. So from 1965 onwards there were instances of Roman Catholic English-speaking students sharing schools with Protestant students in areas off the island of Montreal.

The school sharing arrangements — ententes — were formal agreements between school boards with the concurrence of the Department of Education. Also involved was the advisory agency of the Ministry — the Superior Council of Education (SCE) and its two confessional committees. After consultation with its committees, the SCE approved of such arrangements and recommended that among the principles inscribed in all such agreements should be the following:

1) The agreement should be designed and ratified in full consultation with the parents of the students involved.

2) The schools boards that are parties to such arrangements must undertake to continue their active involvement in the operation of the school.

Despite the SCE's recommendations, apparently administrative convenience prevailed. Possibly because the authorities were conscious of the school rights guaranteed the Protestant minority in the Constitution, or because that minority had in place operating organizations and experienced personnel (administrative units) that were English-speaking, the English Roman Catholic children were placed under Protestant school boards.

That choice had two significant consequences for the Protestant system:

1) a segment of the parents with children in the system, the parents of the Roman Catholic children, had no voice in their children's education (i.e., being of another faith, no school board representation), and

2) the Protestant school boards had to adapt their school curricula to accommodate Roman Catholic educational philosophy within the context of Protestant schools.

Both consequences were detrimental to the tradition of the Protestant public system. Historically the Protestant community had been directly involved in the management of its schools and thereby had provided for itself a public education system. Now, with shared schools administered by Protestant school boards, there was a segment of the English-speaking community — the English Catholics — that was denied participation in the management of their children's schools. That issue has since remained in the forefront of the system's concerns, and even the subsequent legislation allow-

Committee had set about preparing course outlines for teaching MRE. Subsequently the English language and literature program was revised by deleting Bible Study, and MRE courses were incorporated into the curricula of both elementary and secondary levels. These courses became subject to the normal scholastic requirements of examinations and secondary school leaving credits.

An ironic feature of the program of MRE development was its emergence in the twilight period of the Protestant Committee in terms of its power. With the supplanting of denominational autonomy the status of the Protestant Committee had been relegated from a management committee to an advisory committee with an express responsibility for the religious character of schools, and its personnel had been changed. Yet under this new regime the Protestant system had become more confessional than it had been

Boards was concerned about Protestant educational rights as guaranteed in the Constitution, and about the simplification involved in portraying the contrast between the Roman Catholic and Protestant systems as merely alternative approaches to moral and religious education. This latter concern later proved to be fully justified. In a subsequent court hearing (1985) on the constitutionality of school legislation — Bill 3 — one of the arguments made on behalf of the Government (Justice Brossard's decision, p.39) was that "only the aspect of 'religious teaching' was protected by the 1861 Statute." The judge immediately rejected the argument.

## SCHOOL BOARD REORGANIZATION AND PROVINCIALIST GOALS

Volume 4 of the Parent Report, which was published in March 1966, dealt with local educational administration, confessionalism and non-confessionalism and cultural diversity. This volume instigated the still ongoing debate in regard to two of the major issues with which the Commission was confronted: the nature of local administration required, and the role of religion therein. Regarding the latter, the Commission recommended that no confessional character be acknowledged by law to school boards and college boards. Regarding the former, a single regional school board was to administer all education, Roman Catholic, Protestant or non-confessional in the French or in the English language within the boundaries of a given area. These recommendations resulted from a concept of the school board as the representative and interpreter of the central authority. Confessionality was to be a local decision made at the school level by the parents.

## The Gordian Knot

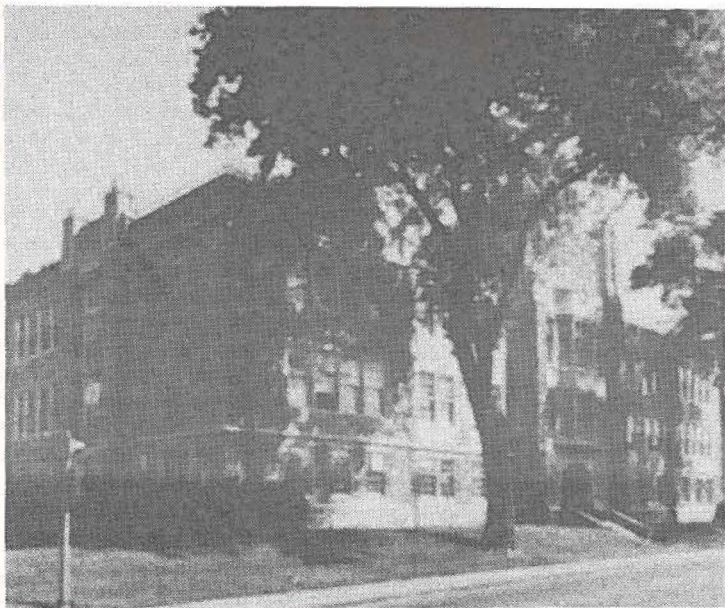
Each succeeding government in the past twenty years has attempted to cut the Gordian knot of the local administration and religion issues. The Union Nationale, which was elected in June 1966, received the report of the *Pagé Commission* in November 1968. It recommended that

nine French and four English boards administer five types of education (French Protestants were ignored). Claude Ryan, as editorialist for *Le Devoir*, took a stand for linguistic boards, a position he has maintained ever since. The school board issue, however, became involved in the language debate which arose in St. Leonard. Education Minister Jean-Guy Cardinal tabled Bills 62 and 63. *Bill 63*, which was adopted in October 1969, allowed freedom of choice in the language of education. Some observers have suggested that the Minister expected English support for *Bill 62* as a payoff for *Bill 63*. *Bill 62* would have instituted eleven unified non-confessional boards with confessional and non-confessional internal support structures on the island of Montreal. The bill died with the government's defeat in April 1970.

The Liberal Government of Robert Bourassa passed *Bill 27* in July 1971 which reorganized more than 1,100 off-island school boards into about 250 *confessional* school boards. *Bill 28*, however, which was a revised version of the Union Nationale's *Bill 62*, eventually had to be withdrawn. It would have set up unified school boards with parallel French and English internal support structures on the island of Montreal. Claude Ryan continued to advocate linguistic school boards and declared himself in favour of a Parti Québécois amendment which would have restricted English schooling to persons whose mother tongue was English. Again the only successful reorganization of Island school boards was *Bill 71* (December 1972) which maintained the confessional status quo, reducing the number of boards from 33 to 8. The new Island School Council was given the task of suggesting a reorganization plan.

Meanwhile the language situation heated up, fuelled not only by the continuing immigration to the Montreal area but by a sharply-falling birth rate among French Quebecers. There were alleged fears that there would no longer be a French-speaking

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Argyle School on Cote St. Antoine in Westmount. Now Selwyn House School.

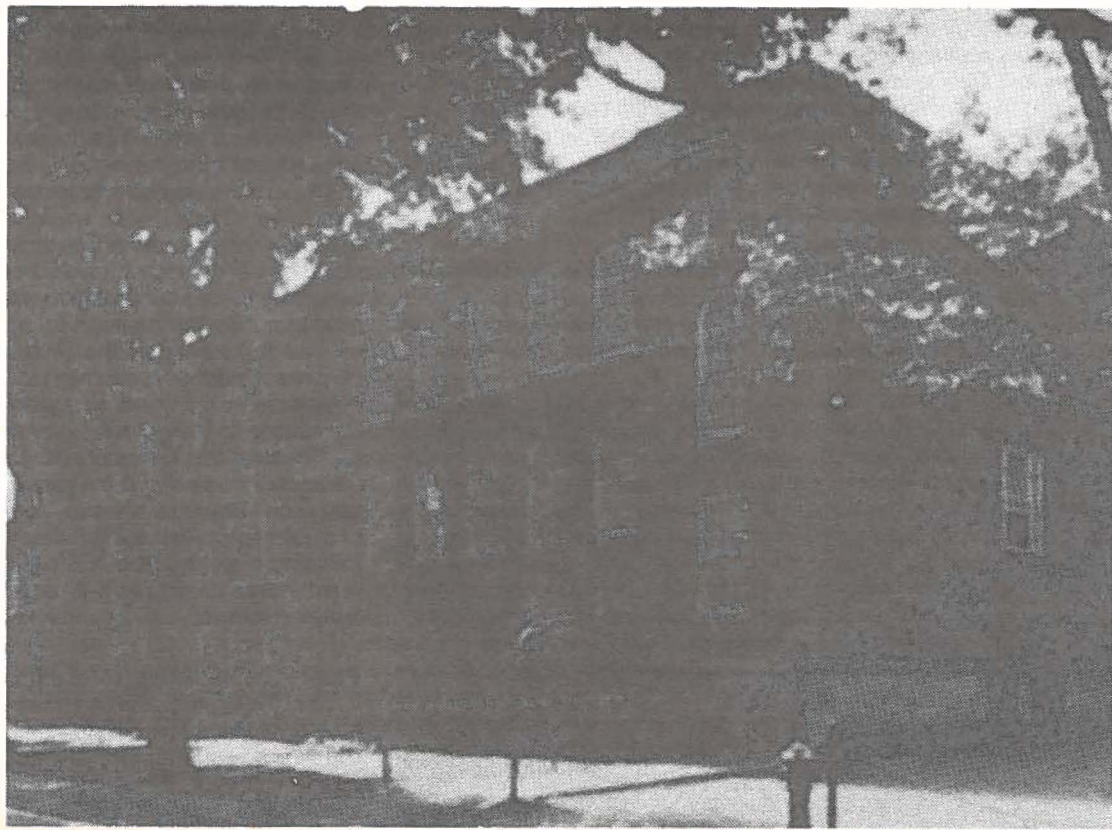
ing parent representatives to sit on school boards has not fully allayed the concern of English-speaking Roman Catholic parents.<sup>2</sup>

The other consequence of the shared school related to the school curriculum. The sharing agreements — the ententes — called for the provision of religious instruction and pastoral service for Roman Catholic pupils. Traditionally it had been the philosophy of the Protestant system to be Protestant but not church controlled, secular but not irreligious, and educational but not proselytising. In keeping with this tradition, religion had not been a curriculum subject that appeared on the Protestant timetable. Instead knowledge of the Scripture or Bible Study was incorporated into the English language and Literature program of the Timetable as an essential part of the Judeo-Christian heritage. Now, with school sharing and the terms of the 'ententes', religion had to appear in the Timetable as a separate subject — moral and religious education (MRE) — to accommodate the Roman Catholic pupils. And since the Roman Catholic parents insisted the Protestant children should not be allowed to study more of subjects such as extra maths, or extra science, or extra French, at the same time their children were studying religion, alternative MRE was proposed for Protestant children.

