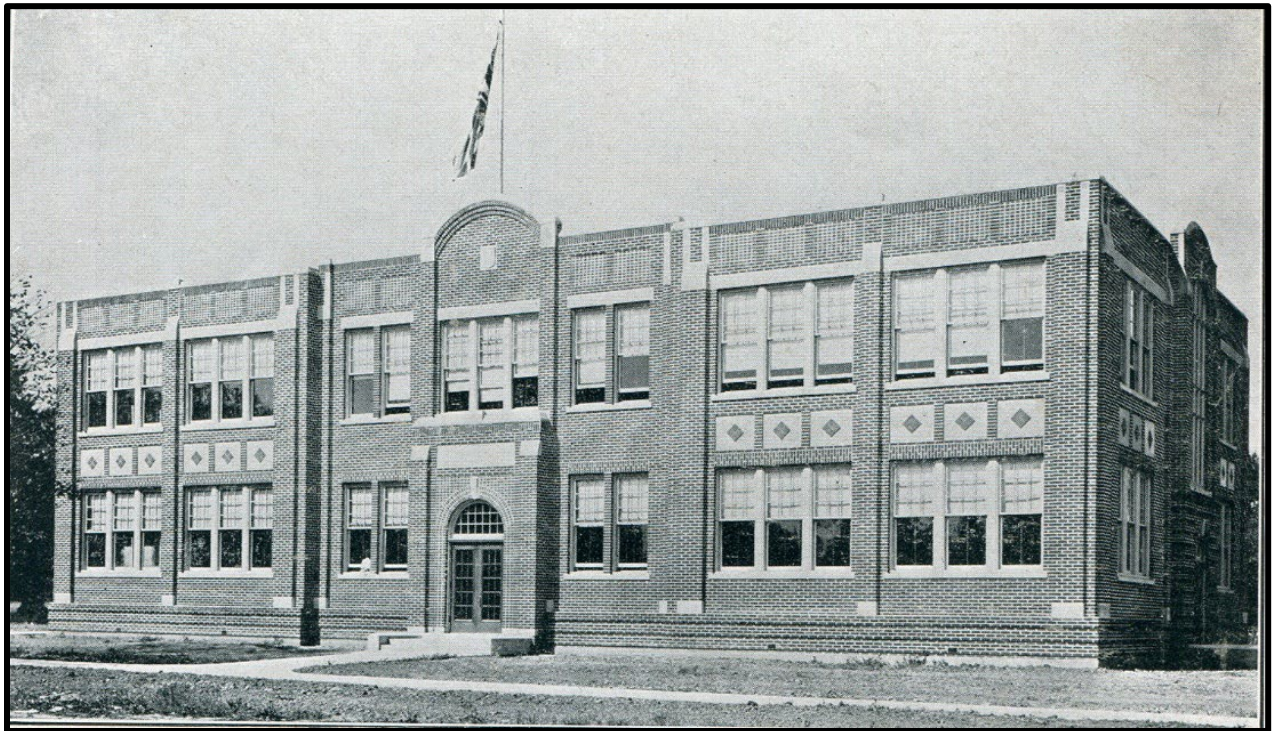


AMHERSTBURG
ONTARIO, CANADA
— EST. 1796 —
EVERY DAY HISTORY

CULTURAL HERITAGE EVALUATION REPORT

GENERAL AMHERST HIGH SCHOOL
130 SANDWICH STREET SOUTH



Town of Amherstburg
Planning Staff
271 Sandwich Street South
Amherstburg, ON
November 2025

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Acknowledgements:

This report draws on research and information provided by community members and Amherstburg history advocates, including the Marsh Collection Society and the Heritage Committee. A special note of gratitude is extended to the many dedicated community members for their unwavering dedication to the history of Amherstburg and enduring contributions and hard work.

1. SUBJECT PROPERTY

Address: Former General Amherst High School – 130 Sandwich Street N, Amherstburg

Legal Description: PLAN 7 LOT 1 PT LOTS 2 AND 3, RP 12R24659 PARTS 1 AND 2

Name of Building: General Amherst High School

Original Use: Educational, Institution (Vocational and Academic High School)

Original Date Constructed: 1921–1922 (Ground broken 1921; Opened 1922)

Original Owner: The High School Board of Amherstburg

Architect: Harold McEvers of Windsor, Ontario (1921); J.C. Pennington (1951 addition)

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The property located at 130 Sandwich Street South is situated on the west side of Sandwich Street South, bordered by North Street to the south and Laird Avenue to the west. The property comprises a substantial two-storey brick educational facility known as General Amherst High School, originally constructed in 1922, with significant additions made in 1929 (later demolished), 1951, 1960, 1964 and 1967.

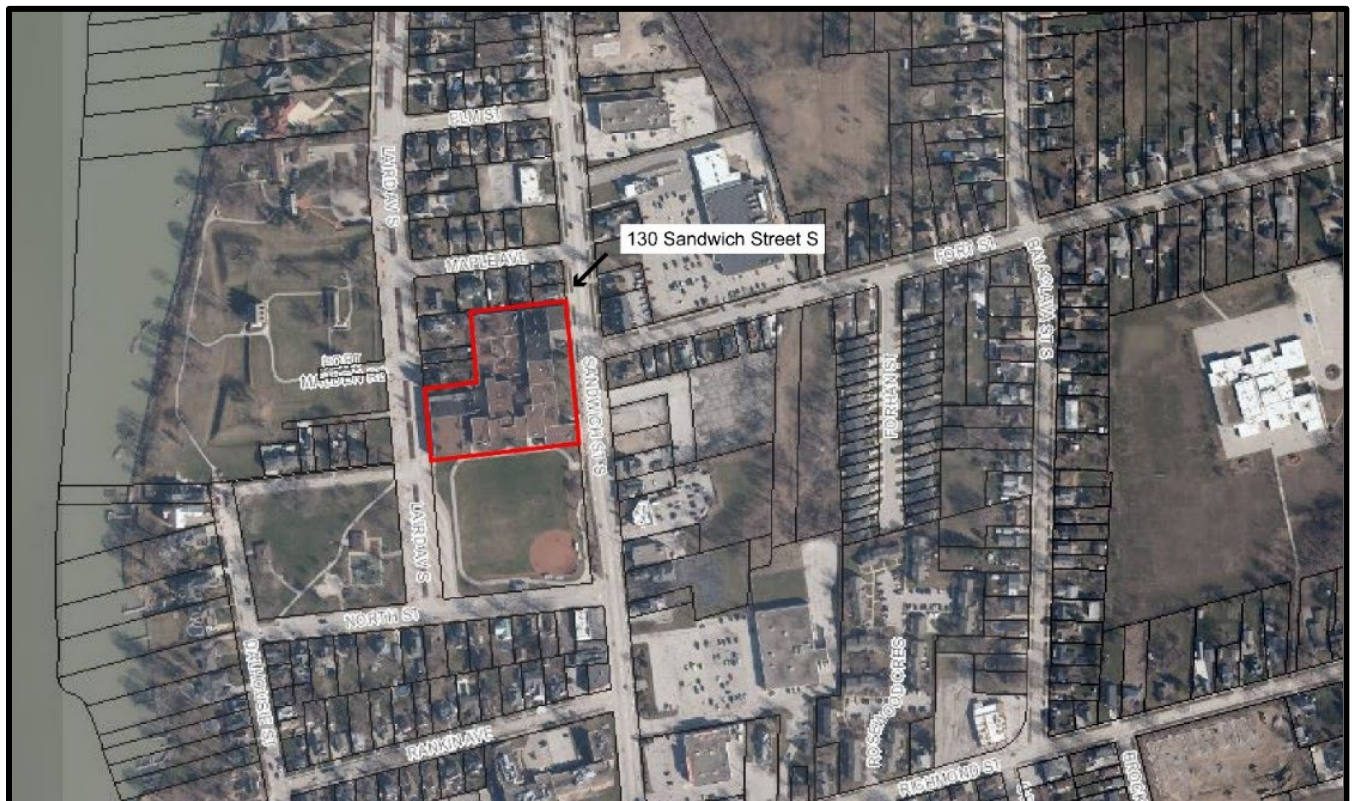


FIGURE 1 - LOCATION MAP. SUBJECT PROPERTY OUTLINED. SOURCE: TOWN OF AMHERSTBURG GIS

The subject property displays characteristics of various architectural styles reflecting the periods in which the original construction and subsequent additions were built. The most prominent and recognizable is the original 1922 architectural style which is depicted in Figure 2. The subsequent additions reflect the timeframe and architectural designs and details of prevailing architectural typology of their time. Not all of the additions or construction meet the merits of being listed as Heritage Attributes. The majority of Heritage Attributes are associated with the original 1922 construction, the 1951 Addition, and the nine murals on the gymnasiums which face Laird Ave. This report discusses those elements in further detail while the later additions are discussed to understand the evolutionary nature of the property.

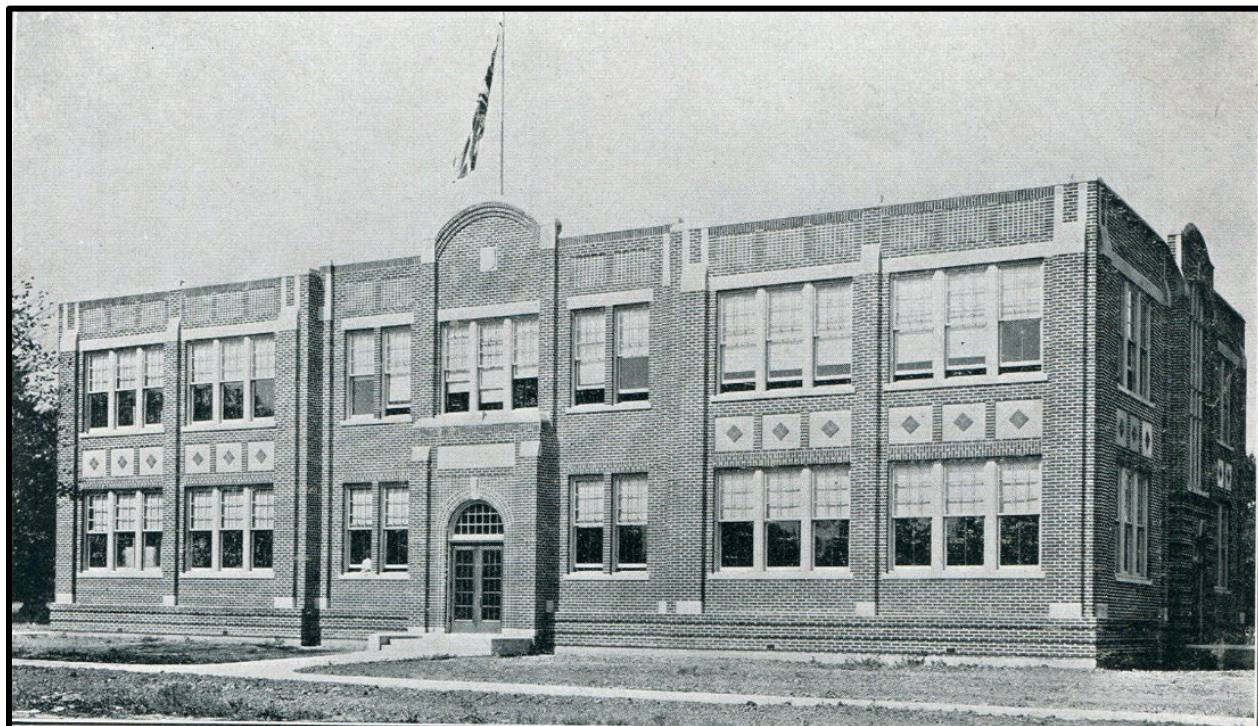


FIGURE 2 - (SOUTH ELEVATION OF 1922 GENERAL AMHERST HIGH SCHOOL.)

1951 Addition

The 1951 addition is constructed to the west of the original structure, this addition utilized and mimicked similar fenestration patterns, materials, detailing and brick patterning/coursing as the original construction. (See Figure 3) – Designed by local architect J.C. Pennington who was, “the acknowledged dean of the local architectural scene in Windsor and Essex County, and who was active for over fifty years.”¹ This addition borrows architectural narrative from the original design, including scale, fenestration patterns, material and detailing.

¹ Biograph Dictionary of Architects in Canada 1800-1850.



FIGURE 3 - 1951-52 ADDITION – SOURCE OFFICIAL OPENING PROGRAM

1960 Addition

The school was expanded east with the addition of a cafeteria and other various classrooms which were designed in the modern architectural style from the 60's, with large windows and simplistic detailing. (See Figure 4) The only portion of this addition still visible from the exterior is the south facing exterior wall, which looks into the park.

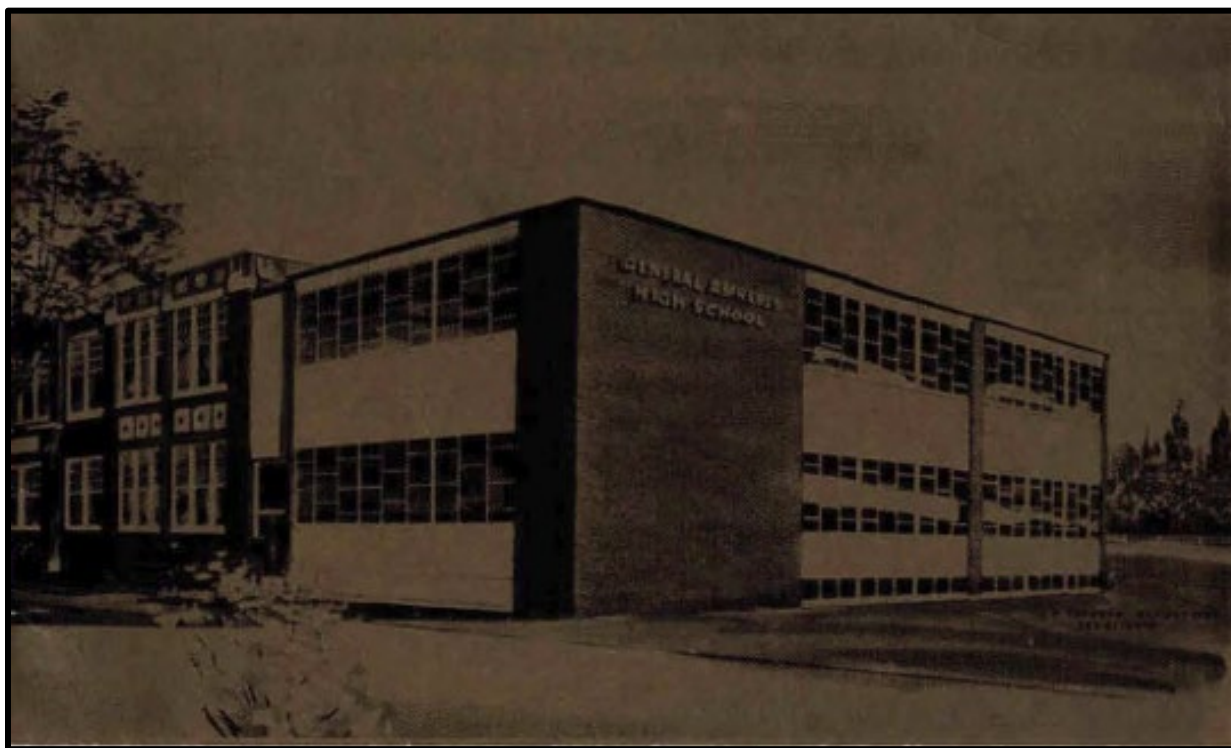


FIGURE 4 - 1960 CAFETERIA ADDITION – VIEW FROM SANDWICH – SOURCE: OFFICIAL OPENING PROGRAM

1964 Addition

This was a major transformation which saw the original gymnasium demolished and replaced with a large new wing running north/south perpendicular to the 1922 building. This addition includes a gymnasium and a vocational wing to the north. (See Figure 5) Importantly, there were six large murals that were added to the west wall of the new gym facing Laird Ave to the west.

