
it was hardly what George Champion had in mind when he designed the park as a thickly wooded version of the English landscape style park in 1929. The only significant improvement at St. Vital Park during the fifties was the resurfacing of the main road to make it accessible in all weathers. The site of the former Swift Canadian Packing Plant on the banks of the Red River in Elmwood also remained undeveloped even though Swift had donated the land to the city at the end of the war. What remained of the old River Park site, Churchill Drive Park, was partially landscaped. It was hoped that this park might become the site of a demonstration garden and arboretum, but lack of funds prevented this. Sargent Park, which was the site of the Pan American Games trials in 1959, received several improvements as a consequence of the event: new bleachers, dressing rooms, track resurfacing and new fencing. A lot of beautification took place in advance of the Queen's visit to

Winnipeg in 1959. The famous Hudson's Bay Company rent ceremony, during which the Queen received beaver and moose pelts from company officials, took place in Assiniboine Park behind the pavilion in front of a crowd of 15,000. A special dais was constructed for the occasion, which afterwards was available for use as a bandstand. In the first of several successful conversions of former landfill sites, in 1960, the Parks and Recreation Board converted the Saskatchewan Avenue dump into a miniature mountain and called it Westview Park.

Overall, there was a sense of frustration on the parks side of the board's work by the end of the decade. It had finally been possible to regain some of the ground lost during the depression and the war. But while the board was receiving far more money in 1960 than it had in 1945, playing catch up on workers' salaries claimed a large part of the gain and high inflation some more on top of that.

There was a feeling that the board was falling behind again. Beyond a few community clubs and tot-lots, there had been no additions of facilities or park land to the inner city during the whole of the 1950s nor any improvements to the area's existing parks. Conditions there continued to deteriorate. In 1954 Hodgson had pointed out that acceptable town planning standards called for one acre of park space for every 100 inhabitants. Based on this standard, Winnipeg parks were clearly inadequate at one acre for every 215 citizens.¹⁴ It was also clear that any future large additions to park land in greater Winnipeg would take place in the suburban municipalities since the City of Winnipeg was almost completely built up. It was hoped that the new two-tier structure of city government to be initiated in 1960 would result in progress being made on some parks projects that were long overdue.