By early 1966 the Protestant

heretofore.

But the confessional trend was not without protest. The Provincial Association of Protestant Teachers reacted strongly, in a written submission, to the direction in which the system was moving and to the prospect of an increased accent on religious education. Similarly the Quebec Association of Protestant School



Elizabeth Ballantyne School in Montreal West.

**Operation 55... had as its objective to establish 55 Roman Catholic regional school boards in addition to the 9 Protestant regional school boards already in place...**

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majority in Montreal. There was also concern about the decreasing proportion of French-speaking persons relative to the Canadian population and there were fears of slippage in the predominant percentage of the French-speaking persons within the province. All of this led the Lib-

**Bill 101, the Charter of the French language... sup-  
planted Bill 22 and further  
restricted access to English  
language instruction...**

eral government to pass Bill 22 in July 1974, providing for the involuntary assimilation of the children of non-English-speaking immigrants in to the French-speaking community. In the view of some, it was an unjust conscription of the offspring of a minority community.

The elections of December 1976 brought the Parti Québécois to power. In May 1977 the Montreal Island School Council sent its study of reorganization to the Minister. It recommended a modified version of the status quo and a stricter language law. Madame Thérèse Lavoix-Roux, former Chairman of the Montreal Catholic School Board, was in dissidence and advocated language boards. The school committee of Notre-Dame-des-Neiges school sought the non-confessional status recommended by the Parent report. The Superior Court (Chief Justice Jules Deschênes) ruling in 1981 was that the Montreal Catholic School Commission (MCSC) could not administer a non-confessional school, and that constitutionally Catholics are entitled to their own system, managed and controlled by Catholics.

Bill 101, the Charter of the French language, which was passed in August 1977, supplanted Bill 22 and further restricted access to English language instruction. The emigration of English-speaking families to other parts of Canada and the desire of many English-speaking parents, who remained in Quebec, to have their children educated in the French language contributed to the decline in numbers in English language classes. On the other hand, there was increased cultural and ethnic diversity within the French Catholic schools and a rapid growth in the French sector of some Protestant school boards. In the latter, earlier English second language training and a different approach to religious teaching proved attractive.

## Culmination of the Confessionality Debate

Both the Green Paper (1978) and the Orange Paper (1979) skirted the question of school board reorganization, although the Green Paper did take notice of the possible reduction in the number of school boards through the integration of elementary and secondary structures. The issue of confessionality, however, was never far from the surface. In August 1981 the Superior Council of Education published its advice on confessionality. The Council recommended encouraging pluralist

and confessionally-shared schools and the institution of an option between moral and religious education and moral education in Catholic schools. The government's White Paper (1982) proposed integrated non-confessional school boards linked to the regional county municipalities, with linguistic status on Montreal Island and unified status elsewhere. The subsequent Bill 40 tabled in June 1983 would have given all school boards linguistic status, but omitted all mention of integration. This gave way to Bill 3, which was the culmination of the series of aborted solutions to the issues of local administration and religion after 1968. It was passed in December 1984, and legalized integrated linguistic boards throughout the province.

## Bill 3 and Provincialist Goals

Bill 3 was more provincialist in its goals than the 1960's Acts that were called the Magna Carta of Quebec education. These latter reforms of the 1960's had by now become firmly established, and their commendable goals of accessibility, quality, and democracy had been largely achieved. Bill 3 moved beyond these goals and set its sights on provincial uniformity. Within a narrowest possible constitutional interpretation, its effect would be to nationalize school boards and concurrently centralize in the Ministry the pedagogical choices regarding educational services.

The legislation proposed to change the status of school boards, the structure of their internal management, and the scope of local participation. The first two changes, by paring the school boards of their pedagogical and financial autonomy, would in effect convert them into regional educational warehouses for a province-wide distribution network of educational services directed by the Ministry. The third change (the scope of local participation), appealed to parents. It had the semblance of an increase in democracy at the local school level. But that increase was premised on parents' rights being totally divorced from school board powers (the first two changes). A premise that Quebec Federation of Home & School Associations (QFHSA) believes to be false.

QFHSA also believes the purported increase of democracy to be illusory. Indeed, QFHSA argued in its Brief on Bill 40 (the precursor to Bill 3) that the misrepresentation in that regard verged on dissembling. Later, in its deliberations on the constitutionality of Bill 3, the Court (p.83) also commented critically on the Government's false assumption of separation of parents' rights:

... he [the Attorney-General of Quebec] submitted that it was possible for the Court to declare the Act *ultra vires* [beyond the powers of the legislature] in all that relates to its denominational aspects and the aspects of replacing existing schools boards with linguistic schools boards, without necessarily concluding that those parts of the law dealing with the internal structures of schools and the

school boards... are also *ultra vires*.

... The Court cannot consider it [the above argument] without effectively taking the place of the legislator since it is impossible to sever the exercise of rights and privileges protected by section 93(1) from the other structures foreseen and regulated by the impugned Act. These rights and privileges cannot be severed from certain powers and functions of the school councils, powers relating to teaching staff, and the powers of regulation conferred on the Minister of Education by the Act.

Although Quebec Federation of Home & School Associations opposed Bill 3 as being unconstitutional as to its intent, and conducive to administrative chaos in the school system on its implementation, the Bill had the

fore, contravened Section 93 of the Canadian Constitution. The Superior Court (Mr. Justice André Brossard) found in favour of the plaintiffs and struck down the legislation.

Section 93 guarantees the freedom of religious conscience in education. It is pertinent to quote at length what the Court had to say about the system of Protestant education in that regard (pp.12-14):

It appears from the evidence presented by the Plaintiffs in the present case that the existence of Protestant denominational schools is part of the culture, the traditions and part of the essence of the Protestant communities of Quebec. Their existence, according to the testimony of Dr. John Simms [Chairman of the QAPSB] "is part and parcel of the fabric of the Protestant

Montréal and the Intervénants establishes that the concept of a Catholic denominational school implies the influence of the principles and dogmas of Catholicism in all spheres and facets of education. The testimony and the documents filed (Exhibits P-8 to P-11 and Exhibits I-6 to I-11) establish uncontestedly that confessionality and religious instruction are at least on paper daily realities within the schools under their jurisdiction.

## Implications of Linguistic Boards — Dismantling of Protestant System

Clearly the Protestant system is different and its values distinctive. Its erasure from the school board scene would not only eliminate parental choice as to professional orientations at the school board level, it would also



The biology building of MacDonald College in St. Anne de Bellevue.

support of Alliance Quebec and spokespersons for the English-Catholic community.

Under Bill 3, the existing denominational school boards for Protestants and Catholics in the entire territory of the Province of Quebec would have been replaced by linguistic boards, that is, school boards for anglophones on the one hand, and for francophones on the other. With the exception noted below, the assets and liabilities of denominational boards would have been taken over by linguistic boards and the former boards would have disappeared. The exception would have been the 'denominational' Protestant and Catholic school boards of Montreal and Quebec City, but with their territories limited to the boundaries of their respective cities as they existed in 1867, and the five existing dissentient school boards that were in place at the time of Confederation. Despite the semblance of increased democracy at the local school level, the authors of the Bill had given the narrowest possible construction to parents' constitutional rights in education.

## Court Challenge to Bill 3

The constitutionality of the Bill was challenged in court by the Quebec Association of Protestant School Boards (QAPSB) and some of its member boards. The contention of the plaintiffs was that it adversely affected rights conferred on a 'class of persons' (Catholics or Protestants) before 1867 and it, there-

community."

The concept of a denominational Protestant school is pluralist due to the fact that many Protestant denominations exist arising from numerous and varied origins.

The result is that the Protestant schools in Quebec developed with a pluralistic philosophy under which religious instruction was principally concerned with the creation of an individual religious conscience. The teaching of secular matters is totally independent and should not suffer any interference arising from religious doctrine or dogma.

The Protestant community has always been strongly and directly involved in the management of schools on the pedagogical as well as the administrative level through the establishment of parent committees. In fact, parents are involved at all levels of organisation in the Protestant school boards and this has always been the case.

The evidence shows that the schools now under the jurisdiction of the Plaintiffs are effectively under the jurisdiction of the Protestant community and of Commissioners, a majority of whom are Protestant.

Finally, according to the evidence, it is impossible to conceive that Protestants could agree to be educated in a linguistic school which would be subject to a Catholic educational approach.

On the contrary, the evidence presented by the Commission des Ecoles Catholiques de

rend the very fabric of the Protestant community.

For example, even if only the common school status is stripped from the confessional school boards of Montreal while their present boundaries are maintained (Bill 3 proposed 1867 boundaries), the impact on the flagship of the Protestant school system — the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal (PSBGM) — of imposing linguistic boards is devastating. From pre-Confederation onwards both the school boards of Montreal (PSBGM and MCSC) have been defined in status as being both denominational and common. The Protestants sought with that status to develop a public system that was open and pluralistic. Both boards therefore could, unlike off-island dissentient boards, admit students of a different faith (see p.18 for the court interpretation), and the Protestants did this to the greater degree. Thus both boards today have a mixed clientele. In the English sector of the PSBGM, 45 percent of the pupils are Protestant and 55 percent 'other': Jews, Moslems, Buddhists, Greek Orthodox, etc. Consequently at least 11,500 of the 21,000 pupils in its English sector would be transferred to the anglophone school board on the same territory. Similarly in the French sector of the PSBGM, 37 percent of the pupils are Protestant and 63 percent 'other'. So, of the 10,000 pupils in this sector, 6,300 at least would be transferred to the francophone school

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board on the same territory. The PSBGM would be reduced from 31,000 pupils to 13,200 and be confronted with radical consequences for its professional services.

The impact on the MCSC (Montreal Catholic School Commission/Commission des Écoles Catholiques de Montréal) would be similar but less drastic. Today, in the French sector of the MCSC, 88 percent of the pupils are Catholic and 12 percent 'other'. So at least 9,700 of the 81,300 pupils in its French sector would be transferred to the francophone school board on the same territory. Similarly, in the English sector of the MCSC, 93 percent of the pupils are Catholic and 7 percent are 'other'. So of the 13,500 pupils in this sector, at least 950 pupils would be transferred to the anglophone school board on the same territory. The MCSC, consequently, would be reduced from 81,300 pupils to 70,650, which would have a marginal consequence for the MCSC's professional services that could be handled by normal retirement and non-replacement.