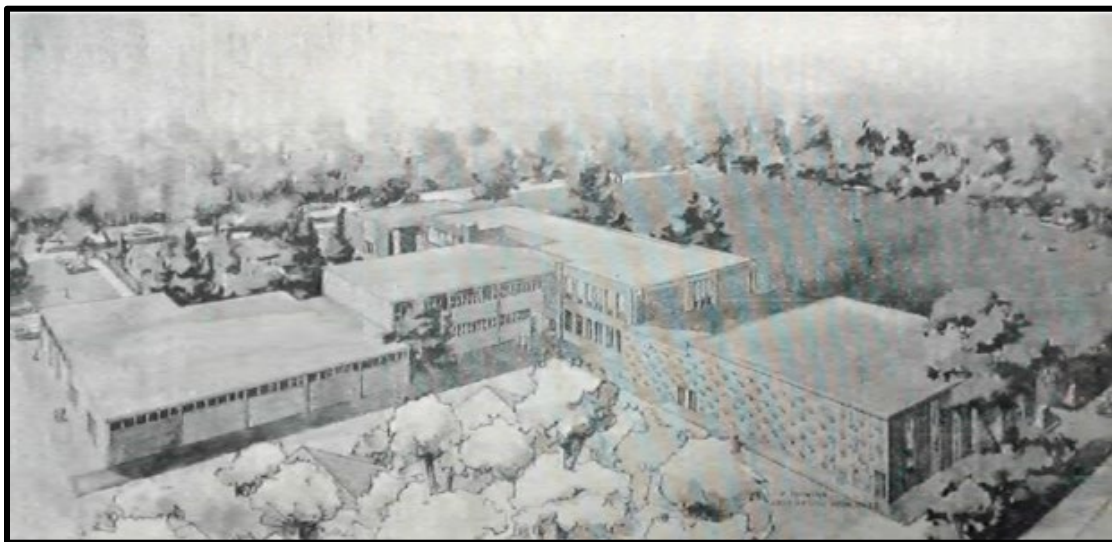


FIGURE 5 - 1964 ADDITION – THE AMHERSTBURG ECHO JANUARY 16, 1964

1967 Addition

In 1967 the last major addition is built, including all parts which front on Sandwich Street and an additional gymnasium on Laird Avenue, along with other facilities in the center. Three additional murals were added facing Laird Ave on the new gym. (See Figure 6)

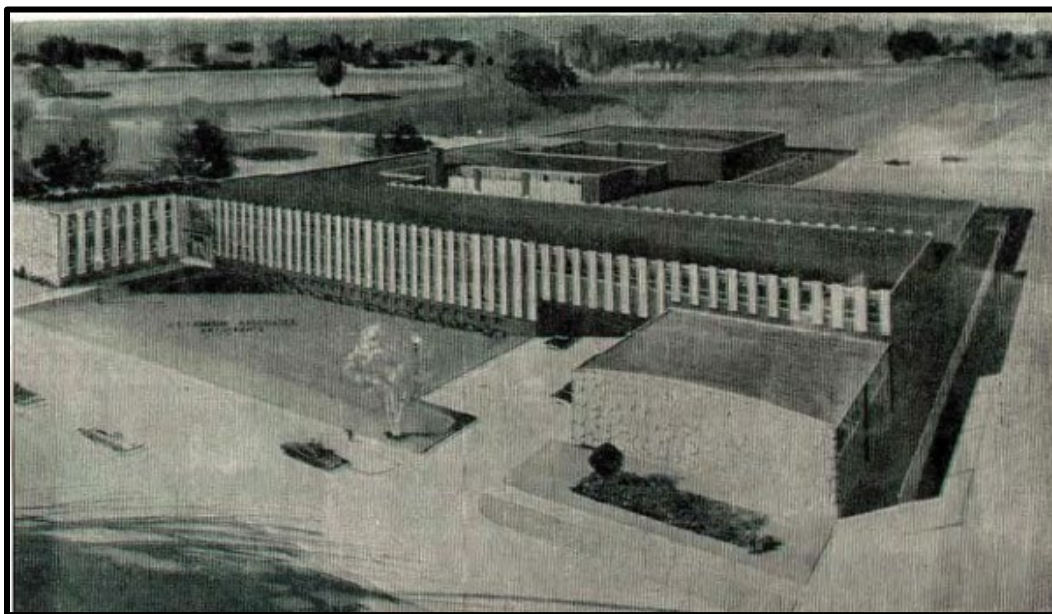


FIGURE 6 - 1967 ADDITION ALONG SANDWICH STREET – SOURCE: OFFICIAL OPENING PROGRAM COVER

This addition was completed in a 1960's Modern architectural typology. The elevation facing east towards Sandwich Street included three distinct rectangular volumes. Including a 2 ½ storey linear wing design with slender vertical precast concrete dividers demarcating the window patterns on the exterior. The spandrels separating the windows between each storey are red brick with no discernible ornamentation. The main linear volume is anchored on both ends with rectangular volumes designed in the same manner with notable curved "cyclopean stone" accent walls that face Sandwich Street. (See Figures 7)



FIGURE 7 - 130 SANDWICH STREET - EAST ELEVATION - SOURCE: TOWN OF AMHERSTBURG

CURRENT CONTEXT

The subject property, historically the educational hub for the communities of Amherstburg, Anderdon, and Malden, occupies a prominent site along Sandwich Street and near Fort Malden Nation Historic Site. The site includes the main school building and associated grounds to the south are a municipal park. The building is currently known as the former General Amherst High School. As of December 2025 the building is not occupied. The Greater Essex County District School Board (GECD SB) sold the former high school to a development corporation in 2024.



FIGURE 8 - CURRENT 130 SANDWICH ST - GOOGLE EARTH IMAGE 2025

2. BACKGROUND RESEARCH

DESIGN AND PHYSICAL VALUE

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE AND FORM

The subject property displays characteristics of various architectural styles reflecting the periods in which the original construction and subsequent additions were built. The most notable architectural style is the 1922 construction. This portion of the building exhibits simplified classical architecture with regards to proportions, fenestration, materiality and detailing. Based on the simplified form, this structure can be identified as an example of “Interwar Stripped Classicism” or a simplified “Collegiate Gothic Revival” building.



FIGURE 9 - SOUTH ELEVATION 1922 CONSTRUCTION - SOURCE: TOWN OF AMHERSTBURG

1922 Construction

- **Massing:** This is a 2 1/2 storey flat roof institutional building. The façade is strictly symmetrical, featuring a central entrance bay flanked by slightly projecting end bays. This ordered layout is a hallmark of Classical Revival styles.
- **Exterior:** The exterior is divided into the three distinct bays. The “central” bay (where the entrance is), with identical bays flanking each side of the center bay. The parapet height of the centre bay is higher than the flanking bays. The exterior is demarcated vertically with a base, body, and cap.

The center bay is sub-divided into three distinct vertical elements. In the middle of the center bay is where the original south entrance was, with the first level protruding out and semi-circle arch parapet to signify the importance of the entrance. The building “name stone,” which reads “General Amherst High School,” is still in place above where the original entrance doors were. The entrance is detailed with flanking, one storey, brick pilasters, topped with a sloped coping stone. The entire protruding entrance is capped with sloped coping and a “keystone” in the centre. Above the protruding entrance is a three bay window opening flanked by brick pilasters. The windows have a continuous reinforced concrete lintel that spans between the pilasters. The pilasters have simple stone capitals as well as stone coping. Above this section is a three course brick arch with stone coping which extends above the typical parapet height to signify its importance. In the center is a stone shield with a shield and date “1921.”



FIGURE 10 - SOUTH ENTRANCE - CENTER BAY

The remained of the south elevation has a similar rhythm. The flanking bays are forward from the centre bay and are demarcated on each end with brick pilaster and with a stone base and sloped stone capitals. Above the corner pilasters, in the parapet section, are two narrow vertical stone elements visually extending the pilaster through the parapet. The middle brick pilaster is narrower than the corner pilasters with a similar stone base, and sloped stone capital. This pilaster, at the parapet, continues the brick and is capped with a stone protruding higher than the parapet coping.



FIGURE 11 - FLANKING BAY

The flanking bays are demarcated vertically with a cap (parapet section), a body (windows and spandrels section), and a base. The “cap,” or top section, is a brick parapet divided by the pilasters with rectangle recessed brick detailing. The recessed brick areas are laid in the header orientation and are separated by a stacked stretcher course. Just below the stone parapet

coping is a single soldier course that is only broken by the pilasters.

The “body,” or middle section of the glancing bays include large window bays. The second level windows have a concrete lintel and thinner stone sill. The first level windows have a single soldier course of brick, as the lintel, laid in a vertical running bond pattern with stone sill under the window. The spandrel between the windows on each floor have recessed medallions, similar in size to the brick recesses on in the parapet. The medallions are parged with cement and have a diamond pattern made of four tiles in the center.

The “base” is continuous across the elevation and consist of a running bond brick pattern. The brick is set to create raised horizontal banding. There are three bands of raised running bond, each band is three courses high with a single recessed running bond course to separate the banding.



FIGURE 12 - BASE BRICK BANDING

- **Fenestration:** From the historical photos we can see that the window openings have not changed. The window patterns are the same although the original windows have been replaced. The current window sashes are not the same pattern that was originally on the structure. The original windows were double hung with an upper sash divided with muntins in a 3x3 pattern. The current windows, although the openings are the same proportions as the original opening, consist of 3 panes divided by horizontal mullions. The top pane is currently filled with an opaque panel. (compare Figure 2 and Figure 9)
- **Entrances:** The south entrance door is no longer in place and has been replaced with a window. (Figure 10) The steps and landing have also been removed. The original south entrance can be seen in the adjacent image. (Figure 13)
- **Materiality:** The exterior is predominantly red brick with a heavy vertical rake. There are stone sills, coping, column bases and column capitals. There are miscellaneous stone details, such as the building name stone and date stone.



FIGURE 13 - ORIGINAL SOUTH ENTRANCE

CONSTRUCTION AND CRAFTSMANSHIP

The building is constructed with a cast-in-place concrete foundation. The foundation can be seen from the interior and the exterior of the building. The floors consist of wood joists that run perpendicular to the exterior south wall and are bearing on the exterior wall.

The wall construction consists of a single exterior wythe of brick, with 8" terra cotta tile with a ½" of interior plaster finish.² The wall construction was investigated and confirmed. The brick is primarily laid in a running bond pattern. There are various other brick patterns and coursing on the façade. Including: Soldier Courses around the ground floor windows and below the parapet coping stone. Rowlock coursing forming the arched parapet (3 courses of rowlock); stack-bond headers in the parapet creating a recessed rectangle; a parquet hatch pattern of soldier coursing with one running bond below the entrance coping; stack bond creating a separation between the central bay windows.

The overall construction of the south façade visually appears to be in good condition. A visual inspection does not show bowing of the exterior wythe. The brick and mortar appear to be in good condition with minor discolouration near the top of the parapet and along the base of the building. Cracks in the mortar or in the brick near common areas of concern (corners of windows) were not observed. Flashing was added on top of the coping at the parapet.



FIGURE 14 - SOUTH FACADE - WEST FLANKING BAY

² John G. Cooke & Associates Ltd – Façade Report dated: Dec 9, 2024

MURALS ON THIS SIDE OF THE GYMNASIUMS

In 1964 and in 1967, murals 9 murals were created on the West exterior facade of the gymnasiums spanning from the bottom of the facade to below to roof coping. The murals are a significant feature of the schools mid-century additions. The panels depict scenes representing the history that helped shape Amherstburg. They can be described as being simple in appearance, utilizing solid bold colours and stylized figures. John Oliver is the original designer and artist, with work completed by Bruno Vendasco.³

The murals were created using a technique known as Granolux, which is a trowel-applied wall surfacing technique popular in the mid-20th century. It consists of an aggregate (crushed stone, granite, or marble) suspended in a strong binder, often cementitious or resin-based.

In 2012, prior to the Town's commemoration of the War of 1812 Bicentennial, the murals were revitalized by Jason Dyrdra. The restoration used the same Granolux technique to ensure the original integrity of the artwork was preserved.

1964 Mural Descriptions



FIGURE 16 - 6 MURALS FACING WEST – 1964

From the left to the right;



FIGURE 15 - PLAQUE ON WEST WALL OF NORTH GYM

³ Plaque on the North Gym, 2012 restoration.

The descriptions of the murals and their names are taken from David P. Botsford, and the current plaques descriptions located adjacent to each mural.

Botsford Description ⁴	Current Plaque
Panel 1	
<p>(No Title) “The mural depicts a pioneer amidst freshly-chopped stumps with the forest in the background. The first clearing in the area was at the site of the Bois Blanc Mission below Amherstburg on the Detroit River front about 1742 in the French regime.”</p>	<p>(Agricultural Settlement) “Pioneer agricultural settlement in Upper Canada began following the American Revolution. Early settlers faced a land of Carolinian forest and swamp. Survival meant use of all available resources. A symbolic pioneer is portrayed amidst freshly-chopped stumps with a forested background.”</p>
Panel 2	
<p>(Griffin 1679) “The second mural represents the passage of LaSalle’s ship the Griffon in 1679. An Indian on horseback is viewing from the shore the shipper under sail. A bit of artistic license is here employed for local historians assert that the Detroit River Indians at that time were not yet acquainted with the horse and that is actually the first horse in Detroit River area was one laboriously transported from Quebec for the use of Cadillac sometime after 1701 and named “Colon” (for Columbus) to signify he was the first of his kind in his region.”</p>	<p>(French Exploration and Aboriginal Contact) “This mural represents the first European and First Nations cultural contact in this region. The contact and conflict of the European and First Nations cultures is portrayed strongly in this mural. a relationship which had a strong impact on the course of Canada's history.”</p>
Panel 3	
<p>(U.E Loyalists) “The third mural shows a later period with Fort Malden erected and occupied by the British who had recently evacuated Detroit when that place was given over to the new United States. The flag shown is that of Great Britain before the union with Ireland. In the foreground corn is shown to indicate the growth of agriculture.”</p>	<p>(Fort Malden 1796) "Following the implementation of the Jay's Treaty on June 1st 1796, British military forces evacuated Detroit and relocated in Amherstburg to construct Fort Amherstburg(Malden). Corn is shown to indicate the growth of agriculture. The flag is the Grand Union, the flag of Great Britain before the union with Ireland in 1801."</p>
Panel 4	
<p>(Brock and Tecumseh 1812) The fourth mural has as its subject the historic meeting at the</p>	<p>(Tecumseh and Brock) "This mural represents the meeting of Chief Tecumseh and Major-</p>

⁴ David P. Botsford, Historian; Explains Murals on West Wall General Amherst High Gymnasium and Amherstburg Echo August 27 1965, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

Botsford Description ⁴	Current Plaque
<p>home of Colonel Matthew Elliott, of Major-General Isaac Brock and Tecumseh. This meeting took place at ten o'clock in the night. Brock had just arrived from the Niagara frontier with reinforcement and immediately consulted Tecumseh's counsel for an immediate attack on Detroit, evoking from Tecumseh the ejaculation, "Here is a Man!" Orders were given setting the Militia, Regulars, and Indians in motion and on August 12th Detroit was taken. The home of Colonel Elliott where the two famous warriors met stood until recent years. It had been built in 1874 and was the oldest structure in radius of some two hundred miles.</p>	<p>General Isaac Brock. The First Nations allies under Tecumseh added essential strength for the British regulars and the Canadian militia to capture Detroit three days later without a single casualty."</p>

Panel 5

<p>(No Title) "The fifth mural represents the battle of Lake Erie and shows a careening ship under fire from a cannon. The battle on the lake took place on September 10 1813, and resulted in an American victory. The flagship of the British fleet was the "Detroit" commanded by Commodore Robert Heriot Barclay. The United States fleet was headed by the "Lawrence" and commanded by Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry. The loss of the British fleet compelled Colonel Proctor commanding at Amherstburg to attempt a retreat."</p>	<p>(Battle of Lake Erie) "This mural represents the battle of Lake Erie on September 10th, 1813 which resulted in an American victory. The flagship of the British fleet's six vessels was the H.M.S. Detroit commanded by Commodore Robert Heriot Barclay. The United States' nine-vessel fleet was headed by the Lawrence and commanded by Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry. The strategic need to control the lake for military supply lines was paramount to both sides."</p>
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Panel 6

<p>(American Occupation) "The sixth mural, has for its theme, the consequences resulting from the American victory on the Lake. The fort was burned by the Royal Engineers just before the retreat commenced so as to render it useless to the Americans. The murals shows the structure of the fort destroyed, the American flagship off shore, and flags to show the period of the American occupation. The Fort at Amherstburg was the only British Post in American hands at the date of the signing of the peace treaty ending the War of 1812. The treaty returned the fort to the</p>	<p>(American Occupation) "This mural represents the occupation of Amherstburg by American military forces following the Battle of Lake Erie in September 1813. Fort Malden was the only British fort in American hands at the date of the signing of the Treaty of Ghent on December 24, 1814. Fort Malden was returned to the British on July 1st, 1815."</p>
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Botsford Description ⁴	Current Plaque
British, the Americans evacuating the fort on July 1, 1815.”	

