

APPENDIX B.3

Response from Heritage Regina

Heritage Regina
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Liberty Brears
Community Planning and Development
City of Regina

Re: 2124 Elphinstone Street (Ecole Connaught/Connaught Community School)

Heritage Regina supports the addition of Ecole Connaught/Connaught Community School to the Heritage Holding Bylaw for two reasons.

First, Connaught is the oldest school in Regina still being used for its original purpose. It was named for H.R.H. Prince Arthur, Duke of Connaught and Canada's Governor General from 1911 to 1916. Construction of Connaught began in 1912, and this 17-classroom school opened its doors just in time for the September 1913 school year. School concerts and gym classes were held in Connaught's upper hallway until the 1958 addition of a distinctive round gymnasium designed by Regina architect Clifford Wiens.

To be sure, the original portion of Sacred Heart Academy (3225-13th Avenue), a Roman Catholic residential girls' school, is older: it was built in 1910. Two additions were constructed in 1914 and 1926, but Sacred Heart Academy was converted into condominium apartments in 1990.

Regina's first purpose-built high school, Central Collegiate, was constructed in 1909; it was closed in 1985 and demolished. A large Condominium apartment complex was subsequently built there.

Regina College, a private Methodist high school, was also built in 1912. It began to offer first Year University classes in 1925, and in 1934 became a junior college affiliated with the university of Saskatchewan. (It is now the University of Regina.)

Holy Rosary School (3118-14th Avenue), constructed in 1914, is the only other elementary school built before World War I that is still operating as an elementary school in Regina 100 years later.

Between 1920 and 1930 the Regina Public School Board built eight more elementary schools: Haultain (1920), Inismore (1920), Kitchener (1921), Lakeview (1922), Thomson (1928), Davin (1929), Herchmer (1930) and Lorne (1930). The Regina Catholic school Board built two: Sacred Heart (1928) and Saint Augustine (1929). Only

six of these schools are still in operation in 2014: Davin, Lakeview, Kitchener, Sacred Heart, Saint Augustine and Thomson.

Connaught School also occupies a special place in the history of education in Regina. In 1976 Connaught introduced a French Immersion stream, and in 1980 the surrounding community helped pilot a community schools program, making Ecole Connaught/Connaught Community School the first and for many years the only dual track (French-English) community school in Canada.

Reginans who live in the Cathedral Neighbourhood have demonstrated on many occasions that Ecole Connaught/Connaught Community School holds great value for them. Their care of the school grounds, their careful documentation of the school's history, their celebration of significant anniversaries over the years (including their installation of a brass plaque to mark the school's centennial), and alumni donations of historical artifacts and photographs are all proof of this. And at public meetings they have demonstrated a preference for considering heritage value in making planning decisions.

All of this not only reflects an appreciation of Connaught School's aesthetic contribution to the Cathedral Neighbourhood, but its role in sustaining intergenerational linkages and a sense of continuous history in one of Regina's oldest neighbourhoods.

Heritage Regina also believes that Ecole Connaught/Connaught Community School ought to be added to the Heritage Holding Bylaw because it is part of the substantial body of work of a prominent Regina architect during the first three decades of the 20th century: James H. Puntin.

Born in Great Britain in 1878, Puntin emigrated to Canada in 1904 and settled in Winnipeg where he became general manager of the Winnipeg office of a Toronto architectural firm, Darling and Pearson. Puntin moved to Regina in 1906 and found employment with the provincial Department of Public Works, overseeing the construction of the new Legislative Building which Montreal architects Edward and William Sutherland Maxwell had designed. In 1912 Puntin went into private practice. One of his first projects was to design a new building for the Young Women's' Christian Association opposite Victoria Park in downtown Regina; another was Connaught School.

In 1929 Puntin formed a partnership with Col. F.J. O'Leary, and the following year they invited Charles Coxall to join their firm. But there was little work for architects during the Great Depression and the firm was eventually dissolved. Puntin continued to practice on his own until 1943, when he retired and moved to British Columbia.

The largest part of James H. Puntin's body of work in Regina are the elementary and high schools he designed for the Regina Public and Catholic School Boards. In all, he designed 7 elementary schools: Benson, Connaught, Haultain, Kitchener, Lakeview, Saint Augustine and Wetmore.

More modest, but significant nonetheless, are the high schools Puntin designed. Five new private and public high schools were constructed in Regina after World War I: Campion College (1921), Scott Collegiate (1924), Luther College (1925), Sacred Heart College (1926) and Balfour Collegiate (1930).

James H. Puntin designed Campion College, Luther College, Sacred Heart College and an addition to Sacred Heart Academy. Edgar M. Story and W.G. Van Egmond designed Scott Collegiate, and W.G. Van Egmond and Stanley Story designed Balfour Collegiate.

Another of Puntin's clients was Regina College, for whom he designed a women's dormitory and tower (1914), a gymnasium (1925), and the Music and Art Building--Darke Hall-- (1928).

During his career in Regina James H. Puntin also designed three churches: St. Chad's Anglican Church (1907), St. Peter's Anglican Church (1913) and St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church (1931). He also designed the Albert Memorial Bridge (1930) and a new City Police Station (1931).

In assessing James H. Puntin's body of work in Regina, his biographer in the *Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada* states that "... it was his assured designs for major additions to Regina College (1924) and the new complex for Luther College (1925) which demonstrated his ability to use Collegiate Gothic forms in a distinctive manner."

But Heritage Regina would argue that Ecole Connaught/Connaught Community School is worthy of praise and recognition too, as the earliest example of James H. Puntin's skill as an architect. For this reason, and because this school has occupied a special place in the history of education in our city, it ought to be added to the Heritage Holding Bylaw.

Sources consulted:

John Archer, *Honoured With The Burden: A History of the Regina Board of Education* (1987).

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Biographical Dictionary of Architects in Canada, 1900-1950.

J. William Brennan, President
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