In summary, the impact on the communities of defining linguistic boards as the only 'common' schools would be as follows:

	Before	After	% reduction
PSBGM	31,000	13,200	57%
MCSC	81,300	70,650	13%
Anglophone school board	—	12,450	—
Francophone school board	—	16,000	—
	112,300	112,300	

## Opportunity for English-Catholics

The data above do not convey the whole picture. They indicate the disruption that will be endured by the PSBGM. But they conceal the opportunity that may beckon the English-Catholics. We mentioned earlier that they had been left out of the fundamental compromise of Confederation in regard to denominational schools and consequently their mentor has been the Catholic hierarchy. But in the last generation legislation on education has drastically curbed the authority and control of that body. What if the English-Catholics now feel isolated in a French-speaking denominational board?

We have seen that the English-Catholic spokespersons already have come out in support of Bill 3. What if those persons represent a consensus in the community that it wants to get out from under the French majority? There are 12,550 Catholic pupils in the English sector of the MCSC. Add them to the 12,450 pupils already transferred to the Anglophone school board, and it is clear the Catholics would constitute the majority.

The Anglophone school board in law would be non-denominational (i.e., open to all religions). But since 1846, as we have seen, it has been the right of the local majority to confessionalize common schools in all respects except as regards their accessibility to everyone. So for the first time the Anglo-Catholics would have majority control of a school board that is defacto Catholic.

Quebec Federation of Home &

School Associations argued in its Brief on Bill 40 that the intention of the Bill was neither reform in the sense of correcting abuse, nor was it evolution in the sense of preserving all that is best in the present system. We now can see it was, in fact, revolution in the sense of the dismantling of the Protestant public system that has existed in one form or another for 187 years.

## Bill 107

The statistics given above for the Montreal denominational boards leave little doubt as to what will be the effect of recent

Catholics solely and of them only those who specifically so choose, so that the boards lose their common school status. Moreover, it restricts the anglophone school board to admitting only those who according to Law 101 are entitled to receive their instruction in English. Thus the only schools which will have the status of 'common', i.e., to which all children can be admitted by right, will be those of the francophone school boards.

As in Bill 3, in Bill 107 the core concept is that of the Ministry as a highly centralized authority. Within its schools boards are cast in the role of regional representatives and interpreters of the central authority, rather than as vehicles of local democratic control by their respective communities.

volume of the Parent Report. It envisaged a province-wide network of unified regional school boards, each to administer within a given area all education, Catholic or Protestant and in French or English. The school legislation of Quebec, although plentiful in terms of successive Bills, still has not successfully resolved the issue posed by the Parent Report. Are school boards to be unified as advocated by the Report, or be linguistic as preferred by the present Minister of Education, or be confessional as indicated by the constitutional precedents of Montreal and Quebec City denominational boards? Moreover, are they to be the representatives and interpreters of a standardized curriculum im-

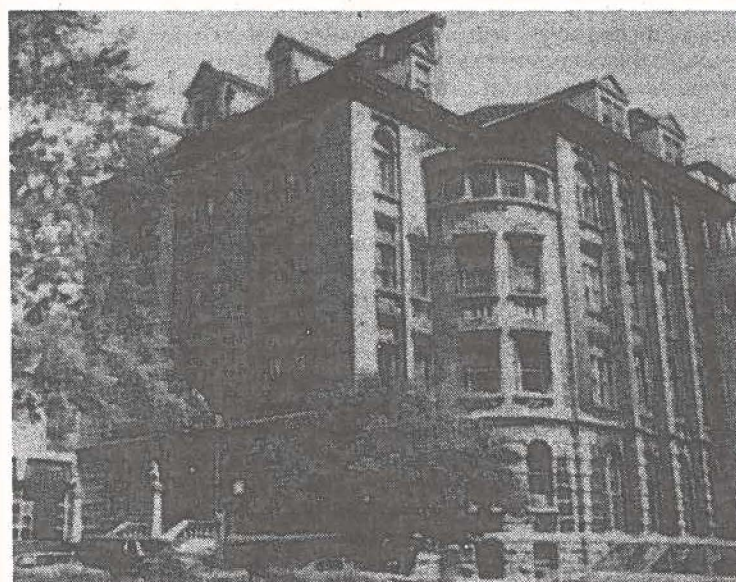
right to recourse to Section 93 of the Canadian Constitution to guarantee their right to manage and control their schools. Linguistic and unified school boards, on the other hand, have no such constitutional guarantees. Therefore, recognizing there is an ideological political level to the school debate, one has to consider the possibility that the linguistic school legislation has a hidden agenda: a short-term goal of eroding the base of the confessional system to facilitate the long-run goal of implementing the language policy of Article 72 of Law 101 — that French is the language of instruction in Quebec schools.

The evidence is already there in Bill 107. Students denied admission to confessional or anglophone school boards by law will have nowhere to go but to the francophone school boards. By the amendments of Bill 107 francophone school boards will have the only 'common' schools of Quebec. The intention is clear. The uncertainty is whether it is within the power of the National Assembly, given the fundamental compromise of Confederation in regard to denominational schools.

The onus to eliminate the fear of a hidden agenda is upon those proposing change to the status quo. There has to be less risk of the disappearance in the long-run of regional autonomous anglophone school boards. That requires Canadian constitutional guarantees. In their absence, English-Protestants would be wise to stick with what they have, schools that are part and parcel of the Protestant community.



Arts Building, McGill University, above, MacDonald Chemistry Building, McGill University, below.



Given the degree of similarity, there is a high level of scepticism as to the Bill's constitutional validity — specifically in regard to the loss of 'common' school status of city boards and to the right of Catholic or Protestant local minorities off-island to have schools which are managed by their co-religionists. The Minister, to allay these doubts, has promised to refer the issue of the status of school boards to the Appeal Court of Quebec for a ruling once the Bill is passed. That is where things stand at the moment of writing.

## CONCLUSION

Twenty-two years have passed since the submission of the final

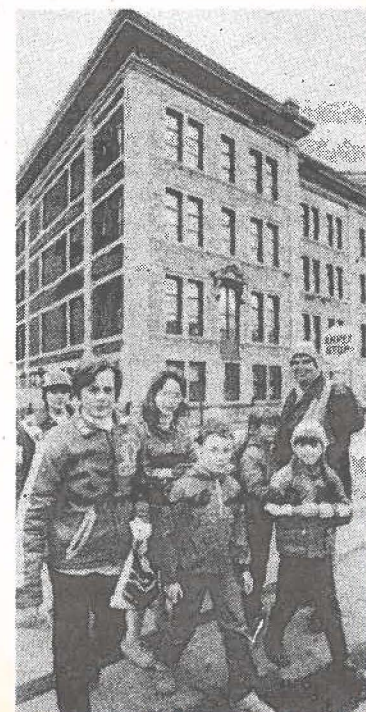
posed by a centralized and ethno-centric ministry (e.g., the banning of federal Armistice Day posters as being contrary to the goals of the Ministry), or will they have enough pedagogic and managerial autonomy to be effective representatives of their local electors and ratepayers?

The difficulty in resolving the school board issue is that the legislation has to recognize certain linguistic and religious rights in education. The holders of those rights are wary of the risks associated with the choice of status of school boards. For example, confessional school boards have the aura of constitutional protection because the parents in their schools have the

## Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Nathan H. Mair, *Quest for Quality in the Protestant Public Schools of Quebec*, Protestant Committee, Government of Quebec, 1980, p.19)

<sup>2</sup> The Protestant system was more successful in improving the democratic rights of Jewish parents. In 1965 the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal established a quota of five permanent Jewish seats on its board. In 1971 that quota was superseded by Jews acquiring full legal rights to vote and to run for election to school boards.



# AT MONTREAL CONFERENCE, EDUCATORS EXAMINE... The future of small schools

BY COLETTE CANAVAN,  
ASSEMBLY ON RURAL  
SCHOOLS

The first Canadian International Conference on "Small Schools" was held in Montreal on May 3, 4 and 5, 1989. Over 70 professionals from around the world gathered to recognize and support the reality, value and potential of small schools and their clientele.

Those attending included professors, administrators, government officials, school board commissioners and trustees from Australia, England, the United States, the Northwest Territories, the provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and Newfoundland.

This conference was informative, valuable and encouraging for anyone involved with small and/or rural schools and the constant frustrations of lack of funds, lack of stability, lack of adequate programs, etc.

The realities incurred by these problems and the subsequent school closures have very tragic personal, social and economic consequences for the students involved and the communities affected.

Rural schools are disappearing somewhat like our post offices. However, it is not letters or parcels which are being re-routed through "super-boxes" but our children who are subjected to extended and abusive bussing in order to obtain their basic education.



These children have no legal right or protection against these bussing abuses of two, three or four hours daily.

They have no union to negotiate the hours of transportation or the distances which would be acceptable when a small school closes its doors and its clientele must resign itself to the elements of "centralization".

School boards determine, according to their provincial and local budgets and from the educational preferences of the elected trustees, what is "acceptable" for their clientele regarding transportation.

The rural school commissioner/trustee, who is often in a minority setting at the school board table, cannot protect or avoid the closing of his/her small school which is cited as "too expensive" vis-à-vis current financial norms.

Many of the workshops at this conference elaborated different programs which have been implemented to reverse the centralization option while assuring a quality education for the rural children.

The theme of the conference and the approaches of the various workshops were: Co-operation and Technology.

Without a doubt, this direction

appears to hold the potential of survival of our small rural or urban schools. However, this avenue of success will require the will of governments to invest in this area of initiative.

As well, it will be essential that all educational partners, including school boards and parents, be prepared to co-operate. Small schools are a global reality.

Australia is attempting to improve its radio and correspondence courses. They have also added computers and two-way videos. These are expensive and the distances involved are great.

The government has pronounced itself regarding the establishment of a new curriculum which will recognize the urban and the rural sectors as two separate and very different entities.

England has a large number of small schools and centralization is very popular as a solution. Many parents have organized to oppose such a policy.

The government has since initiated a research program to find alternatives to school closures and centralization. Their research includes re-grouping of schools along administrative channels where schools share services, resources, personnel, etc.