1967 Murals

In 1967, three more murals were added in commemoration of Canada’s Centennial year by the same artist, John Oliver.



FIGURE 17 - 3 MURALS FACING WEST - 1967

From the left to the right;

The descriptions of the murals is taken from the current plaques mounted next to each panel.

Panel 7

(Canada's Centennial Year) "The year 1967 marked Canada's 100th year of nationhood from coast to coast. Canada and Amherstburg's multicultural identity is expressed through the flags in the mural and the design of the official Canadian Centennial Logo."

Panel 8

(North To Freedom) "The roots of the Black presence in Canada dates to the early 17th century. Early Loyalist settlers in this area brought slaves with them. The Anti-Slave Law of 1793 forbade further importation of slaves into Upper Canada. The Abolition of Slavery Act ended slavery in Canada on August 1, 1834."

Panel 9

(New France) "In the late 1670s, French explorers and fur traders were the first Europeans to enter the Lake region of Ontario. Missionary priests, attempted to bring 'civilization' to the frontier. In 1742, a mission house was established on Bois Blanc Island, the first place of Christian worship in Essex County."

HISTORICAL AND ASSOCIATIVE VALUE

HISTORY OF THE SITE AND OWNERS

The land on which the subject property sits is legally described as PLAN 7 LOT 1 PT LOTS 2 AND 3, RP 12R24659 PARTS 1 AND 2.

Prior to the school

The grounds upon which General Amherst High School was built were not a blank slate awaiting development. Long before the first classroom was conceived, the land at 130 Sandwich Street was part of a dynamic and historically significant landscape, imperial treaties and the strategic imperatives of a colonial outpost.

In 1796, the British military relocated to the Canadian side of the Detroit River, establishing a new strategic garrison, initially named Fort Amherstburg and later known as Fort Malden, at the mouth of the Detroit River. The site was chosen by the Royal Engineers for its strategic command of the deep-water shipping channel.⁵

The specific property at 130 Sandwich Street, was part of this military-centric landscape. Its early use reflects the industrial needs of the adjacent fort and Navy Yard. In the early 1800s, the British Navy was anxious to secure a local supply of hemp for naval cordage, a critical military resource.⁶ In 1804, two rope walks—long, narrow buildings or lanes used for twisting hemp into rope—were established on the Military Reserve. One of these ran parallel to Sandwich Street, in the immediate vicinity of the future school site, indicating a direct military-industrial purpose for the land.⁷

Initially, the Crown granted Lot 1, on the west side of Sandwich Street, to William Caldwell. Later that same year, Caldwell transferred the lot to the Anderdon & Malden Agricultural Society.^{8,9}

Education in early Ontario was largely privatized where teachers were paid on a fee basis according to the subjects they taught and in rural areas, it was not uncommon for instructors to “board” in students to compensate for low wages. This selective and inconsistent system of instruction persisted until the intervention of Reverend Egerton Ryerson in the mid-19th century. Ryerson, after studying education systems across Europe and North America, reformed

⁵ Botsford, D. P., *At the end of the trail: A collection of anecdotal histories relating to the district surrounding the Canadian end of the Great Sauk Trail in Anderdon*, (pg 14) Amherstburg and Malden, Essex County, Ontario.

⁶ Botsford, D. P., *At the end of the trail: A collection of anecdotal histories relating to the district surrounding the Canadian end of the Great Sauk Trail in Anderdon*, (pg 67) Amherstburg and Malden, Essex County, Ontario.

⁷ Botsford, D. P., *At the end of the trail: A collection of anecdotal histories relating to the district surrounding the Canadian end of the Great Sauk Trail in Anderdon*, (pg 67) Amherstburg and Malden, Essex County, Ontario.

⁸ Essex County Land Registry Instrument #4511, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

⁹ Essex County Land Registry Instrument #4512, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

education in Canada West (Ontario) by making it free and compulsory. The *Common School Act of 1850*, was a pivotal piece of the education reforms championed by Egerton Ryerson, the Chief Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada for all children.¹⁰

The first result of his system in Amherstburg was the appointment of a School Board which was to be inaugurated on March 1, 1851 and organized on January 24, 1852 with the following met to prepare for the event: Horatio Nelson, Alexander Bartlett, Dr. Dewson, John Turk, Isaac Askew and James Dunbar. Peter Menzies was Secretary and John McLeod was appointed chairman.¹¹ Their work laid the foundation for future educational infrastructure, with early schools in Amherstburg evolving into continuation schools by the early 20th century.

The Community's call for a High School circa 1910-1922

In the early 20th century, local secondary education was a significant challenge for the families of Amherstburg. A "continuation school" was established in 1910, which offered instruction for grades nine and ten. Under the leadership of its first principal, B.P. Overholt, this fledgling institution was itinerant, operating out of a series of borrowed spaces, a clear indication of the pressing need for a dedicated, permanent facility.¹²

The lots of Sandwich Street adjoining the Town Park was used for many years by the Malden and Anderdon Agricultural Society for the staging of their annual fair.¹³ In 1920, the Agricultural Society granted Lot 1 to the earlier High School Board of Amherstburg with plans to erect a High School.¹⁴

Through the persistent efforts of local leaders like Mr. Overholt, the continuation school was eventually upgraded to a full high school. This achievement culminated in the construction of a purpose-built facility at 130 Sandwich Street. Construction began in 1921 and was completed in 1922, giving the community the landmark institution it had long sought.¹⁵ In 1922, the sudden unexpected death of Percy Overholt occurred in May.

“Although his untimely death meant only the partial realization of his life’s ambition, tributes to his worth and the high esteem in which he was held poured in from all sides. In recognition of his high ideas and achievements, the high school board along with students and former students

¹⁰ McGarry, M. G. (2013). To read, write, and cast accounts: Foucault, Governmentality, and Education in Upper Canada/Canada West (Doctoral dissertation, University of Toronto)

https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/35903/5/McGarry_Michael_G_201306_PhD_thesis.pdf

¹¹ Botsford, D. P., At the end of the trail: A collection of anecdotal histories relating to the district surrounding the Canadian end of the Great Sauk Trail in Anderdon, (pg 128) Amherstburg and Malden, Essex County, Ontario.

¹² History | barkingdog, accessed July 2, 2025, <https://amhersthigh.wordpress.com/history/>

¹³ Botsford, D. P., At the end of the trail: A collection of anecdotal histories relating to the district surrounding the Canadian end of the Great Sauk Trail in Anderdon, Amherstburg and Malden, Essex County, Ontario.

¹⁴ Essex County Land Registry Instrument #8142, Marsh Collection Society

¹⁵ History | barkingdog, accessed July 2, 2025, <https://amhersthigh.wordpress.com/history/>

arranged for a memorial tablet to be placed in the school for him. A memorial service was held later, at which Dr. George Christiansen (Class of '13) gave a glowing testimonial to his former teacher and mentor. As a token of his admiration and appreciation, Ivor J. Menzies presented an oil painting B.P. Overholt which occupied a place of honor in the school ever since.”¹⁶

The main facade facing south toward Bill Wigle Park, still stands as the historic core of the larger complex. The construction of this substantial school was more than a practical solution; it was a powerful symbol of Amherstburg's civic maturity and ambition, a declaration that the town was investing in its future and was committed to providing for its own. Architect Harold McEvers identified the design as “an ideal working example of a Vocation Academic high school”¹⁷

Construction History

The physical structure of General Amherst High School grew in lockstep with the demographic and pedagogical trends of the 20th century. The building itself serves as a physical record of the community's changing needs and educational philosophies.

The initial phase began on October 19, 1921, with the local council raising \$75,000 to fund the project.¹⁸ The school was completed and officially opened in 1922, providing a much-needed educational facility to Amherstburg residents who had previously traveled to Essex for secondary schooling. The school was constructed in brick, following the architectural trends of the period, and featured facilities like classrooms, and community spaces.¹⁹

The high school consisted of a Manual Training Room, Forge Shop, Art Room, Domestic Science Room, Gymnasium, Principal's Room, Lady Teacher's Room, and Boys' and Girls' Toilet. The upper floor consisted of five classrooms, four large and one smaller. One of the large rooms was allotted to commercial work and another to science laboratory work. The construction was carried out from plans and specifications under the supervision of Harold McEvers, an architect from Windsor.²⁰

Over the following decades, the property expanded through various transactions involving adjacent lots, to accommodate for the growing population within the Town of Amherstburg. In 1924, Thomas A. Thortan sold the westerly 45 feet of the southeasterly quarter of Lot 2.²¹ In 1928, Joel Craig and his wife sold 60 feet of the southwesterly quarter of Lot 2.²² The addition for

¹⁶ Amherstburg Bicentennial Book Committee, *Amherstburg 1796-1996: The New Town on the Garrison Grounds*, (Amherstburg, Ontario: Amherstburg Bicentennial Book Committee, 1997), [p. 65]

¹⁷ Reflections, March Historical Collection, Summer 2018, Volume 11 Issue 4

¹⁸ The Amherstburg Echo October 21, 1921, Marsh Collection Reference Files

¹⁹ The Amherstburg Echo July 21, 1922, Marsh Collection Reference Files

²⁰ Dedication Program, Marsh Collection Reference Files, and The Amherstburg Echo July 21, 1922

²¹ Essex County Land Registry #9455, Marsh Collection Reference Files

²² Essex County Land Registry #10022, Marsh Collection Reference Files

a gymnasium was added to the school²³, located to the north along with shop-work improvements in 1938²⁴ and the opening of the school cafeteria in 1947.²⁵

Further additions occurred in 1951, where an addition of four rooms is put on the west side of the school, including a Home Economics room, a general shop, an agricultural lab, and a classroom. Its official opening was January 25, 1952.²⁶

In 1953 Garnet R. Braun and June Evelyn sold part of Lot 2 to the Amherstburg District High School Board to prepare for another addition²⁷ with six rooms plus a basement cafeteria is added to the east side of the school including four classrooms, a large library-classroom, and a third science room by Architect J. P Thompson Associates. The official opening was May 25, 1960.²⁸

In 1963, the board acquired Lot 3 through grants from Edgar Karrer²⁹, Majorie Radley Hamilton³⁰, and Frank L. Arnett & Ethal M. Larkel.³¹ In the same year, Joseph Thrasher granted Part of Lot 2.³²

Once again to accommodate growth for the local town, a planned addition to include a double gymnasium and vocational wing to the north at the cost of the demolishing the old gymnasium.³³
³⁴ ³⁵ The official opening was on December 3, 1964 at the cost of \$1,800,000.³⁶

At that time, six murals were completed on the west exterior wall of the gymnasium by John Oliver. The artisan in charge of the mural construction was Bruno Vendrasco, a Windsor plasterer, who obtained the subcontract to construct the murals. The murals are valued for their artistic merit and craftsmanship. Designed by John Oliver of Utah and plastered by Bruno Vendrasco of Windsor, the application process used painting techniques called “granolux”³⁷

In 1965, Emile T. Laframboise granted the southeast quarter of Lot 2 to the school board. The current legal description of the property now encompasses Plan 7 Lot 1, Part 2 & 3.³⁸

²³ The Amherstburg Echo February 15, 1929, and April 26, 1929, Marsh Collection Society

²⁴ The Amherstburg Echo August 12, 1938, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

²⁵ The Amherstburg Echo October 9, 1947, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

²⁶ Official Opening Program, Marsh Collection Reference Files, The Amherstburg Echo January 31, 1952.

²⁷ ECLR Instrument #14472, Marsh Collection Reference Files

²⁸ Echo May 25, 1960, Official Opening Program, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

²⁹ ECLR Instrument #291330, Abstract for Lot 3 W.S. Sandwich

³⁰ ECLR Instrument #294072, Abstract for Lot 3 W.S. Sandwich

³¹ ECLR Instrument #294073, Abstract for Lot 3 W.S. Sandwich

³² ECLR Instrument #294360, Abstract for Lot 2 W.S. Sandwich

³³ The Amherstburg Echo January 9, 1964, Marsh Collection Reference Files

³⁴ The Amherstburg Echo January 16, 1964, Marsh Collection Reference Files

³⁵ The Amherstburg Echo February 20, 1964, Marsh Collection Reference Files

³⁶ The Amherstburg Echo August 27th, 1964 and Official Opening Program, MCS Reference Files

³⁷ Paul Hertel, The Amherstburg Echo March 19, 2008, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

³⁸ ECLR Instrument #344877, Abstract for Lot 2 W.S. Sandwich, accessed via onland.ca

The final addition was built including all parts which front on Sandwich Street and a third gymnasium on Laird Avenue, along with other facilities in the center by J. P. Thompson Associates along with three more murals by John Oliver on the west wall of the gymnasium. The official opening was November 17, 1967.³⁹ Within the later years, much of the interior of the school has been renovated and redesigned along with the development of a sports lobby/hall of fame in the front of the school gymnasium in 2000 and restoration work on the nine murals in in 2012.^{40 41}

CHRONOLOGY OF THE SITE.

Year	Description
1896	Grant/ The Crown to William Caldwell/ Lot 1 west side Sandwich Street. ⁴² Deed/ William Caldwell to the Anderdon & Malden Agricultural Society/ Lot 1. ⁴³
1920	Grant/ The Amherstburg, Anderdon and Malden Agricultural Society to The High School Board of the Town of Amherstburg/ Lot 1. ⁴⁴
1921	Specifications and plans for the school were completed. Council to raise \$75,000 for the building. ⁴⁵ Tenders called for the construction of a high school. ⁴⁶ Ground was broken for the new school on October 19th. ⁴⁷
1922	General Amherst High School is opened. The lower floor consisted of a Manual Training Room, Forge Shop, Art Room, Domestic Science Room, Gymnasium, Principal’s Room, Lady Teacher’s Room, and Boys’ and Girls’ toilets. The upper floor consisted of five classrooms, four large and one smaller for advanced form one of the large rooms was allotted to commercial work and another to science laboratory work. -“marks an epoch in the development of this historic settlement” -“strikes a note in educational forethought that will keep it at least until other municipalities awake into a like sense of their responsibilities, a unique example of its kind.”

³⁹ The Amherstburg Echo November 17, 1967, Marsh Collection Society reference files.
⁴⁰ The Amherstburg Echo November 17, 1967, Marsh Collection Society reference files.
⁴¹ The Amherstburg Echo January 12, 2012, Marsh Collection Society reference files.
⁴² ECLR Instrument #4511, Marsh Collection Society reference files.
⁴³ ECLR Instrument #4512, Marsh Collection Society reference files.
⁴⁴ ECLR Instrument #8141, Marsh Collection Society reference files.
⁴⁵ The Amherstburg Echo June 3, 1921, Marsh Collection Society reference files.
⁴⁶ The Amherstburg Echo July 8, 1921, Marsh Collection Society reference files.
⁴⁷ The Amherstburg Echo October 21, 1921, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

Year	Description
	<p>-“the allotment and distribution of accommodation in the building make it an ideal working example of a ‘vocational academic’ high school”</p> <p>-“an attempt has been made to produce an exterior which, in general design, possesses dignity and restraint consistent with the educational functions of the building, and at the same time by being different from the usual run of such buildings.”</p> <p>-designed and carried out from plans and specifications and under the supervision of Harold McEvers, architect, Windsor.⁴⁸</p>
1924	Grant/ Thomas A. Thornton to The High School Board of Amherstburg/ The westerly 45ft of the southeasterly quarter of Lot 2, west side Sandwich St. ⁴⁹
1928	Deed/ Joel Craig & wife to The High School Board of Amherstburg/Easterly 60ft of the southwesterly quarter of Lot 2. ⁵⁰
1929	A gymnasium is added to the school, located immediately north of the general offices. ⁵¹
1938	The basement of the school is fitted out with shop-work rooms. ⁵²
1947	The first school cafeteria is opened. ⁵³
1952	An addition of four rooms is put on the west side of the school, including a Home Economics room, a general shop, an agricultural lab, and a classroom. Official opening was January 25, 1952. ⁵⁴
1953	Deed/ Garnet R. Braun and June Evelyn Braun to The Amherstburg District High School Board/ Pt. of Lot 2 (central). ⁵⁵
1960	An addition of six rooms plus a basement cafeteria is added to the east side of the school. Architect J.P. Thompson Associates. The rooms include four classrooms, a large library-classroom, and a third science room. The school can now accommodate 500. Official opening May 25, 1960. ⁵⁶

⁴⁸ Dedication Program, Marsh Collection Reference Files, and The Amherstburg Echo July 21, 1922

⁴⁹ ECLR Instrument #9455, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

⁵⁰ ECLR Instrument #10022, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

⁵¹ Amherstburg Echo February 15, 1929, and April 26, 1929, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

⁵² Amherstburg Echo August 12, 1938, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

⁵³ Amherstburg Echo October 9, 1947, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

⁵⁴ Official Opening Program, Marsh Collection Reference Files, and The Amherstburg Echo January 31, 1952.

