

# Season's Greetings

## The HISTORIAN

Newsletter of the St. Vital Historical Society  
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Bob Holliday photos

MP Dan Vandal (St. Boniface-St. Vital) congratulates Winnipeg councillor Brian Mayes (St. Vital) for his efforts in celebrating the 50th anniversary of the opening of the St. Vital Bridge. Also on hand for the ceremony at the Canoe Club were Riel MLA, Chris Melnick, and MLA James Allum (Fort Garry-Riverview).

## St. Vital Bridge turns 50



The development of St. Vital took a giant leap forward on Saturday, Dec. 11, 1965 with the official opening of the St. Vital Bridge.

The bridge linked Osborne Street South with Dunkirk Drive which, until the construction of the four-lane, split roadway, had been mostly a dyke separating the golf course operated by the Winnipeg Canoe Club.

The bridge came to be 75 years after Leo Warde first suggested linking the

cities of West Kildonan and St. Vital via Winnipeg streets.

Warde's ideas were brushed aside because politicians of the day and such didn't put too much stock in the dreams of a 17-year-old boy.

"He was a remarkable guy," said Cllr. Brian Mayes (St. Vital). "He was a visionary."

Mayes unveiled several displays Dec. 14 at the Canoe Club.

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# Prevent fires by decorating wisely and safely this Yuletide Season

Christmas and New Year's is often marred by fatal fires, most of which are preventable.

The following Christmas safety tips are courtesy on McElhoes & Duffy, Insurance Brokers and Auto Pac Agents, 604 St. Mary's Road.

Only use lights and extension cords that are in good condition. Check for frayed wires, broken bulbs, cracked sockets Or plugs and excessive wear.

Feel the cords to see if they are warm when plugged in. If you find any of these signs of damage, replace with CSA approved lights.

Always follow the manufacturer's instructions about how many sets of lights that can be safely strung together.

Do Not overload electrical outlets. • Use only indoor lights and extension cords indoors, and outdoors lights and cords for outdoor use.

Use mini or LED lights as they are cool-burning and save electricity.

Never remove the ground pin as this interferes with the electrical grounding.

Never place extension cords through doorways or under carpets.

Use only non-flammable or fire resistant artificial trees and decorations.

Do not use angel hair (glass wool) together with spray-on snowflakes as this combination is very combustible.

Be careful when using metallic ornaments on the tree. They could become a shock hazard if contact is made with defective wiring. Do not use nails, tacks or staples to hang cords and lights as this can damage the insulation on the outside of the wire, causing corrosion or a short circuit.

There are also rules for the safe use of ladders. Always use an appropriately sized ladder when hanging decorations. - Stepladders should be about 1 m (3 ft.) shorter than the highest point you have to reach. This height provides a wide, stable base; open the stepladder spreaders and shelf fully to avoid collapse: do not overreach; climb down and move the ladder when needed. Do not stand, climb or sit on the stepladder top or pail shelf and make sure that all of the ladder's feet are on a firm and level surface. Always maintain three-point contact on stepladders by keeping two feet and one hand on the ladder.

## Staff salaries are biggest expense

By Jeff Whyte  
Finance Chairman

The past year was good despite the cancellation of the pancake breakfast due to construction. Thank you to all who made a monetary contribution to the museum. Your donations go a long way toward the operation of the museum and the preservation of artifacts and the history of St. Vital. Also a special thank you to all of the volunteers for their many hours worked to keep the museum open.

A revenue of \$17,256 allowed the purchase of new display units as the museum continued to expand, create displays and archive history. The SVHS was able to retain the part-time

assistants that enabled the museum to be open to the public on Saturdays as well as funding a portion of the cost for two full-time summer students, one of whom was retained part-time to work with the museum assistant.

Some of the disbursements as reported on the audited financial statements at August 31, 2015, include costs for displays at \$5,423, fire truck restoration at \$346, archiving and office supplies at \$1,806 and staff wages at \$13,083.

A huge debt of gratitude is again owed to Chris Law, CA and Tracy Pal for their assistance throughout the year and the preparation of the annual audited financial statements.

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City Councillor - St. Vital Ward

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*This is what awaits staff and volunteers in the main basement storage area.*

# Construction end is near

BY BOB HOLLIDAY

As 2016 draws to a close hopefully so does the construction to the 101-year old former fire hall that is home to the St. Vital Museum.

To say the past year has been frustrating would be an enormous understatement as the anticipated end to the mess and mayhem was pushed back several times.

Originally scheduled to start in September 2014, construction was set back to April 2015 as some in the City balked at the idea of spending money to preserve St. Vital history. By the time construction began in April, costs had skyrocketed.