Government funds are allocated to school boards which are willing to involve themselves in such a co-operative program.

The United States also has a co-operative program which operates between school boards and Cornell University in New York state. Some 330 schools are involved and each pays \$325 per year.

The University assigns two professors and a secretary to the program. There is an executive of 42 members made up of parents and administrators.

The objectives of this co-operative are: the liaison between federal and state governments; the research and distribution of information and encouragement; the distribution of practical solutions to problems; the planning of conferences.

The Province of British Columbia has named Tom Miller of the Ministry of Education as the first person "Responsible for Rural Education". This government has also pronounced itself regarding the rural realities and the adjusting of budgets to reflect the particular needs of the rural educational system. Chemistry and Biology "kits" for senior secondary levels are available for all schools as well as kits in mathematics and sciences for multiple-level classes from grades 4 to 7. These are practical ways which assist teachers in their complex tasks. The purchase of such "kits" in large quantities also reduces the costs while ensuring the highest quality of material available to all children of the province.

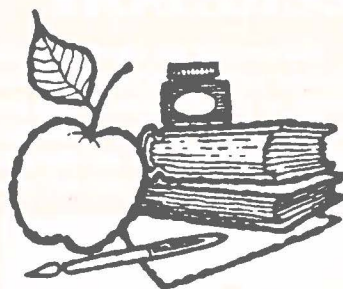
The Province of Alberta has reopened a small school with 25 students in the Sereol area through a new Distance Education Program. This program involves 28 schools from kindergarten through to Grade 12, many of which have 50 students and less. Government grants paid the initial capital costs of materials and equipment in each of the schools

including satellite dishes, computers, facsimile machines.

The Province of Manitoba also has initiated a Distance Education program. Their program involves high school and first-year university students who are linked via technology with university professors.

This program appears to serve the needs of the rural sector as well as ensure a good secondary education which also promotes the continuity of post-secondary studies. Courses like woodworking, mechanics, agriculture and administration are also offered and have proven their value and success rate. The courses utilize local professionals which provides another direct benefit to rural communities.

The Baffin Educational Council have their head office at Frobisher. The school population of 3,000 students continues to grow. They are administered by the native population and the language of instruction is Inuktituk. French



and English are taught as additional languages.

Culture and language are key elements of a well-rounded curriculum. Seniors of the community form an integral part of the educational system. This is a precious resource which appears to be neglected in our southern communities.

The Province of Quebec — Mary Campbell and Judith Shurman of the Ministry of Education gave an overview of the results of their research study on small anglophone schools across Quebec.

Their recommendations to the Ministry appear to follow the ideas elaborated at this conference. It would appear also that many of the suggestions submitted by the Assembly on Rural Schools have been considered as valid for consideration. The official report is now available.

During the conference's closing plenary, as the only non-professional parent present, I stressed my great disappointment regarding the lack of publicity concerning such a vital conference.

I also stressed the great need for an information network system of programs and resources which should be highly visible and accessible to all the educational partners including school boards and parents who must find alternatives to avoid the closing of schools.

Please note, only 29 of the 122 members of the National Assembly of Quebec answered our personal request regarding their position of support for rural schools of September 19th, 1988.



## War toy messages

By MARY GUREKAS

**WE USUALLY take special care in purchasing gifts for adults during Christmas time, but rely more on TV ads and store flyers to find out what new toys are on the market that might be of interest to our children.**

We also rely on their requests. In a way, it is "easier" to buy a toy for a child. Sometimes this easier method may be a disguise for carelessness.

What does a gift say about us? What does our gift to a child say to the child who receives it? Are we inadvertently promoting a value we do not believe in?

Buying war toys for boys and passive toys for girls further reinforces stereotyping. It suggests to children that it's fun to be aggressive, it's powerful, but that it is also a typically male thing to do.

Girls may be "set-up" to perpetuate a belief that boys are "innately" more aggressive. Parents, especially, do not always see the manipulation that the toy industry exercises on our children.

Children, however, have their own ideas about war toys. They have empowering insights into the matter.

Many letters were written on the subject of war toys by children in West Island elementary schools as part of a letter-writing contest last Christmas.

Here is a sampling of some of their thoughts.

Dear Editor,

Since the toy people only care that they make money, we could give suggestions of other toys like the peace guys. The peace guys are action toys that do good. You do that because you take war toys off the market, then take toy guns off the market, then war action figures. After that you take war programmes and war movies off the air.

Kelly Hanson  
Room 13  
Allancroft school  
Grade 5

Nov, 30, 1988

Dear Editor,

I think that little children should not play with war toys because they could get hurt and die! Or someone else will get hurt! And little children will think war is a game to be played!

From Meghan  
Grade 3  
Allancroft

## FALL CONFERENCE

## Workshops give valuable info

## BE AN H&amp;S SECRETARY

Gail Cooke, Secretary at Courtland Park (Dorval) Home & School, described the functions of a secretary in most Home & School Associations.

She stressed the importance of having precise, accurate minutes while, at the same time, trying not to be too long-winded. Gail said that when she began she thought every word was important but now

knows that isn't really true.

Guidelines, outlining the secretary's responsibilities, and a sample agenda were handed out and gone over in detail with the delegates attending the workshop.

Some things that may not have occurred to new secretaries is that they are responsible for taking attendance — who actually was there, who sent regrets, who didn't show up!

Minutes should be written up and sent to all the executive members at least one week prior to the next meeting.

Ingrid Vollmer, in her third term as Treasurer at Willingdon Home & School, mentioned some of the do's and don'ts of being a treasurer.

Make sure you have an invoice or bill for every request of you for money. A signed receipt is a must for all monies given out, or received.

A hard-covered ledger with many columns for keeping track of expenditures and receipts is a must. The ledger will last many years and is not easily lost or destroyed.

She said it was a good idea to try to keep all your papers in one particular place in your home, so nothing will get lost.

Ingrid also stated the chequing account should require two signatures; a good idea is two out of three possible signing officers of whom, obviously, two would be the treasurer and president.

Bank at a place convenient for YOU. Try to hand in your cash deposits in an orderly fashion, bills all in order and facing the same way; the tellers will not cringe then when they see you coming.

While she did not feel written financial statements were necessary for every monthly meeting, she did present a written income statement every three months during the course of the year.

A sample one for the last three

month period during the 1988/89 school year at Willingdon was given out.

Besides revenue and expenses this showed the previous balance, the new bank balance, and a breakdown on the monies in the chequing account and savings account.

*Ed. note: copies of these handouts are available from our office if you would like them.*



Gail Cooke of Courtland Park in Dorval told H&S secretaries about the importance of accurate minutes.

## PROMOTING PARENTS

By MARGARET WILSON  
THE WORKSHOP "Promoting Parent Potential" given by Heather McBride was a 'How To' of programs and activities to create a "literate" environment with the home, school and community working together.

We began by discussing the morning's plenary session and expanding on some of the issues already spoken about.

It is impossible for the schools to do everything, so parents play an important part. They should work with the school and try to provide children with opportunities to be involved, e.g. clubs, girl guides.

## How Parents Can Help:

- Be a reader and writer and encourage your child to do the same. Read to your child regularly.
- Don't make learning to read and write a chore. Talk to your child and see the world through a child's eyes again.
- Build up your child's personal collection of books. Give a book as a gift or to mark a special occasion.
- Take children to the library regularly or to the bookstore to select books.
- Watch *Reading Rainbow*, an excellent TV program for younger children.
- Use your newspapers which are excellent for dinner table discussions on current events, environmental issues, etc.
- Write notes to your children. Leave them on the fridge or drop one in his/her lunch bag.
- Begin a family log book. Members of the family write something which has happened or is of interest to them each day.
- Encourage letter writing. It doesn't necessarily have to be to family; how about the newspa-



Heather McBride, a teacher at Dorset School in Baie d'Urfé, helped parents learn how to help their children with reading and writing.

per, TV, hockey players, M.N.A.? The list is endless. Maybe the children on the block could get a newspaper together.

- Have an Authors Club. Get some children who enjoy writing stories together.
- Begin a Reading Circle. Find a spot in a church hall or shopping centre, get some volunteers and bring along some books.
- Celebrity Reading. Ask the mayor, your commissioner or someone in the neighbourhood to come and read to the children.
- Reading and writing is needed for everything, including math and science. To encourage math use problem solving activities, such as banking or visiting a restaurant.

Use the newspaper for the stock market, sport scores and statistics. Card games, math mysteries.

If people are interested in knowing more about "Reading Circle," how they can help or begin, please get in touch with Marian Daigle at QFHSA.

# Volunteering: Give a little — get a lot



BY BEVERLEY SMITH  
EC. PRIM. HARWOOD

MARY JANE DE KOOS (Valois Park Elementary) and Judy Owen (Dunrae Gardens) held a very successful workshop offering their ideas on how to tap the talent in the school and community for volunteers.

One topic which was discussed was why do some schools have so many and some have so few. All recruiting should be done with a personal approach to achieve good results. Another aspect discussed was never to refuse someone's help when offered; you'll always find a positive way to put their efforts to use.

In conclusion, it was stressed that our teachers are there to teach the basics, and anything extra we want to have for our children during their year can only be realized with the help of volunteers all year long.



Judy Owen, left, of Dunrae Gardens, and Mary Jane de Koos of Valois Park tell how to tap volunteer talents.

## THANKS TO . . .

for taking the pictures at the Fall Conference

Ben Durand



810, RUE SALABERRY, LAVAL, QUÉ. H7S 1H3 • TÉL.: (514) 384-0430

## More on Workshops

# H&S: WHAT'S IT ABOUT, ANYWAY?

By MARILYN BARKER

**THE WORKSHOP** "Home & School: What's it all about?" looked at this question from the perspectives of both understanding Home & School's function and of 'selling' or explaining its role to others.

The workshop leaders, Betty Shotton, president of a revitalized and very successful H&S at Sunnydale Park, and Nancy Hope, president of the new and very active E.P. Harwood H&S gave a practical and informative presentation based on their own experiences and successes.

After briefly outlining the history and goals of H&S, Betty went on to discuss communication. She stressed the importance of effective communication in determining the needs of our children, parents and school; in finding and directing our volunteers and in making parents, teachers and the children aware of our accomplishments.

A weekly or monthly newsletter

and a prominently displayed bulletin board were suggested as effective ways to keep everyone informed.