⁵⁵ ECLR Instrument #14472, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

⁵⁶ Echo May 25, 1960, Official Opening Program, Marsh Collection Reference Files

Year	Description
1963	<p>Grant/ (Joseph) Thrasher to The Amherstburg District High School Board/ Pt. Lot 2.⁵⁷</p> <p>Grant/ Edgar Karrer to The Amherstburg District High School Board/ Pt. Lot 3.⁵⁸</p> <p>Grant/ Marjorie Radley Hamilton to The Amherstburg District High School Board/ Pt of west ½ Lot 3.⁵⁹</p> <p>Grant/ Frank L. Arnett & Ethel M. Larke to The Amherstburg District High School Board/ Pt of west ½ of Lot 3.⁶⁰</p>
1964	<p>Collavino Brothers Lowest Tender for the construction of an addition.⁶¹</p> <p>Architect’s Drawing completed for the proposed addition, which includes a double gymnasium and vocational wing to the north.⁶²</p> <p>The old gymnasium is demolished.⁶³</p> <p>Six murals are nearing completion on the West exterior wall of the gymnasium, designed by John Oliver, showing six different historic views. First, a pioneer amidst freshly chopped stumps; second, the passage of LaSalle’s ship Griffon in 1679; third, the establishment of Fort Malden, with corn in the foreground indicating the growth of agriculture; fourth, the meeting of Brock and Tecumseh in 1812; fifth, the Battle of Lake Erie,; and sixth, the subsequent evacuation and burning of Fort Malden by the British Army.⁶⁴</p> <p>Official Opening of New Vocation Wing and Gymnatorium December 3, 1964. Cost was \$1,800,000.⁶⁵</p> <p>High School Now Able to Offer Full Opportunities of Re-Organized Program- “- The children of the Amherstburg district will be able to enjoy the same type of education as offered in large city schools.”⁶⁶</p>
1965	<p>Grant/ Emile T. Laframboise to The Amherstburg District High School Board/ southeast ¼ Lot 2.⁶⁷</p>
1967	<p>Another addition is built, including all parts which front on Sandwich Street and a third gymnasium on Laird Avenue, along with other facilities in the center.</p>

⁵⁷ ECLR Instrument #294360, Abstract for Lot 2 W.S. Sandwich, Accessed via onland.ca

⁵⁸ ECLR Instrument #291330, Abstract for Lot 3 W.S. Sandwich, Accessed via onland.ca

⁵⁹ ECLR Instrument #294072, Abstract for Lot 3 W.S. Sandwich, Accessed via onland.ca

⁶⁰ ECLR Instrument #294073, Abstract for Lot 3 W.S. Sandwich, accessed via onland.ca

⁶¹ Amherstburg Echo January 9, 1964, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

⁶² Amherstburg Echo January 16, 1964. Marsh Collection Society reference files.

⁶³ Amherstburg Echo February 20, 1964, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

⁶⁴ Amherstburg Echo August 27th, 1964, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

⁶⁵ Official Opening Program, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

⁶⁶ Amherstburg Echo December 10, 1964, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

⁶⁷ ECLR Instrument #344877, Abstract for Lot 2 W.S. Sandwich, accessed via onland.ca

Year	Description
	Architect J.P. Thompson Associates. Three more murals are added to the West wall of the school in commemoration of Canada’s Centennial year; first, “One Hundred Years”, showing with a river tugboat bearing 3 flags including British, Italian, and maybe French/Dutch, as well as the centennial logo; secondly, “North to Freedom 1793”, showing a map of North America, slavery chains and ball, and male and female forms; third, a nameless mural with a log cabin, Indigenous forms, coureur de bois, and a priest. These new murals were also designed by John Oliver. ⁶⁸ Official opening November 17, 1967. ⁶⁹
1993	Classrooms redesigned and renovated. ⁷⁰
2000	A sports lobby/Hall of Fame is opened in front of the school gymnasium. ⁷¹
2012	Restoration work begins on the fading murals on the west wall of the school. ⁷²

THEMATIC ASSOCIATION

For a century, General Amherst High School was far more than a building; it was the crucible of community identity for generations of Amherstburg residents. Its culture was defined by its leadership, traditions, and the achievements of its students.

The school's history was guided by a succession of dedicated principals, whose tenures often marked distinct eras in its development. The long service of figures like Walter K. Sidey, who led the school for 34 years through the Great Depression, World War II, and the start of the post-war boom, provided a foundation of stability and growth.⁷³

Principal ⁷⁴	Tenure
Mr. Norman Davies	1922 – 1926
Mr. Walter K. Sidey	1926 – 1960
Mr. A. A. Martin	1960 – 1962
Mr. Reg Cozens	1962 – 1969
Mr. Jack Wilson	1969 – 1987
Mr. Cliff Pattison	1987 – 1989
Mr. Rod Paulin	1989 – 1991

⁶⁸ Amherstburg Echo November 17, 1967, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

⁶⁹ Official Opening Program, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

⁷⁰ The Windsor Star April 7, 1993

⁷¹ Amherstburg Echo November 28, 2000, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

⁷² Amherstburg Echo January 12, 2012, Marsh Collection Society reference files.

⁷³ History | barkingdog, accessed July 2, 2025, <https://amhersthigh.wordpress.com/history/>

⁷⁴ History | barkingdog, accessed July 2, 2025, <https://amhersthigh.wordpress.com/history/>

Principal⁷⁴	Tenure
Mr. Reg Simpson	1991 – 1996
Mr. John Corbett	1996 – 1998
Mr. Tom Halliwill	1998 – 2002
Mr. Patrick Catton	2002 – 2009
Mrs. Mary Edwards	2009 – 2012
Ms. Hazel Keefner	2012 – 2017
Ms. Melissa DeBruyne	2017 – 2022

CONTEXTUAL VALUE

The property has contextual value as the Town’s High School located within its core area of development. It has been a key centre of learning for over a century. Sports, extra-curricular activities, and a wide variety of community events such as concerts and ceremonies have been associated with the school as a community center piece. The property, its location, and its direct associations as an institution is significant to the community.

STREETSCAPE AND SURROUNDINGS

The property contributes to the character of the Sandwich Street and the adjacent public park. It is visually linked to park as the original south entrance faces into the park in a formal alignment. The original south entrance is centered on the 1922 building, which is located to align with the center of the park. This formal relationship creates an implied or intuitive connection to the park. The length of the property along Sandwich Street defines the character and scale along that stretch as the property opens up to the greenspace of the park.

LANDMARK STATUS

The property has been a landmark since 1922, since which time it has been one of the most substantial buildings in the Town. In addition to the building’s scale, its distinctive original design also attracts attention to the buildings. The building’s central location, as well as its location on Sandwich Street – a gateway thoroughfare of the town contributes to its status as a landmark.

The school property is surrounded by low profile commercial and residential land uses.⁷⁵ The school building’s central location visually stands out on its own from its height and generous setback. The Town Park on the south side has remained largely undeveloped and remained as open space to accommodate the students at the School and as a recreational space for the community within the Town of Amherstburg. The school and property are visually distinct from its surrounding neighbourhood as an institution within the core developed area in the Town of Amherstburg.

⁷⁵ *Fire Insurance Plan of Amherstburg, 1917*, Library and Archives Canada.

3. TOWN OF AMHERSTBURG OFFICIAL PLAN

The Official Plan outlines the Criteria for Individual Buildings in section 6.4.5. That section states:

“Council and the Heritage Committee shall consider the following criteria when evaluating individual buildings for designation under The Ontario Heritage Act. The buildings so designated should interpret the Town's heritage through architectural merit and/or historical association.”

O.P. Policy 6.4.5	
Has the building been associated with the life of a historic personage or has it played a role in an important historic event?	Yes (Associated with B.P. Overholt who helped establish the school. W.K. Sidey (long standing principal) played a key role in local WWII efforts and Cadet training).
Does the building embody the distinguishing characteristics of an architectural type recognized for its style or period of construction, or is it a notable example of workmanship by an early master builder, designer, or significant architect? It is not imperative that antiquity alone be the basis for selection, however, it should be an important consideration if other more significant examples have disappeared	Yes (Designed by architects Harold McEvers and J.C. Pennington). Notable example of institutional architecture from the interwar period.
Does the building or building type have special significance in that it forms an integral component of a particular neighbourhood character within the community?	Yes (Integral to the Sandwich Street South streetscape and the history of the surrounding Tri-Community).
The potential for illustrating the heritage value should be such that it will be possible for visitors to gain from the building an appreciation for the architecture or history with which it is associated.	Yes (The building's formal setting, architectural typology, and location in the Town tells the story of the town's growth and commitment to education.
In considering the designation of a building, the extent of the original materials and workmanship remaining should be important to that designation.	Yes (the original building façade facing south is mostly intact with the exception of the original entrance.
Intangible elements such as feeling, association, and aesthetics shall be considered as important as the physical appearance of the building or structure.	Yes (the community has a strong cultural tie to the murals and the siting and

O.P. Policy 6.4.5	
	connection to the adjacent park.
Architectural character should be considered on the basis of style, plan and sequence of spaces, uses of materials and surface treatment and other detail including windows, doors, lights, signs, and other fixtures of such buildings and the relation of such factors to similar features of the buildings in the immediate surroundings	Yes (the architectural character contributes to the designation of the property.)

4. EVALUATION UNDER ONTARIO REGULATION 9/06

The following table evaluates the property against the criteria set out in Ontario Regulation 9/06 of the Ontario Heritage Act. To be designated, a property must meet two or more of the following criteria.

Criteria	Evaluation and Rationale	Met
1. The property has design value or physical value because it:		
i. is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method;	<p>The former General Amherst High School has design value as a well-preserved example of period institutional architecture. The 1922 design does not fit exclusively within any distinctive architectural style but exhibits elements of "Interwar Stripped Classicism" and simplified "Collegiate Gothic Revival" style. The 1922, and 1951 addition, have a principal façade facing south and are primarily constructed with red brick cladding. The facades have classical proportions with a symmetrical design, large windows, stone details, stepped pilasters and intricate brick and coursing patterns.</p> <p>On the west elevation of the gymnasiums there are nine murals. The murals are a rare construction method made using an application process called "granolux." The murals have a unique styling, utilizing bold colours and</p>	Yes
ii. displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit;	<p>The 1922 building reflects a high degree of masonry craftsmanship. Including the brick and stone detailing.</p> <p>The nine murals dating from 1964 and 1967 are valued for their artistic merit and craftsmanship. The murals by artist John Oliver of Utah depict aspects of Amherstburg's history, are large in scale and illustrate a high degree of artistic merit in their design and execution with the "Granulox" system. The work was executed by plasterer, Bruno Vendrasco of Windsor.</p>	Yes
iii. demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement	NA	No
2. The property has historical value or associative value because it:		

Criteria	Evaluation and Rationale	Met
i. has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community;	The property has historical value as the first dedicated high school building constructed in Amherstburg, replacing earlier "continuation classes." The school is a physical representation of the evolution and maturing of the Town of Amherstburg. It reflects the development of Amherstburg during the early part of the 1900's as the town grew and the needs of the community become more sophisticated as the town modernized. The school has been a Town focal point as a main centre of educational activity since 1922. As the Town's High School, it has been a key centre of learning, sports and extra-curricular activities and a wide variety of community events such as concerts and ceremonies.	Yes
ii. yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture;	NA	No
iii. demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community	It reflects the work of prominent local architects Harold McEvers (1922 Design) of Windsor and J.C. Pennington of Windsor (1951 addition).	Yes
3. The property has contextual value because it:		
i. is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area;		No
ii. is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings;	The former General Amherst High School possesses contextual value as it is physically, functionally, visually and historically linked to its surroundings. The south façade is linked to the public park and community space to the south. The connection to the park and its surroundings was interracial in the original design of the school as the southern entrance to the school was centrally aligned with the park. This visually linked the south façade to the community space. Functionally, the park was used as a sports field by the institution. The relationship between the school and the park has been there since the construction of the school.	Yes

Criteria	Evaluation and Rationale	Met
iii. is a landmark.	As the primary high school for the region for a century, it is a visually and socially prominent landmark in the community. The property has been a landmark since 1922, since which time it has been one of the most substantial buildings in the Town. The building’s central location has been recognized by residents and visitors as a long standing historical institutional landmark with the Town of Amherstburg.	Yes

CONCLUSION:

The property does meet the criteria for designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

5. HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION

J Amh 4592
Dated May 7th 1901.
w
Caldwell
-TO-
Anderson Malden
Agricultural Soc.
↑ 275⁰⁰
Deed of Land
SITUATE
Amherstburg
1. W 5 St. #77
1st 32 per
Newsome & Co., Limited, Law Stationers, Toronto, Ont.

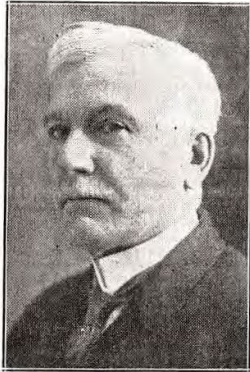
Franklin A. Hough.

O. Amh. 8141
Dated March 26th A.D. 1920
The Amherstburg, Anderson and
Malden Agricultural Society
-TO-
The High School Board of the
Town of Amherstburg.
Deed of Land
SITUATE
TOWN OF AMHERSTBURG.
Newsome & Gilbert, Limited, Toronto
1 W 5 Sandwich St
Pl. - 87

FRANKLIN A. HOUGH, B.A.
BARRISTER, ETC.
AMHERSTBURG, ONTARIO

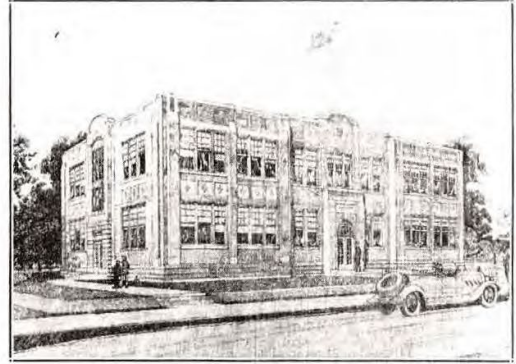
Dedicated
Thursday, July 20th,
1922

by



Honorable George P. Graham,
M. P. SOUTH ESSEX
Minister of Militia and Defence for the Dominion of Canada.

A Beautiful
New Educational Centre



“General Amherst” High School
Amherstburg, Ontario.

Compliments of THE AMHERSTBURG ECHO

DESCRIPTION

The recent completion of the General Amherst High School in Amherstburg marks an epoch in the development of this historic settlement, while in the annals of education a new and brighter lease of life is taken and a new era consistent with the importance of this town and its future promise, is entered upon.

The new General Amherst High school strikes a note in educational forethought that will keep it, at least until other municipalities awake into a like sense of their responsibilities, a unique example of its kind. In this building are embodied requirements that have been arrived at after a close and systematic study of the needs of the young people of the municipality of all conditions and predilections. Great credit is due to the Board and those who have helped, for the radical lines of thought and broad vision that marked the undertaking, but particularly to those late colleagues of the Board whose unwearied energy and keen interest aroused the gratitude of all they came in contact with—Dr. Abbott and Mr. Overholt. It is impossible without alluding to them, to either think or make mention of this school, a monument to their efforts.