The City wanted the SVHS to close during construction beginning in September 2014, such a move would have seen the beginning of the end for the society. Your directors refused to sign the letter, countering that the floor construction was under 598, not 600 St. Mary's Road and there was no danger to staff, volunteers or visitors.

The fire truck was eventually moved but

the SVHS continued to operate and will attract 600 visitors during the period. Closing would also have eliminated two-student positions during the summer. The students continued the much need task of cataloguing artifact and papers pertaining to St. Vital history.

Once Marrbeck Construction has turned over the building to the City, directors have been promised a meeting with Brad Erickson and Cllr. Brian Mayes to iron out some of the deficiencies not done during construction.

Marrbeck has been super co-operative with our organization. We would like to thank site supervisors Dan Tremblay and Gilles Morin for their understanding and patience.

The SVHS allowed Marrbeck personnel to use the new board room as a site office, instead of renting a trailer.

First and foremost on the agenda will be the lack of a connecting door on the main floor that will allow easy access to

displays on the other side of the wall. We had not been aware of the City's plan to reinstall the wall that divided our space from that formerly used by the Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service.

The plans also did not call for any electrical plugs being installed, which leaves our bay with just one receptacle, 100 feet away.

We have been promised a crew to clean the layer of dust covering the artifacts stored in a basement room, plus the display cases in the west end of the bay that once held the 1939 Fargo jumper truck.

The truck was moved earlier this month to the other side of the wall to allow the cosmetic changes to the new concrete floor. The truck will remain in its current spot, which happens to be located under two of the three holes in the ceiling used by original fire firefighters to slide down poles from their quarters on the second floor.

(Continued on Page 4)



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Director



*The original wall will be left bare in some areas of the basement.*

## Construction end nears an end

(Continued from Page 3)

As artifacts are moved, the SVHS will be in need of volunteers to aid in the rebuilding of displays etc. If you can spare a few hours, please call 204-255-2864 or send an e-mail to [info@svhs.ca](mailto:info@svhs.ca).

We have purchased a set of divider walls from the Winnipeg Police Museum. They will be used in the new display area.

The November AGM drew 34 members to the first-ever meeting held in the new area.

The AGM site was chosen last August when directors

were told the SVHS would have possession by mid-October.

The AGM was an opportune



time to show off what will be display area and where the boardroom is now located.

As this is the final Historian of 2016, a reminder that it's time to renew your membership. Cost is \$15 per annum. The money allows the SVHS to continue spreading the word about the history of the second oldest settlement in Winnipeg.

Anyone who has renewed recently, or is a new member, is paid for 2016.

Have a Happy New Year everyone! See you at the Museum in 2016.



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Clutter in the basement hallway has to be cleaned. Some of the clutter is storage shelves which will be rebuilt..



## Do you know her name?

*Do you know this woman. She played for the St. Emile Alouettes softball team in 1959 or 1960. The rest of the team has been identified, but even team members can not remember her name.*

*If you know her name, please contact us at [info@svhs.ca](mailto:info@svhs.ca) or leave a message at 204-255-2864.*



*Proud to support the preservation work of the St. Vital Historical Society*



**Dan Vandal**

*Deputee  
Member of Parliament*

*St. Boniface-St. Vital*

**Thank you for helping to preserve our history!**



**Christine Melnick**

MLA for Riel

204-253-5162 | [ChristineMelnick.ca](http://ChristineMelnick.ca)



*Thanks to Paul Desrosiers, the St. Vital Museum will soon have a genuine birch bark canoe on display, that is once construction to the building is complete. For the time being, home to the canoe is on the bed of the 1939 Fargo fire truck which will soon be*

*moved to the expanded display area. The truck will be parked under two of the holes that once held poles original fire fighters slid down to answer a fire call. The first fire fighters lived on the second floor of the fire hall. The horses were on the main level.*