An overview of how to approach the role of H&S president also covered many practical suggestions: evaluate the functions of your H&S, its priorities, programs and its constitution. Be aware of the strengths, skills and availability of your active members so as to best use their talents; have a good rapport with school committee; keep your school secretary well-informed of H&S activities (who to contact for specific events, etc.); and have very open lines of communication with your principal.

On the topic of recruiting volunteers, we were reminded to make all our members feel special: they're helping our children! As well, recognition of the individual was stressed. This could mean the friendly introduction of a new parent at an H&S meeting, volunteer buttons or thank you notes for a job well done.

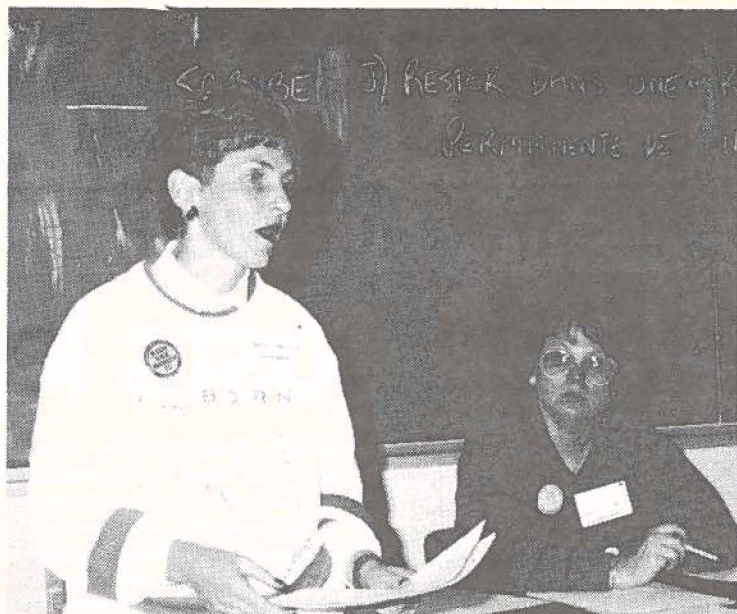
Many of these actions have the added benefit of increasing the visibility of H&S and are examples

Betty noted of the "finishing touches" which set apart a job well done.

Nancy Hope then went on to stress the importance of organization. Get everything down on paper. She outlined a month-by-month calendar of the year's events, beginning in May of the previous year, which was especially useful.

Questions and comments from those attending the session were welcomed and there was considerable sharing of problems and solutions among the group.

The handouts were relevant and complimented a well-presented and worthwhile workshop.



Betty Shotton, left, of Sunnydale and Nancy Hope, of E.P. Harwood, explain what H&S is.



The plenary speakers: (L to R) Dr. Gordon MacLachlin, Pierre Belanger, Dr. Norman Henchey, Helen Koepp (President, QFHS), and Michel Decary.



"It's obvious that this H&S member below can't understand what makes Marion Daigle smile and sparkle with glee, left.



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# FOCUS on the LOCALS

## LINDSAY PLACE HIGH

### Harris hosts leaders

**WE HAVE** been busy this year trying to meet the government's requirements for an orientation committee without further straining our parent resources.

Gordon Robertson, who is well known and loved in our community, is our community representative. Nine parents who are presently members of H&S or school committee, have agreed to participate in the orientation committee

as well.

The remaining members are four teachers, two students and one non-teaching support staff. We plan to combine business and merriment on Dec. 4, when we will hold our first meeting.

Also worthy of mention is the Student Leadership Conference hosted by the Lakeshore School Board. The school was proud to be a part of this conference, held Oct. 25-29.

John Rennie was the host school, and our own Andrea Harris, student council president, was the hostess. The school was represented by six delegates from grades 7-10.

Students had a chance to exchange ideas with other Canadians from the other provinces and Northwest Territories.

Steve Jackson is our enthusiastic Student Life Department head and we appreciated his support and encouragement of the students.



Many of the students at Lindsay Place participated in the Leadership Conference.

## FLASHES FROM THE LOCALS

The Ministry of Leisure, Fish and Game organized a unique contest for Grade 6 students in the **Bas-St-Laurent/Gaspé/Magdalen Islands** region. It allowed 24 students to accompany conservation agents on their patrols for a day. At the end of the day they received books on wildlife along with a beautiful photo album.

The Terry Fox Run took place at **Hampstead School** on September 22. It was a resounding success, raising \$2,956. Next year promises to be even better as the City of Hampstead Employees join the fun. It was a great opportunity for the children to learn about the gift of giving.

The H&S is offering great sweatsuits at very affordable prices. Parents had a chance to see samples on Meet the Teacher Night.

The first **Thorndale** H&S meeting of the year was held September 11. It promises to be an exciting and productive year. The Chocolate Bar Sales are in full swing.

The grade 6 students went on a three-day trip to Saranac Lake during September. They gave "humongously" big thanks to Mr. Walker and the teachers who took them.

On "Meet the Teacher Nights" at **Dr. S.E. McDowell/Onslow/Campbell's Bay** parents were invited to accompany their children to the school to meet the teachers and animators, to visit the classrooms, and to see some of the materials which will be used during the coming year.

Following the classroom visits, there was a general meeting of all parents. Members were elected to the school committee, who later elected officers and discussed the need for an orientation committee.

The main fundraising event this year at **Shawinigan High** was the Brunch-Fashion Show, held on October 29 at the Hotel des Chutes in Shawinigan.

It began at 11:00 am and everyone was invited to attend. The event was organized by the school committee with all profits benefitting the students.

Parent volunteers shared their talents and time over the summer to make crafts for the December Gift Shop at **Royal Charles**. It is held in December and the students are able to purchase inexpensive gifts for family and friends from the large selection of crafts created by the hard-working volunteers.

**Keith** had a Terry Fox Run on Sept. 18. After the run, nine volunteers helped the children get their McDonald orange drink.

The H&S membership drive got underway on Sept. 27 at Parents Night. Our new membership chairman, Kenneth Vingoe, is very eager to have a successful year.

Last year was a busy and exciting first year for **E.P. Harwood** and our H&S. Because of the many activities that were held, the H&S was able to make a sizable donation to the library, as well as provide many "extras" for the students.

Topping off the year was the thrill of receiving the Newsletter and Membership Awards from the QFHSA.



Students take a breather and get some instructions while hiking Mount St. Bruno.

## WOODLAND

### Students enjoy Mount St. Bruno

PUPILS AT Woodland School in Verdun have actively participated in a year-long program involving the environment.

With the help of a professional naturalist and environmentalist Chris Adam, they became not only more sensitive to the environmental issues, but also demonstrated an active concern as individuals.

Part of the year-long program involved pupils spending a day at Mount St. Bruno as well as planting two spruce trees in front of the school.

Three hundred trees were also donated by the students to the City of Verdun in a ceremony attended by the mayor and other dignitaries.

## CHRISTMAS PARK

Nancy Bethge received the Parent's Committee Award of Excellence on June 13.

The H&S donated disk drives, computer programs, books for each of the classroom libraries, and a video camera to the school.

The H&S was involved in consultation with the LSB on Pupil Placement needs, and is presently networking with the Lakeshore Regional Council and the Lakeshore Parent's Committee.

## COURTLAND PARK

**THE SCHOOL** began the year with a "Beach Picnic Party" on Sept. 1. It was well received and participation was high until the showers appeared and things were slightly "dampened."

We have adopted a dress code this year and the majority of students are participating. Clothes were ordered through 'Special Delivery For Kids' and the results are a "sea of blue, white and red," very pleasing to the eye. Not only are the parents happy, but the students are proud of their new "uniform."

A "Morning Extended Care Program" has been added to our already successful "Afternoon Program" and everything is running smoothly.

On Friday, Sept. 29, principal Lilly Urban, and our city's mayor, Peter Yeomans, planted a red maple tree on the school's front lawn. This was in keeping with one of this year's school objectives — "The Environment."

October 21 was the school's 16th annual Country Fair. This major fund-raising event draws people from far and wide to celebrate.

Carol Milley

## ALLANCROFT

**LAST JUNE 13** was the school's annual "Hot Dog Day." Our principal cooked, the parents served, students, parents and staff ate and EVERYONE had a fantastic time!

After lunch, a magician entertained an enthusiastic crowd in the gym, while outside, teachers played a rousing baseball game with the grade 6 students. **TEACHERS WON!**

This fall is a season of "beginning" at Allancroft. We welcomed a new principal, Patrick Baker, who has already become well known and appreciated among the students, teachers, and parents. There are also several new students and they and their families have been properly welcomed with a "newcomer" lunch.

Our former principal, Mr. Lessard, left Allancroft to become principal at Mount Pleasant School in Hudson. Our loss was Mount Pleasant's gain. The five years Mr. Lessard spent at the school were very happy and successful ones.

Students were able to purchase all their school supplies through our H&S School Supplies Store. This was only possible through the tremendous organization and hard work of Linda Allison and several tireless helpers.

On the first day of school, students received an informative 'handbook' containing informa-

tion about Allancroft life — H&S, School Committee, Library, etc.

Over 400 of these handbooks were prepared by our H&S President, Terry James, and a hard-working group of volunteers.

Lynne Huber

## WESTPARK

**THIS YEAR** we have begun a new fundraising campaign that seems quite successful.

Last spring we ordered magnetic 8" x 11" school calendars which attach to the refrigerator door. They were printed with our own school holidays and professional days and have our kids' art work as the cover. At \$2 each they sold quickly and we intend to continue this useful idea.

We have allotted funds to buy videotapes so our school nurse can conduct a Drug Prevention Program for all grades.

A special music instructor has been hired to prepare some of the students for a holiday show.

This year we will be changing our Science Fair to one with an environmental theme. We have given the go-ahead for Chris Adams to lead grades 4, 5 and 6 to great things in this area.

As usual our extra-curricular program was quite popular. We are running 11 different courses from Mad Scientist to Karate and Copper Enamelling. There are 135 students signed up.

Sandra Phillips Posner

## VALOIS PARK

# Rodeo teaches safety

**CYCLING SAFELY** was on every student's mind, along with the possibility of winning a new bicycle, when the H&S's Health and Safety Committee sponsored the annual bike Safety Rodeo on May 17.

The weeks prior to the Rodeo, students had been learning the rules of bicycle safety through films, informational pamphlets, classroom activities, checklists, a

visit from a local police constable and a pedestrian rally.

