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St. Philip's Indian Residential School, built in 1927 and torn down in the 1960s, Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan, Roland A. Pinsonneault, HPI/R-A25317



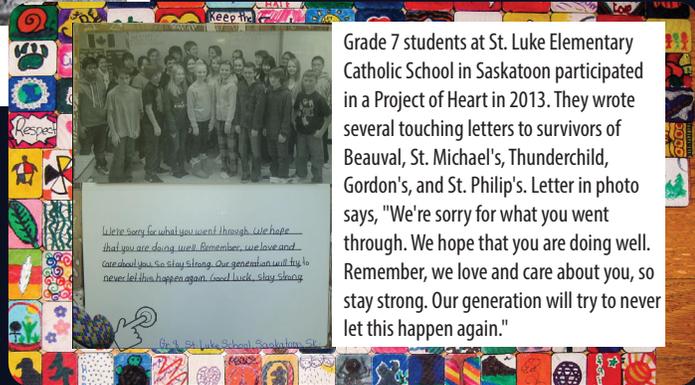
Click to hear Grant Severight's Survivor Story in Where are the Children exhibit (Legacy of Hope). "The experience in itself dislocated the children from the nucleus of the family warmth and the family caring."



St. Philip's School, ca. 1928, Missionary Oblate Sisters of St. Boniface Archives/M5/03



"Girls working in the kitchen", St. Philip's School, ca. 1935, Missionary Oblate Sisters of St. Boniface Archives/M5/14



Grade 7 students at St. Luke Elementary Catholic School in Saskatoon participated in a Project of Heart in 2013. They wrote several touching letters to survivors of Beauval, St. Michael's, Thunderchild, Gordon's, and St. Philip's. Letter in photo says, "We're sorry for what you went through. We hope that you are doing well. Remember, we love and care about you, so stay strong. Our generation will try to never let this happen again."

FORT PELLY/ST. PHILIP'S INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

There are separate listings for the Roman Catholic church schools near Kamsack at Keeseekoose First Nation, (Treaty 4), but these refer to the same institution. Fort Pelly school was established by Rev. Jules Decorby in 1895 on the Fort Pelly Trail, about two miles (3.22 kms) west of the St. Philip's Mission.¹ The government began paying per capita grants to the school in 1905. Fort Pelly closed in 1913 due to the ill health of its second principal, Father Ruelle, low enrolment, and poor conditions. The second Indian Residential School, St. Philip's, (1928 - 1969), was built in 1927. At its peak, the school had 132 resident students in the 1964/65 school year.

Poor Supervision

In 1909, "a federal Indian Agent reported that female students had been sneaking out of their residences to meet with young men from the Key and Keeseekoose Reserves. The Agent suggested that the 'local ladies' who had taken over from the Sisters who had previously worked at the IRS had no experience in working with pupils and 'let the children do very much as they please...' The federal government advised that the Principal

was in charge of discipline at the IRS and should be more vigilant in light of the recent staff changes."²

Abuse

In 1911, the intoxicated assistant principal threatened staff and students with a rifle, saying he was going to shoot some of them. When the federal government requested that Principal J. DeCorby explain the incident, he tendered his resignation instead and shortly after the assistant principal became the principal (Father Ruelle).³

In May 1965, due to a report from the school nurse, the regional supervisor of Indian Affairs, K. Kerr, dismissed the boys' supervisor, Ralph Jubinville,⁴ from his position for inflicting "burns on the arms, hands, and necks"⁵ with a lighter, as punishment on at least seven boys. "Andrew Quewezance said that after nine years' employment at the school, this man was fired when school authorities asked

² [SPR-001936; SPR-001937; SPR-001938], Fort Pelly, NCTR summary, p. 3.

³ [SPR-000062; SPR-001943; SPR-001945; SPR-000063; SPR-001947], Fort Pelly NCTR summary, p. 4.

⁴ An Online Message board posts that Ralph Jubinville was married to Helen Nanowin, a First Nations, Catholic nurse from Pine Falls, Manitoba, who froze to death in 1965 near Kamsack, only one to two years after marrying Ralph. Their only son Mark died in Edmonton of drowning in 1973 at about 11 years of age. (<http://boards.ancestry.ca/thread.aspx?mv=flat&m=216&p=localities.northam.canada.saskatchewan.kamsack>)

⁵ The History, Part 2: 1939 to 2000, Vol. 1, p. 391

students about their scabs and were told they were caused by being burned with a hot lighter."⁶ Newly appointed Principal Turenne concluded that "these incidents reveal a definite sign of sadism on the part of this man."⁷ Although Indian Affairs notified the local Mounted Police of Jubinville's actions, the RCMP took no further action. However, in 1994, complaints from former students led the police to revisit the case. In May 2004, Jubinville was convicted on three charges of assault causing bodily harm and fined \$500.⁸

Student Death

Three boys ran away on June 4, 1965. "One of them, Alfred Whitehawk, died when he attempted to cross the Assiniboine River. The principal stated that he expected he would 'need the help of the RCMP to bring back to school the other boys who are still at large.'"⁹ He complained, "I feel that we do not get from the people the cooperation we need in locating these boys. The reserves are too big an area for me to cover, especially when some of the people purposely hide the children and

⁶ Miller, J. R. (1996). Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools, (p. 510).

