

This narrative history of a Residential School was researched and produced by the Government of Canada as part of its response to litigation and the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement. The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation has not verified the content of this document. It is provided here for reference purposes only. Documented incidents of sexual and physical abuse are based on the documentary record and do not take into account survivor testimony.



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Sandy Bay IRS
School Narrative
June 22, 2004

This School Narrative summarizes documents that provide an over-view of the history and administration of the school.

NAME OF SCHOOL and VARIANTS

- 1905 Sandy Bay (Indian) Boarding School [SBR-3500]
- 1926 Sandy Bay (Indian) Residential School [SBR-1971]

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

- 1903 School at Sandy Bay Reserve on Lake Manitoba proposed by the Oblate Order. The proposal is accepted by the Minister for Indian Affairs. [SBR-3414; SBR-3425]
- 1904 Sandy Bay RS is built by the Oblate Fathers according to government specifications. [SBR-3414, SBR-3425, SBR-3426]
- 1905 Sandy Bay Residential School opens August 1, 1905. Initially there is room for 35 pupils, but as early as 1906, there are 44 pupils in attendance. [SBR-3500; SBR-3501]
- 1970 Closure of Sandy Bay residence effective June 30, 1970. The old residence buildings are turned over to the adjacent Sandy Bay day school. [SBR-1138]
- 1974 The Sandy Bay Band takes over the management of the day school. [SBR-0875]

MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOL

Dates managed by Church

- 1905-70 The school is operated by the Roman Catholic Church under the auspices of the Oblate Fathers of St. Boniface (“les Reverends Peres Oblats du Manitoba”). [SBR-1704, SBR-0401]

The Sandy Bay RS is closed in 1970, at which time the Church is still, apparently,

responsible for the management of the residence and school. There is no record of school management being turned over to the government between 1962, the date of the Indianescom (Oblate Indian and Eskimo Council) agreement with the Oblates, and 1970, the date of the residence's closure. [SBR-0475; SBR-1138]

Dates managed by Government

1970-74 Upon the Residence's closure, the buildings are converted to a day school managed jointly by the government and band council. [SBR-1138; SBR-1142; SBR-0180]

Dates managed by band or other aboriginal group

1974 As of this date, Sandy Bay becomes a band-operated school. [SBR-0875]

SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Date of original building

1904 New school building built by the Oblate Fathers of St. Boniface to conform to Departmental specifications. [SBR-3414, SBR-3425, SBR-3426]

Additions and renovations

1914 Additions made to school buildings (No further information available). [SBR-1652]

1922 Building of a garage is authorized. [SBR-1241]

1926 \$1420 is approved for renovations and repairs at Sandy Bay RS. [SBR-1971]

1939 Additions made to school buildings, including a new electric plant; new septic tanks; new brick work on the north and south wings; new chimney on the south side of the north wing; and fire-proof stairs in both wings. Other repairs and additions are also made. [SBR-0603; SBR-0624; SBR-0380]

1940 Construction of two wings to be added to the existing school building. [SBR-0401]

1960 \$236,000 to go to various additions and renovations, including the Installation of 16 new lavatories. [SBR-0826]

1962 An 8-classroom addition is built for the Sandy Bay RS. [SBR-1664]

1966 Company tender for construction of 2 prefabricated 3-bedroom residences is accepted. [SBR-2021]

Day School

1892 Documents make reference to decrepit school located on Oblate land within Sandy Bay Reserve. The dates of its operation are not known. [SBR-1720]

1950 A construction project form is received for the building of a day school. Subsequent documents referring to pupils who attend suggest that a day school of some kind is indeed built, although its original date is uncertain. [SBR-0445]

1956 Day school to be abolished and pupils to be amalgamated with residential school pupils. [SBR-0467]

1967 A new day school is mentioned in a fire inspection report. It is said to be about 75 feet west of the residential building, two storeys high in one section, with classrooms and a gymnasium. [SBR-1651a, p. 1]

Dates owned by Church

1904 The Church builds a residential school at Sandy Bay with the intention of transferring it immediately to the Government upon its completion. Plans of the proposed buildings are submitted to the Government Architect for approval. [SBR-3428].

1905 After 1905, the school building is considered in some sources to be the property of the Crown. [SBR-0187; SBR-0180; SBR-0189; SBR-0190; SBR-0401; SBR-0327]

Other documents, however, suggest that some of the school buildings may have always remained the property of the Church. One document from 1968 says that the Branch owned the school barn, but not the church hall nor a single dwelling or garage. [SBR-1685; SBR-1623]

Dates owned by government

1911 Operational Agreement confirms Crown ownership of buildings. [SBR-0327].

1977 The school buildings continue to be owned by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. [SBR-0190]

SCHOOL LAND

Location

The Sandy Bay RS is located in the middle of Sandy Bay Reserve, on the west shore of Lake Manitoba in the Manitowapah agency. The school's location does not change through its period of operation. [SBR-3500; SBR-3501]

Nearest Town

The school is about 5 miles east of the village of Amaranth and 75 miles northwest of Winnipeg. [SBR-1652, p. 2]

Treaty

1873 The Sandy Bay Band Indians signed Treaty No. 1 on Aug 3, 1873.

Ownership by Church or Government

Available documents on government ownership of school lands on Sandy Bay Reserve are somewhat ambiguous, as shown below.

