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**CONNAUGHT SCHOOL
2124 ELPHINSTONE STREET
REGINA SK**



**INITIAL HERITAGE
ASSESSMENT**

2012 April 30
JY12025

2012 April 30
JY12015

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**INITIAL
HERITAGE
ASSESSMENT**

I N D E X

- 1. INTRODUCTION**
- 2. FINDINGS**
- 3. CONCLUSIONS**

APPENDIX A - STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A brief site visit was carried out on Wednesday, April 24, 2012 in the company of James Youck and Wyatt Eckert, from P3 Architecture. We were accompanied by Terry Zacharias.
- 1.2 The purpose of the site visit was to review first-hand the overall appearance of the School having relied on archival materials and recent photographs to write a Statement of Significance (SOS) which lists the history, historic significance

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and the physical character-defining elements of the building. A copy of the SOS is attached under Appendix A.

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- 1.3 In addition to the SOS the visit was to obtain a first-hand impression of the overall condition and see what original parts of the fabric still exist.

2. FINDINGS

2.1 EXTERIOR

- 2.1.1 The exterior of the School has been much altered over its 100 year life with the removal of all the original wood-framed windows and either their replacement with aluminium-framed units and blocking up with brickwork, which only nearly matches the original. This intervention has severely affected the appearance and aesthetics of the building.
- 2.1.2 A major change is the removal of the six (6) Doric columned entry portico that originally covered the main entry. This would have been the most important element of the building.
- 2.1.3 All of the original windows to the basement level have been removed and the void below the stone belt course infilled with some new windows set within concrete to closely resemble the adjoining sandstone of the plinth of the building.
- 2.1.4 At the front entry one original set of doors is retained to the south side. However, to right it has been infilled with brickwork.
- 2.1.5 At the front (east) parapet level the original sheet metal cornice is in place but is showing signs of rusting in a number of areas. Of concern is the fact that this cornice

that extended around the perimeter of the entire building has been removed from the other three (3) sides.

This action has exposed the soft common back-up brickwork, which was never designed to be exposed as an exterior finished surface, and has now been left exposed to the elements which has allowed the penetration of rainwater to the interior of the fabric.

- 2.1.6 The red facing brick is laid in Dutch bond with five stretcher and one header course. The new (1970?) brickwork is all laid in stretcher bond. An attempt appears to have been made to match the size and gauging of the new brickwork to the original.

2.2 INTERIOR

- 2.2.1 A major CDE is the very wide central corridor at all levels, which incorporated terrazzo floors surrounded with a darker perimeter strip this same colour is used as cross division strips which line up with the location of the beams. These terrazzo floors are boarded with a marble baseboard, which has been both painted and covered with a vinyl-coved baseboard.
- 2.2.2 The staircases between the three (3) levels have balustrades of intricate wrought iron with a moulded hardwood (oak?) handrail. This is an important CDE.
- 2.2.3 The original terrazzo finish of the stair landings and treads has been overlaid with 1" x 1" clay mosaic tiles. These tiles preserve the terrazzo underneath and could be removed in the future.

2.2.4 Some of the plaster work within corridors and classrooms retain the large radius corners to the exterior corners, again a CDE.

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2.2.5 The classrooms all have a small narrow cloakroom at their rear. At some time, possibly when the original windows were removed in the 1970(?), two circular openings surrounded by bricks have been inserted into the wall between it and the classroom to provide better supervision.

2.2.6 Many of the original mouldings and casings to the doors and windows are still in place although all the original doors and windows have been replaced.

2.2.7 All the original ceilings have been covered by the installation of suspended ceilings, a combination of tee bar systems and ceiling tiles. Above the ceilings within the main central corridor are the original plastered ceilings and cross beams.

3. CONCLUSIONS

3.1 Since the Connaught School was built in 1912 there have been many alterations and changes made to it. These changes have been made for two basic reasons; to mitigate structural failure of the foundation system and to "upgrade" the interior with modern materials and finishes.

