

This is Our History

An educational tour by Grade 11 students at the Maples Met School

April 2021

[Link to tour](#)

Introduction: In September 2020, our two grade 11 classes at the Maples Met School dove into learning about history. One of our first experiences in learning how to think historically this year was a walking tour through the Seven Oaks area, Scotia Drive, and Kildonan Park. This is an area rich in history. We learned about the fur trade, flooding, the importance of the river, land claims, the Battle of Seven Oaks. We stopped by the Chief Peguis statue and talked about treaties; we learned about Canada's contributions to the world wars. Students took an active role, each choosing one location and presenting their research to their peers. It was a beautiful sunny day and a great kick-start to our year of historical investigation.

So when the idea arose that students across Seven Oaks School Division would make walking tours of their own for publication, we thought: what a great way to come full circle and to test out some of our newly developed historical thinking skills!

But we quickly realized that our school's neighbourhood - the Maples - history was not lying right before our eyes for easy access. Along the river where we did our first walking tour, history showed itself on every corner in markers, murals and monuments. But in the Maples, aside from street names and school names, we didn't come up with much - so we had to dig deeper. What was the history that we *weren't* seeing? What stories lay just below the surface that we could tell?

We had lots of conversations about commemoration. About the importance of doing it appropriately and with sound ethical judgment. About the role it plays, or doesn't play, in our ongoing awareness of the past. Our questioning centred around the Essential Question: *How and why do we remember the past?* Through this process, we realized that to create our own walking tour, we had to look within ourselves and ask: Where do we come from? What significant people and events laid the groundwork for us to be here? What are the injustices we want to remember so we can create a better future? And how can those ideas be represented in connection to the places and spaces in our community?

Some of our students are Indigenous to Manitoba; a vast majority are first- or second-generation Canadians with cultural ties to a variety of countries, including the Phillipines, India, and Portugal. Our students are artists, scientists, athletes, women, journalists. They care about the world they live in and the stories that brought us to where we are today. We reached beyond the Maples to pin locations all over Winnipeg. All of these stories are part of the history of our community, because our community is made of us. This is *our* history.

Please click the link above to explore our map. At each location, you will see the commemorative artefacts that students created, and can read the stories they chose to tell!

- Emma Gehrs-Whyte and Luke Taronno (Grade 11 Advisors, Maples Met School, April 2021)