The entire school participated in the Rodeo. Students drove through an eight-station course manned by H&S volunteers, which included a mechanical safety inspection, and the students practiced their braking, hand signals, balance, stops and turns.

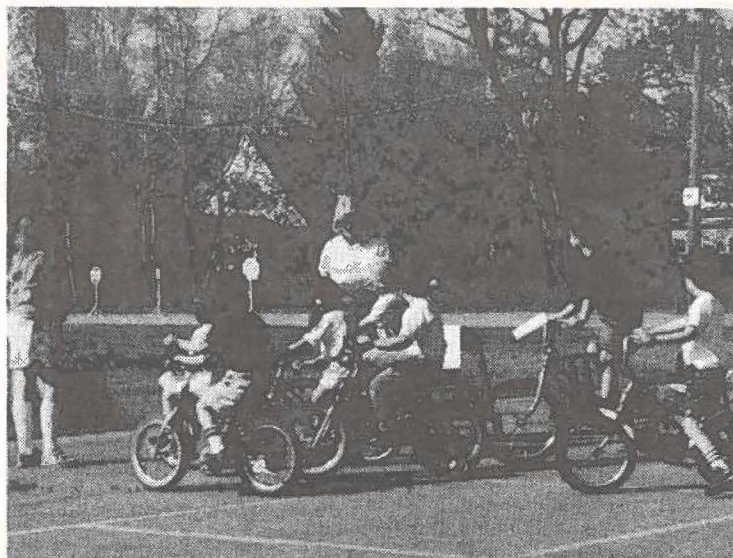
The highlight of the Rodeo was the draw for a bicycle donated by Mr. Stocker of Fraser Cycle & Sport in Pointe Claire. The winner was participant Audri Bishara,

Grade 1.

On June 23, there was a school-wide assembly, where awards were presented to several outstanding students in the graduating grade 6 class.

Included were the Gordon Robertson Award for Citizenship, presented to Valerie Morkill, and the Art Douglas Most Improved Student Award, presented dually to Adrian Weisendanger and James Stirling.

The annual Apple and Chip Sale took place on October 21.



Students line up to do the eight-station Rodeo course.

## MORE FOCUS

### MOUNT PLEASANT, HUDSON ELEMENTARY AND HUDSON HIGH

On June 3, the H&S sponsored a Spring Fair.

Events included pony rides around the football field for the little ones, clowns with pretty colored balloons, face painting, a young children's games centre, 'bargain tables', used toys, books and games, and the ever-popular home baking table.

At the same time a craft fair was held in the gym with over 20 crafters from Montreal, Quebec and Ontario on hand to demonstrate their art and sell their creations.

At the final tally over \$3,000 was raised for all the schools.

The H&S presented a 'Murder Mystery Night' at Whitlock Golf and Country Club.

From the moment you entered the club, and enjoyed a beverage in the lounge, the characters were subtly introduced and the plot cleverly outlined.

The storyline and ensuing events held your interest right through the delicious buffet dinner. The principal characters in the drama were seated at the dinner tables with the other guests.

One lucky lady actually guessed the correct solution to the baffling mystery and won a lovely prize for her efforts. Several door prizes were also given out.

The H&S, which sold 115 tickets to this event, raised over \$900. The original storyline and actors were hired from Eddie May productions, who put on this type of evening at many restaurants in Montreal.

Organizers Joanne Smith and Sue Wright did a terrific job. It was an evening to remember.

On September 20 the H&S held its annual Ski and Skate Sale at Mount Pleasant School. The sale operated on a consignment basis of 20% of members and non-members. For non-members there was an additional \$1.00 drop-off charge.

### GREENDALE

THERE WAS reason for celebration by staff members, parents and all involved in our school, when we won the Award of Excellence given by the National Council of Teachers of English, in recognition of our high quality of instruction in English Language Arts.

Our teachers from Grades 1 and 2 were responsible for achieving this Award.

Congratulations to Kathy Colley, Ramona Dzianaga, Shirley Spence, Joyce Thompson, Linda Branston and Judy Gilmore for putting all their teaching skills and excellent work together to achieve this special honor.

On the lighter side of things, H&S fund-raising got off to a good start with the sale of Everfresh juice and plans for a Valentine's dance.

Grade 5 students were treated to a three-day trip to the Adirondacks and a day of fun picking apples.

A special presentation was given by the Lakeshore School Board AIDS Committee to advise all parents of a new AIDS Awareness Program being implemented at the elementary level of our schools.

Heather Lantaff

### JOHN F. KENNEDY

MAY OF US at JFK, having been touched personally with the painful agony of cancer, felt we wanted to contribute in an active way to the research and cure of this disease.

On May 16, principal Leo Venditti presented Richard Lortie, a member of the board of directors of the LEUCAN Organization, with a cheque for \$3500.

Craig Furtado, a student who is himself a victim of cancer, inspired this project and proudly gave Lortie the cheque.

A Read-A-Thon launched last April had students sponsored to read either books or chapters. D.E.A.R. (Drop Everything And Read) took place everyday at school for 15 minutes.

The results were very satisfactory. The students improved their reading, enjoyed new stories, and raised funds for LEUCAN to distribute.

These funds will be directed mainly towards McDonald House near Ste-Justine Hospital, and also for equipment and research for cancer.

Congratulations to Isabelle Walton of Grade 1, who collected \$518.50.

### EDINBURGH

## Hard work makes a fair success



"Choose the face you want!" This young lady picked #9 - a daisy.

THE H&S wound up a successful year last spring, with the annual Spring Fair. This end-of-the-year event was the culmination of lots of hard work by lots of volunteers. It was one of the best fairs ever.

There were games, a raffle for terrific prizes, a used toys and books sale, a bake sale, a haunted house, and many more fun things to see and do.

Last year's many fund-raising events resulted in the H&S donating money to the library, buying science and math materials, and bringing Youth Theatre into the school.

This year it was back to school with a wonderful kindergarten party. It was a great success, thanks to the work of a terrific group of parents.

### BEACON HILL

THE MAJOR FUND-RAISING being undertaken this year by the H&S, is a Wrapping Paper Sale. The paper is excellent quality and includes All Occasion, Hanukah, and Christmas paper.

The Safety Programme, sponsored by the H&S, is one of our most important programs. Every month there is a different safety theme and the safety co-ordinator helps the teachers by obtaining safety information, reserving movies and requesting speakers to visit the school.

During the last weeks of August three students from Kids for Peace, Alicia and Neil Barratt, and Tara MacDonald, gave presentations at an organization meeting for the formation of a peace club for very young people in the Beaconsfield area.



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# ÉCOLE PRIMAIRE POINTE CLAIRE

## Families flip over Fun Fair

THE FIELDS behind the school were transformed into a carnival midway on Sept. 21, from 5 to 7 p.m. as the H&S kicked off the school year with Family Fun Night: an annual fundraiser.

Teachers supervised games as students tested their skills at bowling down pins, balancing beanbags, running relays, bursting balloons and face painting.

And what's a carnival without food! Parents sold tickets for 25 cents each. It cost four tickets for a

hot dog; two tickets for a bag of chips, a donut or a drink. Games cost one ticket each.

The event was an enormous success. Everyone took home a collection of "valuable" prizes just for participating and having a great time with family, friends, and teachers. The H&S raised over \$2,000 to boot!

The kindergarten children summed it up best:

**Jordan:** "I like the part where you got to keep the prizes when you played the games!"

**Marc Antoine:** "J'ai aimé jouer et j'ai gagné!"

**Maxime:** "Il y'avait trop de gens, j'ai perdu ma mère, mais j'ai trouvé mon ami et puis j'ai trouvé ma mère!"

**Jessica L.:** "I won lots of prizes! I won so many I almost died!"

**Sebastien:** "Il'y avait un simple jeu, et j'en ai rentrer un et j'ai reçu un jouet. J'ai aimé gagné les dents éffrayant!"

**Paul:** I liked getting my face painted. I looked like Batman."

**Jessica P.:** "I got my face painted like a kitty cat!"

**Ryan:** It was a party, eh? Like a fair! Mommy and Daddy came and I got skeleton teeth!"

Jill A. Johnson



It was fun and games for all at E.P. Pointe Claire's fall fair.

## WINDERMERE

### Play sheds light on fears

ON SEPT. 7 THE annual Ski and Skate Sale once again provided a budget-friendly way for families in the community to prepare for winter, while also supporting the H&S. Over \$600 was raised.

The main fundraiser for the year, the Spice Sale, is under way. This was held in good time to allow everyone to do their Christmas baking. Packaged baking goods and spices were sold at "bulk food" prices.

The H&S Coffee Party on Sept. 15 was a chance to renew friendships, meet new friends, and say hello to the new H&S executive.

The very successful Pizza Days had become unwieldy. The pizzeria has to prepare and volunteers have to serve over 60 pizzas. It has been decided to have those special days by area, beginning with the Primary Area. The profits from each of these days will go directly to the area involved.

On Saturday, Nov. 18 parents and children had the opportunity to enjoy a night at the theatre. The H&S arranged a showing of "Night Light", a Geordie Production show.

"Night Light" was written by John Lazarus, winner of the 1987 Jessie Richardson Theatre Award for Outstanding Production of a Play for Young Audiences. It is suitable for children from kinder-



From left, Emily Stoger, Amanda Prokopovich and Elissa Georges were on the prowl in Windermere's June production of 'Cats.'

garten through Grade 6 and is billed as a "warm and sensitive comedy" which teaches children positive strategies for dealing with their fears.

From a schoolyard bully to a

nocturnal monster named Goodge, "Night Light" suggests that true acts of courage occur when we embrace our fears, not just face them. It was a terrific hour for the whole family.

## MORE FOCUS

### ROSLYN

IN A SPELLATHON, held as part of Helping Others Week in May, the students amazed themselves by collecting almost \$10,000 for the Montreal Children's Hospital.

A cheque was presented to a hospital representative in a special ceremony at the school. The most costly item bought was a special microscope for studying allergies.

Also purchased in Roslyn's name were a table-type weighing machine, a long-distance transmitter for ECG exams, and a water bath for the microbiology department.

Susan McKenna

### EDGEWATER

THE SCHOOL'S participation in the Read-A-Thon sponsored by the World Book Encyclopaedia, was a record-setting success.

The students raised more money through their pledges than any other group in Quebec who has undertaken this endeavor!

All grades, K-7, were invited to participate. The school decided the limit would be 10 points times the student's grade level.