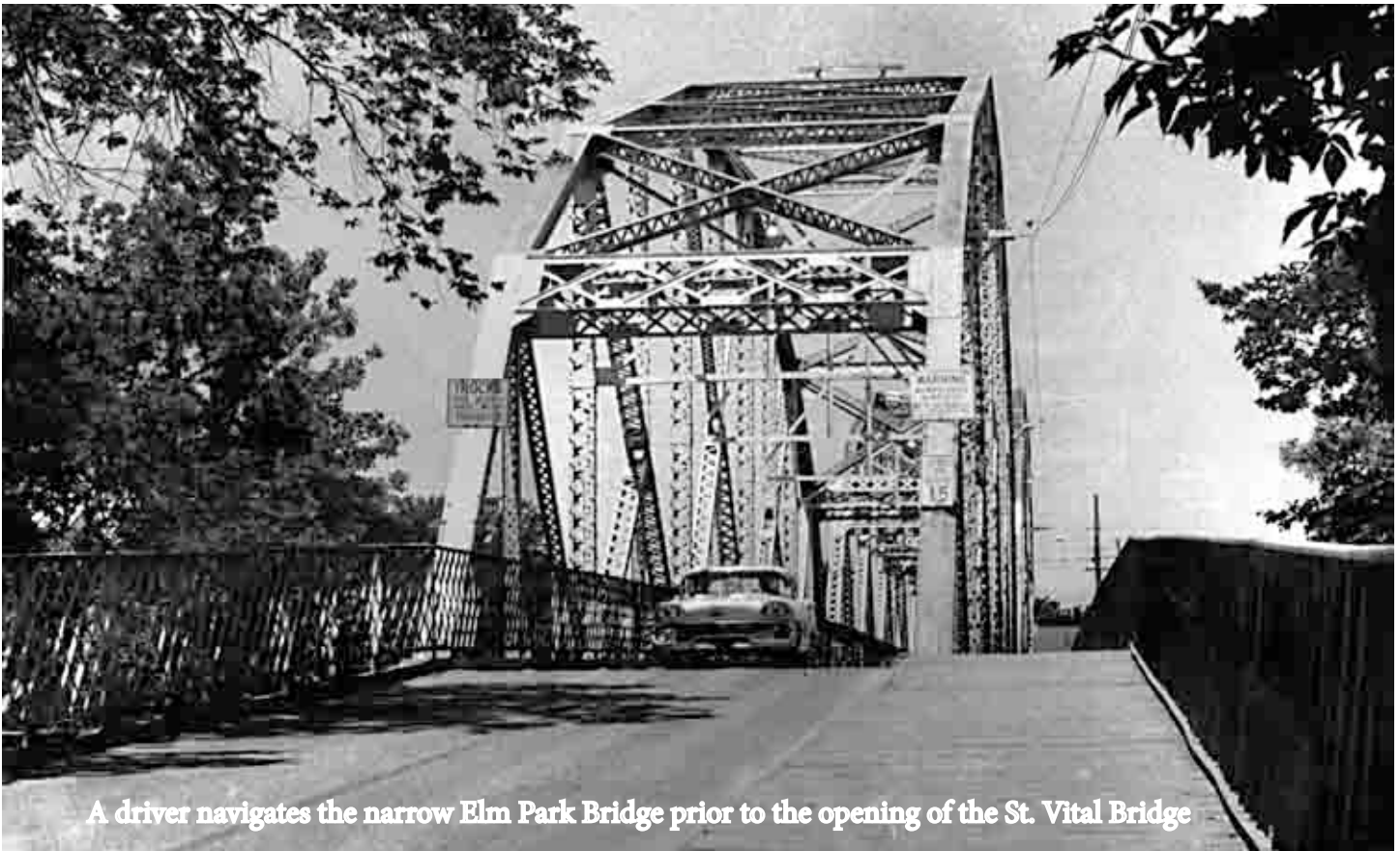
# Many thanks to the St. Vital Historical Society for preserving our history.

*From your St. Vital team!*

**Nancy Allan** (MLA)  
MLA for St. Vital  
204-237-8771  
NancyAllan.ca

**Theresa Oswald** (MLA)  
MLA for Seine River  
204-255-7340  
TheresaOswald.ca





A driver navigates the narrow Elm Park Bridge prior to the opening of the St. Vital Bridge

# Bridge turns 50

(Continued from Page One)

Media reports of 1965 claimed Warde's idea was "too far advanced for the people" of the day.

What would have been the first freeway in the Winnipeg area would have covered 6 1/4 miles.

At age 78, Warde was present in 1965, when the St. Vital Bridge was opened to traffic. Until then, motorists had three ways of crossing the Red River: the Norwood Bridge; heading south the Perimeter Highway; or driving across the narrow Elm Park Bridge, built in 1914 as a private toll bridge linking Kingston Crescent with Jubilee Avenue.

Warde is remembered today by the east-west roadway in south St. Vital and St. Boniface that is divided by the

Seine River.

Other routes across the Red were suggested, including a road connecting Oakenwald with Fermor Avenue and Brandon Avenue and Carriere. The \$5,578,000 cost of the St. Vital Bridge was divided between the province and the Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg, aka Metro.

Metro was responsible for roadways in Greater Winnipeg which was made up 14 cities prior to the formation of Unicity in 1972.

The bridge contains 7,600-cubic yards of concrete and 8,700 feet of steel pipes.

The display boards will visit the St. Vital and Fort Rouge Libraries before going on permanent display in the St. Vital Museum.

## CHRIS LAW CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT

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