⁷ The History, Part 2: 1939 to 2000, Vol. 1, p. 450

⁸ Missing Children and Unmarked Burials, Vol. 4, p. 101

⁹ The History, Part 2: 1939 to 2000, Vol. 1, p. 348



She Didn't Just Survive. She Thrived. Elaine Durocher & Vancouver's Downtown Eastside Women's Centre

Still courtesy of TELUS

Elaine Durocher: "As soon we entered the residential school, the abuse started right away. We were stripped, taken up to a dormitory, stripped. Our hair was sprayed... They put oxfords on our feet, 'cause I know my feet hurt. They put dresses on us. And were made, we were always praying, we were always on our knees. We were told we were little, stupid savages, and that they had to educate us." (The Survivors Speak, p. 41)

"They were there to discipline you, teach you, beat you, rape you, molest you, but I never got an education. I knew how to run. I knew how to manipulate. Once I knew that I could get money for touching, and this may sound bad, but once I knew that I could touch a man's penis for candy, that set the pace for when I was a teenager, and I could pull tricks as a prostitute. That's what the residential school taught me. It taught me how to lie, how to manipulate, how to exchange sexual favours for cash, meals, whatever, the case may be." (The Survivors Speak, p. 120)

Read former student stories

In making the case for a boarding school on the Keeseekoosewa Reserve, Roman Catholic missionary J. Decorby informed Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier in 1899 that "children could no longer be sent from here to industrial schools. Already a good number have been sent. Although care was taken to send only those who gave the best assurances of health, all are dead, with the exception of one girl." Decorby promised that if the government built a Catholic boarding school on the reserve, "the number of children would be small" and "on the first symptom of the disease appearing they would be sent home." (*The History, Part 1 Origins to 1939, Vol. 1, p. 395*)



Helen Quewezance is also an overcomer. Her story is one of resistance and inner strength. Footage by Trevor Sutter.

DIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

pretend not to know where they are."¹⁰ One can only wonder how dire the situation at school must have been for students to risk their lives in order to escape, and for parents to hide their children from school officials.

Harsh Punishments

"In May 1965, Indian Affairs ordered an investigation into allegations that students who had run away from school "had been punished by having their hair cropped. Instructions were issued to stop the practice immediately. Part of the investigation was a review of the school files." Indian Affairs supervisor Kerr and the Principal Turenne "could not find a copy of the Indian Affairs regulations regarding discipline."¹¹

Sexual Abuse

Father Martin Houston, who was convicted as a child molester in 1962 for sexual offences committed at Grollier Hall (Inuvik, NWT), had been a supervisor of young boys at St. Philip's in the 1958-59 school year. He was given an indefinite sentence and served nine years in a federal penitentiary before being released in 1971. In 2002, he was again convicted of sexual

abuse for new offences that occurred during his time at Grollier Hall. His 1990 ordination had angered former students who had been sexually assaulted by him.¹²

Fire Hazard

In July 1955, Principal Raymond Beauregard "sent an urgent telegraph message to Ottawa,... warning that, because of a 'critical' problem with the school's water pipes, there was a 'danger of fire.' A Saskatchewan government inspector reported in November 1955 that the Kamsack school's alarm system is completely out of order, and fire escapes are not marked at all. The existing hoses are leaking badly and the valve if opened will not close off again."¹³

A 1968 inspection report described the school as a "fire hazard and a potential threat to the lives of the children still living in it."¹⁴

Principal Turenne "reported that students had tried to set the school on fire on two consecutive days in the spring of 1968. On one occasion, three girls set a cardboard box on

fire in their dormitory. Two of them then went to bed in the dormitory, while a third called the matron. The principal said that one of the children who set the fire was "very deeply disturbed." The fire was put out quickly before it could cause any damage. The next day, a girl set a sheet on fire in the laundry."¹⁵ The dormitory "was judged to be beyond repair in 1968, and the following year, the residence closed."¹⁶

Commemoration Project

"In 2012, the St. Philip's Residential School Project Council, with the support of the Keeseekoosewa First Nation, commemorated the legacy of Indian residential schools with a three-part project that included statement gathering in the language of the St. Phillips students using video and audio formats. A monument and commemorative plaques were installed at the site of the St. Phillips Residential School, and a variety of events and activities were held to educate the community and general public about the legacy of residential schools."¹⁷

¹² Struzik, E. (May 11, 2002). School counsellor convicted of sex abuse now working as Catholic priest. *Edmonton Journal, Canadian Press*

¹³ The History, Part 2: 1939 to 2000, Vol. 1, p. 329

¹⁴ The History, Part 2: 1939 to 2000, Vol. 1, p. 329

¹⁵ The History, Part 2: 1939 to 2000, Vol. 1, p. 324

¹⁶ The History, Part 2: 1939 to 2000, Vol. 1, p. 185

¹⁷ <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1370974253896/1370974471675#sk>

¹⁰ The History, Part 2: 1939 to 2000, Vol. 1, p. 348

¹¹ The History, Part 2: 1939 to 2000, Vol. 1, p. 391