Medals and certificates were presented to the students at a school assembly, with each participant receiving a certificate.

Each junior class received a set of Childcraft books for their classroom; every senior class a set of World Book Encyclopaedias; Grade 7 also received 8-9 science reference books.

In addition, a set of Childcraft, World Book and Science reference books were given to the library.

The very considerable success of the students represents a tremendous degree of parental interest and support in the encouragement of reading.

## SEIGNORY

### Provigo donates bicycle helmets



THE GRADE 2 students are all riding safely to school on their bikes, wearing helmets that were given to them at the end of grade 1.

The local Provigo store donated all the helmets; all the children had to do to get one was sign a contract stating they would wear them.

This was the second year of the program and we hope to continue it for four more years, when all the children in the school will be wearing helmets they received at the end

of grade 1.

The new year is in full swing. We welcomed many new volunteers at our Coffee Morning sponsored by H&S and School Committee during the second week of school. It fell on the same day that grandparents were visiting primary classes, so the school was very busy.

Our first fundraiser was a very successful Hot Dog Day in September, followed closely by a ski/skate sale the first week of October.

Anne Gill

### LACHINE HIGH

THE H&S, for the past two years, has emphasized communication, by inviting a staff member to begin each monthly meeting with a half-hour presentation on curriculum or student services.

The talks have ranged from a college approach in language arts to the computerized physics lab of the future, and we've found them fascinating.

The main fundraising activity has been evenings of recreational badminton. Students are charged a fee for the season (roughly \$1 a session) and volunteers supervise.

For some years the H&S held a nest-egg in a savings account. The proverbial rainy day never came, so we donated \$600 to the school library and increased the number of \$100 bursaries awarded to graduating students.

Barbara Peden

## E.P. BEACONSFIELD

ACTIVITIES ARE just starting to roll. Work is underway to produce another EPB Cookbook which will include appetizers, main course selections, desserts AND suggested menus for every occasion!

Montreal's columnist and noted wine expert, Wayne Grigsby, has agreed to suggest wines to go with the menus. The book should be on sale in December.

# Books on Review

By KENNETH RADU

Stephane Poulin's new picture book, **Benjamin & The Pillow Saga** (Toronto: Annick Press, 1989), is a story built upon close family ties, the social importance of music and, by implication, of art generally. Benjamin is a happy man who is "always humming, just like a hummingbird, except that Benjamin was much larger." He lives with his parents and hums while his mother plays the tuba and his father, who raises white mice, plucks the harp.

During the day Benjamin works in a pillow factory where he stitches a fine seam on the edge of each pillow. His natural good feelings and love of life, expressed in his humming, find their way into the very fabric of the pillows so they "gave people a deep, delicious sleep, a sleep so deep that the loudest alarm clock could not disturb it."

People came from all over the world to buy Benjamin's "magic" pillows, including Mona Delopera who is so impressed by Benjamin's humming she invites him to hum at her opera house in Italy. He goes with his parents and the musical trio become celebrities.

The pillow industry suffers because Benjamin has ceased to hum his art into the seams and the pillows have become yet another mediocre project. The factory owner, Mr. Arthur, begs Benjamin to forsake fame and fortune and the public demonstration of his art for the sake of his business. Benjamin refuses.

His love of humanity, however, and his instinctive belief that art is not a plaything of the elite or the eccentric, send him on a world tour.

People everywhere "come to the concerts with their pillows" so Benjamin's voice "would flow into them" once more.

There are important ideas present here. The same gentle tone of voice and understated narrative we find in Poulin's famous books about Josephine the cat are also evident in **Benjamin & The Pillow Saga**. Unfortunately, Poulin's story is not a successful fantasy. The actions are arbitrary, the problem too whimsically treated, the solution facile.

A writer who believes that anything goes in fantasy, that fantasy does not have compelling inner logic and imaginative restraints, risks producing a story without depth or resonance.

Too many wands are waved in Poulin's story, too little real conflict or individual choice is involved, Mr. Arthur's anguish over the loss of his profits notwithstanding. Moreover, the logic of the solution, the world tour, is dubious to say the least.

Poulin's paintings, as rich and detailed as any of his work, have taken on a darker tone which is at visual odds with the smiling, optimistic people who inhabit his prelapsarian universe.

Most of the characters have smiles on their faces, including the workers in what is to all intents and purposes a textile factory.

A story with stronger narrative force than Poulin's but accompanied with less impressive illustrations is the recent translation of Gabrielle Roy's story for children, **My Cow Bossie** (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1988).

Not a fantasy, that most difficult of genres, **My Cow Bossie** is about a Manitoba girl who receives a cow for her eighth birthday. Alert to the ulterior motives of adults, our heroine supposes the purpose of the gift is to keep down the wild grass and vetch that "stood thick and high, waving like a real farmer's crop of hay" growing in the empty lots surrounding their house.

She admits, however, that the real reason for the gift is her need for better milk than that brought to the house by the milkman.

An enormous expenditure, the cow is also a bit of a nuisance who arouses the young girl's resentment at being turned into a cowherd for the summer.

"I hurled insults at her stupid face. I muttered horrible things about her. She wasn't even a pretty cow."

Pretty or not, Bossie gets loose and finds her way into the city where she blocks a yellow streetcar which clangs its bell as the girl tries to lead the cow away.

The cow's greatest fault, ironically, is her ability to produce milk, literally a never-ending stream of milk, and every container in the house is full: "there were bowls, small, medium and large, each one fuller than the last with milk from yesterday, milk from the day before yesterday, milk from the morning, milk from the evening. . ."

One way to get rid of the milk is to sell it so our heroine goes from cowherd to businesswoman, in partnership with her mother who dazzles the child with promises of great profits.

Unfortunately, the mother withholds the money. "Weeks passed and I still hadn't received my share of the money." The mother is neither callous nor conniving, merely incompetent at bookkeeping and, in the manner of adults, rather too easy with her promise to children and insensitive to their feelings.

As it turns out, the money disappears, the cow is sold after her udder runs dry, and the little girl is left with a confused notion of entrepreneurship and fiscal irresponsibility.

There are no easy solutions in this story. Despite the warmth of family feeling present here and the gentleness of the story-telling voice, the narrative is built upon incontrovertible logic, as necessary to realistic fiction for children as it is for fantasy.

The writing is clear, Alan Brown's translation felicitous and rhythmic. Characterization, however brief, is sharp and true to life.

When **My Cow Bossie** first appeared in French in 1976, Louise Pommerville, the illustrator, received the Alvine Belisle Award for her art work. Child-like in spirit, I nonetheless find the facial expressions of the people too cute, the eyes oddly prominent and peculiar.

There are, however, wonderful illustrations of the vetch-covered lots around the house and the little girl muffled up against the winter, delivering her bottles of milk.

# HOWICK ELEMENTARY Goodbye Mrs. Bahsh

**LAST JUNE 21 parents of the level 1/2 children held a farewell party for Roseanna Bahsh.**

Mrs. Bahsh has been appointed to the position of Elementary Education Specialist for the Protestant Regional School Board of Chateaugay Valley.

At the party each student presented Mrs. Bahsh with a poem and/or story they had written. Then lemonade and cupcakes were served.

Mrs. Bahsh, a recipient of the Literacy Award presented by the Chateaugay Valley Reading Council, was a pioneer of the whole language approach of teaching reading in the Chateaugay Valley.

## MORE FOCUS

### CEDAR PARK

**AS PART OF an environment theme last year, the school took part in a tree planting ceremony sponsored by le Canal Famille.**

This event was preceded by an assembly where students saw the Academy Award winning film, *The Man Who Planted Trees*. After the assembly each child received a small tree and became responsible for it.

For families who did not have a suitable planting site, Canal Famille arranged for an area to be set aside at the **Botanical Gardens**.

Several seedlings were planted at the school as a symbolic reminder of the events of the week.

This year our enrichment centre is expanding into a Fine Arts Centre, funded mainly by the H&S. Two teachers are organizing it and plan to have cultural enrichment, art and drama activities and workshops dealing with ethnic and cultural ideas, for all the school's students.

### SUNNYDALE

**LAST YEAR** the school finished their productions with a musical called "Show Stoppers". The children worked very hard under the direction of Mrs. Merrill Liverman and her assistant Mrs. M. Yadgard.

The parents and students truly enjoyed the production. It was great to see so many talented children giving their best (the singing and dancing was a treat to watch) to entertain and help raise money for the school.

They raised over \$600 which will go towards buying a new sound system.

Sunnydale Fair, our annual largest fund raiser, was held Nov. 11 from 10 am to 3 pm.

Carol Magurn

The new school year began with many new faces and a fresh outlook. We welcomed our new principal, Fred Hutchings. We will share him with Huntingdon Academy.

His relaxed, friendly manner has won him immediate affection from the children and his obvious commitment to his new position has impressed parents and staff alike.

We also welcome the other new staff members who are diligently working to ensure a successful academic year. This is the fourth year of our bilingual program with kindergarten through grade 3 now involved.

Many new parents and grandparent volunteers were seen in the halls this fall — working in the library and the cafeteria, reading to our students and planning fundraisers.

Our School Committee's major fundraisers took place on Nov. 18, the 9th Annual Howick Craft Fair. This year over 50 artisans attended.

One of the projects to which the money will go is the construction of new playground equipment.

Our school has a record enrollment this year of 139 students. We are very pleased with the increase and credit it largely to the success of our bilingual program.

