

## About our school...

The Sir James Whitney School is home to one of North America's oldest schools for Deaf children still in existence. With a rich and interesting history spanning over 140 years, it was established in October 1870.

Previous names of the school were the Ontario Institution for the Education and Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb (1870–1913) and the Ontario School for the Deaf (1913–1974). In August 1974, the Government of Ontario renamed this educational and residential establishment in honour of Sir James Whitney, a hearing statesman who had been Ontario premier from 1905 to 1914.

The present-day school campus is situated at its original location, west of Belleville along the picturesque shore of the Bay of Quinte.

The Provincial Schools Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Education is responsible for the operation of the Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf and other Provincial and Demonstration Schools. For more information, visit [www.psbnet.ca](http://www.psbnet.ca)

1927–1928 Rhythm Class



## School Archives

The Provincial Schools Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Education recently set up a project to manage the school's collection of historical materials (artifacts, photographs, documents, and other items of historical value) to ensure their preservation and maintenance. Many of these materials are culturally-sensitive to Deaf history, Deaf people in general, and school alumni. Branch staff, volunteers from the Deaf community, school alumni, and summer co-op students have been assisting in the task.

One of the school's classrooms has been divided into two sections. The first section consists of an archival-quality storage environment with high-density shelves, temperature control, and improved conditions for high quality preservation. The second section is a reading room with a large table and chairs. It also has a display case and ample space for individuals who have a legitimate interest in research or are doing school projects. The two sections are secured by a camera monitoring system 24 hours a day/7 days a week.

With the exception of items on loan, all historical materials accumulated by the school or acquired by the archives are the property of the provincial government of Ontario. The constant expansion of the school archives owes much to the generosity of its alumni and other members of the Deaf community who have donated items over the years.

## Acknowledgments

The Provincial Schools Branch and the Sir James Whitney School for the Deaf wish to thank David Bentley, a former hearing residence counselor, and alumni Keith Dorschner '56 and Christina (née Bennett) Dorschner '56 for their early efforts in collecting and preserving historical materials and artifacts related to the school and the Deaf community in general. Clifton F. Carbin, (a PSB employee and 1966 graduate of the school, has been assigned to supervise, sort, catalogue, stabilize and preserve the materials.

A special thank you is also extended to the alumni and former/current staff for their continued support and generous donations of school photos and so much more.



1919 Girls' Hockey Team

1954–1955 Senior Academic Class



## How you can help...

The OSD-SJW Archives is interested in collecting artifacts, photographs, documents and other materials from the school's alumni, students, current and former staff, family members, the Deaf community and the general public. These materials will help document and preserve the history and culture of the school. While the policy is to accept only permanent gifts, some items will be accepted as loans for displays and exhibits.



This 19th century silver medallion for academic proficiency and good conduct was presented to student William "Willie" Kay by His Excellency the Governor General of Canada, Lord Dufferin. The outer rim reads: Ontario Institution for the Deaf and Dumb William Kay 1874.

Fifty-four years later in 1928, this 1880 graduate unselfishly donated his treasured medal to the school's showroom.

1987 Christmas Nativity Pageant



1903 "D & D" Senior Football Team

## Open to staff, students and the public

Deaf history enthusiasts, researchers, visitors, alumni, students and school staff are welcome to come and see several beautiful showcases of the collections in the Main School building.

Access to the archives is restricted for research purposes and must be made by appointment.

All materials are subject to copyright protection and FIPPA (*Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*)

### OSD-SJW ARCHIVES

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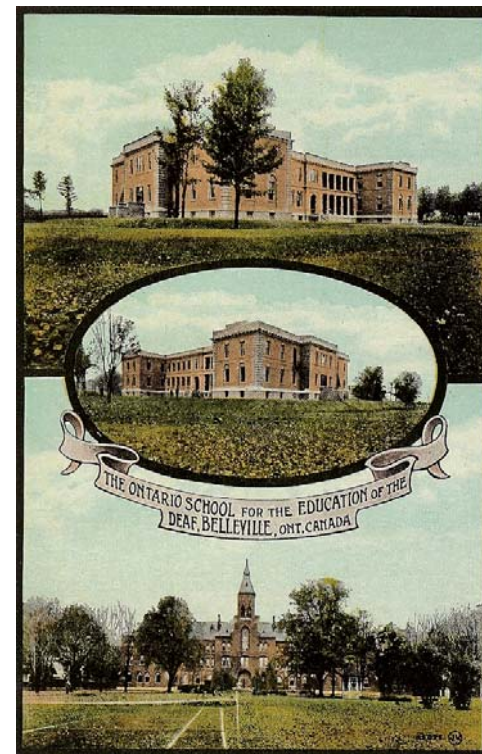
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*Front cover: An early postcard, printed between 1914 and 1921, depicting the Girls' Residence (top), the Boys' Residence (middle) and the original school building (bottom). Below is another postcard view of the present-day Main School, taken in the late 1960s.*

## Preserving Our School's Heritage: The Past, the Present and the Future



## THE ARCHIVAL PROJECT of the SIR JAMES WHITNEY SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF Belleville, Ontario

