

2015 MAIN STREET – PEGUIS PAVILION, KILDONAN PARK
Morley Blankstein (Blankstein Coop Gillmor and Hanna), architect (1960)
Günter A. Schoch, landscape architect



When the City of Winnipeg was looking to upgrade its facilities and services in the post-World War II era, one sector they were keen to improve was parks. As the population began to increase, the use of Winnipeg’s extensive park system grew as well. The land for Kildonan Park, in the north end of the city, was purchased between 1909 and 1912, with initial landscaping carried on from 1910 to 1914 and a pavilion built in 1915, which was severely damaged in the 1950 flood.

Planning for new park facilities, especially public buildings, was the desire to design year-round structures. At Kildonan Park, the new pavilion sought to provide space for all seasons. This included the man-made pond directly north of the building, used for skating in the winter.

The Peguis Pavilion was completed in 1965 and is an excellent example of elements of two of the major post-War modern architectural styles: Brutalist and International. The waffle ceilings and board-formed concrete are part of the Brutalist Style, which strove to present a clear, unadorned display of the structure and to celebrate the textures of the construction material – concrete utilizing rough, concrete finishes, deeply inset fenestration, concrete with linear patterning or “corduroy concrete”, the use of diagonals and circles, and \ complex and irregular massing. The International

Style used hard, angular edges, severely plain surfaces, large areas of glass, and square or rectangular modules stressing material and proportionality over ornamentation. The use of glass and steel gave the style a “lightness” of appearance.

The main (south) façade features dark brick walls extending out from the façade, and the main glass entrance, and a take-out window. Above the brick is a band of concrete serving as sills for the thin clerestory windows that encircle the entire building. Above, the flat roof is emphasized by its wide concrete design and overhang, embellished with waffle roof supported by round concrete columns visible on all façades. The main entrance is the only exterior element significantly altered from the original design.

The east façade continues the architectural language of the front elevation with an open deck overlooking the pond and a rounded concrete garden extending outward from the deck to form a retaining wall. The west façade includes a small brick mechanical systems area (addition), blocked from view from the pond by a brick wall.

The north façade, overlooking the pond, features large rectangular window openings and two doorways overlooking the deck, separated by the round columns and a wide staircase in the northeast corner giving access to basement level. The sunken basement concrete wall is interrupted by rectangular window openings.

On the interior, restaurant facilities were provided on the main floor and included a concrete and brick fireplace. The basement featured changing space for ice skating, washrooms and a second fireplace.

As part of Kildonan Parks redevelopment in the 2010s the pond and plaza adjacent to the Pavilion was redesigned. This included the design of a lighting installation called *Bokeh* (Japanese for blurriness) by local artists Takashi Iwasaki and Nadi Design that was officially opened January 12, 2019.

The pavilion is named to honour Chief Peguis (ca.1774-1864), prominent Saulteaux leader who helped the Selkirk Settlers survive as they established the colony and signed an early treaty with Lord Selkirk allowing them farming tracts on traditional Indigenous land. Peguis and his wife were baptized by Anglican missionaries in 1840 and took the names William and Victoria King

Two important monuments are located to the west of the pavilion. The Chief Peguis Monument was dedicated in 1923 by the Lord Selkirk Association of Rupert's Land. The Sargent Tommy Prince Monument, Prince being a descendant of Chief Peguis, was placed in its location by the officers and men of Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry under the auspices of the Lord Selkirk Association of Rupert's Land on November 11, 1989.

The designer of this structure is Morley Blankstein (1924-2015) of well-known local firm Blankstein Coop Gillmor and Hanna. It was responsible for many fine modernist style buildings throughout the city and in 1964 merged with Waisman Ross to create Number Ten Architectural Group.

Günter A. Schoch (1928-2017) was a German-born and trained landscape architect who was responsible for the design of the pond next to the Peguis Pavilion and other improvements to the nearby Lord Selkirk Creek.

Malcom Construction, a well-known local contracting firm founded in 1900. Still in operation today, they have been responsible for many outstanding structures in Winnipeg and the province.

Elements of the building that would require approval if alterations were planned are:

A. Site:

- i. The immediate park setting adjacent to a constructed pond with its landscape nestled around the building;
- ii. Paved patio spaces adjoining the walk-out basement on the north side of pavilion with the edge of the pond;
- iii. The curvilinear geometry of the retaining walls and concrete paving around the pond; and
- iv. The retaining walls extending from the building into the landscape.

B. Exterior:

- i. The two-storey concrete structure with flat roof with its north façade overlooking the pond, its south façade facing a parking lot and its east and west façades facing the park;
- ii. Each façade with heavy concrete and/or brick walls, rectilinear window openings, bands of clerestory windows, overhanging waffle-slab roof, open decks;
- iii. The exposed sunken basement and staircases of the north façade;
- iv. The brick walls and take-out window on the south façade; and
- v. The concrete retaining wall along the east façade.

C. Interior:

- i. The concrete waffle-slab ceiling; and
- ii. The location and any original materials of the fireplaces on the main and basement levels.