# TEST ANSWERS

## ANSWERS TO DRINKING & DRIVING TEST

- False.** Alcohol is a depressant which slows down your nervous system.
- False.** The alcohol test gives a clinical reading. It does not differentiate between a dangerous driver and a cautious one, but it does tell what your blood alcohol content is.
- False.** Your faculties start to become impaired long before your blood alcohol content reaches the legal limit of 0.08. Between 0.02 and 0.03 the judging of distance and speed is off. At 0.05 the quality of vision diminishes and reaction time takes longer.
- True.** As soon as your blood alcohol content reaches 0.05, judging distances and your panoramic vision is reduced by half. Likewise, auditory reactions dim and your reaction time and attention span is diminished.
- False.** Although it is common practice to judge one's capacities, it is also the least reliable. Alcohol, as it reduces your capacities, diminishes your awareness of risk and leads you to overestimate yourself.
- False.** Coffee, like cold showers and exercise, changes little. Only the time that elapses after consuming your last alcoholic drink will allow for the elimination of its effects.
- True.** Each of these drinks contains approximately the same amount of alcohol.
- True.** The number of drinks leading to a blood alcohol content higher than the legal limit does depend on your body weight. What must be taken into account, however, is the time elapsed since your first drink, as well as other factors such as the ingestion of medication, fatigue, time elapsed since last eating, etc. to properly evaluate the elimination of alcohol by your body.
- True.**
- True.** What's more, alcohol has been found to be the primary cause of 10% of the fatal accidents in Canada and the United States.
- True.** And, you might like to know, after 01h30, one driver in three has consumed some alcohol before driving.
- True.** Refusing to submit to an alcohol test (breathalyzer) is an infraction to the Criminal Code of Canada.
- True.** A first conviction will lead to a suspension of your permit for one year; after which you will have to undergo a driving test before being re-issued a new permit.
- True.** Your passengers have a responsibility towards you. Their drinking could disturb you in your driving because of their possible attitudes while drinking, or by tempting you to drink.

## HOW WELL DID YOU DO?

**Between 11 and 14 — Bravo! You are a responsible person. You realize that mixing alcohol and gasoline is dangerous for everyone on our roads. Keep it up!**

**Between 5 and 10 — Be Careful! Even though you seem to be aware of the problems of drinking and driving, your notion of the consequences might be a bit distorted.**

**Less than 5 points — BEWARE! Please read up on the laws governing drinking and driving. A close examination of your drinking habits vis-à-vis driving might be considered.**

While the laws were not meant to prevent you from having a drink, they did and do take into consideration the tragic consequences that can result from drinking (especially too much) and driving. Follow the advice of the experts — **IF YOU DRINK, DON'T DRIVE! PLEASE!** Take a taxi — or — check in your locality to see if they have Operation Nez-Rouge (Operation Red Nose). If they do, use their fine services.

**From our house to yours, a very Happy and SAFE Holiday!**

# Comité loses key member

THE COMITÉ provincial de concertation des programmes de sécurité routière en milieu scolaire (Provincial committee of road safety programs in schools) lost one of its key members to cancer on Oct. 21.

Jean-Claude Cauchon, originally with the Ministère de l'éducation, came to the Régie de l'assurance automobile in order to help make road safety a part of the new curriculum in our schools.

The aim was, and still is, to make "a new generation of road users".

Jean-Claude was well-known for the way he ran each and every one of the Comité's meetings. There was a strong sense of fair play. Everyone left the meetings

with the feeling of a job well done, and with having had a fair chance to contribute to the meeting.

He will be difficult to replace.

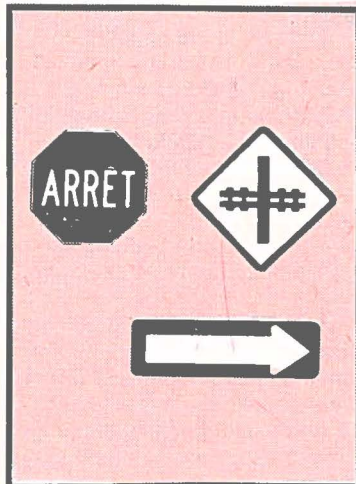
Apart from running the meetings, Jean-Claude did a lot of province-wide travelling, helping set up workshops where local concerns could be discussed.

The Safety Scene editor worked closely with Jean-Claude in setting up three such workshops.

The English community, represented on the Comité by the QFHSA Safety Scene editor, was well served by Jean-Claude's presence. He made sure your representative received every document, book, video, etc., in English.

We have lost a good friend.

To Jean-Claude's family, our heartfelt sympathy.



## SAFETY SCENE

### Test driving skills

**CHRISTMAS 1989 is just around the corner. How time flies! The Régie de l'assurance automobile du Québec has published a series of "Loto" cards which tests driving abilities.**

**The Safety Scene editor feels that the "loto" on drinking and driving is a most appropriate one for this time of the year.**

**The test is simple: read the statements below and answer true or false. Look on p. 19 for the answers and an evaluation of how well you did.**

**Try your luck; it may save a life — yours.**

1. Alcohol is a stimulant. *T. F.*
2. The alcoholtest (breathalyzer) measures your physical capacity to drive after having consumed alcohol. *T. F.*
3. Your capacity to drive is only affected once you reach the legal limit of 80 milligrams of alcohol per 100 millilitres of blood (0.08). *T. F.*
4. The first things that alcohol affects are your vision and your reflexes. *T. F.*
5. The best way for you to find out if you have consumed too much alcohol to drive your car is to rely on the way you feel. *T. F.*
6. A good way to eliminate the effects of alcohol is to drink coffee. *T. F.*
7. One drink of alcohol is equivalent to:
  - a 341 ml (12 oz) glass of beer; or
  - 43 ml (1½ oz) of hard liquor (gin, rum, scotch, etc.); or
  - 85 ml (3 oz) of fortified appetizer wine; or
  - 142 ml (5 oz) of table wine. *T. F.*
8. In order to evaluate the number of alcoholic drinks required for you to reach the legal limit of 0.08, you must take into consideration your body weight. *T. F.*
9. If you are a man, weighing 68 kg (150 lbs), you will pass the legal limit of 0.08 after consuming 3 drinks in an hour. *T. F.*
10. It is estimated that in 50% of fatal highway accidents, the drivers had consumed some alcohol before the accident. *T. F.*
11. On Quebec highways after midnight, one driver in 10 has a blood alcohol content reading of over 0.08. *T. F.*
12. You are obliged, when asked by a policeman, to submit to an alcoholtest. *T. F.*
13. In Quebec, the Highway Safety Code provides for immediate suspension of your driver's permit if you are found guilty of driving a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol. *T. F.*
14. Like the driver of a vehicle, passengers are forbidden by law to consume alcoholic beverages while in a vehicle on a public road. *T. F.*

# WE ARE LIVING IN INFORMATION AGE

continued from page 1

and generate a lot of rhetoric but achieve little of lasting worth.

Secondly, we must remember that literacy deals basically with the transmission of meaning. It has to do both with the extraction of meaning from things around us and with the communication of our meaning to other people.

Thirdly, it is important to recognize that literacy means different things in different cultures. In some it implies little more than the ability to write one's name legibly while in others the term encompasses a vast array of communicative skills. It is thus deceptive to talk about "basic criteria of literacy", because the criteria almost certainly vary in relation to the modes of communication most prevalent in a particular society.

Fourthly, the whole concept of literacy is being continually modified by a variety of different pressures.

We live in an information age and are daily confronted by an avalanche of information from which we must be able to extract only that which is relevant and necessary to our individual needs.

The bulk of this information flow is mediated by our technology. So a very important aspect of literacy is being able to constructively manage the information flow by using and controlling the technology.

This already challenging task is further complicated by the wide diversity of channels of information and the fact that almost every component in the process is changing rapidly, becoming more and more complex.

Lastly, Henchey pointed out it is important to recognize that there are different levels of literacy. The lowest of these is simple literacy (reading and writing) and numeracy.

The next higher includes ecological and technological literacy and involves the ability to relate causes and effects. At yet another level is cultural, artistic and economic literacy.

Ultimately there is moral literacy, a vital component of any culture that professes to be



**Conference speakers Pierre Belanger, above left, Dr. Gordon MacLachlin, above right, Michel Decary, right.**



compassionate and wholly civilized.

According to Henchey, the home is probably the best place to begin combatting illiteracy at all levels. Parents must be prepared to set a good example, by having good books in the home, by reading them actively and by encouraging their children to do likewise.

We shouldn't expect schools to resolve the whole literacy problem alone. They should instead be left to focus more on those aspects that they are best equipped to handle.

MacLachlin stated that the scientific community in general is becoming alarmed at the rising level of functional illiteracy among students in our universities.

There is great concern that we are falling behind other developed countries in this regard.

According to a Southam News survey 8 percent of graduate students are functionally illiterate and another 5 percent are only marginally literate.

Many students have great difficulty communicating information verbally and in writing; yet these same students are often computer literate to a very high degree. They are clearly capable of learning.

MacLachlin feels most have simply been allowed to become lazy and sloppy in their communication habits. Schools have not



been sloppy in their communication habits. Schools have not been demanding enough in setting high standards of literacy and expecting them to be met; the rigour of the essay question has given way to the laxity of multiple choice exams.

Excessive specialization is another factor that often leads to difficulties in functioning in the broader social context.

We should be encouraging a broader range of generalized knowledge as a complement to the necessary narrow specialty.

In a highly technological society such as ours, all citizens should have some basic level of scientific literacy in order to cope effectively with the world around them.

This should not, however, be at the expense of a broad based

humanistic literacy.

There is an equally widespread concern within the business community about the prevalence of functional illiteracy, according to Michel Decary.

He described his own experiences in interviewing graduates for jobs and finding that a large number of them were incapable of engaging in a simple conversation about almost any topic outside their narrow range of specialization.

They were unaware of and incapable of properly interpreting what was going on in the world around them. Decary felt that much of this is attributable to modern electronic media which require only the passive involvement of the recipient of the information.

They demand little in the way of critical thinking and synthesis. All too often we allow the media to do our thinking about issues for us.

As a result, the media increasingly is able to manipulate the social agenda and determine the pressing issues. He also pointed out there is a great lack of basic social literacy; a disregard for the basic social skills that are often summed up by the terms of etiquette or politeness.

These are very necessary in facilitating interaction among people. The home is certainly one of the most important influences in this particular area.

Pierre Belanger, a media researcher, emphasized that the

electronic media are becoming more and more pervasive in our increasingly technological culture. To prepare our children for this rapidly evolving society we need to assist them in understanding the role that this technology plays in their lives.

They need to be aware of the societal implications of the widespread use of such things as fax machines, computers, cellular phones, interactive television and the rest of the broad array of technological marvels that are being thrust upon us.

Belanger spoke in glowing terms about a TV Ontario series designed for high schools that delves deeply into the role that the media play in our society.

He strongly urged the development of comparable programs for use in Quebec schools.

Following these very informative and stimulating formal presentations a barrage of questions from the floor clearly indicated that the audience had not been passive blotters soaking up information.

They had evidently been listening carefully and thinking critically about the issues raised. They were eager to explore the topic widely and ferret out possible solutions to a very disturbing social problem.

Such keen interest bodes well for the success of the upcoming year of literacy in encouraging more people to come to grips with the issue in a constructive way.