The allotment and distribution of accommodation in the building make it an ideal working example of a "vocational academic" High school. Roughly speaking the lower floor is devoted to vocational purposes and the upper to academic. The former consists of Manual Training Room, Forge Shop, Art Room, Domestic Science Room, Gymnasium, Principal's Room, Lady Teachers' Room and Boys' and Girls' Toilets. The Forge Shop is placed at the northwest corner of the school with entrance off the boys' vestibule—this enables students soiled from mechanical shop work to avoid passing through the school when leaving. The floor

of this room is lower than that of the ground floor, being at grade level to facilitate entry of heavy moving machines for demonstration and instruction. The upper floor consists of five class-rooms, four large and one smaller for an advanced form. One of the large class rooms is allotted to commercial work and has a typewriter room at one end separated by glazed partition so that it is under direct supervision from the Commercial Class Room. Another of these classrooms is for Science Laboratory work and has a small apparatus room directly off it. The basement accommodates boiler plant, ventilating unit, coal room and storage space.

The mechanical equipment of the building is of the highest class. Heat is supplied by two "Royal" sectional down-draft steam boilers. They are specially efficient, smoke consuming type of boiler, and are of such size that in normal cold weather one boiler need only be operated while in an extreme spell both boilers will be thrown in. The heating system is fitted with an air line connected to all radiators and ensuring a positive circulation of steam at all times. The fan unit draws its air supply down from the roof through the centre of the building. The location of this fresh air shaft, protected by screen and lowers at the top, insures the cleanest supply of air. The fan, driven by a small electric motor, draws the fresh air down the shaft and over the stacks of radiators where it is warmed to the correct temperature and then whirled through ducts to the various rooms at the rate of 12,500 cubic feet a minute. All rooms discharge their foul air directly up to ventilators in the roof. All this ventilating machinery is situated adjacent to the boiler room where it can be manipulated by the man in charge of the heating plant. The toilets are not

connected to the main system but each has a small disc fan set high up in the wall and drawing the air out and up to the roof. This is in contrast with the rooms where the air is blown in by mechanical means—in the toilets the air is sucked out; this prevents possibility of odors from the toilets permeating into the corridors. This ventilating system insures an unfailing supply of fresh air, correctly tempered to all rooms of the school at a time when it is too cold to open the windows, with the result that the pupils are working under conditions conducive to both good health and mental progress. The plumbing fixtures of the school are of the best class. All basins, bowls and urinals are of imported English solid porcelain. The toilets are equipped with showers in addition.

Careful attention was given to the matter of lighting and the distribution and capacity of the fixtures produce ideal working conditions for both dull weather and evening classes. A signal system is installed throughout the school with gongs in corridors and will be used in both class signals and fire alarm. Buttons operating these are located in all rooms, corridors and boiler room.

An attempt has been made to produce an exterior which, in general design, possesses dignity and restraint consistent with the educational functions of the building, and at the same time by being different from the usual run of such buildings, interests by a sense of individuality. A magnificent site enhances the appearance of the building, which, occupying the north end of the park, fronts the park and has that magnificent sweep of ground

to set it off. Broad and ample corridors run the full length of the school and at either end are connected by metal stairs of pressed steel construction, and large windows at the landings amply light both upper and lower corridors. The corridors have on both sides a recessed portion in which the students' steel lockers will be placed. Fire hydrant piping runs to both corridors.

Some of the figures of material quantities might be of interest. In the excavation 1050 cubic yards were removed. In the foundations, 400 yards of concrete were poured; 61,500 face and 159,000 common brick were used in the structure; 13,000 F.B.M. of maple flooring were laid. The cubical contents of the building is 296,300 cubic foot and cost per cubic foot of all trades is 26.2 cents per cubic foot. The cost of building alone, exclusive of plumbing, heating, ventilation and electric, is 17.8 cents per cubic foot. The cost of the building, including mechanical trades is \$67,674.39.

The first sod was turned on the 17th of October, 1921, and the virtual completion of the building was the 15th of April. Great credit is due to Ernest Clarke, Limited, of Windsor, Ont., for the expeditious manner in which the contract was carried out and the thorough and conscientious spirit in which the plans and specifications were interpreted. The work already done by this new firm in Essex county has established a reputation for uprightness and painstaking work.

The building was designed and carried out from plans and specifications and under the supervision of Harold McEvers, A.R.I.B.A., architect, Victoria Block, Windsor, Ont.

High School Board, 1922.

F. M. FALLS, Chairman
COLIN WIGLE
MACOMB MULLEN
J. H. SUTTON

I. S. BROWN
HILLAND PETTYPIECE
P. A. BARRON
SIMON BERTRAND

THE AMHERSTBURG ECHO.

AMHERSTBURG'S NEW HIGH SCHOOL.

The recent completion of the General Amherst High School in Amherstburg marks an epoch in the development of this historic settlement, while in the annals of education a new and brighter lease of life is taken and a new era consistent with the importance of this town and its future promise, is entered upon.

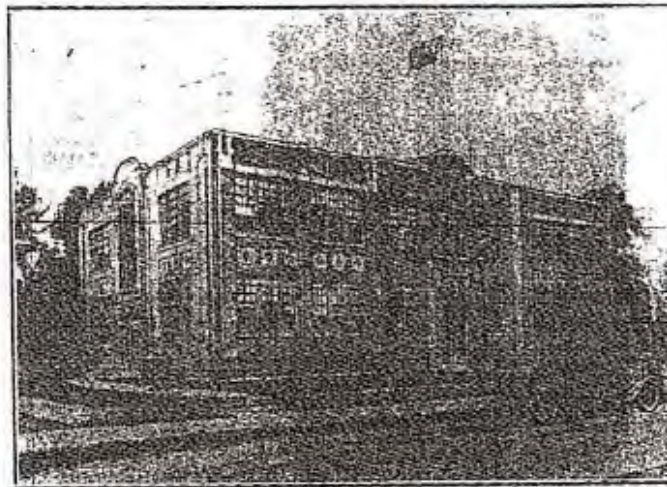
The new General Amherst High school strikes a note in educational forethought that will keep it at least until other municipalities awake into a like sense of their responsibilities, a unique example of its kind. In this building are embodied requirements that have been arrived at after a close and systematic study of the needs of the young people of the municipality of all conditions and predilections. Great credit is due to the Board and those who have helped, for the radical lines of thought and broad vision that marked the undertaking, but particularly to those late colleagues of the Board whose unwearied energy and keen interest aroused the gratitude of all they came in contact with—Dr. Abbott and Mr. Overholt. It is impossible without alluding to them, to either think or make mention of this school, a monument to their efforts.

The allotment and distribution of accommodation in the building make it an ideal working example of a "vocational academic" High school. Roughly speaking the lower floor is devoted to vocational purposes and the upper to academic. The former consists of Manual Training Room,

Forge Shop, Art Room, Domestic Science Room, Gymnasium, Principal's Room, Lady Teachers' Room and Boys' and Girls' Toilets. The Forge Shop is placed at the northwest corner of the school with entrance off the boys' vestibule—this enables students galled from mechanical shop shop work to avoid passing through the school when leaving. The floor of this room is lower than that of the ground floor, being at grade level to facilitate entry of heavy moving machines for demonstration and instruction. The upper floor consists of five class-rooms, four large and one smaller for an advanced form. One of the large class rooms is allotted to commercial work and has a typewriter room at one end separated by glazed partition so that it is under direct supervision from the Commercial Class Room. Another of these class-rooms is for Science Laboratory work and has a small apparatus room directly off it. The basement accommodates boiler plant, ventilating shaft, coal room and storage space.

The mechanical equipment of the building is of the highest class. Heat is supplied by two "Royal" sectional down-draft steam boilers. They are specially efficient, smoke consuming type of boiler, and are of such size that in normal cold weather one boiler need only be operated while in an extreme spell both boilers will be thrown in. The heating system is fitted with an air line connected to all radiators and ensuring a positive

"GENERAL AMHERST"



AMHERSTBURG'S NEW HIGH SCHOOL.

circulation of steam at all times. The fan unit draws its air supply down from the roof through the centre of the building. The location of this fresh air shaft, protected by screen and, lowers at the top, insures the cleanest supply of air. The fan, driven by a small electric motor, draws the fresh air down the shaft and over the stacks of radiators, where it is

sign, possesses dignity and restraint consistent with the educational functions of the building, and at the same time by being different from the usual run of such buildings, interests by a sense of individuality. A magnificent site enhances the appearance of the building, which, occupying the north end of the park, fronts the park and has that magnificent sweep of ground



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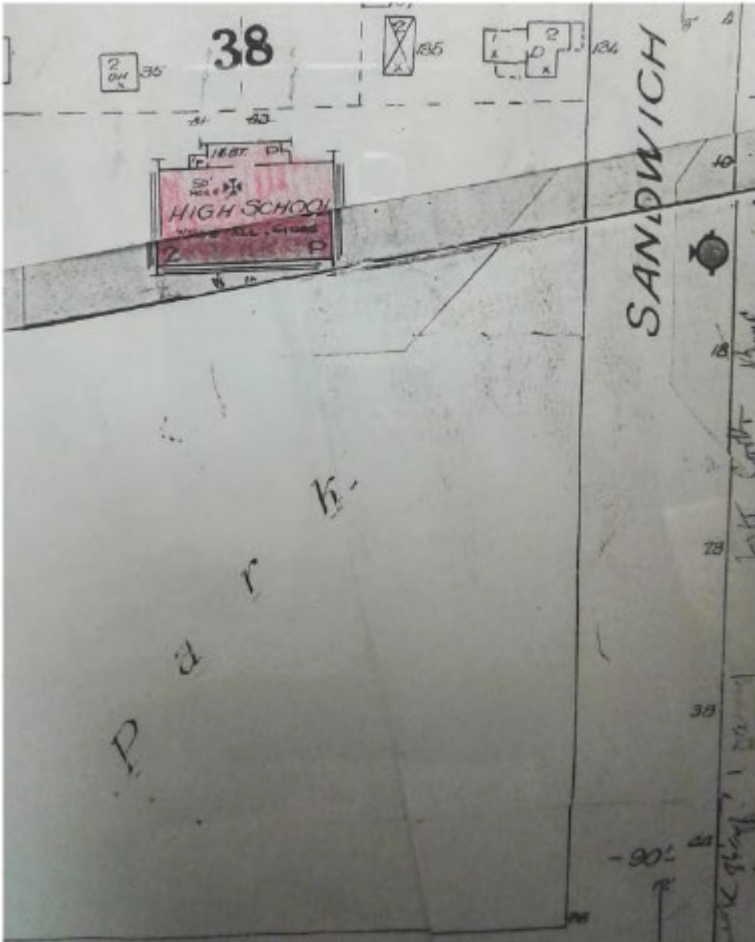
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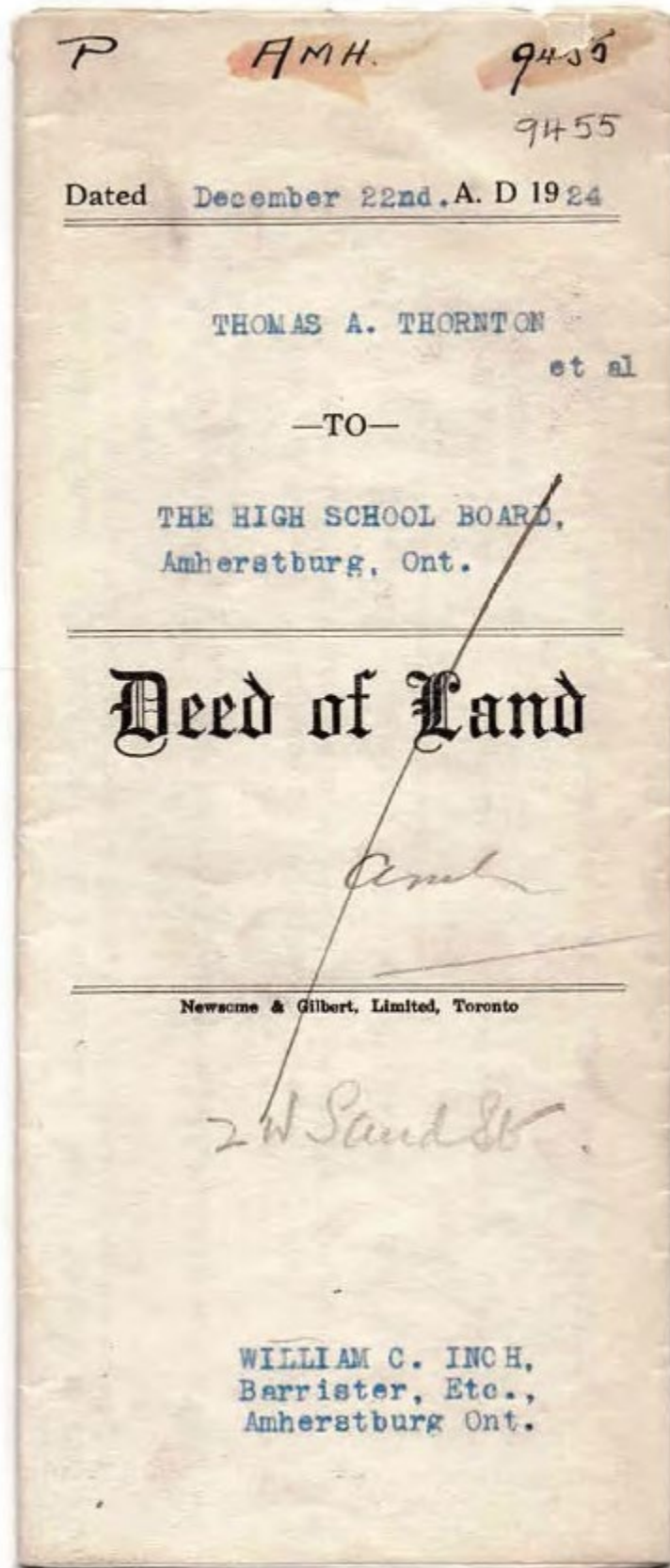
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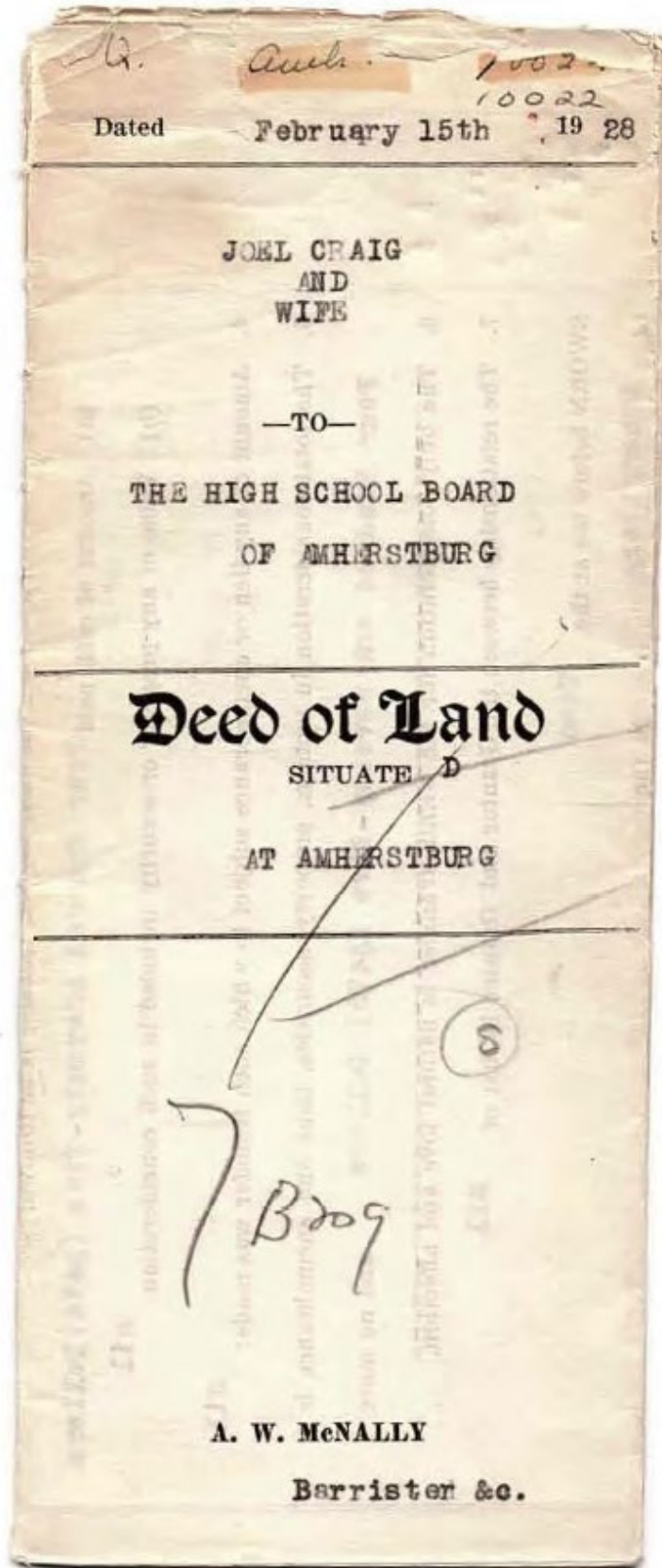