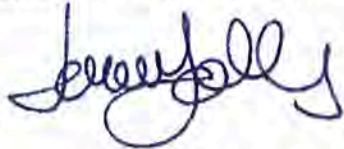
3.2 The exterior has suffered from the wholesale removal of all the original windows and either replacement or being blocked up with brickwork, the removal of the sheet metal cornice and the portico to the main entry.

3.3 Despite the interventions of the past 100 years, the overall appearance of the building still reflects the bulk, mass and interior ambiance of the original design.

3.4 Dependent on the educational programming for the School as to the suitability of the spaces within the building, from a heritage perspective the building could well be re-used for its original educational purpose. This will require much further study related to programs and a full heritage conservation plan to enable the most appropriate decisions to be made.

3.5 It is hoped that this brief overview of the heritage aspects of the Connaught School will enable a rational plan to be developed.

Respectfully submitted



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APPENDIX A

Statement of Significance

Connaught School – 1314 Elphinstone Street, Regina, Saskatchewan

Description of Historic Place

Connaught School is a two-storey brick structure in the heart of Regina's Cathedral Village neighbourhood at the corner of Elphinstone and 13th Avenue. Also on the site is a round auditorium designed by Clifford Wiens Architect in the 1960s..

Heritage Value:

The heritage value of Connaught School lies in its connection with the development of education in Regina, its architect, and its architectural style.

There is value in the connection of the building with the development of education in Regina. Built in 1912, it is the oldest public school in Regina still being used for its original purpose. It is a pioneer in community schooling and dual track French-English education, for many years it was the only dual track community track school in Canada. The school was

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named in honour of His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, who was the Governor of Canada from 1911-1916. The French Immersion Program at Connaught started in 1975 and in 1980 the school was designated as a Community School.

There is also value in the identity of the architect. James Henry Puntin(1878-1957) made an important contribution to architecture in Regina yet his work is often underrated and overlooked. Born at Gateshead-on-Tyne, England on 3 May 1878 he was educated at schools in Gateshead, at Rutherford College, Newcastle-on-Tyne, and at Owens College in Manchester. He articulated to Charles Kempson, Gateshead, 1891-95 and worked as assistant to F.R.N. Haswell of North Shields in 1896-99, then joined the Royal Engineers Civil Staff as draftsman and clerk-of-works. He emigrated to Canada in 1904 and settled at Winnipeg where he assisted J.G.H. Russell in 1904-05 and became manager of the Winnipeg office of Darling & Pearson in 1905-06. Puntin moved to Regina in late 1906 and worked as supervising architect for the Saskatchewan Public Works Dept. overseeing construction of important buildings such as the provincial Parliament Buildings in Regina, designed by E. & W.S. Maxwell. He accepted the appointment of Architect to the Regina Public School Board in 1912 and designed many substantial school buildings in Regina during the next twenty years, but it was his assured designs for major additions to Regina College (1914) and the new complex for Luther College (1925) which demonstrated his ability to use Collegiate Gothic forms in a distinctive manner. In 1929 he formed a partnership with Col. F.J. O'Leary and the following

year invited Charles Coxall to join their firm, but a dearth of work during the Depression led to the dissolution of the firm and Puntin continued under his own name until 1943 when he retired and moved to British Columbia. He died in Vancouver on 20 March 1957.

There is value in the architectural styling of the school. An architectural style was chosen that was devoid of ecclesiastical reference. The building expressed the local fervour of the time against any religious component in public education, and as such became a kind of prototype. The architect based his design on those developed for the London School Board in England. With vernacular red brick and applied decoration, it contrasted sharply with the Gothic buildings normally used for places of learning. The style of this building manifests the ideal elements of a school from that time period: practicality, economy, and beauty.

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Character Defining Elements

The heritage character of Connaught School is defined by the following elements:

- stone base
- masonry walls with applied pilasters
- stone column capitals and bases
- double staircase on front facade
- entrance doors on front and rear
- pattern of fenestration
- relationship between main school and gymnasium
- brick chimney at rear

- name plate on front of building
- setting in landscape
- rondels on frieze above main entrance
- connection with history of education in Regina
- connection with architect James Henry Puntin

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Front facade



Rear and side view

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Front, side and auditorium