

*Welcome to some of our historic materials. Looking back at these minutes from early Lindenlea Community Association meetings sure gives us an insight into our birthing problems as a community. While the writer was a bit heavy handed on the wordiness, he certainly expressed the problems and his reactions.*

*Have fun reading these! Great to see our community works much the same way still.*

## **From the Archives of the Lindenlea Community Association**

Note: The first four issues of *The Lindenleader* contained a four-part retrospective of the Lindenlea Community Association. Excerpts are reprinted below.

### **LCA, Part 1**, printed in *The Lindenleader*, Vol. 1, No. 1, November 1927

Way back in the years immediately following the termination of the Great War, there was a shortage of houses in Ottawa. There were several reasons for this: partial abandonment of building while the war was on, an abnormal number of Civil Servants employed in war work, and the return from England and France of our soldiers, some with families acquired overseas. To stimulate the building of houses, the City of Ottawa availed itself of the advantages of a Housing Loan and purchased the Lindenlea Estate.

By the fall of 1920, between 20 and 30 houses had been completed, or were sufficiently far advanced to allow of the new owners occupying them.

As in other pioneering ventures the residents had much in common, and soon began discussing their troubles and difficulties with each other.

It was therefore decided to form an Association for their mutual protection and advantage, and the September 19, 1920, a meeting for that purpose was held in the cellar of Mr. Annand's house on Ridgeway. Two days later the first meeting of the Executive Council was held.

A delegation interviewed Mr. Thomas Adams, who planned Lindenlea, regarding the old shack at the end of Lindenlea Road, and he advised leaving it there until building operations were completed, after which an effort would be made to have the building of the Club House started. The Club House site still remains and is used by the children for sliding and skiing.

### **LCA, Part 2**, printed in *The Lindenleader*, Vol. 1, No. 2, December 1927

The development of a garden city within the limits of Ottawa naturally attracted many sightseers and prospective householders. These visits were particularly numerous in the open season of 1920 when house building was much in evidence. The natural advantages of the Lindenlea estate were unmistakable, but the lack of conveniences in the early period of development was just as apparent.

Interested parties were charmed with the convenient location in close proximity to Ottawa, one of the most favourable residential cities of the Dominion. The general

contour of the estate as well as the abundance of trees, many of them of considerable grace and beauty, imparted a sense of enchantment.

The lack of facilities of city life usually furnished by local government supplied a striking contrast to the wealth of natural splendor. In many respects, the estate was as lacking of roads, sidewalks, street signs, lights and other necessities as was Champlain's colony at Quebec in 1608. In the end it was only through the persistent effort of the residents that improvements became an accomplished fact. In this work, the Association played an important part.

A difficulty arose on the part of the uninitiated in regard to finding the home of any given resident. Friends from up town would give up in despair, and delivery men were in a quandary. The shift from a rectangular plan was sufficient to puzzle the vendor, the bones and bottle man, the grocery boy and the iceman, but without the sidewalk or a street light and a streak of mud for a road, the delivery fraternity threw up their hands.

Any body of lot owners may petition for a sidewalk, but the fact remains that on April 7, 1921, the initiative was taken by the executive. The construction of the roads, being out of the general funds of the city administration, proved to be a protracted operation. The first step was taken in April 1921, and it was only six years later that the road question ceased to be an issue.

The location of the poles for electric service was a bone of contention for some time necessitating delay. It was finally decided to place the poles at the rear of the lots and an extraordinary clause was added to the Agreement of Sale. A false start by the Ottawa Electric Co. in placing poles near Springfield Road was corrected by their removal to a less conspicuous quarter. A progress report was presented to the executive on March 17, 1921, when an attempt was being made to obtain street lamps at the following junctions: Rideau Terrace and Lambton, Rideau Terrace and Ridgeway, Lambton and Maple Lane, Maple Lane and Springfield, and Springfield and Lindenlea.

The archives show that a live wire organization was absolutely necessary to obtain an adequate service.

**LCA, Part 3**, printed in *The Lindenleader*, Vol. 1., No. 3, January 1928

Many thorny problems faced the Association in 1921 ... that it would only be by the closest cooperation that a solution would be obtained. Many of the new householders were returned men who had been in tight corners before and had learned the art of meeting a difficult situation. That experience proved very useful in the days to come.

The three governmental units—national, provincial, and local—had joined in a paternal housing project, and it is not surprising that a goodly number of the homeless looked forward with sanguine hopes to the Utopian development in the vicinity of Ottawa. The survey and planning of the locality was in keeping with the conception of a model garden suburb in spite of several minor objections raised during the interval.

From this point the purchasers were due for a disillusionment which was nearly general. If it had been said when building commenced that 8 or 10 years would elapse before the roads would be completed or the recreational ground developed, the speaker would have been regarded as a pessimist even by those who had some experience with civic politics.

Whatever has been accomplished in the last eight years was due to community cooperation. Many grievances were corrected by individual action but for the most part the community acted through their Association. Reverting to detail, however, it is apparent that the ventures of the Association in cooperative buying were not always attended with success. A sample was the purchase of 45 chairs at a cost of \$120.50. It was proposed to resell the consignment to the members at cost, but the movement did not quite come up to expectations.

Another feature of the Association's activities was introduced in 1920 and 1921. With the approach of winter in 1920, preparations were made for a rink on the recreation grounds near Rideau Terrace. Although the location was not altogether satisfactory, the rink was maintained throughout the winter and the children of the originals were privileged to don the skates and show their skill.

At a meeting held in the Clubhouse on June 13, 1921, a field day was proposed and a committee of was named to make the necessary arrangements: The field days was duly held on August 13, one of the principal functions sponsored by the Association being thus inaugurated.

**Article 4**, printed in *The Lindenleader*, Vol. 1, No. 4, February 1928

During the first two years of its existence, the Association was favoured by a unanimous feeling of cooperation and mutual helpfulness among its members and in the community for whose benefit their organization was designed. When the interested body of residents met in the Separate School building on Springfield Road on December 2, 1921, and calmly elected the officers and councillors, there was practically no inkling of the differences of opinion which according to manifest destiny were to develop in a short time. The following year, a Women's Association was organized.

At a municipal election meeting held at the Springfield Road School building on December 30, the speakers were asked to support holding an investigation into the operations of the Ottawa Housing Commission. The executive on January 13 arranged for a questionnaire for to ascertain whether an investigation were desired. As the questionnaire was nearly unanimous, a so-called indignation meeting was held at Crichton School on March 24, at which a resolution was adopted asking for an investigation. The request was granted, and an inquiry was conducted into the methods of construction of each house on the estate.

During the early summer, a group considered building a clubhouse. The intention at first was to proceed independently of the Association, but upon second thoughts the project was referred to the organization for attention. A general meeting was held on July 21 at

which a ballot was taken resulting in a decision by a slight majority that construction should not be proceeded with.