General Amherst High School, 1922
Marsh Collection Society P1588



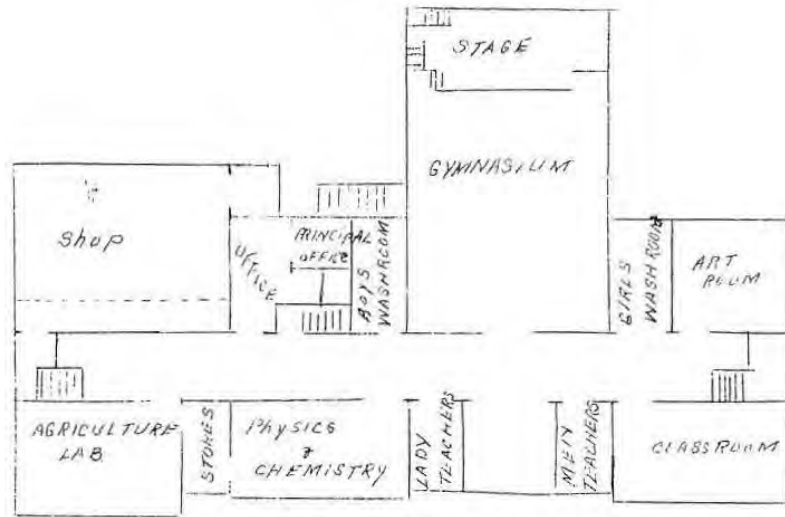
Extract from Fire Insurance Plan of Amherstburg dated 1926
Marsh Collection Society



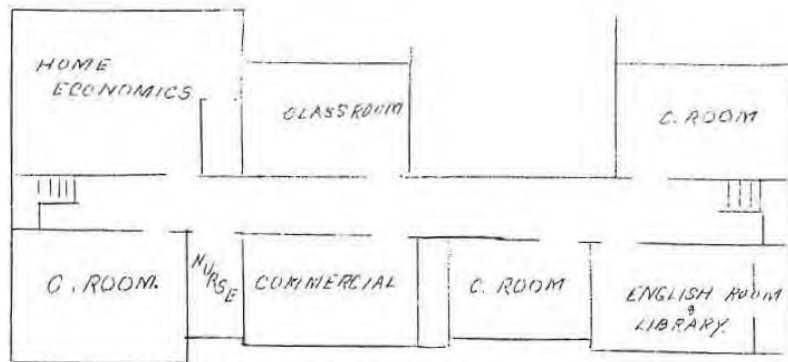


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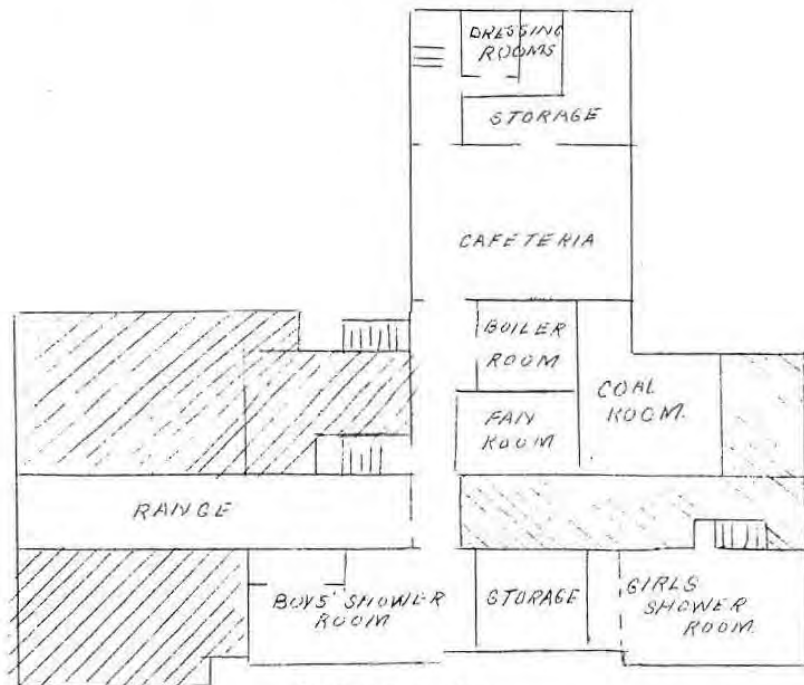
PLAN OF "GENERAL AMHERST"
HIGH SCHOOL



MAIN FLOOR



UPPER FLOOR



BASEMENT

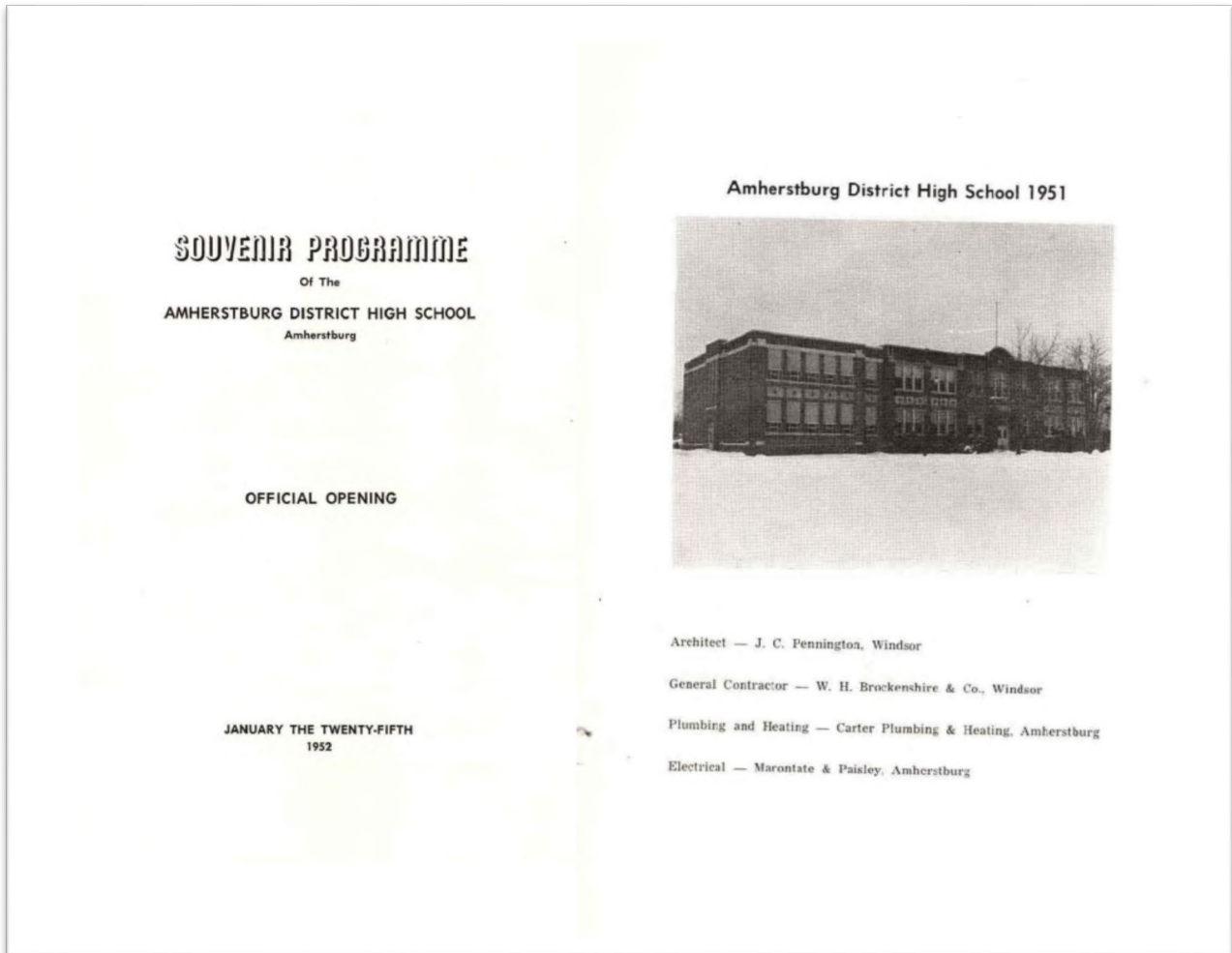


FIGURE 18 - OFFICIAL OPENING PROGRAM, 1952

Dated December 28th 1953

W. Amherstburg 14472

GARNET R. BRAUN and JUNE EVELYN
BRAUN

TO

THE AMHERSTBURG DISTRICT HIGH
SCHOOL BOARD

Amherstburg, Ont.

Deed of Land

SITUATE

Town of Amherstburg, County
of Essex, part of Lot No. 2,
Plan No. 7.

Newsome & Gilbert, Limited, Toronto

amb

DONALDSON & THRASHER,
Barristers & Solicitors,
904 Canada Building,
WINDSOR, Ontario.

7-B

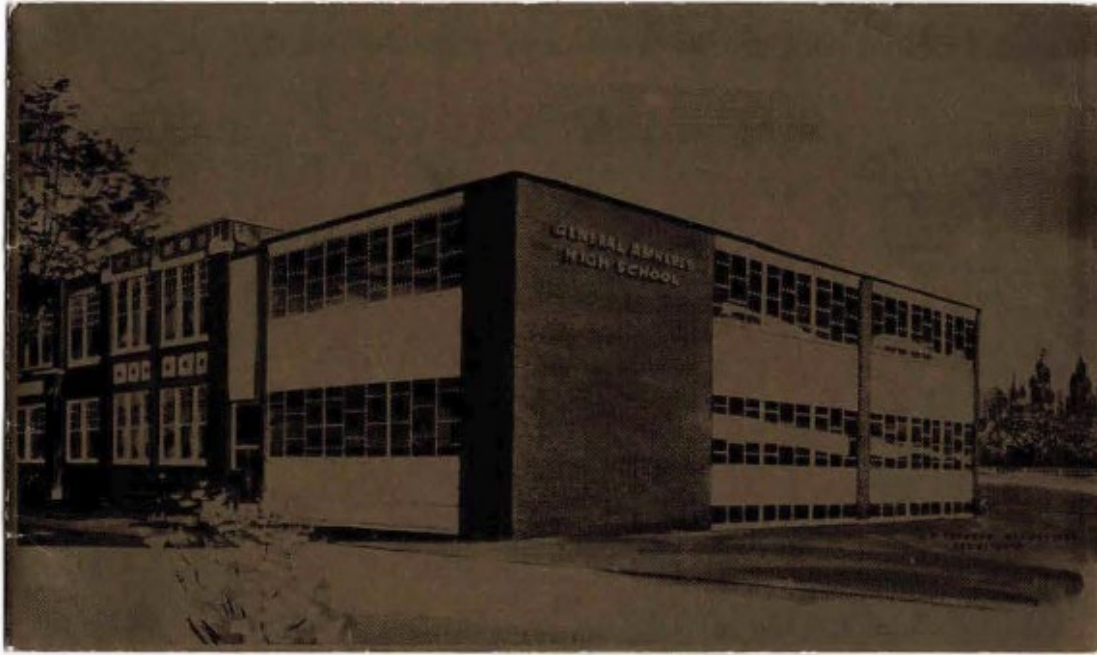


FIGURE 19 - OFFICIAL OPENING PROGRAM, 1960

AMHERSTBURG BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

**BICENTENNIAL PROJECT PROPOSAL FOR
GENERAL AMHERST HIGH SCHOOL MURAL RESTORATION**

REPORT # 1 MARCH 19, 2008

SUBMITTED BY PAUL HERTEL

The First Addition Set of Six (1965)



David Botsford is credited with an article printed in the Amherstburg Echo August 27 1965.

David P. Botsford, Historian: Explains Murals On West Wall General Amherst High Gymnasium

The new additions to the General Amherst High School are nearing completion and a feature that is generating considerable interest is the series of six murals now in process of being permanently implanted in the west wall of the new gymnasium.

The artist is John Oliver and he and his assistants have been engaged for several weeks working from scaffolding placing the murals. Originally it was intended that athletic motifs would be shown, but in deference to the Amherstburg area's rich heritage in history the theme of the motifs was changed.

In viewing the murals one should bear in mind the limitations of perspective and regard the bottom of the mural as the foreground and the top as the background.

The Second Addition Set of Three (1967)

No description was found in a 1966-1967 microfilm research of the Amherstburg Echo.



One Hundred Years

North to Freedom 1793

No Title

DAVID BOTSFORD'S HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE 1965 MURALS

PANEL I

THE LEFT MURAL depicts a pioneer amidst freshly-chopped stumps with the forest in the background. The first clearing in the area was at the site of the Bois Blanc Mission below Amherstburg on the Detroit River front about 1742 in the French regime.



No Title

DAVID BOTSFORD'S HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE 1965 MURALS

PANEL 2

The second mural represents the passage of LaSalle's ship the Griffon in 1679. An Indian on horseback is viewing from the shore the ship under sail. A bit of artistic license is here employed for local historians assert that the Detroit River Indians at that time were not yet acquainted with the horse and that actually the first horse in the Detroit River area was one labouriously transported from Quebec for the use of Cadillac some time after 1701 and named "Colon" (for Columbus) to signify he was the first of his kind in this region.



Griffin 1679

DAVID BOTSFORD'S HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE 1965 MURALS

PANEL 3

The third mural shows a later period with Fort Malden erected and occupied by the British who had recently evacuated Detroit when that place was given over to the new United States. The flag shown is that of Great Britain before the union with Ireland. In the foreground corn is shown to indicate the growth of agriculture.



U.E. Loyalists

DAVID BOTSFORD'S HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE 1965 MURALS

PANEL 4

THE FOURTH MURAL has as its subject the historic meeting at the home of Colonel Mathew Elliott, of Major-General Isaac Brock and Tecumseh.

This meeting took place at ten o'clock in the night. Brock had just arrived from the Niagara frontier with reinforcements and immediately consulted Tecumseh's counsel for an immediate attack on Detroit evoking from Tecumseh the ejaculation, "Here is a man!" Orders were given setting the militia, Regulars and Indians in motion and on August 12th Detroit was taken. The home of Colonel Elliott where the two famous warriors met stood until recent years when it finally collapsed through weight of years. It had been built in 1874 and was the oldest structure in a radius of some two hundred miles.



Brock and Tecumseh 1812

DAVID BOTSFORD'S HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE 1965 MURALS

PANEL 5

THE FIFTH MURAL represents the battle of Lake Erie and shows a careening ship under fire from a cannon. The battle on the lake took place on September 10th, 1813 and resulted in an American victory. The flagship of the British fleet was the "Detroit" commanded by Commodore Robert Heriot Barclay. The United States fleet was headed by the "Lawrence" and commanded by Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry. The loss of the British fleet compelled Colonel Proctor commanding at Amherstburg to attempt a retreat.



No Title

DAVID BOTSFORD'S HISTORICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE 1965 MURALS

PANEL 6

The sixth mural has for its theme the consequences resulting from the American victory on the Lake. The fort was burned by the Royal Engineers just before the retreat commenced so as to render it useless to the Americans. The mural shows the structure of the fort destroyed, the American flagship off shore and flags to show the period of the American occupation.

The Fort at Amherstburg was the only British Post in American hands at the date of the signing of the Peace ending the War of 1812 and in the treaty it was returned to the British, the Americans evacuating from it on July 1st, 1815. It was destined to be used for a further period of forty-four years before it was disestablished.



American Occupation

THE ARTISAN AND THE ARTIST BEHIND THE MURALS

The artisan in charge of the mural construction was Bruno Vendrasco, a Windsor plasterer, who obtained the subcontract to construct the murals from architectural firm JP Thomson & Associates. Vendrasco did some 50 murals throughout Windsor and Essex County, but has never been recognized for his work.

The 1960s material used for the murals' texture was called "granolux", and was difficult to use and apply. Bruno Vendrasco has indicated a willingness to examine the murals and share further insights on the technical side of the construction, and restoration suggestions.