1892-04 Catholic Church operates a small school on the reserve for a time. It is not clear whether the Church owns the land upon which the school is built. [SBR-1720; SBR-3414]

1905-08 Successive annual reports state that the land has been given to the government by the band (Sandy Bay Band). [SBR-3500; 3501; 3502; 3503]

1930 Audit report dated Sep 30, 1930, states that the school is "situated on land belonging to the Church", contrary to the agreement cited above. [SBR-0878]

1954 Inventory dated Mar 29, 1954, indicates that the school owns 100 acres of land on the reserve while the Oblates own 640 acres. [SBR-1160c]

1962 Memorandum indicates that the Oblates are going to abandon their farm on Sandy Bay Reserve. [SBR-1618]

PHOTOS, PLANS and OTHER MEDIA

1931 Sketch showing suggested removal of building. [SBR-1846a]

1939 Photo showing Sandy Bay RS from the front, at a distance. [SBR-0374]

- 1939 Blueprints for future additions to Sandy Bay RS. [SBR-0393 to SBR-0398]
- 1946 Drawing of fire safety plan with proposed fire escapes. [SBR-000417a, SBR-0418a, SBR-001342a]
- 1948 Photos and drawings of school buildings, including school, granary, garage, etc. [SBR-0424a-c]
- 1959 Map of school grounds and buildings. [SBR-1652a]
- 1961 Sketch of school and property showing proposed construction at Sandy Bay including 8-classroom block. [SBR-841, SBR-001634a]
- 1967 Map of grounds and buildings. Multiple views. [SBR-1651b]
- 1969 Plan of Sandy Bay Reserve showing the location of the school and student residence. [SBR-0873]

STUDENTS FROM OTHER RESERVES

- 1923 Most of the pupils who attend Sandy Bay RS are from the Sandy Bay Reserve, but there are also some from Dog Creek and Ebb and Flow Reserves. [SBR-0336]
- 1949 Sandy Bay RS is attended by pupils from other reserves during this period, including those of the former Birtle Agency, Lake Manitoba, Long Plain, and special cases from other reserves. It is not known how long this custom continues. [SBR-0437b]

RELIGIOUS GROUPS

- 1905-70 The school is managed by the Oblate Fathers of St. Boniface (“les Reverends Peres Oblats du Manitoba”), who were responsible for such tasks as hiring staff, overseeing expenditures, and the like. [SBR-1704, SBR-0401]
- 1923 It is not clear which religious order was responsible for the day-to-day operation of Sandy Bay RS. One document cites the Sisters of Charity, who would have handled such tasks as account-keeping, taking care of problems in the school and residence, and so on, in addition to their teaching duties. [SBR-0336]
- 1932 Another document cites St Joseph’s Order as being responsible for teaching at

Sandy Bay RS. [SBR-0880a]

1961 Nuns of unknown order appear to have taught at Sandy Bay until at least 1961, the date of the latest document referring to the sisters. [SBR-0835]

WRITTEN AGREEMENTS

- 1911 Agreement between His Majesty the King and L.P. Langevin, Archbishop of the archdiocese of St Boniface, to support, maintain and educate 60 pupils at the Sandy Bay Boarding School, on the Sandy Bay Reserve in the Province of Manitoba. [SBR-0327]
- 1962 Operational Agreement stipulates that the Oblate INDIANESCOM (Indian and Eskimo Welfare Commission) manages the school and residence. [SBR-0475]
- 1970 Chaplaincy contract for the provision of chaplaincy services, including religious guidance, by the Order of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate to the Sandy Bay RS. [SBR-1136 and attachments]

DOCUMENTS REFERRING TO ABUSE

To date, we are unaware of any convictions for abuse at Sandy Bay IRS or of any convicted abusers present at the school.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- 1909 Letter states that only one or two pupils have abused the privilege of returning home on weekends. [SBR-0325]
- 1937 Death of female pupil at home, of acute attack of broncho-pneumonia, a complication of tuberculosis. She first fell ill in 1935. [SBR-0365 and attachments]
- 1937 Death of male pupil in hospital, of acute appendicitis [SBR-0367 and attachment]
- 1944 Death of female pupil at school, of meningitis complicated by symptoms of epilepsy. [SBR-0410]
- 1949 Nineteen people on Sandy Bay Reserve had been stricken with typhoid since 1937. Three were pupils at the Residential School. The illness is found to be caused by unclean water. A chlorinator is recommended. [SBR-1461a]

PRINCIPALS/ADMINISTRATORS

Fr G. Leonard	1906 - 1912
Fr P. Bousquet	1912 - 1913
O. Chagnon, OMI	1913 - 1942
John Lemire, OMI	1942 - 1944
M. de Bretagne, OMI	1944 - 1944
Jean Lambert, OMI	1944 - 1952
Roland Chaput, OMI	1952 - 1966
Ruest, Adeodat, OMI	1966 - ?*

*The *Dictionnaire biographique des oblats du Canada* states that Father Ruest became principal of the Sandy Bay RS in 1966, but the entry in his name does not make clear when this assignment ended.

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The original school narrative document produced by Canada also contains a number of records that have been separated pending review.



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