

## **HERITAGE CHARACTER STATEMENT**

The Monument Lefebvre, at the Memramcook Institute in St. Joseph, New Brunswick, was built in 1896-97 by Sylvain Gaudet to the designs of James C. Dumaresq, architect. It is currently the property of the Memramcook Institute, and is slated for acquisition by PWC. See FHBRO Building Report 83-81.

### **Reason for Designation**

On February 27, 1984, the Monument Lefebvre was designated Classified, primarily because of its important historical associations, consciously expressed in its architecture and siting.

The building was constructed as a memorial to Father Camille Lefebvre, who founded the College Saint-Joseph de Memramcook in 1864. It was, at the time, the only institution of higher learning available to the Acadians, who, because of it, were better able to maintain their traditions and ensure their cultural survival. That fact was recognized to be of national historic significance by the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada and the site was plaqued in 1978. The building has become a symbol of Father Lefebvre's contribution to the rebirth of Acadian culture.

James C. Dumaresq was one of a family of noted architects based in Halifax, and designed numerous commercial and institutional buildings throughout the Atlantic provinces.

### **Character Defining Elements**

The heritage character of the property is defined by the integration of siting, exterior design, and interior layout. The architect has used an eclectic stylistic vocabulary to provide both a range of functional spaces and a sense of memorial.

The building's location on the crest of a hill with an unobstructed view over the valley below is important in establishing its symbolic role. This is reinforced by the detailing of the principal façade, a symmetrical arrangement featuring a central projecting pavilion, carefully articulated window and door openings, and flanking towers. The other façades are relatively simple and unadorned.

The ceremonial aspect of the building continues in the interior, where the main entrance opens into a central corridor leading to a stained glass commemorative window. The other spaces are arranged symmetrically about this central corridor.

The upper floor houses a large auditorium, in the style of many town halls of the period. The patterns of access and the orientation of the space are independent of the ground floor layout, but the function itself, as a place of public assembly, is important in the context of the building's symbolic role.

St. Joseph, New Brunswick  
**Monument Lefebvre** (Continued)

Finishes and decorative features on the exterior and in the interior circulation routes and public spaces are of above-average quality, in keeping with the building's ceremonial role.

It is important that those aspects of the design which reflect the unique cultural dimension of the property be protected and enhanced. These include the siting and balance of the composition, with its emphasis on the monumental front façade; the symmetry and ceremonial aspect of the ground floor layout; and the public assembly function of the second floor auditorium. The finishes and decorative features in these areas should be carefully maintained and restored where appropriate, to assure that the original architectural intent is preserved.

Outdoor circulation patterns around the building, paving materials and the planting scheme should reflect their historic precedent. The temptation to introduce modern landscape design methods should be resisted.

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