The design work leading to full scale stencils was done by John Oliver, a recently retired commercial art teacher living in Huntsville Utah.

Further information from John Oliver's files is expected shortly to help describe better the design rationale, content, and context for the selection of subject matter.

Submitted By Paul Hertel
March 19, 2008

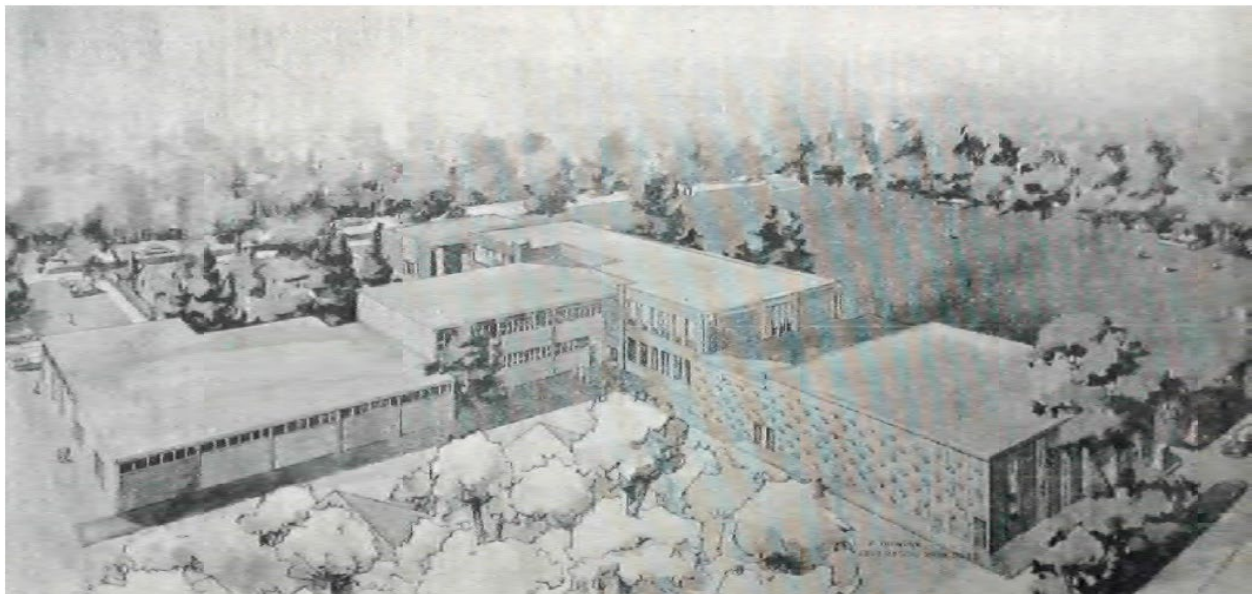


FIGURE 20 - THE AMHERSTBURG ECHO JANUARY 16, 1964



Official Opening

OF THE

New Vocational Wing and Gymnatorium

Built by The Government of Canada
The Province of Ontario
The Amherstburg High School District

for

TECHNICAL AND COMMERCIAL EDUCATION



Amherstburg District Secondary School



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4th, 1964
8:15 P.M.

Official States At Opening of Wing High School Now Able To Offer Full Opportunities of Re-Organized Program

"Your school is now able to offer the full opportunities of the re-organized program for secondary schools in Ontario", W. T. Laing, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Education, Western Ontario Division, remarked during his talk at the official opening of the new million dollar addition to the General Amherst High School on Friday evening. He added the children of the Amherstburg district will be able to enjoy the same type of education as offered in large city schools.

Mr. Laing represented the Minister of Education and at the end of his address declared the school officially opened. He was introduced by William Wood, district inspector, who observed, "No man in Western Ontario has done more for secondary education than Mr. Laing".

"The school is designed for 840 pupils and even at this stage it is reaching its limit and it is likely, in the not too distant future, the board will have to consider a further addition", he said.

* *

MR. LAING told the school has the most modern equipment and is designed to develop fully the potential greatness of all pupils. He continued that over one half of the pupils in secondary schools are in the vocational four-year courses that are preparing them for gainful employment when they graduate from Grade 12.

"A school is only as good as its teachers and Amherstburg has been fortunate in this respect", he observed and added, "Your able principal and his staff backed with the support of the board and community have the opportunity of building an even greater excellence in education".

Mr. Laing told that in the last 17 years the number of pupils in Ontario secondary schools has increased three times while the growth of General Amherst has gone from 166 pupils and seven teachers in 1957, to 760 pupils and 38 teachers in 1964.

* *

"Secondary education has gone a long way since its inception in 1904", R. W. Bailey, chairman of the Amherstburg District High School Board, remarked in his address at the official opening of the new million dollar vocational wing and gymnasium on Friday evening.

Mr. Bailey's remarks follow: "This is indeed an important occasion for all of us and on behalf of the High School Board, I welcome you here tonight.

I feel that everyone is primarily interested in seeing the new addition, so I shall make my remarks as brief as possible.

Many hours of planning — a few heartaches — and headaches — along with the modern building materials of today, have all been combined to give us this lovely new addition which we are here to officially open this evening.

I am sure, after you have a chance to look around, you will agree secondary education in this area has come a long way since its inception in 1904. From a few rented rooms in the public library at that time, it steadily progress-

Continued from page 4-B)

December 10, 1964

Official Opening High School Wing

(Continued from page 1-A)

ed until a high school was built in 1922 on this site. Through the years, this original nine room school has been increased to the present 30 rooms, plus this gymnasium. Of course, the expansion ties in with increased enrollment, which has grown from 84 in 1922 to 760 young men and women in our school today.

It was this group of young people with whom, we as a board, were vitally concerned and were anxious to provide them with the best educational facilities possible.

I think we have done just that, along with the aid of our architects, the contractors, the advisory vocational committee and also Mr. Cozens and his staff. But we can not stop here. At this point, we must challenge the students, to add the finishing touches to these cold lifeless walls. They must use these facilities and benefit from them in order for this investment in their future to pay dividends.

It is therefore, our sincere hope that the walls of this beautiful gymnasium will ring with shouts of happiness and bear witness to good sportsmanship both in victory and defeat.

In the academic and technical wing, you will find the necessary tools with which each and every one of our young people may equip himself or herself for a happy and profitable future. We simply ask — be eager to learn and develop your talents to the fullest.

We have been happy to see this project through to its completion, but may I, at this point, stress the fact that all this could not have been possible without the help and cooperation received from both our federal and provincial governments. They together with bear 75% of the cost, with the remainder to be borne by our school area, Amherst, Malden and Amherstburg.

In conclusion, I thank the taxpayers and all those who in any way helped make all this possible.

TAKING PART IN the program were Rev. J. E. Martin, pastor of St. John the Baptist Church, Rev. D. S. Henry, rector of Christ Church and Miss Carol Courtney, who offered piano selections.

L. R. Delmore, vice chairman of the board, introduced the platform guests and R. W. Bailey introduced the members of the board and advisory vocational committee. Mr. Bailey paid tribute to W. K. Sidey, former principal and secretary of the board, for his untiring work during the construction period.

Samuel Thompson, of Collavino Brothers, contractors, turned the key of the new building over to Gerald Simrod of J. P. Thomson Associates, architects, who presented it to R. W. Bailey, chair-

man of the board. Mr. Bailey turned it over to Reg. Cozens, principal.

"The simple act of giving and receiving a key is an awesome challenge charging my colleagues and myself with one of the important phases of young lives. We accept that challenge and promise to do our best", Mr. Cozens remarked.

ON BEHALF of the students, Stanley Bezaire, president of the students' council, thanked the department and the board for the enlarged facilities. Miss Sharyn Hall, vice president of the students' council, presented Mrs. Laing and Mrs. Wood with bouquets.

Members of the Amherstburg District High School Board include R. W. Bailey and Dr. E. D. Hutchinson, representing Amherstburg; C. D. Bailey, appointee from the Amherstburg Public School Board; L. J. Fox, representing Amherstburg Separate School Board; W. Hallock, Anderdon representative; Earl A. McGee, Malden appointee and R. B. MacGregor, appointed by the Essex County Council.

Members of the Advisory Vocational Committee are C. D. Bailey, chairman, D. Kirkaldy, Mrs. William Knight, Mrs. R. Lozon, J. Warren, R. W. Bailey, L. R. Delmore and W. Hallock.

An inspection of the school followed the program. Members of the staff and senior students were on duty guiding the visitors about the building.

December 10, 1964

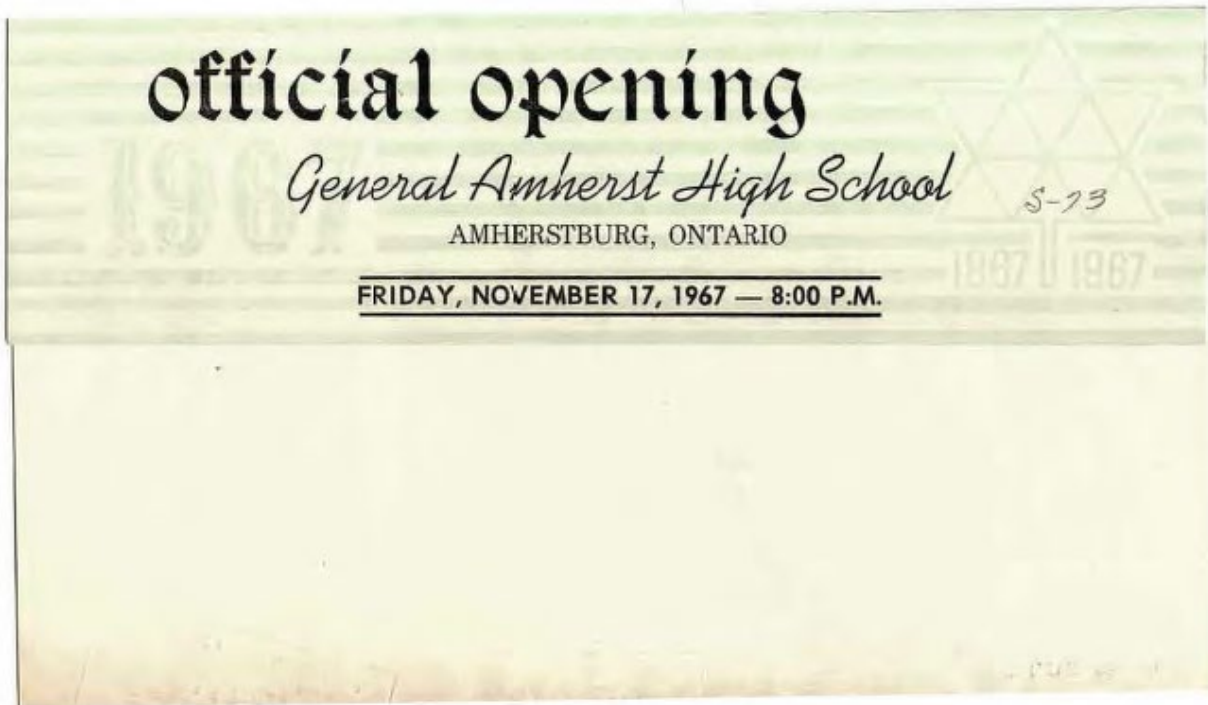
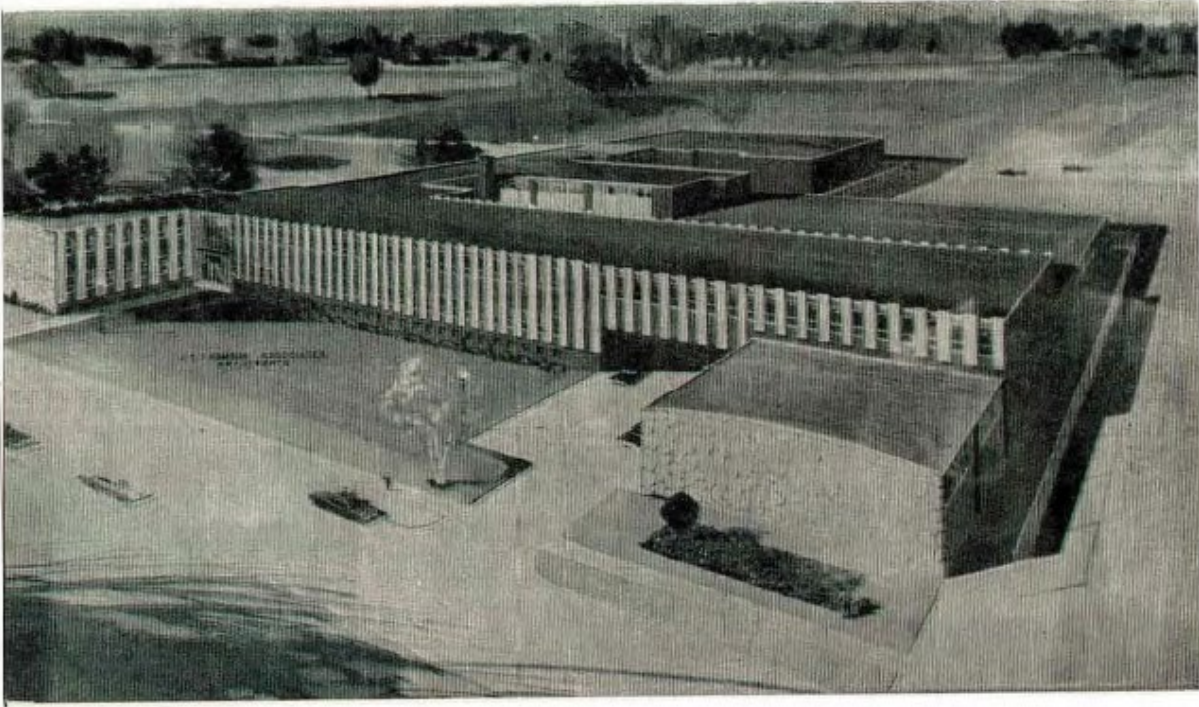


FIGURE 21 - OFFICIAL OPENING PROGRAM, 1967



THE ARCHITECT . . .

J. P. Thomson Associates, Architects have designed over 150 school projects including elementary schools, secondary schools, retarded children's schools and have recently been commissioned by the Canadian Department of External Aid to be the architects on a new vocational school in Guyana, South America.

The firm has been privileged to be the architects for all the additions to General Amherst District High School since 1959 when the school consisted of only 12 teaching areas up to its present size to serve 1800 students in Academic, Commercial and Vocational Courses.

our thanks
The Amherstburg High School Board acknowledges with thanks the generous donation by Mr. E. Murray Smith, of the native Lime stone which so beautifully enhances the front of the high school.



THE CONTRACTOR . . .

Incorporated in 1951, Ellis-Don's first year of operation was limited to small school and church projects to the total value of \$150,000.

The company now builds almost every type of building including schools, hospitals, universities, and industrial plants and has just recently completed the most impressive National Library and Archives Building in Ottawa, and are presently constructing the 1600-unit residence at the University of Guelph.

Ellis-Don is rated among the seven largest construction companies in Canada with one hundred and seventy-five salaried employees completing in excess of \$50,000,000 in contracts per year.



programme

- O CANADA
 INVOCATION Fr. J. E. Martin, C.S.B.
 St. John the Baptist Church
 OPENING REMARKS R. W. Bailey, Chairman
 INTRODUCTION of GUESTS William Hall
 INTRODUCTION of BOARD R. W. Bailey
 PRESENTATION of KEYS Contractor to Architect
 to R. A. Cozens, M.A., Principal
 DEDICATION of BUILDING ... Rev. W. C. Tupling, B.A., B.D., S.T.M.,
 Wesley United Church
 GREETINGS FROM DEPARTMENT of
 EDUCATION W. W. Allen, B.A., Area Supt.
 INTRODUCTION of SPEAKER Harvey Jones, Vice Chairman
 ADDRESS Eugene Whelan, M.P.
 APPRECIATION Grant Golden
 BENEDICTION Elder Murray Jones
 R.L.D.S. Church
 GOD SAVE THE QUEEN —
 PIANIST — Joan Vandelfinder

AMHERSTBURG DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL BOARD

- R. W. BAILEY — Chairman
 HARVEY JONES — Vice Chairman
 HAROLD BERNACHI
 GRANT GOLDEN
 GEORGE F. McCURDY
 ADMINISTRATOR — WATSON HALLOCK
 R. A. COZENS, M.A. — PRINCIPAL
 CHARLES BAILEY
 WILLIAM HALL
 MARWOOD PARKS

ADVISORY VOCATIONAL COMMITTEE

- MRS. WILLIAM KNIGHT
 DOUGLAS KIRKALDY
 HARVEY JONES
 C. D. BAILEY
 MRS. M. LOZON
 JOHN NEDA
 GRANT GOLDEN
 R. W. BAILEY

official opening

Eugene Whelan, M.P. Speaker —

Two And A Half Million Dollar Addition To General Amherst Opened

The two and a half million dollar addition to the General Amherst High School was officially opened on Friday evening by Eugene Whelan, M.P. Essex South. Mr. Whelan was a former student at the school.

Praise for the members of the school board was voiced by G. Simrod, representing the architects Thomson and Associates. He told of the co-operation of the board members and the many hours they spent in planning the school and during its construction.

Watson Hallock, business administrator, reported that the contract for the construction of the building was \$1,981,787; architect's fees, \$117,440 and furnishings, \$279,446. To this has to be added the cost of the site.

★ ★

THE FEDERAL government through grants paid 38.5 percent of the cost of the school, the provincial government paid a like amount and 23 percent was divided between the municipalities of Amherstburg, Anderdon and Malden. Anderdon pays 37.79 percent; Amherstburg, 34.41 percent and Malden, 27.98 percent. Mr. Hallock stated it was necessary to issue debentures in the amount of \$920,310 to finance the municipalities share of the cost. The debentures are for 20 years.

Three of the five principals of General Amherst were present. These were R. A. Cozens, present principal; W. K. Sidey, who was principal for 34 years and R. W. Martin, who succeeded Mr. Sidey.

W. W. Allen, area superintendent of the Department of Education, told that General Amherst had doubled its enrolment in five years. He said the caliber of planning was very good which reflected the interest and work on the part of the board. He said General Amherst has a fine staff of teachers.

★ ★

TAKING PART in the program were Rev. J. E. Martin, pastor of St. John the Baptist Church; Rev. W. C. Tupling, pastor of Wesley United Church and Elder Murray

Jones of the R.L.D.S. Church. R. W. Bailey, school board chairman, presided. Mr. Whelan was introduced by Harvey Jones and thanked for his address by Grant Golden.

Following the program the seven hundred in attendance toured the school. The visitors were served with a lunch in the cafeteria.

★ ★

EXCERPTS FROM Mr. Whelan's address follow:

"I would like to leave you tonight with a few impressions that I, as your federal member of parliament, have regarding education and the future of Canada. but first of all, I think I should go back over a little personal history that I have been acquainted with in the development of this high school. I remember the first day I came to General Amherst High School like it was yesterday, the excitement of going to that great big school and, believe me, it was big alongside of that old one-room school located on Texas Road called Springhill 3 and 4. It was like a new world, full of freedom that I had never known before, and I can see some faces in the audience tonight smiling who had to control that bronco, and even today, I'll bet they wonder if their efforts were futile when they read the papers. I see two teachers here tonight that I remember quite well — Miss Veronica Coyle and Mr. Philip Gibb, who both seemed to me, at that time, not much older than we were, and we gave them a pretty tough time. I will bet neither ever thought they would live to see the day that that oashful, fun-loving, rough and tumble kid would ever be bringing greetings on behalf of the federal government anywhere, let alone in his own home town in this own old Alma Mater.

I have done some research on technical high schools and have found it very interesting. The first piece of information I found was a royal commission on technical education, which was com-

(Continued on 1-B)

Nov 23 1967

The Amherstburg

Amherstburg, Ontario, Thursday, Nov. 23, 1967

Two And A Half Million Dollar Addition To General Amherst Opened

(Continued From 1-A)

missioned in 1910 and the report made in 1913. However, it was until 1919 that the act was passed and the program originated.

I am a firm believer that our education system across this nation must become as similar from province to province as possible — why some may ask — well, mainly because of the great movement of people from place to place in this great nation, which is tremendous, and will even be more so as our nation develops, and the people must have no handicap as far as relocating in some other part of our nation goes.

We can realize, from what I have said, that I am a strong believer in education — technical and otherwise. I might add here that the federal government has been a long-time participant in this type of program and during the last war the technical high schools were in most cases run 24 hours a day to train armed personnel and personnel for industry, which were called war emergency courses.

* *

I LEFT GENERAL Amherst along with several other 16-year olds to take this course, which was called machine shop practice, which lasted six months. The course consisted of learning the operation of lathes, shapers, milling machines, bench work and drafting and blue-print reading. Though I never followed this training up professionally, I have found it a tremendous help to me as an M.P. and as an owner of a mechanized farm. There is never a day goes by that it is not a help in the way of reading blue-prints or understanding someone's problem.

I am pleased to be here tonight representing the federal government on the occasion of the opening of the General Amherst High School. We are honoured to have been a financial partner in this project, and wish to offer our congratulations and best wishes for the future of these much needed educational facilities.

When this project began, the federal government was working with the province on a cost-sharing basis under the old technical and vocational training assistance act. This institution represents only one of many hundreds which were brought into being under the provisions of this act.

* *

EVERYONE IS concerned with costs these days and on the occasion of the opening of the General Amherst High School it is interesting to note that the federal government has contributed some \$1,440,300 in building and equipment costs for this project.

In addition to the money expended, there has been a great deal of time and effort put into the construction and equipping of these schools. This expenditure will be more than justified, I am sure. In this day and age, as I stated earlier, the need for greater education and training is of paramount importance and institutions such as this are playing a vital role in our economic development.

During the six years between 1961 and 1967 the federal government has provided nearly \$600 million to the provinces for the building of vocational and trade schools and technological institutes. It has also added many millions in shared-cost programs to train teachers, apprentices and the unemployed.

* *

WHILE THIS filled a large gap, it did not adequately cover the over-all educational needs of our country. About two-thirds of the federal contribution went for the training of students who had not left the school system. Relatively little actually went toward the retraining of adults whose skills had become obsolete because of technological change.

So after six years of shared-cost arrangements in the technical and vocational training field, the federal government has decided to withdraw from this program and concentrate on occupational training for adults. The new program which went into effect April 1, 1967, is known as the occupational training for adults program. Under this program, the federal government assumes 100 per cent financial responsibility for adult training, leaving the responsibility of the students to the provinces.

In modern day living, probably the greatest challenge to employability is brought about by rapid scientific and technological change.

* *

SKILLS THAT ARE valuable today can be obsolete tomorrow. Occupations that seem productive often become relatively unproductive and unrewarding.

What is required of people today and will be required even more in the next generation is the ability to adjust to change and to adjust rapidly.

This accelerating pace of change is the fundamental reason for the federal government's emphasis on occupational training for adults.

concerned with helping people respond to their new economic and technological environment. Its purpose is to create the opportunities and conditions which allow people to obtain and hold jobs for which they are best suited and which in turn makes them most productive.

* *

CANADA TODAY is on the march, forging ahead with the greatest future of any country in the world. In another thirty years we will be one of the most important nations in the world, more important than Great Britain or France, our population will be more than doubled, our development even more than the mind can imagine. We have just finished our greatest year in our history, our 100th birthday. I think it is possible that what we think of as the centenary of confederation may turn out to be our genuine confederation, a period of spiritual rebirth in response to the central social fact of our time. That man must unite, not divide, because he simply will not survive in a state of radical disunity. Technology of course helps to unite the world; we cannot take off in a jet plane and expect a wholly different way of life in the place where the plane lands. But technology in itself does not distinguish unity from uniformity. This distinction is the great mental achievement that democracy has created for the modern world: the realization that identity cannot be preserved either by cutting oneself off from others or by dissolving oneself in others, but only by the flexibility of a larger group where there are great variations of character, and sharp differences of opinion and emphasis, yet all contained within the sense of a common heritage and a common destiny.

* *

Nov. 23, 1967

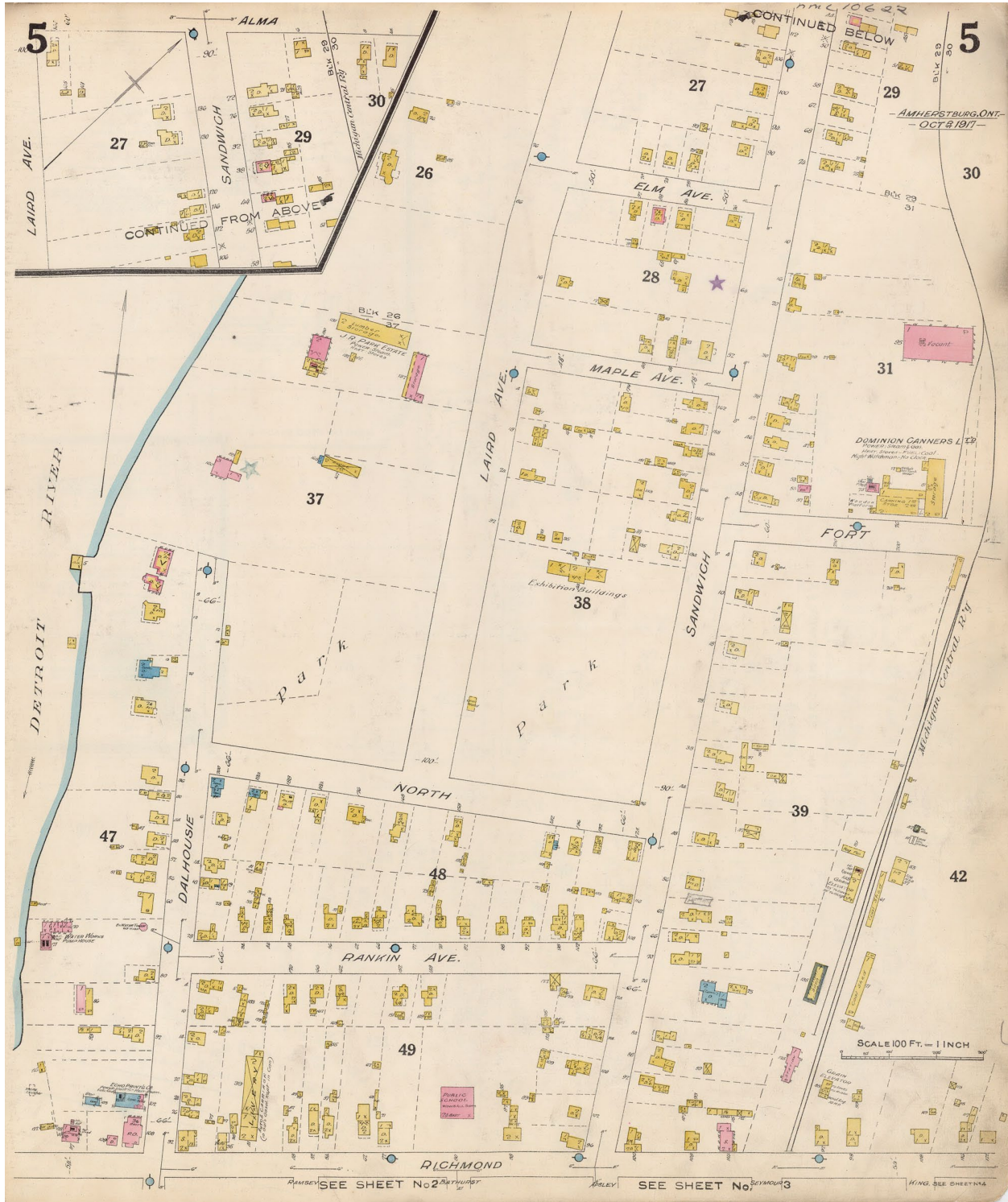


FIGURE 22 - 1917 FIRE INSURANCE MAP



Reflections

Newsletter of the Marsh Historical Collection
Amherstburg, Ontario



Volume 11 Issue 4

Summer 2018

ISSN 1913-8660

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Above: c.1924 MCS P1588
Below: Present (2018)

Then & Now General Amherst High School



On September 5, 1922 the new General Amherst High School opened with 73 pupils and four teachers. Norman Davies was Principal. Following is a description from The Amherstburg Echo, July 21, 1922.

"The lower floor is devoted to vocational purposes and the upper to academic. The former consists of a Manual Training Room, Forge Shop, Art Room, Domestic Science Room, Gymnasium, Principal's Room, Lady Teachers' Room and Boys and Girls Toilets...

The upper floor consists of five classrooms, four large and one smaller for an advanced form. One of the large class rooms is

allotted to commercial work and has a typewriter room at one end separated by a glazed partition so that is under direct supervision from the Commercial classroom. Another of these classrooms is for Science Laboratory work and has a small apparatus room off it. The basement accommodates boiler plant, ventilating unit, coal room and storage space."

It may be interesting to note that in its first year evening classes were established in Bookkeeping, Shorthand, Typewriting, Sewing, French conversation, Chemistry, Shop Math and Motor Mechanics. The same teachers who taught during the day also ran the evening classes. In one of the

many articles it is noted that the Dominion War Trophies Commission at Ottawa sent a collection of trophies, machine guns, helmets, enemy rifles and much more. These items were to be placed in one room of the new school to be "fitted up as a museum." A large cannon was also forwarded by the Militia Department, which was "mounted on the school ground facing Sandwich Street."

Harold McEvers, Architect, of Windsor, designed and supervised the construction of the building for a total cost of approximately \$68,000. It was said to be "an ideal working example of a Vocational Academic high school."

Continued on Page 3...

Then & Now

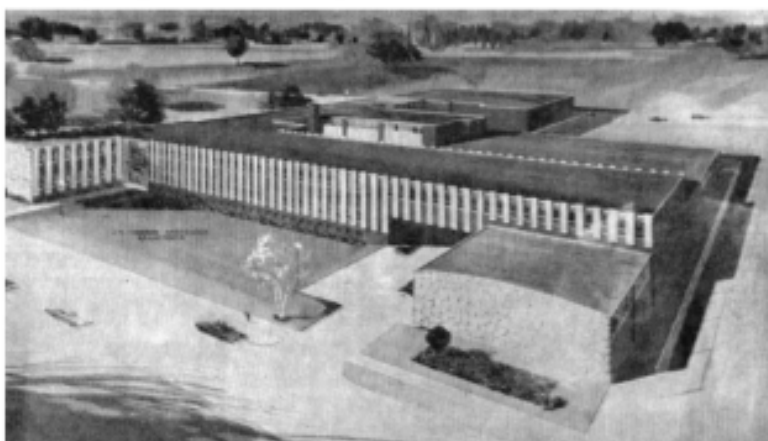
...Continued from page 1

By 1928 enrollment had increased from 65 to 150 students and the gymnasium was too small to be useful. J.C. Pennington Windsor architect, was engaged to prepare specifications and by the fall term General Amherst students had a new 65' x 35' gym. In 1934 the school basement was enlarged, the work being accomplished by about 40 men who were on "welfare." The Marsh Collection files contain so much information about the new school- possibly a good project for a history student?



Opening of new addition May, 25, 1960

If you would like to receive an electronic copy of our quarterly newsletter by email, please contact us at 519-736-9191 or research@marshcollection.org. You can also access the newsletter on our website.



Opening of new addition November 17, 1967

Yearbooks

We have a collection of local high school yearbooks that visitors are welcome to access. The following is a list of available years:

St. Rose High School

1950-53, 1955-57, 1959-66

General Amherst High School

1961-87, 2000

St. Thomas of Villanova High School

1987-94, 2001-03

If you have a yearbook that you are interested in donating to help us fill in the gaps, please contact us at 519-736-9191. Or if you are interested in lending a yearbook for scanning, we will return the original book to you.



6. CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHS



FIGURE 23 - 130 SANDWICH STREET - SOUTH ELEVATION OF 1922 CONSTRUCTION



FIGURE 24 – 130 SANDWICH STREET – SOUTH ELEVATION OF GYM



FIGURE 25 - 130 SANDWICH SOUTH ELEVATION - 1951 ADDITION AND 1922 CONSTRUCTION





FIGURE 26 - BRICK BASE COURSING AND BANDING



FIGURE 27 - ORIGINAL SIX MURALS ON THE WEST ELEVATION



FIGURE 28 - ADDITIONAL THREE MURALS ON THE WEST ELEVATION



FIGURE 29 - EAST ELEVATION - VIEW LOOKING WEST FROM SANDWICH STREET.



FIGURE 30 - SOUTH ELEVATION - VIEW LOOKING NORTH NEAR SANDWICH STREET